

# Obama Care

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## Foreword

Obama Care insurance companies appointed death squads who sentenced millions of Americans to an early grave by refusing to give them medical treatment. Their friends and relatives avenged them. They formed open rebellion against the government and its crony insurance companies. Soon, people were being murdered by the hundreds in their office buildings, malls, stadiums, and universities. Others wer... [incomplete].

All persons and/or their actions in Obama Care are purely fiction. Although Obama is named as President, which is true, all of his speeches and other activities as presented in this novel are fiction.

### 1

Yancy Stokes drove his 1984 Chevy toward the doctor's office. Thanks to Obama Care and its affordable health care laws, he could visit his doctor whenever he was sick. So far, so good.

Yancy lived in abject poverty along with the vast majority of America's retirees. He lived alone, and he did so by choice. Women hadn't agreed with him much lately. He liked them when he was nineteen years old, but now he steered clear of them for the most part. Besides his three marriages had been busts. Each divorce impoverished him. Each break up cleaned Yancy out a little bit more. Now, everything was gone but the kitchen sink. Eventually, every woman he saw on the street became persona non grata. He wanted nothing to do with them. So, he stayed away.

Yancy hadn't been feeling well lately which caused him to stay at home a lot more than he should. He wasn't used to that, and he needed to find the cure.

All the government gave Yancy after fifty-five years of enslavement as both worker and taxpayer was \$612 each month. Yancy was not bothered by that. He had lived his entire life on a shoestring. Yancy had never lived the American lie that most people talked about incessantly. It seemed to him that most Americans he met had never experienced the middle class prosperity that the government bragged about. For instance, like most of the nation's citizens, he had been told that he was part of a middle class society, but everyone he knew was as poor as a church mouse including himself, and he and they knew it. All of them complained about their lack of spending money including himself. These things were par for the course in Yancy's neck of the woods. It had been that way all of his life.

"I've had trouble making ends meet," Roy Glimmer told him. "Can you buy me a lunch today? I'll pay you back."

"Sure," Yancy would say, but he always knew that Roy would never have enough money ahead to pay him back a dime.

“Thanks, Yancy,” Roy would say. “You are a good Christian man, Mr. Stokes. That’s for sure.”

He lived on hot dogs and beans and never drank or ate out. His house was a tiny urban box of bricks worth about nothing, because no one wanted what Yancy had. That was not a big deal for him. Most of his friends were in the same situation. He considered his house to be another badge signifying the equality of absolute squalor that awaited nearly all of the nation’s people, especially when they retired, because they simply could not work anymore.

“We are all in the same boat together,” Yancy told his buddies when he was out drinking with them. “We’re poor as a church mouse, and we’re going to stay that way. Like my grand daddy who was from Bosnia always said, ‘The rich fuckers get all the pig cheeks,’ and he was right. We’re supposed to enjoy what’s left which means we buy only the cheaper cuts of meat if we get any at all and we are supposed be darned happy about it.”

They considered Yancy to be an all right guy, but they understood he was nothing special. Neither were they. Most of them, like Yancy Stokes, had their own lower class panache for measly human trivialities. Like Yancy, they lived as best as they could which meant just barely getting by.

In front of the hospital where his doctor’s office awaited him, Yancy saw a group of protesters carrying signs on sticks. Their signs proclaimed their unhappiness at the present state of things.

*Obama Care Death Squads!  
Health Insurance?  
Don’t Bet Your Life.*

They were members of the tea party movement. Their signs were decorated with Lipton tea bags which dangled from dirty strings like lost unkempt children.

They were chanting,

„Death to Obama Care!  
Every one beware!“

He found it quaint but somewhat enchanting. Besides, Yancy had always been a free speech supporter.

He parked and entered the medical building. Inside it always smelled like alcohol swabs and a hint of recently cleaned vomit. After an examination, Doctor Mandel Philips, M.D., came back into his room.

“You have heart disease, Yancy,” the doctor told him. “I recommend a bypass to open the blockage in your heart.”

“I’m good for that,” Yancy said. “Check me into the hospital, and we’ll get her done.”

“Normally, I would do that, but at your age, Yancy, Obama Care insurance won’t allow me to open you up and fix it. It’s against the rules.”

“So, what does that mean?” Yancy asked.

“It means you will be treated medically. That’s the new way we do things. With so many older folks there’s not enough beds, operating rooms, or insurance funds to fix everyone.”

“So, what’s going to happen to me?” Yancy asked.

“You may or may not get progressively worse. Eventually, your heart will become exhausted, and you will die. Keep in mind, the same thing might have happened to you even with the bypass. There are no guarantees in life, you know.”

This wasn’t of much comfort to him. In fact, it upset Yancy a great deal. It seemed completely unjust, and Yancy felt like he was being robbed of what should have been his.

“I’ve been paying health insurance all my life, doc. They owe me some sort of care.”

“I know. However, my hands are tied. I can give you blood thinner. You might live a long time. I just cannot operate under these new rules.”

“What else can you do?”

“Nothing. If the blood thinners I can prescribe for you don’t work, your quality of life will become a bit worse every month. Let’s just hope they work.”

“How long do I have?” Yancy asked.

“Not too long. You are basically old. You’ve reached the natural end stage of life. I’d say the way your heart is, you might have one to three months tops. If it gets worse, I’ll keep you comfortable. Here’s a script for several medications.”

“What if I got a bypass? How long would I live then?”

“A lot longer. Maybe one or two decades.”

“Thanks, doctor. I guess I’ll go home and die, then,” Stokes said. “Obviously, the tea party that’s picketing outside today is right. The Obama Care death squad has killed me.”

“There might be a lot of truth to that.”

“I’ll see you, doc,” Yancy said.

“Sorry, I can’t do more, Yancy.”

Yancy left and got into his car. He started it and drove a few blocks, then stopped. He had a great idea. Yancy had decided he wasn’t going to be a good boy.

He wrote a few lines in his notebook. They said,

#### To Whom It May Concern

I was murdered by Obama Care’s negligence in not treating me for heart disease, and I hold all of the American people responsible. If I could have done so, I would have killed them all. If I can’t live, they do not deserve to live, either. I know now for a fact that America sucks. My death will not be a quiet one.

Yancy Stokes

He tore out the sheet on which he had written his confession to Murder by Obama Care and put it inside his wallet.

Next, Yancy drove down the boulevard. He knew exactly where he was going. In a few minutes, he was entering his favorite gun shop. All about him, Yancy saw hundreds of pistols and automatic rifles sparkling in their glass cases.

“How can I help you, Yancy?” Bill Quince asked. Bill was the proprietor of the establishment. He had been a pro-gun person all of his life and was proud of it. His National Rifle Association plaque was loudly displayed on the wall behind him.

“Two automatic pistols, light. I’m getting old, and my grip sucks, Bill. Get me something that is easy to operate. I need to squeeze off shells one after the other.”

“I got just the thing.” He handed Yancy a Glock. It was full size standard frame 9mm automatic pistol.

Yancy turned it this way and that.

“Just right,” Stokes said. “Give me your best price for two of them. I also want thirty magazines and three hundred shells to fill ‘em up with.”

“Gotcha, Yancy.”

Fourteen hundred bucks later, Yancy was fully equipped. As Stokes drove away, he was several pounds of guns and ammo heavier, but he felt a lot stronger. Stokes now had several super easy 9mm Glock semi-automatic pistols in his shopping bag. They were jet black. He also owned thirty Glock magazines holding ten shells each, and the three hundred shells he was going to pack them with. “That should be more than enough for what I need to do next,” Yancy whispered to himself as he walked through the parking lot to his car.

Soon, his new Glock nine millimeter pistols were packed under his belt in the crook of his back.

As he drove through town, Yancy felt their deadly metallic fingers pressing into his ribs. He drove to the park where he sat in the car loading all three hundred shells into his newly amassed cache of cartridges. When he had finished testing them for ease of inserting and then dismounting them, he stuffed the cartridges into his pockets, then drove up to the town’s largest restaurant, parked, walked in loaded for bear, and ordered himself a large T-bone steak. It was to be his last meal, and he knew it. Yancy hadn’t had a T-bone steak in several years. In fact, Yancy had no idea how many years ago it was when he’d last had one. It tasted delicious.

As he ate, he thought of his wives and of all the hell they’d given him. That was then, he mused. Today was the last he’d ever think of them.

It was a huge restaurant. He watched the hundreds of people around him enjoying their dinners with their families. They lived in an evil country that cared diddly shit about people like Yancy, and it didn’t care much about anyone else, either. As far as the government was concerned the people inside the restaurant were just little economic units and were in no way human beings with feelings and needs. They were just like any other retail product you’d buy and then discard when you were done with them. When they got worn out and couldn’t work any more, the people would be thrown into the trash like Obama Care had just done to Yancy. Yet, they seemed quite happy with their lot in life. None of them were concerned in the least with the problems of the sick people like Yancy Stokes who were being denied treatment by the government's healthcare insurance buddies on a regular basis.

Yancy finished his steak. Fortified with his last meal, Yancy stood up, reached back, took a deep breath, and pulled out both of his new Glocks. If he was going to go out, it was going to be in a hail of bullets and rage. He was going to make it

count. He'd play the anti-hero at the end of his life's movie, and play it better than Brad Pitt, Jack Palance, and Clint Eastwood ever could.

He began firing at the people in front of him and to the sides, one after the other, taking care to aim at their heads and to pull back easy on the trigger. That way, nearly every bullet hit its mark. He watched the holes entering them and the back splash of blood at the other end of their skulls. Minuscule pellets of blood exited each of their tiny wounds and swarmed through air in a gentle spray. It all seemed so clean and innocent. As the dead fell backwards to the floor, those behind them stood up to see what had happened and his bullets found them just as easily. Killing them was even more enjoyable than Yancy had even dreamed. This was fun. Their heads produced the same delicate pellets of blood that peppered the air just before they fell. Within the first two minutes, Yancy had silenced twenty of them. He reloaded carefully by slamming home the next deadly magazines, then carefully fired again and again. He took his time and aimed well. He didn't want to waste a single shot. As the people fell, the room reached a certain maddening crescendo of screams and moans. The people either tried to run away or fell to the floor to escape Yancy's deadly aim. By the time he was finished, Yancy figured far more than 200 people were either dead or injured.

For the first time in his deprived life, Yancy felt fully alive. In fact, he felt more excitement than he had ever experienced. Killing these scoundrels was a true rush. By now, almost the entire restaurant was filled with corpses. He slammed home the last two magazines and dispatched another nine people trying to push their way out a side door. He followed the others onto the sidewalk outside in front of the building and shot the last of them on the sidewalk.

Yancy heard sirens approaching him now. The first police car rounded the bend. Its line of fancy flashing lights grimaced at the overwhelming world of hurt where Yancy stood. Yancy shot the driver causing him to slam down on the accelerator. The cop's flashing car ran up over a curb and spun several times in the air like a wounded fighter jet before crashing head first into the glass window of the restaurant after which it burst into flames. A few seconds later, its exploding gas tank blew out the building's hundreds of feet of glass windows. Yancy watched in amazement as the shattering windows shot their painful pellets into his back and onto the sidewalk. In three minutes, several additional police cars were on the street, with policemen crouching down behind them, using their metallic bodies as protective shields. A cop with a bull horn ordered Yancy to put his gun down, but Yancy refused and pointed his gun in his direction and snarled. All of them fired.

Yancy Stokes fell silent and dead onto the awaiting concrete in the slow motion of a bad dream. He seemed to take forever to reach the pavement. In all, his body had suffered eleven direct bullet hits. Two of the bullets had entered and exited his head in the same puff of red droplets. Yancy Stokes collapsed into an instant death coma in which he instantly perished. His heart problem had been solved once and for all. He fell to the pavement with a wry smile on his face. He was perfectly satisfied. He had done exactly what he wanted to. He had made them pay for what their government had done to him when the doctor told him to just go home and die without what had once been the appropriate treatment.

All in all, his last T-bone steak had been even better than Yancy had ever imagined.

## 2

The donuts on the way to work were old hat for Steve Branch. He had been a homicide detective at the seventh precinct for sixteen scruffy police years. Morning donuts were a part of his turf. For sure, he was jaded. He wanted out, but he had nowhere else to go. Steve's disheveled and crumb dotted suit betrayed his slovenly attitude about anything and everything that his life as a cop had amounted to. His life was merely a dance of angry citizens, endless reports, boxes of donuts, and coffee. Nonetheless, Steve persisted for many years in his job of being a completely approved and licensed police officer. In fact, playing dick was his only stock and trade. His dad had been a homicide cop, and Steve Branch was a chip off his old man's block right down to his endless sips of java and the eternal wetness of so many wayward and very horny women. These girls had always been part and parcel of his family's forensic repertoire.

Kevin Richter, his partner, was a lean thirty-five year old stud, because he hadn't gotten fat yet. Detective Branch hated him for that. Branch had traded in his furtive youth for a puffy adult body whose thousands of donuts dumped on the pounds and escorted him directly into the onset of his advancing obesity. Richter was still thin. He was also somewhat naive about women, kids, and marriage. He persisted in believing in the sanctity of his wedding vows even though he fucked women police officers in the restrooms of restaurants when off-duty. It was all the same to him, and, besides, his stupid Irish Catholicism covered all of his sins with the savior's blood right down to the gooey stains that graced both sides of his zipper. No matter what he did, Mr. Richter firmly believed that Jesus would save his muscular seven percent fat ass. But that was beside the point. To Officer Kevin Richter, life and crimes were a daily blast. He couldn't get enough of them.

"How's the wife, Kevin?" Steve asked. He really wanted to know. He was close buds with Kevin, his wife, and kids. Steve considered them his family, because they were all he had to hang onto.

"I'm okay," Kevin said. "As for them? They're good, too."

Steve nodded.

At that point, the precinct commander, Grant Holland, came rushing in.

"Heads up, everyone!" he shouted into the room from his dingy office door, "We have a multiple code one-eighty-seven over at Small's European and American Cuisine. For you McDonald's fans, Small's is an expensive dining room that serves steaks. All of the big wigs eat there. Get on it now! Full sirens! They already know we're coming!"

The police cars gyrated around corners. Their cars' stylishly flat and flashing eyeslits sparkled with red, silver, and blue lights in a garish horizon of oozing sunbeams that exploded against the streets and buildings they rushed past, brighter than bombs in a battle. These police cars had become surreal seas of spinning tires that moved so fast that they barely grounded their rubber coated wheels against the cobblestones. Their yapping loudspeakers barked their incessantly surreal siren scream through the night much the way that troubled girlie dogs whined in heat. Kevin and Steve twisted right and left inside each

radical turn of their wheels, slamming the their bones against the well scratched vehicle's doors, as they swirled past paused cars and stoplights. On both sides of their racing police car, Steve and Kevin watched the glaring glass faces of the passing city buildings whose glass windows reflected whatever shreds of their hurling image anyone could fathom as the policemen sped forward in their totally indecent blur of blue, red, and white.

When they peeled off onto the scene, the fun had already started. Police cars were pegged sideways and the guys were shooting it out with a weirdo who had already flourished his gun at the frightened cops who hid behind their cars for protection. Steve stopped his police car and took position behind its partially armored door. He pointed at the perp who pointed back with his tiny gun and dared him to shoot, so the detective did what the perp wanted. He pressed off a shot, and watched him receive a full fuselage of fresh lead from his own gun and those of the other officers who suddenly fired as well. This time, their bullets hit him head on and opened him inside out like a shotgunned can of tomato sauce. Blood was everywhere and still gushing from the volcanic peep holes in his exhausted body. Steve and Kevin smiled when the man's body jiggled with each connecting hit. To Detective Steve Branch, the guy looked to all the world at that moment like a tiny paper doll glued by its foot to a woman's pussy vibrator. Why he thought that, he wasn't really sure.

Kevin approached the suspect, bent down, and felt his neck for a pulse.

"Clear! Suspect dead!"

Steve surveyed the body, noted what he assumed was the expired perp's 9mm Glock on the pavement next to him, and shook his head.

"What a mess," Steve said.

"How's he doing?" his side kick Kevin Richter asked.

"The guy is just waiting for the coroner," Steve told him. "His body has been shot up so much, he looks like gourmet cheese embedded with red peppers."

Steve donned his detective's latex gloves and retrieved the man's wallet. He read the name Yancy Stokes, took a picture of his driver's license with his cell phone camera and sent it on to headquarters with a text message that read, "Check this perp's records and get back to me fast. — Det. Steve Branch." He checked the inside of the guy's wallet as thoroughly as he could, but found little to go on, only a few bills and nothing else of note. There were no telephone numbers, only a card with an appointment for his doctor dated just a few hours before. He dialed the number and slid the wallet into an evidence envelope.

"Dr. Sumac's office," a nurse answered.

"This is Detective Steve Branch. We have a homicide here for a man named Yancy Stokes whose wallet contains an appointment card in your office for several hours ago. I need to know what happened there."

"Confidentiality," she said.

"Don't give me no confidentiality bull shit, lady. The man's dead. He has no rights, anymore. Got it? Now listen well. This guy has committed several homicides. Get me the doctor he saw, and do it now."

"He's with a patient."

"I don't care if he's fucking a whore. This is a murder scene. Get the cocksucker on the line."



“Yes, detective.”

The line clicked. In less than a minute, a man calling himself Dr. Lawrence Sumac was on the phone.

“Was Yancy murdered?” Dr. Sumac asked.

“No, doc. It seems to be the other way around. Mr. Stokes went nuts and took out dozens of citizens with a nine millimeter Glock pistol. Did anything happen at your office that might help explain this?”

Dr. Sumac almost trembled. He had never had anything like this happen in his entire professional career.

“I told him he was terminally ill and that his affordable health care act insurance didn’t allow me to operate to save him.”

“How did he react?”

“He seemed okay.”

“I guess he changed his mind, doc,” Steve said as he walked through Yancy’s killing field. “I’m looking at a half burned restaurant with blood oozing out of bodies everywhere, and I see families and kids with skulls blown apart. Get a clue.”

“Oh, my goodness,” the doctor said.

“He used the police to commit suicide,” Detective Branch said. “I don’t think you’ll be billing him any more. He’s dead as a door nail. You’re going to need another patient to work with.”

The doctor hung up. He sat back in his chair, happy that Yancy Stokes was dead, because it meant he wouldn’t be coming to the office and killing the doctor and his hot secretary with the plump breast tissue pushing up behind her tight shirt.

The crime scene was a mess.

“I’ve never seen anything this big,” Steve said. “The guy went nuts.”

“Why?” Kevin asked.

“I just talked with his doctor. A few hours ago the doc gave him the bad news that he was dying, that a year ago he could have been saved, but the government’s new insurance scam wouldn’t cover the cure because of his age. I’d say Mr. Yancy Stokes was clearly pissed off. Look at this bullshit. Where do we even fucking begin?”

The scene looked like a classic painting of a battle’s aftermath. Bodies lay absentmindedly here and there throughout what was left of the smoldering hulk of what had been a five star restaurant transformed into a butcher’s shooting gallery. Before the count was over, the guy had murdered one hundred and eighty seven citizens, most of them celebrating their birthdays and wedding anniversaries in the wrong spot at the wrong time. It seemed that just being in here was the only reason they were dead. By now, the press had arrived. They had gathered themselves just a few feet outside the crime perimeter and their first amendment cameras were interjecting themselves into the virginal cortex of the murder scene’s first stages of post menstrual climax. Nothing could be worse. Steve’s phone rang. There were no priors on the perpetrator, Yancy Stokes, but it followed a pattern that had been emerging for weeks where a patient was told he or she was going to die because the government didn’t give a fuck. Like Yancy, the others had shot up a hospital or a theater or some other public venue that articulated their

displeasures inside some sweet little killing field of their choice. With the details surfacing on the scandalous health care act's refusal to treat people who were ill when just the opposite had been promised when the law was being passed, detective Branch figured this might well be just the tip of the iceberg. He also deduced that he'd be seeing even more of it in the near future. The world as he knew it had entered a sea change. Small's was just another long eternal shoreline where it all began.

Reporter Brenda Gardner, a recent graduate of some candy assed college that detective Branch was trying to remember but couldn't, was performing before the cameras. He watched her firm titties pointing directly at his eyes as her lips moved persistently in front of the ever present lens. Detective Branch figured she was having her fifteen minutes of fame at the police department's expense. Now, everyone and their moms would be up in arms about the poor police work that had just allowed another elderly gimp to take out half a small town right in front of Detective Branch's donut gobbling pie hole, and how absolutely nothing at all was going to be done about it.

Gardner stuck her microphone in front of Detective Branch's mouth, demanding immediate answers to the present situation.

"How did the man get the gun to do this?" she asked. "Isn't it time we stopped conceal carry laws, detective?"

"I think this sadistic crime scene is a good case for everyone carrying a gun," Detective Branch told her, "because if only one other citizen had carried a gun in there for his daughter's birthday party, then she might be alive right now, and the perpetrator would have been shot after the first round instead of continuing unabated until the man shot everyone in there. But I know you don't want to hear the God's honest truth of what I just said."

"So, you suggest arming the citizenry, detective?"

"It makes a lot more sense than all of these cold dead bodies, Ms. Gardner. You don't go to a gun fight totally unarmed, if you want to win. No more questions. With all due respect to the media and the first amendment which I personally believe in to the fullest degree, you need to get back, Brenda, because this is a working crime scene, and we need room for medical and law enforcement to gain easy access to the crime scene. Some of the people in there might still be saved, mam. Please cooperate by moving back across the street as I instruct our officers to place police tape showing the borders you are to observe."

"Thank you, Detective Branch, for speaking with me. We have just been speaking with Detective Branch of the Homicide Division who has just told us that only by having a citizenry who are armed to the teeth can this type of vicious mad dog murder scene be avoided, and from the looks of things inside that restaurant, I'd have to admit, uncomfortable as it seems to me, that Mr. Branch is probably correct. The question is whether or not we will arm ourselves for our own protection or just willingly go to the same slaughter as these unarmed and innocent folks just experienced right here in our town. What do you think out there? Do you want to carry a gun so that you can protect your family from this sort of thing? Twitter us @newsteam4 with your thoughts. I will tell you one thing out there in our audience. It's going to be a long night for law enforcement as well as for the families of these victims."

Detective Branch turned away. Brenda was okay with him. She had always been fair to the police, including himself. However, as far as he was concerned the media could wipe his sweet ass. There was work to be done. All the reporters wanted was a good line to stir up mass shit and make a name for themselves as an Emmy laden news guru who brought the community's awareness to a new state of descending madness. The entire world was a fruit basket filled with poisonous mushrooms like Brenda Gardner, star reporter, and another deadly mushroom or two out there in the city who were just like her might attract other news addicted copy cats to their mindless deaths. The news was just more poison in a sea of it, and the citizens were choking to death on the sweet pungent smells of fresh deaths, and that was exactly the way they liked it. People loved the feel of an exploding jugular inside their neck as long as they could feel it giving way by reading about someone else's misfortune and not their own. Let the toxic splatter on the news media fly where it may as long as the Sarah Lee pastry freezer at the supermarkets remained full of the fattening glop they loved to stuff down their insular citizen pie holes as they waddled back and forth to the doctor's office, the TV, and the refrigerator.

As far as Detective Branch was concerned the entire world could just die and go to hell.

As a matter of fact, he wished it would.

### 3

Inside the busted and half-burned restaurant was what looked to all the world like a biblical hell hole. Kevin entered and picked through the vastness of the murder wreckage with kid gloves. He wore the usual latex garments to protect both himself and the criminal virginity of the victims and their evidence clusters. Kevin never knew what he was going to find, but he knew exactly what he could screw up with his own DNA and fingerprints at a crime scene. Murder one-o-one. Keep it neat, photogenic, and clean as a whistle. In other words, as his daddy used to put it so distinctly while guzzling from his rot gut gin glass, "Son, don't shit where you eat. Always treat a crime scene like a pretty lady. Whatever you do at one, keep it tidy, son, and don't disturb it." The words weren't exactly the same. Perhaps they didn't really fit into the historical puzzle, but the gist of what his dad had said to him was quite similar.

The Coroner, Chen Yong, from forensics had shown up. He was a Chinaman. Yong was always filled with humorous aphorisms about anything and everything that had to do with how far he'd gotten with his whores the night before and how, "she went for it, and I gave it," and all of the usual sundry descriptions of what he described as his yellow meat tube, how the ladies craved it, and its exact whereabouts.

"You put that thing in too many places where it doesn't belong, and soon it will be leaving you for someone who treats it better, Chen. Best to restrain Jimmie Ding Dong at times, if you know what I mean," Detective Steve Branch told him.

“Ha ha! You so funny, Missah Detective,” Chen said in his worst pigeon English. “Me just come off ship and girls all over body! Ha. Ha. Me no want disappoint white girl, Missah Stevie. They too stupid. They no know what no mean.”

Kevin and Steve had to hand it to him. Chen knew better than most Yanks how to bullshit his way through a policeman’s left nut without touching a single metallic tooth on his zipper. The detective watched the Chinaman bagging and photographing one body after the other while mentally playing with everyone’s mind. Chen might be an asshole, but Branch liked him a lot, because he had a way about him that was hilarious, forbidden, and rife with irregularities. Chen Yong was a glaring misfit. That was the way Branch and most people in the department liked it.

“Me no see reason for this mess, Chen. Maybe you make me see it pretty as daylight.”

“You make fun,” Chen giggled. “Then I kick balls. Delay crime report. Mess with mind.”

Steve winked at Chen. They both loved mocking each other. It passed the time of day.

As blood dripped from fingertips and across crime scene floors, so flowed the endless bullshit shop talk from Chen Yong’s blathering lips whose words spewed from somewhere within his personal shanty of sexual innuendos.

What the heck. It passed the time.

Kevin wondered how much was real and how much was a cover up for Chen’s always hidden two incher which he’d always been so clever never to show. A guy with so many tales of conquest had to have a reason. To be honest no one really wanted to know. The fried chicken was greasy no matter where you ate it in this city.

It took four days to work the crime scene. They could have spent four years. That’s how big the place was. “So many bodies, so little time,” Steve Branch mused out loud as he surveyed the huge mess inside. Less than eighteen hours of bending and grabbing and the place was beginning to stink like three day old fish left uncovered in the family’s waste can and begging to be tossed. Finally, they gave up and bagged the booty. Time to put it all on ice.

Branch looked at the bloodied face of a little girl. Her forehead showed an entry wound. The back of her head was nearly gone where the bullet exited with her brain matter attached. She couldn’t be older than three or four years. “I’m sorry, dear,” Steve said to her. “I think you deserved far better than this, and if I had been here, I would have done my best to save you, honey. God bless.” He stood up to leave. Then, he returned for a few moments, bent down, and caressed the kid’s shoulder. “I love you, baby,” he said. “Know that I care about you, dear, because I really do.”

Then, he turned and made his way out of the crime scene.

## 4

Chen had never seen the chiller so full of fresh ones. The lab was like the hold of a ship on the high seas in search of cod, halibut, and flounder. It stank like day

old boy scouts at a jamboree with no one to watch them to be certain they would shower off all of their naturally clinging human sludge. The morgue's usually strong stink accumulation had already become downright toxic.

The autopsy tables were filled with bodies. Chen's scalpel was dipping Quixotically into the subjects, opening their flesh books to one page after the other of organs, brain dumps, and other exquisite chapters in each decaying body's doorway to death. He liked the kids best, because they were easiest to handle and quickest to finish. Their chests opened far more easily, and their organs were tiny and easier to lift, turn, and inspect. Why couldn't everyone be a child? It just seemed unfair. Only thirty-two percent of them were kids. Toss in a few older teenagers in the final stages of their mental insanity and their parents and other relatives of various ages, and he had an orchestra of human widgets that would keep him busy for days and days.

His scalpel parsed the usual incision into a kid's mom. She was a certain Mabel Looper from 8th Street. Her two kids and husband were with there in the room next to her. Chen liked to dissect the families together. That way, when he was done, there was less paperwork. They could usually be picked up by the family's funeral parlor with a single transport request that he could copy and place in each person's file. Easy as pie. He pulled her thorax apart and removed each of her organs to inspect them. The woman had a tumor on her intestine the size of a slightly long wiener. He cross-sectioned it and discovered it was non-cancerous. He noted "fatty cyst" and "attached to small intestine" on her autopsy file. The entire family seemed healthy enough, but the single bullet theory held true. That was the theory that it only took a single bullet to kill a healthy person. Each of the kids as well as the husband and wife proved the one bullet theory. Chen saw so many one bullet deaths from the restaurant that he figured it should graduate from theorem to scientific law. "I hereby declare it to be a law," he said out loud, just to hear his voice, but no one was listening.

He sewed them up, placed them in body bags and moved them to the cooler. He made sure the tags were properly attached and checked to make certain their names were not only theirs but were spelled correctly. Then, he doubled checked their case numbers. This was the number he would use to find them again on the computer.

He dug into the brain of a man who had been a waiter at the restaurant. He was handsome and had a well toned body. His magnificent health hadn't helped him survive. The 9mm shell in his brain took him down in a split second. Dr. Yong noted that the bullet had gone through and was missing from his cranium. He took pictures with his cellphone which he uploaded to the man's numbered case file, checked his other organs, found him fit as a fiddle, and pronounced him dead from a single 9mm gunshot wound to the head. There had been a lot of those today. Most of them had been head traumatized, and it had resulted in their immediate deaths. Mr. Stokes, if anything, was a good shot. In fact, Dr. Yong figured him to be an ace with highly accurate and deadly aim. He must have been a student of anatomy, because his body shots were savvy. The man's heart area was hit in several places by perfectly aimed bullets shot during Yancy Stoke's deadly accurate rage. He sewed the man up, cleaned his skin, and placed him in a labeled body bag. In most cases, body bags were not used, but in mass homicides

like this one, there were simply not enough tables and movable slabs for all of these bodies, so bags were the only choice the coroner had. As crazy as Dr. Yong was about sex with women each evening, he was totally respectful of his clients. In fact, he suffered mentally for what they had gone through. He sympathized in his mind with their spouses and siblings. He often caressed their shoulders and foreheads, saying, "I am so sorry this happened to you," as he worked on them. Chen took it very personally which was totally to his credit as a professional and a human being.

## 5

At the Gazette, Brenda Gardner was busy with her notes, typing frantically for both the newspaper article as well as her approaching TV news slot concerning the mass murders. The news room was frantic. People were calling relatives, gleaning stories and anecdotes about the dearly departed for human interest stories and short bits to be inserted here and there between short yet highly focused comments on the lives of the victims. The trick was to maintain total homage and veneration concerning each one of the innocent victims who had lost their lives in the evening's mayhem. In the beginning, she typed,

They had thought this would be an evening to remember. For most it was an evening they might afford once or twice a year, or, for some, once in a lifetime, because Small's European and American Cuisine was not cheap. In fact, it might be the most expensive restaurant in five surrounding counties.

Thus, Sammy and Mabel Perkins put on their best clothes before heading toward Small's for their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. She wore the best of her jewelry, and Sam even bought a thirty-three dollar tie for the occasion. They were not disappointed, the rib eye was truly outstanding. Moist. Easy to chew. Delicious. By the time they were done, they not only were satisfied, but dead.

Like the Perkins, the Browns were celebrating a special occasion. It was their daughter's twenty-first birthday. They had feasted on duck with sweet sauce surrounded by aromatic fruits and vegetables. All of them agreed the food was the best they had ever tasted. Unfortunately, it was their last meal. When it was over they were sprawled upon the floor where the madly firing guns of Yancy Stokes had instantly felled them.

Detective Steve Branch confided in me that it was a case where a conceal carry law might have prevented most of the deaths. Mr. Branch said that just one armed person might have spelled the difference between all of these deaths and just a few of them. The trouble was that everyone in the place was purposely disarmed by the owners who demanded that the establishment always be a no gun restaurant. Mr. Brown's Smith and Wesson was locked in his car trunk, because he knew that no one was allowed in with a weapon. Today, knowing what happened, he would have chosen his place of celebration far more carefully, and it would have saved his life as well as the lives of his family. As usual, hindsight is 20/20. Who could blame Mr. Brown.

Even his favorite TV star, Captain Kirk of the fantastic USS Enterprise, had been second guessed on many of his hazardous assignments regularly resulting in the loss of life for many of his crew members. This was no different, and it was certainly nothing to be ashamed of, since no one would have guessed that a mad man would violate the restaurant's gun code in such a violent and unfair manner. It had never happened before and would probably never happen again. For the Brown's and more than one hundred additional victims, it was simply a case of being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

The Editor topped her story with tersely dramatic headlines stating,

“MASS MURDER AT SMALL'S ELITE RESTAURANT—178 DEAD.”

## 6

The television set in the Siteman home glared across the room. Billie Siteman, their father, had been murdered at Small's European and American Cuisine. His wife and two kids were watching the screen intently.

“Shut up, kids,” Faye Siteman said. “I want to see this.”

The camera surveyed the outside of Small's restaurant. The glass windows were shattered and smoke stains ran like darkening ass wipes over the bricks.

Brenda Gardner said, “Small's is where the murders took place. Unfortunately, as you can see, the restaurant had been partly burned down when a responding police car flipped into the plate glass window, spiraled over the tables inside and burst into flames. This, of course, made matters even worse for those inside, some of whom might still have been alive.” The camera shot a close up of Ms Gardner. “Police say this is one of the largest mass murders in history, not only here, but nationwide and worldwide.” A shot of the local social security office was followed by a closeup of Samantha Roberts, a spokesman for Family Services. “Samantha Roberts, a spokesman for Family Services in our city, says that it is yet unknown whether or not the perpetrator, Yancy Stokes, was upset that his Obama Care insurance would not pay for life-saving medical procedures. What we do know is that his doctor had just told him he would die soon, because Obama Care would not allow the doctor to perform an operation that might cure him. In addition, a piece of paper in Mr. Stokes wallet clearly stated he was at Small's Restaurant to exact revenge.

“I know that newspapers are speculating that Mr. Stokes went on his shooting spree when he was denied medical care,” Samantha Roberts said, “and the investigators seem to have direct evidence for that.”

“The government has been mum on attempts to pin any of the recent gun play by those denied medical care on government corruption. The government's position is that rules against providing medical care which used to be approved before Obama Care went into effect but were no longer weren't causing these outbursts. The government said that accusations that Obama Care in any way contributes to violent outbursts were premature. When asked about this,

presidential adviser and press officer, Dale Mellon, said in the white house, that 'we have no comment on these allegations,' so the presidency and congress are still keeping mum on this subject," Gardner reported. "That's about what we expect from our government."

Cut to the City Morgue.

"The morgue is having to store the over one hundred bodies of the victims of this tragic mass murder in a refrigerated room. They are zipped neatly inside body bags instead of using the morgue's twelve retractable body slabs as there are just too many bodies for the number of available slabs. Dr. Chen Yong who is the coroner told me, 'I am doing whatever I can to speed up the process, and I want to assure our citizens that the bodies of their loved ones are being treated with absolute reverence and respect.' Meanwhile, investigations of the alleged mass murderer have revealed no diaries, statements, or notes as to what his motives might have been with the exception of the note in his wallet. What we do know is that the suspect had just been told by his doctor that he had a terminal illness and that normal treatment had been denied by both the government and the insurance carrier. A spokes person for the tea party told me that these are euphemisms for the death squad that the party has warned about. It seems that the tea party may be quite correct on this."

"Where's daddy?" Chelsea asked.

"Shhh. It's not over."

"This is Brenda Gardner signing off."

"Daddy's not there," Bryson said. "That means nobody at the TV station gives a shit."

"Yea," Chelsea said. "We are just trash to them."

"That's not true, dear," their mother said. "There's over one hundred dead and even more who are wounded. That's why they aren't going into the names. There's too many of them. No one else's relatives were mentioned either, and big wigs were dying in there along with your daddy."

"If it had been President Obama dying, then they'd have mentioned him," Bryson said.

"Yea, that's true," his mother said. "It's a good thing he wasn't."

## 7

In a corner of the city, a group of tea party members held their regular weekly protest. They came to stand in front of a major hospital with signs which were stapled onto sticks so they could hold them over their heads for people to view and read. Their signs proclaimed, "AMERICA DEAD BROKE!", "ROBBER OBAMA!", "PRO BANKSTER OBAMA!", "MEDICARE DEATH SQUADS!", and "THE ONLY GOVERNMENT PLAN IS TO KILL YOU!"

A leader stood up to address the group.

"Hello, my friends. We are gathered together as usual to proclaim our right to survive!" Brad Majors said to the tea party membership and their colorful signs of protest. "Government assigned death squads are already changing the way Americans are ladled out what is left of today's slim pieces of health care. After



Obama Care, all we have left to us are these tiny shoddy remnants of our once great health system. Everything we once had has been reduced to a totally inferior health service,” Brad Majors said. “Now, our brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, grand parents, sons and daughters are dying but cannot get into hospitals, because Obama Care's death squads won't approve treatment for them, because they are either too old or not qualified for the procedure which the corrupt insurance companies now deem unacceptable any longer. It seems so strange, because just before Obama Care took over all of these procedures were acceptable. But now? Now, things have changed, my friends. Now, whenever you take your loved ones to a doctor in this building, he diagnoses them, then instead of treating them, he reads a sheet of paper to them explaining how that procedure is no longer on the approved list, because of its expense and a thousand other reasons that make no sense at all.

“Your loved ones are out in the cold all alone. No health care. No nothing. They are just supposed to go home and die!

“This was not what the law's backers promised us. They promised us excellent care. They said it would be the same care we had gotten before Obama Care was passed. Is going home to die the humane face of the Obama presidency? Is going home to die a feature of Democratic Party hospitality? Is it also a twin plank in the Republican Party's National Platform? The plank of death? Well, I don't know how to answer that. I don't think either party ever expected this to happen, but we are here, anyway. Not one of us can doubt that Obama Care has become a death sentence for millions of Americans.”

“My friends, are you going to put up with this insult to your families and friends?”

“No!” a man shouted.

“Damned right we're not!” another yelled.

“We're going to stand up and fight this time!” David Meadows bellowed.

“My friends, we see on TV and in newspapers how many heart broken people have shot our fellow citizens out of frustration over the death of their closest loved ones who were callously sent to their homes to quietly die. Is that what now passes for medical care in America and will continue to be passed off on to us in the future generation to generation until we forget how things used to be?”

“No!” the crowd shouted.

“Obama Care is bull shit!” a woman yelled. “We deserve better! One heck of a lot better.”

“I know. I know,” Brad said. “You are frustrated. You paid thousands of dollars, and you know now that in some cases you are going to get nothing but your deaths handed to you.

“You and I have been crucified on the cross of insurance profits. You and I have been taken for a ride, and it is a ride to the cemetery, which is the house of the dead, and not a ride to the hospital and the bonafide treatments that you were originally promised. Now, you are just supposed to give up the struggle and die. Instead of trying to save you, you will do your dying in your own bed and not in a hospital ward. They say it is the new humanitarian way. They also say there are too many sick and old people, too many poor to be treated. Why? They weren't left out of the law that forces them to buy insurance. They were only left out in the

cold by this new practice that allows the insurance companies to raise their prices and then reduce their services!

“It’s just plain wrong, folks! We must not condone this predatory insurance corruption for another minute! We are human beings! Do not treat us as bad children in need of punishment when we come to the doctor for help.

“We’ve paid in advance for services they promised we would receive but, when push came to shove, these companies bugged out on us, leaving us high and dry with no medical or hospital coverage whatever! None!”

“It’s wrong, I tell you,” a man shouted. “It is just plain ignorant of them to send us to our deaths without treating us!”

“You bet it’s wrong,” Brad Majors said. “In fact, there’s nothing much wronger in America than Obama Care. It’s not care at all. Instead, it’s zero care. You ought to be scared to death. In fact, you ought to start calling it by its real name which is *Obama Scare!* You heard me! *Obama Scare!*”

Several policemen and guards assigned to cover the demonstration laughed along with the crowd. Obama Scare sounded just about right. To the tea party, the government had indeed become one of the scariest institutions ever known to mankind. It had plenty of money for several wastrel wars based on lies and faulty intelligence, plenty of money for large international bankers in Europe, having spent trillions and trillions of dollars for both, but none for the medical care it had promised to us and to our loved ones!” Brad Major yelled. “We are not dogs to be put to sleep in a veterinarian’s shack because we are old, especially after we purchased health insurance. We are not dogs to be put down. We are human beings. We are loved ones to be cherished and cared for. The least we ought to have expected from a legitimate government was for them fulfilling their promises to each and every one of us! We want the insurance we were promised at the moment we made our payment! We want what they honestly owe us in accordance with their contract with us to provide us with health care!”

After more speeches, their leaders joined everyone there in picketing the hospital.

## 8

Marcy Adams had breast cancer. She had received several minor surgeries. They hadn’t stopped her cancer process. Her tumors seemed hungry for her personal human food stuffs. They metastasized like hungry ants scratching around for left over meat. They poked their horrid little beaks into all parts of her limpid system and tore away her life.

All the while she was seeing doctors, Marcy and her husband Ralph Adams were told that there were hundreds of treatments that could be used, but for one excuse or another the government’s Obama Care program would not approve them.

“You mean we have this great national affordable health care system that we are paying hundreds of dollars for each month, but their gate keepers won’t approve Marcy’s cancer treatment?” Ralph asked the cancer specialist.

“Yes, but it’s not the government’s fault. The insurance companies never approve cancer treatments for patients as advanced as Marcy’s, even if there’s a tiny chance they might work.”

“Why is that?” Marcy asked. She squeezed Ralph’s hand. She couldn’t believe she was being denied any and all treatments for the disease that was ravishing her life. For a full year, the cancer had sucked all of her energies away. It had induced horrific pain. Now, the cancer was lodging itself inside many of her organs.

“They say that there’s not enough money,” Dr. Samuel Worthington told the Adams. “In addition, the insurance companies are guaranteed a hefty little profit for your care, but only if they follow these limited guidelines.”

“I see,” March said. “So we are being cheated.”

“Cheated?” Dr. Samuel Worthington asked. “No, you are not being cheated at all. It’s just the way things are. You are being treated exactly as everyone else in America is being treated. It’s right here in our treatment guides that everyone is treated exactly the same. It is your right as a patient to receive only the approved treatments. These policies have always been subject to changes.”

“But they won’t approve any treatments. We want to know why not?”

Dr. Samuel Worthington looked at her with a great deal of sympathy. “I know it seems cruel, but the system has found that people with your stage of this illness cannot be helped except in the most rare cases. The possibility of a positive outcome would be less than one percent. That’s not enough to warrant the expense for either the insurance carrier or the government. I would personally like to give you that treatment, because I could profit from it. However, it’s out of the question. My hands are tied by the rules of Obama Care.”

“My wife wants to live, Dr. Worthington, and there are still treatments that could save her. We want you to give them to her,” Mr. and Mrs. Adams protested. “Everyone else gets them.”

“No, they don’t. Ever since Obama Care, the old treatments have been stopped, because they are so generally ineffective,” Dr. Worthington explained. He wondered why it was so difficult to get people to understand these things. “We can’t go against the guidelines, because, in the past, these other methods didn’t statistically work out well. We can only provide treatments that have a reasonable expectation of saving people including Marcy. At this stage, nothing much helps, so the costs of such procedures are wasted in her case.”

“Our neighbor had treatments right up to the end,” Ralph Adams said.

“Yes, but that was before Obama Care. And your neighbor probably died anyway. Now, the procedures are limited. Marcy is still being cared for, but her condition is considered hopeless at this point. And I agree. It is quite hopeless.”

The Adams got up and left.

“I’m sorry, dear,” Ralph said.

“I wanted to be treated.”

“If it’s any consolation, Marcy, I’ll kill these bastards. I promise you that.”

“But I’ll be dead, Ralph. So, it won’t do me any good.”

Ralph kissed her.

“Without you, I don’t want to live, anyway,” Ralph said. “But believe me. I’ll take care of business later, because if you die I’ll shoot the bastards.”

Marcy's husband sat by her bed hour upon hour. He was always there, but today was different. Dr. Worthington had told them that Marcy had only a few hours left. So, Ralph called the kids and told them to come. He sat close by and held her hand. He could feel her beginning to pass to the other side. Marcy Adams was already becoming cold to his touch. Their two children, Nancy and Robert, were there in the room. They came to her bedside to speak with her again and again, and each time, their consoling words seemed to placate her.

"I want all of you to promise me you will remember how I raised you when I'm gone and conduct your lives properly in my honor," Marcy said. "I would have loved to have been with you longer, but that's not going to be possible now."

"I cannot believe they won't treat you other than give you pain pills for this, mom," her son, Robert, said.

"Don't worry about me, Robert," Marcy said, to her son, "because I'm accepting my fate. We all have to die sometime."

Robert was twenty-five years old, and the tears came from his eyes, letting her know that her death was painful to him.

"I know you love me. Now, show it by accepting fate. We all die, son. Please don't let this destroy your faith in the goodness of the world. That would only increase the loss I have suffered. I want you to be happy and productive, to have children, and raise them the same way I raised you, Robert, with love and kindness. I know you will do that for me."

"Yes, mom," Robert said.

Her husband, Ralph Adams, bent over and kissed Marcy's forehead. "We have really good kids, mom," he said.

"I know, dear. When it came to our children, we most certainly did something right in our lives."

Marcy looked at her children and smiled.

"Listen, guys, I will be up there with Jesus, looking down upon you. Everything you do down here, just remember this, that I will be there with you," Marcy said. "I won't ever desert you. I promise."

It seemed trite to Nancy, but it also seemed the right thing to say. She had loved her mom for all twenty-three years she had lived with her, and she'd never known her mother to lie to her. She also could never remember a time when Marcy was unable to be with her in times when she needed her mom's counseling. Those days were now coming to an abrupt close. Nancy knew her life would soon experience an abrupt change.

"How will I live without you, mom?" Nancy asked. Tears rolled down her cheeks.

"Oh, you'll make do, Nancy," her mother said. "We have always made do. You will survive me and live a very good life. And, like I told you, I'll be right here with you, from up there just as I am now. Just because you can't see me doesn't mean I'm not with you. I will be with you always, dear. I want you to believe this."

In a matter of minutes, their familiar matriarch was gone. When she crossed over Marcy had slipped from life into eternity so fast that none of them were even aware of the moment in which she crossed the path into eternity. Her eyes

remained open just as when she talked with them a few seconds before, only in the very next moment she no longer breathed. There was no dramatic change to indicate her passing. In fact, it took several minutes for them to realize Marcy had actually taken the exit ramp out of their little world of mistakes and joys. What clued them in was how she lay there so quietly and her eyes never blinked at them. They just stared ahead like they always had, and they eventually noticed how her breathing had stopped. Other than that, she looked as alive as ever.

“She’s gone,” Mr. Adams said.

## 10

Marcy’s family was not large. She only had one brother whom the children knew affectionately as Uncle Dave. He was a good looking man. He was unmarried, a confirmed bachelor, and they all knew that he was gay which was all right with them. They still loved him. He was theirs. Marcy was laid out in her open coffin for all to see. Her friends from church and from work came and went during viewing times. Other than that, it was mostly her husband, her two children, and Dave. When the time came, Minister Frank Long gave a nice eulogy.

“My friends, we are always sad when a loved one passes into the other world where God awaits all of us. I like to celebrate the life of the person who has passed on rather than dwell on their suffering in the last days of their lives, because we all live and therefore we are each of us slated to pass away to the other side.

“The Lord tells us that we are allotted only one death. It is a blessing that we die only once in our life and that we never have to experience the pain of death ever again.

“I see the sadness in this room every time I gaze into your eyes, but I want to let you know that Marcy is still with us. She is up there with her Lord in everlasting life. She is right now looking down upon all of you. Marcy is right here listening to every word I am saying to you, because she is not the type of mother who would ever leave her children. So, I know she is listening. Because you are close together and listening, Marcy is right here with us, also. She hears what we are saying at this very moment, and, as your life continues, know that she will continue to be inside you from up there in heaven above you. Marcy looks down upon us wherever we go in life, going everywhere we go, listening to our conversations, smiling inside us, crying whenever we cry, and laughing whenever we laugh. Mothers like Marcy shall never leave us. We know this in our hearts, and our hearts do not lie about these things. This heart of ours is the strongest organ in our bodies, and the heart is there inside each one of us to tell us the truth as we proceed down our life’s road, because the heart can never lie to us. Understand me. There isn’t one particle inside of our hearts that can lie without us knowing it as a lie. Our heart is our conscience and our guide. My heart and your heart is merging right now with Marcy who is still alive inside us. She is going to follow each of us wherever we go in our lives as we leave her funeral and go about our business.

“She is in eternal peace. She never died, because she believed in Christ, and as John three sixteen tells us, “whoever believes in Him, meaning Jesus Christ, shall

have ever lasting life.” Marcy is not dead. She believed in Him. She is in the arms of God at this very moment, just as all of us are promised who believe in Jesus when we are alive.

“Shall we pray?”

“Lord, we have enjoyed the grace of having lived with your daughter, Marcy, and we rejoice in how you have taken her into your arms and protected her just as you did when she was here. When we cross that great divide, Marcy will greet us as we enter the streets of gold where she now resides and that is exactly where she will welcome us into our spiritual eternity. It is the same place where she now enjoys her own eternal gift of life forever. Amen.”

Marcy’s family didn’t buy a single word of it. She was dead, and they were pissed. It was Obama Care that killed Marcy, and they all knew it.

## 11

Barb Smothers and Rod Lancaster were regular listeners to short wave and Internet radio “Indie News Shows.” They were committed to all of these independent or Indie commentaries concerning news happenings all over the world. The tea party members like Barb and Rod mistrusted the monopoly media giants who were owned and operated for the benefit of banks and related corporatists. They listened to Glenn Beck, Fox News, Alex Jones, and read Breitbart News, The Huffington Report, and Drudge Report. They had little interest in NBC, ABC, MsNBC, CBS and those whom they considered the other useless and lying trolls of the American news establishment. These news giants were the enemies of America’s constitution who posed as supporters of it but had done everything possible to destroy it.

Instead, the giant *presstitutes* were known by tea baggers like Barb Smothers and Rod Lancaster and their associates as *sell outs*, *traitors*, and *idea monopolists*. These were highly overpaid corrupt people who were in the business of propagandizing the world at large. They were merely corporatist entertainers who pretended to be disinterested journalists. They were not disinterested. They were not objective. They were subjective and manipulating corporatist shills who had purposely merged journalism with entertainment. They were monopolists who worked for those who owned all of the frequencies through which they broadcast their lies into the homes and cars of millions of passively massaged listeners and viewers. These passive audiences had been trained by years of TV and radio to turn to certain approved channels and frequencies where they were spoon fed what the government wanted them to know. The news commentators even apologized for government mistakes in an effort to support the corruption that congress, the presidency, and the courts handed out on a daily basis.

Barb Smothers and Rod Lancaster and most of the Tea Baggers considered themselves as the *true patriots* who were interested in maintaining laws underwritten by the United States Constitution. The problem as they saw it was that the government was dedicated to overthrowing the constitution and to defeating all guarantees of freedom, because it had become a government of the world’s most greedy power hungry thugs. So, they joined with the tea party. They

wanted to change the world. Instead, Glenn Beck usurped the entire movement. He had grabbed its reins and had taken almost total control of its energies as its default spokesman. In doing so, he transformed the tea party into a vehicle for the preservation of corruption for the elitists whose main goal was the destruction of America and the constitution. In short, he made it into his own personality and caused it to become a black flag movement for those who owned everything and wanted to keep it all for themselves, because they allowed Beck to control their thoughts and to do the work of the rich and greedy. The tea party became a brilliant operation that stood up for the international bankers who were the actual government and pretended at the same time to represent the people of America which was not true at all, because Americans were merely pandered to and not really considered as important in the party's rhetoric.

At any rate, the tea party proved its power by standing up before the microphones of the false representatives in Washington who were bankrupting the American people while enriching the bankers and corporatists who owned almost everything. They appeared at speakers forums in many if not all of the states, standing up and stopping the speeches of representatives and senators with questions about overspending, payments to banks, acceptance of donations for campaign expenses and how these things affected their votes in Washington. With Glenn Beck, Rush Limbaugh, and others leading and waving the American flag, they at least became the first force for change in America since the 1960's anti-war movements. They masqueraded as common citizens against the banks and corporations, even while as false conservatives, they were actually false supporters of the greed oriented system which had caused these bad things to happen to America all along.

"We need to protest Obama Care," Barb Smothers shouted through the microphone to the assembled crowd of tea party protesters, "Because the system will totally destroy the independence of doctors, pharmaceutical companies, hospitals, and related persons. Once the insurance companies have control over every consumer needing medical care, they will begin to overpower the traditional manner in which doctors were able to perform what was needed for patients. Under this government mandated care, the insurance companies are right now undermining our rights by establishing what I call their corporatist *death squads*. These evil people will insure that millions of us are given substandard care instead of what an independent physician would prescribe to cure diseases. This is precisely why protesters whose relatives have died from these death squads are now shooting up innocent citizens in their misguided revenge plots against not only the government and insurance companies, but against the American people themselves, people who had nothing to do with the back room decisions to take their medical choices away from them. I relinquish the microphone."

