INESCAPABLE DESIRES

Written by Christopher Rivers

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Other books by Christopher Rivers

Inescapable Desires (Alpha Series book 1 of 3)

For the Love of Peace (Alpha Series book 2 of 3)

Elapsing into Love (Alpha Series book 3 of 3)

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Christopher Rivers

Inescapable Desires

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Author’s Note

I knew I was a writer ever since my sister Cathy gave me two books to read on my sixth birthday. One novel was by Robert A Heinlein, “The Star Beast,” and the other was by Piers Anthony, “A Spell for Chameleon.” At that point in time, I’ve never read a book for pleasure in my life, but Cathy told me if there was one thing I ever do, she wanted me to read these two books. I read them both, and fell in love for the first time in my life with reading. Being a young teen with no experience, I had high aspirations of getting an education to fulfill my dreams of becoming a writer. Even though. I felt I would never achieve my dream until late in my life. I ignored those feelings as I pressed on, and went to college at Universities like, the University of Maine in Orono, Maine, and then Burlington Community College in Burlington, Vermont. However, the stories, the visions, and the formation of words, never made it to my fingertips. I wasn’t able to put words down on paper except with poetry. The stories were inside of me. I just couldn’t write them because I had a secret that I never shared with anyone until late in my life.

Over the years, I knew something was wrong with me, but I didn’t know what that was. Doctors tell me I am a high-functioning Bipolar with ADD, and PTSD. There were also many suicide attempts that came hand in hand with being a Bi-Polar, and it wouldn’t be for another twenty years before I worked these problems out. To put it bluntly, I failed at everything I did with my life from the moment of self-awareness right up to the year 2000 when I was thirty-five years old. I even blew away my chances of having a military career with the United States Navy. I may have held an Honorable Discharge, but I was a drunk, and started using drugs as soon as I was discharged. In the year 2000, I stopped drinking, and using. I went looking for God, and I found Him right where we all do; deep within us.

In 2002, I tried writing again. I gave it everything I had, but once again, I did not produce anything readable. It was during that time that Kelly let his presence be known to me as he did when I was a teen, but all he had to say was, “Hi, we’ll talk soon.” I don’t really know who Kelly is, and he doesn’t even feel to be a part of me. He just is, and he’s been inside of me for as long as I can remember. Could Kelly be the locked-up creativity that was inside of me? I may never know.

It was eleven years later, when I moved to Waterville, Maine, from Vermont.

My best friend of many years asked me to stick around, and live there. I ended up staying, and it was “okay” living in Waterville. It was better than living in my car with my two dogs, or in a ten-by-ten hard shell camper.

Then, out of the blue one afternoon, after moving into my apartment. I was watching a movie when, with no warning whatsoever, my thoughts drifted off, and I looked into my mind. There, inside my thoughts was Kelly; he was waiting for me. Inside my mind, we talked directly for the first time in our lives. It was just as if I was talking to you. Kelly told me a story he was excited about. As we discussed the storyline, I shared my thoughts with him. Before I knew it, we were collaborating creating this story you are about to read. I was getting excited with the story’s plot when, without realizing it, Kelly became a part of the storyline, and I was the author.

Much later, I snapped, too. Both of my dogs were sitting close to me. Their dark brown, sorrowful eyes were concerned for me. I was so damn happy at the time I started crying. Over the next few weeks, I played out, shaped, and groomed this story all in my mind before I sat down at my laptop, and really wrote for the first time in my life.

I dedicate my first novel to my mother. We didn’t have much growing up. Clothes, and food were an everyday struggle. Mom, every day I have known you. I fall in love with you over, and over ,and over again.

To my Uncle George, who passed away just three weeks before I talked with Kelly. George, you were the father I always wanted. I will see you soon.

To my sister, Pamela. Pam, you have always been there for me; protecting me from events, from people, and my personal self-destruction. I know I would never have lived this long without you in my life. My past has held so much evil for me. Pam, I give you the most credit because of the life I live now. Simply put, I am happy with who I am. I am finally writing, and the joy of it is almost overwhelming to me. I love you, dear sister.

This dedication is also dedicated to those people in the world who have harmed me, family members, and non-family who have kicked me out of their lives, and to the people who have prejudged me. In addition to those who have flipped me off, this dedication is also for the bottle throwers to the givers of insults. This acknowledgment is for the thieves who have stolen my trust, and my possessions. This novel is really more about all of you than it is about anyone else. I will always love all of you, and do you know what? You can never stop me from loving you. Not ever!

God

Father………………..I’m here now,………………..and I am alive!

# Chapter 1

# Alpha

Some say they existed as far back as when the druids worshiped their gods, and made human sacrifices at Stonehenge. It was said that as the Mongols created their destruction across the world; the organization lived in secret among all people, everywhere. There was never any evidence to prove they were, in fact, real, for there was no written record of them, nor would there ever be one. Many times, throughout the centuries, they almost vanished into oblivion until the motivation of a few brought them back to live among men. They had one purpose in those early years: to survive, and stay hidden from the world until the day came when they would evolve. Using a simple mindset, they reached out to consume knowledge about everything in the world, but one of their greatest discoveries was found hidden deep inside of themselves. They learned that one day, somewhere in the distant future, they would be the greatest tribe the world has ever known. They hoarded information and kept many secrets from the world until the day came when God told them it was time for them to grow. God made their purpose clear to them. Over the years, after many thousand decades, their search made its way to discovering the true potential of a human being.

As the shout of the discovery of the New World called America spread across England. More, and more people of the same faith came together, dedicating themselves to the organization, and their known cause. Time had finally changed the organization and the way it would survive. A gathering would ensure the continued existence of the greatest secret in the world's history.

The Adams family was a respected, and well-known family throughout the colony in America. John Quincy Adams was known to be a brilliant statesman, as well as a loving husband, and a fine woodsman. What no one in the colony knew. A secret gathering was taking place over the next few days at the Adams home, and what no one outside the home knew, Mrs. Adams had already given birth to a wonderful baby girl. But that fact was kept secret to allow female friends of the family to come to the gathering. The fathers of these women agreed to let their daughters go help Mrs. Adams, for they were told it would be a difficult first birth for her.

Around the world, people in the organization stopped in their tracks at the

thought of what they believed the Adam’s child was, and what that child would do for the organization, and the world. For the first time since the beginning of time. There would be a human being, unlike any other human, living in harmony with the rest of the world. By the birth of this child, the organization knew they had finally begun to evolve.

What Mr. or Mrs. Adams didn’t understand before the birth of their child was how important their daughter was going to be to the world, and the organization. They knew she was special when she was born, and Mrs. Adams had a very easy birth delivering the child. But the rest of the organization kept their eyes glued on the Adams, because they knew what they had been waiting for all these years was in the arms of that one family.

Looking at the infant, she was in every way a normal child. However, she was a happy baby, a quiet baby. It wasn’t until you picked her up did you feel the power inside of her. There were certain men, and women who were compelled to be with her. These members said they could feel her from miles away. Once you felt the child, you would always feel her, and know if she was in distress, or if she was happy, or sad.

Having given birth to her child the week before. Abigail thought it was about time for her daughter to feel the warmth of the sun on her face for the first time. Within minutes, she was singing a lullaby from her own childhood as she walked across the front yard, carrying her bundle of joy in her arms.

Nearby, John was working on the barn, getting everything ready for the coming event. He paused every once in a while to look over at his wife, and the child he loved so much. Abigail knew her husband was an extremely proud father. She knew John would not range far from her, or the child for some time to come. John had placed a rocking chair from the porch under an old oak tree so he could keep his ever-watchful eyes on both of them. It was a wonderful spring morning. The sun wasn’t too hot, or too bright for the baby. Abigail sat down in the rocker, then... she screamed.

“John!”

Startled, John first looked at his wife. She was pointing at a wolf who suddenly walked into the yard from the other side of the cabin. Quickly glancing over to where his rifle leaned against the barn, John saw another wolf beside his weapon. As he watched, more, and more wolves were quickly appearing from out of the woods. They were everywhere, all around them. The wolves placed themselves all around John, his wife, and their newborn child.

John knew there was no chance they could ever escape from the animals. Never in his life has he seen wolves like the ones in his dooryard. They were all huge silver-gray timber wolves. Even the smallest one was bigger than any wolf John had ever seen. The wolves were herding all three of them together. The only area open for John to go towards was by his wife’s side. There was no chance he could reach for his rifle.

Slowly, John walked over to his wife as the wolves closed in behind him. At this moment in time, John only had two ideas. Maybe he could get the child high enough into a notch in the oak tree, so the wolves couldn’t get to her. He was also praying Vaughn had heard Mrs. Adams’ scream from where he worked in a nearby cornfield. Vaughn was more family than a hired hand. John was sure the man would run into danger for his friends.

From the corner of his eye, John could see Vaughn across the yard. He was standing tall as he aimed his rifle at the wolf closest to them. The wolf in question was one of the biggest ones in the pack, but as John watched. None of the wolves made a move to attack them. John knew that if these animals wanted to, they could have easily killed them, and yet for some strange reason. He didn’t feel the wolves wanted to hurt them at all. From passed experience, he knew a wolf’s thinking, and its reaction time was almost the same thing. When they attacked, they did it like lightning hitting the earth. However, there was something else going on here, and John was sure it was more than what it appeared to be. Reaching his wife’s side, he took Tess from Mrs. Adams’ arms. He held the child up away from the advancing

wolves as he called out to Vaughn. “Vaughn, I want you to put that rifle down, and then step away from it.”

Vaughn was twenty-four years old. He had a little trouble doing what John just told him to do. Shaking his head, it escaped his imagination why John wanted him to set his weapon down. John couldn’t hear him, but he was sure Vaughn was cussing to himself.

“Okay, fine by me,” Vaughn retorted back in a thick southern drawl, “If that’s what y’all want, but if I do this. I want extra pay for getting eaten by a damn wolf.”

Slowly, Vaughn kneeled, and set the rifle down on the ground. Once the weapon was on the ground, the wolf pack seemed to settle down. Having dealt with that threat, the biggest wolf slowly walked over to John and his wife. The animal was twice the weight of John with a long bushy tail. He could see it had been in a few hard fights. There were scars on the wolf’s face, and both of its ears had several tears in them. As the wolf got closer to him, out of the blue, it started wagging its long tail. Suddenly, it rubbed its body against John’s legs, almost knocking him down, and then the creature circled around him like a dog.

Seeing how the wolf behaved with her husband, Mrs. Adams’ eyes went even wider than when she first saw the wolves. “John, it’s because of Tessa. There can’t be any other reason for this wild animal to be so tame with us.”

John had to agree with her, “Darling, we are in new times, and things of the past seem to be no longer a part of our lives. We knew things would change, but not how. I reckon by this display we know the organization is right on track. I believe most of the group will understand that, too.”

What they were going to do with anyone who didn’t agree at the meeting, John thought to himself, has been an issue that has been bothering the hell out of him. When all the members of the organization got together, they seemed to have their own way of thinking, and this, too, was another reason for the gathering.

Warning his wife, John told her. “OK, now. Don’t cry out. I want to try something.”

Turning Tessa’s little body in one of his hands, he faced her away from him. With her in his hand, John slowly kneeled to the ground. As soon as he did, one wolf approached him, but the wolf was only looking at Tess, and not at John. The alpha wolf slowly, and cautiously got closer to Tess. When he reached her, he placed its snout in between her legs, and took in a deep breath. He then smelled her ears, and even her breath coming from her mouth. Finishing his greeting, he gave her a lick across her face with his long tongue.

“Honey, this guy took Tessa’s scent. He wants to make sure he remembers her. I think Tess is going to have some playmates, and guardians with the rest of the pack watching over her.”

There was no doubt about what the wolf did, and John was sure of that. He thought the animal would be finished once he was done with Tess, but then it went over to Miss Adams and started smelling her face just as he did to Tessa’s. Knowing what was about to happen, John warned his wife. “Baby, don’t move a muscle.”

John figured was about to happen just as the wolf did it. Lowering its enormous head, the wolf put it up Abigail’s dress. John could hear him smelling her, and his wife was in total control of herself until she let out a loud shriek.

“John, the damn thing just licked me... twice!”

Mrs. Adams was about to say something further but, stopped with her finger still in the air.

Looking questioningly up at her husband, she added. “John, why am I not frightened right now? I know darn well I should be, but I’m not.”

John could only smile down at her.

“It’s because we all are a part of this pack, that’s why babe. These wolves have a reason for doing what they are doing. I don’t believe they want to hurt us at all. I’ll bet my life on it,” he told her.

“Well, next time, you wear the damn dress because I sure as hell am not. He’ll have to kill me before I let him do that again.”

“These guys aren’t any different from a dog, honey. However, I believe they are smarter. The alpha male is just doing what nature is telling him to do.”

Just then, another wolf approached them. It was almost as big as the first one, but this one was clearly a female. John could see by her belly that she’s delivered a few litters, as there was a double row of tits hanging down from her. She also had a long, bare patch of scar tissue on the side of her neck with no fur growing from it. It looked like a recent wound. The female approached the three, mimicking the behavior of the alpha male.

“Babe, that was the alpha male, and female checking us out. I reckon the rest of the pack won’t be so detailed with their welcome,”

John then realized Vaughn was still patiently waiting, watching the strange exchange between humans, and animals.

“Vaughn, come over here. The alpha male and female are done, but things are going to get exciting for a while as the rest of the pack gets to know us. Let’s sit on the grass, and welcome them home.”

The wolf pack stayed with the Adam’s all that day, and then the next day, and the day after that. They disappeared into the trees if anyone came to the house. It wasn’t long before the Adams realized. If they didn’t see a wolf around the yard, it was because someone was coming to the farm. Over the years, leaders died, and new pups were born into the pack. Sometimes, they were born in a place under the barn that the Adams made for the alpha female. The wolves made sure the Adams were just as they should be, free, happy, and safe. Over time, both the wolf pack, and the Adams family learned to live as one. Nature and mankind finally merged together as God has always wanted.

The Adams group and their organization only had one last thing to do. The gathering.

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Because of the women in the carriages, the trip out to the Adams farm was a longer one than Paul would have hoped for. Being a restless young man, he was getting tired of riding so slow. He and another man were following behind a group of women who were riding in the carriages. Two more men rode up front, leading the group to the Adams farm. Each of the men was dressed in rugged leather clothing the people of the settlement would wear while out in the countryside. Their flintlocks were in their holsters, while their rifles laid across their laps, with one hand resting on their rifle, and the other guiding tall brown quarter horses. These men had been asked to bring this group of women safely to the home of John Quincy

Adams so that the women could tend to his wife when she gave birth to her first

child.

“Damn,…” Paul cursed, he kept his voice low when he spoke. He didn’t want the women riding in the carriages to hear him. “It escapes my imagination. Why in tarnation would the Adams want to build so far outside of the confinements of the settlement, and way up on top of this hill, to boot?”

It had taken the group well over five hours to get to this point in their journey. They still had another half an hour’s ride before they reached the Adams farm.

Mr. Revere’s riding partner agreed with him. “Yes, it is, but it’s kind of necessary for secrecy. I am sure you understand that, Paul. You don’t mind me calling you by your Christen name, do you, Paul?”

Paul had turned out to be a wonderful riding companion, and his truthfulness, and fresh outlook on the organization was a welcome new beginning for Paul. Ben could see that about the man.

Paul immediately told him. “No, Sir. Not at all,”

Having the older gentleman address him in such a manner was indeed an honor, for the man’s reputation was well known, all the way up to Boston, and back. Paul could hardly imagine all the wonderful things Mr. Franklin shared with him on this one trip alone. Mr. Franklin was also at the center of social gatherings of the settlement, and the making of the new country. Paul wanted to be a part of it as well.

“Paul, you must call me Ben,” Ben told him. “After all, we are family now. Our families come first in everything the organization does, and the Adams built way up here for just that reason. Take the name of the organization as an example. It doesn’t have a name because why would you want to name something if you wanted to keep it a secret? We all must stay hidden within our tribe, and let the rest of the world do as it should. Word is already out across the globe. Groups are now forming up even as we speak. Our agenda on top of the list is to learn as fast as we can, to love as hard as we can, and to keep an open line of communication with God, our own hearts. If we continue doing that, the rest will follow-”

Ben suddenly stopped talking, and looked off through the trees behind them, and said more to himself. “Wow, now that was a real pretty one.”

By the perplexing expression written on Paul’s face, Ben could see the young

man was confused. “Ah, you didn’t see them, did you Paul? You didn’t see those wolves standing back there in the trees.”

“No, sir,” Paul confessed, glancing back the way they came. “I did not.”

“It does take a while for you to get used to them. They are worse than a ghost, disappearing when they want, but we all are a part of this one pack. The Adams family must survive. The wolves are here protecting the Adam’s child. Only time will tell what happens next, but we believe we are now onto something everyone has been waiting for these long years.”

“Paul, tell me. By what manner did you come to the group?”

Ben watched Paul hesitate, so he added. “Come on, tell me. The inside happenings of the group are fully open for its members to talk about inside of the group. We have no secrets together.”

Reluctantly, Paul told him. “Well, I found a dispatch attached to my front door when I came back to the house from working my fields. The note pinned to the dispatch told me to get it to Mr. John Adams as fast as I could push my horse.”

Paul went on telling Ben the rest of his story.

When Paul finished, Ben slowly asked. “Aw... Paul... didn’t you find the two women’s behavior a bit... odd?”

Paul hesitated again. Ben pushed him. “Come on Paul, we don’t have all night.” Ben was having fun pressing the young man. Ben always thought, “One must find happiness wherever he can,”

“To tell you the truth, Ben. I sure did, and I’ll tell you this too...I sure as hell hope they do it again.” Paul busted out laughing, with Ben joining him. I don’t know what happened,” Paul explained. “But the girls did something to me that first night, something that made me different. When I woke up, my body felt like it was brand new. At that moment, I was never happier in my life. My skin was glowing, and I didn’t even care that I was naked. It was as if I was drinking ale. And yet, I felt just like I should have. It was the world around me that seemed out of place. Soon after, I started noticing things about our world I had never seen before. I was going to leave the following day because I needed to work my fields, but the girls made me stay with them. That’s when they told me the day I entered the barn with Mrs. Adams, and her friend was two days in the past. I ended up staying at the farm for two more nights. Mr. Adams brought us food, and drink, so we didn’t even have to get up off the straw.”

“Paul, did you ever find out what was in that dispatch, or who sent it?”

“No, Sir. I never knew who sent it, but when I handed it to Mr. Adams. He

handed the dispatch back to me without opening it, and told me to open it. When I did, inside the dispatch, all I found was a blank piece of paper.”

“Sir, do you know anything about it?”

“Yes, I do Paul. Because I was the one who put that dispatch on your door. I was the one who sent you to the Adams. Paul, everyone has a different way of how they show up at a member’s door. That way was yours.”

Ben continued, “Paul, when I met you... I knew you were an alpha. I, too, am an alpha, as were the women you were with. Once you’re with the family, you are in for life. Not one member has ever left us except through death. We are not superhuman. You still can be killed, or be hurt. It’s how we think that makes us different from the rest of everyone else in the world. Paul, you are just like everybody else, but you may have the potential to have a new ability. We all expect that to happen soon enough. The fate of the world is resting on our shoulders, and we can’t fail in anything we do. That’s how important it is that we achieve our goals. What we are doing here at the gathering has been in the works for so long, even we don’t know how long it’s been going on. Over the years, the organization has been slowly evolving. We have been developing it all by our self.”