Another week, another tea party meeting. At this one, Lucy Daniels came to the microphone to say, "I support what Barb Smothers told us last week. That was when Barb told us how we are indeed caught inside a monstrous governmental dilemma of death wherein our loved ones are now being mistreated by what we now know as Obama Care. This is because Obama Care, as it is called by most, is a very deadly program. In fact, it is immoral. It affects you and me, our family, our friends. We are all under attack.

“Our mortality is hanging from the creaking door hinges leading into every physician’s office in this land and trailing from his back door into the insurance board rooms where profit is their only motive. Instead of the forked stick and serpent of Hippocrates’ logo in the ancient world, we now see only dollar bills. These paper dollars represent profit oriented medical decisions for the benefit of insurance companies. Today’s decisions by a physician are not for the benefit of their patients, meaning you and your loved ones, those who are supposed to be their clients but are only their under insured shills. They are the ones who now suffer from this program of medical isolation and lack of care which the insurance magnets have sadistically engineered for us.

“We, as patients of Obama Care, have been tossed under the bus. We languish in pain beneath the insurance company’s crushing tires of indifference as we are squashed down into the pavement by its heavy passing weight. In the midst of their cruelty, life passes us by, because our diseases go untreated. We are expected to remain silent while this happens to us out of political correctness.

“The tea party will never remain quiet over the slaughter of our people under the heavy weight of death that Obama Care dishes out to our friends, business acquaintances, and relatives. Instead, we pledge to scream to the hilltops, to picket hospitals, to place YouTube videos of our discontent all over the web of increasing social networks to alert the world of how much we actually care.

“Yesterday, I attended the funeral of my neighbor who died on the cross of Obama Care. Her name was Marcy Adams. She lived on the same block. I grew up with her. She was a wonderful lady with two wonderful children. But Obama Care told her that she was not worth saving, that so many persons with her condition died no matter what treatments were offered that it would be a waste under the present system to even treat her. Treatment of Marcy, it seems, was detrimental to the profit incentive.

“The insurance planners, you see, never worked for Marcy. Instead, they worked for unseen people inside the hierarchy who deemed people like Marcy to be expendable just so long as it brought them higher profits. She was only one of many whom they saw fit to toss under the bus whenever they saw that it would benefit them to do so in the name of their corporatist greed, so that the insurance companies might cram a few more pennies into the bulging pockets of their investors.

“Therefore, people like Marcy Adams have to die earlier than they would have under the pre-Obama Care system. Now, inside the inhumanity of the death squads of the federal nightmare we live within, we must die so that people like Donald Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney or capitalists like them might enrich themselves from their investments and continue to capitalize on our deaths. To do that, sometimes a Marcy Adams has to die. She had been tossed under the passing busses of a thousand points of corporatist profit, the same way our soldiers had their arms and legs blown off so that Halliburton investors wouldn’t go home penniless without the Iraq War filling their illicit coffers.

“I ask you *what has America come to?* In our short lives, we have watched our nation’s representatives vote down our rights with the Patriot Act, NDAA, and other anti-constitutional laws. Did you ever ask yourself how a law could be passed that short-circuited your own guarantees to life, liberty, and freedom that



were guaranteed to you by the constitution for over two hundred years? Wasn't that document passed in order to stop congress from passing laws that denied those guarantees? Yet it only took congress fifteen minutes to destroy the constitution in the passage of the Patriot Act which was thousands of pages long and which no one in congress was allowed to read. The way it was done simply takes my breath away. I mean Adolph Hitler and Joseph Stalin must be standing proud every time the representatives and senators enter the capitol building. The fascist-communist infrastructure of those sessions up there that regularly toss all of us under the federal bus are the perfected fruition of the anti-democratic fantasies that fester inside the corrupted minds of every two bit dictator on this planet. The houses of congress paint themselves in the colors of corruption as they regularly vote against our guarantees of fairness in their support of the growing powers of the federal government in its reach toward higher taxes and its desires for centralized expansionism just as long as it continues to benefit their corporate cronies and make them wealthier than ever while they ride roughshod over the backs of the working poor."

## 12

After the meeting, Barb Smothers and Ron Lancaster went home as they always did. Home was their shared apartment. Although they believed in the sanctity of marriage, they had refused to take the plunge. Instead, they lived in what many tea party members would call a sinful nature, unblessed by God. Barb and Ron sort of believed in the religious sanctity of marriage themselves, but they were also quite happy with what they were doing. Besides, they hadn't yet had any children. If a child were dropped into their laps, they'd sit down and seriously consider marriage. As for now, they were okay with simply sleeping together in their apartment behind their closed doors. Besides, everyone else was doing it. To them, it was not a problem.

They watched a video of their protest meeting on television, arm in arm. There was Barb speaking to the audience. There was Ron, also as he gave his own speech to the group. Bob was saying, "We are a great movement. We stand for the constitution. We stand for independent businessmen and professionals who are college educated people, for millions of struggling high school graduates who cannot afford outrageous college tuition as well, and for everyone who gets up in the morning and trudges to the workplace and puts in a full day's work for a full day's pay and gets taxed to death for his efforts. Nonetheless, we are proud of America. Our nation is strong, and we want to keep it that way. We want the international bankers out of our government. This is America. We do not live in Europe. We live here, in the states, where a constitution delivers unto us a set of freedoms guaranteed to keep each of us a free person forever. But that can only happen with low taxes that allow us to keep our earnings so that we can save some of our paychecks for retirement, for the purchase of a home, for food and clothing to insure that we have the right stuff to be good workers who are not afraid to help our bosses to earn an honest dollar and to turn around and share it with their workers. We believe in the concepts of free enterprise with all of our

hearts and minds. We stand for freedom. Our freedom. And we intend to see it through to the end. This is not a fly-by-night party, and we are not quitters. We are here to stay to the end!"

Barb looked at Rob.

"You were great, dear," she said to him.

"So were you, hon," Rob assured Barb.

They touched and kissed. It was a good relationship. Both of them were respectable. Each believed in the good life that could be earned through hard work and loyalty to their company, their nation, and their people.

That night, they showered before bed, then lay together and cuddled.

"I love you," Barbara said.

Robert smiled.

"I love you even more," he said.

They kissed as they fell into a deep sleep nestled within each other's arms.

## 13

Bob Wheeling had been scrimping to make ends meet. It was always difficult, but what happened today made it even worse. He had been told that his company was establishing a new policy that no one could work more than 29 hours per week due to changed United States health insurance laws which made it prohibitive to employ people longer than that. In addition, there would be no medical benefits provided to employees on account of other Obama Care regulations. The company apologized for any inconvenience, and it said that anyone needing to resign could check with the human resources office.

At home, Ginny knew something was wrong just by looking into her husband's eyes. "What is it, Bob? I can see something has upset you. Let's sit down and discuss it together and get it off your chest." She knew Bob was a good man, and she loved him dearly. He had sired her three children, Mildred, Robert Junior, and Phyllis. They were twelve, fourteen, and fifteen respectively, and they could not ask for a finer family of kids.

"My work is being cut back and medical insurance is being done away with next month," Bob said. "It's a new policy companywide."

"Why?"

"They aren't making money, Ginny. That's why. Also, it's the new Obama Care medical insurance. The company won't have the money to pay for it, so all they can do is limit us to twenty-nine hours or less. All overtime is also forbidden, because it would give us more than the twenty-nine hours that would force the company to pay medical insurance for us."

"Oh, my God, Bob. We can't pay our bills as it is, and Phyllis has a heart murmur. We'll never be insured."

"Lacy at Human Resources told me that we could be insured. The new law makes insurance companies take everyone including those with previous medical conditions like the one that Phyllis has. However, there's one catch."

"There's always one catch. What is this one, Bob?"

“It would cost seven hundred and eight-three dollars each month for the insurance. With my cut in wages that would come to over one thousand dollars a month in lost income for us.”

“Oh, honey, I’m so sorry. But we will survive somehow.”

“I’ll get a second job.”

“That’s right. I’ll get a job also. We’ll make it.”

After three months, Ginny had a job at the grocery store as a cashier. She worked four hours per day at eight dollars and fifty cents an hour. Every month, she was earning two hundred and twenty dollars. However, the government was taking thirty-seven dollars back for itself, leaving her with one hundred and eighty-three dollars take home pay. That barely made up for Bob’s pay cut and left nothing for health insurance.

Soon, the bills were piling up. Ginny got more work at the grocery store giving her an extra one hundred dollars a month which brought in two hundred and fifty-seven dollars after taxes. It was still not enough.

By the end of the year, their house was in the hands of the bank, and the family was out on the street. At first, they slept in their car and used restrooms to wash up. The children hid their family situation from teachers and friends out of embarrassment.

The place they slept was in a small portion of woods just outside of town. It was on property that was owned by their family. Bob had gotten several camping tents so that the girls could use one and the boy another to keep them separated. Bob and Ginny slept in a third tent. Eventually, Bob rigged up a shower using buckets that could be placed in the sunlight, then used for their warm water. All in all it wasn’t too bad.

“It’s a little like homesteading,” Bob told Ginny and his kids. “It’s tough, but it’s not something our nation’s ancestors didn’t have to put up with. Plenty of Sooners out in Oklahoma did it. So did Daniel Boone and a million others like him. I see it as a history lesson to us.”

“Yea, one that I’ll never forget, right dad?” Robert Junior asked.

“Well, yes. Right, son. But we still have our family. We can be proud of that. We are going to stick together through thick and thin,” Bob said.

Ginny turned around to hide the tears of remorse that streamed from her eyes. She didn’t want the children to see her like this. She had to be strong, so she wiped away her tears, and turned to the family and said, “Your father is a good man. Always remember that. But the country is in bad shape, and his company went through hard times. It’s not his fault, and it’s not ours. And we are not alone.”

A few months later one of Ginny’s uncles acquired a trailer for them to live in. He had it hauled to his small retirement farm. They all pitched in to restore it to a livable condition. They replaced the floors and parts of the walls and Bob fixed the refrigerator and stove. It was box fourteen feet wide and sixty feet long, but it gave them three bedrooms which were enough for privacy for everyone provided the two girls roomed together.

## 14

Ralph Adams spent several days resting at his home. As he did so, he remembered Dr. Sam Worthington and the hundreds of yapping mouths in various parts of the insurance company that refused to provide his wife, Marcy Adams, with the treatment she needed in order to have that minuscule chance she deserved to survive her cancer.

“No, Mr. Adams, we cannot treat her anymore. It says right here that it is forbidden. Very few ever survived cancer at her advanced stage, so it is unreasonable to waste scarce medical care money on something that has no chance to work. We used to do that, but the statistics show that it was quite rare for it to reverse the cancer’s outcome.”

“But she has a right to be treated so she at least has a chance.”

“No, sir. She doesn’t. It only works in five percent of the cases.”

“Maybe she’s in that five percent,” Ralph Adams protested. “We both are agreed that we want to try it.”

“I’m sorry, sir. It is not authorized.”

So that was that. Hours and hours of arguing and filling out forms had not helped. Marcy went to the doctors again and again, received the same answer over and over, and was told to just go home and accept fate. So, that was what she did. No one in the entire health care system would budge an inch to give her the chance to live.

“You’ve decided to kill Marcy, then,” Ralph told Dr. Worthington.

“I’m sorry you feel that way. I’m not the person making the decisions here. Others are doing that for me. It’s no longer up to me to treat her. I wanted to, but I was over-ridden. You really need to speak with your congressmen. They were the ones who set this up.”

## 15

Ralph Adams had made his decision. Marcy was not the type of wife to go into the dark night without a struggle and Ralph supported her on that. He knew what he had to do that might even things out for himself and Marcy as well as for the American people. The decision was tough. It meant sacrificing himself on the cross of justice. He would give his life for Marcy’s. He knew it was crazy and half-cocked, but he liked it anyway. All in all, come hell or high water, Ralph Adams was willing to do just that. Today was his Omaha Beach. Ralph would make Americans pay for what had been done in not treating Marcy Adams, his beloved wife.

## 16

Three days after Marcy died, Ralph awoke, cleaned the house, and drove to the local gun shop. There, he made a few purchases including two Beretta PX4 Storms. Both items were well constructed and very compact semi automatic hand

guns. He also purchased thirty shell clips holding ten bullets each for a total of three hundred projectiles. He bought three boxes of one hundred shells which was enough to pack all of his new clips with the ammunition he was going to require. As soon as he left the gun store, Ralph drove to the park, sat his bag of purchases on a well hidden picnic table deep inside the woods, and filled his shiny new clips. Then, he prayed and went back home where he would live his last day on earth in peace and remembrance.

After breakfast of steak and eggs, Ralph called his son and daughter from his cell phone.

"Hello, Robert," he said. "How are you holding up?"

"I'm not real happy right now, dad," Robert said.

"None of us are, son."

"I'd like to kill some people," Robert told his father.

"I would, too, but you don't need to do it. If anything needs to be done, Robert, I will do it. I love you, son."

"I know, dad," Robert said. "And know this. I love you even more, sir."

They hung up, and he called his daughter.

"Hi, dad," she answered. "What can I do for you?"

"Nothing. Just be happy, Nancy," Ralph told her.

"Seems a bit to close to what happened to mom for that, dad," Nancy told him. "Every couple of hours, I started to cry again. I'm going to miss mom, dad. It will take me a while to get over this, if I ever do. That's for sure."

"It'll get better, Nancy," he told her. "Whatever happens, just know that I love you. It's all about love, you know."

"I know, dad."

"Have a nice day, Nancy."

He hung up. Now he was ready. After a few hours, the day was nearly over, and the people were just a few hours from getting ready for dinner. The restaurants would soon be filling up, and the kitchens would soon be warm with fresh food.

## 17

Bob and Ginny Wheeling had not done well during the previous eighteen months. First, Phyllis died from her medical problems. She had not even been treated, because she had no medical insurance, and, even if she had the coverage, the insurance companies were no longer treating her disease, because they considered it incurable. A month later, their son, Robert Junior, hanged himself from a tree branch in the woods. An hour later, Ginny opened the drawer where Bob's gun was kept. She walked to the kitchen and shot her one remaining daughter and well as her husband, Bob. Then, she turned the gun on herself.

It was the biggest thing that had happened in these parts in years. The press went wild with speculation as it printed the entire story which it was rumored had even reached the president's desk in Washington, but no one knew for sure.

If it had, nothing was done about it. Obama Care just continued to kill its subscribers by not helping them.

The TV screens throughout the city suddenly flashed as they announced a breaking news event.

“Ladies and gentlemen, we have terrible news to report. One of our sister stations has been invaded by what seems to be an Obama Care terrorist. The facts are coming in rapidly, but they are still sketchy. Everyone at one of our sister stations broadcasting news on Channel 4 have been either killed or injured. A man entered their offices and studios and mass murdered many of the workers and reporters. Some of them were killed on the air as their news show was in progress. The man, whose name was Ralph Adams was protesting the lack of treatment given to his wife, Marcy who passed away this week from cancer.” Someone handed the newscaster a piece of paper. The camera flashed, and Brenda Gardner’s face suddenly appeared. “What I have been handed says that several other businesses were attacked by Mr. Adams. More than one hundred are known dead. They were shot in the same manner in which the people died at Small’s Restaurant here in town not long ago. This seems to be a copy cat crime which is occurring here and there around America as Obama Care allegedly sentences many of its patients to die of their diseases rather than to offer them what used to be standard and effective treatments and alternatives to traditional medical care in the name of efficiency and cost.” Brenda looked at the camera. Another message was handed to her live on the air. “This says that the McDonald’s restaurant close to the southern part of downtown has been shot up. More than fifty people have died there of gunshot wounds. Although it is not certain that Mr. Adams was the shooter, I think we can all assume that he will be one of those whom the authorities will be considering as a person of interest.”

A voice in the background yelled, “We have more on this story coming in now.” A new message was handed to Brenda. She paused to read it.

“An Obama Care health insurance company was hit an hour ago by a gunman. Almost one hundred persons were shot to death in the insurance carrier’s offices by a lone gunman. We are not sure who the gunman was. Things are still sketchy. I have been asked not to reveal the name of the company, until it is verified that this information is accurate and close family members have been notified.”

Another piece of paper was handed to the reporter.

“The mayor has asked that all businesses, schools, public places, stores, and homes lock their doors and place their facilities on high security lock down. The mayor asks that no one be allowed to leave any premises until it is certain that the shootings have ended. It is possible that the gunman or gunmen are still out there. No one should either enter nor leave a building until it is certain that the city is once again safe. I repeat. Wherever you are do not leave. Lock yourself in. Do not answer the door for anyone.”

The Internet was buzzing with commentaries about the mass killing in a large restaurant by an Obama Care mourner and activist as well as other cases around the nation which had captured America's news imagination. Ralph Adam's single act of revenge for the loss of his wife, Marcy, on account of Obama Care had created another such sensation. People wanted to be told by radio hosts, teachers and friends what to think about it. They also wanted someone to tell them what they should do about it. The trouble was, few takers had come forward, because the fear that Obama's government would arrest them for protesting Obama Care was hounding them. After all, they were being strip searched at airports, malls, and grocery stores. The goons of government announced day by day how they were going to stop people and grope them in their cars in order to stop the threat of terrorism, and the fools did nothing to protest. The entire nation seemed cowered by the intense hatred being spewed by the head of NSA who was seen daily at Wal-Mart overhead screens whenever they approached the check out line. There in front of them was the wicked bitch herself who headed the National Security Administration which employed one hundred and fifty thousand people and seemed powerless to do a thing to stop the shootings. It had been money spent for nothing, and all it did was to piss people off and try to scare them. She had become known to many Americans as the nation's worst hate bitch. She was easily identifiable by her neurotic and deadly eyes which seemed to pin each citizen to the wall as she stared straight through them from Wal-Mart's many HDTV screens. Her ugly mouth was telling them to watch closely what other people were doing. She also told them to report anyone whom they observed had been doing something the least bit suspicious. That included mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, teachers, or anyone else. It was as though the entire nation had succumbed to total societal insanity. The bitch pontificated over it all.

There was no cure that had been found that would stop the vicious clatter of government tongues in their ears. It seemed to be getting worse as time went on. Now, they were talking about using drones to spy on people from thirty to ninety feet in the air, using wireless rotor copters with cameras which had come down in price to as low as one hundred dollars which meant every police department could have one.

The announcements made some Americans very uncomfortable. What were they to do? If they complained they might be put on a no fly list. Wasn't it an act of terror to deny anything that Big Miss had said? Wasn't every patriotic American supposed to follow her in whatever she pronounced? What if they denied her words? Hadn't George W. Bush said to the entire world after 911, "If you are not for us, you are against us," and hadn't that very same little tin horned presidential prick also said, "If you are out there, we will come for you, find you, and stop you."

Of course, Gitmo's torture racks were still riding high inside the minds of the people even though Obama said no one was being tortured there any more, but no one believed him, because he had lied about everything else in his political career including his promise to close it down. After all, President Obama had promised an end not only to Gitmo but to the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Then, as soon as he was elected, Obama had turned counter clockwise and used his powers to prolong those wars as long as possible. Many fell asleep at night wondering if some new *Red Dawn* of government oppression might not be unleashed on them at the

domestic level. There was the haunting possibility that innocent people might be rounded up at any time under the new laws of the federal government that denied everyone a day in court before the gendarmes hauled their asses into Guantanamo, Cuba and placed them inside one of those human chicken coups where hundreds of Arabs were being kept in extremely inhumane conditions and water boarded on a daily basis. Were the Americans themselves to be next? Was that not why the tea baggers did exactly whatever the nearest cop had demanded? Were they not fearful? Probably. Things like threats to citizen safety by criminal thugs in Washington had a tendency to shut down so-called free citizens who expressed widely different ideas and views. The phrase, "If you are not for us, then you are against us," remained a fixture in many minds for years after they were first spoken. It was both a threat and a dire warning from the federal warlocks who were doing their best to destroy every sense of freedom inside the North American Continent.

People tuned in to radical independent radio and television commentators such as Drake Medvick to hear their latest take on the federal government's continuing threats to public freedom in the United States. Today, Drake was speaking on the subject of the mass killing at the restaurant several weeks before. Drake said, "If the Obama Administration didn't plan and carry out this act of terror, then it was just an outlandishly fortuitous act of murder that played right into the hands of the manipulators in Washington who have been trying to come up with one 911 black flag operation after the other in order to push the federal conspiracy to shut down public opinion and silence all of us forever. We are all under the threat of a visit to Gitmo or to some isolated and very dark cell in Poland or Turkey where torture can easily and cheaply be paid for by the FBI and CIA, and where no one will even hear about our plight nor about our torture and death at their hands. In fact, major newspapers, to whom I have provided links on my website, which include government news shills such as the infamous New York Times along with MsNBC and other purveyors of so-called truth as only they know it and have the millions of dollars needed to run these paper and electronic rags of disinformation and to fill each of us with fancy pronouncements threatening government terror against us whenever they so wish. They are well known for writing sensational stories about how we are under threat of arrest, torture, military imprisonment, murder without trial, and even rendition in torture shops outside of the United States. I am holding a group of these newspaper articles in my hands at this very moment, so don't tell me that its not true! It is absolutely provable that it is true! I have the evidence right here in my hands! And it's not like it is new to us. I have been reporting these stories about torture and the new world order and how the international banksters who live outside of America and use us as their proxy to commit acts of war costing trillions of dollars are controlling our president, congress, and senate through the nation's presently disreputable and corrupt campaign donation process. Last month, I told you the cost of the stupid and useless George W. Bush invasion and war in Iraq has cost you and I two trillion dollars, and how his useless war was based on lies about Saddam Hussein having nuclear weapons, when the government knew damn well the man didn't have a single nuke in his entire nation, because the United Nations inspector on the ground had declared Iraq to have a clean bill of health and to be completely



nuclear free. Until a few years ago, there were no nuclear weapons in all of the middle east with the exception of Israel until Pakistan and India which borders on the middle east, nations developed nuclear programs. By the way, both succeeded in developing their own nukes.

“Until then, the only nukes in the entire middle east were limited to Israel who got their nukes from the United States, and because we are so media compromised and enslaved, no one said a thing about it!

President John F. Kennedy said he was going to investigate Dimona, Israel’s nuclear reactor site to see if they had used it to manufacture nukes, and suddenly Kennedy was silenced by being shot in the head in front of all of us in Dallas. Everyone knew it was a conspiracy. Many fingers even pointed directly at the Israelis. Others pointed at Lyndon Baines Johnson, the vice president, a man who wanted to be president very badly, but the news monsters who kiss every president’s behind whenever possible wouldn’t report it without saying it wasn’t true. Did they know it wasn’t true? No. Of course not.

“Soon, Dorothy Kilgallen, a well-known reporter for the Hearst Corporation’s *New York Evening Journal* announced on a popular TV show entitled *What’s My Line?* that she had cracked the Kennedy assassination wide open and would print the story the next day. That very night she was murdered. They claimed it was a case of booze mixing with sleeping pills that accidentally killed her. Well, I can tell you that Dorothy had been mixing sleeping pills with booze for years, and it hadn’t killed her before then. Why would it do so on the night before she printed what she had discovered was the real story behind the Kennedy assassination? And what was her story? No one ever told us, even though her typed sheets on the subject and her copious notes were at her home and at the *New York Evening Journal*. Have you seen Dorothy Kilgallen’s story on who killed Kennedy? Have I? Of course not. We aren’t supposed to know.

“I can tell you this. Kennedy said he was going to print green backs and end the printing of Federal Reserve Notes which were costing the USA a fortune in unnecessary interest paid to the bankers who owned a monopoly franchise on distributing and even counterfeiting them as fractional reserve banks. Fractional reserve means the banks can loan you money that they don't even have, so it's one of the biggest scams in the nation today. John F. Kennedy had already begun printing green backs. The banks didn’t want that. Then, Kennedy was going to investigate Israel for having nuclear weapons, and suddenly, he was as dead as a door nail and America was grieving in its heart for a young handsome president who was also a father.

We were all stunned. We asked how this could happen? Then, we found out that the person responsible was a CIA agent named Lee Harvey Oswald who was handing out anti-Castro materials in a New Orleans black flag operation paid for by his Central Intelligence handlers. Lee Harvey Oswald had even traveled to Russia and lived there for several years under the orders and pay of the CIA. The Russians said they knew Oswald was a federal agent. That’s why they isolated him and didn’t talk with him. The Russians gave him the cold shoulder. He had come there for amnesty, or so he said, and Russia, being a member of the United Nations was bound by law to take in refugees like Oswald who claimed he needed asylum. So, they had to let him in.

They knew he was a CIA agent. How else would he have learned to speak Russian in the United States way before entering Russia? Did he learn Russian in school? Of course not. American schools didn't teach Russian. The CIA itself taught him Russian. That's how he knew it. They did it to send him to Moscow to spy on the Soviet Union. But what they really wanted at Langley was to use Oswald as a patsy for the murder of anyone the CIA wanted dead. He had been set up for several years for this role as a patsy. They only needed the right murder to pin it on him.

"Like I just said, they got that when they went after President Kennedy for threatening the Federal Reserve Notes and wanting to investigate Israel for having nuclear weapons. Of course, Israel had never tested a single nuclear weapon, because a single above ground test would have poisoned all of Israel. After all, Israel is a very small place. The radioactivity from a single nuclear test would have destroyed the lives of millions of people who live in Israel. That meant only one thing. That one thing was that the Israelis most likely stole those nukes from the United States of America. Either that or the government in Washington gave Israel all the nuclear weapons they presently have, which I think, by the way, is highly likely.

"The Israelis planted a false story that they had used South Africa as a testing ground for their nukes. They said they were going to share the technology with South Africa. Does South Africa have a single nuke? Of course not! If they did, they would not have ended apartheid. The western powers would have left South Africa alone on apartheid if that nation even had just one nuclear weapon. But they didn't.

"Israel lied about testing its weapons in Africa under the aegis of Johannesburg. Israel didn't need a single nuclear test. That was just a lie to throw world at large off its trail. This leaves only one place where they could have gotten pre-tested nukes and that was from the United States and in specific from the CIA, and that, my friends, is exactly where Israel got its weapons, and John F. Kennedy was opening an investigation on Israel's nuclear arming and was summarily killed for his audaciousness in that regard.

"In my personal opinion based on my extensive research in many libraries around the nation, the previous administrations gave them to Israel. The nukes in Israel were a part of our foreign policy to dominate the entire area of the middle east. Without nukes, Israel could still be invaded by the Arabs. With them, Israel is fairly safe. No one is going to invade a nearby nuclear nation. It would be instant suicide," Drake Medvick said.

"So, here we are today with the killings in the restaurant and now the additional killings at insurance companies, doctor offices, and TV stations. Now we have this story about the Wheeler family whose daughter was denied medical treatment and died, her brother hung himself, and the mother then killed her husband and her second and final daughter to save them from living in this prime western filth we call America today with all of its craziness of endless wars and Obama Care.

"I have one question to ask. We have spent one trillion dollars on the Homeland Security Agency, and if a person like Yancy Stokes or Ralph Adams can march down to the local gun store and buy whatever he needs to murder a hundred people without Homeland Security figuring it out before it happens, then why do

we even have a Homeland Security Agency at all? It doesn't do any good. They didn't figure out the Yancy Stokes killings before they happened. They missed Ralph Adams. They missed the Boston Marathon. What good are they? None! They are no good at all! So far, they have groped every groin in the United States except for the guilty groins of those people who have gone on rampages.

"So, I say, once again, it's time to shut down the National Security Agency. Because they are idiots who can't do their jobs. So why have them at all? Might as well get rid of them. Clear the boards. Fire them. They are just a big fat fraud! That's all they are!"

Drake Medvick continued on the air for three hours, then signed off. As he headed for home, he wondered how long it would be before they silenced him. Medvick knew too much, and he had one hugely amplified mouth and knew exactly how to use it. That's why they wanted to kill him. They needed him off their backs. The only trouble was that everyone in the world would know they had done it. The government didn't need that on their hands.

For now, Drake Medvick was safe. But for how much longer would that be true? That was the question.

Drake's followers asked that question over and over. They even called up on-the-air and asked him how much longer would he would be allowed to live. Medvick told them, "I don't know. But I'm alive now, and that's what counts. I might be a little too big for them to take on right now. But I'm under no illusions about them. They are pure evil. They took out Mussolini, Hitler, Yamamoto, Diem, Allende, Kennedy, Saddam Hussein, not to mention the infamous Marilyn Monroe, and others. There's nothing they won't do, and that includes killing me.

"Let me tell you this. I do not fear death as much as I fear for my country. America is being destroyed by the international banking elites of Europe who own the Federal Reserve Bank and use its fake, phony printed money against us to keep us in line. We do their bidding. If we don't, they will destroy us. You see, by owning the money system, they effectively own the entire United States of America. We are their sheep. They are our shepherd. We are a colony of the international bankers. In effect, what the banks tell us to do, we have to do. Otherwise they'd make sure our entire economy and system would fall apart. They can do it whenever they want to. They wrecked the economy in 2008, didn't they? Yes, indeed, they did. And we gave them trillions of dollars to keep their sorry behinds afloat. That's how powerful they are. Get ready, folks! It's coming! Over and out! This is Drake Medvick, coming to you live every day of the week."

## 20

Detective Steve Branch and his side kick Keven Richter were briefed by the Precinct Commander, Grant Holland, on the developing story. Holland was not certain that the butchery was over, but he expected it either was over or would be soon.

"It depends on whether or not this man who is dead at the TV station is the only threat out there," Commander Grant Holland said. "If he was the only one, he seems to have been very busy and very methodically accurate. Either way, it

seems like another Small's Restaurant killer has happened right in front of us. Again, we look like a bunch of blue clothed lazy donut stuffing pieces of shit who cannot control our own city. Ain't it a bitch! I need a new job!"

"If this keeps happening, we will all need a new job soon," Kevin Richter said. "People aren't going to tolerate this sort of thing forever."

"Like I mentioned to you many times, the answer is easy," Detective Steve Branch said, "Arm everyone. That way people can protect themselves."

"Tell it to the mayor one more time," commander Holland said. "See how long it takes for him to fire you. He's a fucking liberal through and through. You already got him fit to be tied over that statement the first time. The second is your personal career killer."

"Fine," Steve said. "Let them continue to die."

"I know. I know. But the libs aren't going to allow us to arm the people. You and I both know that."

"What if it happens again?" Detective Branch asked.

"Tough shit, I guess. Let's hope it doesn't," Holland surmised. "Now, I want you to make sure the killer is dead. Check it out. Find out if he had friends and if they are of a like mind. Then, I want a survey of all doctors in town and all funeral directors. I want to know who is supposed to die this week, who has already died, and I want all of their relatives briefed, interviewed, and reports on their god damn gun ownership on my desk in two days."

"We'll need court orders," Kevin said.

"I'll get the court orders," Holland said. "Oh, yes. I'll get them in the next hour. They will allow us to enter anywhere we deem necessary."

"Anything else?" Detective Steve Branch asked.

"Yes. I'm going to post an officer in every store that sells guns, and I want an executive order from the governor for a mandatory two week wait on gun sales in this town, unless the person has a conceal carry permit."

"Why the exception?"

"Maybe a gun carrier who is trained on the law might be relaxing in the next restaurant or doctor's office being shot to hell and will stop it in progress by blowing the murderer's head off, that's why."

"So, you agree with me."

"I didn't say that."

"Yea, well, you do."

"No. I don't."

"Yes. You do."

"Not a word of this," the commander said. "Understood?"

"Not one word from my lips," Steve promised.

"Nor mine, either," Kevin chimed in.

"Good. Now that we are agreed, let's get out there and do some real police work. I'll have the court order here in an hour."

Robert Adams, who was the son of Ralph Adams who had just committed the mass murders, was working on a business project when the police arrived and handcuffed him. He had no idea why. His fellow business workers watched passively as several well-armed fascists in blue garb trundled him out of the room. In the police car, he was read his Miranda rights.

“You have the right to a lawyer. You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law.”

Robert was terrified. He had never been in trouble with the law. He was a peaceable person. He never fought at school or anywhere else. If anything, he was a typical metro-sexual, a phrase invented to describe men with feminine characteristics who were endemic in today’s culture. These were guys without balls. They were zero testosterone freaks who grew up eating from the feathery teat of Big Bird and the effeminate indulgences of Jack Webb’s soft police Dragnet reruns.

Robert Adams was placed in an interrogation room where he looked at the walls in amazement. Just how had he gotten here? Why were they persecuting him? What had he done? He wondered if he was crazy and if he had strangled an ex-girlfriend in the middle of the night, then driven the body to an unknown location and dumped it way off the street somewhere, all of which he did without knowing it, because of a hitherto undiagnosed psychotic disorder. He had seen things like that on Hawaii Five Oh and other sleazy TV shows as a part of his dysfunctional upbringing by mentally disturbed script writers on his way to adulthood.

Robert Adams tried to remember what it was that he had done, but his mind was having none of it, so he was still in the dark as to whatever sins he had committed. Whatever it was, it must have been quite bad to warrant arresting and cuffing him like this.

Detective Branch came in and sat down.

“Do you want to tell us about it?” he asked. “Why you did it? How you put them up to it?”

Robert Adams had no idea at all what he was talking about.

“I think not,” he said.

“Surely, you know that it’s best if you tell me. Once it leaves my hands, things will go a lot tougher on you.”

“Whatever,” Robert said. “You know everything. Why don’t you tell me what I did? That way I can sign off and walk to the loony bin unassisted.”

“You are a smart ass. Is that what you are?”

“Whatever. You are the producer of whatever this is that’s going on. I’m just an observer.”

“Did you help him do this?”

“Whatever.” Robert still had no idea what this was about.

“I’ll get it out of you,” Steve Branch told the young man. “But it doesn’t have to come to that.”

“I want a lawyer.”

“All right. Be a tough guy. What’s his name?”

“You tell me. I’m broke. I don’t have one.”

Detective Branch dialed his cell phone and reached the district’s public defendant.

“Gloria? I have a young man who asked for an attorney, and you are it by default.”

“He’s broke?”

“Says so,” Steve said.

“I’ll be right there,” Gloria said. “Who is it?”

“The son of Ralph Adams.”

“Gotcha.”

A few minutes later, Gloria Dennison entered the interrogation room and introduced herself.

“I’m Gloria Dennison, your public defender. What have you told them?”

“Nothing.”

“Are you sure?”

“Yes.”

“What are the charges?” Gloria asked.

“I don’t know. I have no idea why I’m here, even.”

“I see. I’ll be right back. I’m going to get some answers for you. First, don’t talk to anyone, including a cell mate. They will put a person in your cell to get you to confess. I’m going to ask for an isolated cell so that cannot happen. Now, remember, if Detective Branch or anyone else comes in, tell them you want your lawyer here, that she will speak for you. Understand?”

“Yes.”

“Anything else?”

“I’m scared,” Robert said. “Should I be?”

“Yes. It’s natural. They are screwing with you. Just keep your lip buttoned.”

“Yes, mam.”

Gloria left. She announced in the police room to everyone there, that she was now assigned as Robert Adam’s attorney and that absolutely no one was going to interrogate him without her presence. “I will answer for him. Not him. Me. Understand? If you talk with him now that you know, I’ll get his case tossed.”

She walked over to Commander Holland’s office. “What gives?” she asked.

“Robert Adams?”

“Yes.”

“I’m not sure. His father shot up the town. We are pumping him to see if he’s involved.”

“Why?”

“Because he exists and his father is deceased. That’s why.”

“It’s a fishing expedition. I can’t allow that. It’s illegal.”

“Not really.”

“Oh, yes. Really. Trust me. I want the man released. You have no reason to have him here.”

Commander Holland called Detective Branch.

“Yea,” Branch said.

“Gloria. She wants you to cut her client loose.”

“I want to question him.”

“He’s lawyered, so you cannot ask him anything.”

“Okay then. I’ll cut him, after I take him to his apartment and search it with him and Gloria there. Have you got the warrant?”

“Yes. Okay. We’ll head there. If he’s clean there, I’ll cut him loose.”

“You and Detective Branch are taking him home, and Branch is searching his premises. If he’s clean, Branch agrees to cut him loose right there.”

“Agreed. But no questions. Understood?”

“Yes.”

She walked to the interrogation room to collect her client.

“She’s one tough bitch,” Holland said under his breath. “When she’s alone, she’s fine. But give her a client and the hair stands up on her back like an enraged cougar tearing into a steak with an over-large meathook.” He looked up at the ceiling. “God, save me from women,” he said. “Just keep them out of my face.”

## 22

Detective Branch, Detective Kevin Richter, Gloria Dennison, and Robert Adams arrived at the apartment. Adams opened it with his key and stood back as Detectives Steve Branch and Kevin Richter started rifling through Robert’s things.

“Do you have any guns?” Kevin asked.

“No.”

“Knives, drug paraphernalia, needles?”

“Nope.”

Kevin found some porno in Robert’s desk. They were white girls in typical porn situations, nothing spectacular, and nothing that Kevin himself didn’t have. Too bad. He liked being titillated. He had a wild hunch that it wasn’t going to happen this time and that Robert Adams might actually be a bit of a nerd.

After a half hour of looking, they were done.

“He’s clean,” Branch said.

He looked at the kid.

“Listen, we are sorry for what we put you through.”

“Is that it? You are just sorry?”

“Yea,” Branch said. “That’s pretty much it. I had to scare you in case you were a part of what your dad did today. I needed you to confess so I could book you. But you didn’t, did you?”

“So, what did he do?”

“Gloria will fill you in. Sorry, I was such an asshole to you, but that’s my job. I know I suck. It’s my job. And I’m truly sorry for your loss.”

Steve and Kevin left. After the door closed, Kevin covered his eyes.

“What’s this about?” Robert asked. “Is it about my mom dying this week?”

“No.”

“Well?”

“Your dad was shot to death today, Robert. I thought they told you that.”

Robert covered his face. He suddenly shook. A tear came from his eyes. A moment later, a long slow trail of tears moved down across his cheek, but he was all numb thinking about his father’s death and could not feel anything. His mind was in a momentary state of shock and inner paralysis. He had been pushed nearly to the point of breakdown.

He figured some creep in the city tried to hold him up and ended up killing him. Now he had no one. Now he was a complete orphan. How would he break it to his sister?

“What happened?”

“He went postal, Robert.”

“Postal?”

“He shot people, Robert.”

“How many people?”

“Lots of people.”

“Why?”

“We aren’t sure. Revenge, perhaps.”

“You have to be kidding. That’s not like my dad.”

“We think it was to protest how Obama Care treated your mother’s cancer.”

“They didn’t treat it at all. They just let her die.”

“Sounds like a reason to me, Robert.”

Robert thought about it. If this were true his dad had hatched this all on his own. He kept it hidden from Robert. He hadn’t let on about it at all. Or had he? Robert seemed to remember his dad saying he had something up his sleeve concerning his mother’s death and how unfair it was.

“He never told me a thing about this,” Robert said. His chin wobbled. Suddenly, Robert was crying. He missed his dad already. “The poor man,” he said. “He was so distraught, but I never dreamed he’d kill people. He’d never done anything like that in his life. At least not that I ever knew.”

“Do you have a girlfriend or a best friend or a relative who can stay with you?”

“I have a sister and a girlfriend.”

“I’ll call them.”

Gloria reached both of them. They already knew about his father’s death. She explained how the police had roughed up Robert for no reason at all. She asked if they’d keep an eye on Robert for a week or so, that he might be a suicide possibility. Then, Gloria went over to him and held him. He wept on her shoulder like a baby. She knew what he had been through with his mother dying, then being man handled, then discovering his father was a mass murderer and was dead. She knew that anyone with such a recent set of traumas was a perfect risk for self destructive intentions.

“You poor thing,” she said. “I would be doing exactly the same if this happened to me. Just let it all out, babe. Don’t keep a thing pent up inside you. Let it all out.”

And he did.

He cried harder and harder, until finally he reached a point where he had to stop just to breathe air again.

His sister and girl friend showed up, and Gloria explained how they shouldn’t leave him alone for several days or weeks after what he’d been through. They thanked her. She gave Robert a big hug and left.

“Thanks,” he told her. He wanted to say more but couldn’t muster his voice. He’d call her in a day or so and thank her correctly.

“No problem, Robert. Call me any time. Okay?”

He shook his head. Yes. He would.



Coroner Chen Yong surveyed the mess. His usually clean autopsy spaces were filled once again well to overflowing. Once again, it was all thanks to what Dr. Yong felt was the government's discredited and criminal tampering with the health care system. He wondered how many more useless nights he would have to spend opening corpses, cataloging their infirmities, and photographing disease processes in their organs and brains. Would there ever be an end to the outbreak of Obama Care revenge killings? Dr. Yong was beginning to think they would continue to happen for a long time now that they had started. Once something like this began, it was usually difficult to stop it.

Detective Branch was sitting in the corner's autopsy laboratory completing his reports. He was back to working on a desk, because Chen insisted on his autopsies being witnessed by a policeman. He wanted them not only entered into the detective's computer but written out by the detective's own hand as well. Such pen and ink documents never failed. Chen didn't trust computers when it came to crime records. He'd seen them screw things up that way. Observations could literally disappear into a computer's void and never be seen again. Detective Steve Branch swallowed and kept himself busy variously typing and then writing each report in long hand. What did he care anyway? Put in the hours and get paid. It didn't matter much to him as long as he had a fat wallet stuffed with cash at the end. This was like old times when police officers used to document the perpetrators and their victims using their half-chewed pens and pencils as they filled out miles of police forms. It reminded him of cops long dead. Their old salty spirits once waded slowly inside the decrepit ghosts of police work. All of them were dead now. All that remained was the classification of death, the suspects, and whatever else pertained to the extinguished life forms lazily reclining within Dr. Yong's exquisite scalpel explorations.

"How did we luck out twice in a row like this?" Detective Branch asked Dr. Chen Yong. "Do you think its karma or something?"

"Ah, karma. I am surprised an American would use such a term. Are you using it to force me to like you more, detective?"

"You are too smart, Chen. Old Mr. Branch can't put one over on you, can he?"

"Nope. It doesn't work that way."

"I guess that's true. So, you caught me."

"Want to know your punishment?"

"Yes."

"You don't get one. You are punished enough having to listen to my Chinese accent when I speak with you. Such confusion is the smallest form of much needed punishment," Dr. Yong said. Then, he laughed. "I like making Yankees uncomfortable. It's the least I can do to help you attain your spot in heaven, Steve," he said. "You do know heaven, don't you?"

"Theoretically. I'm not sure I want to go there, however. All of my friends are doing their best to go to hell instead. I think that's probably the spot best suited for an ex-detective like myself, if you get my drift."

"I get your drift."

"Any new discoveries?"

"I have found a number of disease conditions, not to mention some tattoos, moles, and other errata. There seems to be no end to the little vicissitudes of my investigations. Of course, each one demands that I stop to type it up and check the spelling and that you do, too."

"Bummer. I hate it when that happens. Besides, you could be seducing some little maiden who wants to know what it's like to be inside a bed with a Chinaman."

"Such lucky maidens," Chen said, smiling, then laughed. He winked, indicating a private joke between the two of them was in the offing. "I love it when their curiosity gets the better of them causing me to perform the Chinese gashie washie inside them," Chen giggled. "Making sweet love to a beautiful woman properly is a tough job, you know. But someone has the ultimate responsibility to pump them into oriental limbo."

"You are a true genius," Detective Branch told Chen. "I told my side kick once that you are an evil genius. Don't put anything over on Dr. Yong, I warned him, because that man is capable of holding a thousand Chinese grudges. The idiot wanted to know what a grudge was, of course. I think he had a good idea it was something bad, although he never indicated whether he knew it or not. Know what I mean? Anyway, I like to keep the guy on his toes while he ages like old wine, so I never let on about the true meaning of words that he does not know. I want him to seek the Google god for that."

"I speak with that god all the time. Especially when I am doing a cross word puzzle." Chen's scalpel made another incision. His patient's skin parted neatly to reveal to him the next layer he was going to cut into.

"I figured you were a cheater."

"Oh, I am. I figure it keeps things even, because there's no way that I can learn the meaning of every term in the English language."

"You are a cheater, because you describe the dead, even though you are alive," Detective Branch said. He smiled. Pretending to be falsely profound was rather amusing to him. "Most people know the dead only when they become one."

Dr. Yong reached into the thorax of his patient and placed the man's heart onto the table. It was just the right weight. The problem was the hole that entered in one side and exited out the top. It had been shot through by Ralph Adams. The man, whose name was Ted Benson, had been killed along with his son and daughter. To Chen, it was just another senseless murder, a meaningless assignation with death. It had no meaning. Nothing ever had much meaning when it came to these curiously unspeakable crimes.

"Death by gunshot," Dr. Chen said. "Ted Benson. He died alongside his daughter Samantha and his son Ruben. We don't know yet why. It really doesn't matter, I guess. Does it?"

"Nope," Branch said. "Not one bit."

Dr. Yong sniffed Ted's heart. It smelled like fresh meat. What else would it smell like? We were all just pieces of protein sewn together with sinew, blood, and liver. Nothing else counted. Ted's entire life was nothing but the biology now resting on Dr. Yong's autopsy table.

The scalpel never lied. It entered corpses like words sailing silently into the biting coldness of an unwelcome wind. As usual, his scalpel would become a victim's final lover. It cut them even deeper than a woman's acid tongue. It always eventually tore out their hearts, lifting them like treasured jewels from their chests as it revealed to a trained mind like Dr. Yong's everything that had ever happened to them in their brief lifespan. When Yong's job was finished, he sewed them back together. He saw to it that their disconnected organs rested peacefully inside them albeit totally askew and unattached.

More than one hundred victims inside his morgue had died at the hands of Ralph Adams. He was yet another grieving husband whose life and soul had been ripped apart by the thoughtlessness of the American hegemony as it enforced its newest rip off which almost everyone now referred to by repeating over and over the pathetic mantra of Obama Care. It reminded Dr. Chen Yong that we all lived in a society based solely on greed in which only profit mattered. People were nothing apart from the money that could be made from them. No one counted unless they were rich and profited by the gore of war and medicine where trillions of dollars flushed back and forth between the economic units at the bottom and those into whose wallets their vital funds flowed.

"Maybe I should put in for a transfer, Steve," Dr. Yong said with a whimsical tone of voice. He flashed his bloody scalpel in the air for dramatic effect. "Perhaps I should resign after I finish with the last victim of this crime. There's lots of vocational opportunities for an ex-coroner, you know. I might even take that terrific position advertised in the newspaper. In fact, it's right here. See it? I could be a Walmart greeter. Can't you just imagine the joy?"

"Not really, Chen."

"No? Why not?"

"I just don't think it's you. That's all."

"Where would you see me, if not a greeter at Walmart?"

"For one thing, I think you'd make a good madame at one of the local loose lady homes downtown."

"You are right! I would make a perfect madame! Great idea!"

Yong's scalpel cut into Ted Benson's daughter, Samantha. It's razor sharp blade swam easily into her youthful flesh. Easy as pie. It entered her chest as soft as butter cleverly parting her thorax to each side the way a wedding cake knife slithers home into an exquisite morass of white icing. Her joyful insides opened in a long smile. Each of her organs immediately revealed their intricate pleasures.

Dr. Yong disconnected the attachments and hauled up her many treasures much like a fisherman happily hauls tuna onto his moving boat. Soon, each organ glistened atop the stainless steel examination table where he turned them carefully and squeezed them for tumors. "These organs are very nice," he said to no one in particular. "Healthy organs are a thing of great beauty, Mr. Branch. Just look at that liver. So nice. No fattiness in it at all. She was a healthy eater and never touched either a Big Mac or an alcoholic beverage. That's for sure."

"I certainly admire your professional delicacies, Dr. Yong," Detective Branch responded. "These little meetings we have from time to time in your comfortable and friendly morgue have allowed me to witness the fantastic manner in which

you approach your job. As a matter of fact, sir, I think you'd be a fool to give all of this up for the Walmart job."

"I think you are right. I do enjoy my work."

"I know few people who are as profound in providing the services expected of them as you are Dr. Yong," the detective continued, droning on half in jest. "I think you'd be a idiot to give up a minute of this line of work. You seem so joyfully suited to it. I doubt if anyone could ever replace you. In addition, I can't think of anyone else I'd rather talk to during these endless autopsy sessions. Your mind is a wonder to behold. That's for certain."

"Your pandering has been noted and appreciated, my friend. If you keep this up, I might be persuaded to fix us another batch of coffee."

"What a friend, you are, kind sir."

Dr. Yong called his secretary on his cell phone. "We need some coffee, Mable," he said into the phone. "Why not make us about eight cups for starters. I have a lot of fans in line here, and Steve needs some fortification in order to make the cut, so to speak." He put the phone down.

"Good help is so hard to find, Steve," he said.

In a few minutes, the coffee arrived, and the old stuff was carted off as Detective Branch and Dr. Yong watched Mable's pretty ass rambling back and forth through the door.

"She's nice," Branch said.

"Very."

"I guess we could all use a little more help, especially if it comes in such a nice package."

"Indeed."

Dr. Yong continued working. He arranged more organs, made notes, and took photographs. "This one's a bit messy," Chen said. "Unfortunately, the poor thing died of a gut wound. Very painful usually. She probably cried a great deal, especially with no one there to help her."

"What kind of help?"

"Morphine."

"I see. She stinks."

"Yes. It's a gut shot. The lower gut."

"Gotcha."

"Right. I guess nothing more needs to be said. I'm going to place her goodies back inside as best as I can, then sew her up." Chen restored the air with a scented spray, then closed the girl's Y-shaped incision with his fine needlework. He picked up towels which he dipped in a chemical bath and cleaned her exterior skin, removing the blood and returning her outer form to a semblance of her previously pristine purity. "Looks much better," Chen said, as he admired his work.

"Cleanliness is next to Godliness or so Aldous Huxley said in Brave New World which I was forced to read in my college English class. In fact, I learned from that novel how love is merely a trained behavior meant only for physical pleasure and nothing else."

“What should I type?” Detective Branch asked his friend ignoring the doctor’s futile attempt at strange humor. Besides, Branch had never read Aldous Huxley’s book and had no plans to do so anytime soon.

“Cause of death is one gunshot wound. Injuries to sides, back, and lower intestine. Bullet not found. Seems to have passed through.”

“That should do it for her. She was really beautiful.”

“Yes. She still is. A real dream girl. I would consider someone as beautiful as she is to be a trophy date to be quite honest.”

“I agree. She’s a hottie, all right.”

Dr. Yong washed up and put new gloves on. “The next victim is Ted Benson’s son, Ruben,” he said into his phone recorder. “Age 25 as verified by his driver’s license. Mildly athletic build. Several tattoos. Two foot Harley wing tat inked across his back. Very nicely done, I might say. Small, sexy butterfly to the upper left of his pubic font. Marijuana leaf tat just below his chest plate. Extensive damage to the left side of head indicative of a 9mm bullet entry. No exit wound visible.” Dr. Yong washed and shaved Ruben’s head. Then he dried it, before using an electric saw to open his cranium by cutting a round circle right through the man’s skull bone and extending it all of the way around. He then removed the head’s upper occipital covering much like carefully lifting a manhole cover from the street. What remained below was Ruben’s brain. With a few cuts, Dr. Yong was able to lift it out and place it on the examining table. He poked inside the brain with his finger. “Extensive bullet tumbling proceeds through the brain matter. Bullet curves off to the left. Bullet found halfway through. I’m extracting it now with a tool.” He dropped the bullet into an open dish, which produced a loud metallic clink, then transferred it into cleaning solution. He picked it from the fluid and noted its pristine color. “Bullet is clean. Slightly misshapen upon impact.”

The body cavity was uneventful.

“Some bruising inside body cavity consistent with violent fall followed by significant cramping during victim’s death throes.” He sewed up the cavity with his fine needlework, replaced the brain inside the skull and sewed its shaved skin tightly together to hold it shut forever. He peeled off his gloves and washed his face and hands, changed into his regular clothes, then came over to Detective Branch who was finishing his report on Ruben Benson’s autopsy. “Cause of death is brain injury from 9mm bullet found inside same.”

“Gotcha.”

“Time for din-din,” Chen said. He grinned from ear-to-ear. “I feel like a Coney Island in a bun. I want one with lots of chili slopped over it. Sound good?”

“Sounds great!” Detective Branch answered.

“Good! Let’s do it.”

## 24

Robert Adam’s apartment was depressing. His father’s death was depressing. The United States was depressing. In fact, Robert could see nothing that was even worth living for anymore. Not only was his mother dead from not being treated by

Obama Care, but so were more than a hundred innocent victims shot by his father.

“They weren’t exactly innocent,” Robert told his girl friend. “All of us are guilty in one way or the other. We should never have allowed our government officials to play hopscotch with the devil like they have. They murdered my mom, you know.”

“Yes, I know, Robert. You’ve told me a thousand times.”

His girl’s name was Cindy Travis. She had brown hair, green eyes, and a body revealing how she had become a dedicated gym rat in her spare time. In fact, the gym was where she had met Robert Adams. They had been in the weight room curling iron to achieve greater muscle mass in their biceps. Cindy was a Microsoft Administrator and earned fairly big bucks.

“I’m not sure who the devil is, Robert. I think you are being a big cryptic,” Cindy said. “Got a clue on that question for me?”

“The devil is in the details, Cindy. He is what Occupy New York used to call the one percent greed. You know, the usual political whores. The right wingers. Mutual health insurance companies and all the others who dabbled in creating wealth by selling health care plans then refusing to dole out the required payoffs when their clients became seriously ill. Like happened to my mom. Its all bundled into the omnibus affordable health care act. Obama Care.”

“I know you have been upset.”

“Upset? No. I’m far more than upset, Cindy. My mom was refused the proper treatment.”

“You can’t fight government.”

“Sure you can.”

“I don’t see how you can say that, Robert. You know the congress has been paid off by the rich. It’s always been that way, and it always will be.”

“Yes, it has. But now it’s become very personal.”

“It’s the old Nazi story,” Cindy Travis said.

“The Nazi story?” Robert asked.

“Yes. There’s is the story of a person who says, ‘First they came for my friend, and I did nothing. I did nothing when they took my other friends, also. So, when they came for me, there was no one left for me to turn to.’ That’s the Nazi thing.”

“Yes, I’ve heard that one. It’s quite pertinent to my mom’s death, but in the final analysis no one really cares, and there’s nothing I can do to exact revenge. However, my dad certainly made them kiss ass.”

They cuddled on the couch and fell asleep moaning about the way things were. Next day, they got up early and went to work in separate buildings, but not so far away that they couldn’t meet for an extended lunch. After a quick sandwich, they drove into a large hospital garage where hundreds of doctors worked.

“Ready?” Robert asked.

“Absolutely,” Cindy said.

They were holding their keys in their hands. Separating, they walked past the cars until they found those that had M.D. license plates, then walked in slow motion past them on all sides scratching deeply into their paint jobs with their keys. Robert loved the sound of his keys against the filthy rich automobiles these specialists and surgeons drove. These were high end Cadillacs, Lexis, Mercedes, and other big brand name manufacturers of fetish cars who pandered to the rich,

as Robert usually ranted, and who made their money playing the system and screwing all the little guys in the ass. Now, Robert realized, it was his turn, with a mere slice of his keys, as a little guy, to exact at least a modicum of revenge. *There you go, medical fuckers*, Robert thought. He felt his keys gouging into their paint jobs from Lexis to Cadillac and tried to theorize the depth of their total disgust at someone like himself who dared to fuck with their car. It was so sweet that he was almost drooling. In fact, Robert surmised that there were thousands of ways that paybacks could be exacted without killing someone.

On the way back to work, Cindy squeezed his hand. "Feeling better now?" she asked.

"A bit better. It still doesn't balance the scales, though," Robert Adams told Cindy Travis. "I've got a lot more hating to do before I even begin to feel healed."

"We'll do it again tomorrow then."

"It's a date."

So, they did. The paint came off in the second hospital garage even better than at the first. There was something good about screwing with the cars of rich people. Robert had never done this before in his life, but now he was convinced that this was the sort of thing that all three hundred and twenty million people in America should be doing on a daily basis to screw over those who had been oppressing them all of these years.

On one of Robert's blogs, written under a ghost name, he wrote how he had keyed thousands of cars since his mother died, "and I never tired of giving those fuckers the shitty feeling of how violated I felt when they murdered my own sweet little mother with their Obama Care boondoggle." On a friend's blog, he wrote a snippet saying, "my tears turned to laughter deep in the night as I awoke in my bed giggling over my dirty work. Hundreds of physician automobiles had been fucked by me, and I suddenly felt that some sort of revenge was in my sights." Of course, this was not enough to make up for a dead mother and the tears her beloved son had shed over what they had done to kill her.

"Cindy, the healing effect of meaningless vandalism is overwhelming at times."

"I know. It's habit forming. I find myself giggling at work. Keying is my new *happy dance*," she said. "I have a lot more rage inside me than I ever knew, and it wasn't even my own mother. It was yours."

They kissed into the depths of the night, professing their love for each other in various ways. Their closeness had been enervated by his mother's death, and, later, by his father's murders.

"I love you," he told her.

"I love you, too."

The next day, Robert published his first poem ever on the Internet.

#### CAR KEYS

The way I feel enraged  
Encases itself inside my handy keys  
As I destroy hundreds of paint jobs  
On the cars driven by the rich.  
Each curling piece of paint  
Unscrews itself about my keys

One-by-One as they gouge out  
The paint from Lexis bodies.  
So, now I see in my mind  
The endless horror in the faces  
Of my greedy victims as they  
Reach their cars and know  
The depths of my vile embrace  
Of their seedy and implacable lives.  
Key-by-Key I fuck them over  
Feeling their horror at my disgust.  
For them, it is the isolated incident.  
Whereas, for me, it is the endless  
Repetition of ritual madness.  
I feel my power in their hatred of me.  
As I key their cars over and over  
Chipping away their resolve to enjoy  
Endless riches beyond measure.  
Some nights I lie in bed awake.  
I dream of them crashing head-on  
Into endless trucks which kill them  
And their families, just the way Obama Care  
Killed my mom and dad. Their lack  
Of concern for others smashes into  
My lack of concern for them.  
This endless enjoyment of destroying  
Their cars with the keys of my discontent  
Cause me to awaken deep in the night  
In fantastic laughter when I feel their pain  
With tremendous enjoyment  
and plan to do more to destroy any happiness  
They might have. Obama Care,  
My revenge is sweetly endless.  
Now I dream of spilling pig blood  
On the Capitol stairs in Washington  
Dreaming that it will never wash away.  
I see how the senators' hands drip  
With the blood of our parents  
Who died from legal phrases and how  
I hate them now with all of my might.  
I long to key their faces as I spread  
Pig blood on their lousy capitol stairs.  
— *One of Many Anonymous Victims...*

His poem was an endless sensation going viral upon the web. It surpassed three million hits in the first month. By year's end it had bloomed into forty-three million and was quoted on talk radio in a thousand cars.

"You are a star, Robert," Cindy said.



"I know. It feels good to have been heard."

"Physicians will be known forever as *those millionaires who drove scratched cars and killed someone else's mothers through their indifference.*"

"We are nuts," Robert said. "You know that, don't you?"

"Yes. I know," Cindy said.

They embraced and fell asleep.

Life with a purpose would always be good.

## 25

National Security Agent Green drove a rental car to the coroner's office where he presented his Homeland Security card to the secretary. Green was rushed into the autopsy room which smelled to him of various stages of human rot. Bob Green could not understand what motivated anyone to become a forensic criminologist. They were always dipping their hands inside people who had just died of one trauma after the other. Many parts of these unfortunate victims were nearly in shreds from the vicious societal mayhem of which they had become victims.

Fortunately, Agent Green felt rested this morning. The jet flight to this city where people were going ballistic over Obama Care had been notoriously uneventful. In fact, it had been a downright bore. Even the rather lumpy and wrinkled stewardesses seemed out of sorts as they marched up and down the airliner's aisles like the ugly elderly trolls they had become over years of unrewarded public service. There was definitely nothing on the flight to give a young man a morning rise, so he had spent his miserable flight time sleeping with his head against the outer wall. When he exited on the tarmac, he figured correctly that this little city was nothing but another way station on the circuitous path to his monthly paycheck. If a woman were to show up along the way, he'd willingly and gratefully jump her and be done, but only if she were willing. He was not the type of guy to force these things. If they wanted him, fine. If they didn't want him, that was fine, also. Whatever. Otherwise, he'd just serve his time like any other willing and patient captive held in the bowels of a desperate small town prison as this one was.

He entered the premises of the morgue where he knew that hundreds of Obama Care corpses were patiently lying in wait just to have their vitals analyzed under the auspices of the coroner's flashing scalpels. When he got to the coroner's autopsy table, he introduced himself, making sure he puffed up the authority of his federal badge. Green thought that puffing himself up as a federal agent was a lot of fun. He loved the feeling of power he got when he put down the locals. They usually groveled before him. "I need your reports on these two cases you've been working on," Dr. Yong, Agent Bob Green said in a harsh voice. "We are working with many coroners."

The trouble was that Yong was no federal agent's patsy. Arrogance might work fine for others, but Yong was at least as arrogant himself, if not more so. Green did not yet understand that he had met his match. He was about to discover a different world.

“That’s your problem, sir, and not mine. I just do my job,” Yong said to Green. “As for my reports. They are in a filing cabinet which my secretary can help you with. As for me, I’m swamped with rotting corpses which are kept barely stabilized by refrigeration, but, as you probably know, there are so many of them that it’s going to take several more weeks for me to open and catalog them for my report files.”

“What’s your overall conclusion, Dr. Yong, concerning what you’ve seen and investigated?” Green asked him.

Yong continued lifting a solid heart from the body of one Nathan Goodfellow as though agent Green was not in the room at all.

“This is an enlarged heart,” Dr. Yong said into his phone’s voice recorder. “Heart failure was imminent.”

Green was a federal agent, and he was not used to being ignored like this. He felt like Yong was treating him like an unwanted irritant. Which might not be very far from God’s honest truth.

“I’m a federal agent, sir, and I need more attention from you than this, sir. I can help or hinder your efforts here, you know.”

“Mr. Green, let me tell you that we don’t need any Homeland Security bullshit here. It is the federal government which you represent that is responsible for all of this national and local mayhem that people like myself have to deal with at the ground level as I am now doing. I am carrying out to the best of my meager abilities a scientific method for living with the mess that the federal government made of Obama Care, and, until you correct what you are doing in that corrupt Babylon known as Washington, more and more are going to die in reaction to your mismanaged health care system. That system, by the way, is really nothing but an insurance boondoggle and a fraud, and everyone knows it. Those of us out here in the heartland are sick and tired of it, my dear friend. Now, if you expect me to stop dissecting and cataloging the dead because a sorry ass investigator from Washington is standing here next to me with his golden federal badge dangling from a chain on his scrawny chest, then you are mistaken. I am unconcerned about the federal government, because I don’t live in Washington, DC. I live here. The problem was started in Washington where you and your agency grows its nasty little policing and spying flowers, of which you are evidently one variety.

“I suggest you get back there and stay out of my domain. I know how to handle this. My reports will be on line soon, and you can read all of them there and then. But I don’t have time for you now.”

“I’m with Homeland Security. You have to work with me.”

“No, I don’t. I have more than enough to do. My assignment is to investigate each of these homicides and write my official report. My work grade does not require me to work with you right now or ever. This triage of cases caused by your government’s incompetence is overwhelming me, and that’s all I can work with. Now, my friend, Detective Branch, is sitting right over there by the reporting and observation desk. Detective Branch might have time to work with you. As for me, I’m not stopping my work for anyone. There’s still several hundred families wanting to take possession of their loved ones so they can bury their bodies in a decent and Christian manner, and I intend to help them in that regard.”

“You are an ass,” Green said. “Do you know that?”

“I can tell you of a few women who would agree with you about that,” Dr. Yong said, smiling widely. “Your observations have been made by ladies far pushier with their female senses of self importance than you can ever hope to be. They have made that very clear. Of that, I can assure you.”

Green looked at Detective Branch.

“Is he always like this?”

“Generally, yes. I’ve gotten to know him over the years,” Branch said. “And he’s right. He doesn’t have any extra time at all. His findings are right here, Bob, and I can work you up a summary of our situation while Dr. Yong continues to work at the cutting edge of the homicides in question.”

“So, Detective,” Green asked him, “what are your assessments of this case?”

“For starters, it’s like Dr. Yong said. The government is the main killer. If they’d done their job of running a proper health care system instead of this expensive and worthless Obama Care charade, all of these bodies you see on the slabs and in bags would be at home in bed warmly sleeping next to their spouses instead of waiting in this cold and God forsaken room to be dissected. I and half the town agree with Dr. Yong on that.”

“Sounds like a form of domestic terrorism,” Green said, “with all of these mass murders and all.”

“Wrong,” Detective Branch said.

“How am I wrong?”

“The terrorist is the federal government’s health care program, sir,” Detective Branch told him. “The murders and mass killings are a natural reaction to the indifference of this health care system which doesn’t want to treat people the way they used to be treated before congress got involved and began to muck everything up. As for the murders, they are just gunshots perpetrated by the government’s indifference to these people’s relatives. It’s the government that’s at fault.”

Agent Green proceeded to the coroner’s huge stacks of reports. They had been authored well. The descriptions of the deaths were precise. Each had been tersely written. The people died of their wounds. Each wound was described, each head and thorax opened, each brain and organ inspected, and the reason for death noted. Their deaths were from traumas and gunshots. Green put the reports away. He’d seen enough.

As he left for his car, he was handed a piece of paper written by Dr. Chen Yong. The note read, “Thanks. Remember this. Death by Obama Care. That’s what it’s all about, Agent Green. — Dr. Chen Yong, Coroner.”

“Fuck these people,” Green said to himself. “They are out here arrogantly destroying America. All they have is their insolence toward us, but we’ll win. We’ll get them back. We own the government, and they don’t. So we will always win, and they will always lose. That’s the one thing that’s certain.”

## 26

Bob Green had been promoted to lead the task force assigned to stemming the Obama Care madness. He stood behind the podium on which the medallion of Homeland Security was affixed and which Bob figured bolstered his authority,

prestige, and flare. At any rate, in Bob Green's mind, the medallion was always a big plus.

"We've got killers popping up in every town," Bob Green told his newly assigned group of homeland security agents. "The media has been stirring Obama Care rebels up for a long time now. Reporters and editorial writers compare them to Robin Hood of Sherwood Forest. The cleverest of reporters say these guys murder the rich in the name of the poor. Are they right? You decide. However, to me, these hoodlums are merely dangerous criminals," he told them, "and it's our job to stop them. And we will. Oh, yes. You and I are going to stop them. Make no mistake about that. Our ability to prevail is just a matter of time and effort."

Next, Bob Green introduced a specialist from homeland security named Phil Crane who had studied the situation for years. He gazed at the agents eye to eye. The room became silent. Only then, did he speak. "These denizens pop up in history all the time," agent Phil Crane told them. "Sometimes I sit up at night giggling over many of the silly reasons these people have for tearing our nation apart. In the past, they would rob banks and use the money to pay off the local police so they wouldn't be hunted down and arrested.

In a place like Turkey it has a name—*baksheesh*. Any way you pronounce it, it is always the same thing. We, who live in America, call it bribes, pay offs, and silence money. It's the way criminals have kept the authorities from bothering them over the centuries. It has always been a way of life for the big so-called folk heroes in the crime business. In their time, gangsters like Al Capone of Cicero, Illinois attained tremendous political traction in the minds of the American people. Millions of citizens were whipped up by the press into following Capone's career of death and assassination of rival gangs.

"Well, these Obama Care retards we have now are built out of the same dark cloth as Capone, Adolf Hitler, and Osama Bin Laden. And we are going to take them down just as we did those guys. Mark my words. We'll get to the bottom of this."

After all of the training, Bob Green's men spanned out across many cities, same as he had done earlier in his career, interviewing doctors, coroners, and the relatives of people who were dying of easily treatable diseases and whose treatments were being denied. These persons of interest were potentially dangerous and, therefore, needed to be watched, and they needed to know they were being watched so they wouldn't act out their rage against society at large. Soon, billions of dollars were being spent on these investigations, money which might otherwise have been used to end the corruption within the medical and insurance establishments which had created this problem in the first place by simply doing their job of actually treating the sick and dying. Newspapers and TV announcers had a field day with these stories, and everything they authored to create public awareness seemed to work against Homeland Security's drive to silence the opposition by apologizing for government corruption as it worked hand-in-hand with insurance profiteers. The welfare of these corporations seemed to have become the only agenda that Obama Care focused on.

In Cincinnati, a man whose son died of heart disease which would have been easily treatable though a bypass which Obama Care denied, readied himself for what he hoped would be a long string of deadly revenge killings. The man entered a fine restaurant where the rich satisfied their grand dining palettes with steaks, potatoes, and pies. Within minutes, his guns would literally turn them into human mincemeat with his well aimed 9mm Glocks.

The man's name was Conner Parish, and his son Dedrick had died unnecessarily of a blockage in his arteries. The insurance carriers did not want to spend \$1,500 for Dedrick's open heart surgeon, but angled instead for various blood thinning derivatives, mostly made from aspirin compounds, claiming the outcome would be the same. They were sadly wrong. The outcome turned out to be death, and Dedrick died of a massive coronary one year into his faulty treatment program which had been approved by all of the hard working Obama Care death squad goons who held Dedrick Parish's life in their uncaring hands.

Conner Parish entered Fleisch's Steakhouse just off of the main drag through town, where he would eventually confront and murder table after table of wealthy businessmen and investors including the various doctors and insurance decision-makers who had killed his only son. He finished a delicious meal which he then proceeded to pay for with bullets and passions which the rich feared as one of the few things that could even begin to touch them, since they owned the entire legal system.

These rich folks systematically paid for that system and what it did for them in big dollars they earned from their questionable manufacturing and service scams. They used them to accumulate millions of unearned dollars. For this, they provided as little work as they could get by with. After all, this type of citizen abuse had always been known by all as The American Way.

After he finished his last meal, Conner Parish stood up and announced his intentions in a booming and blood curdling voice, "I'm going to kill you folks right now, because my son was just buried today. He died because some of you decided you could get by without treating him properly for heart disease. It was cheaper to treat his condition with medicines which couldn't do the job. None of you physicians in here stepped forward to help him. Now, any of you who moves one inch while I do my job of revenging his death will be the next one to get himself killed. Am I understood?" Heads nodded "Yes" throughout the room.

A woman close by told her husband, "Don't move one twitch, honey. Do exactly what that man wants." With that introduction and the woman's command to her husband, Conner Parish began his killing spree. Physician after physician felt the bug spray of bullets as Conner's little 9mm projectiles entered their heads and chests. The assemblage of rich investors, insurance executives, and physicians went down like spastic flies dying from bug spray. Blood leapt high into the air from their heads and chests. Each bullet released tiny blood pellets from the backs of their heads.

As Parish Conner progressed, the redness of blood began to coat the faces and clothing of nearly everyone who was close to his victims. The gunner walked

through the establishment with its defenseless and unarmed diners aiming his bullets here and there, taking enough time to make each shot count.

The doctors' expensive suits had not protected them. Instead, they had become useless visual rhapsodies of frail cloth inside the carnage that burst forth inside them. Blood covered their once graceful tables, steaks, forks, and floors. The groans of the dying survivors filled the room with a constant drone beneath the flow of Muzak sounds as weakening voices drifted over the myriad death clumps of more than one hundred victims. The scientifically calming selections of music whined softly and ironically over the surreal scene of death and dying.

## 28

When Parish's nightmare of revenge was over, the detectives and coroners arrived led by Detective Paul Meyers. They passively photographed the bodies, took measurements of distances. Blood specialists graphically illustrated splatter markings to detect the position of the shooter at the time of each carefully aimed shot. Very soon, Detective Paul Meyers gathered evidence that the shooter himself seemed to be an accurate head shot guy. He took the time to insure that his work created the maximum death toll as had most of the Obama Care killers they had either seen or read about in the newspapers. The shooters had learned in the press that head shots were the most effective manner of producing deaths with their 9mm weapons and their larger than life magazines filled with shells. They had obviously taken that information to heart. The killer had either learned sharp shooting and other sniper talents while in the military or had thought them out long enough by watching a plethora of well filmed crime movies on his TV set over the years. Everyone, it seemed, had become crime drama aficionados in their studies of the newest of forensic melodramas sweeping the nation's television screens.

"You'd think the government would get the big picture and crack down on the insurance companies and the doctors and put an end to this shit," Detective Paul Meyers told his sidekick who was Detective Bill Masters, "but they seem to be oblivious to all of this killing. I'm beginning to think they like this sort of thing."

Bill replied that, "FDR said that nothing happens by mistake. Everything is part of a bigger plan by government. So, yes, it is quite possible they wanted this to happen."

As he proceeded through the room, the coroner's gloved hands were dripping wet with the oozing claret. It was all he could do to keep the latex gloves from sticking to his camera as he made his way through the gore and mayhem, popping off photograph after photograph of the dead and dying. Now and then, he could actually hear a drop of blood hitting the floor from someone's oozing wound.

"Help my son," a woman pleaded. She was covered with blood. The coroner went over to the young man she was pointing at and felt the youth's throat.

"There's no pulse, mam," he told her. "Your son has passed away."

"Well, do something," she begged. "Please help him."

"I'm afraid it's too late, mam. He's dead. I'm very sorry for your loss."

The woman's moan filled the air. She crawled to her son and hugged his body and rocked up and down with him, pronouncing his name over and over, "Martin! Oh, Martin!"

Coroner Ansel Willis took her picture. It was the least he could do. Helplessness in the midst of mass murder had become one of the nation's specialties these days. Even the death examining coroner was overwhelmed by the hugeness of the enclosed killing field where he was now forced to inaugurate the grim workload ahead of him. So, Ansel went about his business of placing numbered cards on each body and snapping their pictures. He spoke into his cellphone recorder, saying things like, "Number 87, male, age approximately 35 years, bullet entered head and exited to the right side with blood splatter indicating his body fell in a forward spiral causing the corresponding blood markings to assume an upward arc."

"Having fun, coroner?" a detective named Dick Phillips asked him.

"Yes, but not as much fun as this gentleman with the entry and exit wounds indicating a perfect skull shot must have had."

Cruel humor was one of the coroner's specialties. It seemed to help him in keeping his mental balance under stressful scenes like this one.

"Wow, that does look nice," the detective said. "I bet your scalpel and your forensic cameras will love that one."

"I look forward to it," Coroner Ansel Willis said as he clicked off a picture of the victim. Willis turned away and spoke into his cellphone recorder, "Number 88, middle-aged male with entry and exit wounds to skull from what seems to be a small caliber bullet at very close range. Minor scorch marks close to entry wound indicates it was left there by a very close shot to the victim's head." He looked at Detective Phillips. "I bet we'll find excellent abs back in the autopsy room. Want to place five bucks on it?"

The detective lifted his white shirt revealing a fat beer belly down below. "Can't be better than my own world famous washboard abs," Phillips said, smiling sardonically. "Want to kiss them, do you?"

"Sorry, Phillips. The gag reflex would take over, I'm afraid."

"Yea, baby," the detective said. "All of you coroner fagots are alike. You only want the coroner's job so you can cut people without suffering prison time."

"That and the pay, officer. All that wonderful pay, you know."

"Tell me. I, too, am a millionaire in work loads."

The coroner smiled at Phillips. He was an all right cop. A barrel of laughs and an excellent boxer at the annual policeman-fireman fight games.

"You did really well in that fireman boxing match last month, Phillips."

"The guy gave me a few licks of his own, Ansel."

"I noticed. But you hung in there."

"Yea, I did. It was okay."

"Feel lucky?"

"Yea. The kid was tough. I got in three sucker punches. That's all that saved me."

"You were good, Phillips. Own the credit. Wear it proudly."

"I do. But a little humility helps. Don't you agree?"

"I suppose. But you earned the bragging rights."

“Naw, I respect that kid in the fire department too much to make light of him. He was good, Ansel. His punches were right on and very strong. He even pushed me back whenever he hit me. He was good.”

The coroner smiled. Phillips was a tough cop when he needed to be, but he had a heart of gold when the perp was in cuffs. He'd even pray with them at times in the cop car, wishing them well and telling them they could use their jail and prison time to overcome their dope addictions before they destroyed them, turn their lives around, and become better husbands and fathers to their wives and kids. Detective Phillips recalled a recent conversation with an arrestee on his way to prison. “It doesn't always have to be this way,” he counseled the youth. “I hope you will see the time you spend in the clink as a gift to help you stay away from the drugs and the bad boys you have been dealing with and restart your life in a new and more positive direction. The time you are going to spend in there can be either good for you or bad for you. I'm going to pray it will be good for you. Will you promise me you will pray on it and try to use it for a more positive outcome in your life this time? Don't let me down now.” Detective Phillips was good at this. The coroner knew several young gangsters whom Phillips had helped to turn around. The officer would sometimes visit their families when they were in jail to make sure they were surviving all right, and, if not, he'd help them to turn their lives around also. He'd even visit the prisoners in the jail to let them know he cared.

“You are a good man, detective,” the coroner told him. “I'll always respect you for that.”

“I appreciate it, Ansel. I really do.”

Their forensic cameras clicked, enlightening the spaces between bodies as their photographic light beams strobed angrily against the redness. They knew that most of these victims had died in a single heart beat.

## 29

Robert Adams and Cindy Travis had just finished an afternoon tryst of sex and coffee. Their session had been hot and wonderful. Their coffee and cream were leisurely. They were winding down and coffee was the calm after the storm. Their love trysts had become a regular send off to their keying of physician cars. To each of them, keying was a pleasant gesture. In addition, their inroads into vandalism had molded them closer together. They shared their crimes the way other lovers shared delicious pizzas at restaurants.

“So, you are a naughty girl in more ways than one, Cindy,” Robert said, grinning at her across the breakfast table in the kitchen.

“You aren't doing so badly yourself,” Cindy jabbered happily. “In fact, you are the regular little keystone bandit, aren't you?”

“You could say that, I suppose,” Robert said, smiling in the midst of their pleasant innuendos.

“You know, there's something about the sound of paint peeling off a Caddy with a fancy medical seal on its side window that sends me into heaven,” Cindy said. “I don't know what it is, but it is just so pleasant to hear it.” She laughed. Keying all



these cars for her had become downright habit forming. She totally loved the wickedness of vandalizing.

Robert touched Cindy's hand. "I love you, you know."

"Yes. I know."

"Is it mutual?"

"Yes. You know it is, Robert. Why would you need to ask?"

"Because I just need to hear it. That's all. Maybe I'm insecure. Perhaps my mom was too much of a bitch when I was in fifth grade during the many nights she sent me to my room without eating. Maybe I took it too personally. Who knows?" Robert mused.

"My mom did that to me, as well. Don't you think it's just a normal mom thing to do?" Cindy asked.

"I suppose it is. You make it sound so much like moms are Xeroxes of each other. I like to think my mom was special."

"Face it, Robert. Moms always read the same parenting books. It's no surprise to realize later that they were all acting alike. They were mostly doing what authors suggested they do."

"So, you are saying mom didn't starve me. It was a writer who did it?"

"Something like that. Yes. We are all victims of books, education, TV, and other mind charming venues like that," Cindy said.

Robert Adams pondered what she had said. She might be right. We were all victims of what we put into our heads. Once an idea entered, it rarely found its way out of the myriad of convolutions, synapses, and nerves that made up a person's brain and through it their personality. "All of us are victims of our tiny personal databases of triteness, you mean?" Robert asked.

"Exactly."

In thirty minutes, they were parked. They kissed and locked their doors. Soon, they were both walking through the gigantic hospital garage, finding doctor's cars, and keying their delicious sides. As they heard the paint peeling off under their key points, they surged with joy. It made their hearts warm to know that Robert's father was being vindicated. His fight to get back at the medical system for killing his wife was being carried on into the next generation. They had taken the flag and waved it in the face of the millionaires who ran the corruption known as Obama Care. The program was a blatant farce and wasn't really medical care at all. Instead, it was the total rejection of real care in the name of corporatist profit. Each of their key lines on these physician's cars were a protest against medically condoned murder. If people were to be treated that way and not supported in their worst moment of medical needs, then no physician was going to drive a Cadillac without key marks. Their windows also almost begged to be scratched, and rightfully so.

## 30

"That was certainly fun," Cindy said as they sat in a restaurant after scratching more than seventy-five physician cars. Her fingers were sore from the effort. "So

many cars, so little time,” she said whimsically, smiling like Lewis Carroll’s Cheshire cat.

“Indeed it was quite fun,” Robert said. “My dad would be proud. So would my mom.”

“Mine wouldn’t be proud of me, because she doesn’t understand that Obama Care is going to happen to her in her worst time of need. But she’s dead wrong, you know. She will be abandoned like all the others.”

“Yes, she will. And you will be so mentally hurt when that inevitable moment of corporatist greed occurs.”

“Absolutely,” Cindy said. “And I will be very upset. I might even do what your dad did.”

“I’d hate to see that happen, Cindy. You know how much I love you,” Robert Adams said. He reached over and squeezed her hand. It felt warm and lovely to hold. “You know I care a great deal for you.”

“Yes. I suppose that’s pretty clear by now. The feeling is mutual.”

Her words were definitely love songs in Robert’s ears. He loved Cindy a great deal, just as he had said. His heart was warm with feelings for her and had been for a long time.

## 31

Ranger James Stone adjusted his sighting scopes. His fifty caliber sniper rifle had been his baby ever since the Iraqi sands where he waded through tons of sweat and sandy Hummer platoons zigzagging through the desert wadis in search of fresh hajji meat. His trigger finger was always sure, and each victim was a personal victory in his bag of continuing tricks.

Today, he was in a woods inside Arlington cemetery where the dead languished in line after line of carefully arranged graves. Each person became a member of the corps, something dear to everyone who ever walked the halls of West Point as a hammered cadet and felt his face beaten into red lumps by his older cadet tormentors. It was all a part of the game, and it produced a bond between men that never died. Thousands of dead soldiers, husbands, and sons reclined in mock innocence beneath the land that Robert E. Lee once owned, an estate that went from agricultural pursuits to the resignation of fates that far outweighed a leaf of corn waving in General Lee’s fine southern farm field just south of Washington’s corrupt square of land. Each soul buried on Lee’s farm with his bony toe pointing skyward earned a well deserved sleep. That sleep had been purchased through years of abject boredom polishing brass Union buttons. The boys in those graves had fired glinting federal rifles during their last painful moments of youthful death, anguish, and bitterness. As they died, their voices emitted dreadful moans inside the deadly midst of battle. When it was over, some of them were only pieces of their original selves. Some had only a hand or an arm left. Their other parts had been lost, disintegrated within horrid, bloody battles that tore them into shreds faster than their lungs could toss out their death screams. Such were these grassy graves of the military people stretching for miles into the hills of Washington where wars were started for no reason at all, most of which seemed to be always

based on tawdry lies, each being concocted, fought, and waged for the elites' profit ledgers.

James felt his rifle with tenderness. She was not only his girl, but his baby. He loved her. The bite she placed inside his shoulder whenever he fired her into his target's shattering brains had always been good for James, because he loved a woman who inflicted pain, because love and pain to James were one and the same. A man was never born without the screams of his mother pushing him forward through her bursting thighs and a fine doctor's hands covered with blood pulling him gently out of his mother's weeping vagina.

It was the same with sniper death. The man or woman who fell from the hidden bullet in the darkness of the woods or on loud city streets bled just the same as in the birth canal. Life always marched grandly away through the madness of the sniper's rushing bullet as it sailed in and out of the exploding heads of his carefully targeted victims.

James keyed in on his present Arlington victim, an unknown target who had nothing to do with his son's death by Obama Care. James's revenge nestled like a baby in his hands as his fifty caliber spat out death after death, revenge after revenge on the immaculately uniformed burial soldiers of Arlington. James's magic fingers slowly and surely pulled its sweet hammer head into the ascending shell as its smooth projectile matriculated like a copperheaded dove of truth toward his intended target. James saw it sparkling in the air as it traveled into his distant target's expanding head wound. He watched the youth's blood splatter gushing out into the air. The finest of red pellets had been automatically emitted from the rear of his finely resplendent jarhead. The young man's falling torso revealed how his freshly strewn blood spray had drizzled along the faces, shirts, and pants of those who had been watching his back. The youth's sudden and very silent death struck James's carefully orchestrated terror into their hearts and souls.

James cross-haired the next man in his Browning gun sight. He saw him falling to the ground with his arms and legs dancing in a final death spasm. Through the lens, James also saw his second victim's blood pouring like a reddening Pepsi spill onto the walls and floor of the Vietnam Monument down below. He shot eight more Arlington honor guards in the next forty-three seconds. Their deaths were just as neat, because all of them were exact, clean kills. Still unnoticed by anyone, James broke down his rifle, placed it in his backpack and walked his bicycle back to the neatly slithering path he had ridden there on, and headed toward Washington where he knew his work would never be quite finished.

"I have many miles before I sleep, and many promises to keep," he muttered as his feet pumped the pedals of his bicycle.

The wind fluttered through his military clothes. James would always be the khaki warrior, always the ranger and the killer, always the avenger of his son's needless death from Obama Care.

Hell would freeze over before James would be finished avenging Brandon's death.

James stopped at Starbucks where he ordered his latte and eyeballed the Starbucks girl whose beautifully articulated hands massaged groups of neatly branded cups and pushed them at her dollar squandering customers, always giving them her best Starbucks smile.

“Thank you for your decision to drink the best coffee in the world,” she said with a smile as she handed each perfectly prepared cup to her customers.

James sat by the window, watching the people outside drift by. He thought about them as they slithered past his gaze. In James’s mind, they resembled like dry snakes dressed in suits. Most of them were government workers. They were tied by their wallets and their consultations to America’s constantly waged wars. James figured most of these government employees were inextricably joined to the deaths and dying of thousands of American soldiers overseas who were fighting for nothing. Most of them had become blood dripping government chumps. They had merely sold their worthless souls for the money needed to feed their wives and children. James tasted the scum atop his latte. It was filled with cream, the taste of which was far stronger and fattier than any breast milk James had ever sampled from his pregnant girl friends.

An hour later, he was stabbing a consultant of some sort in an alley in downtown Washington. As his knife sliced across the man’s throat, neither James’s face nor body betrayed his act, for he walked right past his victim’s flailing appendages as though the death dance were of no possible interest and only the sounds of his own calming feet were part and parcel of his being. James never internalized any of the deaths. It was as if he had been born a perfect sociopath when in actuality he had merely been trained as such at military facilities where he learned that killing was actually an honorable profession in which millions of his fellow Americans were gainfully employed in one way or another.

Next, he walked into the capitol building where tourists were being victimized by the youthful propagandists who paraded as tagged docents through the halls. The guides explicated on various intricacies of the architecture, art, and historical happenings of the ongoing American empire. James noted how everything seemed squeaky clean and how no one mentioned the wars that abounded worldwide where soldiers were being shredded into little pieces for the rich whose profits soared from the blood letting and mayhem.

James believed it was his job to spread the joy, making everyone else give a bit of their own blood to the cause of making his dead son whole again. They were paying for wars on both fronts now, domestic and foreign, and the veiled statistics that were always kept from the public languished in minds far greater than his own which placed Brandon’s death in forgotten reports that had been placed upon the president’s blood soaked desk. It was here that the stench of morbidity resided, for the corrupting of his government by the rich permeated everything Barak Obama, the commander and serial murderer in chief, ever touched.

The presidential dictator marched seamlessly side-by-side with his henchmen. He and the congress bowed before the wealthy who ordered up war after war and rapidly passed every law the insurance industry ever asked of them. After each long day of selling out and legislating the vast and overly expensive overseas wars they walked down to the senate bar for drinks and endless chatter.

He went several blocks toward downtown until he entered the private storefront office of one Senator Delwood Clay and sliced the throat of his four minimum wage secretaries along with fifteen student volunteers working in his constituent response lab. "That should piss him off," Stone thought. It was the least he could do after the prick had voted for Obama Care and later voted to limit its funding.

He saw the handsome students lying dead upon the floor. They were innocent as lambs. He watched their collective blood flowing into a pool surrounding their lifeless bodies.

He saw in his heart of hearts that it was all good.

"Thank you, Jesus," he said out loud to no one in particular. Using his fingers, he painted in blood the words Obama Care across the walls. He wanted their deaths to count for something. Now they did. Then, he turned around and left.

All-in-all, it was a good day's work. Now, it was off to the baseball stadium to kill some fans.

### 33

Ranger James Stone entered Nationals Park through a cargo door in the back. He simply hooked his legs through the metal rods that dangled beneath a beer truck and openly invited himself to a free ride. Once he was inside the major league baseball stadium's huge warehouse, he simply rolled out and stood as though he had been walking beside the truck. No one even took notice.

Making his way into the ball park stands above, James observed a medium sized fan whose plate was loaded with fresh nachos. James observed the greedy manner in which the guy stuffed his mouth. The man appeared to be well dressed and he seemed to be unshaven on purpose. James noticed that he was deadly fat, and happy as a bed bug as he waddled his huge frame forward into the ball park's seating.

Down below the athletes were slamming fists and balls into their gloves, waiting for the game to begin. As James walked down the outer aisles, he stuffed the empty seats with pamphlets discussing Obama Care in negative terms and stating that Americans would never sleep as long as the Obama Care scandal continued to kill their beloved mothers, fathers, sisters, and brothers.

James noticed the beautiful grass down below blowing in the wind. Their tiny waving blades of deep green instantly triggered his sniper specialist training. They indicated exactly how much he'd have to correct for air flow to accurately shoot his targets. To James it was just one more easy piece of cake in a long list of recent take downs.

James made his way to the top rows, where he checked things out to see if any guards were around, then positioned himself behind a wall of advertising signs that stood in the area of the National and American League score boards. He selected a particularly dark area where he could not only hide but rest his sniper rifle on a railing to stabilize his aim. In addition, this would place James in a dark shadow where no one in the stadium would ever see him as he methodically completed his deadly extermination spree.

The national anthem was announced and a war team of several armed and uniformed fascists marched forward as the voice in the speakers praised American glory in the middle eastern wars which cost Americans trillions of dollars and had gone on and on without end for years and all for nothing. The fans cheered and stood. As the team of singers began, James shot into the crowd with his silenced sniper rifle. He gently squeezed off shot after shot, connecting with the fans right atop their hearts where their hands had been placed in respect for their national anthem. In this way, his bullets entered their reverently placed hands then sliced through them and into their splintering ribs and then down even deeper into their warm, beating hearts below.

The instantly dying fans slowly slouched to the floors and across the chair backs as though they had fainted. Each victim had that one nail hole in his hand where the bullet rang true before passing through their ribcage and entering their hearts. In the two minutes that the anthem rang out, James shot 87 fans through the hand and heart. At that point, the stadium became quiet. Suddenly, the fans covered in blood splatter and standing above the dead and dying victims burst forth in a howling chorus of terrified screams. James continued firing his silenced shots again and pushed in more and more magazines as his rifle spat its deadly bees into the crowded seats. He aimed them into the foreheads of the American patriots down below and across the field. He was soon killing hundreds of them.

It was now becoming quite obvious to almost every person in the stands that something was dreadfully wrong. The fans in several areas that James had hit hard ran up the stairs and out of the stadium, dragging their children with them by their tiny hands. James shot several of these mothers and fathers at the top of the stairs just to stop them, blocking the exits to those trying to escape from below. To increase the terror he aimed at their children and shot them in their heads. The stadium began to panic even more as fans either ran to the sides for another exit or squeezed themselves under their seats to hide.

Stone felt his rifle heating up from the fast discharge and ejection of bullets. The heat made the Browning Fifty easier and faster to operate. James plugged more and more bullets into the fans. The small amount of sound his silenced sniper rifle made was over-ridden by the screams and yells of the hysterical Nationals fans as they tried to extricate themselves from James's deadly pounding bullets that fatally wounded the trapped and bewildered fans one after the other. In another seven minutes, the stands were even more alive with screaming. People pushed their fellow fans to the side, attempting to walk over them, and scramble into the increasingly scarce exits in the shortest possible time. Some were rapidly walking on top of the rows and heading in all directions to reach their exits before being shot.

*You bastards will pay, James thought to himself. My son's death will be avenged as long as I can make it happen!*

James's rifle popped again and again as the announcer's voice asked for calm and told the people to proceed to the exits in an orderly manner.

Next, he took out the honor guard. Their flags fell to the ground alongside them in reddened cloth clumps. That particular stroke of sniping genius sent even more horror into the already frightened fans below.

In the end, the stairs and seats were blood stained with spraying micro-pellets of gore. The TV cameras surveyed the on-going mayhem, and the official play-by-play broadcaster told the fans listening on radio and watching on television how, "Something seems to be happening here. It seems that a sniper is shooting down fans right and left all over Nationals Park. The fans are dropping to the ground in large numbers. My God, the humanity! Look at that! The sniper has even killed the honor guard! I have never seen anything so hideous and disgusting in my entire lifetime of sports announcing.

I am praying that these fans who are badly wounded are going to survive this awful mass murder attempt. Look! Those that ran onto the field to escape are also being shot. They are falling down within ten feet of third base! Now some have gone down right behind home plate! Oh my god! This is a national tragedy of immense proportions. I am not sure how many fans are either wounded or dying at this very moment. It could be in the hundreds, maybe even more, and it's still going on. The bullets are silent. We cannot hear anything until a well aimed bullet smashes into a luckless fan with a sickening thump. This horrible sound of flesh yielding to a madman's bullets is terrible. This is worse than a Jason horror flick. I know instinctively that it is going to haunt me for the rest of my life.

"If you are religious in any way, please pray for all of these victims. They seem to be falling like flies out there, and nowhere in National Park is it safe at this point. Oh my God! Is it ever going to end? It is going on and on and on! The blood is splattering here and there and just about everywhere and even those who are not yet shot are covered with the stuff as they make their way toward the exits and fields. Pray for them out there. Pray for us all. Who knows? I might be next. And there's no way to even hear where the shots are coming from. We are all in the dark as far as the gunman or gunmen are concerned. We don't know where they are or where to hide."

The voice of the Nationals Park loudspeaker again urged the patrons not to panic, but to continue to exit in an orderly fashion, but for those whose loved ones had already died, it was too late. They were fighting and doing whatever they could to get out of the various killing areas inside the stands where death and dying was all around them.

"Thump! Thump!"

The bullets clattered through the fans for eight or nine minutes. Then, all of a sudden, they stopped.

The stadium had become an even louder and seething sea of screams and cries. The countless wounded lay dying while their friends and families called for a doctor, a refrain which the voice of the stadium's loudspeaker soon took up saying, "If you are a doctor, please treat these people. Please come forward and help them! If there is a doctor, please come forward and help!"

The broadcasters put out the call on live radio and television to hospitals and ambulances to come immediately, to bring their doctors, medical bags, nurses, supplies, and whatever staff members they could muster to Nationals Park to help the hundreds of dying persons who were being shot from nowhere by an unknown shootist.

"If you are at a hospital or a doctor's office, please ask the doctors and nurses to leave now and to proceed directly to the Nationals Park. Come now, because there

are too many to be taken to hospitals. These people require immediate attention. Please, doctors and nurses, bring all of the necessary tools and drive right away to Nationals Park where you are sorely needed.”

They came by the hundreds. A massive onslaught of specialists from all over Washington, whether from private, public, and military hospitals. All of them moved rapidly toward the scene of overwhelming tragedy at the baseball park.

At CNN, smart phones and digital cameras held by fans transmitted picture after picture of the dead and dying. The indy press was also abuzz. HD videos of the panic and fan reaction surged across the nation’s computer and TV screens from video phones. Their owners cowered, took pictures, and realized these might be the last few minutes of their lives.

The nation’s gaze was riveted on Nationals Park and the dying fans sprawled in the chairs and across the aisles.

At Fox News, the announcers were ranting about terrorism coming to the United States, saying, “It hit the Boston Marathon and now it has raised its ugly head at a place more American than apple pie. It has struck at the fans watching a major league baseball game, and it has done so right in the heart of the nation’s capitol. It seems that no one is safe from terror this summer. Look at these pictures and videos. They are pouring into our studios second-by-second, and we are going to bring them to you unedited as we receive them as we try to bring you the rapidly breaking news of this tragedy. I want to warn those who have family members attending this game that it might be very inappropriate of your children or yourselves to be watching this right now in case a member of your family has been shot in this melee. If your family members are in Nationals Park, please turn off your TV set. That is my best recommendation. But for the rest of us, these instant HD videos and photographs of the developing news of a significant tragedy are unprecedented in their ability to instantly bring home to us what real Americans like ourselves are experiencing there at National Park at this very moment and the feelings they are expressing at this very terrifying national tragedy.

“The gunfire which no one heard actually, if first reports are correct, may indicate that some type of silencer might have been used allowing the people in the stands to be shot out of nowhere one after the other with no gunshot sounds ever being heard. Evidently, the killer or killers, we are not sure how many are involved, have not been identified. They are still at large. The situation remains very dangerous.

“Everything is so sketchy right now. Is the shooting over? Will it start up again? We just don’t know. This is a developing story. It is another tragedy for America. It is possible that high level politicians at this game were targeted, we just do not know yet. It has been rumored but not yet verified that some high level government figures and their families may be among the stricken.”

A photograph of a parent holding her young daughter covered in blood and screaming was plastered across the TV screen. “This woman is obviously distraught. We are not sure if this is her child. However, it is a child whether hers or someone else’s, and she is overwhelmed with emotion, grief, and a sense of loss. Look at her face. This just so awful. Now, we are going to the white house where a statement is going to be made.”



The president walked into the white house press room where he stood for several minutes, looking at the press members. He waited for them to become totally still so that he could speak to them.

“My friends, we have been witnessing another tragedy of immense proportions. I have had to speak with you concerning many similar tragedies of late. First of all, let me express my condolences to all of those whose family members were injured or killed in this senseless act of domestic violence. Even with such powerful tools as the Patriot Act, NDAA, and NSA, we have suffered another shocking and terrible incident as well as other shootings in public places of late. I think I can speak for all of us in asking for your prayers for the victims and families whose lives have been so seriously affected here at major league baseball’s Nationals Park. We shall not allow these activities to end our American way of life.

“I ask you to be careful when you leave your home, work, or school today and in the future, because these tragedies can happen to you or to anyone close to you. I have signed an executive order closing all public events today. All such places where people gather including restaurants are being asked to close down, until we assess what to do tomorrow and for the days to come. We want to insure the American people that these venues are once again as safe as they can be. We need to find out how these persons got into the stadium without being seen and stopped.

“I have asked experts in all areas to determine better answers to making certain that another act like this is stopped before it happens, once and for all. I never want to preside as your leader at a mass murder like this ever again, and I will try my best to insure that this cannot happen to our people either now or in the future. Thank you.”

A question came forward from a reporter, “Mr. President, do you think this is another atrocity meant to avenge the death of a family member who was denied health care by the present administration?”

“I certainly hope that is not the case. Next question.”

“Mr. President, what are you doing, if anything, to change America’s approach to medical care including the role of the profit-driven American insurance industry concerning what is happening right now? Will there be a change in policy as a result of these horrible murders by disaffected family members?”

“The government will not be railroaded by terrorists of this ilk,” President Obama said. “We will not back down in cowardice, but we will care for the people of this nation in a forthright and honest manner as we have always done. Everyone seeking care will be given care. Every operation on an American citizen that is necessary will be approved and given in a very timely manner. I will not allow anyone to go untreated, nor will I allow delays in treating these cases. I intend to erase all stumbling blocks to patient care and to end all delays in receiving it. This is my promise to you. The American people shall be treated with respect. All manner of treatment will be approved wherever warranted by each patient’s diagnosis. No one will be deemed too old to be treated. I am issuing an executive order to this effect tonight.”

“Will you attend a mass funeral for these sports fans?”

“Yes. I will attend their funerals and memorials, and I will do so at the National Cathedral here in Washington and another one at Nationals Park itself. I will

appear anywhere and everywhere that I am needed and no terrorist, no matter how brazen or cowardly, shall hinder me in carrying out my mandate for representing the great people of this nation.”

## 34

James Stone made his exit from Nationals Park. He had successfully left behind a nation filled with panic. Fears of home grown terrorism were being discussed at high and low levels, from the president’s policy makers at the white house to Glenn Beck on the Fox Radio and Television News Programs. In the bowels of the white house, planners gloated over the Nationals Park massacre, because the war on terror had experienced so much trouble gaining traction in a news environment in which so few credible terrorist acts had surfaced since the fake terror war was started in the year 2002 and had been mostly boring, hard-to-sell, and non-consequential. Whether it was or not, the murders at Nationals Park struck home as an act of terrorism. It gave the war some credibility.

Many Americans were pissed because most of them considered the business of baseball to be a national icon which in the best of times ought to be unassailable. In fact, however, baseball itself was simply a highly profitable privately owned enterprise of the very rich. The sport was run solely by and for the old men and women who possessed enough wealth to own one of the extremely expensive baseball franchises.

However, the people in the white house weren’t complete dummies. Their public relations people grabbed onto the tragic stadium incident with supreme gusto, waving it like a bloody flag before the faces of the American people. This mass killing was a rare chance for Obama to turn things around a bit and to possibly even begin to shine. Obama’s hidden men told themselves over and over again with perfect Straussian logic that a tragic massacre dumped onto huge and greedy political laps should not be allowed to languish like a dying bug. The white house press corps immediately went about its task of fully exploiting these killings for the fortuitous political treasure they might become.

So, white house spokesmen appeared in the press room every fifteen minutes, stroking the reporters with seamy observations about terrorists, each time repeating worn out cliches on the subject which had been thought up and permanently codified by the nation’s cleverest and most fascist college professors in think tanks years before.

These grossly paid teams of professors were richly funded by government as well as private grants. Only last summer, new and very redundant reports that endlessly rehashed old thoughts had been written and handed to the white house restating what had been said many times by the Austrian socialist and traveling university professor named Leo Strauss how, “no good tragedy should ever be allowed to die without being pumped for political advantage.” The reports explained how each event in which blood was spilled must always be re-exposed to the public again and again ad infinitum for propaganda purposes. For the presidency, such events were certain political gold. They had always been a patriotic godsend. They should be mined, harvested, and used at just the right

moment, and this, evidently, was the perfect moment for Obama to exploit Nationals Park to achieve thereby a boost in his popularity rankings.

The white house press secretary handed out a foundation study and its corresponding FBI report stating that, “domestic terrorists are mostly white men who live in the basements of their autocratic mothers and spend their time watching cable news and reading mystery novels. In addition, some of these revenge artists, though not all of them, might be imported terrorists who regularly visit middle eastern conspiracy sites where they are easily misled and taught how to make bombs and plan social disorder activities such as killing innocent people in malls, theaters, offices, airplanes, and on highways.”

It did not matter that this type of psychological banter was nothing but conjecture best befitting the appellation of the worst of academic bullshit, because no one in the press was ever going to treat such discussions negatively until it had been accepted hook, line, and sinker and discussed as credible factual material worthy of tucking inside the nation’s belief systems without some Doubting Thomas pulling its politically contextual wings away with the pleasure of a wicked child killing a fly on the school playground. Of course, that would eventually be done, but the press would wait for months to do that. Instead, they would run with the terrorist agenda and use it to further puff up government fascist departments by suggesting how hard they worked on preventing these episodic outbreaks using such idiotic phrases as, “we should be happy that a cadre of highly paid experts are busy at work on these terrorist conspiracies so that we can be secure in our homes, sleep safely each evening, and drive to work without being bombed on our highways.” It didn’t matter to the news media that most of these things had never happened to anyone. It was enough that their editors wanted them to run with it, because their press seats in the white house press room were contingent on them actually and rapidly using the stories the government wanted to see printed daily in the newspapers or hawked by the news reading elites on their nightly TV news shows. If they didn’t perform, their seats could and would be taken withdrawn from them at the white house and given to some worthy reporter who would. These were the unspoken rules, and the white house press corps knew them for what they were. The rules were followed faithfully by those wanting to get ahead as reporters, and the well paid press corps gingerly and faithfully reported on the president’s policy statements just the way they were expected to be voiced.

Meanwhile, James Stone had once again re-entered the Nationals Park. Soon, he had secured a large number of plastic bombs to the pilings holding up the inside of the stands high above the entry way along with triggers set to explode in three days, thirty-seven hours and three minutes which would be exactly five hours after the building reopened to the public and two hours before the evening news. It was also the time at which the president would be in Nationals Park for a memorial service. This was going to be good.

Mr. Stone might be a serial killer fighting against Obama Care, but he was definitely not an inexperienced public relations dummy. He could and would grab headlines from the president’s men. He placed more and more of the bombs including many designed to bring down the humongously large and heavy light poles that hovered high above the stands. He hoped the visual effect of their

collapse would be dramatic. In his mind, he saw them catapulting down upon the helpless fans.

*They will pay for what they did.*

## 35

Many years ago, James remembered how his beautiful wife Berenice often sat across from him and feasted on the family's leg of lamb. Things had been far different then. At that time, Stone still believed in a golden future for himself and for America. The young couple had been dreaming of the future, digging into the warm and tasty meat shanks, drooling over the combination of gravy, potatoes, celery, orange, lemon, and carrot spiced with savory, cinnamon, peppercorns and sea salt. As usual they had been making light conversation.

"This is very good," James commented.

"Yes." Berenice said, "and it's even better than usual which I didn't think was possible."

"I agree."