“Things will start moving forward now that the wolves are with us,” he told Paul. “I’m sure of it.”

Both men were lost in their own thoughts when Paul suddenly told Ben. “I

would like to sleep with a few of the wolves, and snuggle into their thick fur on a chilly night. I saw them in the daylight while I was at the farm, their beautiful creatures.”

Straightaway, Ben sat up in his saddle. Placing his right hand on his horse’s rear end, he looked over at Paul for so long that Paul was starting to feel a bit uncomfortable.

Finally, Ben spoke to him. “Paul, I’m sure of it. I made a damn fine choice with you. You’re just as crazy as the rest of us.”

At the gathering, all the members, one by one, walked into the Adam’s barn. As they entered, they made their way through a pile of straw evenly laid out on the inside of the barn doors. Everything in the barn had been removed earlier. There was now a clean, thick layer of straw covering the whole back of the barn, and in the lofts, and the stalls.

The meeting began with a prayer, and then Tess was brought out from the house. The wolves appeared through the doors, and windows as she was handed one by one to everyone there. They all touched, and loved her, as the wolves licked, and rubbed against them, taking the scent of some people they liked best.

The alpha male, and female wolf stood with John as he talked, and explained the situation to the group. He told them that, as a whole, everyone’s life needed to change in order to further advance a solution that would help them achieve their primary goal. There never has been a human like Tess before, and it was her coming into their lives that triggered the organization to embrace change. He told the group they were within a few years of a leader to be born, and lead them further, but they had to change the way they lived, and they needed to do it right now.

Because of the amount of members packed into the barn, no one talked out of turn at the meeting. The gathering was held in an orderly fashion. Anyone who had a question would raise their hand; all questions would be answered. It took hours. Some members were shocked when they told everyone in the group would live as the wolves do. They would not live by society’s standards any longer; they would all sleep together in one room, and they could have sexual relations with anyone in the pack, if that’s what they wanted. The prime purpose of the organization would remain the same: to protect every family member of each group so they could achieve the prime goal. They were to love the world, and all who were on it. Change had reshaped the organization, and the way they would all live. They have moved onto the next stage of growth, and baby Tess was living proof of that new life. The

wolves had found her, and would protect her until the day she died.

John asked all who would follow their new ways to step to one side of the barn, and for those who couldn’t accept it, step to the other. When it was done, there were twenty-seven members who did not want to conform to the new pack’s order. John pleaded with them as others helped to get these people to see their reasoning. After an hour of debating, it was plain to see that twelve members would not budge from their own stubborn ideals, and submit to the new order. John told them they needed to leave the farm, and never to come back. Even as they turned to leave, he was still trying to talk them out of their rash decision.

When the twelve members reached the barn doors, and the first man placed his hand on it to leave. A large group of men stood as one, and shot arrows into their bodies from the lofts above. All over the world, there were gatherings. At some gatherings, everyone who was present accepted the new way because that’s what was needed to achieve their goals. Never before, nor would there ever again be another event like this one at the Adams farm. After all, the group’s prime order was to preserve life, but those who went against the organization were, in fact, the most dangerous people who could cause the most harm to all of them. Without question, they had to be killed, or eventually, they would talk, exposing the organization to the world.

The men who weren’t killed outright by the arrows were stabbed with knives, however only the men were scalped. Initially, it was the women who had to suffer the most because the shooters were told only to wound the females. When they finished abusing the women in a way, no female should ever be treated. They killed them by cutting their throats. They left the arrows sticking out of their bodies as they loaded them all into a wagon. The bodies were disposed of miles from the farm. When they were found, it appeared as if Indians had attacked them, but the Indians were never caught.

Everyone in the barn vowed to never let this event happen ever again. They promised to value life, and love above all, and to rebuild the wakening structure of the organization at any cost to their own lives.

Placing the blood-soaked straw outside, they burned it. After cleaning their bodies, they all laid on the fresh straw in the barn. Some openly made love. Everyone stayed on the farm for a week, making friendships. Some even made groups of their own.

Drifting off to sleep, Paul was lying on the soft straw with a naked female in his arms as two wolves cuddled up close beside them.

The four slept.

That night was the first time in the life of baby Tessa’s childhood that she cried. It would be hours before her mother, and the alpha wolves could settle her down.

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A dark blue Cadillac, with whitewall tires, and mirrored windows, turned into the cul-de-sac, and passed through the reinforced gate of a massive fence surrounding the property. A young man was sitting in the back seat of the car while his uncle drove the

Cadillac. The lad himself had chosen this group to visit with first, but over the next several years, he knew he would also visit many other groups in the organization. It may have been the lad’s uncle who told him it was time for this to happen. However, only his uncle, and the young man knew what group the lad would first pick, and why. They both have known for almost nine years.

Encasing the country homes, the fence went around all the houses, keeping prying eyes out. The old mansions were to be protected at all costs. The only way into the interior was on the road they were on. There weren’t any cameras, or motion sensors in sight as they made their way to one of the vast mansions, but the lad knew they were in place, everywhere. All the homes he saw were three stories tall, made of stone retrieved from the surrounding countryside many years before. For over three hundred years, everything here, the grounds, and the homes, were kept in immaculate condition. For here in Scotland, this one group has thrived in this wonderful, timeless place, for it belonged to one of the oldest groups in the organization.

This group’s customs weren’t very different from the lad’s own. In any case, the lad’s training he has received throughout the years has prepared him for this very day. He was excited to be here, yet to look at him. He was calm, and very sure of himself. For as far back as four years old, the lad knew he was more different from everyone else. The fact he could remember that far back would have raised eyebrows from outsiders, but their society knew that secrecy was their greatest weapon. It was because of him that they were here on this summer evening to be loved by a society that the rest of the world didn’t even know existed.

His uncle parked the car out in front of one of the stonework homes. They both got out of the car, and walked up to a round oak hobbit-like door. Opening the heavy door without knocking, they walked inside. Although neither of the two had ever been here before, they were considered family, as it was within all the other groups. They were expected. Everyone was excited to meet the young man for the first time.

Walking inside, his uncle called out. “Frank... Sue, we’re home!” Removing their coats, they hung them on a tree stand made of teak, and stained to a deep cherry red.

From the back of the house, both Frank and Sue eagerly rushed to greet them. The lad closely watched Frank and Sue welcoming his uncle. Nothing got by his attention.

The woman was very attractive with light brown hair; she was a little taller than him. She wore soft flat shoes, and a light blue strapless, free-flowing summer dress that appeared to be held up by her firm breast alone. Amazingly, the dress was cut very low, exposing her cleavage. The lad couldn’t see how it was possible that it stayed on her at all.

Their society had some strict mannerisms, and touching was a very important part of those customs. Anyone could come up to you and kiss, or touch you in any manner on your body. If someone refused to welcome you because they were busy, or needed to be somewhere else. Another member of the family would step in, and caress you. Once a person gets used to these behaviors, only a fool would turn back affection that said; “I love you,” “I desire you,” and “You are very important to me.”

Members of the organization didn’t consider themselves swingers, nor did they sleep around with outsiders. As a matter of fact, their organization was filled with people who were unlike the rest of the world. The rest of the world didn’t have the customs that their society had. In contrast, the rest of the world focused on their individuality. The group’s society forgot themselves, and tended to each other’s moods, feelings, desires, and needs. Their spiritual faith, and the well-being of everyone in their pack superseded everything else. Family was very important to them, and new members were in more need of contact from family than anyone else. As wolves, they would play together, eat together, and, if needed... fight together.

Frank reached for his uncle, he grabbed his uncle’s left hand with his own right. Putting his left arm around his uncle’s shoulders, the two men gave each other a brief, closed-mouth kiss. Quickly stepping aside, Frank did the same to the honored family member, the young man.

Sue planted herself into his uncle’s firm embrace. The two kissed. The lad could hear sounds of pleasure escaping from between Sue’s lips. Releasing his uncle, she approached the lad.

Sue first looked into his hazel eyes, then she took a good long look up, and down his form. “Goodness,” she told him. “I heard you were big for your age, but I didn’t expect this,” she said with a sly smile.

The look she gave him told the lad everything, she wanted him, right then and there. The woman knew she could do just that, and Sue knew he would not refuse her. However, this was his first night here. Everyone had already been told he had something very important he needed to do. Sue kissed him, and it lasted a long while. Pressing her body firmly against his, he could feel through her dress that she wasn’t wearing anything under it.

Holding her out at arm’s length, he grinned, and asked her. “You are totally ready for me, aren’t you?”

She held up her forefinger just slightly apart from her thumb, and laughed. “Just a little,” she teased. “Come, let’s get you two washed up. Dinner is almost ready,” she told them.

Taking his hand, Sue pulled him deeper into the house as the men followed. This was the young man’s first time. He would be refused nothing. He was very important to all of them. Their standards considered the young adult a great man, while the world considered him a nobody. However, they knew he was the only one of his kind. Even when he was a baby, they knew with the right training, along with love, and a firm belief in God; he was just what the organization was waiting for all these long years. He was the Alpha of all Alphas everywhere. The young man wasn’t engineered, but his mother, and father, and those before them sought the right mates for themselves. The task set before him could take him the rest of his life to accomplish. It could also end it, and end the lives of everyone in the organization as well. The young man knew what he needed to do, and he didn’t want to hurt anyone in the process, but he was ready to end millions of lives in order to achieve the ultimate goals of the organization.

After dinner, the four talked outside in the evening air until bed time. Sue kept her arm around the lad for the whole time. She was having fun with him. They both knew the lad would want extra time looking their complex over. They showed him, and his uncle the way into the cellar earlier than usual.

Under the stairway, the four walked through a doorway with a vault-like door. Taking the stairs down, they entered the tunnel system under the house. At the bottom of the stairs, using a panel on the wall, Frank placed the house’s security system on alert.

The vault door closed by itself, locking them in.

Under the house was a maze of tunnels, and doors. The underground complex, as the young man was told, was one of the biggest in the entire organization, for it extended down four levels under all ten houses. There were classrooms, training rooms, fitness rooms, and bed chambers. The adult bedchamber was on the first level, but the children’s chambers were on the last level down, protecting them from the world, and all harm.

The children were not allowed in the bedchambers of the adults. They were protected from everything in the world, and that included the adult life of the pack. They had their own chamber of enormous beds in a room just like the adults. The children slept wherever they liked within the room, and they were to wear garments to cover their bodies. It wasn’t uncommon to find almost all of them sleeping on one bed, filling it, forcing others to take another. The teens were clothed while in the bedchambers. They helped a lot with the smaller kids. But two adults, who helped the kids with bathroom chores or a hug when needed also watched over the room. The teens were under watch by the adults during the night, because no kind of sexual contact was to take place within the children’s bed chamber. And because of the harshness of the penalty, and the self-awareness of the pack, this rule was never violated.

Living within the pack was truly the safest place in the world for anyone to be. There was no incest, no cheating on spouses, or spousal abuse. Nor was there drug abuse or deception, and unless someone was challenged, there was no fighting. The pack’s primary job was to work together, and love each other, and the world with total abandon. They were protectors of humanity. In any dwelling, you could drop a bar of gold on the floor, and whoever found it would not stop looking for you until they got it back to you. There was no actual crime within any of the groups.

The only blemish the lad knew of in the organization’s long history, happened many years ago. A young girl was attacked within her own pack. The family gave the girl the best medical care, along with repeated surgeries to repair the damage by the man. Her attacker was an older man who stayed away from the pack for long lengths of time. He turned into a heavy drinker, and then started using drugs. In the process of violating the girl, and her fighting back, the man lost his mind, and seriously injured her.

Later, after the crime, when she healed, an alpha male carried the girl into a room in the lowest part of the cellar of their home. Other members of her pack were already waiting inside. They could only see her blue eyes shining between the bandages on her

face. With the girl in the room, the whole pack turned their attention to the girl’s attacker as he laid crying on the floor against the far wall. The guy knew pleading for mercy would do him no good.

Over the next several minutes, they ripped the girl’s attacker into pieces with their bare hands, and teeth. Their fury was so great, blood pooled on the floor, and splattered over the walls. The room, and everyone in it were covered in red. The copper stench of the man’s blood seemed to heighten their wild senses. Some male members were clearly excited. Never has this happened before in any pack until that crime, and it hasn’t repeated itself since that day. To offend, and hurt one of their own in such a manner could only be repaid in blood. Nothing else would satisfy the hunger of the wolf within them.

If you could define their lives, you would first have to tell of the organization. Their faith in God, the love they expressed together, and their devotion to family members. However, outsiders would only see one thing about them: their strange sexual behavior, and the outlandish customs that they had. For mankind of today’s world, was not only judgmental, as it was self-centered, and hostel. The organization already knew mankind could never change their wild behavior until a force greater than man made them think, and act differently. They knew they would be that force that would change the world’s violent, hostile ways toward people, and their destruction of the planet.

At age seven, the lad found out about the attack on the girl. He cried for days as everyone around him tried to comfort him. To this day, hearing a child crying, or someone calling out in pain, and terror triggered him into action. If he found that another human being had caused the pain, and suffering, he would kill them. He only found out about the events with the girl through stories since there were no written records kept about the organization. He asked his uncle to get him more information about the incident. His uncle spent many months trying to get to the truth of the crime for his nephew.

Nothing would be denied to him. All he had to do was ask for whatever he wanted. The lad’s whole life was to learn, and train with everything that man used to kill with. He studied people more than the world studied any other subject. His mind could absorb information faster than anyone, anywhere. He needed this ability because he would need the information to help him make the most important decisions no man has ever had to make.

The four finally reached a side door in the tunnel. The two men kissed, and said good night to him, and then they went through the door. Pressing Sue up against the wall, the lad opened her legs with his knee. Responding to his touch, Sue’s breathing quickened as he pressed against her. Neither of the two bothered to look up as others walked by them, locked together against the wall. They all knew he was here.

Breaking his goodnight kiss, he pulled back from Sue when a young female voice whispered in his ear. “Please, come make love to me tonight,” the girl quickly told him.

The unknown woman had already prepared herself. Reaching around him, she touched her fingertips under his nose, then pivoting she walked away. The lad’s head snapped around at her as her scent filled his senses. He didn’t see her face clearly, but only the backside of her as she hurried away. She couldn’t have been no older than twenty years old. However, by placing her scent under his nose, she made sure he could find her anywhere in the world.

Sue’s placed a loving hand alongside his youthful face. “I know you have other plans for tonight, but you are going to come find me later, aren’t you?”

Laughing more to himself, he told her. “Sue, I have a funny feeling you will be seeing a hell of a lot of me from now on.”

When he let her go, Sue entered the room as the two males inside were waiting for her. The rest of the family would sleep in the adult bedchamber tonight, including him. They considered him highly important. For a few months, he would stay with them while being taught many things. He would go on to other groups, and do the same once he left here but without his uncle. He was old enough now, and he was on his own. There was no time limit for how long he would jump from one pack to another. Only he would know when he needed to return to the island, if he ever did. One thing the lad knew. He would return here to this group many, many times throughout the years of his life. Thinking that thought brought a smile to his face as he walked into the great bedchamber.

As expected, no one was in the room when he walked in. The room was in the shape of an enormous circle, holding up a high dome ceiling. There was one bed sitting higher in the room than all the other beds in the room. The lad knew that was the alpha’s bed. In the middle of the room, there was one large circular bed which would accommodate twelve people. He smiled to himself, for he knew it was one of the most active beds in the entire room. Anything could happen on those sheets. The alphas of the pack would observe it carefully. No one was made to do anything they didn’t want to do in the bedchamber. If anyone denied you, you would find eight others willing to share themselves with you. Giving pain anywhere in the group was frowned on, but the lad knew it sometimes happened during sex. For human beings, sometimes a little of pleasurable pain was just what they needed. Other than when they were on the round bed, they had words to express their desire for sexual contact. Everything about their life was openly expressed to reduce suffering, and to receive greater gratification from their love.

With the amount of sex taking place within the room, cleanliness was mandatory. Everywhere around the room there were cupboards, and shelves filled with hand towels, and disinfectant body wipes to keep those hands, and body parts clean.

He stuck his head into the bathroom. It was as he thought. Touchless fixtures were everywhere. Even the shower was voice controlled. The lad knew no one in the world had anything like what was in this bathroom. Soon, they would, but not right now.

The third room of the bedchamber had a huge hot tub, a steam closet, and massage tables with steam ovens for hot towels, and oils. There was also a bed built in the middle of the floor. It was sunk ten inches into the carpet, and was padded all around the sides. As a youth, he had always thought about that bed, and couldn’t wait to try it. What his uncle told him was for some women, they found it increased their pleasure. The bed was made of a heavy fabric, any liquid would not soak through it, destroying the mattress.

Walking back into the bedchamber, he picked a bed, so he could see the alpha’s bed while laying down. After a while, he heard people removing their clothing in the outer chamber. The first person who stepped through the archway was a pretty brunette female, about thirty years old. She was naked as she walked up to him, just as the others would be in a few moments. No one slept in pajamas here.

“Hi, I’m Tania,” she told him, walking up to embrace him, she give him a customary family kiss. “I am thrilled to meet you at last.”

Even though he towered over her, as they embraced, and kissed, Tania began rubbing her hands all over his body. Touching was so important to them, and this was the custom. To embrace, and feel each other’s warmth, and sex, as well as their lips, and hands. It was the wholeness of their bodies they wanted to feel when they embraced. They were people who were very open with each other. The lad didn’t think Tania would ever let go of him, anyway; he was loving the personal contact.

Too soon, Tania released him, and told him. “To see your body is just frigging crazy. I really can’t believe how big you are for your age.”

The lad laughed out loud as he watched the gears double back in Tania’s eyes.

Laughing to herself, she smiled, and looked up into his face. “What I meant to say is,” she said as she got closer to him, and took hold of his male member in her hand. Looking into his eyes, she continued, “You are beautiful, and it’s your body size,” she stressed, is what I was talking about, and not this.” She gave him a light squeeze. “However, I love this too. Please, would you give me twenty minutes tonight?”

For an answer, he reached down, and grabbed a hold of her. Tania lifted both of her heels off the floor to accommodate his hand as she leaned against him. Her breathing took off real fast, the girl’s body immediately started trembling under his fingers.

After a while, she breathlessly said, “I’m done now, thank you. Anyway, the others are waiting to come in. I’m like the welcome party,” she smiled up at him again.

As she cleaned his hand with a wipe, he told her, “I’ll give you more than twenty minutes Tania.”

“Thank you. Don’t you dare forget.”

He then asked her, “Tania, am I what you thought I was?”

“No, you certainly are not,” the girl instantly replied with a bright smile. “As a matter of fact, you are far beyond what I was told.” Still smiling, she gave him one last squeeze and walked off into the bathroom.

The other members waiting in the changing room started filing into the bedchambers, laughing because of Tania’s reaction. She wanted to be the first one to meet him, but as Tania found, the alpha was a bit more powerful than she had first thought.

Everyone kissed, and held him, as was the custom.

Two young women approached him at the same time. One looked about twenty, and the other was older. Both were beautiful, small-chested women with wonderful bodies, and demure presents.

During their greeting, the younger one told him, “Hi, I’m Sara, and this is Toni. May we love, and snuggle with you tonight?” She quickly added, “Me and Toni like loving rough, but now that I have seen you. Just watch me. You’ll know if it can withstand your loving.”

Toni, the older girl, was eyeing him up, and down when she piped in. “Don’t hold back on my account, baby.”

“I don’t think any man on earth could say no to your wonderful invitation. Sara, you were the girl in the tunnel. Did you think I wouldn’t know who you were?”

Sara only gave him a little smile, and replied, “Well, I did have high hopes you wouldn’t forget.”

Everyone was about doing their business in the bathroom, or getting a massage in the far room. The lad was thinking the night would really begin when he heard the first sounds of lovemaking coming from behind him. Turning around, a man, and a woman were locked in the battle of love with the lights still on.

Growling mostly to himself, the guy raptly forced himself into the female. The woman herself wasn’t holding back one bit as she held onto his neck with one hand, while the other raked down his back with the other, leaving five long red marks behind. The pressure of her nails on his back seemed to inflame the man’s lust for her.

The lad’s snuggles for the night took him into the bathroom for a shower. They washed, and rinsed each other off. Then he pressed Sara up against the wall. Playing with her, her screaming outburst told him he satisfied her, but when he let go of her. She quickly pulled him down on the floor of the shower, pinning him on his back. Throwing her leg across him, she guided him into herself. Slowly, she started loving him, but then Toni reached over and began caressed her with her fingers. The act was just too much for Sara. Not able to handle any more, Sara took hold of his shoulders, and she didn’t make it any further when she went off. She made enough noise to drown out everyone in the bathroom.

Suddenly, Sara fell off him, limp like a Barbie doll, heavily sucking air into her lungs.

Toni couldn’t wait any longer, and jumped on top of him, and did the same thing Sara did. This time, he got a clear view of her body as she made love to him. A few minutes later, he opened his eyes when the girl, out of breath, collapsed on top of him. A sudden movement outside the shower stall caught his attention.

Wiping the glass with his hand, he saw her for the first time in his life. She was more beautiful than he could have ever imagined her to be. Her body was perfectly built in every way. The alpha stood tall on long, powerful legs. Her body was fair-skinned, lightly covered with freckles all the way to the top of her head, where a long mane of red hair flowed down past her shoulders. Her breasts were large, and her nipples were erect. She was excited from watching him make love to the girls. The lower half of her was shaved. He could see the center of her sex. The woman just stood there for a moment, making sure he saw her, while silently letting him know she wanted him. She was an alpha, unlike Sara, and Toni, who were Beta’s. No one in the group would say anything if he got up off the floor, and went with her, and he wanted her, but first, he wanted one night to get used to making love.

She smiled down at him. When she moved, it was as if the earth had moved out of her way. There were stars under her feet as her long legs glided her quickly out of the bathroom. Just that simple look from her, and the sight of those long legs attached to that firm body suddenly turned on a switch inside of the lad. It was just too much for him. For the first time in his life, he felt the need to let the animal inside of him come out. She was the female he had come here for, and he would have her, but first, he turned back to Sara.

Turning her on her back, he picked up her legs, and let the being inside of him come to life. Sara knew right off she had bitten off more than she was going to handle. His chest was already heaving, and his eyes were as wild like a wolf’s.

Pressing down on her with his hips, he looked into her eyes with dazzling hazel eyes on fire with lust; he told her, “Wild.”

Toni quickly moved over, placing her body under her girlfriend’s shoulders. Sara reached up taking a hold of her friend’s hands. They both knew what was about to happen. Although Sara has been with an alpha before, she has never been with an alpha like him. There has never been an alpha like him before. They were all warned, and told what to expect if he asked for “Wild.”

Sara was scared silly. Her voice was smell and weak when she replied, “Yes, Wild.” She couldn’t refuse him.

He had only just started loving her, but Sara could see the young man’s mind had already gone crazy. Sara was completely lost as he entered her. Her little body couldn’t handle any of it. Her arms were wailing, and slamming onto the floor as Toni was the only thing holding Sara’s body in place. Sara’s mind exploded with sounds coming from her own mouth as she screamed out one long, endless cry for help. She was now locked with the Alpha of all Alphas, and he was overpowering her with his love. From within, Sara’s whole body felt like it was on fire. She knew she was going to die if she didn’t get him out of her, but it was much too late for that because he already had taken hold of her from within. She was now totally helpless to him. There was nothing she could do but scream!

In the bedchamber, everyone was making love, and causing a lot of noise. They all stopped what they were doing when they suddenly heard Sara’s cries coming from the bathroom. People looked up as others jumped to their feet. Everyone looked over at their own alpha on the alpha’s bed, but they did nothing. It was the steadfast expression in their eyes that told them all, “Do not interfere.”

The betas in the group didn’t understand what was happening between the new alpha, and Sara. However, all knew, every once in a while, an alpha needed to be set free. This was the alpha’s first time, and it would be the hardest he would ever be with any female. It had to happen so he could learn, it was necessary.

Sara’s spine-chilling scream was suddenly cut off unnaturally as the alpha bellowed out his call, filling all three rooms. No one in the bed chamber moved a muscle. The chamber went deathly quiet for several minutes, until the new alpha carried Sara’s lifeless body out of the washroom.

Laying in his arms, Sara’s head was laid back with her mouth open, and her arms hanging down past her sides. The girl looked dead to the world in his loving embrace. The lad carried her over to the bed he had chosen. Sara wasn’t even trying to move as he laid her on the bed. Laying down beside her, Toni curled up on the other side of her friend. No one moved, or said anything until the new alpha laid down beside Sara.

When Sara woke, she clung to him as any lover would, but even awake, and back in control of her own body, she knew she was still totally helpless against him. When she first saw him in the hallway, she felt something from him, and she wanted it. The need to have him superseded the knowledge of what it would take for her to get it from him. It was painful, but even saying that she would never forget this night, how wonderful the experience had been for her. His male power, and his animal-like behavior, and, most of all, the overpowering love he had for her almost killed her. Sara knew she would be in love with him until the day she died, never would she feel safer in anyone’s arms but his. Sara, out of all of them there, really knew he was the Alpha of all Alphas because he had been inside her mind, and body.

After the ordeal he put her through, the young alpha knew Sara needed to rest. He told Tania to take care of her until he came back. Getting out of bed, he started strutting his stuff around the room. He would come back, and please Sara as gently as a woman should be loved before getting her to drift off to sleep.

It wasn’t normal for a family member to intrude on others once they picked their mates for the night, but seeing who he was. The young alpha knew he could do as he wished. Walking around the vast room, he could feel the female Alpha’s eyes from the bathroom watching him. Her eyes stayed on him the whole time while he held a breast here on one bed then gave a kiss to another on a different bed. He stopped walking around, and placed his hands on a man, and woman making love. They stopped loving each other and let him run his hands all over their forms. After feeling where they were joined, he moved on.

With a smile plastered on his face, he looked over at the female alpha, who still hadn’t taken her eyes off of him. She was intently watching him. It looked to him as if she was ready to jump off her bed, and take him. She was clearly loving his attention as he strutted his stuff while silently telling her, “You can’t have me until I give myself to you.”

Laying on her side, the alpha was propped up on her elbow with her back off of the pillows. Her body language was telling him, “I’m relaxed,” but he knew. Deep inside, she was lying to herself. He could smell her scent hanging on the air in the room over everyone else. As he moved closer to her, her breathing increased as she rubbed her thighs together.

“Oh, you are so very excited,”

Laying down beside two women making love. He played with them as they rubbed themselves against each other. Their hips trembled as they released their desire on one another. The lad didn’t have to look up to see what his playing with the two females was doing to the alpha. Glancing over at her, he knew she. Was about to lose it. And she knew with no doubt he was playing with her family members deliberately to drive her crazy. Her breath was rapidly going in, and out of her nose, making her nostrils flair with each exhale of breath. She was a leader, one who was very much in control of herself, but he knew she desperately needed to ease her desire.

Finally, the lad had enough, he stopped playing with the two females. The chase was over, and the time was now. Walking over to the alpha’s bed, he told her. “Open your legs. I’ll cool you down.”

Opening herself to him, he gently dragged his fingertips down her body until he was inside of her, touching her in just the right way. While he pleasured her, he stared into her blue eyes, but try as she might, the woman couldn’t hold his gaze. Shutting her eyes, she gave him the very essence of herself. Moments later, she did it again, and then a third time.

A smile washed across his youthful face. He had gotten her so hot she couldn’t stop releasing herself even if she wanted to. The alpha finally dropped back on the pillows, moaning over, and over in excitement at what he was doing to her. When her breathing started getting out of control, he stopped what he was doing to her. Lightly caressing her with his fingertips, he let her calm down. He knew the next few minutes were going to be really hard for her. He stayed quiet, letting her enjoy the glow of the moment.

Her eyes were heavy when she finally opened them. Smiling up at him, she told him, “Hi, my name is-”

He finished it for her. “Catherine Mary O’Donnell. You grew up in the city of Drogheda, Ireland. At thirty-two, you were involved in a scandal in Ireland concerning a married man from Wales. Your employment at O’Donoghue’s Bar on ‘O’Connell Street in Drogheda was terminated. You have four older sisters, and both your parents have passed. You left Ireland for better things, and married in this group when you were twenty-four years old.”

Catherine cried to herself. “O my God. Who in the hell is this wonderful man? His body is to die for. He stands with the confidence of one hundred men. I know he is fearless, and I’m falling madly in love with him.” Calling out to the almighty, she pleaded to him. “Please, dear God, give him to me tonight.”

Concern suddenly flashed across Catherine’s face when she saw the tears slowly building in the corners of his eyes.

Softly, he spoke to her, so no one else in the surrounding room would hear him. “Catherine, I have been in love with you since I was seven years old. I would marry you this night, but you know as well that I cannot do that.”

“Catherine, I know what happened in Dublin. I know you were raped...”

Catherine’s body suddenly froze solid as the old terror shot through her. Through his hands alone, he could feel the fear tightening every muscle in the woman’s body. Tears were streaming down her face, revealing the pain she still had locked up deep inside of her. It has been so many years, but the memory of the event still lingered on inside of her. For all of these years, the screams, the blood, and the images were still buried deep within her.

“…beaten, and sodomized.” What he said next drove fear straight into her heart, “I know you watched them tear him apart. I know what you went through. I am here because of you, Catherine. I have to have you in my life. When I found out about you, I cried for days. I got someone close to me to spend thousands of dollars to get information about you.”

Quickly, taking her face in both of his hands, he cried, “Catherine, I vow to you for the rest of my life, I will love you. For the rest of my life, I will protect you. I will send you flowers, candy, cards, notes, and letters at every chance I get. I will send for you, or will come to you, and make love to you. Catherine, I want you to always remember this... there is no other man in this world who loves you greater than I.”

Catherine was sobbing when he started his rant, but by the time he finished. She was crying so loudly everyone could hear her. He knew she now realized he was aware of the assault, and the feelings that were still trapped deep inside of her. But Catherine also felt that he himself has been living with that same pain with her for the past nine years. He wanted her to know he couldn’t go on living with it anymore that she needed to let it go as well. She knew he was telling her. She needed to forget everything that happened to her because it was time to change. This was the reason for him being alive. He was here to change the world, and he was going to make it happen for mankind, and for Catherine.

Throughout the history of the organization, the groups had one golden rule within all the groups. If an Alpha was crying, it was the responsibility of every member to get to that Alpha as fast as it was humanly possible. Alphas were violent, and extremely dangerous people, but when going through troubled times like what Catherine was experiencing, they were even more so. They were totally unpredictable. They were the strength of power of every pack, but they, too, like everyone else, had their weaknesses. If there was any flaw in the design of an Alpha, this would be it.

Neither of the two were aware of what they were doing to everybody around the room. Not knowing it, every member in the bedchamber was out of bed, and on his, or her feet. They were slowly making their way over to the two lovers. The bed chamber had two Alphas in trouble, and one of the Alphas was totally new to them.

The lad softly cried, “Catherine, please stop. You need to calm down.”

Catherine only cried harder. Her body’s temperature was steadily climbing, getting hot to the touch, and then it began to tremble, and shake. She was beyond hearing him. Still wet with tears pouring from his own eyes. He picked her up in his arms as everyone followed them into the bathroom. The new Alpha seemed to understand what was needed. They all watched, letting him handle the situation. Word must have been sent out that the two alphas were in trouble. People began pouring into the bathroom from all over the complex.

The bedroom, and bathroom were filling up fast. Everyone knew the new Alpha was with them. They were concerned about his well-being, and for their own female as well.

Carrying Catherine into the shower stall, he told it, “Freezing, full jets, full spread.”

Still crying uncontrollably, Catherine’s body was almost too hot to touch, and it was getting hotter by the second. He laid her on the floor as ice-numbing water poured all over their bodies from the shower jets.

To no one in particular, he said, “Get me a pillow.”

It took almost six seconds when someone handed him seven different pillows. He arranged them against the wall, and laid her on them with her shoulders slightly up against the wall. Catherine would have to brace herself for what he was going to do to her, was harder than what Sara went through.

Settling between her legs, he entered her as he leaned over whispering into

her ear, “Wild.” He told her.

Catherine could only partway open her eyes. Taking hold of his neck, she brought him down on her, held on to him for dear life. There was no Beta anywhere in the world who could ever survive what he was about to do to her. Only an Alpha, above all others like himself, could share their love, and what was inside of them in this manner. Catherine, being an Alpha herself, stood only a slim chance of surviving it as she mated with one of the most advanced human beings the world has ever known.

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The air turned frigid with the coming winter season in Scotland. Summer was a lover’s kiss away. The tides of the world rose up, and crashed back down, stealing sand from every shore around the globe, then releasing it, scattering it back upon the earth. People died, and made love, and gave birth to babies, and God loved them, and blessed them. But for the exception of Fernando Dominguez, and the two men with him. They would never know of the pain, trouble, and suffering they would cause the Dominguez family because of their stupidity. The three Brazilians would never know how over two hundred men in the Dominguez’s operation would lose their lives because of Fernando, Rafael, and Javier.

Fernando’s father, Ortega Dominguez, wouldn’t be just disappointed over his son, and his two-man crew because Ortega, and everyone in the family business would all probably die. Ortega sent his son to America to prepare for a very important operation for the Dominguez family. The Dominguez Cartel has been built up with Ortega’s own two hands by using the bloody bodies of others as he stepped his foot on their lifeless remains to reach higher heights to become one of the wealthiest drug traffickers in South America. However, times were changing, and Ortega watched that change coming. He knew for them to survive, they, too, had to change.

In the preceding years, cartels were so brave, and powerful that they openly killed important people in South America’s Government. South America had a very hard time with the drug cartel’s manipulation, and death they delivered to government parties, and their families. Scared of them, police would flee from areas in a city when cartel gunfire took place because no one wanted to stand against them. The cartels were fearless, and their power kept growing. They also played good cop, and bad cop with the governments for as much as they terrorized, and killed. They also funnel millions of dollars back into the towns, and its government. There wasn’t anything anyone could do about the situation. If everybody didn’t do what the cartels asked of them, they would destroy your businesses, burn your crops, and murder your family members. The cartels did whatever they wanted. Everyone took their hush money, and tried to stay out of their way.

Other countries didn’t accept the same understanding as the rest of South America’s Nation. The United States watched drugs come into the country at increasing levels over the preceding years. The drug-related problems were one matter, but when the American citizens started losing their lives in ever-increasing numbers. It wasn’t long before someone would step forward and say, “No more!”

As it happens in the drug trade. Relationships between cartels, and other parties ended abruptly. And people would die, or someone would break a deal, and a lot more people would lose their lives. Senator Samuel Johnson from Connecticut was by all means a respected man from an old family of wealth and power. The day Roger Mellon, the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, and his Deputy Director Mike Cunningham learned about the Senator’s death. Both Roger. and Mike put a plan together, and then Director Mellon asked for a private meeting with the President of the United States. It was that meeting that turned the tide. and put fear into the hearts of the cartels in South America.

A message was written with painstaking measures taken to quietly get it into the hands of the President of South America’s Nations. Deputy Director Cunningham wrote the letter. It wasn’t long after the man received the letter that he handed it back to the one who gave it to him. The letter reached Langley, Virginia, six days later.

Opening the letter, Mr. Cunningham found eight words written on the bottom of the letter. “You have our full cooperation in this matter!”

South America took the United States’ offer without question. The cartels have done so much damage to force the President of the United States, and South America’s governments to combined forces using black operations against the cartel’s in Latin America. The United States’ job was to use the CIA to gather intelligence, and then, using that intel, the CIA would be the spearhead of every operation. Special hand-picked men of South America’s Armed Forces would surround, and guard each operation until the Americans took out its leaders, and their men. Once the black op was completed, the Americans would move out, and the South American forces would move in then strip the Cartel of all its wealth. Everyone would know what happened, but no one would have any details of the expeditions as there was no written record of the events. The governments of the United States, and South America were pissed off to the max. They both were hunting after the drug cartel’s as if Hitler were still alive.

Fernando, Rafael, and Javier were at a place called “The Kingdom” in Northern Vermont. It was a heavily wooded area out in the middle of nowhere. Having arrived two days earlier, the Brazilians looked over the operation, and talked to both white American males, who made it very clear they were homosexuals with their constant touch of affection between the two men.

Fernando didn’t want to let his father down. He would do anything his father asked of him that included killing senators, women, and even children. The three men were the killing force behind the Dominguez Cartel. They were also Ortega’s advance party for setting up labs alone with other money generators for the family. For the past many months, the three men were illegally in the United States as they traveled back, and forth across the northern parts of the country, setting up labs for other Americans to run. They had one set of identification that showed they lived in the US, and another that told them they were Mexican nationals, spending six months visiting different spots across the country. Fernando had to admit his father was the smartest man he has ever known. Ortega even confided in him that even if they got into trouble in America. His father told him he knew someone in the United States Government who could help them out. That fact surprised Fernando, because even though his father loved him, the man never shared his secrets with anyone.

Disgust was heavily laced in Rafael’s voice as he packed the rest of their things. “Man, I can’t believe you trust these assholes, Fernando. What a bunch of fucking rude cocksuckers these ones are.”

After concluding their business, the two Americans went down to the stream to bathe. At this point in time, they were screwing each other in the stream, and they didn’t give a shit who heard, or saw them. Rafael was disgusted by any homosexual act. Back home, if he ran into people like this, he would cut their throat, or shoot the bastards in the head. Being as it was, he couldn’t do it because these guys were top earners, and they themselves were in the northern part of the United States, far away from home. Their mission was so secret that very few people knew about it, except the people who they were doing business with.

“Will you just chill the fuck out, Raf? We have a job to do, and I don’t give a flying rip if they’re down there stuffing squirrels up their asses. These two guys are top earners. They take all the risk. All we do is check on them, supply them, and take in the cash.” He didn’t add their only other risk was to travel around the country illegally then get the money back home. “We have a sweet ass operation here in the States. The CIAm and the FBI, and the DEA, and the fucking XY and Z don’t know a damn thing. On top of that, the Feds will leave us alone at home because it’ll look like we are downsizing, and staying out of trouble. But, in fact, we are growing so fast here in the States we will have to keep people living here just to tend to the flock.”

Both men laughed together over that one.

“Damn, Raf, my father shocked even me on this one.”