They ate in silence interspersed with political repartee so they could enjoy the atmosphere as well as the taste along with their soft conversations. Both were of the belief that cuisine was a national treasure that went far beyond mere patriotic borders and represented a bevy of cultures that blended together inside the nation's millions of kitchens.

These were James's Halcyon days. They were times when James's future seemed not only golden but endless.

Later that evening, he slipped under the covers and held Berenice in his arms. Their son was sleeping down the hall. Everything seemed perfect. "I love you," he whispered. She knew it. They had been married for years and had dated ever since high school.

Later, during the Iraqi and Afghanistan Wars the two of them had worn copies of their son, Brandon's, dog tags both atop and underneath their shirts to remember him by. Every evening she spent with James, she smiled. "You are so good to me," she said. "You know how to treat a woman no matter where we are." Her lips nibbled his ear. They absorbed themselves in their embraces, then fell asleep. Tomorrow would be another busy day.

Today, those years were merely memories. Berenice was dead and so was Brandon. As for James, his life was totally different from what he had dreamed it would be. Now, he had more than several things to do and miles to go before he slept.

## 36

The president addressed the funeral of the dead at Nationals Baseball Park. The huge stadium was filled with fans. The politicized ceremonies were publicly televised all over the world. This was an opportunity for the president to gain

terrific political advantage for himself, his party, and his friends who paid to keep him in office.

“My friends, we are here to respect the lives and memories of the fallen. Today, our battles may well be in our schools and restaurants and even in our baseball parks because mad men never know an end to the evil their minds may conceive and carry out against us.

“So, today, we mourn twenty-eight year old Daniel Parker, a well trained computer programmer, who leaves behind his wife, Melanie, who is a graduate of Carnegie Mellon University and holds a Master of Business Administration. In addition, our hearts go out to their children, Bill Parker, who is eight years old and Melissa Parker who is six years old. Both of his children are bewildered as to why their father hasn’t come home. Both wonder why their father will never again take them to Nationals Park for a baseball game. Both also will wonder in their futures why their father did not live long enough to attend their college graduation ceremonies, their weddings, and the births of their children. Because of what happened here, that will never happen for them. My sympathies go out to them and their mother for his loss. This is a great loss for America, but even more of a personal loss for them.

“There are so many whom we respect here today including Maria Rodriguez who was a mother of three girls ages three, five, and eight years and who wonder why they will never see her at home again nor hear her reading them their bed time stories each night as she tucks them in. Maria can never do that again for them. Her husband, Jesus Rodriguez can never hold Maria in his arms again, as he stands in for Maria in caring for their wonderful children, but even though her husband is very good with his children, nothing he knows will ever replace the woman’s touch which the entire family must now live without and for all of time, because that is how long she will be gone from them. For all of time. Her loss will be borne by them, and she will be missed during the entire length of their lives. They cannot even conceive of this as yet, but in the following years they will form an interior knowledge of just how permanent their separation from their mother has become.

“What I can assure the American people is that you should not be afraid for your lives. This memorial we are having today at Nationals Park should show you that the United States is still perfectly safe despite what happened here a few days ago. We are not going to allow you to be hurt by these sociopaths who hide behind political platitudes, espouse terrorist acts against you, or talk down the absolute generosity and safety of our new federal medical system. I promise you this here and now that we shall leave no stone unturned in bringing this person or persons to justice.”

Suddenly on cue, explosions rocketed through the stadium, sending tons of electric stadium lights into the sky to float out and down onto the stands below in a stadium filled to the brim with fans. Tens of thousands of fans and funeral attendees were either hurt or killed by tons of crashing metal. The explosives James had placed on the poles hours before had done their work.

He had planned his demolition of Nationals Park well. After what was about to happen, many people would be afraid to leave their homes. Entire segments of the economy such as sports events, restaurants, shopping malls, parks, travel, tall

hotels, and other assets would soon be seen by the heads of families all over the nation as places of grave danger to themselves and their children.

In one of the millions of homes, the occupants were yelling at the unfolding horror, shouting at their HDTV screens, "Oh, my God! The stadium is exploding! Look at that, honey!" The woman screaming was Ellie Williams. She lived with her family members in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She was not alone. Ellie was accompanied by millions of others who were also on their feet inside their homes. Almost all of them were frightened and appalled at what they were seeing.

"They are going to kill us all," her husband said.

"I'll tell you one thing," Ellie said. "I'm never attending anything in a stadium again! Period! I am staying away from those places from now on."

Similar voices in one hundred million homes were dialing their cell phones and imparting the same message to their social networks.

"We are staying home from now on. All of us!"

"So are we!"

Soon attendance in public places would begin to rapidly wane.

Americans were sufficiently frightened now, so much so that they would restrict what they did in public places. The nation was about to switch from being constant consumers who visited malls for their shopping entertainment to nester's who tended to shop at home, play on the Internet, watch Netflix movies, and avoid crowded malls and 3D movie theaters where killers might be either placing similar bombs or buying rifles to shoot them where they sat.

America's Obama Care Hell was in full swing. The lights on the white house phone boards lit up as did phones to police stations and FBI offices all over the world from those who were watching the funeral.

"We have a national tragedy all right, ladies and gentlemen! This stadium has gone from a somber memorial to absolute horror and panic. People are fighting once again to get out of their seats. It is a repeat of several days before. Panic could not be more intense inside Nationals Baseball Park. Some are not moving but are attending to the thousands who are trapped and injured by the fallen debris that litters much of what was once a proud Nationals Park. You and I are witnessing a dead and blood soaked little girl being hugged by her mother and father. They are frightened, and many others in this stadium are in tears. These tragic scenes are unfortunately being repeated all over Nationals Park where the dead and dying are emitting a sea of moans that you probably hear right now on your television sets out there across our great nation. If you have children in the room, please send them to another room with neither television nor Internet access until this is over. Children should not be watching this horrible sight of injured and dying, and I should not be watching it either but it is my job to continue announcing this national tragedy.

"Look.

"The president is being hustled off the podium which was soon hit with huge pieces of falling metal any one of which could have killed him instantly. The president, as you can see, is surrounded by secret service guards who are making sure he does not stand up but remains crouched below them. The president is resisting them but to no avail. They will not let him stand or say anything. Instead

they are rushing him away from the danger that threatens all of us in this stadium where we are not sure that everything we've witnessed is over.

"We see a military helicopter coming down for a landing deep inside the stadium now, and the secret service is rapidly escorting the president of the United States in its direction. They are keeping his head down and his entourage of protectors are five men deep. They are acting as human shields in case gunfire in his direction breaks out. We are not sure of our own safety here in the broadcasting booth high above home plate, and we all fear for the president and his men on the field below where they are an open invitation to an assassination attempt by whoever and whatever is orchestrating this horrible nightmare at Nationals Park. If you pray, please pray for all of us now at your home, for the president and the first lady who are now being placed in the helicopter. Now, the president is being helped up. He seems to be alright, at least for now.

"Ladies and gentlemen, this breaking news event is something so totally unbelievable to all of us. We never thought anything like this would ever happen.

"And now, the helicopter with the president and the first lady is lifting slowly into the air. The secret service is left down below probably waiting for another copter to pick them up. Military personnel fill the copter with the president using their own bodies to protect the first family. He is leaning out and waving to the stadium, and now they have literally jerked the president back and again have placed their bodies between him and the open door of the copter, to offer themselves as protection from any potential terrorist who might be in the stadium aiming a rifle in his direction. Now, the copter is rapidly moving over the top of the stadium and is seen heading toward some unknown place, with the first family inside it. Now, several additional military copters are entering the stadium. We can see members of the secret service waving to them. Evidently, this is where they are going to be taken away to protect the president of the United States of America who has had to flee Nationals Park in what can only be described as a scene of mayhem, destruction, and disgraceful chaos. This is something that we hope will never happen in our life times again.

"I am in such a state of shock. All of us are in shock. In fact, I and others in the booth are shaken to our core. There is so much death and madness in the twisted steel inside the stadium, in the seating and on the field where tons of steel were hurled from the exploding metal metal above us that used to house the huge lights for night games in this magnificent baseball venue and which forever after tonight will be a memorial stadium to commemorate the dead and dying who are screaming and crying out for help all around us down below.

"Many children in this baseball park are dead and dismembered. Their families are clustered about them in frightened circles, many of them covered in blood that splattered onto tens of thousands of persons from the bodies of fans whose lives were snuffed out like the tiniest of candles, their smallest of living flames no longer lit, their minds silenced forever. Whatever lives these people had before them exist no more. Hundreds if not thousands have been killed and many more injured by the tremendous burst of shrapnel from the exploding pilings which securely held the humongous lighting system above us, most of which have fallen like matchsticks upon the audience. There seems to be another problem, ladies and gentlemen.

“The roofing over left field has begun to sag. Huge sections of it are crumbling. It is coming down. The people below it are looking up at it. They are trying to save themselves now, scattering in all directions, but there are too many in front of them doing the same thing. This is madness. This huge stadium roof is actually crashing down atop them. People are being instantaneously crushed by the hundreds. But, sorry to say, that is not going to be the end of it.

“Now it is letting go again, and it is moving over the seats toward the edge of the stands. Oh, no! Now the stands are crumbling and buckling. Bodies are falling under the broken stands to the stands down below them. The second level is now sliding and is now falling down upon the first level. Oh, my God! This is horrible! These people are also being crushed to death by the weight of tons of metal.

“The red we see everywhere has to be from the fans who have been taken away inside this collapse. Oh, the humanity! This is awful.

“I don’t think I can take too much more of this. I am so saddened by the horror that is taking place.

“Another set of these huge stands is now crumbling and falling over into the stadium itself. I can see bodies literally floating down through the air. They tumble in front of me like tiny dolls onto the field. It is so surreal. Oh, the horror of it! Everything around me seems to be in slow motion, yet it is all happening so quickly. The horror. The absolute horror. I cannot tell you what I am seeing.

“I know that you can see it at home in HD, and I wish that you couldn’t. There are things happening here that we should never have witnessed in our lives. This is one of those terrible things that none of us should have to see. I don’t know about you out there in your homes and office buildings, but this will haunt me forever. As long as I live, I will be looking down onto this sea of blood in the stands, the aisles, and on what was once a beautiful baseball field.

“Now, more stands are bending over. We fear the worst is about to happen. Our own part of this building is beginning to shudder. I have no idea what that means, but there’s nowhere for me to go to get away from it. Whatever happens, one thing is for sure, all of us in this studio are doomed to suffer the fate that awaits us, whatever it is. In a way, I feel it would be merciful if I were to perish here right now with thousands of fans, those who have died in front of me. Why should I outlive them? I shouldn’t. I have no right to survive them. I’m not as good a person as many of them are, and I will be the first to confess that to you.

“No. There is yet another huge wrenching motion and a loud noise. The stands above and to the left of me are now buckling. The radio room where I am broadcasting is now beginning to twist slightly. I am trapped. The door behind me no longer is connected to the outer rim of the stadium beneath which my broadcast booth was once securely suspended. This may be the end. I am not sure of anything at this point. What happens to me is of no consequence now. I am ready to accept whatever cards have been dealt to me and my co-workers in this approaching calamity. Another great movement of the floor. The ceiling above me has torn away. Metal is coming down inside this place. I will continue broadcasting as long as I can. The studio is moving downward now. Something seems to have broken. We are almost afloat. Our box is moving with the side stands down onto the seats below us, just as others have done and just as I feared would happen.



“God help those who might be down there below us. I hope they are going to be able to escape this falling debris that I and my radio colleagues are rapidly becoming a part of. I have changed over to a cell phone that has been handed to me. I have been told by staff to run for it now that we have stopped moving and are at fan level and forty-five feet below where we once were. I am climbing onto the stands that used to be way below us but which are now right at our front wall.

“You can hear the screams down below me. People are hurting down there. Some have been crushed by what just happened. I was just now able to extricate myself from the booth. I am at the aisle, making my way down, trying to get out as best as I can. I see a stair that still leads down to other seats below us. I will soon be trying get there before this entire facade comes down once again and slides into the baseball field taking thousands of mourners with it including myself and my staff. I am moving as fast as I can. Now I am reaching those stairs leading down to the stands below me and eventually to the baseball field. Mam, can I help?”

“Yes, sir.”

“I am helping her up. Run, mam. Try to get into the middle of the field. I fear this might collapse very soon.”

“I’ll try.”

“She is running. I do not know who the lady is. I’d say she looks like someone’s grand mother. I hope that doesn’t offend her, my saying that. I am just trying to bring you this story as best as I can, and I say this only because she looks like a grandmother that I have and whom I love very much. She just made it to the grass. As I say, she is running. I have now stepped onto the grass. I am hurrying as best I can.

“I am out of breath, and you can probably hear me panting. This has been very hard on all of us in a physical sense. I am trying to get as far away from the stands as I can. So many of them have collapsed and slid down onto the grassy areas. Several new ones are sliding onto the field right now, and people are attempting to scramble as fast as they can to escape them. Some got away. Some did not. Like myself, many are exhausted.

“I am now behind third base, and I am inside a group of people who are very wary of what is going to happen to us next. Like me, they are afraid some of the stands may come down and wipe them away, and that would not be good. It would probably mean our end. There are bodies all around us down here. The scene is ghastly, to say the least.”

“Sir, would you care to speak with Americans out there about what has happened here today?”

“It is terrible. That’s all. I’ll never come to another game. I’ll tell you that right now. I have never been so frightened in my life.”

“Would you like to identify yourself to let your family know that you are okay?”

“I’m Phil Gains of Silver Springs, Maryland. I’ll be home tonight, if I get out of here alive. So far, I’ve been lucky. Luckier than many others in here today. That’s for sure.”

“Are you serious about never coming to a stadium again, Mr. Gains?”

“I’m as serious as a heart attack. This is my last one. Period. End of the story. After being here during the shootings and now for this, I’m not placing myself at

risk in a public place ever again, and I'm going to be very wary at malls and wherever I park. That's the God's honest truth, sir."

"Well, thank you for speaking with me, and I'm glad that you are alive and safe, Mr. Gains. Our prayers go out for your continued safety, sir."

"Thank you."

"I have a family of four here, who would like to say something. Can you identify yourself for your families and for the audience out there. I think the cameras are rolling, so they can see you as you speak."

"I am Bob Lockstead with my wife, Windy, and my son Rick who is fifteen years old and my daughter Regina who is sixteen years old. We are from Reston, Virginia and were here for the funeral service. We had no idea of the dangers involved in coming here. Don't they have security here twenty-four hours a day to stop people from blowing these things up and killing thousands of people? That's what I want to know. This is an outrage. My family has been attacked, and thousands of kids and dads are dead right up there and everywhere else in here." He started to cry, then, said, "I have to stop. This has been too much for me. I'm going to have to be alone a bit. Sorry, I have been doing my best trying to save my family. You know how it is."

"Yes, sir. I do know how it is. Unfortunately, a lot of people are trying to save their families here today. It is very stressful to be here and wondering if the entire stadium is about to collapse on top of us. It's the luck of the draw whether we who are still alive will live or die here, today. Even the president had to be taken out of Nationals Stadium with the first lady and their two children in a special military helicopter. I assume they were afraid to use the president's copter for fear someone out there might target it and shoot it down.

"I am just surmising this. No one said that was true. However, the president's copter was nearby just outside this building, but they did not put the president inside his own copter, and I take it there was a security reason behind that decision. He may be heading for the white house, or they might take him to a military base for protection considering the liquidity of the present situation.

"If you thought that terrorism was over, then both you and I were given a heads up this week at Nationals Park where hundreds were killed starting right here just a few days ago, and it may be thousands more are being killed here today. I will make no conjectures about who is behind the mayhem and death. I will leave that to the authorities to decide, and when they do, our networks will bring that information to you.

"I see another part of the stadium has started to come down, same as the other parts. The stands and roofs seem to be literally pulling themselves down one upon the other. The pattern seems to be going that way and repeating itself over and over. Something in the overall infrastructure of this stadium has been tragically damaged by these explosions. First one section is hit with the massive release of metal from above, then a piece of it eventually fails. After that, an entire section begins to pull away and eventually falls down upon the section just below it. Then, a little bit later, the adjoining section, already damaged when the one next to it fell and bent part of it, that next section starts to fall. First it bends toward the one that damaged it, then it seems to pull forward and bend down onto the stands below before literally breaking free and falling more rapidly. All of the layers of

these stands are compromised and damaged beyond repair. People standing below them are crushed as they fall upon them. Then, the stand that fell on them starts to slide down onto the field. It seems to literally fall off the stand below it and slide onto the baseball field killing more fans along the way. Some of these huge sections of stands have even flipped head over heels on their way to the grassy playing field. This is exceedingly dangerous business. I have been told that we are still transmitting, so I will continue with my reporting using this cell phone. At least a few television cameras are still working, and I must say that the fact these cameras are remotely controlled is the only reason you are seeing me as well as the parts of the stadium from which we are transmitting live to you. When you saw those stadium levels coming down, those were real people dying beneath them as the tons of stands and debris crushed them where they stood. So many have died here, and it may not be over. The architecture of Nationals Park still seems to be in flux as I speak. There have been sounds of bending metal, parts falling into the street from the outer walls, and other indications of things happening that I don't even wish to think about.

"If you are religious, please say prayers for me and for these people all around me. We are in deep trouble here, and it won't take a lot for other pieces of this huge edifice to come down right here where I am standing and wipe all of us away. This is still very much possible. We just don't know. I'd like to run under the stand and reach the outside, but as you have probably seen from mobile cameras outside, there are things going on out there as pieces from the roof roll off and plummet to what used to be a wide expanse of sidewalk down below. Now, the souvenir salesmen and the cotton candy hawkers have fled the scene. Most of them even abandoned their entire stache of souvenirs and treats in their attempts to flee the scene. That's something I never thought I would ever see. Everyone who can get out has gotten out and have run as far from the stadium as their legs can carry them. Those who can go home to their warm beds and their loving families tonight have started to do that. But thousands of us are stranded in here as emergency crews continue to arrive, as engineers assess the situation, and as we await our fates, whatever our fates may turn out to be. That is the situation. It is not a good one.

"We have seen things and felt things and heard things that will stay with us for a long while. Many of the people here will replay this nightmare over and over, and many who have witnessed this on their new HD television sets are undoubtedly seeing horrible things that will fester forever inside their souls. I am certain that many of these fans will be seeking counseling help in the days to come whether they were here with me in the crumbling parts of this magnificent stadium or whether they were at home and transported here on their HD television sets, seeking far crisper pictures of the dead as they died, just watching it right there inside their living rooms, witnessing all of this carnage.

"This is why we asked you to remove all young people from the vicinity of these broadcasts, because young minds are so easily hurt by pictures of people struggling to live but who cannot even hope to escape their fates.

"Can I bother you for a moment, sir? I see you are wearing a uniform. What is your name, and what can you tell us about what you know concerning what has happened and is happening here today."

“My name is Sergeant Lance Carroll, and I’m with the 82nd airborne. I was here today with my family.”

“Are they okay? Your family, I mean.”

“No. They are not okay. At least, I’m not sure. I was not with them when the stand fell upon the place where they had been sitting.”

“Have you been over there since then?”

“Yes, I have.”

“Can you describe what you found there?”

“Chaos. People moaning, people bleeding out under tons of concrete, and no way to get to them. I could see parts of my children through the cracks in the concrete, including their faces, but there was no way I could reach them. No one could reach them. Since then, the building moved, and I cannot locate them.”

“And your family?”

“I dunno. They are down there, sir.”

“Are they okay?”

“I don’t know, sir. I wish I knew. It’s not looking good for them, sir. I just can no longer find exactly where they even were when the roof and seating collapsed on them. Since then, everything on top of them has moved down onto the field leaving piles of heavy debris in its wake.”

“What do you think happened?”

“I’m afraid.”

“Of what.”

“Of you know what. I just can’t say it. I have to go now. I’ll start to cry soon. I have to get out of here. I’ve said too much already.”

“Thank you, sergeant. I’m afraid my questions have upset the husband and father whose family members are still unaccounted for. They are now beneath the sandwich of steel and concrete which used to be the floor just above them. But now it is not above them. It is resting right on top of them and has even slid down onto the field, and most likely it might have carried them with it. He had found where they were trapped, then the building shifted again, and he has no idea where they are down there in the mess of concrete.

“This is not good. I hope and pray that they are still alive and well under that massive mess that has entrapped them in its collapsing web of indifferent stadium chairs. Hopefully they are in an air pocket safe and sound right now, that rescuers will find them, and that they will be reunited with their very worried father whom you have just met.

“I see a policeman standing next to me. Who are you, sir, and what can you tell me concerning the present situation as you know it?”

“I am Officer Brent Higgenbaum, and I am here with my family. I was here when this started. I wanted my kids to see the president.”

“And did your kids see the president?”

“Yes, they did see the president.”

“And are they okay, Mr. Higgenbaum?”

“Yes. Fortunately they are alive and well. They are standing over there.” He pointed to his right.

“Have you heard anything at all from the police department about how and why this happened here today? What caused the explosions? How was someone able to

get in here and set up bombs when the security was all over the place, and they must have known the president would be here and all? I'm just wondering how these explosives got in here with all of this going on?"

"I can't say. You'll have to ask those who were in charge."

"Have you been in contact with the police?"

"Yes."

"What can you tell us about that?"

"I can tell you that there are hundreds of police outside this building."

"But not inside?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"It is too dangerous inside for the police to come in. The situation is fluid and highly deadly. Their first assignment is to stay alive and assist in getting everyone out safely. Many are going to have to be dug out. That will take time and construction expertise. That is way above our pay grade. We'd do more harm than good. Their rescue is the job of emergency crews trained to work in building collapse situations. The police are clearing the area outside to bring those people and their equipment into the building so they can get busy saving people. They are trained in this, but we are not. We'd probably do more harm than good, sir."

"Is there anything else you wish to say?"

"I want to express the police department's sorrow over the great loss of lives here in Washington. If you have lost a loved one, I'd just like to say that we are very sorry for your loss in our capitol and in our Nationals Park. This is a terrible time for us as well as for you. We do feel your pain. I feel your pain. I am with you. We are all with you."

"Thank you, officer. We appreciate your service to our capitol city, and we also appreciate the depth of feeling expressed by you in the name of the department."

"I have just received word that the stadium must be evacuated as soon as possible. Special ushers wearing orange arm bands will be escorting people to exits which have been determined to be safe. I will stay here as long as possible to report what is happening, although to be honest I really want to flee the scene as rapidly as possible. However, I am going to stay with you all night long if I am allowed to, because all of the people watching this catastrophe deserve to be informed on a moment by moment basis."

"I have also been told that there are many television vans parked outside. They are recording the evacuation of the stadium which you are probably seeing on your screens. In addition, they are interviewing officials concerning the situation inside. As far as I know, I am the only reporter inside with direct television capabilities. Our cameras are being operated remotely, without live cameramen on the spot. These cameras have been placed in this stadium and in many others in order to bring you live baseball games from various angles. These are the cameras now being used to report this ongoing tragedy, at least those that have not been damaged by the collapse, and they are the very cameras that are being remotely activated to bring my image to you."

"I have not been given any estimate of injuries and deaths. It is far too early for that. The memorial for the deaths of those fans who were shot to death by a stadium sniper has been answered by additionally far worse killings when the

stadium was attacked by bombs more than an hour ago. Among other places, we know the bombs were used to bring down the lighting fixtures which are massive. These structures when built were large and very heavy. Their collapse led to the bending of walls, seating areas, ceilings, halls, floors, and everything else in this stadium which seems to be attached throughout. I say they seem to be attached, because I noticed during the collapse of sections of this building that one section fell and in doing so caused tremendous bending and damage in the next section, and, when it fell, that brought the next section into question. I am not an architect. I am just reporting what I honestly saw. Later, after review of video tapes, the experts will likely meet to assess the information and determine in more scientific terms exactly what happened here today.

“This event is the most significant domestic bombing since jet aircraft plowed into the world trade center and caused the two tall towers to collapse. That incident triggered what has been called *The War on Terror* which has cost the United States government an estimated \$3 to \$5 trillion in military expenditures and which, as you can see from this devastation, has brought very little security to anyone. In fact, that train of events precipitated the disastrous occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan, both of which were failures in their attempts to bring a greater democracy to those nations. Both nations are now left in ruins, and they are worse off than if we had not acted in the first place. In addition, NATO has now become a military arm of the United States as it participates in overseas occupations of one nation after another including the direct overthrow of nationally and democratically elected officials.”

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Americans were astonished. Television sets all over America were frozen on as Americans witnessed the developing catastrophe in Washington. The fact that thousands of people were either dead, trapped, or dying in the rubble of this major league baseball stadium riveted every man, woman, and child. In addition, more than one billion viewers overseas were glued to their sets as the mayhem was being directly and instantly broadcast through satellite to their own nations.

Several times during the evening, spokesmen for various government departments, grants foundations, and news media consultants stepped in front of the cameras to make statements concerning the crisis.

One of the spokesmen from a major public opinion agency appeared on three networks complaining that too little was being done to stop people who were victims of Obama Care from carrying out revenge killings upon the entire population.

Bruno Crane, spokesman for the National Opinion Institute of Higher Learning reported, “These new serial murderers are angry as hell, because their loved ones have been denied what used to be high levels of medical care. Now, no matter if they are poor or if they are in the higher income brackets, they are being regularly denied life-saving procedures. All of it is being done in the name of government efficiency. The government and insurance companies both claim that the national averages for survivors of heart disease, cancer, and other dreadful diseases is

exactly the same now as before, but that significant savings for useless procedures that promised to prolong life but really hadn't made any differences in patient longevity have been achieved, making the Obama Care program more affordable to the insurance companies, the people, and the government."

Angela Brie, the spokesperson for the National Association of Insurance Advisory Council, told several news teams, "We are certainly not in the business of shooting from the hip in terms of making rash and heartless decisions about our clients' health options. Instead, we look at all angles of the situation to determine which approaches have value and which are merely cosmetic. Many physicians seek to provide services for their patients which are in no way pertinent to the curing of a dreadful disease. Instead, too many of these decisions are made at times which cause intolerable suffering to their patients for no good reason. These decisions might be extremely profitable to physicians' bank accounts but have no chance of curing his patients who simply demand that everything possible be done even if it has no chance of helping them.

"The reality is that some diseases are not fixable. People do reach a situation where their lives will end no matter what we do for them. Trillions of dollars can be wasted providing worthless operations which are simply mental placebos to convince patients that they are being cared for in the best way possible when, in fact, that are merely expensive options that will do the patient absolutely no good whatsoever. I mean, if your loved one will die no matter what your physician offers to do for them, or if an expensive procedure has been shown to be of zero benefit, do you really want to cause that loved one to undergo some draconian medical torture just to pretend there is something that can be done when, in reality, there is nothing available that will help them?"

"Sometimes, it is better to accept fate and to address the welfare of the patient in ways that save billions of dollars and allow really effective procedures to be given to those patients who can really be helped."

"Are you telling us that many procedures given to us in the past were merely for the profit of doctors and hospitals?" Moderator Rex Ortega asked Ms. Brie.

"I don't want to say they were given merely for profit. In many cases the patients simply demanded things be done which were useless and expensive and which our records show would not add one day to their lives. In the past, billions of dollars were wasted on what I have to call vanity medicine. By vanity medicine, I mean procedures designed to quiet the patient in an attempt to pretend that something effective was being tried, when it was really just wasted money tossed at an incurable problem. Doctors provided these vanity procedures for patients and their families who simply could not let go of their loved ones. What happened much of the time was a bad outcome for the patient who suffered useless and extreme pain at the end of their lives to suit their wives, husbands, sons, daughters, and themselves, then they would have the same result with far less pain if they were told to accept that nothing could be done for them and they should go home and prepare themselves for a painless end where they were not surgically torn to pieces in a painful show of something being done for them which was of no account whatsoever except the horrible pain and expense."

"What do you think of these people who seek revenge against people like you in the insurance industry, Angela Brie?" Rex Ortega asked.

“Of course, I think that it is understandable for people to express outrage when they think their loved ones have been left to die. But they would have died even if the procedures they wanted had been given to them or not. To a bereaved loved one there is no palliative for the pain of separation which they feel at the death of their friends and relatives,” Angela Brie said.

“Are we too demanding as patients and their relatives when the natural end of life is near, Angela Brie?”

“Absolutely. We have been treated to thousands of unrealistic advertisements developed to enrich pharmaceutical patent holders, hospitals, clinics, and treatment centers which exist for profit producing purposes. These are corporatist cronies who are involved in the medical business, as they refer to it. Businesses are all about marketing, profitability, and continued growth. Anything that inhibits their natural inclination to increase their revenue base will always be opposed by them, and that is a large part of our perceptual problem in this regard. In addition, we had years of emergency room programs on television in which we were treated to Dr. House, Dr. Welby, and emergency rooms where outrageous scenes were developed concerning treatments that we can receive but which either never existed or were created merely to fulfill a fictional plot line, Mr. Ortega. All of these things have exacerbated public perceptions and made matters far worse than they ever needed to be.”

“So, Ms Brie, I think what you are saying is that we have been handed a fictional pig in a poke, that we have been systemically mis-educated about medical options until we have no realistic ideas about the realities of medical care.”

“Yes, Mr. Ortega. We have literally been entertained into believing that there is far more that can be done, when in reality that was only a dramatic melodrama that we saw on a television show for the benefit of being more fruitfully entertained. But that did not mean that these shows presented a realistic picture of what lies ahead for us close to the termination of our lives. The fact is, we are all going to die, because real options just run out. All of us, you and myself included, cannot escape this fact.”

“Thank you. We have been talking with Angela Brie, an expert on insurance, medical procedures, and realistic outcomes in modern medicine today. My name is Rex Ortega, and this is the World News Network. We will be right back.”

The camera dimmed.

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Next, Brandy Gise, a spokesman from Homeland Security spoke to the American people, saying, “We are witnessing another great tragedy for our people. Despite all of our billions of dollars spent on stopping these crimes against America, another horrible event has happened. As we watch these victims in Washington’s baseball stadium, we must remind ourselves that there is no end to which people may go to exact revenge upon our innocent citizens for the life tragedies that they themselves or their loved ones claimed to have suffered. This is a problem that has been seen in ancient times right up to today’s modern America. Try as we must to intercept these things before they happen, with three



hundred and twenty million people in America and another seven billion people worldwide it is nearly impossible to know everything that is going on inside the private minds of budding terrorists like the ones who have caused so many deaths in Nationals Stadium today. Our president could easily have been injured or killed in the falling metal that crashed down upon himself and all of those other innocent citizens attending the Nationals Stadium Memorial Service. He took the risk of being there along with the rest of the mourners. Each of those victims were innocent bystanders in a process in which misguided people seek to exact their revenge upon the innocent.

“We all take our chances. Every time we leave our house for an office, a school, a public or private event, we are all in danger. Fortunately, the chances of being a victim of such a terrorist event is quite small. Still, those who are killed or injured suffer unjustly at the hands of terrorists. That is why your government is constantly on the alert for the small indications that someone somewhere out there might be teetering on the edge of madness and making unwise decisions that should never be contemplated. We must be ever vigilant of all possible dangers for our own protection. Homeland Security is with you at all times trying to keep these things from happening. We apologize to the American people today for having failed to stop what has just occurred, and we pledge to continue our work even harder in the future to make our world as safe as possible. I am Brandy Gise at Homeland Security. Thank you, and God bless those whose loved ones are suffering in this horrible calamity at the stadium.”

“We have just heard from Brandy Gise of Homeland Security. She has warned us all that events in the future are possible and that all of us should be wary, but keep in mind that our individual chances of being a victim of a terrorist act are really statistically small. We are more likely to be hit by lightning than to be hit in a terrorist attack. Still, we are left worrying about it, and it is something we will probably always fear,” said Rex Ortega.

“The stadium is still creaking overhead. All of us in here are in great danger. At any moment more of these unstable pieces of metal can slide away. When they do so, there is a chance, a good chance, mind you, that another huge piece of the stands may collapse trapping workers who have come to extricate hundreds of people entombed under this debris. I have received indications that the situation in the stadium is still very fluid. It might even be more dangerous right now than a few hours ago.

“It is even possible that the terrorists who caused this damage may still be inside Nationals Park. They could be in the crowd behind me. We are all suspects here. Even I am not above suspicion. They are interviewing, frisking, and looking through the personal belongings of these people. No one is being allowed outside the stadium before they go through another series of interviews.

“As you can imagine, no stone is being left unturned to find those responsible. Video cameras and cell phones are being searched for photographs snapped today inside Nationals Park.

“I cannot tell you how exhausted I am. All of these people are also exhausted. The workers in the stadium are even more stressed, because this happened on their watch. Some if not all of them feel responsible for this catastrophe. They take their jobs very seriously. This tragedy is an affront to every stadium employee from

the janitors to the engineers, the cooks, vendors, waiters, and ticket takers. All of these workers are devastated. This stadium has been their home since it opened. Many worked for the original stadium before this one replaced it. Their home has been violated, and, from the looks of it, this building is a total wreck now.

“The workers will most likely lose their jobs, because the games will have to be moved elsewhere. This building is totally unsafe. I have received intelligence that it will be torn down and rebuilt. During that time, which may take two years or more, these people will have to find employment elsewhere.

“These stadium workers are mostly poor people who exist on the bottom of the social ladder. Those who work in service jobs here make less than \$10,000 per year. Their employment is short-term. Now that term will most likely become even shorter than they expected. I hope that other service establishments who need workers in the near future will remember these workers and offer them a position, because they are going to need work very badly.”

Rex Ortega placed his microphone next to a woman who was dressed in stadium clothes, indicating that she was employed there.

“Mam, can I ask you a question?”

“Yes.”

“Do you think you will have a job here next week?”

“I don’t think so. But that’s not really important.”

“What do you mean, it’s not important?”

“I mean hundreds of people have lost their lives. Others need to be found and rescued. My job is gone, but what’s important to me and to my fellow workers is to do whatever is necessary right now to save as many people as we can.”

“Thank you so much. May I ask your name?”

“Penny Nobles. I’m from Silver Springs, and I have worked for stadium services more than fifteen years.”

“Will you ever work again in a stadium?”

“Yes. They are not going to scare me or my friends whom I work with away. They’d have to kill me to keep me from my chosen type of work. I love the Nationals and I love the fans. I am here to do what I can for them, in this case to save them. This stadium will be rebuilt. I know that for sure. When it is, I’m going to be right here with the fans, the team, and my co-workers. You can count on that. We will all be back. And, to the families out there who are waiting to find out about their relatives I just want to say that even though I am only a service worker, I will stay here to do whatever I can to find and rescue everyone who is trapped or injured. We care. I want you out there to understand that. These fans are our people, and we love each and every one of them.”

“Thank you, Penny Nobles. Nobly said. And to you out there in America watching this, you heard from Penny how each person, no matter if they are cooks or food servers, feels responsible. Many of them are just as concerned as Penny, and they are staying here to help find every person who has been injured, trapped, or killed by this terrorist event. If you come to any baseball stadium in America, know that even the lowest person on the staff has the same potential for instant heroics to save fans from harm as Penny Nobles. All they want to do is to keep you safe. They really care about you. This is not a job. It is a passion. These men and women who work here for the entire baseball season do it because it is in their

blood. The building, the fans, the city, the team, and baseball itself is a large part of their lives, and, God forbid, if this happened to your team, those people in your stadium would also be staying as long as necessary to help each and every one of you.

“I have just received news that all baseball games will remain canceled until further notice. All of today’s games were already suspended due to the original attack several days ago. In addition, tomorrow’s games are canceled out of respect for the people who have been killed and injured today. These games will not begin until the Commissioner of Baseball decides it would be totally safe, respectful, and appropriate to have them start again. We are going live now to the white house.”

## 39

The presidential seal blossomed in full stately colors across America’s screens.

“I understand the president will now be making a statement.”

The screen suddenly cut to the president.

“My fellow Americans, again we have been faced with an ugly event. Our way of life is under attack by those who have no respect for the rights of our people. We are investigating thoroughly both of the attacks at Nationals Stadium. We will find, apprehend, and punish everyone involved in this disgusting act of civil disobedience. It doesn’t matter if this attack has been done in protest by an organized group or from a single demented individual. In either case, I promise you, we will get to the bottom of it. No stone will be left unturned, and I assure you that finding and punishing every single culprit or culprits is job number one.

“I have been in contact with enforcement officials and with the Commissioner of Baseball. Together, we will decide what needs to be done to insure that this never happens at a baseball stadium again. The next time you go to a game, you can be assured that you and your family will be safe. That is our earnest desire, and we aim to see that it is carried out effectively and rapidly. Baseball is very important to millions of Americans. Baseball will once again be safe. I promise you that.

“I want to thank all first and second and third responders who are working right now to rescue people and to detain and interview everyone at the stadium to find out who did this. All the photographs on cameras and cell phones are being copied as fans leave the stadium in the search to find images of whoever did this. Whoever the bombers are, they may be already be found in those fan photographs.

“I want to thank the police, emergency workers, firemen, hospital personnel and doctors who are converging on the stadium or are already there providing life-saving services to the wounded and entrapped fans. I want to say to each of them that I am proud of you. America is proud of you.

“God bless America, and God bless the American people.”

## 40

“So, we have heard from the president,” Rex Ortega reported. “He assures us that the culprits for this act of terror will be found and punished in accordance with the laws of the land. He has thanked all of those here on the scene for their efforts to save lives and to rescue the injured.

“For now, I will be handing the microphone back to our studio in another location for more news both domestic and abroad pertinent to this breaking story. However, you may be assured that I will remain here as long as necessary to continue coverage of this event. So long for now.”

## 41

Several days later and any miles away, Agent Wilson Cogs spoke to a medium level special unit inside the National Security Agency. The newspapers abbreviated the agency’s name as NSA as it had always done with all government agencies. Agents like Cogs showed more respect and frequently pronounced its name in what he considered to be its sacred entirety.

“The National Security Agency needs to get onto this disaster like flies onto fresh poop,” Agent Cogs told the group that had been formed to investigate. “I have followed several Obama Care serial murderers, and one thing that struck me about them from the beginning is their personal sense of loss over the death of each citizen’s family member. They take this very personally.

“Now, despite the fact that some citizens out there have a solid gripe against the government for the way this program is being carried out, we as agents still have to stop them from threatening the security and prestige of our nation and people. Needless to say, every act of terror diminishes the power of the United States of America. In addition, every senseless act of murder and revenge, when it results in deaths, demonstrates to the citizens that we have been ineffective. It shows them that no matter how much we have spent on the war against terror we are as much in the dark as they are about how to defeat these mass killings. Obviously, many Americans have begun to feel unsure about their futures. This is exactly what the Obama Care killers want to achieve. They want our people to be not only uncomfortable but frightened.

“It is our job to give our people a sense of security which allows them to live their lives happily and openly, lives without any terrorist worries whatsoever. That’s what we are here to do.

“So, what can we do to help them? A lot of things.

“We can profile these killers. Sometimes he or she is someone who has himself been diagnosed with a disease but told that it cannot be treated in a professional manner because the insurance companies will no longer pay for that treatment. Sometimes it is a family member or friend who just lost a dearly beloved person or is about to. Usually, they seek some sort of revenge for a wife, daughter, son, mother, father, sister, brother, grandparent or business friend. At times it is someone who was demoted from full time work down to part time work of less than twenty-nine hours per week so that his employer would not have to pay for his health insurance premium. So, they lash out at society. They pick innocent people and kill them to make a splash in the news. They articulate their rage by

sacrificing these unsuspecting people in public places where they gather. They turn these crowded whereabouts into killing areas in much the same way the Aztecs and Incas did as they sacrificed their victims high atop their stone pyramids for all to witness their power to do so. Sometimes, these priests sacrificed thousands in a single day. The more the merrier, as they say in Shakespeare's plays, but don't quote me on that. I was never an English major, but if Shakespeare had thought of it or not, I can assure you he would have used it."

Some of them laughed for a moment at the Shakespearean reference and retraction. These meetings needed more humor, and they were thankful that Agent Cogs had the sense of decency to amuse them at least once.

"The question is how to profile would-be killers and create a pool of suspects and to do so *before they act out*.

"Please turn to page three of the handouts I gave you. There we see a sample database of those who are gravely ill and were not treated because of government or insurance rules, because we think that some small percentage of the persons associated with their specific situations might become Obama Care killers. They are the most likely to strike out against others as a result of the perceived hurt they think was done to them or to their loved ones. Therefore, we have begun to assemble lists of persons diagnosed with fatal illnesses or once diagnosed, have passed away. Their distraught relatives and friends are prime suspects. By interviewing these victims as well as their neighbors, we can obtain a list of people most likely to join in this ensuing chaos that has taken off around the nation. While we interview them, we are alerting them that they are under surveillance. Knowing that we are already watching them will make it less likely they will ever act out their pain. Why? Because they know we are watching. We are now requiring that doctors assemble lists of their fatally ill and recently deceased patients who were not receiving the care they thought they deserved before they died and who their friends and loved ones are. We are beginning to interview these prime suspects. In the past, some of this information was previously collected by physicians such as the names of friends and next of kin in case of an emergency. We are mining these lists. Any questions as to what we are about on this?"

"Yes, sir. I am Bob Moore. I'd like to know how we will follow up on this?" Bob asked.

"We will ask the police to knock on doors and interview these people. It will be a local job, not one for National Security Agency staffers who have other jobs on their plates. However, once the police find a person of interest, we will then interview them ourselves. It is hoped that many who might do something anti-social will stop before they start once they realize the local fuzz and the feds are both on their heels. However, we must be vigilant with these people. They might be so mentally compromised by their grief that they might still lash out as killers. Some might be more than willing to die in the process than others, and we need to determine who they are. Such persons will always be with us. It is our job to pinpoint who they are.

"I have passed out in my materials how we expect agents to go about this business of intercepting trouble before it starts," Agent Cogs said.

“Please study these materials. Learn them by heart. Tomorrow when we meet there will be a test to ascertain that you not only read this material but that you understand it. I think that will be all for today. Thank you for your attention.”

Wilson Cogs left the meeting and walked to the executive offices where he had a desk with a window, computer, and phone lines. He spent the rest of the day telephoning suspects, police departments, coroners, and special agents who were doing the dirty work of snooping and asking questions pertinent to the on-going Obama crisis.

## 42

On his way to the family cabin, Ranger James Stone passed a political rally. Old tea party hippies were flashing signs against government spending, state medicine, endless war, and trillions of dollars wasted on bailing out the banksters. James agreed with all of their views.

As soon as he reached the cabin, Ranger James Stone remembered the warm happy days just one month before before his son, Brandon, was born. His wife’s belly was swollen up. It looked to James like a watermelon had crawled inside her. It had nested there for its own amusement and convenience. James had placed his head against the swelling and felt his son’s feet kicking inside his wife’s warmth. Those were wonderful days.

In his first year, little Brandon crawled across the rugs and reached for everything he could touch. His smile warmed James’s heart. James would pick him up from the floor like a soft rag doll, only Brandon was far more precious and heartfelt than any doll in the world would ever be. Brandon was just about everything in life to his father.

As James spread out onto the bed in the little cabin, he saw the hand built baby furniture that he had placed his son in. He smiled just looking at it. Brandon would reach up at the toys that James and his wife had placed throughout the room. As proud parents, they watched their son reaching for them with his tiny spastic arms which as yet he could not completely control. But James knew in his daddy’s heart of hearts that someday little Brandon would grow up to be the star pitcher for his high school team. Then, Brandon would be tossing fast balls, sliders, and curves with pinpoint accuracy and turning the girls’ heads. At least that was James’s fondest hope, and he was determined to help it happen.

In his mind, he saw Brandon swimming in the stream at the state park. It was a beautiful place where the family would camp for the weekends. Brandon was a great swimmer. He took to the water much like a fledgling duck. The first time his father let him go, he swam well enough to make it fifteen feet to his mother. All of them were smiling from ear to ear.

Some nights, they slept together in the family bed, and Brandon’s proud father would feel the heat pouring from this son’s body along with his little arms reaching up to feel his face. A tear fell from the far corner of James’s left eye as he remembered those moments.

These were times that no one thought would end. The world was good then. Brandon was his little healthy son rolling around on the bed, in the grass, and on

the floors of the cabin and the home where they were happily living. These memories continued collecting themselves in James's mind as his son grew and matured into the athlete his father always knew he would be. Later, he entered the military and survived two tours.

After he came back the final time, Brandon was sick. He had gotten cancer from the depleted uranium in the army rifle casings and canon shells they had given him to fire off at the enemy day after day. Iraq was powdered with the stuff, and so were the soldiers. After two months of being diagnosed, Brandon had wasted away, but the doctors did nothing to help him, because the medical insurance protocol mandated that no one be treated for the cancer Brandon had, because it was determined to be terminal and because of tight budgets and criticism of the Iraqi war from the start, no one with Brandon's cancer was getting anything but pain medicines.

"You mean you cannot treat my son for cancer, because it might not work? What if it did work? Could you do it then?"

"Probably. Maybe. But not necessarily," Doctor Alan Mosler said. "It all depends on those who make the decisions on Obama Care. Unfortunately, the insurance companies are top dogs in deciding who gets treated, and it's to their advantage not to treat people wherever that's possible. The reasons are always defined by the insurance executives, and that's what I think is so darned wrong about it, but I have no say. I am just a passive player here."

"I'd like to be treated, sir," Brandon said. "I'm young, I served my nation, and that's how I was exposed to radiation."

"I understand," Doctor Mosler said.

"So?"

"I have nothing to say on these decisions. They are not made by me, but I have to carry them out. I am the one who has the duty to inform you of them. I'm the man who has been assigned to serve on the front lines here, but my physician rifles have been taken away from me, so to speak. All I can do now is to carry out their program, not mine," Doctor Mosler replied. "All decisions are from above."

On the way out of the medical building, they walked through a tea party Rally. Eighty citizens with signs protesting Obama Care were carrying anti-Obama signs and discussing the problems of Obama Care. A loudspeaker announced that the doctors in this medical establishment were not following the Hippocratic Oath when they abandoned their patients due to the death squads. The speaker said that these squads were made up of insurance bureaucrats who ran Obama Care at its highest echelons. Brandon could tell the rally participants a thing or two, and he asked the man to hand him the microphone, which he did.

"My name is Brandon Stone," he said. "And I got cancer in the army. I was exposed to the depleted uranium in bullets and shells in Iraq. I have news. It's not really depleted. It's got live radiation in it. Now, I have cancer, and, in that building right there, I was just told that Obama Care didn't care about me. They were not going to treat me for cancer, because it was terminal and the money would be better spent elsewhere. I protest that decision. I think they owe me."

Brandon handed the mic back to its owner.

"Thank you. Let's give Brandon a big hand."

The tea party enthusiasts applauded.

On the way back home, Brandon heard his dad say, "If you die from this, I'll kill a lot of people on your behalf. You can be sure of that." Brandon figured he was pure bluff. His dad would never do such a thing.

James remembered when Brandon was sixteen, he was a track star. He won State three times. His forte was running. This also spilled over onto the baseball diamond at his high school where he did become one of the best pitchers his school had ever produced. He was generally able to strike out several players every two to three innings and to produce grounders hit to short and second which resulted in game winning double plays.

James remembered taking his son to baseball games during the summer at both major and minor league stadiums. The team managers scouted him and asked him into the dugouts and gave him standing invitations to visit team workouts and even to participate in them as a local guest. Brandon loved the attention.

In college, the boy did well. He made the baseball team as its first string pitcher. His averages on the mound were good, especially his ERA scores. However, the war had intervened. Brandon had decided he owed his country several years of service in the armed forces. Now he was paying for it with his life but not in the way he had thought. His father was totally pissed.

*What the government had done to Brandon by not treating his cancer is just so unfair, James thought. I'm going to continue down the road of his revenge until they find me and kill me.*

He would not let them take him alive. Sitting in a prison awaiting execution was not a part of his life style. He'd go down fighting. Fort Bragg had been pinned permanently to James's Ranger chest like a bullet that had been shot directly into his own heart.

As a result of his training, James would never surrender to these bastards whose ignorant decisions had killed his son.

If James could kill the entire nation, James would do so.

In fact, he dreamed of boating on Yellowstone Lake disguised as fisherman and using diving equipment to place bombs at the lake's bottom far below the surface. These would blast huge holes into the caldera's roof line. When that happened, water would rapidly drain from the lake into the hundreds of super volcanoes sleeping in stealth inside the miles of magma down below. The ice cold water hitting that sea of hot magma beneath Yellowstone Lake would cause the volcanoes below to suddenly fire off, in a massive explosion of steam and molten rocks. The eruptions would soon produce species threatening pyrotechnics blowing one-fifth of Wyoming sky high. The magma would immediately soar upward into outer space for more than 50 miles, then solidify as razor sharp particles of mica and other glass chips in the perfect coldness of outer space. These microscopic particles of jagged glass would be so tiny that they would curve back toward earth and re-enter the atmosphere and float forever in its air before they entered the lungs of every American on the continent and sliced their lungs and other organs into shreds as they flowed through their bloodstreams.

To James it was a beautiful vision. Everyone would die in a fitting tribute to the sanctity of his son's life. In James's mind, if Brandon didn't have a right to live, then no one did. If he lived long enough, he'd do it for sure. Nationals Stadium was



just the beginning. Besides, Washington, D.C., was too hot now. James would never attack there again. Or would he? James realized he could never say no. It would be suicide, but it also might not be. To a man like James nothing was totally insurmountable as revenge events panned out. He had gotten away with it twice, but to repeat his efforts there would just allow them more of a chance to pinpoint who he was, so that was out. In fact, baseball, football, and basketball was out. Soon, they'd plug all of the security holes. Trying to score another massive big kill in those stadiums would not be a wise move to make. A smart person knew when to start and when to quit. James considered himself smart. It would do Brandon's revenge against America's murder of sick people no good if James, as Brandon's sole instrument of revenge, got himself caught or killed.

Nonetheless, attacking Washington seemed to draw at him, making him want to return there for more. After all, hadn't it become the very center of evil in America?

## 43

The tea party had been rallying for weeks in front of major hospitals. Their members were generally frightened that their relatives were about to be murdered one-by-one by nameless insurance executives who lurked inside the darkening gates that housed Obama Care's hidden death squads. These were the seedy people who privately decided who would live and who would die, according to tea party dogma. The worst thing about it was that these were true facts, and it was happening all the time. Already, many of their family members had been denied some of the medical services they were used to receiving as a matter of course in the days before Obama Care and it was getting worse.

A speaker told the rally, "Once the government takes over a program in this country, the people are denied all rights to receive what they were being given before. Today, the government has interfered with the free medical care system and forced insurance companies to insure persons who are already ill. The American people don't like that. The expense of this type of medical insanity is so immense that everyone's insurance rates have skyrocketed.

"Many companies are firing employees today as I speak and hiring them back part time only in order to just simply survive. Obama Care has become the disaster of disasters! American business was already going downhill under Obama's left wing radical policies. Now it is beginning to plunge, and both small and large businesses are closing their doors to employment, manufacturing, and everything else they used to offer us!"

The crowd applauded what he had said to them. They knew a boondoggle like Obama Care when they saw it. They were no one's patsy. That was for sure.

"Today, if you go to a hospital, you bring your insurance policy or you don't get an appointment. Then you are asked if you have any other financial resources.

"Let me ask you this. If you have insurance already why are they asking if you have any more resources? Why isn't the insurance policy enough?"

"Boo!"

"You are right! It's not enough! That is the problem! Now there are fees added to everything! The hospitals are broke, the insurance companies are broke, the

government is broke, the American people are broke, and the doctors are broke. The whole damn system is broke!”

“Applause rang out along with hoots and yells of, “End the medical and pharmaceutical nightmare!”

“I am mad as hell!” a voice rang out louder than an enraged blue-jay, followed by, “I’m not taking any more of this!” which was incorrectly lifted from the decades old movie entitled “Network.”

“I know you are frustrated. So am I. So are my kids. My kids are attending a state college where they are being charged thirty thousand dollars per year just for the right to sit in on sixteen lousy hours of classes a week. Years ago it was only twenty-five dollars or less to attend a state university. Last month, I was introduced to a senior citizen who went to the University of Missouri at Columbia in 1959. At that time, he only paid seventeen dollars per semester for tuition and one hundred and twenty-five dollars for room and board. In other words, he paid less than three hundred dollars for one year of schooling. Today, that costs more than thirty thousand dollars at the same University of Missouri, not three hundred dollars! Those same services have become one hundred times more expensive today! That’s what happens when irresponsible governmental officials increase tuition six percent per year for fifty years. You get a one thousand percent increase in cost. It now costs sixty dollars for each hour a kid sits in a boring college classroom. You have to multiply that \$60 times 48 classes per course per semester. The cost per course is, therefore, \$2,880. Each hour! But that’s not all. The books are another \$300 per course and sometimes \$500. This is an outrage! I say we should place all these public university lectures on the Internet for free! With the Internet, there’s no reason any student should have to pay a dime to attend a school and receive a degree!”

The crowd supplied endless cat calls, boos, and screams of “government screw job!”

“We’ve heard from hundreds of people on this microphone who have been denied medical treatment under Obama Care. Two years ago, they would have been treated. Today, they are tossed under the bus and told it’s too expensive, that Obama Care won’t pay for it, and that they need to go home and die with dignity. Have you ever seen a cancer or heart patient who died with dignity? No? No? Well, to be honest, I’ve never seen that either.

“Even when they are in a hospital there’s no dignity. None whatsoever. They are herded around like cattle to one specialist after another, even if they don’t need to see the specialist. Hundreds of dollars are collected every day to pay the hospital, its pharmacy, and its doctors, yet in many cases the procedures that might benefit that patient are denied as being too damned expensive! What kind of medical care is this! I’ll tell you what kind! It’s that democratic socialist party type, that’s what it is! It’s the type where nothing is done to cure the patient, but everything is done to milk the system dry without providing any services whatsoever! It just can’t get any worse than this!”

The crowd responded with more anger. Hundreds of fists were being raised in the air, shaking at the skies overhead.

“I want you to follow me now into the halls of this hospital where we are going to go floor to floor alerting each and every patient of the low quality of care they are

now receiving, and how, in the past, the care was far better. We are going to give them envelopes and letters with stamps for them to send to their congressmen and senators for this Obama Care scam to be either tossed out or immediately fixed! Are you with me?"

"Yes! We are with you!"

"We must be quiet inside the hospital. There are sick people in there. Talk with the patients and their families. Talk with the nurses, the doctors, and the rest of the staff. Ask them to help by sending an email protest to the government as well, and give them the appropriate letters we have included in your work packet to take with you. Are we ready to go to work?"

Yes!

"Now. Remember. Do not talk much in there. People are sick. Respect them. Respect the staff. None of them are responsible for Obama Care. It is destroying their services, too, and they are just as angry as you are. Make them your friends, and they might even agree to help you. Make them your enemy, and they will never let you enter their hospital again. So, be wise, and be polite. Be friendly. With that in mind, let's quietly go about our business soliciting support in this hospital. Let us begin by giving them the benefit of the doubt and assuming they want to help us. I think they will help us. If they don't want to support us, just smile and thank them for their time. Tell them you appreciate their work. Be pleasant to them. Don't get angry. Everyone will not agree with you. So, suck it up. Act mature. Be as wise as a serpent. Your job is to contact those that do agree with you and to leave the other ones alone.

"Now, let us begin."

## 44

They entered the hospital. It took about fifteen minutes for the tea party to quietly penetrate security and to move beyond its front desk. Each of them signed in and indicated the floors and offices where they were heading. Some were going to the physician offices, nurses stations, staff areas, pharmacy, and various specialty departments. Others were going to speak with patients wherever that was deemed possible.

Ronald Parsons headed toward several doctor's offices. He entered them rapidly, speaking with the receptionist, making a five-minute appointment for later that day, then going to the next doctor's office and doing the same. Then, he went back to the first office and waited. After two hours, his name was called, and he went into the back room. There, he was seated for the doctor. After another ten minutes, Doctor Edwin Rosen came into the room.

"I understand you need five minutes with me," Dr. Rosen said.

"Yes. I am here on account of the problems you are having with Obama Care. How do you feel about the program so far?"

"I think it is deficient in funding, and my patients are not getting the care they got before that program began. We, as physicians are not being paid correctly, either."

“Do you blame the government, the treasury, the congress, the president, or the insurance companies?”

“The major problems are due to the way our government is elected. They are basically taking bribes in order to get enough funds to win an election. Then they feel like they have to vote for the needs of those who made their election possible by paying for their campaign costs.”

“Can you give me direct instances?”

“No. But you are the reporter, and I think you already know the instances, at least in your city and state. You have access to the financial statements of the candidates as well as to those of corporations who advertise for them without even being in contact. That’s your job. Mine is healing patients.”

“Have you sent patients home to die who would have been totally eligible for treatment before the Obama Care program started?”

“Yes,” said Dr. Rosen. “I think all of us have been forced to do these things.”

“Does that reduce the survival rates of these patients?”

“I think it does, but I have no way of knowing. There’s always three major ways of treating a disease. One is by doing nothing, one is by administering medicine, and the other is by using surgery.”

“Which is better?”

“That depends on the patient and the situation.”

“Do you think you are still able to treat patients in the same professional way?”

“I do not treat them in the same way, but I do treat them in a professional way. I do everything that I can for them considering the parameters of treatment that are allowed to me.”

“Is that what the doctor ordered or what the insurance company ordered?”

“It is what the insurance companies allow.”

“We are suggesting that you contact senators and congressmen to let them know that their program has resulted in less care for your patients and that the situation as it exists presently is intolerable.”

“I write them all the time with that message, but it does no good. The situation still seems frozen. I don’t see any reasonable way for it to improve.”

“Why is that?”

“I think with all of the useless wars around the world, our government is basically bankrupted for the next twenty or more years. There’s no money for health care, and there never was. The government decided since 1789 when it first met in Philadelphia that the United States of America was going to be in the business of waging wars against the Indians and the world. It turned out to be a matter of tragic proportions. Such decisions almost always lead to unhappy outcomes.”

## 45

The Lambrecht Theater on Broadway’s magic mile of lights had been all done up for the new musical sensation, “Girls!” which had received banner headlines in the media for weeks. Everyone billed “Girls!” as one of the best original Broadway musicals in two generations. Opening night was a gala sell out as were the next

three months, all of them purchased by fans sight unseen. Big wigs had been sold front row seats for as high as eighteen hundred dollars each.

James Stone had already been at work in the theater. Although he dressed as a construction worker, he worked in the darkness high above the theater's auditorium as a rogue sapper. Down below, he could see the stage and seating, so he knew exactly where to place his plastic charges for maximum kills. The military had trained James in undermining and bringing down all manner of buildings and defensive structures. At the Lambrecht Theater, James would punish even more Americans for what Obama Care had done to his son, Brandon. The ranger was quite content in placing his plastic explosives in just the right points inside the walls and ceilings to insure a perfectly horrendous implosion of the huge theater's walls and roofing just when it was packed to the max with the filthy rich. He was hoping that the mayor of New York among others was going to be happily seated inside the Lambrecht for what the ex-ranger figured was going to be the biggest show in Broadway's entire history. He hoped it would be a night to remember.

He was in the ceiling area day after day, dressed as a construction worker, cutting through planks of wood that held the roof up then sticking plastic explosives in the cuts connected to triggering wires, one after the other, then covering them with black goop so that no one was the wiser. The goop dried in minutes and looked just like the wood to the trained eye. He had just finished the final ten cuts in a particular section, while day dreaming in his mind that he and his son, Brandon, were trout fishing in the cold mountain streams nearby, hitting on brookies with hand tied flies. Brandon and James loved to tie flies in the frigid winter months, discussing and dreaming of the great catches they would make in nearby streams that spring where the brookies fought the strong cold currents of life. The eager brookies poked their heads upstream to maintain their positions as they doggedly scrambled against the deadly rush of water. They were down there in the rocks lost to all the world in the icy water's incessant flow toward the ocean.

In James's day dreams, Brandon was still fit, and his manly muscles bulged as he applied his fly lines inside the stream's drooling coldness as the brookies flashed their tiny sides to the wary fishermen who were bent on their destruction. James imagined Brandon's excitement as his flies inched their way over the tiny rapids, moving in spastic flashes of color toward the eager brookies below. His flies looked to all the world like delicious insects just waiting for the aggressive trout to take them into their hungry mouths as they moved down stream. Brandon's arm moved in its dance-like trance beneath the verdant northern forest as his artificial flies hurled themselves upstream and settled neatly into the surging river. Down they came, falling past the shimmering rocks, between the rivulets and through the rapids toward the awaiting trout whose constant hunger for insects represented their greatest weakness. Above their cold, watery homes lurked a small close family of clever, hungry men. Each of them were warm blooded creatures who strung their deadly hooks with artificial flies.

The Fly Fisherman's Bar and Grill was Brandon's favorite restaurant. It was where the two of them ordered breakfasts of eggs and steak, their usual fare at four in the morning. That was a sacred time when the air was ice cold and the equally icy river pounded its incessant current against the rocky shores outside in a grumbling thunder as it spiraled through the mountain passes and turned

sideways here and there inside the narrow valleys and cut its watery way toward the ocean's distant shore.

The Fly Fisherman's Bar and Grill produced fantastic breakfasts every morning. These tasty morsels of eggs, meat, potatoes, and coffee were far more than enough to keep the business flourishing. Even when a fisherman's morning catch had been made, the restaurant stood ready to help. Its staff cleaned and cooked up the pan fish caught by its customers and served them on plates covered with small red potatoes, green beans, and a simple mountain kale and onion salad.

No wonder the Fly Fisherman was the only restaurant within ten miles. It had regularly driven all of the other restaurant hopefuls and new comers right out of business in short order.

James watched his almost silent battery operated saw cut neatly again and again into the wood that supported the roof of the old Lambrecht Theater which was already showing signs of an ancient weakness. As the outside wind whipped itself over the top of the massive theater, its roof creaked and shook. James imagined it suddenly shattering into pieces and floating rapidly down. In his mind, he saw its deadly pieces turning like pounding bat wings against the walls as they descended upon the unsuspecting audience down below. When this happened their deaths were a certainty. The final moments of their lives would create another media sensation. This grand event would be the next fitting memorial for his dead son and another of his perfect revenge killings.

The American people could be stand offish about Obama Care all they wanted, but now many of them would do so only at their own peril. James knew now that he was not the only person out there working to right the wrong by killing those willing to put up with the centralized madness that medicine had become. He was merely one of many seeking revenge for their dead relatives. Whether the FBI knew it or not, most of the surfacing Obama Care revenge artists were loners like Stone.

They were lone wolves. They didn't seek to involve others. This was what made it so difficult for government goons from the myriad security departments to catch them. Their lives were dedicated, forfeited even, to revenge. In choosing such a surreal commitment, they almost sought their own deaths along with those of the others whom they were busy killing.

James heard a man's footsteps through the wall. Someone was checking on the roof. James had anticipated this. He unzipped a hidden piece of equipment and stepped inside. The cleverly camouflaged bag in which he hid was the same color as the rest of the roof. Its outer surface also resembled the miles of wood pieces on both the roof and the floorboards. As the guards passed him in the roof area, their flashlights lit up the floors and walls, but they only saw wooden beams everywhere including in the faked pictures of wood that lined the outside of James's devious cloak, so they moved on, confident that the roof was safe from anyone wanting to mess with it. Soon, James crawled out and continued his deadly work.

Later that night, he found a young NYPD officer who was about his size whom he knocked out and rapidly pulled into an alley and killed. He broke the youthful officer's neck in the manner he had learned over and over again during ranger training. James just never knew where or when he might need to use a skill set like this. James never even dreamed he'd use that military move on one of New York's finest. Yet, he had. James undressed the cop. Then, he placed the man's

naked body into a garbage container. Next, James carefully packed the cop's uniform into a box he found in the alley and left. He'd have good use for the man's uniform.

Even better for James's plans, no one even found the policeman's naked body. That night, contents of the garbage container where he had buried the young policeman were themselves placed inside a huge refuse truck which applied five hundred pounds of pressure which merged the man's body with a menage of vegetables, breads, and scraps of metal. In short, the cop simply disappeared into the huge mess of the world's recycling frenzy as though he had never lived and loved.

## 46

The next morning, James headed back to the theater. He had a lot more struts to compromise with his cutting tools, wiring, and his plastic explosives. He considered the implosion of the building as an impending artistic creation. As it plunged downward into the darkness, it would symbolically bury some of the pain of his son's demise. As he raised his arms and his cutter over his head, he surmised just how surprised the audience was going to be when the musical's early ending crumbled around their dying bodies, hands, and faces. He doubted if many of them would even have the time to scream or to cry out for help. That's how rapidly their end would come. Most if not all of them would be crushed or impaled by wooden pieces. Others would be torn apart in the crushing weight when the huge brick walls collapsed inward along with its megatons of decorative sconces and statues. All in all, it was a very good idea for a revenge act. It would work just fine for James Stone at any rate.

He attached thirty-five more plastic explosives that day then made his way home. On the way, he came upon a gaggle of whores on the sidewalk and flashed a twenty at the one he wanted. As she worked him in the alley, James wondered how his life had come to this. He had gone from a loving husband and father to a sniper of Americans who supported the very government that had killed his son who was also a war hero and deserved far better than that. He cleaned up and continued his walk toward his apartment. He felt no guilt. James decided after his family was gone that he'd never get married again. In addition, James would not date ever again either. Although the loving had been good with his wife, the pain of separation from her and his son were just too much for his heart to fully absorb.

Now, the only thing left to bring him pleasure was revenge. Revenge over the loss of his only son. A finger under the nose of the oppressor. That oppressor lived in Washington DC, where he was supported by the taxes of almost every American on the North American continent. James saw that government as a thing of adversity and evil. The Americans themselves were merely relegated to the unsure status of mere economic units skidding along the bottom rungs of corporatist factories and office cubicles. They had become the little nameless worker bees that kept the system going. Their busy hands helped to keep alive the darkening and vile toilet bowl of political corruption in which America's political system swirled.

James imagined the government's drones dropping bombs onto the innocent people below. He had begun to associate America's foreign war victims with his own son. Their innocent eyes looked at the descending bombs flung at them from hundreds of faceless American drones. These descending bombs attracted their imminent victims' curious and widening eyes. Those innocent victims could hear the bombs whistling down through the air during their last few seconds of life on this earth. They were the other microscopic foreign Brandon's down below killed by the American corporatist crony government.

The bombing work at the theater was like honey to a bear for James. It was the natural outcome of a lifetime of patriotism leading him down that inexorable primrose path to nowhere. It trailed forward and downward toward the flagrant treachery and final betrayal of America's slacker government. In the final reality, the country had no heart for Americans. Its heart was set solely on corporatism, hard drugs, wars, petroleum, dollars, and greed. A man's son meant zilch to them. Many Americans no longer had any stomach for love and relationships. They were now merely the world's hate mongers. Not only did they hate foreigners enough to kill their children and mothers from the air, but they turned on their own people by inventing Obama Care so they could deny health coverage to the sick and infirm and use their insurance money for profits to be squandered on more wars of death and dying inside the myriad of innocent nations around the world.

James washed the plastic explosives from his hands and prepared to walk home. Tomorrow was the long anticipated opening night of "Girls!" He didn't want to be late for the big show. He stopped on the way home for a potato knish at the deli, climbed the stairs to his room, and fell asleep in his own bed. The last thing he saw was the picture of his handsome son who had been a hero in several wars before being betrayed by his uncaring and disloyal government. He fell asleep with Brandon on his mind.

## 47

Dressed in the patrolman's uniform that he had stolen when he killed the NYPD officer just two days before, Ranger James Stone peeked through the high boards of the theater. Down below he made out the figure of the mayor. He was talking to the cameras. James figured he was using the occasion to sell the city's many glorious achievements to others nationwide. The mayor's name was Walter Graham. Mayor Walter Graham had been in the city's limelight all of his life. He was a blue-blood Graham and an American monarchist whose royal line went back before the revolution. Generation by generation, the wealth of his egregiously wealthy and powerful family was passed down, exactly the way it was for the British Queen and other monarchists in England and Europe.

Two hours before show time, the mayor's tuxedo was in perfect shape. It had been picked up, dry cleaned and returned to his apartment which directly faced Gracie Mansion Park. He was a mere walking distance from the Lambrecht Theater, and the ticket had been burning a hole in his dresser for three months. In an hour, he would be there watching the dancing girls amid the opening fanfare.



The mayor and his wife walked down 42nd street with their entourage of heavily armed NYC police who always accompanied his highness to events like theater openings where the mayor was supposed to attend and make statements about how proud the city was to be the center of the nation's theater and musical production industry.

As the lights flashed in his face, the mayor went on and on about the manner in which New York City hosted the finest opening productions in the world and how the successful ones were later opened in cities around the world including London, Paris, Berlin, Moscow, Tokyo, and Rio.

"We are proud to be the center of the world's musical and theatrical life blood," Mayor Graham said to the flashing cameras. "New York City is the finest host in the world to these productions. It's stages are the creme de la creme of drama, music, dance, and comedy. I hope that "Girls!" will receive high reviews and will go on for years right here in New York as well as in our affiliate cities where parallel productions of this fine musical have already been planned. Millions around the world see New York plays without even having to come here, because we come to them all of the time."

"Thank you. That has been the mayor of New York City, graciously taking time to be with us at the opening ceremonies for "Girls!" which is one of the most anticipated musicals in New York theatrical history," said Larry Solomon, one of the top television performers in the New York City area.

Meanwhile, backstage, the stars and dancers were trying their best to chill. Even so, their theatrical excitement could be heard in all parts of the backstage. After all, they had been practicing the musical for more than three months, and the anticipation of their opening night performance was energizing their brains to the max in these very last moments before curtain time.

Sitting in the dressing room and applying makeup, one of the singing dancers named Lacey looked at her best friend, Gloria, who just happened to be billed as the top performer and top star of "Girls!" and said, "Gloria, honey, this musical is going to knock their socks off. I can't wait to read the rave reviews! They are going to love you. You are so amazing on stage!"

Gloria slowly blinked her overworked eyelids to make their dark markers seem even more coquettish than usual and replied to Lacey, "Listen, honey, let's just hope the critics like it even a teenie bit. That'll satisfy me. You know how those media bitches love to cut up the singers in these shows. They think it covers their big fat rolls so no one will notice."

"Like it? Oh, they will, Gloria," Lacey replied. "That's for certain, baby. I feel it in my heart, and when my heart feels it, I know for sure it is going to happen."

Gloria wasn't too certain about Lacey's critical prognostications. Besides, listening to prophecy was not Gloria's strong point. She was more of a show and tell, girl. Gloria wanted to see it in the raw before she'd believe it was for real. She'd lived a life of many disappointments. She'd had even been stood up at the church on her wedding day. She'd lost her mother to cancer. She'd been passed over again and again for the best financed musicals.

But this was different. Gloria had arrived. "Girls!" was only her third schtick on Broadway, and she had top billing. It was amazing to her that she had finally arisen to this pinnacle of success. This time, she'd show them all. Now, she was

the lead girl in the dancing chorus. She sang, pirouetted, and flashed her legs much like a typical chorus girl, keeping her movements in tune with the orchestra pit as she flashed her seductive youthful smiles at the audience in an attempt to rivet them to the whimsically delightful character she played. She was the chick magnet. Out there in the audience were the attentive clowns, the fatties in their suits and negligee, clapping and asking for more from the stage, always demanding, wanting, coaxing her onward and upward to new heights.

Gloria repeated her favorite cliché, saying, "Every day in every way, I am better and better." She repeated the line over and over in the hope that its constant recitation would bring magic, love, and success to every aspect of her life. "Every day in every way, I am better and better." It filled her with happiness, confidence, and the subjective flutter that would propel her to dancing and theatrical greatness. "Every day in every way, I am better and better."

Meanwhile, behind the theater walls, James continued to check his wiring to insure that no one had discovered the little deadly surprises he had placed so professionally in wait for them. James knew that this would be the very surprise that would have made his dead son, Brandon, aware of his father's love. He saw this act of defiance in New York City as the culmination of his revenge, at least for this moment. Others might come later. However, Lambrecht Theater was a noteworthy metaphor for his son's unfair death. As soon as the theater itself collapsed around its hundreds of patrons, James would feel pride at having again revenged his son's death over the abstract indifference of Obama Care to Brandon's painful death as caused by the army's immoral use of depleted uranium. James Stone felt the NYPD uniform that covered his flesh. In doing so, he felt the immense pride that all the other New York policemen tended to feel every day they patrolled their turf and flashed their metal badges at the city's generally calm and obeisant citizens.

To James, revenge itself had become his turf. The uniform was a trophy of the passing of an innocent cop on the street who was merely another bonafide speck of the immense collateral damage caused by Obama Care and how it had destroyed Brandon's life as well as his own. One thing was for sure, the world would pay for what they had done to his son, Brandon, and what ex-ranger James Stone was about to let loose in New York any moment now was just a shred of the damage the entire nation was going to suffer to right the horrible wrong that it had done.

He heard the orchestra building toward the final curtain pull when the dancers and actors would strut across the stage for their final and most famous performance in history. He swelled with almost devilish pride knowing that his hidden surprise would soon be sprung. He was a few minutes from the implosion from the point that marked the theatrically booming beginning of the musical. Once the curtains opened, he would set the first part of the fuse which would start the entire implosion into action. The timer in his hand was set to twenty-five minutes after he pushed the button to begin his deadly orchestration of destruction that would bring down the entire house stone by stone and brick by brick. His scene would completely rewrite and trump what the playwrights and composers of Broadway had intended.

What James was about to cause would be what historians would remember for all of time. This gave Ranger Stone greater comfort than all of the protesting in the world. The irony was that he worked in stealth. No one knew that Brandon's death was the reason for what was going to happen.

It had to be that way. After all, if they knew, James's work would be over. The system would come crashing down upon him like a Godzilla stomping through the Bronx.

The curtain opened below him, and James saw the dancers frolicking across stage center to the delight of the doomed audience. James chuckled. What these stupid people who were insensitive to his son's suffering didn't know would not hurt them until it was far too late to do anything about it or even to save themselves. The world would be crashing down upon them and nothing could be done to stop it. James moved to the trigger point and reached for the device.

"May I help you?"

The voice came out of the dark like a sound in the night.

James turned around. The voice belonged to an elderly gentleman dressed in police uniform. The medals on his chest and the colored ribbon identified him as a very important person on the force. He was the police commissioner of New York City.

"Everything is just fine, here, commissioner," James said. I have swept the entire backstage area on three levels. I can honestly report to you that absolutely nothing is out of order here." He saluted, and the commissioner returned the salute.

"The mayor is here," the commissioner said. "I'd hate it if anything disturbed his evening."

"That's two of us, sir. Everything seems in order. There is nothing to worry about, commissioner."

"Fine."

The commissioner smiled, then turned and walked around the corner to disappear forever into the shadows of New York history books.

James swallowed. He immediately plugged in the trigger device, tucked it neatly where the sun didn't shine, and left. He then tiptoed down the stairwell, until he came to the side door which led to the alley. He opened the latch and stepped outside onto the fire escape. It was a long way down, and eighteen feet above the street, the fire escape mechanism teetered and reached out like a huge metallic arm extending itself outward from its elbow as it carried James downward into the final depths leading him into the darkened alley below. James noted how it emitted a screeching sound like fingernails descending down a blackboard, a sound of surreal pain that would have been just loud enough to awaken most of the dead from their slumber. As he stepped off of the mechanism, he heard footsteps behind him and a voice demanding that he stop. James turned and saw a young officer with his gun drawn. James raised his hands.

"At ease, officer," James said. "I'm making final checks of the security areas. The fire escape was one of the final things on my check list."

The young man eyed James's police uniform and checked his badge number. Everything was in order.

"Just checking it out," the young man said.

James smiled.

“There is a place over there that needs to be looked at. You may accompany me in the inspection, if you’d like.”

The man needed to be silenced. He had seen James’s face. If he survived the implosion, he’d be able to identify him. Then, his revenge killings would be over, and there’d be hell to pay. James went through the narrow hallway, and the young and very naive policeman followed him.

“There is a problem,” James said.

“What’s that.”

“Hold on a second. Something’s on your shirt.”

James reached up to assist the youthful cop, then grabbed the man’s head instead and wrenched it to the left rapidly causing his neck bones to crack. His spinal cord broke instantly, and the young cop fell to the floor. His arms and legs spasmed for a few moments and were soon stilled forever. His life was over.

Collateral damage was a bitch.

James would get over it. This young cop was just a part of the mix. There was nothing else he could have done. Down to the crunch, it was either the cop or James. Such was the tragedy of a man’s life in the surging Obama revenge business.

“Sorry, son. It wasn’t anything personal, you understand,” James said to the young cop’s lifeless body.

He bent down and kissed the young man’s forehead. “You were very brave, son, and I want you to know just how much I really appreciate your service to the city.”

James walked away slowly, hoping to leave without encountering another cop. He didn’t like killing them this way. Just like them, he had worn uniforms most of his life. In James’s mind, there was a deep connection between almost all uniformed guys including cops, soldiers, football players, and cowboys.

In a few minutes, James passed the alley’s darkly confined walls. Now he walked the city’s back streets where things seemed safer and more comfortable. Since he was still dressed in the uniform of a dead policeman whom he had murdered, so he tried his best to act the role.

He strutted proudly, glancing this way and that, as though he were looking for criminal activities along the way.

Playing the role of a cop, James knew he could never be too careful.

After all, crime was everywhere.

## 48

Mayor Graham and Police Commissioner Hucksbee were enjoying the performance. “Girls!” was filled with good voices and great legs. These were the things that good Broadway shows are made of. They were the mainstay of the great white way where the lights of New York’s entertainment rush glittered overhead on the way to the theaters. People on the streets marched with their tickets to the theaters in hopes of enjoying several hours of top flight entertainment.

“Nice legs,” the mayor said to his commissioner.

"I might have to arrest you for harassment if you talk like that," Commissioner Hucksbee said.

"The rush might be worth it," Mayor Graham said with a sly grin on his face.

Gloria was the hit of the show. Her gallant smile flashed everywhere on the stage. Her part was vigorous and demanding. She moved here and there among the dancers whose grandiose voices surged through the evening's performance with the moving sumptuousness of a fine mixed drink served by a profoundly beautiful mistress. Then, as the music reached a crescendo, the building shook once, twice, then several more times. Suddenly, the ceiling broke loose in fragments. People saw the ceiling descending upon them. As they discovered the overhead doom that was rapidly approaching them, they screamed and tried to move. However, it was far too late for that. A flood of sailing concrete, plaster, and wood dove down upon them spiraling from above in an avalanche of death. Beneath the rubble and the crushing of its patrons, the building's edifice continued rumbling downward without any end in sight. Soon, the screams of the dying could no longer be heard. Then the walls buckled as they hurled their massive weight inward, pulling asunder everything that had held the ancient and massive structure together for more than one hundred years. It had all come apart. More and more bricks and plaster tore away from the walls and tumbled into the auditorium.

After that, no one moved. The building was totally gone. Inside its cavity, the first responders found clouds of white dust and a perfectly hushed silence.

## 49

The media might have been the first responder. Their mobile units all over New York City converged on the area as fast as possible. In addition to reporters on the ground, helicopters with cameras hovered high overhead, surveying the damage. The other theaters all over town were immediately closed out of fears that bombs might already be placed inside them, ready to bring them down like happened here at the Lambrecht Theater which was nothing but rubble resting atop its giant sea of broken dreams. Hundreds of audience members were feared dead including major stars of film and Broadway. In addition, the mayor of New York and his police commissioner were feared among the dead deep in the rubble of brick and powdered plaster.

## 50

America's prime television shows were immediately interrupted as on scene cameras focused on the wreckage of the Lambrecht Theater. Lorie Walters stood close to the building's corpse, explaining, "This is Lorie Walters with a special report from Broadway. The horror in front of this camera is difficult to describe. Everyone inside this theater is feared dead. There is literally nothing left. Even the ticket office at the front of the Lambrecht Theater, long an icon on Broadway, no

longer exists. Even its huge stage is gone, its curtain lies buried deep inside the vast grave that rests high atop the more than one thousand dead who held the most coveted tickets in town. These entry vouchers cost their owners between one hundred and eight hundred dollars. That was only their face value, and the bidding didn't stop there. Some people reportedly paid over two thousand dollars for a single ticket. This was the hottest show in Broadway history, but the ticket to that show was a ticket to death. Everyone who was the lucky holder of this ticket is buried in this smoldering mass of brick, concrete, metal and plaster where the mighty Lambrecht Theater stood for one hundred and twenty-seven glorious and star-studded years. Now, the mighty Lambrecht is merely a tiny footnote in Broadway history. Literally nothing remains. The banisters, the stage, the fancy walls with their painted figurines, the floating elephant that hung from the ceiling and regularly dropped down onto the stage carrying the Lambrecht's endless sea of top performers are now gone, buried forever in the vast wreckage you see behind me. They are nowhere to be seen.

Now, everything has vanished, gone with the wind, and even the aisles where the patrons walked with tickets to claim their seats—all of these things and much more including the beautiful figurines that graced its walls are no longer with us.

Our mayor is probably dead, crushed beneath the rubble. Hundreds of Broadway stars and producers are either dead or dying inside the wreckage of this once great stage which had hosted one successful musical after the other.

After this, there will be no more fanfares, no more delicious orchestral interludes before and during performances, no dance routines, no songs, and no audiences. Death is all that remains of the Lambrecht and its impressive history in the New York entertainment world.

"A few moments ago the president announced thirty days of mourning. Flags will be flying at half mast just as soon as the people in charge of those things arrive to readjust them in accordance with the president's request. No one is mandated to lower any American flag, because this is still a free country. However, we know that nearly one hundred percent of the flags in this country will be lowered either tonight or tomorrow. No one will want to defy what will surely be a popular observance of respect for the more than one thousand dead who died in the blink of an eye right here, having been crushed to death beneath the total devastation that we are now witnessing.

"This is Lorie Walters, and, as I said before, for those who just joined us, I am standing in the vicinity of what used to be the grand old Lambrecht Theater on Broadway. She was a proud building filled with antique walls upon which more than one hundred statues perched themselves on the theater's massive walls where they peered out above the more than one thousand very rich and very influential theater goers who paid for some of the most coveted musical tickets ever sold in this city. The last ticket spelled the Lambrecht's final moments, because it's curtain is now silenced forever. Unless a new building is built to replace her, no more performances will ever be held in this historic spot where literally tens of thousands of performances were held over the more than one hundred years in which she reigned as one of the most prestigious theaters on Broadway.

“What we see now is all that is left of her. More than one thousand bodies are trapped inside the rubble of what was once her beautiful auditorium with those beautifully painted sconces, lamps, and statuary that all of us have learned to love. That is all gone now. I will never see those walls again, nor will you, nor will anyone else see them. Nothing remains. Only photographs in books, newspapers, websites, and magazines are left to remind us of the Lambrecht’s fantastic grandeur. Our mayor and his family rest in muffled silence beneath its ashes. No one is sure if his body can even be identified even if it is retrieved because of the vast tonnage of debris that now fills the open hole which was once this historic place of entertainment.

“I have been handed breaking news that the mayor’s position has been assumed by Dale Featherstone who was next in line. Mr. Dale Featherstein, shall attempt to make sense out of the chaos he has inherited. I would not want to be in his shoes. I have a statement which has been released from his office that reads, ‘I am saddened by the apparent death of my long-time friend and associate, Mayor Graham of New York City. I will do my best to fill Mr. Graham’s immense and ably talented shoes. I do so in sadness for the death of the mayor, and I will take no pleasure in this task, because I am so filled with sadness. Together, New Yorkers will work to overcome this catastrophe. We will work tirelessly to determine why the building collapsed. We are as of now not certain what exactly happened here, but I can assure you that my administration will leave no stone unturned in determining exactly what caused this implosion of one of our city’s most coveted Broadway venues. I have ordered all theaters in New York City remain closed. During this necessary, and I hope very brief, hiatus, the fire marshals in our city shall thoroughly inspect all of our theaters for safety to insure that nothing like this ever happens again. The buildings will be upgraded with new wiring wherever that is appropriate, although the fire marshals have assured me that regular inspections have already insured that every particle of these theaters has been found to be safe for the public. Nevertheless, we are going to make certain by once again inspecting each and every theater to insure that nothing is overlooked. Audience safety is our primary concern. Since Broadway and Off Broadway are integral parts of our local culture, these inspections will be priority issues and will come first. Some of these buildings will be opened within seven days. We believe that will be enough time to inspect them and to give the dust of the Lambrecht Theater a chance to settle. It will also be a suitable time for us to show respect for all of those who have perished in this tragedy.’ This letter is signed by New York’s new Mayor, who is Mayor Dale Featherstein.

“All of us are stunned. New York City has rarely experienced an event of this magnitude. Of course, the tragedy of 911 is still fresh in our minds. The Lambrecht adds to the horror that our citizens have had to endure. Remember, however that New Yorkers are tough. We are survivors. The bomb and arson squad will determine whether or not terrorists played any part in this event. As soon as their investigation is complete, the new mayor of New York will be advised. Then, the results of their investigation will be released to the media and the public. We will keep you informed of their work just as soon as we hear from them. Most of Mayor Graham’s immediate family were inside the theater sitting next to him, and for them the worst is feared. The mayor had his wife, son, and daughter with him.

Most people fear the worst. It is difficult to see how anyone could survive this tragedy. However, there is always hope. Even the most catastrophic building collapses can yield a humanitarian surprise here and there as an isolated person is pulled from some small pocket of safety where they survived amid the vast rubble. I know that all of us pray that such an event will unfold beneath these ashes of the collapsed theater. There are protected areas in basements, rest rooms, back halls and beneath the theater chairs where survivors may be found and rescued. That is our fervent hope. The first responders will be searching day and night to find the survivors. People have been found alive in situations far worse than this, so if you have loved ones in this building, keep in mind that they may still be rescued.

“That is what we are all hoping for. We will be grateful for whatever miracles the lord of each and every faith in this vastly teeming multicultural city decides to give us in the days ahead.”

## 51

Fireman Greg Pickett carefully dug into the mass of white dust that was the new floor of the Lambrecht Theater. A few bodies had been recovered, but the mother lode was expected approximately eight to twenty feet farther down. Plenty of human flesh was waiting for Pickett's constantly tapping shovel as he dug down below the building's collapsed ceiling and walls. He anticipated a somewhat grisly undertaking ahead. Pickett thought of his own much loved wife and daughter. He was lucky that none of them had the money to squander for tickets to the opening night of “Girls!,” because having them would mean that Pickett and his family would be down there in the massive gore that rested only God knew how many feet below his pounding shovel. Soon, the fire department ordered small tractors with shovels to help in the recovery. A few hours after Pickett his men had begun to dig, he was ordered to stand down as several new mechanical shovels arrived to replace him. “That's good for now, Pickett. We made our point that the fire department cares. Now, it's time to back off and let the mechanical boys take over. Even so, it will be several days to reach the mother lode of bodies.”

By that, the captain meant the mass of torn and dismembered bodies of the people trapped below in the crushing weight. The firemen wouldn't remove them, because a team of forensics experts had been contracted for that process which was far above a mere fireman's pay grade. They had been retained to exhume the dead just in case this turned out to be a crime scene.

Before leaving, Fireman Pickett took samples of stones, bricks, wood, metal, and dust for the bombing and arson squad who were part of the NYFD. Then, he took a taxi back to the fire station.

The guys were worn out. They had been on duty at the collapsed theater for more than seventeen hours. Some had been there since 9:10 p.m.

After they had been told to cease digging, they had surrounded the building's corpse and waited in case of fires, but nothing came of it. The scene smelled somewhat of explosives, but most collapses smelt that way. The internal parts of buildings contained chemicals buried deep inside the walls which were riddled



with petroleum distillates and resins, most of it from the paint, tar, and other elements that generally parked themselves deep inside building walls. These volatile chemical essences were released suddenly in collapses, giving the area a petroleum odor. In addition, any burned parts of the building from previous fires were reopened to the air. Old buildings have usually suffered several fires, most of them contained to small areas, which left an odor of burning once they were opened to the air during a massive collapse.

Before long, the contractors arrived to take charge of removing vast tons of broken materials including the dust that had settled between the bricks, plaster, and concrete inside the wreckage.

Having learned from the disaster of first responders at the World Trade Center collapse on 9/11 and beyond, the law required all workers at the scene to be fully insulated from materials including a mandatory personally secured filter system through which rescue persons breathed without coming into contact with the dust filled air of the building's wreckage. In this way, they were protected from lung and other internal organ damage as had been suffered by the NYPD at the world trade center. In fact, this was one of the reasons why the fire department no longer worked such scenes after the original possibility of fires had been eliminated. The firemen just had no interest whatever in risking their lives once again for a city that had proven itself as totally unreliable and heartless in protecting them from harm as had New York in the days following 9/11. Those days of complete trusting innocence were over at the fire department. The city had worn out its credibility with first responders. After that, New York City was not to be trusted ever again.

On the way back to the station, Picket passed a political rally by the tea party. They were protesting some sort of government expenditure for the building of a project using TIF money.

Picket didn't really care what the protest was about. It meant nothing to him. In Picket's opinion, they were merely a bunch of pompous intellectuals. Anyone who protested against the government was suspicious to Picket. After all his paychecks were from the government. Picket didn't trust these tea partiers as far as he could throw them.

"Look at those crazies," Picket said to the taxi driver. "Always protesting, always carrying signs. Why don't they just get an honest job?"

"I dunno," the cab driver said. "I hate them, too. They are another blight on the city. They never protested anything that meant something to a taxi driver or his family."

"Or the fire department," Picket said. "We don't get piddly crud from the tea niggers. We firemen are losing our salaries and pensions from these government money launderers, but those bastards don't give a false whiz about us."

"They care about the rich and not much else," the driver said.

"Yea. They are ass kissers."

"Yea. They are. I have no fondness for them. If you are rich they are for you. If you are poor they are against you. A bunch of selfish bastards. That's what."

"Yea."

The taxi let Fireman Picket off at his fire station. Picket paid him and left him a five dollar tip. He'd have both the fee and the tip returned to him by the city. He

was no one's chump when it came to being reimbursed, nor would he pay the bill from his own pocket. Picket only wanted what was honestly coming to him.

He walked inside. He stared blankly at what was left of the fireman's food that was sitting in bowls for all of them to eat, but most were not hungry. After small talk, he undressed, showered, and hit the sack. Most of the guys were already asleep in the dorm, trying to make up for the entire night they spent at the Lambrecht Theater making sure no fire broke out and that the adjacent buildings were themselves still structurally safe and sound. They were. None of them would be coming down soon. Hopefully they'd stand tall for another one hundred years.

## 52

Americans saw their television screens fade and dissolve to reveal the white house lawn. There, the usual white house correspondent for World Network News stood with his microphone.

"Ladies and gentlemen, the president of the United States will address the nation in a few minutes. In a release given to the press, we already understand the president will speak on the tragedy in New York City, but he will not treat it as a terrorist act. Instead, he will only refer to it as a complete shock to the nation and to its humanitarian focus. Ladies and gentlemen, the president will now speak."

The camera switched to a close up of the president.

"Citizens of the United States and our friends around the world, I come here tonight with a very heavy heart. More than one thousand persons were killed tonight in the collapse of one of the most historic theaters in the nation. The people had purchased very difficult to obtain tickets and were watching the much heralded performance of a musical that seemed destined to be an entertainment knock out, but as you can see that was not to happen. Instead, fate intervened. For some reason the entire theater collapsed upon everyone who sat inside it. We do not yet know why, but I can assure you we will.

"Many of the dead who are sleeping beneath the Lambrecht Theater's rubble include persons who were extremely high up in the ladder of recognition within the theater community not only in New York but in London, Paris, Los Angeles, and even in Tokyo. The people of New York City lost their mayor and their police commissioner along with their families. So many died in the collapse of the building that I simply cannot read all of their names, and, if I did, I'd leave many out either by selection or omission. I don't intend to do that. Let me just say that all of them are in our hearts as Americans.

"We have endured many difficult situations in our nation recently. We are being sorely tested. However, America is a strong and united country. We have faced many adversities together and survived. Even the hard fought civil war did not destroy us. Nor did that war destroy our destinies as citizens of this great nation.

"My family and my staff are praying for the families of the fallen. It is our prayer that the Lord will lift up his countenance to them and bring them peace at this time. To all Americans, I pray that God will raise you up and bless you."

The camera faded as the scene switched to the outside of the white house.

“The president has just addressed the nation. He said that the situation in New York City weighs heavily on every American’s heart. He told the nation that even incidents like this would never break the will of the America people. He said that he and his family prayed for the families of the fallen and would continue to do so. He asked before he spoke tonight that Americans who wish to do so as well will participate in their own way, depending on their own religious or other beliefs. This has been a report from World Network News.”

## 53

Coroner Hal Dopkin, M.D., and his crews of highly trained N.Y.C. coroner department specialists picked carefully through the mountains of dust and bricks which had once been the grand Lambrecht Theater. Hal and his forensic assistants had reached the mother lode of bodies right where they stood atop the building’s wreckage. Tiny pieces of corpses were resting everywhere intertwined with chairs floor boards and ceiling materials. Usually he’d come upon a hand or some hair. Then, upon dusting and pulling away the debris, he got down to the person or at least what was left of him. A lot of black tar had oozed into the area of each one. Dr. Dopkin and his forensic staff referred to alot of this material as black tar, but it wasn’t the type of tar roads and parking lots were covered with. It was the black tar of congealed blood.

In Hal’s mind, the tar was a sort of metaphor for many tragedies. It was the stuff of pain and fear emitted from a dying person. The tar had swirled inside their frightened cries which came from whatever end-life terror the audience might have had to endure in their last seconds. Dr. Dopkin, M.D., poked his tools into the fertile soil of death, extracting its hidden victims bit by bit, most of them fully intact even though many were physically broken and disfigured by tons of fallen debris.

The construction workers had cleaned off the debris in what had become a six-day labor of remorse. It was a time of wreckage and dust, of trucks backing in beside the mechanical diggers which loaded them down with the stuff of history, mostly brick and mortar mixed with a bit of angry, busted construction wood as well as roofing tiles. The mechanical claws tore it up and dumped it into the boxes attached to the dump trucks’ bodies. Yesterday evening they had reached the first bodies. Then, Dr. Hal Dopkin, M.D., and his forensics staff took over.

Construction men stood around with their shovels, hoes, and gloves, lending their hands to the further removal of debris whenever asked by the forensic staffers.

“Got a cold one here, boys,” Cindy Elefson called. “I need some good gloves to extract it.”

Bob Edwards and Sam Bernard came forward. The corpse was that of yet another suit draped man. He was bent over this woman who held a child about four years old. She had covered the little girl with her body at which point her husband had protected her body with his. This was typical behavior during emergencies. The coroner had seen it many times. Each group had its protectors and its protected. For Dr. Dopkin, people protecting their families from guns,

knives, and car crashes was an old story as ancient as the hills upon which New York City had been built. The DSLR cameras as well as smaller cameras housed in smart phones flashed over the entire graveyard of destruction as they documented the victims body by body. At times, their operators selected video mode to reveal their extraction. Then they returned to their flash mode. Cards were placed on each body as it was discovered and photographed, and these cards had numbers. They were later attached to the outside of the victim's body bag. "Victim number 257. Male, approximate age, 37, brown hair, brown eyes, multiple lacerations. Tattoo on left arm shows an artistic rendering of a dragon wrapping itself around a heart-shaped shield that read Mom in its center, body in fairly good shape but crushed in parts, both legs and left wrist shattered. Discovered and placed in bag at 3:30pm, 7 days after building's collapse." Dopkin directed a body picker over to his side. There were more complete bodies than he would have guessed, and that was good to know. "This one is bagged and ready. Please pause a few moments out of respect before you leave with it on your cot. And be sure, you do this with each person. I think that is very important," Dr. Dopkin said. "These are our family now."

"Yes, of course, sir," Bob said. "Be assured, they are our family, also. Mine and Sam's." He and Sam lifted the body. "Up we go," Bob said. "We are going to take you out now and clean you up." They placed the man's lifeless body on the stretcher and hobbled through the debris to the ambulance. There, they lifted it, placed it on a medical gurney, and slowly pushed it inside. "Wait here," Sam told the driver. "He is part of a small group. The coroner says they were this victim's family members. Two of them are coming in a few minutes. We want to keep them together out of respect."

"Yes," the driver said. "I'll wait for them." The driver respectfully dusted the bag with a towel. He was as depressed as the other workers over the incessant transport of hundreds of theatergoers including families, friends, and writers, actors, etc., all of whom had the lucky opening night tickets. He had shed many a tear when people weren't watching him, mostly as he drove slowly down the street on his way to several of the morgues that were being called upon to spread out the huge work load. The driver's name was Ed and his associates were Bill and Edna. All of them were certified medical technicians. They were used to tragedies. Victims of deadly and near deadly accidents, heart attacks, assaults, and shootings. These were their daily take. But despite their outer veneer of jaded disgust, many of them still had tender hearts of gold based on personal physical contact with the dead and dying, giving them comfort along the streets to the hospital emergency room. They broke down a lot and attended psychological sessions with counselors whenever they felt the need and nothing whatever was said about it. It was a part of the job.

Dr. Dopkin continued pulling family members from the catastrophe. Their sadness weighed down upon his shoulders. These people really could have been his own family. His family attended Broadway productions hundreds of times over the years. It would have taken very little to have placed them beneath another coroner's gentle searching hands.

Hal tried to picture in his mind what these dead would have felt as they were being retrieved from the wreckage. Would the coroner's gloved hands not be

welcomed in kindness as they were pulled up from their mangled graves? Would he himself not be aware of his own tenderness and respect for them? He imagined his reaching hands enclosing themselves about his own arms and shoulders as some future coroner hauled him out, dusted him clean, then placed him inside the body bag's plastic shroud of welcoming darkness. What would he think as he dissected himself upon the autopsy table, the scalpel opening his body, his organs being lifted and turned for inspection, his brain sitting atop the table prior to being reinserted into his awaiting cranium? Hal was not sure he'd feel the love, even though he dearly wished that he would.

Dopkin remembered his first autopsy. She was a little girl who had been tossed against the wall by her mother's angry boy friend. She was just a tiny little girl two years old. Her mother was an African American junkie and so was her boyfriend. According to court documents, in the midst of an argument the boyfriend had used the child against its mother. He picked her up like a rag doll and slammed her against the wall, until her head lost its shape and opened like a tiny watermelon. It spilled its load of undeveloped brain matter against the wall. Dopkin remembered cleaning black tar brain materials from the little girl's body. He sawed open the top cap of her skull and removed the brain. It was mostly loose material left there from the beating. Most brains were still solid and kept their shape. The little girl's brain was different because of its freshness. Her brain was more like a soft jello salad of juggled membranes. "I'm sorry this happened to you," he said to her as he held up what was left of her perceptual organ. "I'm truly sorry, my dear. I hope you are in a better place now where you can be happy all the time."

He realized heaven was just a useful psychological crutch. There was no such place. Only the mournful used it. They needed something to hold onto to make something awful have a good turn at the end.

But lives are not like Broadway plays. Lives and blood and guts and the damaged brains and kidneys in a corpse's final autopsy were where the truth of life's brutality stepped forward and took its bow.

As Hal Dopkin, M.D., placed the children of the wrecked Lambrecht Theater into their body bags, he said a prayer to them the same as he had to his first patient. He wished each of them a swift journey to a better place and a full life with their own children, their innocence, their smiling faces, and their laughter. Dopkin knew in the depth of his most exquisite coroner's fantasy that God existed, even though Dopkin himself was an atheist. Despite his rational skepticism, he still entered into a compact with the devil by negotiating a respite for autopsied children. His dignity for life itself demanded that he do this and that he pretend to all the world of endless scalpels and spreading chest clamps that the grand persona known as the great one come down off his high horse. The great one had ridden so far away into the distant heavens that even the Hubble telescope had not been able to find him there. If Dopkin ever experienced the unlikely event whereby he stood naked and oppressed before the face of the mythical lord in heaven, he would ask him what in the world he had in mind in allowing these tragedies to happen.

Coroner Hal Dopkin, M.D., and his crews of highly trained N.Y.C. coroner department specialists worked day and night to autopsy the remains of the Lambrecht Theater goers. More than one-half of the creative theatrical and film talent of New York had been lost in this single tragic event. The lives of the good and the bad had perished in a single moment of extreme horror. As he cut into the chest and thorax of each patient, Dr. Dopkin performed his ritual of wishing each of them well in his mind as he had always done in trying to make this procedure as humanely respectful for them as possible.

It was useless, and he knew that, but he did it anyway. The coroner knew that little things in life were often tied together like paper dolls cut from the horror stories found in newspapers to create endlessly happy newsprint babies, each with the same stupid little smiles as they danced in the hands of their youthful creators. That, too, was an example of the good being created from the horror of our lives, and Hal often dreamed of how he had created those smiling babies from newspapers on rainy days when he couldn't run through the streets to the park and join other kids' baseball teams. With his little scissors, Hal cut out thousands of neatly arranged newsprint babies, each attached by their hands and arms to a paper accordion of little people. When Hal played baseball in the city parks each strike out allowed him the occasion to pretend he had just whacked a homer out of the park to the endless cheers of fans. He knew that his discarded paper babies hovered close-by in his inquisitive coroner mind. They had become thin ghosts in the trees beyond the crime scenes and the baseball parks where the gaseous strands of his imagination blew in the rustling leaves as they rattled against themselves in nature's winds high up in the hidden branches of that dense greenery where hidden paper doll ghosts gazed down upon him as they applauded his every move of his bat and scalpel.

Officer Denzel Woods was the official autopsy policeman and attache for the autopsies. Detective Woods had been stationed like a trendy blue Druid inside Dopkin's autopsy room. Woods was a necessary evil of America's court system. He was there to keep the train of evidence intact. He was an extra witness so to speak. He was there only to later testify if needed in a court of law where he could be sworn in and say, "Yes, your honor, I was there for the entire autopsy, and, yes, I witnessed Dr. Hal Dopkin as he ascertained the condition of his clients at the moment of their deaths."

"Can you describe in detail for those in the court, who are not aware of these things, exactly what happened there?"

"Yes. Dr. Dopkin surgically opened each victim and removed their organs and their brains. After placing these items on the examining table he then investigated their condition. At times, this required cutting into these items to find a bullet or other foreign object that might have caused their death."

"Did you and the coroner find this distasteful?"

"No. We found it to be in the best interests of the victims. These procedures are very necessary to determine the nature of death and to classify it as either natural or as a homicide. It is not something you would describe in detail to your children

when you go home, but it is something that needs to be described in great detail before being presented to a jury in order to arrive at real justice for the victim.”

Dr. Dopkin interrupted his day dreams by suddenly speaking to no one in particular.

“Number 427,” Dr. Dopkin read into his cell phone’s recorder. He took pictures of each organ as he discussed it. “Patient’s brain shows signs of trauma caused most likely by the collapsing roof of the Lambrecht Theater. The other internal organs are in a condition similar to what would happen if they had been crushed from the same building collapse. The heart has been impaled by the victim’s own bones which were found intact inside the organ where they had been forced by the collapse. The death seems to be caused by the collapse of the building. The court will have to determine whether or not the death itself was a felony. This will be based on evidence gathered at the scene to determine whether the building collapsed by itself or did so as the result of a criminal act of some sort. This ends the coroner’s official autopsy report for victim number 427. I am Dr. Hal Dopkin, M.D., the coroner in charge.”

Officer Denzel Woods sat in his observation post trying to stay awake. Woods mulled through his past memories in order to amuse himself for a few moments. Anything to partially distract his mind from the incessant removal of organs and their inspection. Although Woods dutifully watched each procedure with an eye toward so testifying in a court of law, nonetheless, being a typical person, Denzel was prone to daydreams as was every cop, taxi driver, or actor within the New York City area.

To deny day dreaming as a national on-the-job activity was to deny all realities in the world at large. It was simply understood, because all Americans did it hour after hour no matter where they worked. Dreams were a part of every activity within America’s work force. Even the placement of nuts and bolts in the manufacturing process were usually accompanied by day dreams of one sort or another. These dreams were the coping mechanisms by which factory workers wielding tools dreamed of their high school exploits and things that might have happened differently and better in a far friendlier world but somehow never seemed to transpire as the factory worker had planned. Without these dreams, the American worker might well die of boredom. The tightening of screws by worker slaves could not be sustainable over hours of work assignments without the constant interjection of minor fantasies for their minds’ amusement.

Detective Denzel Woods was a career officer who backed his men and gave his all to the force. This was his life. He knew that it wasn’t much, but it was what he had been dealt from childhood on as a direct result of having been raised in a policeman’s family where he made the decision to live his life exactly as his father had done and reap the retirement pension at the end of his avocational rainbow which contained the sparkling pot of gold that glowed vociferously at the end of each policeman’s career. Woods already knew what he’d do when he retired. He would sell his home and move with his wife to Florida and live the stingy good life that all ex-cops lived. There, he would eat at cheap local diners and watch the New York sports teams on his HDTV in crisp living color until the inevitable heart attack or cancer sent him into the ground or packed his ashes inside the proverbial jar of her loving husband’s final cremation. He and his wife, Nellie,

laughed at the idea that they'd both be better lovers after they died. They figured their own passing would be the final tweak to make all things right, clearing up unpaid debts and atoning for dreams that were desired but never totally fulfilled. The songbirds of death deep inside the earth would tweet to them of the great things they had done or missed having done, because in their final end everyone's triteness needed to be covered up as with a blanket of self forgiveness. Otherwise, suicides would rise. They would cause planned price increases to be foregone due to the unexpected loss of more and more consumer units and with them, the lowering of overall demand for products. Hence their prices would drop.