Quietly, Rafael asked him, “Has Antwan calmed down?”

Rafael was outside at the house waiting for Fernando when Antwan was told he was to stay home to care for the coco leaf operations up in the mountains above the town of Labrea. Fernando, and his team would be the ones going to America. Rafael heard a single gunshot inside of the Dominguez home. Running into the house with his pistol pointing forward, he entered the study of Ortega Dominguez, the founding father of the Dominguez Cartel.

Fernando, and Antwan were struggling in the middle of their father’s study. Fernando’s left hand was around Antwan’s throat while his other had a locking hold on Antwan’s wrist, stopping his older brother from using the gun in his hand.

Rafael froze in place, drawing a bead on the backside of Antwan’s head, waiting for an opportunity. Ortega was yelling at both of his sons, but the two men were locked in a battle for the gun as they moved around the room, knocking tables, and lamps on the floor. From the corner of his eye, Rafael could see Senior Dominguez had had enough of his son’s crap. Reaching into a drawer in his desk, he took out an ancient Colt single-action forty-five revolver. The 1897 Colt was a favorite weapon of Ortega’s, as Fernando gave it to his father a few years back on Ortega’s forty-sixth birthday. Rafael himself has held the gun. It was very heavy as it was very big, with a long gun barrel.

Ortega pulled the hammer back on the gun with his thumb as he walked up to his two sons, then he placed the seven-inch gun barrel against Antwan’s temple. The two men suddenly stopped fighting each other.

Ortega told Antwan in a calm, quiet tone of voice, “Antwan, both you, and your brother are the very center of me, but if you harm him in front of me.” Ortega lowered his voice even further. “I’ll blow your fucking head off. Now drop the God damn gun, and stop your bullshit.”

Antwan, as well as Fernando, understood their father very well. They both knew he would have indeed killed Antwan. The man ran an empire of riches that had taken him most of his life to acquire. The two men knew Ortega has gone to much greater lengths to keep control of the family business, and the army of men who guarded the Dominguez Empire.

Rafael understood his father loved both of them, but Antwan was getting harder to control as he got older while trying to stay on top of the family business as Ortega’s number one son. The only problem was, Antwan never got the hang of the family business. He has caused many problems which Fernando, and Micheal, Ortega’s security chief, had to fix for his father. There was an unspoken understanding between the three men that if something ever happened to Ortega. On that day, either one, or both of Ortega son’s would die.

“I really hope he has Raf. Cuz, if he doesn’t... I’m going to kill him myself,” Fernando confessed to his friend.

The two men stared at each other. They both knew Fernando would do just that. Antwan just wasn’t cut out for leadership. He didn’t understand people like Fernando did. Repeatedly, Ortega has given Antwan a chance to prove himself, but he keeps failing the family, and has given everyone a lot of grief. Pretty much. Everyone knew if the old man died, it would be Fernando who would take over the family business.

Fernando, and his father were very much alike. Where Antwan wasn’t like his father, or their long-past mother. Fernando always thought that if their mother had lived through the pain, and suffering of her cancer-riddled body, things might have turned out differently from the way they were now. It was only after her death that Antwan, and Fernando started butting heads. With their mother gone, all three men turned to the small family business to forget their pain, and ended up building one of the most powerful empires in Brazil’s history.

“Raf, he just doesn’t know what he’s doing. Never turn your back on him, and never trust him. You feel me.”

“Ya, I feel you brother, and trust me. I will watch your back,” Retorted Rafael.

Remembering back. Rafael thought of the first day he met Fernando. Being a young man, Rafael moved back home because he was having problems living in Parna, which is a providence of Rondônia. Rafael had been working with a cartel there, but things were not working out, and he feared if he stayed, they would have killed him. After coming back home to Brazil, he met Fernando. After that first year, whenever you saw Fernando, you would always find Rafael close by him. Rafael was Fernando’s right hand, and they both kept each other alive for many years. Fernando had first met Rita, Rafael’s sister. He was sometimes sleeping with her, but their relationship went nowhere. It was his relationship with Raf that had developed into a great friendship, even after his relationship with Rita died.

“Hey, are we going up to Maine like we talked about?”

Not surprised by the question, Fernando started laughing as Javier walked into

the room after carrying stuff out to the SUV. Fernando knew his friend for fourteen years, so Raf’s inquiry didn’t surprise him. Rafael was twenty-nine years old, as was Fernando. Fernando understood very well that Rafael was indeed a skilled killer. He also knew Raf to be an intelligent man, but Fernando watched one day when someone called Raf stupid. The other guy didn’t have a chance because Rafael was deadly fast with pistols. The only thing with Rafael was that he believed in fairy tales. As soon as he heard they were going to America. He started surfing the Internet. He found a bunch of places he wanted to see, and Paul Bunyan was at the top of his list.

“Yes, we are. We’re going to stop off in Bangor on the way through, and see Paul Bunyan, and his Blue Ox.”

Softly, Raf told both men, “You know. I don’t believe there could have ever been a blue ox. That’s just stupid, but they said Paul, in his day, could cut a hundred cord of wood in one mighty swing of his ax. Man, he must have been some woodsman.”

Both Fernando and Javier just stood there, looking at each other from across the room. They both knew Raf didn’t believe anyone could cut a hundred cords of wood with one swing of an ax. But they both, in fact, knew Rafael believed there was once a guy living out in the deep Maine woods called Paul Bunion. Both Fernando, and Javier snapped a quick look at each other, and then busted out laughing. Javier fell to his knees, trying to catch his breath as he laughed his ass off.

Raf looked at both killers. “What...what’s wrong with you guys?”

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Across America, the Early Morning News Show was about to begin it’s morning broadcast to repeat the eleven o’clock news from the night before, and to deliver recent news that came in overnight. People seemed to enjoy getting the news before they went to work, and Washington, DC, loved the Morning Show, and its anchor, Tiffany Johnson.

Tiffany was an attractive woman of five foot six inches. She had long blond hair with blue eyes with a hard body from heaven. The woman was very attractive, with a soft, sexy voice, and well-rounded breasts who could dress up, or down, and go with the flow. She has been a journalist since she left college fifteen years before, and she was noted to be one tough son of a bitch when working. Tiffany loved her job, and commanded total perfection while on the set, and when she was out in the field. The CEO’s of the broadcasting channel, and most of its Canadian board members love Tiffany too, and they showed it by sleeping with her as much as the

girl would let them.

Tiffany would tell them all upfront, “No fucking Canadian money!” Yes, Tiffany was a hard ass, and yes, she slept her way to the top while making a little money on the side, but Tiffany was still a young, vibrant female. She, too, like everyone else, needed someone to love. It took her years to find it, and the hours she worked didn’t help her in her process. But one day, Tiffany finally had enough women in love with her. She could have a different female in her bed every night. Tiffany Johnson was one hell of a highly motivated woman, and the girl knew what she wanted, and would go to any length, and take it. She was, in all aspects, “The All-American Girl.” Her life’s motto was “If men could do it, then a woman could do it better.”

Every morning, Monday through Friday, her sexy, smiling voice rang out took hold of the hearts of all who could hear her... “Good Morning, I’m Tiffany Johnson, and it’s time for the Early Morning News. Thanks for joining us.”

Then, she would jump right into the leading story. “North Korea has once again closed its doors to the scheduled peace talks. This is the third time this year that President Kim Jong-Un of the People’s Republic of North Korea has done this to the six-party talks. The United States, and Russia, along with South Korea, and Japan, have all stepped forward to get North Korea to keep the Armistice Agreement, and stay in the peace talks. North Korea has never given any reason for stalling the talks this year, and countries like the United States, and our allies are very disappointed over the rising situation. The Federal Government has even started using economic pressure to get North Korea back into the peace talks, but to date, North Korea is still dragging its feet.”

Looking up from her notes, Tiffany looked into the camera. “What the Government is concerned with is North Korea will open their Yongbyon Nuclear Scientific Research Center again. The nuclear power plant was once shut down, but once reopened; North Korea can then build Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles, ICBMs, which is a rocket that can hit just about anywhere in the world with multiple nuclear warheads attached to it. North Korea has also been testing ICBMs with no warheads attached to them over the Yellow Sea all last month. They have even fired one over the Northern tip of Japan. With the opening of the power plant with the testing of rockets, it is in all likelihood that North Korea will soon build ICBMs. President Obama vowed to cool the situation down before his first term ended.”

“And as we all know, what happened in 2005,” she told her audience. “North Korea was caught making over fifteen million American dollars in counterfeit

money using a Bank on North Korea’s west coast to facilitate the money-laundering

operation.”

“Also, back in 2009. North Korea arrested two American journalists who were on the border of China, and North Korea, while the reporters were filming a segment of human trafficking. They allegedly crossed North Korean boarders, and were arrested, they were sentenced to twelve years at hard labor. Both men were in prison for several months before former President Bill Clinton could gain their release, and return them back to Los Angeles.”

Tiffany looked over to her co-anchor. “You remember that don’t you, Scott? Didn’t you just get here at the Morning Show about that time?”

Tiffany waited until Scott was talking before she picked up her water glass, and took a quick sip.

“I remember it very well, Tiffany. It was my first week with the station, and it was a very tense time for everybody.” Scott directed the lead back to Tiffany. “But what I remember most about North Korea is about their inability to be truthful about their nuclear weapons testing.”

Tiffany started off by looking at her co-chair, then turned back to the camera in front of her. “Right you are, Scott.” (turn, forward camera) “North Korea has had underground testing of nuclear weapons as far back as 2006, and then again in 2009, and then the most recent in 2013. The blast of the 2013 test yield was similarly as strong as the 2009 test, if not stronger. Along with the United States, other members of the stalled six-party talks have denounced the nuclear tests. The United States Government has also denounced the subsequent series of short-range missile tests over Japan that have followed the last detonation. Our correspondent at the White House has told us here on the Morning Show.” (Tiffany glanced up from her notes and grinned into the camera), “That North Korea is getting too big for their britches, and if something isn’t done to slow them down, further problems will arise.”

“When asked what the President will be doing this weekend. We were told that President Obama is having a working weekend at Camp David, and of course,” (Tiffany gave the camera another beautiful smile), “they wouldn’t tell us what he would be working on.”

Tiffany continued on, “Also, in the news. A disabled veteran was shot, and killed during a shootout with Togus Police Officers at the Maine State Veterans Hospital in Togus, Maine. Angelo Garcia became upset over the administration’s policy on how the hospital treated its disabled patients. Agitated after repeated attempts to get his doctors to give him medications he used in the past to relieve his anxiety. And because our sources say, they treated him as a mental patient, and not a man with a disability. Things got out of hand really fast. Two police officers were trying to calm Mr. Garcia down when a Togus officer who was responding to the call ran into the hallway with his gun already drawn. Afraid of his own life, Mr. Garcia took a gun from one cop then shot, and killed all three officers. Angelo Garcia was later killed before he could made it to the safety of the tree line around the Veterans Hospital. The cops later explained their actions to their superiors, and simply said. “He was trying to escape.”

Susan LaVaser, the spokesperson for the Veteran’s Hospital, told a Channel Six news reporter, “Things of this nature have happened here frequently. This is why we have the force of men with their weapons to enforce our policies. It’s unfortunate the incident happened. However, you must understand that it can be difficult at times when dealing with mental patients.”

“While back here in Washington, DC. Thousands of Gays and Lesbian activists marched on the Capitol demanding equal rights for same-sex marriages. Sally Kenworth, a spokesperson for the event, screamed out on the steps of the Capitol that, change wasn’t just necessary, god’s creation also demanded it.”

“Wow,” Tiffany said to her audience. “I think we need a break. We’ll be right back (This time, her smile went global) right after these messages from our sponsors.”

(Fade out, Tiffany talking to Scott).

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Kelly has been watching the girl for many years. Her name was Tessa Mitchell, and she had green eyes like the ocean Kelly loved so much. Tess was twenty-three years old, and Kelly was right in love with her. Whenever he came into town, he would find Tess then watch every step she took, and every movement her body made. Everything she did, he analyzed comparing it to everything he knew about the girl. He studied the very structure of her body. Kelly knew her better than the girl knew herself.

Tess was a little overweight, but she wasn’t obese, nor was she top-heavy. Kelly knew Tess loved to run, but the past few years hasn’t been kind to her. He hasn’t watched her run in a long time. Tessa carried most of her weight around her waist, as most girls do, but Kelly thought she had a wonderful shape. Thinking of how short she was always made Kelly smile. Tess stood four feet eight inches tall. The top of her head just reached up to Kelly’s chest. She had little delicate hands

with small fingers, and wonderful small breasts. Tessa has been driving Kelly wild

since he first met her.

Kelly believed anything that touched Tess was amplified. Putting perfume on the girl was like wearing a bright hunting vest along with a red flashing light on top of your head as a speaker screamed out, “I Love the USA,” while walking through the streets of Baghdad. The women blossomed, and shined brighter than life itself could handle. The little women had the female scent that turned Kelly, a six-foot giant, into a gooey mass of helpless, pulsating, horny crazed man. Kelly was madly in love with her, but, for many years, he didn’t make his move. Kelly knew his timing had to be perfect.

Over the years, men had abused Tess. They didn’t give her credit for her beauty, or respect her intelligence, and grace. Tess was a hyper, and sexy one-of-a-kind female. Very few people ever saw what was truly inside of her. Even her boyfriend, Josh, was clueless. Tess would become Kelly’s wife, and he would show her how important she was to the world, and how much people really loved her.

Kelly pulled her down, and sat her in his lap while she was working at the Fisherman’s Wharf last week. He was sure the time had come. The moment he had been waiting for was finally here.

Immediately, Tess tried to stand up, but Kelly started flirting with her. Yet, the girl held herself back from him. Tess still wouldn’t lay a hand on him, and show him any kind of affection, but Kelly knew she loved him. But because of what has happened to her, Tess felt she wasn’t good enough, or pretty enough to be with a well-accomplished man like Kelly. Kelly knew all about it. Tess felt as if fate had given her the best outcome for her life, she just had to deal with it.

Kelly’s plan would soon get her to see what a ravening beauty she really was.

He planned on bringing out the fiery blood in the girl, and she would feel the fire in his soul. Tess didn’t have a clue what was about to happen to her, but Kelly knew. And when Tess saw it herself, she would feel as if her life were over, and she would pray to die. Kelly was a very smart man, but if Tess knew everything about the man, she would never have let him lay a hand on her.

Kelly was no couch potato. At twenty-seven years old, he weighed 250 pounds, and he didn’t have an ounce of fat on him. His tall, heavy frame stood six feet two inches with wide broad shoulders, and a strong smooth lower body. His legs were more than strong, they were powerful. He was a catch for any female. The man’s most distinguishing features weren’t his youthful, handsome face, and hazel eyes. But it was indeed the long, full head of brown hair that had unnatural streaks of silver running throughout it which first caught your attention. Kelly’s lifestyle since he was four years old has made him into what he is today. His whole life was spent learning everything about human beings, and life on the planet. He was a hero. A man who delivered his own justice, and the law of the land could kiss his ass. His drive to succeed was evident in everything he did, and every decision he made. He possessed an understanding of military tactics, and strategies, making him a planner, and a multi-level thinking man. He calculated everything in his life. Because he would be dead if he didn’t. He was filthy rich, and has been living on Heaven’s Gate Island, northeast of Belfast Maine, for the past many years.

The people in Belfast respected Kelly, and if there were those who didn’t like him, they kept their mouths shut. However, Kelly kept everyone at arm’s length, for he had many, many secrets. If anyone could look into the man’s chest, and see his heart, they would be terrified by the size of it, along with the knowledge of the power that he kept contained within his body. Because it could surely kill you. Kelly’s biggest secret was that there was no other human being in the world like him. He was more different from anyone else alive. Kelly hasn’t taken a mate to this point in his life because he just wasn’t ready. He had only been intimate with a few females in his life, but Catherine would always be his first love.

Finally, today, Kelly was ready. He watched the small young girl walk into the restaurant to go to work. Kelly knew she was his. There wasn’t a damn person on the entire planet who could stop him from taking her.

Years before, after moving back to the Island. He found an empty skiff floating out in the bay all by itself. Things of this nature have happened before when a boat got loose of its moorings. But because of the depth of the water along with a strong, steady current pulling anything in it into open waters. Kelly knew he had to be sure no one was in the water. He removed the mic from its cradle.

After calling for the Coast Guard, he drove up-current in the Freeloader, looking for the owner of the skiff. The person, or persons had to be up current somewhere. Ten minutes later, Kelly spotted the man as the guy was trying to swim for Heaven’s Gate Island.

The Coast Guard boat was still some distance off.

“Coast Guard, Coast Guard. This is the Freeloader. I have the boater in sight.”

Kelly knew these waters. He has helped more than one person out in the strong currents. He just shook his head, watching the guy struggle in the heavy current. The guy would never have made it to the Island. It was just too far away, and the water was way too cold with a powerful tide that would easily overtake him. When Kelly pulled him into his boat, the stranger was exhausted, and freezing cold. He was so cold the guy couldn’t even talk. Kelly stripped him of his clothes then wrapped a blanket around him.

Timothy was the captain on the “Cutter,” a Coast Guard boat stationed twenty-eight miles northwest of his island, on the mainland called Pleasant Point. When the Cutter came alongside, Tim jumped into the Freeloader while someone in the maritime boat handled the helm.

“Jesus Kelly, you fished out another one. Man, you’re putting me out of a job.”

Kelly laughed at him. “Come work with me, and I’ll show you how to make some real money. You’ll be able to pay off all of those student loans you have.”

Tim was a lot like Kelly. He was always in class learning one subject, or another. Graduating from MIT, Tim was a nut for anything dealing with computers. He built them, fixed them, and helped Kelly find the computers that ran his home. Tim was also an engineer, and master locksmith. Tim was a busy, busy guy. Both men love to learn, as they loved the sea. They were seen together once in a while, having a beer together in town. But it was their love for the sea where you would always find them. They also just happened to be in love with the same girl. Kelly, and Tim often openly talked about Tess. They were two men of like minds.

Tim’s response got Kelly laughing. “Thanks buddy, but then I would have to associate myself with you. People would get the wrong idea with two men living on your island with no women around.”

That was Tim’s old joke. He always laughed at his friend, who was a good-looking guy, yet he had lived for many years on the Island by himself. Once they transferred the boater to the “Cutter,” both boats pulled away from each other as Tim yelled out from the pilot’s house hatchway, “Hey, are we going fishing out to the Grand Banks next Friday?”

Kelly raised his voice over the sound of both boat motors as he assured his friend, “Tim, I won’t know until I get back from Boston. I’ll call you.”

With a wave of their hands, the two boats went their own way.

It was Tim who introduced Kelly to Tess, and he has been watching her ever so closely since that day. Kelly was more than ready for Tess as he walked into the Fisherman’s Wharf. It was still early. He didn’t see anyone in the place eating. As he went through the front door, he locked the door behind him, and then walked up to Gloria.

“Hi, Gloria. How are you, and Fred doing today?”

“We’re doing great, Kelly, but Fred is in the kitchen bitching with how poorly the Pat’s are doing this year.”

The New England Patriots were having an off-season. Kelly liked to keep tabs on everything in life, however he felt sports was only entertaining when watching it with friends. He didn’t follow it much. The Pat’s have done this before. Kelly knew they wouldn’t let the state of Maine down this year. He still believed they would make a comeback for their state.