"Look at this, guys," Lonny Harris said. Lonny was one of the coroners tagged to help in the crisis. Lonny stood back and revealed a man's head with his own hand and wedding ring wedged inside his brain.

The coroners continued to work. They sawed open their patients' skulls and surgically opened their soft thoraxes with their scalpels. They held up their victims' innards for inspection directly beneath the room's surgical quality lights, and spoke to their recording devices when giving their findings. There were more than a thousand bodies left for them to respectfully dissect, if such were even possible, which meant the present project was going to be a long and laborious toil.

## 55

"This is Lori Walters. I am back once again in New York's Broadway Area, the site of the collapsed Lambrecht Theater where the bodies of more than one thousand people had been interred within the wreckage of this ancient theater which was renowned worldwide for its daring presentations of drama, musicals, and dance productions. Now, most of the bodies have been exhumed. As you can see, the building, or what is left of it, is still nothing but a lesser sea of dust and bricks. All that was its history and grandeur is now gone. The vibrantly interesting walls are gone including the clever little devils and beautiful maidens of the ancient past who glared down upon its audiences from their positions in the walls and ceiling, the cupids, maidens, elephants, and other gilded decorations. These are also all gone. Nothing is left. All of these icons have been permanently and irretrievably destroyed in the collapse of this single building.

"The new mayor, Mr. Dale Featherstein, has reluctantly picked up the shroud that was once his predecessor's and has announced that New York City will recover. He has banned the reopening of large auditoriums and theaters until the fire marshals can reinspect them and determine their safety from collapses and other hazards. In this way, the mayor has told the theater going public that, whenever they enter a theater anywhere in New York City, they will know for certain that the building will be safe. Others have said that the implosion of this building was due to its age. Most likely someone sabotaged the ancient theater for terrorist reasons to make a statement about Obama Care, one of the most popular reasons for serial murderers seeking publicity in these dangerous times.

Until now, these were the actions of lone wolf madmen whose relatives allegedly died from state bureaucracies that now control the medical-insurance complex



and its obscenely high profits. They allegedly determine on a daily basis who shall live and who shall die. Their motives have been expressed in the press by spokesman in the tea party and other conservative movements in the United States. Similar opinions have been expressed by spokesmen in other organizations. These opinion makers have previously expressed their concern over what they term as the rampant takeover of America by large monopolists. According to these speakers, the corporatists who decide who lives and who dies in American medicine have achieved an almost communist-like hold upon the careers of congressmen and presidents alike through their ability to determine each election's outcome with their money. They claim these corporatists have an iron grip over the outcome of any election in which they themselves have an interest by being the only significant ones who supply money for political campaigns. It seems that this occurs during almost every election.

"I have with me right now, Emily Jackson, one of the spokeswomen for the tea party movement in the United States. Ms. Jackson, what would you like to say to the American people and especially those who live in New York?"

"I want to remind people that the tea party movement is a political organization that is attempting to rescue the federal government from its own corruption. We are an organization of civic minded persons who believe that over-taxation and lack of any representation for the working people have become prime directives in an America that has recently entered a predictable insanity phase, one of many in its long history. Things shouldn't have gotten this far, yet they have.

"I also want the people to understand that our view is a peaceful one. We do not allow persons who are prone to violence or advocate either violence or terrorism in any fashion to participate in our activities at all, so there is no way that we could have in any way been even the least responsible for the killings in Washington or New York City, provided, that is, that this theater's wreckage is not from weakness in the structure but from the work of a terrorist who has set off bombs inside the Lambrecht Theater when no one was looking."

"There is no indication that bombs were used, Miss Jackson."

"We have indications that a few survivors who were outside the building heard detonations inside the Lambrecht Theater at the exact time of its collapse. We have no way of verifying these rumors, but we feel they are bound to increase in numbers as time goes on and people come forward."

"That determination, Ms. Jackson, will be up to the fire marshals and the bombing squads to determine."

"It will indeed be up to those exact people to determine, and we hope that terror will not be a part of why this building came down, because if it were the act of a misguided person or persons it would further undermine the principles of freedom that most Americans believe in. Freedom requires that terror not be a part of the menage of people within our nation. Otherwise, the government can be expected continue to exploit each terrorist act to further undermine the rights and freedoms of our nation's citizens as was done with the Patriot Act and the National Defense Authorization Act which have totally undermined our nation's central core of citizen values. The tea party movement would ask that everyone remain calm and that the congress not be railroaded into the passage of more freedom corroding

acts which can do nothing to improve the security of our nation but can only undermine it and destroy our constitutional rights and privileges even more.”

“We have been listening to a spokesperson for the popular tea party movement. Her name is Emily Jackson. Ms. Jackson lives and works in the New York City environment and is very concerned that this incident, if a terrorist event, is not used to further undermine the American system which until very recently has guaranteed our freedoms.”

## 56

Months before the Lambrecht Theater implosion, Americans with clear minds far more precise and cunning than those of most had been busy at work preparing various scenarios for achieving the easy passage of even more anti-constitutional legislation. These co-conspirators had been used to getting their way for a long time, because they represented the parasitic elitists who had already systematically destroyed most of what America had once been. New laws perpetrated by their organizations redesigned the balance of power in favor of the fascist elements of banking, military preparedness, and crony corporatism which had always been alive and well within the body politic of the nation but which were now destined to assume even larger inroads into what had once been a far freer nation of free men.

This was nothing new. Their predecessors had begun this progressive takeover more than two hundred years before. They had been appointed to the first constitutional convention to compose the very document that insured the nation would always be controlled by the repulsively rich who passed their fortunes down through the generations to their posterity the same way the English royalty had always done through the false rite of ascendancy which was how they were granted their huge land tracts, franchises, and other government largess that insured their wealth on the unknown continent of America while all other Englishmen who came here were not.

These selfish men were working for the same aims as were their predecessors hundreds of years ago. Conspiring behind closed doors, as they had always done, these elitists sought to destroy even more remnants of the old America as cleverly and stealthily as they could manage without attracting too much attention. In so doing, their goals were simple. They desired a newer and even more fascist nation which would continue to enlarge itself at the expense of the ninety-nine percent of its citizens who owned nothing while insuring that those who had always owned everything would continue to do so by engorging themselves day-by-day through government favors and huge profitable contracts for their goods and services which were paid for by the public purse.

They had been behind many profitable deals approved by the easily obtained votes of their friends in congress who were usually their nation's croniest legislators and of whom they were themselves usually the most vociferous members. All the while the persons behind this most recent conspiracy against constitutional guarantees for the citizens were very busy paying high fees to known collaborators on Madison Avenue whose public relations and advertising

agencies controlled many of the nation's mental threads of public perception via their nearly monopolistic ownership of movies, music, television, radio, Internet, and print propaganda. Their employees were burning midnight oil for the corporatists who saw the Nationals Stadium as well as the Lambrecht Theater collapse as perfectly good crises to be mined and fully exploited for the conspirators' anti-American objectives.

"We can use the two thousand page document which we have personally authored and which sits right here in front of us to exploit the public clamor for security within the borders of America," the CEO of Rasmussen and Williams, LLC said in his privately held board speech. "The public clamor for change has more than exceeded critical mass. This is the best disaster we can hope to have since 911 when we finally passed the Patriot Act."

"Never look a perfectly good crisis in the mouth," said Willard Knowles, the board chairman and CEO, as he continued speaking. "This crisis is a gift horse for the corporatist world by whom we are being more than well paid."

Knowles patted the top of the document, then he continued talking.

"Having read and edited this manuscript several times, I must say that, in my opinion, this document is nearly perfect for our needs and goals. We can be very proud of what we have done here, and I want to congratulate all of you for your efforts in this regard. Your diligent work has surpassed our every need and expectation. In addition, your quality control in handling this project has been excellent."

Other members of the board nodded in deference to the opinion of Mr. Knowles which was precisely why they had been selected to serve on the firm's board.

Mr. Knowles knew his men. He selected them solely on the basis of his ability to easily dominate and manipulate them to his constantly changing needs whatever they might be. For more than fifteen years, these men had never let him down. Their existence on the board was, in Knowles' mind, the perfect revelation of corporatist control over businesses and consulting firms all of whom in concert possessed the crucial means to control not only the United States but Russia, England, China and most of the other countries in the world.

"We have a motion before us," Willard Knowles said. "Is there a second for passing this document along to the house of representatives under the title of 'The constitutional Preservation Act?'" A second was immediately registered with most of the board members offering with their eagerly raised hands to vote for the motion like the little patsies they had been carefully selected to become. In a few moments, the voting was over. Rasmussen and Williams, LLC, would now apply millions of dollars in propaganda funds to persuade both congress and the American people to deal an even heavier death blow to the constitution.

## 57

The pre-paid propagandists in the bowels of Rasmussen and Williams, LLC, Madison Avenue, New York had finally tweaked their legislation to the maximal level possible consistent with winning their objectives. Now, they began secretly and surely mapping out careful and well documented plans designed to bring their

functionally prepaid and therefore totally compromised congress around to their side of things.

“Are we ready to move on the bill?” Knowles asked.

“Yes, sir.”

“Do it.”

The public announcements were made on television sets all across America.

On a black screen the words appeared line by line as they were read by an announcer speaking in a well-trained and most confident speaking pattern designed to hypnotize the unwary television viewers:

“The nation is beset by criminals, protesters, and patriots. Many of these misguided people are threatening us with violence. We have seen these violent and murderous developments at sports stadiums, shopping malls, parking garages, and office buildings. Enough is enough. Support the Constitutional Preservation Act to toughen laws and bring these threats to our way of life to an end. The Constitutional Preservation Act... The time for a renewal of the American spirit has come.”

It was the beginning of the end of civil rights in America and the start of the new security apparatus in Washington.

## 58

The hearing room of the senate judicial committee was crowded with so-called experts who had been invited to speak, and with generally cooperative reporters on whom the government knew it could rely for calmly supporting the government’s position.

“Sir, the United States can no longer coddle criminals bearing bombs into our buildings. Even churches have been their targets. The public is demanding action from us,” said the witness.

The man’s name was Peter Williams, and he was a paid shill sent there to support the bill’s sponsors.

“Mr. Williams, you speak of demands from the public. What do you mean by that phrase?” asked Senator Jayson Harrington, the chairman of the judiciary committee.

“Polls taken by Rassmussen and other public relations agencies have indicated a seventy percent favorability rating for the Constitutional Preservation Act, Mr. Chairman.”

“Well, Mr. Williams, I’ve seen a lot of polls. Being a senator, I’d guess I’ve seen ten thousand of them if I’ve seen one of them. The thing that is obvious about them is that the people taking them are biased on one side of the issue. Aren’t all polls tainted, Mr. Williams?”

“We live in an imperfect world, Mr. Senator. Sometimes the questions asked are phrased in particular ways that predetermine in some respects the answers that are either anticipated or desired or both.”

“Exactly. So what are we talking about in this Rassmussen Poll?”

“I am not certain, sir. I wasn’t there when the poll was administered nor was I present when it was developed.”

“Yet, you must think that this poll is important.”

“Yes. I do think its important.”

“What about the possibility that his poll is tainted in some way by its handlers?” Senator Harrington asked.

“Again, Senator, we live in an imperfect world. Everything we see is projected through an uncertain and roughly ground lens. No matter how hard we try to be perfectly fair all of our efforts may still fall short of perfection. However, this does not mean that all polls are without their benefits.”

“Well, the only poll I believe in are the ones that appear on election day.”

“Some say that even election findings are false, senator. I’m sure you’ve heard the complaints.”

“Indeed. We’ve all heard the complaints. Those on the winning side tend to feel the electorate has spoken and done so with infinite wisdom when the votes are being counted. The losers, on the other hand, sometimes state that the elections have been rigged. What’s interesting, Mr. Williams, is the the winners have never claimed they rigged a single election. So, where is the real truth? Were they rigged and unfair? Were the counters in back rooms really criminals who participated in a mockery of our democracy? Or are the people doing the complaining just bloviating? It’s an interesting question that most of the people on either side of me have pondered many times over the years. And, Mr. Williams, none of us knows. We don’t do the counting. But, as far as I know, the counting is at least partly fair and partly unfair. Like most things, the practice of a perfect scenario is always flawed by the weakest links embedded in the system into which it has been forcefully inserted.”

“All of us live in cynical times, senator. Not everyone is going to believe everything they hear, and, if they did we might have to send them to an institution where they could be carefully observed. I would surmise that those doing the observing might be searching in vain for the mental aberrations from whence they could well be suffering,” Williams answered. “That’s precisely why I keep an open mind on almost everything.”

The room laughed nervously.

“I, too, keep an open mind, Mr. Williams. I don’t want to be in an institution any more than you. But what bothers me is that we live in a world of opinions. Such a world is a world of confusion to be exact. Everything we see merely exists in the fog of our perceptions. Every day, when we open our eyes to the sun, we enter into a new war for our minds. Shells are going off everywhere. The shells are silent and cannot be heard or seen, and the ideals being given to us on television are warped and frozen in time. If we could Stone the invisible veil behind those ideas and ideals being piped into our eyes and ears, I think we might easily perceive that almost all of them are warped and distorted by their inventors and providers. Our best defense against such things might be our constant wariness. Carried to the extreme I would guess the best way to remain mentally clear of these aberrations might be to remove the televisions from our homes. Skepticism and social withdrawal from propaganda, Mr. Williams, is America’s best defense against being manipulated by its best and highest paid liars. It’s also your best defense.”

“Yes, sir. I’d agree with that.”

“You are very perceptive, Mr. Williams. I’d like to thank you for answering our questions, and I hope you will return in the future if we ask you.”

“I would certainly be pleased to meet with the committee at any time of its liking. I enjoyed most of my visit, although there were a few moments that, at the time felt as anguished and as painful as child birth as told to me constantly by my wife.”

The audience laughed.

“Most enjoyable to hear from you, sir,” said Senator Harrington. “Say hello to your charming family.”

“Thank you, senators, for inviting me.”

Mr. Williams got up and left the room. His reception had been good for the most part, but the skeptics, as always, had been there like cats waiting to pounce upon him with their claws which they had purposely extended to tear him apart. That was always the way these hearings seemed to be carried out. It might even be that they would always be like this. The world, as Harold Williams knew it, was uncertain, keenly beautiful, yet foul. Life was confusing. Some people were even more so. Opinions, as he well knew, were like assholes. Everyone had one which made the world malodorous and dangerous at best.

That made sense, because his mama used to tell him, prairie pies inside the State of Kansas would always be a dime a dozen, because there were so many of them.

Harrington knew that very few things in this world ever changed.

## 59

Understanding how the rich elitist bankers and corporatist cronies had already more than generously paid the nation’s senators and congressmen as well as members of the president’s constitutional advisement groups to do their will no matter what the people at large wanted, they expected nothing less than enthusiastic and rapid cooperation on the Constitutional Preservation Act. In fact, it was passed in less than thirty minutes, same as had happened with the Patriot Act.

The implementation of the two thousand page bill rapidly compromised the constitution. A near dictatorship run from the capitol in Washington which was already in operation was now bolstered legislatively.

If the Patriot Act and National Defense Authorization Act were bad, then the new bill in front of them was one thousand times worse. It was even more intrusive into the lives of Americans, taking away freedom of speech entirely. This new set of laws also provided an already dictatorial president with even greater dictatorial power whenever he might declare it necessary for his administration’s survival. It also gave the president unlimited powers to curtail gun ownership, censor news reporters and editors by enforcing the concept of pre-approved news stories to insure they were in-line with government objectives, and opened everyone within the nation’s borders to search and seizure without a court warrant. It even provided for the spying and bombing of citizens by anyone in government deeming it to be necessary and to provide a context for their domestic surveillance using

the new drone technology. Another paragraph allowed the use of deadly gassing to end citizen protests and general unrest in any town, city, and county in the nation where it was deemed appropriate.

These were only the highlights. The low lights, no one needed to know. They were strictly classified to protect the government from the snooping eyes of the American people. That way Americans couldn't protest them.

Since demonstrations and other gatherings of the populace that might embarrass members of the government were now generally forbidden in the usual sense of the word for the sake of national security there could no longer be protests of these laws. The bill would turn the nation into something very akin to East Germany in the 1950's and 1960's.

As a matter of fact, the government would have more rights to crush citizen dissent than had been given to the Stazi, East Germany's notorious secret police. Government goons could now capture, imprison, torture, and kill any citizen in the name of national security. All other implied freedoms under this new set of laws were crushed in the name of total governmental control.

In this manner, America stood poised to enter an even worse stage in its ongoing dark age.

## 60

Will Sturm needed his usual oil change. His car edged Main Street with the caution that most drivers used only during times when they meandered the most suspect boulevards of life.

Will was a safe driver. He was employed at the local factory. His job was a piece of cake, and he'd been doing the same thing for seventeen years and never regretted it for a moment. His bank account was sweetly fat, and he was able to take vacations without busting the family budget.

Up ahead, Matt saw the end of his present journey. It was a filling station, one that specialized in oil changes, tires, and minor repairs. Will honked at the service door and a mechanic whose face was nearly obliterated with oil stains came out.

"What can I do for you?"

"I've never met you before," Will said.

"This is my first day," the mechanic said. "My name is Rob Gibson."

"I'm Will Sturm. I need an oil change," Will said.

Rob guided him until his car was positioned neatly over the vehicle lift.

"It'll be about fifteen minutes, sir," Rob said. "The waiting room is outside to the right."

"Gotcha."

Will headed out. He turned and walked slowly and confidently around the building. He knew exactly where the customer waiting room was located, and no one had to tell him. As he walked, Will took in the scene's completely grubby ambiance. The place was quite a sight to behold. It always had been. Its tawdry condition was exactly what gave it a tinge of notoriety and was more than likely the reason that guys liked it better than women did.

Will Sturm always felt more secure in knowing that Matt's filling station was still true to its nature. He expected nothing less. Even its doorway was delicately flavored with years of oil stained hand prints. The door's dingy wooden surface seemed to contain more grease than three pounds of bacon. Torn seat covers on the rickety chairs revealed years of service to the weary waiting drivers who counted on Matt's filling station to change their oil and get them on their way. The upside was how cheap it was to get service here. At Matt's everyone got the lowest price in town. Its motto might have been, "No frills and low bills."

Inside, the new mechanic who lied when he said his name was Rob Gibson, was under the car, messing with the oil drain. While the oil poured out into the bucket below, Rob hid a melange of plastic explosives along the edges of the gas tank. The blast would be huge, because Will Sturm's tank contained a full eighteen gallons of gasoline. The plastic weighed seventeen pounds which was a lot. It's explosion would be a big one. That was for certain. Maximum impact. Minimum cost. Kills. Thrills.

A few minutes later, Will Sturm paid his bill and picked up his keys. After he picked up his car, he was ready to rock and roll. He had no idea that the car behind him was driven by his mechanic, because he no longer looked like the carefully disguised grease monkey Will Sturm had met at the garage entrance. Instead, his face mask was changed.

Rob Gibson might even have really been James Stone in clever grease monkey drag, but if that were the case no one needed to know. That's why Rob had disguised his face with a latex mask and his carefully applied oil smears which meandered here and there totally camouflaging his real features. Everything about Rob had been destroyed in an oil drum in back of the filling station where his clothes and papers had been set afire just before Stone donned his next identity as Troy Sutter. His Virginia drivers license had been made several days before on an HP color printer attached to Stone's own laptop. He had used the computer camera to make his photo ID which included one with him wearing the mask he was now hiding behind. He had no fingerprints, because his hands were now semi-permanently covered with latex. The only prints to be found on the car were some he had made on his computer using FBI prints of felons. He had selected those of a terrorist who had escaped from a prison in Dubai. They had been carefully smeared across the steering wheel, keys, and knobs in the stolen car. Every piece of evidence led away from him and toward some innocent person whom he had selected as his scape goat.

After twenty minutes in the garage that morning, the explosives and cell phone trigger had been securely and carefully placed and checked. The car had been turned into a massive and effective bomb. It was more than powerful enough to bring down a skyscraper if exploded in just the right place inside an underground garage area. If exploded in the open, it could severely damage fifteen to twenty buildings causing several of them to collapse. The deaths either way were going to be massive.

James Stone felt the mask he had so carefully and artistically glued to his face. He had used such disguises many times in his line of work as a dedicated sniper. This was how he was able to make his getaways safely and never be discovered. The descriptions of the suspected perpetrator would be totally counter to his real



looks which he was careful to hide from those who could harm him if they knew anything about him, especially his real description. James chuckled to himself. It was always so easy for him to slip in and out of characters who did the killing and those who simply walked quietly away with a totally different identity. Killing was a piece of cake if you were not sure of who you were, because your faces changed with each new environment you chose to deal with. He felt certain the law would never catch up to him, because he always made sure they never had a clue. In fact, the car he was driving was stolen. The plates were those of a car of the same model and color that had been recently demolished. Its serial numbers and VIN were now a part of the new car that he had made the stolen one into. He could never be traced, and he knew that quite well. He would get away with it both now and in the near future again and again. He always had.

Will Sturm pulled up to the huge factory where he worked. His parking space was right next to the building. More than 850 workers were busy inside, manufacturing chemicals for secret weapons programs. It was a top secret installation. None of those inside were aware they had been making poison gas. For years, they had been told they were making special polymers which were highly poisonous if inhaled. Sturm and his co-workers only knew that the chemicals were used in the making of plastics and that they were volatile and needed to be placed in air tight drums to protect the workers and their customers. In fact, unknown to the workers, the final products manufactured and housed in this factory were not only poisons but included several lines of viral agents to be used in clandestine CIA attacks on foreign powers. Will entered the building, flashed his worker's badge and signed in.

"You are a bit late today, Will," the guard said. "I'll have to report you for it."

"I'm not late. I took a personal hour off," Will explained. "I got three hundred and fifty hours of personal time piled up, Mac. Maybe more."

"Want to transfer some of them to me?"

"No. I think I'll keep them."

"Just joking," Mac said. "If I had time off, it'd just mean I'd be getting even more nagging from my wife. You know how it is."

"I have a good idea."

Sturm made his way to the locker room. There, he dressed out into his chemical protection hood, gown, and shoes. He'd need them further inside to insure that he didn't fall victim to the vapors that were regularly released from the chemicals he had to oversee. It could become a dangerous job, and some had died from it in the past. But for a low life like Will Sturm who only had a high school diploma, it was the job of a lifetime. He'd been at it for more than seventeen years, and it paid his bills. He was glad to have it. There was no way he would ever quit.

Will Sturm had even worked his way into the top secret security areas where a combination of toxins, gasses, and viruses were kept. Of course, these agents were labeled HAZARDOUS MATERIALS and nothing else. Only a series of long numbers and identifying bar codes insured that the cans of these agents went to the right places, persons, and nations. As a result, when things went right, no one was the wiser. In fact the city where Will Sturm was employed would have raised hell if it had ever found out what was being manufactured, tested, warehoused, and shipped right there under their noses, and that a single mishap could take out

everyone for the surrounding twenty-five miles or more depending upon weather conditions if the plant's many walls of security were ever breached. Sturm's life was a time bomb for himself, the 850 other factory workers, and the one hundred and fifty thousand people who lived in the vicinity of Will Sturm's deadly workplace.

Sturm entered another super secure area. This one contained explosives. The one he had just passed through contained deadly bacteria, virus, and toxins. He showed his card, punched in his personal code and heard the security door lock release its security fix. He pushed the door open and entered. Here was what he knew as the automated canning facility. The cans were loaded by robotic equipment, and Will Sturm's only job was to enter that facility in case of a breakdown, then to fix whatever had clogged the assembly line and start it up. In seventeen years, he had to do this four hundred and thirty eight times. In between, he was an observer and dispatching specialist who listed the serial numbers of the war materials passing through the system. Will thought for sure that he knew what the cans and boxes contained, but he really didn't. In fact, he and all of the others including the executives thought they were making materials for plastics and paints. The less they knew the safer everyone was. That was the plan, and it had worked perfectly for almost two decades.

That was about to end.

## 61

Three hours later, James drove the stolen car into a junk yard and witnessed it being crushed just to make sure it was destroyed. He pocketed the three hundred in cash and walked out. Several blocks away, he picked up his next stolen car. Once inside, he changed his clothes and mask, becoming someone completely different. Driving down the interstate, he pulled off into a roadside park where he deposited his clothes and gas mask into a barbecue pit. Then, he doused it in chemicals, and lit it. In minutes all of it was reduced to ash. He put the ash into a bag and dusted it into the park's lawn where it disappeared between the blades of grass. Then he took off again and picked up his next car. It was in an industrial area alongside a river. He started the new car to make sure it was working, then doused the car he had been driving with volatile chemicals. He placed a wedge in front of the rear tires, then unlocked the brake. He was in the middle of nowhere, but he checked around out of habit to insure no one was there. The coast was clear. He was perfectly alone, just as he had planned. He lit the car and watched it bursting into flames. After five minutes, everything inside and outside the car was destroyed beyond any identification. Besides, the VIN and serials were faked. He pulled out the wedge and watched what was left of the car as it careened into a stack of oil drums several hundred feet away. They exploded one by one spreading even more fire across the already burning scene.

In minutes, he was gone.

When James Stone reached the next town, he stopped his stolen car and dialed the number of the cheap throw away cell phone he used as the bomb trigger on Will Sturm's automobile. He listened as the phone paused to send its signal to the cell phone beneath Sturm's car. It began to ring, then the ring stopped. An announcer came on saying, "The person you have called is not available. Please call again." James figured the explosion was already happening, and the phone was gone forever.

Meanwhile, at the secret factory where Will Sturm worked, the blast tore out almost seven acres of the plant including the warehouse. All Sturm knew was that his desk moved and what was left of the walls to his part of the factory had disintegrated around him. Pieces of it entered his chest killing him instantly, then the volatile chemicals in the factory were released in repeating secondary explosions that tossed cans of chemicals and viral bombs high into the air where the heat of the fires caused them to explode. These secondary explosions sent toxins, virus, and incendiary agents high into the air as the exploded materials added to the tremendous blast and continued to obliterate all sections of the property. Everything within the factory's insides soon assumed the shape of a mushroom cloud that towered high above its ground zero.

Buildings all over the near-by city fell from the blast's concussions. They seemed to collapse one by one as more and more of the explosive materials broke loose inside the burning plant's remains. Entire rooms of five, ten, and even fifty gallon barrels looped high into the air. They exploded hundreds of feet up which propelled other floating cans of toxins and volatile agents farther up and out, and, as they exploded, the surrounding floaters took on new life and moved farther and farther out as the multiple air born explosions self propelled their rapidly escalating devastation. In minutes, most of the small towns in the factory's vicinity were on fire. Multiple house and factory fires sent up black smoke into the sky. Meanwhile, people were overcome by toxins manufactured from military grade materials, and others who were lucky enough to escape carried slowly developing and very fatal diseases inside them to one city after another. Some traveled by land and air as far away as both coasts before their infections surfaced.

The delay in viral gestation worked exactly as the military experts had planned. The traveling public began infecting town after town with new types of military viruses that no one had ever seen before. Soon, schools, hospitals, office buildings, and every other business in all parts of the United States were either filled with the dead or were locked down to prevent the fleeing people from reaching them, spreading their diseases, and infecting others.

A few hours after the explosion, the story of the deadly release of toxins and viruses slowly began to surface. It was then that James Stone heard the first reports of an explosion in the area where his bomb had been placed for

detonation. That was far away from where he was now. The news was sketchy, which he expected, because so much of the surrounding area had been compromised. An hour later, he reached the spot where his next stolen and disguised car was waiting for his use in the old barn where he parked it. He transferred to it, and lit the barn aflame so he could destroy all semblances of his present escape vehicle. He drove toward home in his final camouflaged disguise, and, once he reached his safe house, he destroyed his mask and latex gloves covering his hands. He disposed of them by burning them outside the house and tossing the ashes into the nearby river a mile away where they were carried away never to be located. His safe house was off grid, so he listened to the news with battery power which was renewed each day by a small one hundred and forty watt solar panel and a single four hundred watt wind powered electric generator.

“Reports coming from the area are spotty,” the news said, “thousands are dead or dying. The military says that terrorists may be involved. People in the area should stay indoors, because toxins may have been released into the air, but this is not confirmed. Some of the information is based on rumor which is widespread within the surrounding areas. No one as yet has been confirmed being infected by diseases, and it is not expected that they will be. For now, everyone is being asked to leave, because there is so little left of the area that has not been polluted by the huge debris cloud. The government warns that those who remain in the area will soon have no fuel left and little to eat or drink. There is zero electrical service in the area at this time. The military promises that by tomorrow all roads in and out for three hundred miles will be filled with military traffic bringing men and materials including food and water to rescue citizens trapped in the counties affected.”

“That was a report from the World News Network,” the announcer said. “Thousands of people are leaving the designated hazardous area at the insistence of the government.”

James laughed. Evidently, the government wanted all of the deadly viruses stored at the plant to escape and spread, because the ensuing chaos that these plagues caused would insure even more losses of citizen protections against government abuse and dictatorship. Government would soon stand atop the corpses and told the American people that it had assumed even more Draconian power to protect America’s children from terrorists and Obama Care protesters.

Days later, the cat was out of the bag and people in all parts of the nation were coming down with illnesses that no one had ever seen before. These were domestically produced military grade diseases designed to cripple and kill with impunity.

Days later, it was admitted that deadly viruses had plunged many of the nation’s cities into quarantine status.

“It is too late,” the radio announcers told the audience. “Diseases unknown to men years and even months ago are now spreading through our cities and towns. It is now thought that these came from a secret facility hidden deep inside the manufacturing plant that was destroyed in those bombings. In fact, they were so secret that even the military and the president was not aware of them.”

That was a likely story, and James knew better. He knew for a fact that they had known all along.

Twenty miles from ground zero, the airborne clouds of smoke and ash filtered down unabated across the homes, boulevards, and farmhouses. In one house, Thelma Rogers and her husband became thoroughly alarmed. They immediately got their kids, Donna and Larry. The four of them packed up and jumped into their car. In minutes, they were on the way to the airport where they were determined to purchase four fresh airline tickets to Los Angeles, California where their friends lived. Several of their end-time neighbors waved to them and smiled. They were at the airport for the same reason. These friends met with them at their weekly survivalist meetings in the town where they had learned the wisdom of leaving their homes at the first indication of danger. They were the happy part of America known as the survivalist fringe. Nothing seemed so important to them as did their own survival in the midst of national and local adversity.

"Thelma, we are on our way along with our friends of so many years," her husband Ralph Rogers said. He smiled. "We are going to live, Thelma, and all those rat's asses who have made fun of us over the years will be history. Soon, our critics will be dead, and we will be alive. I call that justice, Thelma. It just took a little knowledge and planning."

"Ralph, we are doing the right thing," Thelma said. "Something terrible was starting to happen back there, and we surely needed to leave and let others find out the truth. The rule of survival is number one, just get the heck out of Dodge when the chaos first raises its ugly head."

"I'll miss my friend, Tom," Larry Rogers, their son, said. Larry was fourteen, and Tom was his best friend. They played baseball, street hockey, and fished each summer until the cows came home.

"Cynthia won't know what to do with herself," Thelma Rogers said. Donna was thirteen. Cynthia's entire world revolved around Donna and visa versa.

"How do we know the place we are going to isn't going to be nestled inside an even bigger crapper than this one, Dad?" Donna asked.

"We don't."

"So, why are we running?"

"Running from a dead city like the one we were a part of is one of the smartest moves we can make, honey. Besides, everything's a gamble now that the chaos is starting."

"I want to stay here," Donna said.

"Me, too," Larry complained. "I have everything back there that I want."

"Tough," Thelma said. "We are going, and that is that."

Soon, they were high in the air and leaving those ominous death clouds behind them. The four of them sat on the airliner and watched the fields below them. They could see cars and farm animals moving slowly through the streets and along the highways. "It looks nice down there," Larry said.

Everything seemed so much cleaner at 32,000 feet. There were no scraps of discarded paper flying about down there, because the Rogers Family were too high

above ground to even see those trivializing anomalies of civilization that often polluted the world around them.

Now that all of them were a safe distance from the impending battle field down below, everything destructive in their previous world seemed weak and extremely obscure. In such a way, soldiers heading to battle are often lulled into complacency by the sounds of heavy artillery only to meet their deaths when unloaded like lightly armed cattle from boxcars into the deadly fusillades of incoming shells.

“Looks fine down there,” Thelma said. “We might have been wrong to leave.”

“That’s the trouble with making decisions soon enough to do any good. By the time you find out those left behind are dead, you’ve already put thousands of miles of danger behind you. Even if you were mistaken and the people where you lived hadn’t perished in the chaos you escaped from, they might have. Sure, you might look stupid if they hadn’t been badly injured enough so that they passed away, but what if they had? Then, you truly escaped your fate. Nothing was ever so rare in this world as a good tactical desertion that worked.” Thelma said.

“I hope Tom survives back there,” Larry said. “And that we get to go back.”

“If things are all right at home, we’ll be going back, Larry,” his dad said, “or I’m not Ralph Rogers.”

“Promises,” her daughter Donna said. “We aren’t going back ever. I know we aren’t.”

“Now don’t be so negative, honey,” Thelma said. “You just never know.”

Hours later, the jet landed at L.A. International Airport, and they worked their way to the baggage area. After that, they rented a small Geo. If things bottomed, they’d just keep the car, and Hertz could stuff it. Ralph hoped against hope that this tactical withdrawal was just a false alarm and that they’d turn the car back into Hertz in a few days and head back home.

“Let’s listen to the news,” Thema said. She dialed through station after station until she found the World News Network.

“The situation is critical at the scene of the bombing. Thousands of families have left, but many others have hunkered down for the long haul. Military spokesmen have indicated they will not be entering the area until they are sure it is safe. Instead, food and water are being shoved into boxes. The food rations are then jettisoned from huge supply planes and parachuted to those down below. It is believed that dangerous toxins might have been released in the hundreds by secondary explosions at the plant. Hospitals are filled to the brim with victims. Tents have been erected to take the excess. Those who can travel have been placed in buses and taken to other cities. Some have been taken to airports so that hospitals hundreds of miles away can care for them. Local hospitals are filled, but the distant ones still have the beds, medicines, and staff to treat the injured, so they ready themselves and await their new arrivals. We have received additional reports that many hospitals in the area and far beyond it are already filled and beyond their capacity to care for people in the states closest to the immediate aftermath. The devastation was wide spread and extends more than sixty-five miles from the original scene of the explosion. Authorities say it was not an atomic blast, but that it was so large that a deadly mushroom cloud of poisons had developed which extended up into the sky for as high as fifteen miles. The heat

inside the cloud was so intense that it literally lifted itself along with the debris and dust into the very threshold outer space. It continues to leech its fallout into the surrounding counties and states.

“Authorities say it is nothing to be alarmed about, but many do not trust what the government says. Some say they remember that first responders to the World Trade Center on 9/11 were told the same thing by the government only to become sick and die a few months and years later. “We will no longer be lied to,” said an activist for survivalist rights. “We will assume everything the government says is a lie, because that way, when the truth comes out, those who heeded caution and rejected the government’s speeches that were filled with false hope might still be alive. Those who didn’t exercise sufficient skepticism have done so at their own risk.”

“Speaking of risk,” the announcer went on, “those who have been scheduled for operations and stays in hospitals need to check with their physicians. The Obama Care program continues to reject applications for medical treatment in hospitals due to overwhelming demand over the past year which has depleted the funds necessary to pay for the medical procedures, rooms, labs, medicines, and physician charges. The so-called death squads of Obama Care according to activists have met and decided that more people need to stop trying to exploit the system for services that cannot be paid by the government. Instead, they should understand that procedures that were regularly used last year and the year before are no longer economically possible.

“According to the head of the organization of insurance companies, the procedures that are being eliminated were strictly performed for profit. These companies claimed those procedures were worthless. They merely benefited physicians and hospitals. They said that patients in general were actually better off and lasted longer when such stringent and unnecessary interventions were done away with.

“According to the Surgeon General, in his own voice and words, ‘Our statistics demonstrate that those on the poorest rungs of society actually lived longer and more productive lives.’

“The surgeon general told the house of representatives, that those who went to doctors and hospitals on a regular basis actually died sooner than those who didn’t. The surgeon general testified that those visits inadvertently opened these patients with insurance plans to medical dangers which they should never have faced in the far saner system of Obama Care. He said that unscrupulous physicians in search of profits pampered their patients literally to death with their expensive and unnecessary procedures, and their patients may died in far greater numbers due to infections they picked up in America’s hospitals. In fact, these insurance companies have told us that we now know from statistics compiled for Obama Care that doing little or nothing is usually more beneficial to the patient, and, of course, the cost is quite negligible to Obama Care when people are kept from expensive beds, surgical suites, and rest homes, all of which are billed at outrageously sky high figures in the older time of medical excesses.”

“Meanwhile, in New York and Washington, the scenes of major destruction at the Lambrecht Theater and Nationals Stadium, the authorities believe that more than ninety percent of the victims have been located and removed but others have

not been reached yet. 'The question is where do we go from here?' said Alfred Sloan, head of homeland security. 'Is this the end or merely the beginning? We just don't know. Only time will tell us, and we might be running out of that,' Mr. Sloan told us. Meanwhile bills were passed in congress which curtailed a number of guaranteed freedoms in the name of national security. One bill came from the Rassmussen firm of Madison Avenue fame. Already famed for its contribution to the Patriot Act, Rassmussen's highly edited bill is said to be more than two thousand pages in length and far more stringent in curtailing Americans' rights guarantees."

Having deplaned an hour ago, Thelma and her family drove through L.A. and marveled at the massive number of palm trees.

"They are going to destroy us all," Thelma said. "We predicted it, and now here we are. The nation is going right down the tube. But we as a family are going to survive."

"I need to visit the restroom," Cynthia said.'

"Then, go," Thelma said to her daughter. They pulled over at a filling station and waited. When she came back, they proceeded to their so-called safe house.

## 65

Ellis and Mary Peterson had lived in Littleton all of their lives. Now, the place seemed dangerously sinister. Many of their friends were succumbing to an illness that might be related to the bombing of the factory ten miles from them. The two of them had not been feeling well.

"It's time to visit Aunt Lucy and Uncle Ed," Mary said. "It isn't safe here. I think we're being poisoned by the air. We better leave for a vacation, if you ask me. We have a place to go, after all." Mary was referring to another family of Petersons. The clan had been quite large at one time, because most of them lived in the country and had little else to do but to reproduce more of themselves. Some of them did it merely to pass the time.

Mary's husband, Ellis Peterson, had been feeling rather puny of late, also. His problems started right after he saw the huge mushroom cloud out of their kitchen window. "I told you that cloud was going to kill us, and we'd better run for it, Mary. Now, it might be a tad too late. We are already sickly, and so are our friends," Ellis said.

Mary was worried about him. If he had gotten any worse, she was going to have to pack up and take him to a hospital. The trouble was all of the beds were full up on account of what had happened.

"I told Aunt Lucy and Uncle Ed all of the hubbub about people getting sick, and she said she wasn't concerned at all. She told me to tie you up if I had to and drag you out of here and over to their place. It's a good three hundred miles from here," Mary told her husband, "so it ought to be safe up there."

"We better leave right now, then," Ellis said, "because I already feel pretty sickly from whatever was inside that cloud. I knew it was bad news the minute I saw it."



"I didn't particularly like it, either. It stood up there on its darkening haunches so high in the air it looked like it was black Satan looking down on us, and I thought I saw something like horns coming up out of its head," Mary said.

"I never seen no Satan and no horns. You must be imagining that," Ellis said. "The trouble with you, hon, is you are too darned romantic. You make everything you see out to be bigger than life."

At any rate, they agreed to flee the place. Packing was easy. They had always been piss poor and clothes minus. All they ever wore were the shirts on their backs, and that was about all they possessed to take with them. When push came to shove, all they had to do was turn the key, start the car, and back out of the driveway down to the road. Ellis looked carefully at the road, because lots of cars had been driving past as fast as they could go. It seemed like a general panic was in effect. Everyone was getting out while the getting was good.

"I'd have liked to stay a few more days," Ellis told his wife. "I like the place. I'm going to miss it a lot."

"I don't plan on staying for very long with the Peterson clan, but sometimes we just need to count on relatives to help us out a little," Mary said. "That's what family is. Family are the only people who help you in an emergency. I'd do the same for them."

"Me, too," Ellis said.

The two of them reminisced over their lives in Littleton. They remembered their five children who ran away just as soon as they were sixteen and could get out. They weren't stupid. They knew a hovel and a bad deal from the moment they had been born into this one and opened their eyes to see it the first time. The Petersons were just about the poorest people in the region. In addition, several members of the extended family who had the last name of Peterson had been in and out of jail for fighting, poaching, robbery and general debauchery.

"I remember Jerry Peterson. The moment he was picked up for fighting, I knew he was guilty. I'd met him several times, and I can tell you that he wasn't a fit person. Jerry ain't all there. You know what I mean? Besides, I think everyone knew it from the day he was born. His mom told me that he was jerky like a robotic idiot his first two or three years. He wasn't right from the starting gate."

"I know. In and out of trouble. He even fought his own mom several times. Had to be dragged off her even. I'd have disowned him and sent him to reformatory."

"For sure," Mary said. "Kids who are off their rocker need to suffer for it. The earlier the better. I'd not have put up with it."

"We put up with plenty of it," Ellis said. "I tell you, being a parent is never pleasant. We'd been to the principal's office with Jamesmy, Bobby, and Ruth a thousand times if we went once. It was one damn thing after the other with our kids."

"I know. But I still love them."

"I do, too. They say you always love the ones you hate the most."

"I guess that's what makes families stay together, Ellis," Mary said. "It's the hatred, the love, and all of that pushing back."

Ellis pulled over. "I'm feeling bad again," he said. He got out of the car and walked fifty feet into the woods. There, he bent over and tossed up what he had eaten for breakfast. The puke tasted awful, and he felt a sort of dizziness all about

him.” He got back into the car. “We should have left as soon as that damned cloud rose up on top of us. I hate this whole thing.”

“Me, too, Ellis.”

“You need to drive, Mary. I’m a bit dizzy now.”

“All right, dear. Let’s do it.”

They continued to drive for several hours. Eventually, they stopped for gasoline. It wasn’t much. It was what country folks generally call a gas dump. The place was just another broken stump tied to some trashy roadside businesses, most of them hand built by persons without a common dot of sense in them on how to do build properly, so the buildings were haphazard and expressed their builders’ general mental decrepitudes as people said in those parts.

“Nice place,” Mary lied.

“Yep. My grand daddy built it.”

“It’s a corker, all right.”

The owner laughed. “Yep, it’s that all right. He only built it, because the depression got his stupid job lost forever due to the shut downs. So he cut three huge oak trees into boards, and now we got this creaking piece of shit. Nicest thing is that its paid for. In fact, it never cost us a dime.”

“It’d be a shame to have to pay for it.”

They all laughed.

“Jesus, lady, you are sure funny. I’ll give you that.”

They bought some bologna and bread to eat along the way and filled their water bottles before pulling out onto the road. The Petersons were as broke as the owners of the flimsy filling station.

“It had character,” Ellis said.

“Yep.”

## 66

At the Peterson house, they were greeted with fresh water and biscuits. Later, more homemade food came to the table. The Peterson clans had always survived on cheap ingenuity, because that way they never had to work much. Welfare, food stamps, and Medicaid were the inherited mainstays of their family life style. Out in back the chickens and goats made their usual noises. The garden was more than big enough for the family and for selling and, when necessary, giving away free vegetables to their closest neighbors when they were in need. They took in a few hundred dollars each year for eggs, nuts, and fruit. They also raised pigs. Hog meat was the mainstay of many a farmer’s food stock.

“We been feeling a bit sickly from the explosion,” Ellis said. “I think that cloud it sent up poisoned us a little. I told Mary we needed to leave right then and there, but she wouldn’t do it.”

“I like my home, that’s all.”

“Glad we could invite you here. After it clears up, which should be in a few weeks, I expect you’ll be able to get back there and take up where you left off. There’s nothing in the world like your own home. I’d feel lost if I had to pack up for

awhile and leave. Glad it's you that had to leave home and not me. No offense meant, you know."

As the days went by, the Petersons settled in and began helping with the farm chores. Ellis, however, kept getting sicker with each passing day, and now Mary seemed to be catching it. What seemed easy to do just days before now became very hard for her to complete. "Every time I bend over, I get dizzy. Just the way it started with Ellis. Now, he can't seem to even shit without me helping."

"I'm feeling a bit midlin' myself," Lucy said. None of them knew what midlin' meant exactly but it had something to do with feeling a bit sickly or so they thought.

Before long, all of them were pretty much bed ridden.

Whatever they had caught, it was going around. That was for sure. If they had radios or electricity, even, they might have figured they had caught what millions nationwide were infected with, which was a set of diseases unleashed into the atmosphere when the back of the plant broke in half and several sets of viruses were set free. As people ran from the threat of deadly diseases that the government had been developing, the disease spread far and wide. There was no escaping it. It wasn't just the Peterson's in the area who were sick. Others were sick for miles, even lots of people who had no contact whatever with Ellis or his wife. It was getting around.

Things got worse for Ellis when he stopped getting up from sleep, and just stayed in bed day and night. He was mostly unconscious, lost weight, sweated day and night and needed constant attention. Then, suddenly, Ellis was gone. Dead. His skin was still wet, even though it was icy cold to the touch. So they buried him in the family graveyard a hundred feet from the house. It was tough, because Mary was half asleep, and the other two were weak and sweating. Obviously, they were in great difficulty. Traffic on the highway was down to nothing, so the Petersons just hunkered down until both of them weakened and died. Lucy was the last one to die, and there was no one to bury her. Fortunately, her grave and Ed's were already dug in anticipation of the coming end. After she capped Ed's grave with dirt, she was so tired, she just tossed some fresh dirt into her own grave and crawled inside and waited. It didn't take to long before she passed away. She had placed a heavy screen and a gate over the top of the grave to keep dogs from getting to her. Months later, someone would surely walk by looking for them and find the grave, the piled dirt and the shovel and dig her in permanently.

In her hand, Lucy held a bottle with the family's new graves identified and the names of the dead in them curled inside. There was a bit of money inside, and a plea for someone to be kind enough to finish her burial and to carve some tombstone markers out of wood to identify them. It was the best she could do. She figured the rest of it was up to God and Satan. At the end, Lucy was so sick, she never really gave a damn which one. In fact, Lucy was so sick she didn't care if anyone ever dug her in later. The tiny drab niceties of life just didn't seem to matter to her anymore. She climbed down into her grave and lay on her back. She held the bottle with the instructions in her hands. "I'm coming home," she said to her family. Then, she turned her head and vomited one last time into the newly shoveled soil. Shortly afterwards, she handed over what little was left of her sick little self to Jesus.

Tony Weber lay on his death bed with his cell phone in his hand. He was so confused from the sickness that Tony wondered if he had brought this upon himself, his company, his family, and his nation. His memory was dim. He felt like the devil incarnate. He dialed his son, Carson Weber, and heard him pick up the line.

“Hi, dad.”

“How have you been, Carson?”

“Sick. My wife and kids are sick.”

“Same here,” Tony said. “I think this is my final call to you.”

“I can barely stand, dad. We are all feeling like death is right around the horizon.”

“Sounds very Egyptian, Carson. I read in Reader’s Digest that the Egyptian pharaohs believed that the horizon carried the dead to the west where the sun set across the Nile River. The horizon was a god named Hora. Hora escorted them to the promised land where the dead were always happy.”

“I don’t believe that shit.”

“Me neither. However, I have to admit the ancient history of it is somewhat comforting.”

“I remember when you took me to camp in the mountains, dad,” Carson said. “Those were the best times I ever had. I want to thank you for doing that.”

“It was my pleasure, son. I’m sure I must have enjoyed it more than you. Aw, son, you were so tiny back then. And so innocent and sweet to look at,” Tony said. “You were always such a cute kid.”

Carson looked at his father’s face in the cell phone. He was crying, same as Carson. “You know, dad, I took my sons camping in the same mountains and those same spots where we spent those times together. They are in the living room, dad. Sprawled on the couch. The little guys are spending their last moments probably texting their friends. Maybe they are playing video games. Who knows for certain. I guess they are trying to get one more moment of happiness in before this damned virus kills them and me both.”

“At least we still have cell phone coverage. The lights in New York have been dark for days. It’s dark here now, too. The grid’s down again.”

“I’m operating on fifteen hundred watts of solar panels, dad. Otherwise, I’d be in the dark myself.”

“Always the romantic, Carson. You went for the survivalist schtick hook like and sinker.”

“Yes, I did, dad. I fully admit it. The irony is, that I’m a dead man dying. The investment was supposed to save me and my kids. Isn’t it hilarious?”

“If it wasn’t disease, son, it’d have been something else. I always figured there’d be a nuclear war, and we’d all die of radiation or just explode in flames.”

Carson turned his head and vomited into the bucket he’d placed by the side of his bed. It reminded him of the pukes he’d heaved as a little boy, sick with the flu.

His dog, Gander, stood by him. Gander was the best friend, Carson ever had. "I miss Gander," Carson said.

"Gander was a good dog, son. He loved you totally. Everywhere you went, he was there for you."

"Yes, he was. I'll be meeting him soon, dad. Sounds like we will both be meeting him soon," Carson said. "I figure he's probably curled up at the gate, waiting for me to tumble out of here and onto the pavement next to him." Carson felt the tears coming into his eyes. He was losing them all. His wife, his sons, his dogs, his dad, his life, and his memories. "I love you, dad," Carson said. "Thanks for being here with me. It was nice of you to call."

"This was the one call I should have made and one of the few calls that I actually did make, son. I've had you in my heart from the day you were born, and I still remember when I held your little body in my arms for that first time. Your eyes were so big and innocent."

"Thanks, dad. I love you."

Tony heard the connection drop. He knew that the end was nigh. Soon, he'd tumble onto the floor of heaven. Gander would lick him again. His own mom and dad would greet him. A moment later, he was gone. His trip was over. He opened his eyes, and saw Gander's head lying against his arm. "Good dog," Tony said. "I knew I'd meet you here." Then total blackness engulfed him.

His son Carson died an hour later. He was curled up with his boys in his death bed. They'd come to him at their last moments. Soon, they'd all three be with their grandfather and with their dad's good dog, Gander. They moaned in pain as the darkness gathered about them and death came to stuff them through the bedroom walls where they were about to tumble through into heaven's elusive and dripping maw.

## 68

Los Angeles was the worst casualty of the diseases unleashed by the explosion. Other cities such as Saint Louis, Chicago, New York, Cincinnati, and Baltimore were affected, but only several thousand died in each. Los Angeles was different. For some unknown reason, the movie city was literally decimated.

The Robert and Lois Eddington family had lived in Anaheim, a part of the Los Angeles basin for several generations. Now that their town was under the disease curfew, they stayed mostly at home surviving on canned goods. The stores were empty of shoppers, but were crammed with shelved food and no one to buy it. Likely as not the electricity would have stopped anyway when they brought their groceries to the cashier for a check out. In the early days of the pandemic, violence over these blackouts had occurred so frequently that police had to be stationed close by. They were called into constant action the moment the lights went out, and they stayed on the job until they died which for many of them didn't take that long.

So far, the Eddingtons had escaped the deadly disease, and they planned to stay that way until the coast was clear. They refused to take their mail for fear the letters and magazines might be infected with one of the diseases going around.

Whenever they went outside, they wore gloves for protection and sometimes face masks.

They never touched their faces with their fingers anymore. Life had deteriorated for them entirely with the exception that they weren't sick. The ones that were ill generally died. A few survived, but not many. The Eddingtons figured how these new diseases were most likely designed in military labs to kill nearly everyone. Besides, the medical community had been wiped out. Doctors and nurses were no more. They had passed away caring for the ill as had happened many times during human history. Doctors were always on the front line, and that meant they were dead ringers for every new disease as it came down the pike taking everyone down with it including them. For most practicing physicians, disease was a professional hazard.

"It seems very quiet out there," Robert said, "as though the epidemics may have run their course."

"Well, we aren't going out to find out," Lois replied, "because all we are going to find is the disease itself, and they think it is going to kill us as it did to a lot of Los Angeles."

"I wonder how we are going to get out of here."

"We aren't," Lois said. "If we stick our heads out, we are dead."

"True. Besides, we have food enough to last quite a while."

"You really don't think there's anyone out there, do you, Robert?" Lois asked.

"Of course not," he said. "We are still sitting ducks for any virus going around now. We are just going to have to hunker down and wait for nature to take its course."

"That's right."

The lights flickered.

"There it goes again."

Robert cranked the emergency radio. One or two stations were on the air. That was it. The gaggle of media had gone the way of the dodo bird.