With a big grin plastered on her face, and a wink of an eye, Gloria held out her hand, directing him into the dining room. “She’s all yours, Kelly. Good luck” she simply told him.

Kelly walked off into the dining room then sat down at his usual table. Back against the wall, with no windows around him. He also liked this spot because he could see more of Tess while she was working at the other tables.

Gloria, and Tessa’s mother grew up together in Belfast, they have been friends since grade school. On more than on occasion, Tessa’s mother worked Tessa’s shift at the Fisherman’s Wharf when Tess herself couldn’t make it to work. Like her mother, Glory was an older woman, but still very pretty, and full of spark. Kelly saw the same spark of life within Tess, although Tessa’s spark was deeply hidden from sight. The girl’s moodiness, and distance stare, with bouts of depression, covered every attempt at Tessa’s real self to shine.

Tess was just coming through the dining room doors carrying ketchup bottles on a tray when she saw Kelly sitting down at his table.

She said more to herself, “Oh, thank God. It’s about time you finally showed up,”

For years, Tess has been having a love-hate relationship with Kelly. She loved him dearly, but hated herself for not being the kind of woman a man like Kelly would want to have in his arms. There were times she wanted to walk up to him, and tell him, “Would you just please make love to me, and let’s get this thing over with?” However, she never had the guts, and it was the same damn situation with Tim. Tess knew if Kelly asked to make love to her, she would be more than happy to help the guy out, but he never once tried anything with her, except when he pulled her into his lap this past week.

Then there was Tim, the tower of nobility, and self-control. The Queen was probably still sending him Christmas cards to him every year. Tess didn’t blame what was happening to her on the two men in her life. In fact, Tess knew it was within herself where the problems lay. She never directed any ill feelings towards Kelly, or Tim. Fate has just had a way of playing tricks with her life. Over time, she has come to accept that this was the way her life was. When the men in her life were not beating her up, or raping her, or cheating on her, she was beating herself up even better than what they did to her.

Watching Kelly sit down at his table, she brushed a single tear from her eye as she spoke into the air. “Melissa, where are, you?” Turning back into the kitchen, she went to get Kelly’s dinner plates ready.

Fred was off to the side by the stove, deep in thought about Tessa’s situation. “Girl,” he directed his thoughts at her, “everyone here knows what’s happening with you, and I saw that damn tear. You won’t talk to anyone about it, and admit that you’re hurting. Well, we all have a little surprise for you tonight honey, so hang on tight. It’s going to be a hell of a ride.” With that last thought, Fred started laughing out loud, but quickly shut up when Tess sharply looked over in his direction.

Kelly knew, over the last few years, the only way Tess had enjoyed her own body was by laying on the beach at the Haven. Using her father’s skiff, she would go there, and relax, and think of Kelly, Melissa, or Tim. The Haven itself was in a group of reefs with rocks, and sand bars all around it. It was very difficult to get into

the center reef if you didn’t know how. Located twenty minutes out of Belfast, the locals made sure it stayed a semi-secret. It was part of a Natural Wildlife Association Area.

Inside, one of the largest reefs was a small sandy beach. Only during the night at high tide would sea creatures come into it to feed. Tess would swim, and lay out on a blanket, and talk to the moon and the stars. In the Haven, she would satisfy her body’s cravings for the only three people in Tessa’s world who fulfilled her thoughts, and dreams.

Tonight, as it was in the past, she showed Kelly that she liked him by giving him extra food with his dinner. She knew he loved fresh veggies, so she piled on extra salad toppings then added fresh lemon along with two servings of his favorite Zesty Italian dressing.

Tess didn’t know it, but Fred kept glancing over at her from his area by the stove. Taking Kelly’s dinner plate in hand, she reached under the divider between her, and Fred, adding a few more potatoes, and green beans. “Yup, there she goes again,” Fred said to himself. “Damn it, Kelly. If we weren’t friends, you wouldn’t

get all that extra food. You eat like a moose.” Fred knew if he said something to Tess about the extra food, Gloria would kill him. The last time he said something to Gloria about Tess—

Fred suddenly stopped what he was doing on the stove, and said quietly out loud to himself, “Oh no, don’t you even think about going there?” He directed his next comment to Tessa. “Girl, get Kelly’s food out to him. Looks like he has lost twenty pounds already from waiting for his dinner.”

Tess may have known Gloria, and Fred for a long time, but as she picked up Kelly’s dinner, and walked through the swinging door to the dining area, she asked herself. “Why in the hell is everyone acting so damn weird tonight?” Gloria hasn’t stopped smiling at her since she got to work. What in the hell was that hug all about that Gloria gave her when she came through the front door? Then there’s Fred, laughing, and talking to himself more than usual.

Tess didn’t see Fred standing behind her as she walked into the dining room with Kelly’s dinner. He was smiling at her back, and talking to himself again. “Good luck, baby. We love you.”

Humming a tune, Fred walked off towards the front of the restaurant, but using the other way around, he didn’t go through the dining area. The only two people soon to be in the restaurant needed to be alone. Gloria, and Fred locked the front doors behind them as they left the restaurant.

“Hi, Kelly. I hope you’re ready to eat. Fred is acting his weird self, more than usual, and shooed me out here with your dinner.”

Setting Kelly’s dinner on the table in front of him, Tess took the condiments she knew he liked best, and placed them in front of his plate. However, the longer she leaned over his table, she could feel the tension in the air building. Something wasn’t right with Kelly, and the more she thought about it, the stronger the feeling hit her.

Quickly, backing away from the table, she asked him. “Kelly, what the hell is going on with you people tonight? You, Fred, and Gloria are freaking me the hell out.”

Standing up, Kelly wrapped his hands around her waist, pulling her close to him. He simply looked down at her, and said. “Tess, I need to know one thing, and one thing only. I will ask nothing more of you.” He hesitated, then said. “Tess, are you in love with me?”

Kelly watched as the poor girl’s nervous system went into meltdown mode faster than a nuclear reactor with the cooling pipes busted all to hell. Those six brief words smashed into Tessa’s world, and changed everything about her life, and how the girl thought. Kelly’s words simply sent her body into complete shock. She was dumbfounded, she didn’t know what in hell to tell him.

Holding her body close to his, Tess had to bend her head all the way back to look up at him. Then it happened. She started trembling, and leaking a few tears from the corner of her eye. Tess knew right away she was lost in her love for this man. This wonderful giant of a man was the one she had loved for many years, and he was now out of the blue coming for her. She wasn’t terrified of Kelly, but only of the powerful feelings, and the desires she’s had for him. Kelly has always been kind to her, and he was such an intelligent man. She wanted to say something wonderful, and beautiful for the occasion.

Opening her mouth, she stammered, “I…well...I…we have…ah...Kelly I.”

He interrupted her, “Tess, this is your hour. Now answer me. Are you, or are you not in love with me? I need an answer girl, and I need it right now.”

Tessa’s whole body was on high alert. Her breathing was a trembling mass of chest-heaving action as each breath was being forced from her lungs. The look on her scared, beautiful face told Kelly everything he needed to know, and there was no mistake in what it meant. That in this moment, in space, and time they were both caught in. Tess knew what was happening, but she couldn’t believe what she was hearing. Kelly’s words were ringing over, and over in her ears, which caused Tessa’s mind to shut down as it was too frighten to help her answer the biggest question of her life.

Kelly patiently waited. He knew Tessa’s heart would override every bodily function the girl had, and would soon take control of the situation. As he looked down into her sparkling green eyes, he knew he had his answer when tears started flowing down her cheeks.

She could finally speak; it was just three words. “Yes, I am,” she said.

Kelly knew she was going to cry real soon, so he hurried, and kissed her for the first time since she had known him, and this time, Tess wasn’t by herself, laying on a blanket at the Haven. Kelly didn’t seem to want to end his kiss. When he did let go of her, she staggered backwards. He grabbed her; her breath was heavy, and

her cherry-red face showed her true feelings about what his kiss did to her.

Frightened, Tess just stared at him for a moment, the girl didn’t know what in hell she should do. This was so unexpected how he has shown his love for her. She was speechless, and didn’t know what to say to him. In all the years she has known Kelly, he has never touched her, or spoken words of love to her. Yet here he was right in front of her, and he didn’t say it, but she knew damn well that this man indeed loved her. She could literally feel his love radiating from his body. All those times she had to go to the Haven to satisfy herself because Josh, or someone else couldn’t do it, but she never thought this gorgeous man would ever want her. She wasn’t of his class. He was rich, and could have any number of women of his own choosing. Tessa was in a state of shock. She didn’t believe she could even be compared to this man. She was fat, out of shape, and carrying a lot of baggage that she had gathered herself from her life.

Thinking to herself, Tess thought, “Why would you even want me?” This giant of her most intimate desires indeed wanted her, and here she was, frozen in time, and couldn’t even talk to him.

Surprised number two suddenly showed up. Picking her up, Kelly sat down in his chair, putting her in his lap. He was indeed excited, and had waited a very long time to touch her. He placed her on top of him in the center of her bottom while his hazel eyes dared her to stop him. Grabbing her hips with both hands, he ground her into his lap.

From the moment he started, Tessa’s entire world shattered, and was forever gone. The girl fell completely apart. Her body didn’t belong to her anymore. It belonged to Kelly and the emotions he was making her feel. They overwhelmed every muscle in her body. She didn’t last long at all. Soon, her breathing was out of control, and there were pains in her chest. Putting her face into Kelly’s neck, she cried out one long screaming moan that lasted as long as the stars had been hanging in the sky over her haven. When she stopped screaming, she was gasping for breath as her body trembled for a man who finally brought her out of the depths of herself, and showed her the love he was willing to give her.

“Tess, look at me,” he demanded of her. “I am leaving here in a few minutes, and I’m taking you with me. I know I haven’t shown you how I feel about you, but soon you will understand. Tess, I love you, but my life has many secrets. It’s very complicated, but the fact remains, I couldn’t pick a wife before, or express my love to you. I had to make sure you were the right one because I needed you to do some things for me. We need time together. All of this cannot be explained here.”

“Tess, my love. Will you come with me?”

When you have waited a lifetime to hear someone you have been madly in love with tell you suddenly that he loves you. Anyone in the world would understand why Tess did what she did next.

“Yes, of course, I’ll go with you,” she told him, laying her head on his shoulder.

To this point, being with this gentle giant, Tess still didn’t believe how any of this could be worked out. Nothing really has changed except for the first time in her life. She was finally willing to be someone she thought she could never be,…Kelly Winston’s wife.

Her tears really turned out of control as Tess started crying uncontrollably. Kelly knew he would never get her to calm down, no matter what he said to her. Instead, he pulled up her skirt.

“Kelly, this is fucking crazy. We can’t do this here. I’ll lose my...”

One of Kelly’s powerful hands grabbed her panties then ripped them off the girl. Tess didn’t understand it yet, but the three people who loved her the most had set her up. They all knew what she needed, but it was Tess who couldn’t bring herself to do anything about it. Gloria, and Fred stepped out of the restaurant, giving the two lovers some time alone. Gloria has known the girl all of her life, and they both knew what Kelly was doing, and why. They all were going the extra mile for her, and they were not letting Tess get in the way.

Gloria, and Fred were waiting across the street, talking to a store owner, when they saw the two emerge from the restaurant. Kelly was carrying Tess in his arms. They both started clapping, and cheering for the young couple. A few people on the sidewalk stop walking by, wanting to know what’s going on.

“I can’t believe we just did that,” Fred said to his wife as they watched Kelly carry Tess over towards the boat docks.

“Fred, we have known that little girl all her life. I swear to God, if another man hits her, or treats her like shit again, I’ll kill him myself. We both know Kelly would do nothing to hurt her. He’s a damn fine man. Tess has never had anyone like Kelly in her whole life. Now she has a real man, one who will love, and provide for her. What Kelly did was kind of weird; he is a very private kind of person. However, Fred, I know damn well that man has a reason for doing everything he does. Kelly’s been eating here at the Wharf for many years now. Every single time he walks through our front door, it’s like the man has just stepped into the jungles of North Vietnam.”

She quietly added, “I would have held her down for him if she would have given him a hard time.” Seeing a single tear fall from her eye, Fred put his arm around his wife’s shoulders.

“Man, she screamed her head off. Did that threesome over there hear her?”

“Oh, hell ya, Fred. Half a fucking city block heard her.” Then she started laughing. “I told those three people you were out back killing rats.”

Shocked, and not believing her, Fred said, “No, you didn’t.”

“Oh, yes. I surely did,” she said, laughing, which got Fred going, too

# Chapter 2

# Kindred Spirits

Kelly didn’t want to take Tess home because the finishing touches were still underway on the Island. He carried her into the cabin cruiser, and undressed her. He looked over her naked body as she laid back on the bed. Tess was hiding so much beauty under her clothes. Her breasts were just about perfect, with pink, pretty nipples that turned hard as soon as he touched them. He played with her, Tess reached down, rubbing him with her hand. Kelly’s smile just kept getting bigger, and bigger.

Relaxed on her back, Tess let Kelly clean her body from the love he gave her at the restaurant. She loved him touching her. She quickly learned that Kelly was a person who understood the pleasure a man could get from serving his mate.

Serving your mate was a large part of any sexual experience. Bathing, grooming, and clothing your mate was something Kelly learned a long time ago. He grabbed a thick white robe wrapping it around her, then placed her in his lap as they drove the Freeloader out to sea.

Resting her head against his shoulder, Tess was mellow as a kitten leaving port. Kelly knew Tess didn’t have a clue where they were or where they were going. She was in her haven, and for the first time in her life, she wasn’t alone.

Kelly found a delightful spot off a small island covered with trees. It wasn’t a popular spot because of rocks, and sandbars sticking up out of the water around the Island. He gave the land mass some distance before setting anchor. Someone long ago named it Nutshell Island. All the Islands off the coast of Maine, once the Island was named, they stayed that way over the years. One of the biggest reasons was if the names kept changing, then all the maps used by the United States Coast Guard would need to be changed as well.

Checking the current, he parked the boat on the leeward side of the Island, which would give them a smoother parking spot with very little wind. With Tess back inside the cabin, he threw out an anchor up current. Letting the rope play out for a bit, he then tied it off to a cleat on the bow. Throwing out one more anchor about ninety feet to the right of the first one. He let it play out, then tied it off to a different cleat. The boat would swing back, and forth like a pendulum between both anchors. Anchoring in this matter, he was sure they were safe, and he wouldn’t have to worry about drifting off in the middle of the night. Of course, anchoring like this could mean he may not get an anchor back, and he may have to cut the rope to free the boat.

Taking off his clothes outside on the stern, Kelly walked into the cabin naked. He found Tess in the bedroom with pillows behind her as she laid back on the bed with her left leg dangling off the edge of the bed. Her right leg was bent, and cocked out, with her foot almost touching her left knee. She was still wearing the robe he had given her. It was fully opened at the top, and bottom, not quite covering her breast. Kelly could see her complete form from her face to between her legs. She didn’t try covering herself up when he entered the room. She wanted him to see everything about her. To Kelly, she looked sexy as hell, he was getting turned on as his gaze rolled over her soft, pointed breasts, and the small patch of her; he was only now beginning to learn how to love. He knew she was as excited as he was, but something was wrong with this situation. Kelly could sense it.

Sitting down beside her, he picked up her legs, closing them. There was no way he was going to have a conversation with her while looking between them.

“Tess, what is it? Something is wrong. It’s written all over you. If there’s anything you don’t like. I’ll change it.” He already knew she was about to say something that would upset him. Her facial expression alone told him that.

With her head turned away, she suddenly looked up at him, Tears started falling again from her eyes as she softly asked him, “Kelly, why am I here?”

For a moment, Kelly was taken aback by her question. “Tess, I love you. I told you that.”

Tess considered that for half a second. “Kelly, you have been coming into the Fisherman’s Wharf for years, but only lately have we been getting really close. So, why now? Why couldn’t you have at least told me before?” As her emotions took hold of her, tears continued flowing down her face. “Jesus, are you that dumb about women, don’t you know? I have been going nuts over you ever since I met you. You pulled me in your lap when Tim was with you, and I had to run to the bathroom to play with myself before I could go back to work. I would see you at work or after, and I had to go home, and let Josh fuck me like I was one of his rag doll sluts. haven’t had a fucking orgasm except by my own hand for years now.”

Then, Tessa totally lost her composure. Kelly knew it was more due to how her life has been than with Tess being upset with him. He understood the girl very well.

Tessa’s voice rose higher, then she screamed at him when he didn’t answer her, “So, why the fuck now?!”

Tess should have just kicked Kelly in the balls instead of yelling at him. Because what Tess didn’t know about the big man was about to come out. This giant could take on half of a dozen men, and win, and run like a wolf for hours. He was very intelligent, and just about everything he has, and will have, is because he himself has made his life into what it is today. That was a requirement he installed into his life a long time ago. A few years before, he had nothing but an old house on an island, and today, after he rebuilt it, it was worth millions of dollars. He also had a hell of a lot more cash than that in the bank. What Kelly didn’t tell Tess was that he couldn’t seek a mate before because there were some conditions he had to meet before he could move on to other things in life. Tess didn’t understand the loneliness he had had to endure living on the Island by himself, year after year. She also didn’t understand; he had a job that no one else in the world could do, but him alone. She didn’t know his chances were very slim that he would even live through it. Tess didn’t know this gentle giant was carrying the weight of the world on his shoulders. Kelly was a man who had more compassion than any man on the planet, and, yet he may not live to see any of his children grow, even if he could have babies. Inside of Kelly was a tender man, and when it came to women, and children, he would stop at nothing to protect, and love them. The man didn’t have one prejudiced bone in his whole body against anyone. He was one warrior fighting alone against mankind’s wild behavior, while he killed anything bad, and destructive in his path. If the governments of the world knew what Kelly Winston Jr was, they wouldn’t shoot him, and take the chance on missing him. They would nuke him instead. That’s how dangerous Kelly Winston Jr was to the world. There was nothing he would not do to protect, to love, and to be loved by others. In the center of this giant’s heart was more love than life itself.

Tess watched it all coming, and regretted everything she said in half a second. She made him cry. Reaching for him, she held him in her arms. “No, no, Kelly,” she told him, stroking her fingers through his hair, and kissing his face. “I’m sorry. I’m a little too emotional right now. I don’t want to see you crying, and I want you to make love to me, but we need to talk about this.”

Those four brief words, “Why the fuck now,” told Kelly so much about Tess

that it hurt him. He was expecting something, but this little woman had shocked him, and that was indeed saying something, because, for Kelly, that had only happened to him a few times in his whole life.

Years ago, he did a complete search about Tess, and her life. He knew every job the girl had, as well as how well she performed at each one. He knew when Tess was sixteen, she, and her best friend, Melissa McPherson, fell in love. Tessa’s heart totally broke when her lover moved to Portland with her mother. Then, she was crushed beyond belief when she lost all contact with Melissa. Tess didn’t know what happened to her or Melissa’s mom. No one has heard of either of them since. With so much going on in his life, Kelly only recently started tracking Tessa’s young love down, and he wouldn’t stop until he found her. He has several private investigators searching for her, but the only thing he knew was that Melissa, and her mother were not in the United States. Finding Tessa’s lover was a demand coming from the center of Kelly’s heart, but he couldn’t tell Tess about it. Because, for all he knew, Melissa, and her mother could be dead.

Kelly knew Tess had three guys in her life who really messed her up. Kelly considered them boys, for their actions with how they treated Tess resembled nothing a man would do. Tim has known her family for a long time. He filled Kelly in on a lot of her past. Kelly even knew Tess, and Tim have wanted each other for many years. But Tim, and she never got together. Kelly knew it was because Tessa’s emotional problems, as well as those three boys, was where the heart of Tessa’s problems were, and the biggest reason why Tim, and Tess never hooked up. Tim’s noble actions along with his honorable ways when dealing with Tess were also another reason. Kelly believed that hindered them from being together. Hands down, Tim was a good man at heart. However, it was because of those three relationships that most of the baggage Tess was carrying around came from.

The first of the worst was Keven.

Everybody living by the ocean drank, most of the trouble happened to people at home, eighty five percent of the time, drugs and alcohol caused most of these problems. There were fistfights, shootings, thefts, and just plain craziness that people make of their lives. Fishermen were a tough crowd, working hard, long hours. Sometimes, they didn’t get paid anything for their trouble. If the boat they were working on didn’t haul in the fish, the owners had nothing to give his crew, and the crew understood this.

Keven was a fisherman. He took Tess when she was eighteen. Their relationship didn’t last long, and Kelly was thankful the girl was smart enough to not get pregnant. Tessa’s relationship with Keven stayed good as far as Kelly was concerned for about three months. The police records showed them showing up at their place about that time, and they kept coming for as long as the two were together. But their problems, Kelly knew, didn’t stop there. First, Tess was getting beat up every once in a while, then the beatings began getting closer together. For a while, she ran home on the weekend to stay away from the abuse. That’s when her mom knew something was going on. When the weekend visits stopped, Tessa’s mom started getting phone calls from Tess after the weekend.

Finally, tired of the situation, her mother, and father showed up on an unexpected visit on a Saturday morning. Keven heard them just walk right inside the house without knocking. Keven booked it out the back kitchen door as they entered the living room. Tess was lying on the couch. She had a rather large fat lip, with a black eye that was half closed. There were other bruises along the side of her body, which she tried to cover up by throwing a blanket over herself. The poor girl started balling as soon as she saw her parents walk into the room. Her mom, and dad didn’t even stop to comfort her; they simply packed her things and took her home.

To this day, Tessa’s father still hasn’t run into Keven, but he still has high hopes.

Once Kelly found out what happened to Tess from his reports concerning that part of her life. Kelly dropped everything he was doing, and tracked Keven down. Keven was still alive today, but Kelly made damn sure he would do nothing like he did to Tess with another female ever again.

The next man/boy in Tessa’s life wasn’t so lucky.

Tony was another fisherman by trade, and he turned Tess on in a big way because he was really into sex like Tess was, or at least the girl thought so. Tess stayed with this guy the longest, and Tony had fun trying everything known to mankind to stick into her body when having sex. But as their lives went on, Tess suspected her body was being used without her consent. They would party a lot with friends, and Tony never hit her, but Tess stopped drinking when they had parties because she thought Tony was spiking her drink. The situation got so bad she would wake up in the morning filthy, with her skin sticking to the bed sheets. There was dried excrement in her hair, and all over her. Tony would just tell her he did it. Tess was nave, and the girl let him use her, even when there were gaps in her memory.

Then, one morning, she woke up and could hardly walk because a bunch from the night before gang-banged her so bad that she had dry blood on her legs, and bruises on her arms, and legs. Tess still thought Tony was the only one doing it, so she confronted him, and told him if he did it again, she would call the cops. Tony apparently told his buddies they needed to chill out for a while, but then, one night, it started again when Tony, and his buddies got together. While working on a car, they started drinking, and then they moved the party inside the house. As the night went on, they were all drinking while playing cards when Tess noticed Tony slip something in her drink.

Leaving the glass on the counter, and half in the bag herself, she staggered off to the bedroom. A while later, Tony came into the room trying to make her feel better, but Tess realized his intentions were not to make her feel better because he forced her to take some pills. Tess fought to keep herself awake as five of their friends came into the bedroom, and abused her in every way that a man can do to a woman. The very next day, Tess left Tony, and ran home with just the clothes on her back.

As for Tony, and his buddies, their whereabouts today are still unknown. Kelly made damn sure they would never be found by anyone ever again. The ocean is indeed a harsh mistress.

Tessa’s last prince charming was Josh, who was sometimes a fisherman, but the man had the gift to gab. He enjoyed being a salesman at Harry’s used car dealership in Belfast. The guy had a lightning tongue with a split personality that could be switched back, and forth at will. It had been a few years since her relationship with Tony. After meeting Mr. love bug, Tess jumped into the man’s bed right away. Kelly couldn’t fault the girl for wanting someone to love her. Josh wasn’t that bad of a guy. He paid for most of the bills because Tess didn’t earn much at the Fisherman’s Wharf, and Josh never hit her. The problem with Josh was the man had a wagging dick, and he needed to seduce at least two different women every week. The sparkle between him, and Tess burned out after a few short months because Josh was getting his pleasure elsewhere. He used Tess as a fuck buddy to have around at the house.

Kelly understood, Tess knew Josh was cheating on her. She told her friends she found his condoms in his coat pockets many times, but Tess just let it slide. Over the last year, or so, she has been pleasuring herself because she didn’t have anyone in her life who understood what she needed. And Josh was clueless about Tessa’s potential, or how to touch her sexually anymore. Tess also couldn’t run home anymore. It was a trade-off. She had an okay place to live, with the exception that Josh just couldn’t satisfy her.

Kelly, in many ways, blew Tess’s world all to hell. Tess wouldn’t find out until later that Josh had lost his job at the car dealership the day Kelly took Tess away from him at the restaurant. Mr. Love Bug was forced to go back to earning his living at fishing until something better came up. When Kelly was turning Tess on in his lap at the Fisherman’s Wharf, Josh was home getting smashed.

Kelly understood Tess let herself be a punching bag for a drunk to release his anger, and as a sex toy, and a plaything, but back then, she was a young girl. Herself worth was just as low now as it was back then. Tess also had her other problems, and couldn’t seem to find someone who didn’t judge her. She was used, like a lot of other women. That was her life, but Kelly knew he would change all of that now.

After a while, Tess calmed Kelly down. Laying in each other arm’s, she held his member in her hand. He was getting excited. “Oh my God,” Tess thought, running her hands over his large body. “What a beautiful man. He was trying to be so gentle with me. He’s afraid of hurting me.”

Getting out of bed, she removed her robe, and laid back down beside him. Thoroughly enjoying the sensations and desires spilling from the pours of her skin. Tess ran her hands over his smooth lower body. Their body-to-body contact heated her love for him as it aroused, and excited the beast within Kelly. He placed his loving desire on her back, and began loving her.

However, he had to watch her closely because he was still a two-hundred-and-fifty-pound male on top of a little woman of hundred and thirty pounds. Kelly thought this whole situation was just a little too funny. So much about Tessa’s life was about to change for her. She was going to understand things about her own body that no one in this world knew, but him, and her alone. Kelly wasn’t a normal guy at all. He had big dreams with a lot of secrets. Tess would end up embracing her future with him, but sadly, the girl didn’t have one clue what this night would do to her life, or the lives of everyone else on the planet.

Tess was so turned on that as soon as he touched her, she started moaning. As he entered her, she was screaming his name. By the time he started moving faster, she was out of control, screaming louder, and louder as he slowly built up his rhythm.

She really was wonderful, Kelly thought to himself. He was loving her with every moment of the day, and every stroke of her beneath him. She was like a young girl again, having sex for the first time. Crying out with deep throaty responses because she was helpless to him. Kelly almost laughed out loud, watching her face turn beet red. He knew what she was about to experience for the first time in her life. Tess would understand what an Alpha felt like inside of her body. He knew she would never be the same woman again.

Whispering into her ear, he told her. “Baby, brace yourself. Hold on to me real

tight, and don’t let go.”

As soon as her arms wrapped around his neck, she pulled him down onto her. Kelly opened his mind, and heart, letting Tess feel who Kelly Winston really was, and the power that he had locked inside of him. There just wasn’t any defense for it. The poor girl just kept screaming over, and over, and over at the top of her lungs as her body was no longer hers. Bucking her hips, she kicked her legs out as he poured more of his love into her. Tess was now trapped within her own body she could only ride it out and pray to die.

Suddenly, her orgasms became stronger, and more powerful as they rolled over on top of themselves. Sweat began pouring from her pours so fast, it was soaking the bed. Kelly knew she would not take much more. She was already having a hard time breathing, and it wasn’t from the sexual contact alone.

Tess no longer had any concept of time. When they finished, she would believe they had made love for at least an hour, but if Kelly rushed it, and finished it soon. In reality. Only a few minutes will have passed.

Kelly increased his efforts as he gave her everything inside of himself all at once. Tessa’s eyes snapped wide open with a look of terror written on her face, but the Alpha’s presence within her closed them. Her body totally freaked out. Her upper half slammed into his chest over, and over as she tried to get up while her legs kicked back, and forth, hitting him in the thighs. If anyone had seen the two locked together. They would have thought Kelly was raping her, and the sounds coming from Tessa’s own mouth would have backed up that fact.

Kelly was quickly becoming lost with his own orgasm when Tessa’s body violently shook, giving him one last chilling scream. Kelly shut her body down from within. She was out cold on her back but as per Tessa’s own instructions. He continued in her lifeless body until the howl of the wolf emerged from deep within him.

When it was over, he rested above her. The bed was ruined, soaking wet with a mixture of sweat, and their lovemaking. It was as if someone had poured water over the spot where they were laying. So much moisture had come out of both of them, that they would need to hydrate soon.

Kelly knew his power. He could have killed a person like this with his love

alone. He had to know when to shut his female down because she needed to be protected at all costs. After a while, Tess could handle him, but the first contact like this was out of the mind, pleasurable, and seemingly totally out of control.

He let her be as he cleaned himself, then he would tend to her. For now, he would keep his inner animal closed to her for a while. Tess would now stay with him for the rest of her life, and nothing he did would ever make her change her mind.

What Kelly knew, and Tess didn’t understand, and what Frank and Glory didn’t know, was that Kelly had a reason to do what he did with Tess at the restaurant. Kelly wanted to make an unequivocal statement that said, “I want you. You are mine. I am here for you to love until my last dying day.” He did all of this by bringing the girl through an uncontrollable pleasurable sexual experience with a man Tess thought she could never have as her own.

Time slowly slipped by. Tess woke up.

As she opened her eyes, Tess knew there was something different about her. She felt wonderful. Her whole body was glowing, and sparkling under a star-filled sky. The fact her body was glowing never even registered to her because her body felt like it was brand new. Never in her life did she ever feel better than she did right now. Looking up at the millions of stars spread across the night sky. A big, friendly moon was smiling down on her. It seemed so close to her, that she gave a little laugh because she almost said, “Hi” to it. She was lying on the back of her lover’s boat, and Tess couldn’t help but to just keep smiling. Never has she felt so happy, and completely loved in her life.

“My loving Lord,” she spoke into the thin air. “What has happened to me?”

Her body wasn’t just glowing; it was on fire, in love with Kelly, and everything in the world. Laying on the deck of the boat by herself, Kelly wasn’t anywhere in sight. However, she could feel him inside the cabin. He was reaching for two glasses, and a bottle of wine. He also had something in his left hand. With so many new experiences, and feelings flooding into her mind, it was hard for Tess to understand all of them.

“Oh, my Lord. You are indeed loving me,” she declared to him. “I love you too,” she quietly told him.

Tears flowed down her cheeks as Kelly stepped nude from the cabin carrying the items she saw him take. Tess herself was naked, laying on something soft besides a platter of food. There were chocolate-covered strawberries, pieces of fresh fruit, cheeses, and meats all sitting beside her. Kelly had also put some kind of perfume on her, and she loved it, whatever it was. It was just out of this world. There were also two boxes sitting off to the side on the deck.

It took her a moment to realize it, but since coming awake, she finally noticed

that she never once turned her head to look up at the sky, or down to the side of her. She had taken in everything all around her as a whole with one glance of her mind since she woke up.

After setting the things he was carrying down on the deck, Kelly went into her arms, and kissed her. “I love you,” he told her.

“I love you too.”

“Kelly. What have you done to me?” Tears continued falling from her eyes

because she was feeling so happy, and the world was right in her eyes for the first time of her life. “What did you do to me? Did you give me drugs, or something?”

He held her in his arms as they both leaned back on over-sized pillows, and gazed up into the evening sky.

“No, my darling. Nothing is wrong, so dry your eyes. We have much to do this night...how do you feel?”

“It’s really weird. I feel as if I’ve been reborn. I’m me, but then again, I’m not. My whole body is tingling. I feel stronger than early today. I’m sure I could pick you up off the ground if I really wanted to. Am I making any sense at all?” she asked him.

Kelly couldn’t help himself, but laugh. He knew it would take her time to adjust to her new body. “No wine for you for a little while,” he told her, laughing again. “But I do have some wonderful gifts for you.”

She pulled him down to lie full length against her. “I want you, Kelly.”

“Hold on,” he told her. “Wait just one minute. We need to talk about some things first. Anyway, I will not make love to you just, yet.”

“Tess, how long do you think we have been floating here?”

Without a watch to judge by, she guessed by looking at the sky through her mind again, while staring straight into his eyes.

“Oh, hours.” She guessed. “The sun has been down for at least three, or four

hours.”

“Baby, this may be hard for you to believe, but this is our third night here.”

Alarmed, she yelled, “You mean I have been asleep for two fucking days!”

The panic in her voice rang clear, so Kelly jumped on it. Taking one box beside him, he handed it to her.

“Tess, for now. I am asking you to follow me. I am going to share things with you that you can never reveal to anyone. We’ll talk more about all of this later, but for right now, if you can follow me without questioning me, then open that gift. If you can’t, then set it back down on the deck.”

It only took Tess a nanosecond for her make up her mind. She tore the wrapping off the gift, and opened the oversized box. Sitting inside the red velvet interior were twelve miniature long-stem roses with stems made of gold along diamond cut in the shape of a blooming rosebud sitting on top of each stem.

Standing in the middle of the box was an engagement ring. The band of the ring was very narrow, and the diamonds on top were in a raised cluster that reached out from the ring.

Kelly softly asked her. “Tessa, will you marry me?”

All hell suddenly broke loose in the boat’s stern as Tess fell completely apart. She started crying like she wanted her mamma, and she wasn’t showing any signs of slowing down. She flew into his arms, holding the box to her chest with one hand, and guarding the twelve roses, and the ring with the other. No matter what he did, Kelly couldn’t get her to stop crying. When he tried being nice, and comforting to her, she just got worse in volume.

Thinking to himself, “What’s a man to do in a situation like this?” Kelly removed the ring from the box; he closed the top then set it off to the side. Tess watched his every move, still balling, holding on to him for the sake of her life. Kelly put the ring on her ring finger, then kissed her, and she increased her volume even more. He knew the poor girl, at this point, couldn’t stop crying, even if she wanted to. Carefully, he picked her up, placed her on her back, and made love to her.

Afterwards, he had to laugh when she told him, “See, I told you I could handle you.”

Lying beside her, he held her, and showed his affection by kissing, and tickling her into submission. High on each other’s love, Tess wished the night never to end. They were on their dream night, a night they would remember for many years to come.

Kelly then gave her his other gift. While she opened it, he told her what it was

It was a bottle of perfume he sprayed on her, and there was also a necklace.

“Oh, my sweet lord, Kelly. It’s beautiful, and I’m sure it’s expensive. She asked him, “What’s the number three for?”

The necklace was a heavy, and thick numeral three made of solid gold with a gold cross attached on top of the number three. Some of the smallest diamonds Tess has ever seen were attached across the face of the cross.

“The number three. That’s a good luck charm.” he told her. “Didn’t you know God loves the number three?”

Tess only shook her head, acknowledging that she didn’t know that fact.

“Well, it’s true,” he said. “there are a lot of things in the bible that happen in three’s.”

Using one hand, he counted out one finger at a time. “The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, that makes three. Tess, there are going to be other three’s in our life. To tell you the truth, there is going to be a lot of excitement, and danger. Remember what I told you? You can’t tell anyone about the things I teach you, Tess. And you tell no one, not even the cops. We live secret lives, and what Joe public knows of us is because that’s what we want them to see.”

Tess shook her head, agreeing with him. Anyway, she couldn’t talk because she had her mouth stuffed with strawberries, and other fruit she had been chowing on for the past few minutes.

“You fell asleep two days ago because of me, and what I did to you is slowly

changing you. You are now a little different from the way you were before. Just being near me can change an Alpha, but with you, I did it all at once. That was all I could do for you. Through further training along with a firm belief in God, you will get stronger. It’s a lot like trying to live a healthy life,” he told her. “Didn’t you feel how strong you were when we just made love? I was loving you as hard as I could. The other day, you would have been flattened out, and bled to death.”

“Ya, I was thinking about that,” she told her lover. “Today, I feel newer and happier, but I’m still horny.” She looked up into his eyes. “Think you can do something about that stud?” she asked, reaching for a locking hold of his member.

Kelly brushed her hand away from him. “Tess, stop it. There are a bunch of things I still need to tell you, and what I am going to tell you next is the most important job you have. Tess, in our family, if an Alpha is upset, and crying, we must put a stop to it right away. An Alpha can be extremely dangerous when we get too emotional. Also, I will not let any addictive behaviors in our lives, and it will be everyone’s job to keep the well-being of our family. However, if I see anything upsetting the balance of our lives. I will step on it. Anyone not conforming to our ways, I’ll throw their ass into the ocean.”

“Now, I have to leave for a while when we get back.”

Tess stopped eating, sharply she looked at him. She swallowed before she spoke. “But what…?”

“Kelly, what about me? What if you don’t come back home? You keep talking about danger, and throwing people into the ocean, and now you’re leaving me. I’ll be all alone.”

Kelly knew she was still living with Josh, and now, with her being engaged to him, she thought they would go out to the Island together.

“You still have your job if you want it,” he told her. “Gloria had your mother fill in while we were away. So that will give you something to do. You can also live on the Freeloader at the docks. or go home to your mom and dad. I am also going to give you some money as well.”

Kelly had already hacked into the girl’s bank account, and found a grand total of nineteen dollars and thirty-five cents.

“You can get a hotel if you want, or go back to the apartment,” he told her. “Because Josh isn’t there. He’ll be fishing for a while.”

“What do you mean, Kelly, he works at Harry’s car dealership?”

“Not anymore; he doesn’t,” he informed her. “His boss found out he was screwing his wife. As of two days ago, he’s back on Billy’s boat, long lining off the Grand Banks. But even if he does come home,” he told her, “tell him to get the hell out. If he won’t leave, smash a few holes into the walls, then tell the cops he is scaring you with his temper. Tell them his threatening behavior has gotten worse since he lost his job, and Tess, do tell them why he lost his job.”

The look on Tessa’s face was priceless. Her bewildered expression made Kelly confess. “My love. I make it my business to know everything, and understanding human beings is a subject at the top of my list. I never really stop studying them. Tess, I am an Alpha who stands alone by himself, for there is no other like me. Truthfully. I am like everyone else. However, I am not. Honey, you will understand more about this later. I have said too much tonight. There is so much I need to teach you.”