The familiar announcer was still on the job, saying to them over the air waves how, "The virus continues to rage through the city and its environs. Hospitals and physicians are as rare as hen's teeth. If you find one, it's probably infected, and it probably doesn't have one doctor left alive to treat you. Best to stay inside. We at KBST-AM are hunkered down. The building has a stench of death to it. I don't need to tell you what that means. Most of you already know. Men have come through and taken bodies away, but the odor remains. We think they've missed some. I don't know why I'm alive, and my co-workers are not alive and haven't been alive for several days. All of them are gone to a better place now. Los Angeles has always been described as a form of heaven due to its perfect climate. However, there's another heaven above that is even better, or so they say. No one knows, because no one ever came back. I guess I have a strong immune system, and my dead co-workers didn't. Who knows why some live and most don't. In show business, it's those who persist the longest that win. I guess that's me. Sad to say.

"The entire plague is a mystery to me. I have been sick several times, but I made it. Maybe others have survived out there. I know one thing. The freeways are clogged with cars and vans filled with the dead. A sea of flies is all over them enjoying very much the deadly festivities. It's like fly city out there on the roads,

and there's no way out of the city on those streets, because they are blocked with cars. If you want a car, just break the window, and use a screwdriver to break the steering wheel key lock so that you can start it without the keys. I tried it. Half of the time, I broke the entire steering wheel, cheap metal shaft and all. Every other car, however, and you are in business. Remember, its not stealing if everyone is dead. Besides folks, this is an emergency. We get to do these things now. All the cops are dead. All the pretty waitresses are dead. Even the endless gays are dead now. No one is left, but you and me, and I'm not certain of you, either. I guess there's some of you out there listening. I have no way of knowing. It's just an assumption on my part. It might even be a fantasy of mine. Whatever. Society is finished. It's just a graveyard now. Beautiful L.A. is not a city at all. Bodies line the streets and front yards. The cars themselves are the closest to coffins that you can find. There's nothing quite as gruesome as a four person family rotting in their driveway. Some of us prefer to die in bed. Some to die in our cars. At least in a locked car we are safe from birds and little animals that will nibble us away bit by bit.

"Am I being gruesome? Yes. I am being gruesome. I am a reporter. It's my job to report truthfully what I see. Folks, it ain't pretty out there. Let me tell you, death is not pretty. This is like the black plague way back in the middle ages, and we are all rapidly becoming the body taker in this Monty Python masterpiece that we all play our bit part in.

"I want to just walk through Los Angeles with a Radio Flyer wagon. I want to pull my little red wagon down the streets of L.A. right now and shout out, 'Bring out your dead! Body man! Bring out your dead!' Just like in Monty Python.

"Trouble is this. My Radio Flyer wagon won't hold one of these fat Los Angeles sluts with their huge GMO corn hips and their corn syrup legs with those ugly as hell swollen ankles. Besides, where would I take them? I've thought about it. I could drag them out of their homes and stack them on a lawn for someone else to move them the next step. That step is most likely to the next god forsaken dump down the line wherever it leads us. Anyway. Who cares? We are all finished. Taking the bodies out would be useless. It would not help a thing. So I have decided to just leave them in their cars and their homes and not to go near them. I am afraid their diseases will infect me the same way they did to them. And I am a chickenshit like all the rest of you.

"I have learned not to get involved, because I have seen my friends try to help, and then they get all sweaty, start vomiting, and the next thing I know they are dead, too, because what goes around comes around. But I don't know for sure. All I know is that they disappeared, and I can no longer find them, so I figure they went home and died in their beds among familiar surroundings. But that is only if they left here soon enough not to get stuck on the clogged freeway. There, they can do nothing but die in their cars and become the subject matter of those huge flesh eating horseflies that I see everywhere there's a body and an open window to a world of hurt.

"This city has become what I call the palace of the flies. We are the people of putrefaction, the receptacles of maggots whose ripened bodies support the offspring of the horse flies. They swarm inside us in a mass movement of swirling larva, all white and clean.

“I read in a military manual that I can eat maggots. They are the perfect food. At battle’s end, the wounded knights survived by eating their buddies’ maggots. They just reached into their body wounds and pulled out a handful. The maggots also were good for cleaning their battle wounds. These maggots will eat only the diseased flesh and leave the healthy part so it can be healed. In all of the filth and the flies, are we reduced in the end to finding the maggots inside our fellow men and eating them to sustain ourselves? Is that next? Surviving merely on maggots?”

“There I go again. I am becoming gruesome. My life has become a filthy thing, because all of us have come around to our sickening mortality. In the stench of our end game, we have come to the realization of what we are, and it isn’t pretty in the least, is it? You know the answer. It is as ugly as it gets. To present a healthy picture of our plague-filled existences, we have to lie about the very world we live in. Not lying is now completely politically incorrect. Only those who lie and say that things are perfectly fine are politically correct. The rest of us are assholes like me.

“I am a sorry person. My family is dead. My friends and associates have passed to the dark side. I have been cursed like you who are still alive out there and listening to my voice. The two of us are cursed, because we didn’t do the decent thing. We didn’t die in the streets and become the cannon fodder of food for giant flies.

“My batteries are low. I have to stop for awhile. In an hour, the generator will refill them. Then, I’ll be back. Hang in there, folks. And, remember this. The horror continues. Over and out.”

He clicked off and went to the roof where he started the generator and wondered how much longer he had to live. He figured he’d eventually come down with something lurking out there and pass away. Then, his journey would be over.

The Eddington’s stopped cranking their emergency radio. They’d try again in an hour.

“What’s for dinner?” Robert asked.

“Beans of some sort. Maybe a little bit of canned meat.”

“Sound’s good, dear. Better than maggots, in my opinion.”

“It might get down to that, Robert.”

“I know it might. I just don’t want to think about it is all.”

“I understand.”

## 69

Lois opened a can of beans. She poured it onto a clean plate and carried it to the little table in the back yard where she had placed her wood box lined with tin foil. It was her home made version of a solar oven. It worked perfectly, warming up all of her meals. She placed the bowl inside a clear plastic bag which held the heat and lowered it inside her little food heater. In a few hours it would be piping hot.

Lois made sure she was wearing her gloves, then walked out into the street. She heard birds in the trees. It was very peaceful here now. No one seemed to be moving anywhere in the city. No horns, no lawn mowers. All of the lawns and gardens had lost their prettiness. Things were simply browned off and drab now.



No dogs barked. She figured all of them had either died or been eaten by starving people. The chipmunks didn't seem to be around either. They may have died of thirst. No water was coming through the taps. Whatever water Lois had was from rain. They had started collecting it from their down spouts and those of their neighbors' homes. There were three fifty gallon drums in the backyard. A half-inch of rain on a roof was enough water to fill all three and then some. So far, that had worked. They kept several ten gallon jars of water in the house. It was only for drinking. Once a week they tried a sponge bath. They only used a cup for each of them for the bath. Water was a scarce commodity these days.

Cars were mostly parked in driveways up and down the block. People had been careful to park their cars correctly every night in case they got sick. That had kept the roads open. Unfortunately, no one came out of their homes and started their cars anymore. Lois was still thankful that the streets were clear. They were no longer clean. They contained pieces of paper and plant matter here and there. There was a lot of fluff that was blown off the cottonwood trees by the wind and carried for miles. Right now, that wasn't a problem, but in the future that fluff would begin to decay and leave a layer of rough soil atop all of the roadways. She figured the way it would play out would be that weeds would eventually grow in the mass of dead leaves, seeds, and dust that would clutter the roads and produce a shallow soil suitable for grasses to grow there. Vines would creep through the houses and crawl across the roads where they would bind to it, then crawl up the cars and entwine them until they, too, looked like tiny Aztec ruins.

Lois walked several blocks listening to the birds. She collected a few figs and dates that fell from the palm trees that lined the L.A. streets. She knew they were safe to eat. No one could have touched them before they fell. She also picked a few oranges, limes, and lemons growing from the citrus trees in back yards. These desert trees survived perfectly without irrigation. The wind was pleasant. Los Angeles still had its appeal. Should the population ever restore itself, life here would return to normal, and things would be good again.

She was careful not to touch anything other than fruit for fear of infection. The fruit was fresh. No one had ever touched them. She knew it was perfectly safe. Then she returned home, felt the hot bowl of beans and the unopened can of potted meat resting in the sunlight beside it. They were hot and ready to open. She went into the kitchen. The radio was on again, and the gruesome announcer was giving a report. Lois found the man almost hilarious. She was not sure why, but his talks had a certain gallows humor about about them. He was very French Revolution and quite bubonic plague in his persistently aggravating droll. After what she had just seen on her walk she knew she could hike through all of Los Angeles and never find him. If the man died, they'd both feel even more alone in L.A.

She opened the cans and gave them to Robert along with the single family spoon. They shared a few utensils. They ate from the cans and pots. They no longer used plates much, because there was not enough rain water to wash them.

"It's beans and some potted ham," she said.

He looked at them suspiciously.

"Don't be that way," she said. "I worked my hands to the bone cooking them."

Robert chuckled. "Soon we will all be bones. You and me."

"I suppose that's our future," she said. "We both understand what the end game is going to be. At least we are still alive. That's more than most of them out there were dealt."

Robert ate some of the beans. They were plain pinto beans, but to his increasing hunger and his skinny frame, they were delicious. He was careful to restrain himself. He left half for her. Next, he ate some of the deviled ham. The can was tiny, so there wasn't a lot there. He ate half and gave both cans to Lois.

"There you are, my dear."

Lois ate the rest of the meal in silence. She loved the way both of them shared the little food and water they had to sustain themselves. She figured it took a lot of restraint on his part to not club her to death and have all of the shit for himself. The only reason he hadn't was that he loved her. He had considered it many times, but he was a good person. When it came to wasting totally away down to skin and bone, they'd do it with dignity. There was absolutely no reason to treat it as though a hidden alternative was hanging around like a vile specter inside their messy closets just waiting to save them. That wasn't going to happen.

## 70

"I was outside a few minutes ago," the radio announcer said. "The freeways were quiet. I saw the usual birds circling and landing on cars. The meat inside, what was left of folks like you and me, was all the cars had to give them. I walked down to the beaches. Bones are scattered here and there. Some of them looked a lot like human bones.

I fished using poles from one of the local sports stores. I figured the owner didn't need them any more. In fact, the guy was strung out on the floor with a rifle in his hands, probably to ward off robbers. I dug some grubs from under the flower gardens and hooked them up. After about thirty minutes, I had caught three nice ocean catfish and a perch. I put them in a solar box on the roof. I cleaned them first at the ocean's edge so that their innards could maybe feed some other fish out there. My hands smell like fish now. I know the fish I'll eat in about four hours of baking in that foil is going to be really good. There's still some cats in town, so I'll put what's left outside somewhere. Everything has a right to live in this town if it can figure out how to do it. It's not like there is a need for stinginess these days. Even with all the death around, I guess I still have goodness in my heart.

"I have become nothing more than a vagabond. I'm not exactly homeless. Vagabonds usually walk around without focus, you know. They are unwilling or unable to work, so they loaf here and there. Well, I'm a lot like that now. I am still broadcasting, but I'm not getting paid for it. The paycheck is out there. I can literally go into any store and just take whatever I want from its shelves. There's literally tons of stuff in them and no one to give it to. I have whatever I want out there where no owners and no shoppers exist any more.

Now that it's come to this I find that I don't want for much, and I don't take much, either. I dunno. Did I buy stuff I didn't need in my past existence just to keep others from getting it? Is that a part of the old way of doing business? I think

it was. What I have now is a lot better. Because I can have anything and everything out there, I don't want anything.

"I just want what little I need to survive. Maybe a can of food. Maybe a fish or two. The fish in my solar box are cooking up there, and the neat thing is that there's no cost for the fuel. A fourth of the electricity I use here comes from a few solar panels. I'll be fetching some more next week. I saw them on a business' roof. They won't be needing them. That's for sure. Someday the generator will either break or the gas will be gone.

"I'd certainly like to have a self-sufficient supply of electricity then. I am the only person transmitting to this entire city. It would be nice to have the means to do this a little longer. There's got to be someone out there listening to me. Solar power is the perfect answer. After all, we have a lot of sunshine here in California. We are known for it. The trouble is that every time I venture out of here for food, solar panels, batteries, and water, I run the serious risk of infection.

"We are all under the infectious A-bomb. Each of us are probably vulnerable. Out of almost one hundred people who worked on this radio station I am the only person who has not died in the pandemic of whatever in the hell has been killing all of these people. Now, to be honest, there is no way to get out of here. The highways are closed off. The people who live in other areas don't want what we have to give them. What we have to give them is death. They want none of that, because they want to live. We all want to live. I want to live. My dead comrades all wanted to live.

"For some reason, LA was hit the hardest. Other cities got sick, but LA is the holy grail of this death thing. We got it the worst. Yea. We got it real bad. I'll just have to suck it up.

"How could we be this unlucky? Is there a dark star that hovers over us? Did Hollywood piss someone off too much? Did Disney do this? Was it Universal Pictures, Paramount, 20th Century Fox? Was it the goth people in their black clothes with their fingernails painted black to match? Who is the culprit here? I am not sure. No one knows why LA got hit so bad. But here we are. Screwed. And there's still people out there listening to me. We are not all dead.

"Now, some day this is all going to go away. The doors will open, and people will come out into the streets. The sickness will be gone. All pandemics run their course. You don't see the black plague running rampant here or in England or the rest of Europe as it once did. That plague killed three-quarters of Europe, but today it is nearly gone. There's a few people every year that get it. Most of those are in New Mexico where rats still have bubonic plague in their nests, and they give it to fleas who then bite you, and you get it. But its only ten or less people per year who ever get it now. Five hundred years ago, it killed nearly everyone. Then, it lifted. Although it went on hundreds of years, eventually it died out and Europe regained its health. It was as if nothing like the black plague ever happened. I can tell you that the pandemics that went through here may already be on their way out. There's people out there who survived it and have immunity. Who knows? Maybe they will pass that stuff, the immunity, I mean to the rest of the world from right here. Then, the deaths will stop happening, and the world will go on, totally cured.

“So the bad news is that we got the black ring on the carousel of death. Los Angeles was snake bit the hardest. In other words, we got screwed. The good news is that other cities were barely scratched by this. Doesn't that just make you grin? No? Why not? Don't be a sore loser! Rejoice in the luck of the Irish! Laugh. Be happy.

“I need to sign off now for awhile. I know there's lots of you out there. Even if there are only three or four of you in this entire city, I know you are out there. I know you are hiding in your homes. Keep up your hope. This will be over one of these days, because it cannot last forever. I will speak with you in a little while. I have to let the solar panels do their thing, make the batteries charge back up, run the gas generator, and then I will be back. Signing off.”

## 71

The sound of disconnection was heard, and the station disappeared as it always did when he turned it off to conserve its power.

“That was positive,” Robert said. “He usually never does anything positive. I'm quite surprised.”

“I'm not,” Lois said. “Even he can't keep up his negativity forever. There's a piece of gold inside every turd on this planet. You just have to inspect it long enough to find it. That's what my daddy told me.”

Robert smiled at her.

“We aren't going to last,” he said. “We are already eating next to nothing.”

“We'll last, Robert,” Lois said. “We are a tough crew here. That's why we are still kicking and so many of our friends aren't. Who knows? Maybe we are the ones who are immune now. Someone out there is. Why not the two of us? The fact we are alive makes it logical that we have developed the means to resist this stuff. Otherwise, we'd already be goners. You and I might be the hope of lots of people.”

“Who is to say?”

“All I can tell you, Robert, is that people don't survive this long if they don't have a good chance of developing immunity to it.”

“We'd have to deliberately infect ourselves to prove that. Are you ready to do that?” Robert asked.

“Certainly not. I may be super positive at this moment, but that doesn't mean that I've gone totally nuts!” Lois said.

“I didn't think so.”

“It's time for my nap,” Lois said.

“All right. I'll read a book until you wake up,” Robert told her. He had hundreds of them that he checked out of the library. Which meant that he walked in and took them. However, he filled out a note telling the library the names of the books he was taking and promised he would bring them back after he read them if he was still alive at that time. At least, on account of Robert, they were still circulating their books. The librarians might be long gone, but their work went on. If he lived long enough, he'd return them as promised and stack them right back where they belonged and check out another box load.

Everyone needed to do his part.

The Gateway City, Saint Louis, Missouri, was hardly hit at all. Even though people used to flow in and out of town through airports and highways, the midwest had fared very well. Were they already immune? People wondered. That same city had survived well during the world war one swine flu pandemic as well. One of the reasons might have been that the mayor issued an order early on that no one was to go to work, to school, or anywhere else, because of the pandemic. He had ordered all but the most essential services to shut down so people could stay indoors and not be anywhere a germ could get near them. The year of the epidemic of 1918 passed, and in Saint Louis the vast majority of its people survived.

The mayor was given the credit. He deserved it. During the quarantine, he was soundly criticized by the area's corporatist cronies for destroying the city's economy. Mortgages went unpaid, and businesses failed. Nonetheless, when the dark clouds lifted, the majority of debts somehow got readjusted voluntarily by the banks and other parasites on society who claimed they were owed everyone else's money.

Chicago, Milwaukee, Indianapolis, and hundreds of other cities survived easily as well. Washington, New York, and Philadelphia followed suit. Their mortality rates were up a great deal, but these cities were not completely destroyed the way Los Angeles was in the present crisis. Evidently, the strains of unleashed diseases hitting Los Angeles were more difficult to survive.

The FBI goons whose offices of oppression were billeted on Market Street in Saint Louis were busy tying up loose ends. Todd Reynolds, an agent who grew up in Richmond, Virginia was in charge of the Obama Care suspects in town. Todd was married to Marlena Ashby. He had been blessed with three children, Ed, Ashton, and Mary. He thought the Obama Care cases were a bit of a bore, but as the toll of dead across the nation mounted from random killings including serial murders like those in the Lambrecht Theater in New York, he realized that solving Obama Care murders might be a realistic career maker for him. If he was instrumental in catching just one of these criminals, he'd have a good chance to move up into the FBI's big time agent ranks. Todd would love that. He craved success and trust, and he knew he could go higher.

"Hey, Todd," Rachel Masters said, "We have a situation."

"What is it?"

"I'll tell you on the way. We have to get going. I'll drive."

"No. I'll drive."

They raced down the stairs to the parking lot. Rachel got to the driver's side first. She got in.

"That wasn't fair," Todd said.

"Why not?"

"You picked the car. That's why not."

"Yea, so I did. And I have the keys. Doesn't that just suck for you?"

"I'll flip you for it."

"No deal. I have the wheel."

"Not fair."

"Work with it, Todd," Rachel said. "I mean, you have nothing to bargain with, my friend. I'm holding all the cards."

"Not fair."

"Yes, it is."

"Not."

"Deal with it, bitch."

The car peeled out onto Market Street as they argued over their control issues. Arguing was a constant thing with them. Rachel gave him a run down of what she knew about the case. "A physician reported that a man's wife died of a heart attack after her insurance company refused to give her a bypass. She was seventy-four years old, and 'the death squad,' as her spouse called her Obama Care review group, had decided thumbs down that she could only be treated with pharmaceuticals," Rachel told Todd, "and according to the doctor, the man is severely pissed off and has threatened him and his staff several times. Interesting coincidence. The man bought guns at a local store recently."

"Just fancy that," Todd said. "See a connection there?"

"It rankled my innards like a longhorn bull goring plates in a china shop," Rachel said. "My Obama Care murder sniffer is wide awake, loaded for bear, and ready to hunt."

Greg Hauser was the suspect. They stopped at his home. A black wreath was hanging from the door in honor of his wife's passing. Her name had been Joan Hauser by marriage, and she was clean. No priors at all. Same with Mr. Hauser.

"Looks a bit morbid, I'd say," Todd remarked.

"Yea, but I sort of like it's vintage aspect," Rachel said. "I think there's a nice tinge of Jack the Ripper about it."

The door opened, and a short man dressed in old blue jeans stood stared at them blankly.

"Can I help you?" he asked.

Todd flipped his badge. "We are FBI agents, Mr. Hauser, and we'd like to ask you a few questions."

"Why?"

"Your wife, Joan, died."

"She didn't have to die," Greg told them. "It was that Obama Care scam that did her in."

"We can't comment on that," Rachel said, "but we are sorry for your loss."

"That doesn't make me any pancakes, Greg Hauser told them. "She's gone, because Obama Care left her hanging high and dry like all the other I read about in the newspaper."

"Is it true that you just bought guns and a lot of ammunition?" Todd asked.

"Yes."

"Planning to shoot up the town to revenge your wife, Mr. Hauser?" Rachel asked. "You see, we have some concerns about that sort of behavior."

"I think our discussion is over," Mr. Hauser said. "You have a nice day."

He closed the door.

"I think that went well," Todd said.

"Yes. It was very nice," Rachel agreed. "It makes for a nice, short report. That should be easy enough."

"Do you think Mr. Hauser's about ready to blow his lid, Rachel?"

"I think so," she replied. "If a government program killed my one true love, I'd want to chop off a few heads, I think."

"I know how hostile you get," Todd said, smiling across the seat at her.

"Want to drive, don't you?"

"Yes."

"Poor baby, because that's not going to happen," Rachel said.

## 73

Greg Hauser drove to Cincinnati. He figured his cover in Saint Louis was blown all to hell, so he might as well use a different place to express his desire to kill all of mankind if not all of the life forms on the entire planet over his wife's death. He wasn't going to let it go by without extracting revenge of one sort or the other. Greg figured that using his guns was expected now that they knew he had them. In fact, he left them at his house just in case the FBI came back with a warrant. That night, he wormed his way into a farm implement and grain store, after hours so to speak, and used his flashlight to find arsenic poison. It was for killing rats in barns. His relatives had used it just for that purpose, but it had been used for years by other families to end family quarrels, revenge killings, and various other arguments of note. Next, he entered a large hotel and made his way to the banqueting restaurant's kitchen. He broke the door lock and walked in. It was night, so no one was even around. He found the menu for the next day's business. A convention of advertising executives from New York were in town, it said. They were probably sleeping upstairs and in other hotel venues in the city. The bill of fare showed him that twelve hundred people would be fed meals at noon. The menu included baked chicken, mashed potatoes, and green beans. Dessert included apple, cherry, and peach pie.

Snooping around, Greg found the prep room. There, he discovered the chickens were thawing in a number of massive industrial refrigerators. Reaching in, he sprinkled the poison on top of each of the twelve hundred chickens being careful to use rubber gloves when touching the poison. He also covered his face with a filter mask as he sprinkled the deadly powder. In two hours and thirty-five minutes, he was finished. The poison disappeared into the miles of skin atop his newly seasoned poultry. When he was turned to make his exit, he took off the set of rubber gloves, dropped them into a bag, donned another, and made his way back to his car.

## 74

The party was about to begin. The advertising and public relations firms had been meeting for several days at the hotel and convention center where Mr.

Hauser had completed his little deadly Obama surprises the night before. All of the top firms were in attendance at these annual meetings. Most of these companies exclusively hired executives who had worked at a number of advertising and public relations firms and who regularly brunched with many key decision-makers inside them. The convention was one of those times when they could cavort together professionally, meet old friends, keep up on the gossip, and discover just how far they had come after switching to another advertising company.

Willard Knowles of Rasmussen and Williams, LLC, Madison Avenue, New York was in attendance with his beautiful trophy wife, Samantha, his two sons, Larry and Mark and his daughter, Nina. In addition, his best heads were there. Everyone at the Rasmussen banquet tables were pleasantly busy kissing up under Mr. Knowles, its president and CEO, which was their first responsibility as a member of his firm if they wanted the least chance of keeping their jobs intact. Which they did.

“Mr. Knowles,” Brad Green said, “you are looking very good today, sir.”

“Why, how gracious of you to say that, Brad,” Mr. Knowles replied with a sly smile. “I can see that you have a great future with our company.”

Brad laughed. “No, I really mean it. It’s not just brown nosing, sir. I have always admired and tried to emulate your appearance as well as your corporate objectives, Willard.”

Willard smiled. He looked at his wife, Windy. “Remind me to find some way to add to Mr. Green’s salary bundle, dear,” he said smiling. “Such delicious and decisive hand shaking cannot go unrewarded, my dear.”

Windy looked at Brad Green. “My husband likes your style, Mr. Green. We shall have to find some way to reward a person of such intellectually creative talents. You will certainly be hearing from me.” She smiled and offered her hand which Mr. Green took, then kissed. “You are so lovely, my dear. It’s always such a pleasure to be at these meetings, because, as well suited as your husband is, not one other male can ever hold a candle to a woman of such beauty as you radiate, my dear.” Windy laughed and looked up at Willard. “Well, you have to admit, honey, that Willard is almost as good at ass kissing as you are while doing it so well before our most lucrative of clients.” Willard laughed. “Indeed,” he said. “Mr. Green is a choice piece of real estate, and I am indeed grateful beyond words every time I converse with him.” Willard’s minions at the table laughed and made small talk about Brad’s cleverness at ingratiating not only Mr. Knowles but his highest paying clients as well. Mr. Green, they all agreed, was a quite talented douche bag to whom they would all be wise to take heed as he was definitely a corporate up and comer.

The food service began. The well sprinkled chickens smiled up at the vast crowd of public relations executives. Their last meal was about to begin, and those with the heartiest appetites were due the biggest and most rapid of surprises. They attacked their meal with gusto.

Marco Pasqual, the guest chef at the convention center had been flown in for the occasion from New York City to cook for the conference. He was employed as a head chef for major conventions in Cincinnati as well as for conventions held in larger venues such as Moscow, Paris, and Beijing. He had been a saucier before moving to head chef, so his creations were filled to the brim with subtle flavors



that kept the rich and pampered coming back for more accolades concerning his tasty gastronomic creations.

A few hours after their meal had been consumed, they were gathered together in the large convention hall to hear a motivational lecture when most of them began to experience extreme discomfort including sweats, difficulty in breathing and paralysis of their large muscles. In the middle of the “strive as high as the world admits” slogan that had been repeated at least three times for emphasis the room was suddenly filled with dying public relations executives whose moans and screams filled the room with despair. Physicians were summoned in an attempt to ameliorate if not totally cure the dying throng, but to no avail. Later that day, devastated hotel staff discovered that the programmable information board was flashing, “Obama Care STRIKES AGAIN!” over and over to the darkened crime scene, and no one could figure out how to stop it.

## 75

Outside of town, Greg Hauser burned the evidence at a public rest stop where he also opened his trunk and filled his car with large cans of fresh gasoline which he brought with him on the trip. As a result, he never stopped at filling stations on the entire round trip. Greg Hauser knew the stations had crime cameras, and he knew the feds would be checking them for suspects.

He slept all day long, then started back toward Saint Louis. He drove all night and got back home at dawn. He showered and jumped into bed.

He dreamed of his expired wife. He saw himself speaking with her. She smiled down upon him.

“I cooked their geeses, dear,” he told her.

## 76

The Cincinnati poison scene was the largest ever registered in history. More than one thousand intellectual word meister's from Madison Avenue passed to the other side from a single meal. A clever reporter noted that more extraneous brain power was lost at the Cincinnati convention center banquet hall than ever before with the possible exception of the day when Socrates drank his tasty cup of hemlock all by himself before the amazed eyes of the citizens of Athens in a crowded ancient plaza which had long ago crumbled into dust.

The FBI and FDA were called immediately. The City of Cincinnati wanted its hands clear of this tragedy. For one thing, the cost of investigating that many bodies was in the millions of dollars. The city was already near bankruptcy. Cincinnati had suffered along with every other American community on account of the Bush-Obama depression. Obama's continuation of the endless sadistic colonial oil wars in the middle east which were huge revenue losers continued without end sucking money from the greatest cities of America which hadn't helped Cincinnati's bottom line in the least.

Elvin Matthews, the special agent in charge of investigating serial killings was the first person to grasp how this huge serial poisoning was just another horror attached to the misapplication of the Barack Obama affordable health care act. It was just another in a long list of rebellious endeavors carried out independently by hundreds of citizens grieving over the loss of a single loved one by the sadistic and greed-oriented insurance and banking industries almost all of whom had been backed by the most corrupted president, congressmen, and senators in the world's history all of the way back to the legislatures of Macedonia, Athens, and the Roman empire. Now, its massive corruption cut at the very heart of political malfeasance in the American capitol.

"I want a full analysis of the agent or agents that are found in the bodies of these victims. I want you to select ten victims from various parts of the room. I want the contents of their stomachs, the type of agent found in those contents, and the agents found in their organs. I want it stat. Now. Actually, I want it on my desk yesterday. Next, I want an analysis of what is left on these banquet tables. Find the agents in the food. I want the kitchen analyzed. We need to know where this started. Did it start here or in the company's chicken factory where these birds were ordered. Find out where these chickens came from and get a search warrant for that factory, and shut it down just in case there's poison in it. Notify their customers not to sell any more of that chicken, that it might be tainted with poison. I want this done in the hour. Now. Get rolling!"

Agents, physicians, scientists, and coroners who had been pressed into service streamed into action. University facilities were federalized to served as immediate local chemistry labs needed to determine within the hour, if possible, the agents in these dinners. Although a few persons objected, the cooperation of authorities, professors, and others was assured.

Besides, the power of the federal government was already nearly Hitlerian. Its overwhelming dictatorship of the American people, had been established with the Patriot Act, NDAA, and other anti-constitutional laws. With each of these laws in place, the federal government's hoodlum aspect was ten times more overbearing and downright fascist than Hitler's German SS Corps of the 1930's and 1940's ever was. The federal government's powers had expanded so much that they easily overcame all constitutional guarantees. The government's fake war on terrorism had become just another made up artifact of fascist thinking in the failed American nation. It had become as divisive as the military draft, the cold war, the Tennessee Valley Authority which stole land from thousands of families, and the war on drugs. Each of these federal power grabs whittled away almost every American freedom and insured that the United States would rapidly deteriorate into one of the most insidious dictatorships in the history of the world. Hitler, Mussolini, Churchill, Nero, and Xerxes were merely weak children by comparison to America's present day fascist presidencies. The worst thing about it was that the corporatist owned media supported the erasures of freedoms by willing senators, representatives, and presidents like the paid off, mean, and wimpish little lap dogs that many of these easily corruptable politicians had become.

Within six hours, a report was handed to the special FBI agent in charge, Elvin Matthews. It stated that the deadly agent used in this mass murder was part of a cocktail of several poisons, but mostly cyanide, strychnine, and bug spray. Traces

of commercial rat poison were also present. No poison was found on the farm where the chickens had been raised nor in the commercial processing plant or in the trucks bringing the chickens to the convention center. The poisons had been sprinkled onto the chickens at night while they were sitting unwatched in the convention center's kitchen refrigerators, because this was the first place in the train of evidence in which poison was found. Some of the powder was still on the metal shelves where the chickens thawed.

"I want all places selling these chemicals in the entire state and surrounding states contacted. I want to know who ordered this crap. I want video taken by all of the stores on my desk. Maybe we can find a picture of the perp buying this junk. There has to be something out there. Check the list of the buyers of these agents with deaths in their families in the last years since Obama Care was implemented. According to several scraps of paper left inside the refrigerators and to the electronic gizmo's flashing Obama Care sign in the main halls Obama Care was the problem that started this. I want to know who had access to the TV screen software. That's where those messages were placed."

Next, Elvin had to face the press. The white house insisted.

Ordered to do so by the president, agent Matthews called the press together in front of the convention center. There, he made a short statement and answered questions.

"The government wishes to express its deepest sympathies to all of the families, business associates, and friends of the deceased in this case. We have run toxicology tests and have determined that the chickens eaten in the convention center were powdered with a concoction of cyanide, strychnine, and common rat poison. The poison has been traced to the coolers in the kitchen. It is theorized that the perpetrator gained access to the coolers last night sometime between two and five thirty when there was no one in that part of the building. One of the doors had been forced, and we surmise that is where entry was made. The toxins we found were sprinkled on top of the more than one thousand fully dressed chickens as seen by evidence from poison powder traces that are still inside those refrigerator-coolers where the meats were thawed in the facility. We are doing what we can right now to find out where these chemicals were either purchased or stolen. That's all we know so far. Are there any questions?"

The press coordinator recognized a reporter from the Cincinnati daily newspaper. "Vinnie Adams, of the Cincinnati Enquirer, Mr. Matthews. My question is this. Do you have any intelligence as to the reason for this attack?"

"As I mentioned in my opening statement, we found slips of paper inside the hall, some of them inside two of the chickens which indicated that this might be a protest to Obama Care. A message also was flashed over all of the center's TV screens."

"One other question, if you will. How many dead are in the building?"

"This is not the final count. We have at the present time a figure of 1,327 dead. There are some persons who are still alive. Evidently, they were vegetarians and persons with special dietary needs based on religious or personal moral codes who requested that they not be served chicken with their meals."

Janet Midler received a telephone call from someone in Cincinnati, Ohio. She assumed it was from her son who was at a conference there.

"Hello," Janet said.

"Is this Janet Midler?" the voice asked on the other end.

"Yes, it is."

"Is Ricky Midler your son, Janet?"

"Yes. What is this all about?"

"I have bad news for you, Janet. Would you sit down before I tell you?"

"Oh, my," Janet said. "Let me find a chair. There. Go ahead. I hope my son's all right."

"I'm afraid not, Mrs. Midler. Your son was poisoned along with more than one thousand other diners in the Cincinnati conference center banquet hall, Mrs. Midler. I am very sorry. I know this is a shock and a great loss to you."

Tears rolled over the old lady's face.

"No. It can't be."

"I'm afraid that it is. He's not alone. Everyone in his company who was there has passed away also, Janet. More than one thousand people were poisoned at that banquet. It was a mass homicide, Mam. I am very sorry for your loss. Is there anyone I can call who can come to your house to help you?"

"Please call my daughter."

She gave the voice her daughter's number. "Her name is Betty."

"Are you feeling all right, Mrs. Midler?"

"No. I'm not. I'm going to be terribly ill."

"We are calling your daughter right now. Please stay with me. I'll connect you when she answers."

"Thank you."

Janet heard her daughter answer the phone. The voice told her the bad news and asked her to arrange to go over to her mother's house. Then she was connected.

"Mom? Is Ricky really gone, Mom?" Betty asked.

"They say he is."

"Oh my God, Mom," Betty said. "I just talked with him this morning. He was fine."

"Please leave work and come over, Betty. I'm falling apart. Please come home."

"I'll be leaving in ten minutes, Mom."

"I love you, Betty," Janet said.

"I love you, too."

Janet walked into the kitchen. She remembered how she and Ricky would make cookies for Christmas. They always had such a good time with the green and red sprinkles. He was a lot of fun punching out the stars, bells, and angels with his tiny hands. Ricky was her little man. Even passed away, he would be her little man. His memories were sewn into her heart forever. Janet reached into the drawer where her old cookie cutters were stored. She touched them. They were still Ricky's in her mind, and in her mind, Ricky was still alive and would be right there inside her forever.

## 78

The president of the United States made a three minute speech to the American people during Prime TV Time, saying, “We shall not allow persons who have been denied health coverage for specific medical conditions to determine our national policy. These people are terrorists who threaten the very basis of democracy. No matter how they flip and turn reality in their diseased minds, we cannot tolerate those who would take the lives of hundreds and even thousands of persons in order to revenge what they consider to be the unnecessary death of a single loved one. Let me say right now to anyone out there who is contemplating such a heinous act against the American people, that no matter how much you loved that person, you have no right to take the lives of other loved ones in order to get back at society. With this in mind, especially the safety of our general population, I have used my powers as the president to sign a decree making it federal crime to murder others in an act of protest against any federal law. From now on, the FBI, NSA, TSA, ATF, FDA, and every other appropriate legal authority will investigate and arrest those responsible for such acts of national treachery. Thank you. God bless you, and God bless the American people.”

One hundred million American screens faded to black.

## 79

Detective Brian Hubble walked carefully through the convention center crime scene where the massive die off of America’s highest paid opinion experts had occurred. Their bodies lay scattered about in contorted positions. Their unusual posture was caused by the poisons they had ingested. The key to determining it was cyanide was the way their bodies were contorted backwards. This was because one of the major symptoms of cyanide poisoning was the cramping of the body’s largest muscles. This was the reason that cyanide gas execution chambers in America always had to strap prisoners to chairs with strong legs and backs. In this way their bones could not be broken by the immense forces exerted by their large leg and back muscles as they cramped from the paralyzing effect of the cyanide.

Some of the bodies at the convention center in Cincinnati were bent backward so massively that their spinal bones were shattered. Almost all of the dead suffered at least partially if not awesomely from this symptom. Their backbones were literally ripped apart as their long back muscles cramped under the poison’s deadly influence. In addition, some of the victims’ arms were broken from the immense muscular strain. Others’ legs cramped so badly that their bones of their other extremities gave way and broke backwards under the severe muscular tightening.

Detective Brian Hubble stopped for a moment and spoke into his cell phone. “Hello, Cathy. District needs to know this and stat. This is Brian Hubble. The dead

are all over the place. The federal government has taken over jurisdiction in this case under the commerce clause of the constitution. The feds claim to have credible evidence that the deaths were part of a protest against the federal Obama Care act. Evidence has been given supporting this claim.”

“Yes, sir,” Cathy said. “I will relay that message to the usual persons.”

“I’d like four or five additional detectives on this case to carry out my orders and to keep things tight here in the convention center. We need twenty men at the front and back of the center to insure that relatives do not cross the police lines in an attempt to reach their loved ones. That’s a total of twenty five persons, and that may not be the end of it. We may need a lot more officers, but that’s enough for starters. Get them down here in the next twenty-five minutes at the latest. Let’s not screw this up any more than it has been already. Over and out for now.”

“Over and out. Thank you, sir. I am ordering additional forces for you now, Detective Hubble,” the voice said. “Be careful, Detective. Don’t let those feds get your goat, sir.”

“Thanks Cathy. Later.”

Cathy was one of Hubble’s favorite police persons. She knew her stuff, and he could count on her to do things right and on time. She was a natural organizer. She was dedicated to police excellence. If Hubble had three more of Cathy the station would straighten up and fly right. Instead, it was generally stumbling along on a crash course. Detective Hubble never knew where the next crash was coming from, only that it was on the way and that nothing could stop it. The entire department had been gutted so much to save money. For this reason, the detective expected nothing less than a total police cluster fuck on any given day or night. And he usually got it in quadruplicate.

Working through the crime scene, Detective Brian Hubble took eighteen megabyte photos one after the other. Brian had never seen so many nicely dressed people inside any tourist trap in Cincinnati in his entire life. These men and women of advertising were well coiffed right down to their finger tips. Not one follicle was out of place. Not one speck of dirt peeked out at him from beneath a single nail in the entire room. One thing for certain. These people lived an entirely different lifestyle than did his usual murder victims. Brian didn’t know where to even begin to make forensic sense inside this crowded room of dead rich upstarts.

He had not yet wrapped his arms around the event properly, but he knew he would eventually if he only persisted in his investigation. That was his job. Setting things straight. Using clues to correctly solve crimes. Never stopping until he had discovered all of the probable motives, the evidence, and, of course, the perpetrators. These were among his personal investigatory specialties.

Brian already knew that poisoned chicken was the agent that was used to send these rich capitalist advertising specialists to their untimely ruin. He also knew that it was in retaliation for the deficiencies of the Obama medical plan. Evidently someone’s mother or son died as a result of government and/or insurance company shenanigans.

It was his job to find out just whom it was who committed this horrendous mass murder. Detective Hubble chewed on the idea for a few seconds. It was so immense, it nearly choked him. Didn’t this person or persons responsible understand that America was all about the rich? Was this perp not aware that the

government only spoke to the poor and middle class to keep up appearances? The lad must be naive as heck to think otherwise. Hubble wondered what the world would be like if the cops like himself were rich and not piss poor? If that were the case, the detective knew exactly what he'd be doing. He'd be retiring on some tropical island filled with exotic women who would spend their lives smiling at him and messing his hair, all of it done in their racy attempts to get at some of his money. Money was the American way. If everyone had the stuff, no one would ever work. The nation would languish in a filthy mud sty of pungent reactionary sloth, floating like a wallowing pig and getting nothing done. Hubble felt sorry for the simpletons and other dolts who thought otherwise.

Brian fumbled through the wallets of the dead, writing down their names and addresses, then carefully placing the wallet, keys, and whatever else was in each one's pockets into a zip-lock bag which he carefully labeled. He attached a number to each corpse and placed a copy of that number inside the victim's personal evidence bag on a special and easily observable card so it would be identified with him. It was a cheap trick, one that had been used for several hundred years. However, the use of a zip-lock bag to keep each person's belongings from harm was quite new as was the soft and clear plastic of which it was manufactured. Back in the day, they used paper envelopes for these belongings. The see-through zip-lock bag was a far better solution. No one had to even open it to see the belongings found inside the pants and purses of each crime scene's victims.

When detective Brian Hubble got to Knowles, he could tell the guy was a big timer. After all the man was dressed immaculately as were his staff. Those immediately surrounding him wore clothes that were a cut or two above everyone else's in the room even though they, too, were not coiffed quite well as Mister Big was. Nonetheless, his minions were adorned in their expensive and quite suave fashion statements. Detective Hubble reached for his phone. It buzzed a few select musical chords until Cathy answered from his station office.

"Cathy Ward, here."

"Listen, Cathy. I found Mr. Knowles and his entourage of well attired advertising *stoolies*. They are all dead. What else would they be? I mean, really. Anyway, I want you to call the Rassmussen advertising agency."

"Do we have their number?" Cathy asked. If not, she'd have to look it up. She hated it when that happened. Life should be so much easier. Stress was nothing but a useless put down that detracted from the general happiness she sought.

"No. I texted you the numbers. There's also a number for the white house and the senate committee that worked with Rassmussen to pass the constitutional support bill that Knowles was pushing for the feds to pass. Anyway, those offices need to be advised. National policy is involved. Don't ask me why. I don't know why, and I'm going to keep my nose out of their business up there in Washington. I want as little to do with them as possible. However, I can assure you they will be pounding me down for the duration of this investigation. It's theirs and not ours. I've been advised to do everything their way, so keep your head up and make sure those federal pricks are advised of absolutely everything we are doing if you know what's good for you."

"I know what's good for me," Cathy said, "and it's not the feds. It's local men with great abs and enough cash to feed me beers before they try to lay me down next to their lumpy britches."

"I hear ya."

"I'll do whatever these feds want. But, remember, you told me to share with them, so don't cut off my head if I do what you just told me to do. I'll do it, but if it comes back to bite us on the butt, I'm out of it. I'm just doing what you ordered me to. Understood?"

"Sure," detective Hubble said. "But if it doesn't work out, I'll kick your ass anyway. You know that. So, shut up, Cathy."

He hung up. The disconnect tones were perfect nonsense. It sounded like a musical water drop.

Cathy smiled. No matter what happened, she was always at fault. Whatever. She was perfectly used to it and had been for years. It was simple. *Cathy was always wrong. Detective Hubble was always right.* She mentally wrapped her pie hole around it. She sometimes did this by pretending she could chew Hubble's head off and spit it into the street whenever she wanted. It didn't help all that much, but at least it was something she could hold onto.

Life was a bitch no matter which way you cut it. You just had to go with it. Even false visualizations about how you were going to kill your boss were a godsend to the low lives in Cathy's position.

Cathy called the senate committee that worked with Mr. Knowles. She asked for the chairman and was switched to him only after she verified her code with his secretary.

"This is Cathy in Cincinnati," she said. "I'm giving you a courtesy call as my boss asked. Mr. Knowles of Rassmussen, LLC, and his staff were killed in Cincinnati along with hundreds of other experts in public relations. My boss is Detective Brian Hubble. He is with the homicide division of the local police. In addition, the FBI has taken over jurisdiction on the case."

"What else can you tell us?"

"We found evidence that this was an Obama Care murder, sir."

"A conspiracy, eh?"

"If that's what you want to call it, you can. However, I can assure you that we know very little, except the case is so bizarre."

"How's that?"

"They were poisoned. More than a thousand men and women were poisoned at a banquet. Strips of paper were found both near and in the food indicating it was an Obama Care operation. We think it was a relative of someone whom the health care plan rejected. He went ballistic when he found out just how affordable it was."

"How's that, Cathy?"

"Easy question."

"Then give it to me. Stop beating the bush. Speak."

"Whoever it was, we figure the insurance refused to pay for her treatment. They explained to the family how they crunched the numbers and discovered it wasn't profitable enough to approve treatment for whatever she had."

"Sweet deal if you can get it."



“That’s right,” Cathy said. “It’s sweet for the insurance companies. This way they didn’t have to spend a dime. So, the district insurance executives got promoted. The victims who paid their salaries found themselves dying for no reason except *it is more profitable to refuse the patient’s expensive treatment*. In some cases it saves upwards of fifty to eighty thousand dollars per rejection. Sometimes it even saves millions. That means profit for the insurance carrier.”

“Makes sense.”

“Yes, it does. But only in America.”

Cathy reported to Hubble that the deed was done. The Rassmussen Company had been told.

Hubble wanted to tell her he was pissed about everything, but he didn’t. He guessed Cathy had figured that out the first day she was working there. He also figured anyone stupid enough to work for him and not know the best way to remain sane was to become the type of person who knew how ignore insults from whatever quarter they came. Just smile and get the job done and no mistakes. Whatever you do. Just don’t botch things up.

“See ya, babe,” Hubble said.

“Sweetie.” The phone clicked off.

Cathy and Hubble had been partners in crime so to speak for twenty or more years.

Hubble smirked and grabbed another number card and zip-lock bag. Then, he started rifling through the next victim’s pockets. Wallet, keys, change, cell phone, and whatever the feds wanted to take. It was theirs.

Anything to keep their stinking federal noses out of his festering puss and give him plenty of personal wiggle room to go on living for awhile.

## 80

Greg Hauser packed his car again with fishing rods and a twenty-two caliber squirrel gun. He drove to his friends’ houses to pick them up. They liked to camp together several times each summer. When they were younger and had enough money, they’d drive up to Canada, then fly into virgin lakes filled with huge fish who had never seen a fly or a lure and had never known the terror of hooks inside their mouths. They were innocent as American’s had been before Obama Care destroyed what little was left of their freedoms including their freedom to select doctors and to receive the procedures their physicians wanted for them. All of that was gone now.

They camped on a clear stream filled with stocked trout. Greg Hauser, Al Buttons, Fred Ashcroft, and Gil Warner dipped their fly rods into the ice cold Ozark Mountain stream and talked about the Saint Louis Cardinals, women they had known in high school, and the things that happened when they were family men.

“I am getting older, and I can feel it in my bones,” Al Buttons said, as he maneuvered his fly rod this way and that, “but there was a time when I was young, virile, full of come, and horny all of the time. My fingers smelled of rainbow

trout twenty-four hours a day as did my upper lip, just like they will in a few minutes. I won't need to explain that, will I?"

They laughed. It was vintage trout conversation. Eventually it would get down to grandma's apple pie recipes, but that would come later. Conversational degeneration took hours and days.

"I was reading about what happened in Cincinnati. Someone should write a book and entitle it *Obama Care: The Novel Concerning a Low Level Government Created Serial Killer Set Loose on an Innocent Society*. It would be great reading."

"That's for sure," said Fred Ashcroft. "I'll read it. I'll order it on my Kindle. I can see the letters perfectly that way. It makes reading easy as pie for me."

They were not getting any younger. Age had been easy on them so far, but eventually they'd be suffering from Parkinson's, cancer, heart disease, dimming eyesight, and dementia. In the end they'd be grasping at the staffers' breasts in their nursing homes.

"My dad got old and died," Gil Warner mused. "They never tried to save him. He was cut off from red meat and fresh farm butter. As a result, he died with a grimace. I doubt he wanted to live after the steaks were withdrawn. He probably figured death was preferable to his enforced culinary deprivation. So he ate meats anyway, and passed away quietly in his sleep. I asked him about it, and he said, 'Well, son, you have to die of something.' I think he was pretty wise about that time, so much so, that he wanted to check out and be done with it. I guess I was boring to him. I can't say as I can blame him."

"Obama Care killed my wife," Greg said. "I can't say it was appreciated. She deserved a lot better than that. I miss her, I can tell you. Every day, I think about her being right here beside me. Too bad, it won't happen."

"It's a terrible thing, Greg," Al said. "I know how much you cared about her."

"Same here, Greg," Fred said.

Gil chimed in as well. "Yes, it's terrible, Greg. I feel for what you are going through. It happened to me also."

Greg cast a dark fly into the stream and carefully guided it over the rocks, watching it flow with the water and hoping a trout would take it. He liked the feel of rainbows resisting his nearly invisible two pound leader. He put most of them back. He only kept those with a fatal wound to their gills.

"She was a corker, all right," Greg said. "I always liked your wife, Gil."

"I heard the Cincinnati poisoning was done by an Obama Care terrorist, said Al. "I can't say I'd blame a guy for doing that."

"Seems a bit extreme," Gil said. "Not that I haven't had desires to do the same thing many times over. I'm just too much of a lazy retard to ever do it."

"Me, neither," Greg lied. "Anyone doing that should be prosecuted." It didn't hurt to embellish false innocence with equally false statements.

Greg chuckled at this two-faced lie. It was great to toss a little bull at the guys now and then. After all, that was exactly what his camping trips were all about. Mental dribble, bull shit conversations, and general unwinding.

"I got a bite," Al said.

His line became taut, then his pole bent as he set the hook.

The other men drew in their lines and watched. They never kept their lines in the water when a buddy was fighting a big one. They had gotten hung up too many times that way. Once they were hung up, the hooked fish usually got away.

Al's fly rod was extremely flexible. Its tip bent down in a responsive arc to each pull of the terrified fish. The rod's tip moved right and left as the trout tried in vain to spit the hook. The fish zigzagged like a staggering drunk in the rushing stream's icy throat. It was a fast gargling river of swift water, but even so the trout were bound to be caught with a well set hook. Al was an expert at working the fish here. He rarely failed to score. The fish finally was worn down. He came up on his side, willing to let Al do whatever he wanted. Al coaxed him into his net.

"Well, *looky here*," Al said. "What a nice trout you are."

He pulled the fish from the net and removed his hook. The fish was not fatally injured, so he was a candidate for Al's early release program. Al hooked a fish scale to the thing's mouth and measured its weight. "Two point three pounds," Al said. "Perfect for eating. But this is one that got away." Al bent down and moved the trout back and forth in the water. After a few moments, the trout regained strength, and he sailed out of Al's hands and back into the current.

"Nice move," Greg said. "He'll live to see a lot more days."

"For sure," Gil chimed in. "Smart move, bud."

Al smiled. Releasing the fish was almost always more fun than catching one.

He often imagined himself playing the part of a Chinese lad who would purchase a finch in a cage just for the pleasure of releasing it into the wild. He imagined a tiny finch standing on the edge of its cage's opening. Then, as the little bird flew away, Al imagined the kid's mouth opening in a smile of recognition just like his own had done just now. Releasing a bird into the wild gave so much pleasure for such a minor expense. Al surmised how a man's death was a lot like releasing a fish.

Long after he was ill, a person would escape the pain of being caught by allowing himself the happy release that only death could bring to a dying man in great pain. And after all, Al thought, I was born into this world to die. I'm only here for a little time.

"Releasing a trout is the least I can do," Gil said. "I am restoring the world's order."

Greg laughed, because it was pure Al Buttons to say something like that. He was more philosophical than most were in a fisherman's camp. He liked to think about the meaning of life, as though it might do some good to the world to think that way.

Greg Hauser knew differently. Life's only meaning was a dance between love and pain. It lasted just a little while. Then, it was gone. Over. Kaput, as the Germans would say.

That day, the men ate several of their fish. They cleaned them, then dredged them in flour, and dropped them into a pan bubbling with hot virgin olive oil. There was nothing like the smell and sound of freshly caught fish as they fried in their pans under the trees. The wind wafted across the men, gently cooling them off, and providing them with a feeling of robustness. A return to nature did each of them a great deal of good. It restored their batteries for the trip back to the

craziness of global America and the fascist dictators who ruled the known world with their vicious iron fists.

*Why am I so political?* Greg mused.

After all it wasn't like such posturing was going to get him somewhere he wanted to go. Besides, nobody liked guys who were overly political. They made everyone nervous, especially in the days following the Patriot Act.

The feds were everywhere, rummaging into the private lives of citizens and making them fearful and miserable.

In a way, Greg figured all Americans had been reduced down to being like these helpless trout. They existed to be played. They were just little economic units to be worked like slaves, then taxed and tossed away when they got old and died. The feds were lazy worker bees as well. Once they tired of screwing with a guy, they let him go. It was as though they'd had their maximal fun with him, and that was enough. They'd made him miserable and afraid, and there was nothing else they could do.

Besides, there was no use to run it into total redundancy. So they let the old ones go. Next, they'd find someone else to screw around with. It didn't matter who it was. People were a mere convenience. They only existed for the government's benefit.

Most Americans understood this from the beginning of their lives. Only, today that was even more evident.