“Tess, you too are an alpha, but you didn’t know it. I will train you myself. I believe you will grow to be one of the strongest female alphas I have ever known. Like I said, I have been watching you for a very long time. I wasn’t worried someone would take you from me during all these years because no one can.”

“Tess, what did you feel when you first met me, and how did you feel when I was inside of you the night we got here?”

“From the first moment I met you. I felt like something was pulling us both

together. It was more than just being attractive to you. I saw the love coming from you the moment I saw you. That’s when I fell in love with you. Our love-making the other night was so overpowering. It felt like your love had wrapped itself around me, penetrating into the cells of my body. There were so many other things going on that I kind of lost it. I don’t really remember all of it. Am I making any sense, or have I lost touch with wanting you so badly?” she asked him.

He kissed her as she said that.

The girl was perfect even if she thought so low of herself. Kelly knew this one would change fast. He would have to watch her closely giving her an outlet to release her pinned-up emotions, and energy. He already knew sex would be that outlet for her. Not because he wanted it, but because that was something Tess had been deprived of for most of her life. Inside Tess was a wildcat crying out to be released from the hold that society, and the world had on her.

“Tess, my love, you will never have need of anything, for I will give you the world, and if anyone ever hurts you, or harms you; I will surely kill them. I also want you to get in touch with Tim while I am away. He has loved you for a very long time.”

“Gee, Kelly, what are you telling me? You want me to fuck him?”

Kelly got mad, and told her. “Don’t be like that. You know, now that you said that. You do as you wish with him, but only him. I have known Tim for years. He’s a hell of a guy, and a lot like me. If something ever happens between Tim and you, I want you to have a good time, and make each other happy. Because if you do. I will know that the two people I cherish the most are taking care of each other.”

Kelly took her face in his large hands drawing her closer to his. “Listen, my love. You are my first Alpha. I vow to you that for the rest of my life, I will love you. For the rest of my life, I will protect you. When I am away, I will send you flowers, candy, cards, gifts, and letters every chance I get. I will send for you, or come to you, and make love to you. And if, by chance, someone kills you. I will honor you by killing 500,000 of those sons of bitches. I will rip out their bloodline, and remove their spine from the backside of their country. That is how great my love is for you. Tess, never, ever forget that there is no other man in this world who loves you greater than I.”

As he kissed her, more tears streamed down her face. Tessa could hardly stand how Kelly was treating her, and his words to her were the greatest thing he had given her thus far. Tess was realizing, Kelly was a poet, among many other things. She was ready to die to lie with this great man, even as his smooth, hard body ripped her up every time he was inside of her. Never in her life has anyone treated her like Kelly has, except for her lost love, and best friend, Melissa. She really didn’t know what in the hell was going on with all the things Kelly was telling her, and frankly, she didn’t care. What she did know was that she had a one-of-a-kind man in her arms. If anyone hurt him, she would rip out their throats with her teeth alone.

Laying back in each other’s arms, they were silently watching the night sky, when suddenly, Kelly jumped to his feet.

“There,” he screamed, pointing into the southern star-lit sky. A rocket had just been launched from Portsmouth, New Hampshire. It climbed into the heavens on a long, bright tail of flame shooting from its boosters.

“Baby, look at her go. What do you think, Tess?”

Tess was almost too afraid to ask him. “Kelly, did you put that thing up there?”

“What I did was to funnel two hundred and thirty-seven million dollars through dummy corporations to pay for the whole thing without telling the rest of the world our organization existed. A small broadcasting company asked the government to put up two communication satellites to help transmit their signal. They were the ones who paid for it. I added cameras to the satellites so the government boys could see parts of the world that were blind to them before the Sat’s were up. It was a shoe-in; they took the bait.

“Once both Sat’s are up, and running, know what we can do, Tess.”

“Ah, watch the news at eleven,” she said, giving him a devilish smile.

“Wrong, my lovely, and horny lover. You will have me in a minute, so remove thy hand from my person.”

Tessa still had yet to let go of Kelly, even when he was romancing her with his sweet words. Once, he even had to pull her mouth off of him. He tried moving away from her, but she kept following him around, grabbing a locking a hold on him. She couldn’t seem to get enough of him, and her small, little body wrapped around him.

“When the other rocket goes up tomorrow night, you and I will be able to see a huge part of the world from our island. We will also be able to communicate with each other even though we both are on opposite sides of the planet,” he proudly finished.

Kelly waited for Tess to give him some sort of praise for his monumental accomplishment. He wanted to boast, and talk about this wonderful feat he had just made. He was disappointed Tess didn’t seem to want to talk about it.

“Will you stop fighting me, and stay on your back?” She-flat-out told him, “I want you to make love to me again, and you’re damn well going to give it to me.” She pinned him down on his back then jumped on top of him in one smooth maneuver.

“Yeah,” she screamed in triumph!

Not even bothering to see if he was ready, or not. Tess thrust her hot little body down on him. Kelly was enjoying watching her in action. She was definitely hot after his manhood. He almost laughed out loud. She was having so much fun with him. Laying back, he put his hands behind his head, watching her satisfy herself again, and again on him. She was so overwhelmed; it seemed to him she forgot he was even there.

Throughout the evening, they made love, and cuddled, and just before they fell asleep. Kelly’s last thought of the day was that he could always handcuff her so he could get some rest. That put a smile on his face as they both drifted off to sleep.

Next morning, the two lovers slowly drove the Freeloader back to Belfast. Tess

sat on Kelly’s lap the whole way. Kelly told her he had opened an account for her at the United Fleet Bank in Belfast.

The surprised look on Tessa’s face was priceless. She then asked how wealthy he was. When he told her, she slipped off of his lap falling to the deck. Tess would never ask Kelly about money ever again.

He also told her to stay on the cabin cruiser until he got back, and to take the Freeloader out whenever she wanted to. He wasn’t worried about her driving the big boat. Tess, and her family have lived, and worked on the water all their lives. Tess knew these waters, as well as how to handle a big boat the size of the Freeloader. Kelly then told her to junk her Vega because he thought the vehicle was a death trap. He told her to ask Tim to help her pick out another car.

“Now listen, I expect to be gone two, or three weeks, but anything could delay me. So, if I am not back by then, I’ll get in touch with you as soon as I can. There’s a satellite phone inside the cabin with instructions on how to use it.”

“I’ll call you as much as I can,” he told her. She started crying.

“Tess, stop it. I can’t leave with you with you being upset. An Alpha doesn’t do that.” He held her close, kissing her until she stopped.

“I have a late afternoon meeting in Portland, then, I am going backpacking for a few days to clear my head. I’ll have to go to Boston afterwards, but I’ll call you as much as I can. After that, I will be off the grid for a while. Are you OK now? You have five hundred thousand dollars. It shouldn’t be too hard to find something to do.”

The girl broke down again. “I love you,” she told him as tears streamed down

her face.

The emotional outburst was worse than before. It took Kelly another hour before he could jump into his uncle’s jeep, and drive off. Tess was sure to go into the restaurant today, Kelly called, and ordered a hundred dozen long-stem roses to be delivered there for her.

Now, he had to get to Portland.

Tess decided to take Kelly’s advice, and live on the Freeloader while he was away. After Kelly left for Portland, he did call her a few times, but she hasn’t heard from him in several days. The day he left her at the docks, she cleared out what stuff she had at her apartment, and left Josh a note.

“Here are the condoms you couldn’t find, asshole. I hope you enjoyed fucking your boss’s wife because if you bother me in any way, Kelly will kill you.” As an afterthought, she added. “Kelly asked me to marry him, and I accepted his offer.”

Then she went, and paid all of her parents’ utility bills with advance money paid up front so they wouldn’t have any other bills coming in for a while. She also stopped by their bank, and paid off the loan on their house.

The bank called Tessa’s mother that afternoon, and informed her about the

house loan. As soon as Miss Mitchell set the phone down, it took her thirty seconds to jump into her old Dodge truck. She laid down four thick black tire marks on the pavement as she peeled out to track down her daughter. She found Tess right where she expected, at the Fisherman’s Wharf. They both had a long talk over lunch. Her mother knew about her, and Kelly but not how she got the money. Gloria, who was almost family, came over and joined them while Tess was telling her mother she, and her dad didn’t have to worry about their bills anymore because she would help them. She told her mother she also wanted to do something about her dad working on his lobster boat.

“Mom, you need to keep Dad away from that boat of his. The damn thing is so

old it’s ready to sink on him while he’s pulling traps. I should know. I’ve worked on it with him for most of my life. It’s going to kill him one of these days,” she told her mother.

“Tessa, you know full well that lobster boat is off limits to me. Your dad’s been earning a living on the water for nearly thirty years with that one boat. Anyway, he’ll just repair it like he has always done in the past,” she told her daughter.

“Your mother’s right, Tess.” Gloria advised her. “Stay away from that one for now. I know your dad. He’s a proud man. If you take that boat away from him, he’ll kill somebody. Kelly understands people really good. Talk with him after you guys get settled in, and deal with that later.”

Mother and daughter, and friend spent the rest of the afternoon at the restaurant. After her mother went home, Tess cleaned the Freeloader because she was hoping to get Tim over for dinner that night.

Later that night, while Tess waited for Tim to get back from the store to get Zesty Italian dressing that she forgot to pick up. Two juicy tenderloin stakes were slowly cooking on a small hibachi on the stern of the boat. Tess laid back on the bed in the cabin cruiser, wondering where Kelly was. Badly missing him, she wondered what he was up to.

Tim could see how lonely she was the second he saw her. He himself was thinking of going to the Fisherman’s Wharf to have dinner, but Tess told him. She was too depressed to be around other people, and was wondering whether he would have dinner with her on the Freeloader.

Tim could hardly believe the sudden change in the girl. Tess was acting more mature behaving like a beautiful woman whom she had hidden away all of these years. Sure, he knew she was feeling lonely because Kelly was away, but to him. Her whole demeanor seemed to change overnight. He was happy for both of them, even though he had always wanted Tess for himself. The change in her because of Kelly still made him happy. Before, every time he, and she were around each other, Tess was with one moron or another. He thought Kelly was a hell of a guy, and he had to admit Kelly sure did snatch Tess right out of Josh's arms. It also pleased him when Tess told him Kelly wanted him to help her buy a car while he was away. He, and Kelly were great friends, but it still warmed his heart, knowing Kelly trusted Tim’s judgment, and also trusted him with Tess. Both men knew they had feelings for the four-foot-eight green eye beauty. Tess was always fun to be with. Tim had no problem driving around to different car lots with the sexy, and excitable younger woman.

After two days of looking for a car, they still haven’t found the one Tess wanted. There were a lot of superb cars on the lots they looked at, but Tessa wasn’t happy with anything Tim was showing her. By the end of day two, Tess still had not found a car she liked. Tim showed her a black sport utility vehicle but, to his amazement, she turned it down.

Sitting in his Jeep, she must have felt his disappointment. Taking his hands in hers, she told him. “Tim, I’m sorry, but I’ll know it when I see it,” she assured him.

“It’s alright, Tess. At least I get to drive around with a beautiful girl all day.”

That earned him a fast kiss on his lips.

The puzzled look he gave her because of her kiss provoked her response. Turning him so she could look into his dark brown eyes, she explained. “Tim, I want you to understand something. We never got together, but you, and I know we both have deep feelings for each other. We have known one other for a long time, and you are one hell of a catch for any woman. But I want you to know. Kelly knows what I’m about to do, and Tim, if you stop me,” she warned him, “I’ll walk the rest of the way home by myself.”

Not saying anything further, she took his face in her hands, and kissed him again. Tim started protesting by pushing her away, but Tess thought he must have quickly thought it over because he wrapped his arms around her, pressing his upper body into hers.

Running her small fingers through his black hair, they continued kissing as Tim ran his hands down her back, and up her sides to brush against her breast. Moving forward with the moment, Tess took hold of his hand, brought it to her breast, and made him firmly cup her. Moaning into his mouth, she dropped her hand

into his lap taking hold of the bulge she found there.

He didn’t pull away from her when she took hold of him. Instead, he put his face beside hers, and whispered into her ear. “Tess, we have to stop. I mean, yes. I know we have feelings for each other, but I will not love you, and still not be able to have you. I cannot do that, no matter what Kelly thinks.”

“Timothy Franklin Scott, this I can deal with.” She squeezed him through his jeans, and was pleased it had some effect. “I am in love with you, and I always have been. You can play hard to get all you want, but you listen to me, mister man. I will have you, maybe not right now, but you can bet your sweet ass I will have you, and soon,” she threatened.

When Tim let her out of the jeep at the Freeloader, he took her, and quickly kissed her. “There aren’t any more dealerships around here in Belfast. I think we need to go down to Portland tomorrow. They’ll have a much bigger selection of vehicles down there. I know you love the waterfront, so we can have lunch at your choice of restaurant.”

“Alright, I’ll see you later,” she told him.

Turning to leave, she was suddenly spun around. Tim had her in his embrace pressing his lips on hers one last time. When he let go of her, Tessa’s cheeks were the color of cherries, and her eyes were bright, and a bit dazzled by his need for one more kiss.

“Okay,” she said, more to herself. “I think I better take a cold shower tonight.

I don’t think I trust myself.” Laughing mostly to herself, she ran over to where the Freeloader was docked.

Tim stood there watching her go. He remembered that, over the years, he had watched her run. He knew the little woman was fast as hell. Tess was short, and light on her top, but those little legs could pick up speed super-fast.

The next day, as they got out of Tim’s Jeep at the first big dealership they came to in Portland. A salesman was watching them through the tall glass windows. He went outside to greet them.

Walking up to them with a bright, friendly smile, he asked. “Hi, guys. Are you interested in looking at a new car?”

Tim spoke for Tess. “Yes sir, we are, but Tess is having trouble finding one”

Tim felt Tess pulling on his arm. As she did, she turned him around, while pointing to a truck across the lot. Where Tessa pointed sat a monster of a truck being displayed with the whole truck on a tall ramp, as if it were climbing up a steep mountainside. The windshield was folded down flat on the hood to show how hunters of the Serengeti would hunt for lions from the opening. The truck was the biggest damn thing Tim had ever seen in his life. He figured it was probably the biggest damn thing on the road other than a semi.

With no hesitation, he told her. “No way, Tess. That thing is going to kill you. It’s the biggest damn thing I have ever seen.” Tim couldn’t believe what he was seeing with his own eyes. “Damn, that thing is a monster.”

The truck in question was a sea green 4x4 Range Rover, and it matched the color of Tessa’s eyes, which meant everything to her. It was brand new, but it was the style of older models they made to use in South Africa’s outback. It had a hoist system on the front bumper with a spare tire hanging on the back hatch. Tim knew the truck must have had a lift kit installed because it was higher off the ground than it should have been. The truck also had tall, wide mud tires on it. Tim knew the truck had one of the largest V-eight engines that they had made. He knew under the hood of that truck was enough horsepower to put the space shuttle into a low orbit around the earth. It was also incredibly heavy in size to protect passengers from attacks from water buffalo, and rhinos. Fasten to the back of the truck was an eight-foot antenna that was pinned to the front corner of the roof.

In short, Tim finally understood why it took Tess so long to find a car. Because Tessa had been looking for a green frigging tank without the cannon on top of it.

Again, he told her without taking his eyes off the truck, “No way, Tess. I mean, how the hell are you going to get in the damn thing?” Tim was totally paralyzed by the situation.

Tim thought to himself. “The damn truck would scare the hell out of anyone just looking at it,” He knew it scared him just thinking about Tess driving it. Then he thought of Kelly, and what might happen when he got back, and saw Tessa driving this friggin beast.

Tess didn’t have too much luck with Tim. She told him she would know the right vehicle when she saw it. Now that they found it, he goes male on her. Tim’s chauvinistic attitude was wearing her thin. Tess took the most direct approach to her problem to get what she wanted.

Drilling her eyes up at the salesman, she dared him to refuse her. “How much for the truck?”

Taken aback by her question, the salesman told her, “Miss, that truck is a hell of a lot of truck. Are you sure you don’t maybe want a hybrid, or compact car? That’s also a bigger model than they usually make. It’s our show model. It helps us to get people to stop by, and see if we can help them find a car in our lot.”

The thought of this very cute four-foot-nothing little girl driving that massive truck down a busy street with people trying to cross it while parking their own cars

concerned him. He was a father himself, and thinking of Tessa’s dad seeing her behind the wheel of this truck was just too much for even him.

Tess looked back at the enormous truck as if in thought, then turned back to the salesman. Tim still couldn’t take his eyes off the monster.

“Is it real? Does it run, and everything?” she asked the salesman.

Her question knocked Tim out of his trance. Snapping his head back around to her, he said. “Tess, that thing is way too much for you, baby.” Tim knew he screwed up as soon as he said it, but it was out of his mouth before he could stop himself. Tess went on the defensive without even looking at him, and told him flat out to shut the hell up.

“Well, I’m waiting,” she sternly told the salesman.

Tim knew, and the guy knew, the truck was way too much for a little woman like Tess, but it was his job to sell cars. The salesman tried using the only defense he had left to get this pretty young girl into a car that would be much better suited for her.

“Sugar, that frigging truck cost a shitload of money,” he told her.

Tess said nothing while she thought about what she was doing. Making up her mind, she got really close to the salesman and told him using the solid, flat tone of her voice. “Sir, my soon-to-be husband,” she held up her hand, showing him her engagement ring. “Is six foot two, and he’s two hundred and fifty pounds without an ounce of fat on him.”

Then she added, “He also is in the running to have more money than God, and could buy hundreds of these dealerships.”

Suddenly, raising her voice, she yelled at the guy, “Are you going to sell me that damn truck. or not?” With her last word, she took two fingers, and poked the guy hard in the stomach.

“Uff...” came out from between the man’s lips as he took two quick steps back, trying to keep his distance from the little firecracker in front of him.

Tim could see the guy was really thinking hard about the situation, but it wasn’t the truck the salesman had on his mind. It was the visualization of this tiny little girl on her back with a naked two-hundred-and-fifty-pound male riding on top of her that had shocked him.

Suddenly, the guy smile got friendlier. “Right this way, Miss,” he said with his hand held out, directing Tess, and Tim inside the dealership. “Let’s go inside, and we’ll go over the details, and get you back home with that wonderful truck. I could see right away why you would want it. The color indeed matches your lovely eyes,” he told her.

Tess gave him a big smile while Tim swiftly dug through his brain, trying to figure out a way to get a hold of Kelly. He didn’t have any numbers on him, but he was sure Tess did.

“Tess, do you have Kelly’s cell number? I must have lost it.” He knew he had to try.

Lying, she told him, “No.”

Tim knew Kelly wouldn’t really hurt him, but he figured he just might run him over with that damn truck. Hell, if Tess spent all of this time looking for a car that matched her eye color. He would have gotten her a green ten-speed mountain bike.

“Thank you,” Tess told the salesman as he held open the door for her, and the three filed into the showroom through the side doors.

Tess stopped halfway through the doorway, and piped up a thought. “Maybe I should test drive it first.”

The last word wasn’t out of her mouth as both men turned to her at the same time, and screamed, “No!”

Thinking quickly, the salesman added, “Miss, don’t you think it would be wise to get used to driving it somewhere where some idiot won’t hit you, and claim it’s your fault?”