The next morning, Greg was out on the stream again, dipping his flies into the deep holes where huge rainbow trout lurked in the darkness below. He felt within his fingers the strikes they made at his hand-tied insects. The flies swam resplendently in the stream's rush flashing their gentle feathers. Each fly had been laced in colors designed to anger the fish. As the flies swam through the water, just above the bottom, the fish came forward, sucked them into their mouths, then turned and hooked themselves. He caught and released, caught and released.

In doing this he dreamed of the deaths in Cincinnati. He knew the American people had learned right away that this had happened on account of the Obama Care legislation. The more they learned of deaths across the country, the more they understood that something was amiss.

They were being fleeced by powerful insurance interests, same as always, only now the cruelty of the insurance companies was far more intense. The deaths caused by insurance greed was hovering over them all. Everyone was liable to be killed through medical incompetence and outright fraud. Either that or some revenge artist like himself might kill them out of pure rage over their collective cowardice in allowing it to happen. The insurance magnets were dining on caviar while the American citizens were being regularly fleeced and were left eating slop. Awake or not, they were all in danger.

Gil Warner had two fish which he kept. "These have been hooked in their gills, Greg," he explained. "They would die anyway if I let them go."

"Understood," Al Buttons replied. "I have one I kept back that was bleeding from its gills. That's really a shame. I'd rather none of them were hurt, to be quite honest. I hate to think I am inflicting pain on them."

Greg looked at Al. He was incredulous. What did Al think, anyway? Did he really think that fish fought against the hook, because it produced pleasure inside them

to do so? Such an interpretation as to why fish pulled against their hooks was totally absurd. Of course, a hook irritated them. It also greatly destroyed their ability to swim back to their favorite place of rest. He wondered how Al could be so stupid.

“I hate to tell you this, Al,” Greg said as he looked over at him, “but these fish don’t like having a hook set into them.”

“You’re kidding, Greg,” Al said. “How in the world did you come up with that bit of intelligence?”

“Easy,” Greg explained. “I simply used my brain.”

“Really. How do you figure that?”

“Very simple. The hook hurts them as much as it would hurt you if I set one in your mouth. If it wasn’t hurting, they wouldn’t care, and then they wouldn’t fight. They’d just swim toward you voluntarily. But they don’t. They are in pain. They are trying to pull away from the source.”

“I’d never have guessed that in a million years,” Al said. “I may have to rethink this hobby.”

“Well, I wouldn’t go that far. No need to have a baby over it. Besides, if you or I weren’t catching them, then some bigger fish might be swimming up behind and eating them. Or maybe a turtle would be biting into their tails, ripping it to shreds, pulling out the flesh. I’ve seen turtles do that. Besides, turtles even attack fish on a stringer. You leave a stringer in the water and come back later and all that’s left are the heads. A turtle has eaten the poor thing alive. So, you see, Al, there’s a lot more that is more painful than your little hook in a fish’s mouth. Like a turtle gnawing it alive from its tail all the way forward to its head.”

“Nature is cruel, Al,” Gil Warner said.

“I see.” Al tossed out another fly and watched it disappear inside the dark hole where the killer trout waited in its hidden lair for minnows, bugs, and seeds to fall through atop the current filled river bottom. Al passed off the attempt to piss him off with the story of hook pain causing the fish to fight back. Even if it were true, Al was still going to fish. These trout were going to die from something. If it wasn’t from Al’s hooks it’d be something far more painful like a gigantic turtle chewing them up from deep inside the settling darkness.

## 81

The FBI had come to Greg Hauser’s home and found him gone again. This time they had tossed it. Everything was sprawled on the floor. It was the government’s way of telling him their powerful goon squads had no respect for anything he valued. Civil rights was for others. Not for Greg Hauser. Killing his wife was just not enough disrespect.

First, they bashed in his door, then they broke nearly every lamp in his house as they tossed them to the floor purposely destroying them. Greg noticed how every drawer was pulled out of its chest and slammed against the floor on top of the wreckage that had once been his lamps and his life. This was a sinister government message if there ever was one. He knew it was meant to scare him. Yet, all it did was to toughen him up.

Hauser refused to be frightened. He had grown up in tough times and in even tougher slums filled to overflowing with a vast number of bullies. Greg had been beaten nearly to death on the streets, and left bleeding far away from home on several occasions. This happened to him both as a child and in his war years. It also happened recently. Sometimes it was repeated by street criminals and other low life ruffians when he went out on the streets in a peaceful manner. This was one of the reasons why he didn't really care how many people he had to kill to vent his rage over the needless death of his wife of twenty-seven years. In fact, after the beatings he took at school, in the war, on the streets of America, and the way his house was just ransacked by the central government's vile gestapo, he was ready to kill again at a moment's notice. If nothing else it confirmed the rightness of his maniacal protests.

Greg was not so stupid as to act without great planning, however. For one thing, he knew they were watching him. That made him plan his actions far more carefully. In fact, he had developed tremendous cunning. He thought of what they wanted him to do so that they could get him. He determined to thwart them, but to never stop achieving his goal of total and unconditional revenge. He wasn't doing this for himself. It was for Joan, his wife. Greg did these things in revering her beloved memory.

He knew they wanted him to do something that would give himself away. That would play him into their hands way before he was satiated by killing the very lazy and fat Americans who supported the Obama administration with all of its medical insurance cronies and their greedy vileness in refusing treatment for his wife. It boiled down to their general disregard for human medical rights among the helpless Americans out there as they faced the Obama death squads.

Greg Hauser was going to show them, but it would be in his own time and at a place of his choosing and not theirs.

He decided to let it go for now. Acting precipitously would give him away. For now, he'd clean his place up. He'd restore it to the way it had been before the goons wrecked it just to piss him off and prove they were boss. That way their unfair actions against him wouldn't fester inside his soul. Besides, working at rectifying the damage would help him heal.

He started with his clothes, because they covered so much more space on the floors than anything else. So, he collected, piled, and sorted his clothes. Then he washed them. Next, Greg began folding them and placing them inside their respective drawers. He was meticulous in his work. The clothes had to be sniffing clean, folded perfectly, then placed in neat rows inside his chests of drawers. They also had to be exactly where he always kept them. That way, he knew exactly where they were. Drawer-by-drawer and chest-by-chest, he restored his home to neatness.

As he worked, he thought of the callus manner in which the government had murdered his wife, Janet. Greg knew in his big heart that she could have lived. All they had to do was to treat her medically. Instead, they did the least they could. It was all right for suckers like the Hausers to pay their health insurance premiums on time. That was supposed to count, but as it turned out, neither Greg nor his wife were protected by their insurance policies. Instead they were simply hung out to dry. Now, on top of the horror of being left without medical support by their

insurance company, he was expected to fill out the forms for non-existent services which they then disapproved. Greg figured it was a lot like what happened to the nations of the world who signed treaties with the United States which were immediately tossed away, except for the parts giving the USA access to every oil field and town in the nations it occupied including the right to burn them to the ground.

The USA was simply a thug and an international pariah. It exploited others. Like a vast international locust, it flew from nation to nation, and inserted its missiles and its troops. Then, it bombed, strafed, and executed its people. But that wasn't all. It's CIA paid warring tribes inside these nations to kill their rivals, and it gave them the bombs, RPG's, dynamite sticks, and rifles to do the job right. Soon, their shops and malls were in flames, and their bombed out police stations contained scores of dead.

America's occupation forces were thugs. They were just like armed insects with no mind in a science fiction film, projecting its little armies of men and women into its occupation areas, soldiers who were basically wussies with more guns than the locals, and who had no respect for the human rights of people and certainly had no respect for their nations, cultures, religious traditions, and laws, either. The USA was a complete bust. The USA was a degenerate rogue nation of porn sniffers, fat asses, and despicable disrespecters of rights who were set adrift in other people's worlds without a conscience. Americans around the world were hated, because their armies were known for torture, imprisonment of locals, the destruction of their towns and cities, the murders of their innocents, and the paying and training of local mercenaries to kill more of their own people for them so they wouldn't have to do it themselves.

In addition, America constantly made friends with leaders then killed them. It had done so for years, including its murder of President Diem of Vietnam and to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq who had been an ally of the USA but who was then summarily overthrown, arrested, tortured, tried in American controlled local courts, and hanged. There was no end to the evil America intended for their duly elected democratic presidents and prime ministers nor to anyone else it wanted to destroy for its pleasure and for its vast realm of corporate crony profiteering.

America was a vicious imperial dictatorship formed merely to ingratiate the rich and to impoverish the downtrodden all over the world. As for the workers of the nation and the entire world at large who were served up atop America's vicious smorgasbord of domestic corporatism and human on human war carnage, the citizens and employees were merely slaves to be used, taxed, and left to die for all the government cared.

Greg Hauser knew in his heart that most Americans were all headed for the graveyard to join his wife. They just didn't know it yet. But they would and soon enough. If the government didn't take them there, then Hauser would.

He worked his way through the living room, kitchen, and bathroom, cleaning and fixing everything as he went. He was not going to let them have their way with him. That was simply not in the cards. In the final analysis Greg would show them who was the real boss including who would function and who would not. When he had finished making the place perfect again, he sucked in his breath and headed for the bedroom which was the last place he needed to fix. They had wrecked

everything they got their hands on in there. Even the pictures of himself and his wife were broken, torn to shreds, and left in a pile of paper and broken glass. What had they hoped to accomplish by doing that? Did they think something was hidden behind the photographs? It was a mystery to Greg Hauser, but it made him damn glad he had murdered more than one thousand advertising executives in Cincinnati. They'd never write another news release, TV ad, or speech for the nation's corrupt congressmen, senators, or presidents. They had spun their last vile statements on American politics. Greg was steady and even more committed to his serial murders of Americans wherever he might find them ready and waiting. He figured it was good riddance to each and every one of them. They were the traitors who had brought America to its knees. When you live by politics, you die by politics. Greg figured they had gotten just exactly what they deserved.

He picked up the picture of his deceased wife, Joan. Her one eye was still visible. The other was gone. Out of nowhere, the federal lizards had broken through the door, destroyed everything, including years of careful preservation of her beautiful pictures.

A tear came to his eye. He would do anything to get Joan back, but he couldn't. Once dead, always dead, he thought, and that included his wife Joan. He'd never see her again. She was definitely dead and gone. Her tombstone was carved with her name and dates. It stood like a shrieking raven at the head of her resting place inside the town cemetery.

What the feds had done to his only pictures of her was insult piled atop injury. Now, it had begun to rejuvenate Greg's desire to act on behalf of her revenge again. The disgraceful way they wrecked his house was something else that hundreds of Americans would answer for. He'd make sure of that.

## 82

Hauser purchased a car on Craig's list. It was a Camry XLE, fifteen years old. It was in good shape, and that was all he needed. He kept the plates that were on it when he bought it. That way, no one could trace him. Besides, he paid cash and the owner didn't know Greg's name. In addition, Greg made a fake driver's license and other ID's in which he was pictured as the original owner of the Camry. This way, whenever he bought something or checked into a motel, he was identified as a different person than himself. This way, the NSA and FBI would be in the dark as to his whereabouts. That was precisely where Greg needed them to be.

He drove to Fayetteville, North Carolina where he befriended a Ranger at Fort Bragg. Over several weeks of drinking, he pumped the man for information which he willingly gave.

"I love North Carolina," Caldwell Langworth said. "The mountains are beautiful, and the shore line is spectacular."

"We should camp together," Hauser suggested. "I love the outdoors." He had told Caldwell only what his fake name was, so that Langworth only knew him as Bob Farley. That was exactly the way it had to be if he were ever to succeed.

"Sure. We can do that. How about this Friday?"

"Let's do it. I'll be good for the beer."



Deep in the forest, both of them were soon drunk and very talkative. Hauser slyly brought the conversation to setting off bombs. "Plastic is the best," Hauser said. "I'd give anything to get some."

"We can make it ourselves," Caldwell said. "I know how."

"Wow. Let's do it, then."

Caldwell was an explosives specialist, so he knew exactly how to manufacture most of the materials Greg Hauser wanted to work with. Langworth's knowledge on this subject was intense, and that was why Hauser had made his acquaintance.

In a few days they were making the stuff. Caldwell even knew how to make the plastic binder that made the weapon so effective. It was a safe bomb because it would never detonate from dropping it the way nitroglycerin did.

"In addition," Caldwell told Hauser, "it stays fresh for years and years and does not deteriorate like dynamite. It doesn't matter if it's hot or cold, the stuff just lasts forever. When you are ready to use it, there it is."

A few days later, and they were using their home made plastic bombing materials to blow entire trees out of the ground roots and all. Next, they were blasting walls inside abandoned mines. The stuff was magnificent.

"Look at how those stones blew right out of the mine wall!" Hauser said. "That is fantastic."

"Works every time. Its the military grade stuff that every army makes. In addition, we are trained to be able to make the stuff on campaigns in case we need it. The materials needed are fairly common."

"It was easy to make," Hauser agreed.

They spent several months experimenting with what they could do with the plastic bombs. They made more whenever they needed it. Hauser learned enough in twelve weeks to do anything with plastic materials he would ever want to do. The great thing was how easy it was to find and assemble the materials for a Grade A box of the plastic goop from which to make all of the bombs he would ever want to assemble and explode.

## 83

Three months later, Greg Hauser stood in the rotunda of the Texas capitol building. He was there to blow up its pink limestone dome in protest to Obama Care. He had packed with him all of the plastic explosives he would need. The explosives were sealed in boxes lined with the darkest of coffee grounds so that sniffing dogs used by NSA could not identify it. Greg was dressed in official Texas working clothes. He had stolen them from the employee lockers. Now, he innocently pushed a cart filled with construction tools through the halls. The area was stacked with boxes. He nodded to the people working there as he passed them, and they nodded back and one even waved at him. He took the elevator to the top of the dome and got out onto the dome's highest walkway. He had soon parked his heavy cart along the base of the dome. Soon, he was using ropes and ladders to reach the very surface of the huge dome itself. Once there, he hauled up several pounds of plastic explosives at a time. He attached the soft plastic

materials to the rounded portions of the dome where they were joined together by reinforced metal ribs that moved right up the interior all of the way to its very top.

Up there, a magnificent star of Texas centered itself right in the middle at the very highest and most focused point inside the dome's inner circle. The single star was a stroke of architectural genius. It represented Texas by its name sake as "the Lone Star State." It was both simple and profound at the same time.

Greg tucked the plastic explosive into the right spots between the dome's massive ribs and painted them to match the dome itself. He worked his way around the dome little by little, climbing up and down and to the sides, patiently setting his plastic bombs at approximately every five feet. It was a massive area to cover effectively, but he took his time and worked his way through it. As he carefully and precisely meandered inside the dome's curve, Greg placed all of the charges at just the right places to bring it crashing down. In this way, Greg assured that the huge Texas capitol building's dome would come apart in sections and collapse downward into the interior and exterior parts of the building. Some parts of it would fall into the rotunda while others would catapult outward and onto the diagonal roofs of both legislative chambers and burst through them as the massive stones fell into their auditoriums. The dome itself weighed tons, so that it was heavy enough that its collapse would easily bring most of the building down with it. That was precisely what Greg wanted.

When he had finished, he went to the Texas house of representatives' wing where he weakened the huge auditorium's high ceilings to help them to collapse from even more of his plastic bombs as the dome crashed down simultaneously onto it. Then he did the same with the other wing. This was going to be quite a show of Greg's personal power and would measure just how far he had come as an explosives specialist.

In two days the governor would speak to the joint chambers in this exact place, at which time Greg would pull the switch using throw away cell phones that he had purchased at a store that had no TV surveillance cameras.

Greg made sure of that.

The entire leadership of the state of Texas would soon be dead. It was exactly what they deserved, Greg thought. After all, the entirety of the Texas state government was nothing but a joke. In fact, Greg believed that all of the American state houses were nothing more than bad jokes on the American people as well. They had surrendered up their independence beginning in 1789 when the states handed over their short-lived and hard-fought sovereignty.

In Greg's mind, everyone associated with the United States should be dead, and rightfully so. To Greg, they were chickenshits and even worse. After all, hadn't they been the ones who had operated the under-funded Obama Care program? That gruesome law's passage and its poorly crafted administration as it dealt out death to its subscribers was nothing short of outright murder. Its laws were symbolic only and meant nothing. The trouble was, Obama Care's pro-insurance legislation had loop holes written into it on purpose. These amendments were authored precisely for insurance companies, senators, and representatives to wiggle through unscathed.

Thanks to Greg's diligent work as an amateur structural sapper with less than a summer of training by a great mentor close to Fort Bragg, the place was eventually

rigged to blow. Not only the domes but the pillars, walls, doorways, and roofs were now packed with plastic explosives. When the dome crumbled into pieces, the entire building would follow it down, and its exits would be sealed so no one could escape. The structure would crumble in the midst of its collapse, and nearly everyone inside would be either dead, paralyzed, or, at the very least, badly wounded.

That night at the motel, Greg watched PBS. He saw a program covering in every detail the huge Obama Care scandal. In many parts of the country, people were picketing in the streets against the program. They were filmed in the Capitol building as well as in the streets in front of the major insurance companies who were feathering their income streams with millions of disgruntled customers who had been wrongfully treated from the start and were mad as hell about it. According to the PBS program, everyone in America knew at least one person, if not many more, who had been denied essential service. The list of medically abandoned and disgruntled persons was becoming monumental in length. The growing cadres of so-called Obama Care terrorists seemed to be at work both day and night. Major buildings were crumbling before alarmed TV viewers' eyes almost every day.

Snipers protesting the state of medical care in America were also feverishly at work in more than twenty other states, and there seemed almost no way of catching them as they sniped, bombed, burned, and disappeared into the walls of the great cities. There seemed no escape from the ongoing turmoil in America by the most deadly of protesters, and nothing seemed to have been done to stop it.

Greg's worst fear was that he was playing into the hands of the United States. By creating chaos, he wondered if he was offering the nation's insurance conspirators more chances to destroy the constitution's human rights guarantees. Of course, Hauser knew that this was the least of his problems. Nonetheless, he was bothered by it. After all, he was not responsible for politics. What the nation did as a result of his work to destroy it was up to them and was not his concern. The nation could use it for good or for bad. That was up to them to decide. Others would make those decisions, not him. The largest guarantee that the United States had never fully taken into account had been citizen rights to free and humane health care. But that had not happened. Obama Care's glaringly humongous errors were the precise reasons why the nation was in such chaos on this issue. Greg wondered if Obama Care was meant to be administered half-heartedly in order to piss people off and make civil unrest inevitable so it could turn the screws on the Americans down below. That seemed to be what was happening. Was it planned all along to be this way?

It made sense to Greg Hauser that the government would do this on purpose. Everything in politics had a plan. They just didn't want to let on what it was.

Greg pushed the cart to the basement where he washed it down with a hose using plenty of soap to remove all traces of himself including his prints and the plastic materials he used for the bombs. He stole a bicycle parked at the bike stand and rode slowly toward his car. It was three miles away.

The Texas air was hot. A southern wind throbbing with dry summer heat from Old Mexico bit into his face as he pedaled toward his car. Several Mexican women dressed in colorful clothing talked incessantly in their Spanish language up ahead. He passed them a few moments later. As he did so, he said, "Buenos dias, Senoritas!" which he figured was some sort of a white man's broken Mexican for "Good Day, Ladies!" They cackled back at him with the words, "Buena, Senior!" which let him know that his Spanish had worked its little bit of psychological goodwill and wonder on them. He maneuvered his bike tires away from a large horned lizard sunning himself in the sizzling road. The lizard was a delightful sight to behold. His face had a certain sophisticated air about it.

The horned scaly creature seemed very satisfied and sure of itself. His mouth seemed to smile at Greg with a slight reptilian grimace as he biked past it. It seemed to Greg as if the creature appreciated Greg's efforts of not running him down. Evidently, the thing had real feelings. Greg liked that idea. The lizard slowly slithered away after Greg passed over him, crawled onto the sidewalk and ambled into a cobblestoned alley where the sun had neatly heated the cobbles in readiness for the creature's next pose in the warming sun light.

Hauser parked his bike four blocks from his car, then walked more than ten blocks in reaching it so he could meander this way and that in his journey in case someone was spying on him. A circuitous journey would short circuit anyone watching and cause him to lose track of where Greg was headed. Or so he thought. Anyway, it was a great theory, and Greg knew in his heart that it was true although he had never tested it before now. Besides, he had thoroughly enjoyed both the bicycle ride and the brisk walk.

The city was beautiful that day. Even the worst parts seemed perfectly sunny and bright. It made him happy to see it in such a friendly light. After all, the brighter the light the happier and friendlier a place seemed.

Greg figured that the cleansing power of light could not be over-estimated. To do so would be a sin. The world was sad enough. There was no reason to doubt the happiness that brightly filtered sunlight could bring to a dire and dismal situation, painting it with joy no matter how wretched and poverty stricken a place might seem.

Besides, as Greg knew, Americans were too attached to their quaint ideas that money and happiness were co-joined like innocent youths placing their lips together for the first time. Nothing could be farther from the truth. A man didn't have to be wealthy to be happy, nor did a woman. To believe so was a pure distraction that fell far from the real truth. Some of the happiest people he'd ever known were the poorest. In addition, some of the least happy he'd met in life were among the wealthiest. So, in reality and honesty, who was to say?

Greg quietly started his Craig's list car. If it were noticed or taped on a camera for later viewing, no one would be able to connect it with Greg Hauser. It was still registered under the last owner's name, a man who had never even seen Greg, and the plates were still those that its previous owner had purchased for the present year. Greg turned on the radio and listened to music. He was able to find Mexican

as well as American bands all across the instrument's dial. As Greg listened and smiled, he figured that he was just about as home free as it ever gets.

"They will pay for what they've done to me," he said to no one but himself.

Soon thereafter he closed his eyes and fell asleep.

## 85

Governor Frank Pelly woke up that morning and ate a nice healthy breakfast with his wife, Betty, and his three children, William, Dole, and Claudia. He thought them to be a fine family. They got along together, rarely argued, and the kids were smart as a whip and did well in school. Having a family like Pelly's was also good for politics. It never hurt to have your boys and girls moving around while daddy played politics with the big wigs.

"Daddy," Claudia said, "Do we go with you to the capitol today?"

"Yes, my sweet. We all have to be there. The press expects their governor to share his family with other Texans."

"I was just wondering," she said. "I don't mind going. In fact, I sort of enjoy the hoopla. I also like to see you making speeches."

"Thank you, Claudia. That was very sweet of you." He stopped speaking and looked at his two boys. "How about you guys? Ready for another political hoopla with daddy at the beautiful Texas capitol?"

"Yea," Dole Pelly said. "I'm looking forward to it. It's better than school."

"Right on!" William agreed. He high fived his brother. "School is great, but watching you speak, Dad. Well, that's really special. I love it when you speak."

"Thanks, William. I like it, too. Speaking is very pleasurable to me."

Betty Pelly brought a large plate laden with eggs, bacon, sausage, and hash browns.

"Dig in," she said. She handed a large spoon to her husband who was always granted the first digs into whatever dishes were being served. Governor Pelly smiled and spooned some food onto his plate, then handed the spoon to his wife. Soon, they were all eating and talking about the coming day.

The phone rang. The governor of Texas stood up, then walked to the other room.

It seemed like he never got a moment to himself ever since he had been elected to his first state office. Now, as governor, his life was neither his own nor his family's. Instead, he had become a prisoner of his own ambitions.

"Never obtain what you ask for," his grandmother had told him. "Otherwise it may take away your life unawares." He thought she was strange at the time, but now she seemed as wise as an ancient Greek seer. In his memories of her, his dead grandmother had become the ancient Greek prophet, Tireseus, the man-woman fetishist whom the ancient Greek nobles always consulted before making important decisions.

Once they had reached the capitol building, the governor asked one of his best friends, "What can I do to make this a wonderful day?" This one statement was his trademark.

"You can get to the capitol podium on time and read your speech with gusto, Frank Pelly," Henry Foster replied with a smile.

Henry was Pelly's public relations specialist and press secretary. He was also his best friend.

"This is a small get together between you and the house and senate, but it means everything to the outside world who will be getting a tiny snippet from the news whores. We need to make it good.

"Maybe I can twist a few arms, make promises I can't keep, then placate them with some insipid breaking news leak to get them past it.

"You know the ropes, Frank. God, what I have to do just to make you look good."

"It's all about you, Henry. Isn't it?" Governor Pelly said, smiling at his friend and mentor.

"Yes. It is, Frank, unfortunately. Remember, I was an only child. Then, maybe you can forgive me my total selfishness. I just didn't learn better."

"Well, Henry, you are indeed a cross I need to bear. Lucky for you that I consider your work fantastic and indispensable."

"I think you just admitted how corrupt you are, governor."

"Yes. I know."

Henry laughed.

"Let's do her, Gov," he said.

"I shall, Henry. Have to go now. We are having breakfast."

"Gotcha. Click."

The phone went dead. Governor Pelly was momentarily free at last. At least until the next phone call.

"Sorry about that. Henry needed to give me a pep talk. You know how he is about those things."

"Well, Frank, he's done a lot for you," his wife, Betty Pelly, said.

"Don't I know. Don't I know," Frank said. "He's like a third arm."

"Whatever, dear. Better a third arm than none at all."

"Now there's a phrase that was tired before it was even thought up."

"I agree," Betty said. "I could have done better, except look how little I am paid. More coffee?"

"Yes."

She poured him a fresh cup. Betty was always the perfect housewife, the eternal and inconsummate mother, selfless unless it came to buying too much jewelry on the Home Shopping Network. Fortunately for the family budget, she'd wear the stuff for thirty days then send it back for a full refund, saying, "I just don't think this is me."

Frank had always found that line to be hilarious, which was exactly as she meant it. Betty was all right. He had married well. On top of being so beautiful and mentally charming, she even had money. What more could a man ask of such an appealing trophy wife? Absolutely nothing.

Later that day, the governor's limousine arrived. The entire family got in and closed the doors.

"Well, here we go," Betty said. She smiled as the car rolled away from the governor's mansion as it was called. The mansion was an all right house, as homes went these days. Betty thought it was a bit pretentious and overly noble for public servants of a democracy.

After all, governors were not kings. They weren't even gods. They were merely punching bags, people elected by disgruntled and very unhappy voters as their revolving punching bags. They were expected to be long-winded, addicted to lying, and able to fight their way out of most wars of words, which was exactly what politics was all about. Her husband was good at it. In fact, Betty knew for a fact that Frank Pelly was a natural. He was born into leadership. Why, he didn't know, nor did she, but that he had been born to be a governor, she was certain.

Inside the capitol dome, Frank Pelly peered up at the large lone star at the top of the massive structure. That star was the symbol of the fantasy that Texas was an independent state and was once its own country. But it couldn't hold Mexico off forever. It simply didn't have the people, so it needed the United States as its militaristic backer. So, it joined. Still, every Texan liked to think of his state as its own country. Sure, it was a fantasy in their minds, but the world was too full of similar outrageous fictions which they always toted about as facts. No one needed to be much concerned about such a colloquial mindset in faraway Texas. It was mere quaintness in a far corner of the world, and it was well tolerated, even laughed at. And why not? It never hurt anyone. Like all the other states in the union, Texas was reduced by politics to a fledgling wussy state that would never fight for its independence again.

Texas was the perfect slave like all of the other states. It licked up under the federal government like a domestically trained swan looking beneath uncertain waters in a stream of nature's wealth for another minnow to coax into its long throbbing neck and down into its dark and endless gullet. The federal agreement had become the mother hen who layed golden eggs. Never say No to mama, or you might well be in deep shit. Besides, Frank Pelly was no dummy. To begin with, he had his heart set on living in the white house and acting like the world's egotistical dictator the way that most of the American presidents always had been in their zeal to make the entire world hate the United States for its arrogance and its well-armed, fascist bootsteps in the middle eastern desert where it seemed always ready to get its butt slapped in public by the natives and asked to leave.

The Pelly family made their way to the house of representatives where both houses were jointly sitting and hoping to get this over with before going home early for the day. Once this was over they could leave for a four-day vacation. The governor and his family were introduced by the speaker of the house, and everyone rose to applaud.

Frank Pelly was well liked. In addition, he had not been caught doing anything wrong which could be used by the reporters to stick him until he bled and attracted even bigger sharks who waited in dark corners to bleed him out in the national news. But they could always wait in the back rooms like hungry, sharp toothed predators and wait for his ensuing blood bath once he was gored by some insipid scandal. It just hadn't happened yet, but that didn't mean it couldn't and wouldn't. In Texas, these things just seemed to happen inevitably.

"Mr. Speaker, Mr. Majority Leader, and all of you royal potentates of the Great State of Texas," Governor Pelly began. The room exploded in laughter and applause. They were indeed rambunctious potentates, but they had rarely been called so to their faces. To have it done honestly and with a sly and very foxy smile on the governor's face seemed downright hilarious and fitting to them. The truth

always seemed stranger than the lie that all of them were humble servants of the people, when in fact many of them considered themselves to be top political rock stars worthy of the people's emulation and worship.

"We have come through some difficult fiscal times, and I am happy to say that all of you there in the immediate audience, along with your esteemed constituents, have devised wonderful ways to sail our ship of state over the rocky shoals. We did not sink. We sailed through the rocks and survived. I want to thank you for being wise enough to show us the way to financial independence by meticulously finding places to cut our state's budgets in many of its departments. You have done the heavy weight lifting necessary to our financial sanity. So, I will ask you to stand and applaud yourselves, because you deserve all of the credit, my friends. Now, please stand and applaud yourselves, because you deserve a hand after all you have been able to accomplish."

They stood and applauded themselves, then sat back down to listen. What they soon heard, however, were not the governor's finely crafted and spoken words, but the explosions of Greg Hauser's massively powerful plastic bombs that were causing the roof of the dome out in the huge marble rotunda to crumble and collapse along with the walls and the ceiling above them which was suddenly falling apart and crashing down upon them to reveal the big sun-filled Texas sky filled with tumbling stones.

Large chunks of pink Texas rock tore away from the capitol dome's immense structure as it collapsed into pieces and hurled its massive weight down upon them. At the same time, more and more bombs exploded overhead, and the dome's collapsing stones poured out over the roof above and into the crowded house. The roof's viability was soon exhausted. The dome's collapsing walls tumbled along with its ruined and bomb torn roof into the huge auditorium, crushing its audience of Texas' cleverest and most recognized dignitaries. The blazing sunlight's sudden brightness broke again and again through the falling roof along with the heavy carcass of the ruined dome as its huge falling stones rained down upon them. The lawmakers covered their faces as the roof and walls of the dome collapsed in upon them. In moments, the mayhem was over. There was no one left to cry or even to sob. They were gone forever. Their bodies were crushed almost beyond recognition beneath tons of lone star stone and metal. At the top of the heap of wreckage stood the lone star itself. Only, now the star was at ground level. Still, it was turned upward at the sun as though someone had placed it there, a symbol of the sturdiness of the State of Texas in the midst of every calamity including this one.

Whatever had happened, the state's next governor soon announced solemnly to the entire world, "My fellow citizens, let me say this about Texans and their remarkable future. We, as Texans, have a way of surviving whatever is tossed our way. The collapse of the dome upon our state officials is no different. So, we shall rise from the ashes and rebuild in even grander ways. Long live the State of Texas and its people."



Hauser had blown up the Texas capitol while watching the governor's speech on his motel TV. To accomplish this feat, he simply dialed the number of his disposable phone in the capitol dome using yet another disposable phone which he carried with him. A few hours later, on the road, Greg Hauser burned his disposable phone in a metal can filled with gasoline soaked wood. He watched as it melted.

"They will pay for what they did to me," he said out loud. "I will make them pay over and over again for her death."

He waited until the phone was completely burnt and cold. Then he smashed it with several stones, until it was mostly powder and ashes.

He drove his stolen car back to Fort Bragg where he sold it to a scrap metal shop and watched them crush it into a little cube. It was hauled onto a truck and taken to a smelter that day. The evidence was gone forever. He still had his bicycle which he pedaled all of the way to a town outside of the city where he had left the other car to have it worked on. He paid the bill and drove the car away.

Instead of driving directly toward Saint Louis, he took a circuitous route through the southern states. In Alabama, he had a meal of the best pulled pork and he had ever eaten. It was served with steak fries, salad, and a local beer just as Greg ordered. Then off to Tennessee and Kentucky. Finally, he drove northwest to the City of Saint Louis.

## 87

By now all of his ID's were in his real name, Greg Hauser, so, when the FBI came and took him to a cell to question him, his identification checked out perfectly. After seventy-two hours and a lawyer, they cut him loose.

"Why do they do that to innocent people?" he asked his attorney.

"I dunno. It's the government. They do crazy shit like that all the time," his lawyer, Aiden Smithton, said to him. "It happens a lot, let me tell you. You are not alone, son. You'll get used to it soon enough."

"You think they will do it again?"

"Do snakes have tails?" Aiden asked sarcastically. "Of course, they will."

"Why?"

"Because it's what they do."

"That's it? That's the reason?"

"Yea. Pretty much that's it."

"Makes no sense," Greg said.

"I guess that's why it's called *the government*, isn't it?"

"Gotcha," Greg said.

## 88

That night Greg went out for a T-bone steak. The FBI followed him. As he returned home, an agent stopped him as he got out of his car.

“Why did you eat at the steak house tonight?” he asked. “Do you know someone there or something?”

“No,” Greg replied. “I ate there, because I knew you two were following me, so I did it as a favor to you.”

“So, what was the favor?”

“You guys got yourselves two of the city’s best T-bone steaks with all of the fixings for free using your FBI credit card,” Greg told him. “See, my little friends, it’s this way. I think about you guys. Whether you know it or not, I want to keep you happy.”

The agents laughed. This character was something else. “Well, I never!” the agent said to himself and let out a guffaw as Greg closed his door. This guy was all right, after all. Even the smelliest garbage truck had a silver lining somewhere. You just had to look at it long enough to find it.

Greg was Scot free. They had nothing on him. He had killed several times and gotten by with it. All they knew was that he hadn’t been around for awhile. For how long he had been gone, they weren’t really sure. Where he had been they were not sure, either. He had covered his tracks by not leaving any. Greg planned to keep it that way.

He had even disconnected and then reconnected his speedometer to mask how many miles he had traveled. When they checked it, they figured he had never left but had holed up in town somewhere.

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Ranger James Stone had been locked up in his mountain cabin for months. So far, none of the FBI characters had come snooping around. As far as he knew, his whereabouts were still hidden to everyone but himself. Stone was used to living alone and keeping himself unseen.

He was an independent sort as well. His Ranger training included skills in tolerating isolated hermit-like environments including prison camps, one man cells, camping in hidden tents, and hunkering down in small woodsy cabins.

When Ranger Stone was behind enemy lines, his best bet was to lie low, light no fires, and think straight. By that, the Fort Bragg Ranger School taught him that he should always stay alert, keep his mind and body clean and pure, and to develop plans to hurt the enemy from wherever he was at the time. That was precisely Stone’s intention. He would emerge, hit them hard, then retreat back into the darkness. It was an age old skill, one practiced by nations overrun by occupying enemy forces. It was used successfully by Russia, Rome, Egypt, and Iraq over the centuries. Russia had a double crack at it when they lay back and then waited for the burning of Moscow to drive Napoleon out. They pulled the same stunt on Hitler.

Stone had changed his mind about ever attacking Washington again. Now, he planned to attack the head of the dragon inside its very lair. He wanted to humiliate and destroy America’s fake manliness. To do that, he had devised detailed plans to take out the most powerful and best known icons of Washington, DC. including the white house itself, the lair of Barack Obama, the instigator and

designer of America's killer health plans. The places he chose presented significant risk. For one thing, the buildings in and around federal square were under constant guard and were monitored twenty-four-seven. Anyone going in and out of the area was taped for later identification should something happen. High tech facial recognition systems were in place, so he'd have to find a way to get past them. He already knew how to do that. After several days of planning, he manufactured more than nineteen hundred pounds of plastic explosive for placement in just the right places to break apart entire structures.

He assembled the batteries, wiring, disposable cell phones, and other paraphernalia and tools for fast wiring of his unsuspecting and very famous targets. He also assembled suits, costumes, hair samples, and flexible facial molding materials.

Then he removed everything from the cabin that indicated anyone ever lived there, stored it underground three miles into the woods where he figured no one could ever find it, and cleaned all fingerprints from the doors, windows, and other surfaces. He swept the grounds to clean it of small pieces of evidence just as the police might do later on. In doing this, James removed all traces of his habitation that the law might be able to use against him.

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Washington was its usual obnoxious self. All of the accoutrements of its fanatic fascism were in full display all around him. Elements of its nationalist worship abounded including icons selected and built to hypnotize and ingratiate the fascist principle. These included the Washington monument, Jefferson memorial, Martin Luther King memorial, the massively huge capitol building, the white house, library of congress, national archive, the pentagon, numerous reflecting pools, park-like streets lined with flowers, thousands of little American flags, and a hundred additional monuments and museums of art selected precisely for instilling unbridled patriotism in the mentally unwary. Then, on top of the little flags at ground level, there were lots of huge American flags. Thousands of flags flew high above the buildings. They were everywhere. All of these icons of patriotism disgusted him.

Because of what they had done to abandon his son, Brandon, to an early death he was sickened by the faulty and corrupt displays of respect for a nation that deserved none of it. In Stone's mind America was and would always be the killer of his only son. Therefore, the nation was nothing but a senseless, heartless, and quite rabid dog biting the ankles of each citizen that passed innocently close to it.

Stone stayed away from the buildings he hoped to gut from corner to corner, because as of yet he was not ready to take them down. He didn't want to play his hand. His face was well known all over Washington, D.C., from his military days. He would need camouflage to keep them from identifying him in video clips they were constantly taking and archiving of visitors to the national shrines. He needed a front, several of them, and in Washington there were plenty of available victims.

He was camping at night outside of Washington in total stealth, deep inside the Shenandoah National Forest down in Virginia. He survived there as a hidden,

unregistered camper, living as a hermit in the woods unobserved by the park rangers.

His human imprint was tiny. It was just him and his sleeping bag with a one and a half foot high tent overhead which was covered by branches and leaves far away from the customary paths. To Stone, it was a comfortable setup. His food was kept in packets of compressed nutrients high in flavor and nourishment. For the most part he ate nothing in the woods. Instead, he ate in his car. The bagged foods were ready to eat.

He was wary. He did not want to present his automotive and facial signatures in food stores where cameras were running inside and out twenty-four-seven and were always available for the various gestapos to study later. So he stayed away from those places. It was the same with filling stations. Instead, he purchased food and gas from small family run rural stores where there were no cameras to trace him. If there were cameras around, he stayed away.

Today, he dressed casually and covered his face with a latex mask he had manufactured months before from a cadaver in one of the morgues. He had several faces of his victims that he had made impressions of. Because he prided himself, he only took impressions he found facially presentable. Perhaps in doing this, James was demonstrating a wee bit of his own personal vanity. On the other hand, he didn't want to select facial masks of persons who would attract attention on account of their ugliness. Ugliness tended to be associated with sinister personalities, and the various authorities regularly zeroed in on such persons. The police tended to think that criminals could be profiled by their looks. For this reason, he chose nice looking faces which tended to "deprofile" him in the minds of the observers who he understood would always be out there. It was obvious to James Stone, if his new face seemed innocently pleasant, his enemies would be more likely to overlook him.

His face and hairdo neatly glued to his facial skin, he drove to the train station and boarded a tram for the city. The interior of the railroad passenger car was brightly lit. The hand grabs were clean as were the displays of greedy corporatist ads that ringed everyone with their propaganda concerning expensive new cars, bank services, cell phones, candy, unfunded charities, civil rights groups, and other extraneous products and services that could easily exploit the riders by luring them into various money traps already set for them by the rich.

The train car was a perfected symbol of predatory corporatism and the search for exploitation of innocent people whom their ads constantly violated and hooked as weak willed customers unable to control themselves. If the people understood the markups on these products and how the banks would use every ploy to charge them for this or that tiniest speck of services in order to pick their pockets, they would be appalled, but these bits of knowledge were carefully hidden from the placards that glared down upon them from their predatory perches. Besides, the news programs were on the take from these same corporatist advertisers, so they did nothing to spill the beans and warn the people lest they lose these same lucrative accounts.

So that Stone would not leave his own fingerprints, James wore latex impressions of his victims that tightly covered his own hands. So, he left their fingerprints instead of his own. He wondered if this might be an exploitation of his

victims, but the thought barely crossed his mind, because he was only doing it to keep the authorities from finding and arresting him. Besides, everything was fair in a war against injustice. He was simply revenging the murder of his only son, Brandon, and, in any event, corpses had no rights in the first place, because they were dead. In America, the deceased possessed no rights under law, because they were dead. Stone was not an ignorant man. Stone had theorized that their deaths had even more meaning by allowing him to use impressions of their faces and hands to fool the authorities, because his cause was so just. In any and every war that mankind had ever fought, the principle of persevering to victory at all costs was nearly always the prime objective on both sides. Stone was a trained military man. He understood goals and policies. He knew how nations worked. He believed that people had the same rights as their so-called "rulers." In fact, the entire idea of rulers was anathema to a person like Stone who was raised up with an open mind. To Stone, a ruler was a medieval concept in a long gone ancient world in which free men were not even allowed to exist, because they were viewed as threats to the corrupt and evil monarchies that ruled by force and possessed the intention to harm others.

He sniffed his hands. He smelled a slight latex scent. This was probably because his face had been freshly covered by a new latex mask of a dead man's face. This latex was the smell of security and safety.

He began to focus as a Washington listening post. He drank endless cups of coffee in the restaurants and bars where the government workers would stop for a rest. At all times of the day and night, these places were abuzz with talkative rumor queens who had access to government offices, buildings, warehouses, and parking lots and couldn't keep their mouths shut. He listened for several things including the reassignment of personnel, especially intelligence on who was leaving town for a long vacation, who had been transferred to foreign offices, and other personnel matters where someone who went suddenly missing might not be noticed for weeks or months if ever. After several days, he heard a man from NSA say that he was going on vacation, and, since he was a bachelor, he was simply flying to Vegas for what he had said was the cure. His name was Collins Hawk. He was from an Army family which he said he was totally out of touch with. They hadn't seen eye-to-eye for several years. James heard him tell his friends that his estrangement from his family had become permanent. Here was a man that no one would know was missing for weeks and maybe months if not forever. People on vacation would get lost from the shuffle in a place like the District of Columbia very easily. They were always being transferred from one office to another, especially when they worked for the National Security Agency or NSA which had more than fifteen thousand employees and had grown exponentially over the war on terror which the government was using to specifically destroy America's constitutional rights.

James followed him out of the restaurant. Collins Hawk was tired and slow. Although he was in his thirties and fit, he'd evidently had quite a workout that day and was unobservant of Ranger Stone stalking him. James kept close, as he would need to act rapidly and surely when Collins reached his car and opened its door. A few blocks away, they entered a narrow street where brownstones lined the sidewalks. Collins reached his car which was a black Lexis in immaculate

condition. He searched for his keys, found them, then aimed the car key and opened the door. When he bent down to enter the Lexis, Stone reached down and pulled up on the back of Hawk's suit, slamming his head powerfully upward against the top of the door jam. He then pushed Hawk's stunned body into the car all the way across the seat and over the hump, then jumped in. Collins was still conscious, but Stone bent down, grabbed his head with both hands and administered his standard broken neck maneuver which resulted in the usual snapping noise. In seconds, Collins Hawk disappeared from the government's gaze.

Stone took Hawk's keys and started the engine. He pulled out slowly, and made his way to the place outside of town where he left his car. There, he stopped and opened the trunk. Next, he transferred Collins' still tidy remains to his other car's trunk, started it, and drove off.

After he reached the isolated part of the Shenandoah National Park, he pulled off the road and down a hill that was hidden from the highway. There, deep in the woods, where he had pitched his camp, he carried Collins to a glen where he had already dug a grave. He carefully removed Collins' clothes, wallet, and ID badge, placing them neatly in his bag for reuse in DC. Then, using several tools, he removed Collins' hands and head and placed them in three mold boxes in which he poured a pink latex compound which would surrounded Collin's hands and head and waited for it to harden. It did not take long. Next he opened the box, cut into the material and peeled the forms away from the face and hands. Then, he painted liquid latex into the mold piece and placed images of his own hands and head against them which he kept in another box. When he closed the mold, the latex bonded itself in a thin layer between James's body image and the reverse image of Collins Hawks' corresponding parts. Any excess latex poured out of several tiny side holes. In a while the molds dried, and he opened them. They were perfect duplicates of Collins Hawk, and the insides fit his own face and hands. He carefully cut perfect holes to accomodate his own eyes, nose, mouth, and ears. Once the latex was trimmed and ready, James sprayed special glue inside the masks, then peeled the finished molds down over his hands and head. Each one was a perfect fit. He patted them one by one so the glue adhered to all three latex forms and then onto his own corresponding body parts. He placed a wig with the right look on top of his head. Now, he looked and finger printed as though he were an exact copy of Collins Hawk. He returned to Collins body and used a blow torch to burn off several tattoos and moles which were identifiable aspects of his person. Then, looking to all the world like Collins Hawk, he filled the man's grave and scattered leaves atop it. Next, he carefully rolled a large, heavy tree trunk over the grave which had been resting a few feet away. He placed large stones along the trunk so it would never roll away again, then left with his various goodies.

He first went to a rest stop meant for a single car and started a fire in the fire pit that the park officials had placed there for families to use for cooking and bonfires. It was evening now, so no one cared about the bonfire which he built with precut wood placed there for tourists to use. He built a fairly large fire on which he placed Collins' head and hands. The fire flickered in orange waves around Hawk's body parts and upon James Stone who stood far enough out to keep his latex face mask from melting in the bonfire's awesome heat. Now and then, the ranger stepped

forward to place more logs upon the fire as Collins Hawk's remains turned to bone and then to ash. Collins' head and hands crumbled minute by minute and hour by hour. Nonetheless, it took nearly five hours to complete the total destruction of evidence. After the fire cooled, James stirred it with a long stick. Only a few slivers of bone and teeth remained. He transferred all of those parts to a bag. When he was sure the fire was totally out and could not start a forest fire, he walked to his car and slowly made his way to the train station where he transferred to his original stolen car. He left Collins car there for the time being and drove the other one to the hidden area in the woods. He crawled into his bed and fell fast asleep.

The next morning, he cleaned up at a camp shower. He then changed into Collins Hawk's clothing. The fit was perfect. He drove back to the train station and transferred the huge cache of plastic explosives, wires, disposable phones, and tools from his stolen car to Collins Hawk's Lexis. He placed enough material and tools into the briefcase that Hawk had carried with him. All of these went with James who got into Hawk's car and took off for DC.

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Using Hawk's NSA badge and ID, he gained access to the NSA headquarters where he set about placing bombs at vital places in the sprawling building's structure. By day's end, the bombs were set and he was off to the FBI building where he did the same thing.

Next, he approached the Washington monument where he flashed his ID and badge and was instantly allowed to enter the structure. He again placed bombs in the most vital places at ground level which would bring the entire building crashing down, then left. He then did a complete tour of the rest of the monuments as well as the national archives where his badge gave him access to all parts of the building. It was easy as pie. All he did was flash the badge, have his face photographed into the facial recognition software and place Hawk's thumb onto the fingerprinting mechanism when asked. He was recognized as an NSA agent and was allowed inside wherever he wanted to go. His ruse worked wonders. For several days he made his way into the basement and attic of the white house and the huge capitol building which he also wired for destruction.

Stone had completed his purpose in less than twelve weeks. Since he knew where to place explosives, it did not take long. His small but very powerful bombs were cell phone activated to produce a fully compromised building ready to be destroyed. Even the capitol dome was wired to come down, and it had only taken him twenty-three hours time to set a large number of small explosives. The rest of the building took longer, about four days in total, because the place was so huge. The pentagon and CIA buildings were the easiest. He placed explosives in the main communications areas as well as in records and digital archives where most of their intelligence was stored. Taking them out would blind the United States of America to its own forces and to what it knew about every place in the world.

Two days later, anti-Obama rallies brought over one million protesters to town including the tea party. Some of the unwanted protesters included anti-Obamacare groups. Various other radical organizations with similar anti-

government agendas were also coming aboard in the capitol. The reflecting pools were now mirrors of the images of the more than one million subversives who lined their shores. In addition, federal square was filled with sign waving protesters who surrounded the Hoover FBI building, treasury, white house, and others which Stone had already wired so they were ready to blow at a moment's notice. Anti-war protesters surrounded the entrance to the pentagon. Every news media hound was also in town giving live coverage to speeches and marches of circling agitators and their crews. It was a highlight of the news year that had been built up by the media conspirators as a direct threat to the United States government. People were tuned in all across the USA and the world to watch. Many of them had settled back with beer and chips to watch the fun and games. The goons had already clubbed some of the kids wearing Guy Fawkes masks and who went too far when they tossed rocks through windows and glass doors and began breaking through into buildings, running down halls with their red and yellow paint spray cans. They had painted "Fuck America" and "Impeach Obama" all over Washington. They were soon run down by foot and on horseback, clubbed, and arrested. It was great media fare, but the best was yet to come when Stone began blowing the city apart.

The first building to go was the pentagon. The explosions killed hundreds of employees, many of them top brass from all three branches. Many strategic parts of the building crumbled trapping the generals and staffers. This drew many of the emergency crews away from D.C. itself. When Langley blew, half the CIA building that housed the communications and intelligence archive hit the ground. The rest was on fire and soon followed suit. After an hour or two, a lot of the fuzz had left DC for those areas, and that was when Ranger Stone's fun really began.

James sat in a restaurant overlooking DC and his handiwork. Stone was drinking coffee and eating a ham sandwich and fries in the corner. As he did so, he dialed one phone after the other in perfect order, all of which were programmed into his unidentifiable and disposable cell phone. All he had to do was to select the building and the cell phone began triggering explosives deep inside its bowels where the infrastructure that held it together crumbled in an orchestrated symphony of plastic explosive doom.

First, he took out the NSA and FBI buildings. The destruction of the security offices in these buildings blinded the authorities not to mention the instant deaths of their top men. Secondary blasts inside other buildings took out additional gestapo responders, killing hundreds of agents sent there to survey and investigate the bombing scenes. Areas just outside the crime scenes where they were gathering also blew, killing hundreds of police, NSA, and FBI agents.

The white house went down next. The president and his family were in the oval office being instructed to fly out immediately when the grand old structure shuddered and bombs imploded the entire edifice along its interior offices, causing it to creak and crumble to the ground. The first family were soon reported as missing in action and presumed dead. NBC had been broadcasting live outside the white house live as it crumbled. The nation witnessed the white house reporter as he was hurled into the air by the blast of exploding debris that blew outward from the expanding walls of the exploding white house itself. All of it was recorded permanently in the minds and DVR's of the American people as they watched in



horror and, for many of them who totally hated what the government had become, in a deeply inspiring sense of pleasure.

When the white house smoke cleared, only its iconic round balcony remained, hovering in mockery of what the building once had been.

The word went out to evacuate all government structures just as the national archives along with the constitution, bill of rights, and declaration of independence were lost in an implosion that short circuited all of the mechanisms for saving them.

After the treasury went, a huge finale brought down the capitol dome which collapsed into the rotunda between both houses of congress. These structures followed suit. Both chambers collapsed inward toward the missing dome and slid over into a single level of wreckage that tumbled outward in a mass of cracked stones that galloped across the capitol steps and out into the lawns and parking lots. Hundreds of protesters were killed in the milieu. As people flocked out of Washington in terror, the train stations blew as did the bus station and Dulles airport burying many of them alive. The finale was the collapse of the other great monuments, all of them filmed in living color by the media. In addition, a delicious medley of pictures and videos taken with smart phone cameras by one million protesters hit Youtube and Vimeo with a passion.

Soon the nation was in total horror from seeing the national capitol with all of its sacred icons including the Smithsonian museum and the National museum of art as they crumbled into masses of dust and debris. Their collections of thousands of priceless artifacts including statues and paintings were now lost forever, their treasures consigned to Google art as the only permanent resting places where they would ever be seen again.

Ranger James Stone was still camouflaged as Collins Hawk. In this disguise, he walked through the capitol observing the panic in the streets as people ran past him in all directions.

Brandon would be proud of him. His son's revenge was now nearly complete. No one had a clue as to who was behind this, and, hopefully, no one would ever find out.

Stone knew instinctively what would happen next. The government, what was left of it, would retreat behind the massive walls of a military base and declare martial law in an attempt to keep their positions of authority and power, along with all of the lucrative financial benefits that went with them. He saw on his cell phone how the markets had crashed all across the world. They had been rapidly closed to prevent a financial panic the likes of which had never been seen even on 9/11. This day had now dwarfed all other national hits by terrorists in America's history.

The man who was responsible was still walking free, surveying the crumbled ruin of the Washington monument, gawking at his work, as were hundreds of other Obama terrorists.

Unfortunately for the ruined and disgraced government of the United States, no one was the wiser.