“Ya, that is good advice,” she told the salesman. “Thanks.”

Tim gave the guy the thumbs up from behind Tessa’s back. The salesman rolled his eyes at him. The dealership was delivering Tim’s Jeep back home. Tess tried to jump in the driver’s seat of the killer truck until Tim pushed her over to the passenger side.

On the way home, she asked, “Where are we going to test the truck at?”

He noticed she said test, and not to teach her how to drive it. “Well, I guess as soon as I can find some place with forty acres of flat, open ground,” he told her.

Tim knew right where to go. For the rest of the afternoon, Tess did as he asked.. Although he had to admit she handled the monster truck like a professional, she still needed to get accustomed to the size of the beast. He was surprised at how well she drove it until she told him, “Tim, not only did my daddy teach me how to drive. He did it with a big four-wheel-drive truck. Dad always told me if I could handle four wheels, I could drive anything.”

Tim was taken aback by her knowledge of driving four wheels, and he told her so. She impressed him with her skills, but he also knew he was madly in love with her. Tim knew he was a good-looking guy. However, Kelly was a hell of a lot bigger man. Tim knew Tess would fit just fine in his arms. Getting back to the Belfast docks, she got really cozy with him giving him a long lover’s kiss while pressing up against him.

“Tess, that is enough,” he told her, holding her out at arm’s length.

“Tim, I’ve loved you, and Kelly for a long time. But Kelly just came into the restaurant and took me. I didn’t have any power to resist him, and it feels like I never will. He did something to me that first night when he made love to me. I don’t know what in the hell happened, but Tim, I can’t get enough of it, and Kelly knows it. He really likes, and respects you. Both of you have a great friendship.”

She moved back into his embrace, quickly kissing him. Softly, she told him. “Tim, if you want me, you can have me.”

Taking his hand, she brought him into the Freeloader’s cabin. He followed her into the interior. There were so many times in the past when he thought of taking Tess, but to him, it would dishonor the girl, and himself to move on her while she was with another man.

Reaching the bedroom, Tess took off her clothes then stood naked in front of him. When she reached for him, her scent hit Tim like a tidal wave as the undertow sucked him closer into her embrace. Her aroma was so desirably strong and sweet. It had Tim’s head swimming in her tidal waters of love. Looking up at him, stone serious, the sparkle in her evergreen eyes beckoned for him to take her as her chest rapidly rose and fell in her need of him.

“Tess, please stop. I can’t do this, and anyone looking at me would know that I want to, but I am not about to do this with you right now.” As soon as he said it, he regretted it.

Tess lowered her eyes to the floor, and bit her bottom lip. Tim damn near jumped her right then. She was just too cute. Tim knew a strong current had a hold of him, and every minute he was alone with her, he was getting closer to abandoning the ship.

“Tess, even if Kelly said this was okay with him, I can’t do it. The man is a good friend of mine, and I know if I stole a hundred thousand dollars from him. I know he wouldn’t do anything to me. The guy seems to have an understanding about people that almost no one else has.”

Tim has watched Kelly closely over the years, and even he had to admit Kelly was a one-of-a-kind man, not to mention a soft, and gentle giant. It always surprised the hell out of Tim when meeting someone with Kelly as a situation developed at random. Kelly always knew just what to do, or say, and he would do it in such a calm, calculating way. It was weird at first, but that feeling went away the more he hung around the guy.

Thinking back, it seemed to him after meeting Kelly that he started shooting through his online computer courses from the University of Maine with a grace of speed he didn’t have before. Tim knew there was something definitely different about his friend, but whatever that was, he just didn’t know.

Looking up at him, Tess asked. “Please, at least help me?” Saying that, she got into bed, and lay down.

Tim knew Tessa’s actions were making him slowly crack. Tess was a wonderful-looking younger woman whom he had always desired, and Tim knew right now that she needed him. Reaching out, she took his hand then placed it between her legs as Tim’s other hand searched out to the rest of her body.

Tess was breathing hard before she got her clothes off, but now with his hands on her. She was pushing up against his fingers, moaning quietly as she totally laid herself open to him. Tim’s eyes roamed over her body.

Tess had what he would call runners’ breasts, enough to hold on to but not big enough to bother her when she ran. Over the years, he had watched her in her early morning runs. She loved the wind blowing through her hair. That is until her life turned for the worst with terrible relationships with at least two of the three men she had in her life.

Tim was thinking too deeply and didn’t see it coming when, without warning, Tess tilted her head back, and cried out as she had her first orgasm.

Afterward, when she opened her eyes, she watched as Tim got into bed with

her. Laying down between her legs, he guided himself inside of her.

“Oh God...yes...” Tess cried as he settled himself in her.

Later, out of breath in each other’s arms, they continued touching each other dearly, trying to hold on to the moment of time, and space. Tim kept his leg locked in between her legs, feeling the moisture from their loving mixed with their overheated bodies. Their eye contact alone, and the sight of their bodies together was inflaming their desires once more.

“I love you, Tim. I always have since I was a young girl. And to tell you God’s honest truth, Kelly wanted this to happen because he knows we love each other. He was bringing you, and me together because we both will always have that need until we do something about it.”

Softly calling for him, she told him. “I can feel you are ready. Love me again. I need this, and so do you.”

Tim knew he was a fool for not taking Tessa away from the other men in her life before Kelly took her. Now, he was cheating on his best friend. Tim knew he had to stuff those thoughts deep inside himself for right now. Tess needed his attention. The girl just wasn’t acting like she used to. Suddenly, for whatever reason, she had the strong emotional desires of a woman he never knew about. He could hardly recognize the old Tess of last week serving him dinner at the restaurant.

By the time he was fully inside of her, she was already releasing herself again

as her lower body trembled as they brought their bodies together for a need they both had desired for many years. First contact had them in its grasp. They held nothing back as the previous year’s slowly melted away.

The next morning, they drank coffee outside on deck. They noticed the cold hibachi, and the burnt steaks. They were black, and crispy. Tim picked up Tess, and placed her facing him in his lap. Her legs went around him, and he was seated deep inside of her. Tess laid her head beside his as she worked her hips. It didn’t take long for them to feel each other explode.

After a while, Tim opened his eyes, and Tessa’s robe was wide open. They were both locked together in plain sight of anyone who may happen by.

“O my God Tess, you look so damn beautiful on top of me,” he told her.

The girl only laughed. Tim always had a way to make her feel special, and his next jester sent her smile across the countryside. “You’re also getting me a bit

soaked sitting the way you are, young lady.”

“You’re feeling different today aren’t you, Tim? I understand because I am a part of it, and for whatever reason, it’s happening. I’ve been waiting so long for my life to change, for something good to happen to me.”

Tim did feel different this morning. For one thing, he never would have done what he, and Tess did last night, and never to a friend’s fiancé. Even the sex itself felt different. Just a minute ago, they were drinking coffee, and then he made love to her in his chair. Not once did they bother to look around to see if anyone was in sight around the other piers.

He asked her, “It’s not just the sex that’s different. There’s something else, isn’t there?”

“Take it from me Tim. I have had Kelly inside of me. I know it’s not just the sex. Kelly is an enormous man, and like his body, he is big. Tim, you were inside of me, and know how small I am. The first night Kelly, and I were together, I was going at him like I was a porn star. There was nothing I could hold back. I completely lost control. I was having orgasms one after another over, and over. I even lost my bladder, and that didn’t stop me at all,” she explained.

“Tim, I’ve never acted that way before in my life. Last night, you were wonderful, and I loved all of it, but with Kelly, it was something different.”

“No,” she told him. “Whatever is going on hasn’t a damn thing to do with sex. I think sex may be the by-product of whatever is happening, and Kelly is at the fucking center of all of it.”

“To tell you the truth,” she confessed. “I hope it never ends.”

“I will say we are acting a bit on the strange side; He told her. “However, I don’t feel as if we are in any danger. Since I first met Kelly, things just seem to get better. Kelly isn’t a man to hurt an innocent person. As a matter of fact, he is the type of guy who would go way off the deep end if someone needed his help. The way you described yourself when making love to him, and the fact what is happening to you, and me, is a bit disconcerting. But, as long as we are not running around screwing everybody in sight, I believe we’re OK.”

Half-jokingly, he asked her. “Do you have any compulsions to go hog wild with other people?”

“No, it’s just between Kelly, and you. I always loved both of you,” she told him.

Tess didn’t mention there were some other things going on inside of her dealing with females, but she doubted she would ever be ready for any of that again. Melissa was gone...

Breaking her thoughts, Tim asked, “I need to go out to the station today. Would you like to try having that dinner again tonight, like around six?”

Tess thought it was a great idea then added, “And afterwards, I want to try something with you called “Wild.” She told him what it was.

“Isn’t that going to hurt you?” he asked.

“Ya, you could say there is some discomfort, but trust me, sugar.” She brushed her fingers through his hair. “You’re going to want to try it, but not on the bed. My reputation with Wild isn’t the greatest. When Kelly did it to me the first time, it was crazy. He finished himself off inside of me, but I had already passed out long before. Wild is just a term Kelly uses to express to his mate that he wants to release his inner animal while making love to her because it can be risky. He told me a male should always ask a female before because you can hurt a woman who isn’t prepared. He

also believes any man who uses a woman’s body in a manner without her consent, Kelly says. That man is a dead man.”

Tim’s puzzled expression made Tessa laugh out loud.

“It’s like this,” she told him. “You go up to your mate, and say, “Make love to me gently” so that’s what you both do, or “Make love to me hard,” or “Slam.” The words are descriptive words that express the desire for contact. In this fashion, there are never any hurt feelings, and you both get what you want. Kelly told me, if your mate says no, you shouldn’t hold it against them. Tim, our culture doesn’t have any behavioral customs like this. Men think it’s funny to control, and “slam” when they want to. Kelly believes we all are looking out-ward way too much, and that as a whole. It’s time that the world started looking inward.”

“That’s never going to happen.” Tim pointed out. “We have too many people in this world who believe they can do as they please.”

“Tim, it’s a hell of a lot more than that.” Kelly told me it’s time all human beings started changing their thinking, and our wild behavior. He only told me a little of what he meant. He said we all needed to change, or we would die. You, yourself, have seen him when he gets really serious. Well, that was the same look he had on his face when he told me that.”

“Well, hell, I agree with him,” Tim told her. “It would be wonderful to live in

a world where there’s no crime, and people are not prejudiced against others because of their color, race, and sexual orientation, but the magnitude of that change is so enormous that it could never happen.”

Turning from him, Tess got quiet, stopping the conversation as she stared across the harbor.

“Tess, what’s wrong?”

“Oh, it’s just something stupid,” she mumbled quietly, looking off into the distance.

“Tessa, tell me, what is it?”

She turned back to him. “It’s just something Kelly told me. I said pretty much the same thing you just did. He got really quiet for a long time as he looked out over the water. Then he turned my face up at him, and he kissed me then told me. “There is a way, Tess, but don’t worry about it. That’s why I am here. It’s my job alone.”

He wouldn’t talk about it anymore after that,” she told Tim.

The two lovers made love again, sitting in that same chair before Tim left for work. Tess loved that. Having your mate sweetly, and gently make love to you on the spot where the desire was acquired was special in itself. There was no awkwardness involved, just an absolute desire for intimate contact between two loving people.

After he left, Tess laid in bed, smelling his scent on her body. Tim has always excited her, but Kelly was a totally different man. Kelly had a way of turning her on just by the touch of his hand. For years she had a lousy sex life, then suddenly, she’s Miss Porn Star. Tess knew she had to confront Kelly about these sex issues along with these other feelings, and thoughts she was having, but she believed Tim was right. She felt there wasn’t anything going on that was a danger to them.

Lying in bed, she called into the air, “Kelly, where are you?”

He hasn’t answered his phone in days. He was so excited to get out to the

Woods, Tess didn’t bother asking him if she, too, could go. She could tell he needed some time out there by himself. After a quick shower, she went out to her truck. Driving it made her happy, and she could take it off road if she wanted to. Her life sure has changed for the better.

Looking up at the sky through the open windshield, she said out loud. “Father,

thank you for the many blessings you have given me. I’m sleeping with two men,

but damn, they are both fine in beds, and chairs.”

Tessa busted out laughing as she turned off the road driving off across a green field, making a path to the forest on the other side. She entered the woods, where there was no trail. Tess didn’t need trails to follow anymore. For the first time since she was born, Tessa was on the highway of life.

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Kelly was relieved to be out in the Maine woods again. He’s been craving it for so long. The first thing he did when he got here was to take a deep drink from one of the many cool, crystal-clear streams flowing by the trail. Then he rubbed his body on the pine needles on the ground, spreading the earth’s scent, and dirt all over his form. Happy to have the smell of pine covering his nakedness, he began running down the trail. He was enjoying himself so much that he didn’t stop running when the sun went down.

Life was wonderful, everything was going as planned. The second rocket made its way into its orbit, and within five days, the satellite will have opened up. It would then start its job until it fell back to earth after 50 years or so, as NASA thought. Kelly knew his satellites would never fall b, to Earth unless something knocked them down out of the sky. And its components would not fail for at least a hundred years, or more. Getting their power from the sun, they would have an endless power supply.

Human beings didn’t understand the capability of a satellite, let alone the human body, Kelly thought. Mankind was still indeed children. He believed they were searching for themselves, but it was their thinking that was holding them back from greatness. That was one thing they had yet to come to terms with. It was about time humanity got a dose of reality.

Tess was learning that she has the greatness that we all can bring to ourselves if we only try. She still had a long way to go, but she was going to be super perfect, Kelly thought. She was already a stark raving beauty with her sandy colored hair, and sea-green eyes that could penetrate deep into his heart. It’s only been a few days since he left her on the Freeloader, but he had to admit he was missing her. He knew she deliberately tried to kill him with her unabated lovemaking that night. Long ago, Kelly realized Tess was caught in a situation that kept repeating itself. The girl felt she had no choice but to put up with her life, and try being happy with unhappiness.

Kelly knew that was bullshit. All anyone had to do to find happiness was to seek God’s love within themselves. Then you rip out all prejudice from your body, add love, and open your mind to new ideas, and new experiences while never forgetting to love all those people all over the world.

“Hell,” He thought out loud to himself. “It sure doesn’t hurt anyone to find an adventure now, and then.”

Like this one he was on now, he had no plans. He came out here to relax, to run, and to sleep with nature, and the other animals that lived out here. Thinking about animals, he needed to find something to eat pretty soon. He was getting hungry. He was going to stop for the night about fifteen miles back, but he was having so much fun running, he decided to press on. He knew this area fairly well. There were plenty of animals in the area, along with a shelter to spend the night in.

Somewhere up ahead was a lean-two off on the east side of the trail, which could fit up to eight people. There was a fire pit in front of the shelter, and a pleasant spring a quarter mile, or so down a hill behind it. Through this area, the trail ran flat; south to north, where it went into Baxter State Park, eight, or nine miles on the other side of the shelter. Upper Jo-Mary Lake was nearby, off to the same side of the trail as the shelter. Joe-Mary Lake was a large lake. that was great for fishing, and swimming. Across from the shelter, there was another trail that went for miles. Kelly had seen a few cabins down that way before but, never any people. As the crow flies, he was some fifty-five miles from Millinocket, Maine. After leaving Baxter State Park, he only planned on staying in town one night before driving to Boston, as there were no excuses to linger longer in town. Millinocket had lots of homes, and a few small bars, restaurants, and businesses. However, there was nothing else there but the Maine State Police barracks.

Kelly has been at this shelter before when a group of people stayed for the night. He had fun with them as they talked late into the night in front of the fire pit. Then, at two o’clock in the morning, they all went skinny dipping. It was because of people like the ones he met that night, was one of many reasons he came out to places like—

Suddenly, Kelly’s body came to a screeching halt on the trail as he ran into a wall of fear, pain, and panic; it hit him like a truck. Standing still on the trail, he waited with every one of his senses stretched to its limit. He clearly heard it again. It was the wailing of a female’s voice. When the woman screamed again, Kelly knew it was the sound of a human being’s last, and final cry for help. Whoever the woman was, she was in a life-threatening pearl. As she screamed, another cry came from another female. Their cries vibrated through Kelly’s body. He put everything he had into his powerful legs, and was at its source almost immediately.

Four people were outside of the shelter, while two others inside were kneeling down beside a naked woman on the floor. Someone in the shelter was hitting the female while yelling, and swearing at her. Two of the guys out front were adding wood to the fire, while the other one was tending to two naked women sitting on the ground. One of the female voices Kelly heard was coming from a woman with strawberry blond hair. Beside her, her friend sat with her. They both appeared to be tied up.

The other woman was definitely a redhead, but she wasn’t making too much noise because one guy had just placed a gag over her mouth. Both of the women look to be about his age.

He got in closer for a better look at the shelter.

One of the two men working on the girl inside the shelter was cleaning himself with some of the girl’s clothes. The woman’s legs were open. Kelly could smell her blood from where he was standing. The blood covered the floorboards. He couldn’t say for sure what the other rapist was doing. He appeared to be choking her.

These men were morons stuck in a human being’s body, Kelly thought. There was no way they could see him in the dark by the edge of the trees because of the light coming from the fire pit. It was stupid ones like these who Kelly loved to kill.

He ran back the way he came to get out of earshot.

“911,” A firm voice said.

“My name is Kelly Winston. I am standing on a backcountry trail that comes out of the south side of Baxter State Park, I’m located south of the park, seven or eight miles down that trail to the first shelter on the east side of the trail, right beside Upper Jo-Mary Lake. There are six men with weapons, and they are assaulting three women. It is my belief one girl is already dead, also,” he told the officer. “I have no weapons.”

The dispatcher quickly cut in. “Then stay the hell away from them. I’ve already sent out the alarm... even flying in by helicopter, the State Police can’t get there for another twenty to thirty minutes. I’m going to call the park. They’re only a few miles from you. They should be able to get help to your location a lot quicker.”

Kelly interrupted him. “I have to go. Do not call this phone back, or they will hear it.” With that, Kelly hung up.

Cutting into the woods, he came up on the south side of the shelter. Just as he got there, three men left the shelter, walking down the trail towards the spring. There was just enough moonlight to tell Kelly something was indeed wrong with these guys. They were acting really weird, and talking really fast. With no doubt, he knew they had to be on Meth. Kelly knew their drug-induced state could help him, or get him killed.

With three of the men out of the way, Kelly slowly made his way to the front of the shelter. The two girls had quieted down, which was good because Kelly didn’t like to hear women crying. It really bothered the hell out of him. He knew he needed to find a weapon, or he was as plain dead as the girl was in the shelter.

Staying in the dark shadow of the shelter, he moved closer to the front corner. By their sounds, he could tell there was one of them still in the shelter while another one was at the far front corner pissing on the ground. When the last guy suddenly stepped away from the shelter, stopping directly in front of him. Kelly knew he found his opportunity.

The guy reached for his zipper with his right hand as his weapon hung down in his left. Kelly had a fleeting thought. “Drugs, they will do it to you every time.”

Placing his body into action, Kelly released every ounce of adrenaline in his body like a tsunami. Quickly reaching out, he simply took the guy’s gun from his hand, then put it against his head, and pulled the trigger. The sound of the gun going off was like a crack of lightning in the dark sky. The bullet put a nice-sized hole in the side of the guy’s head as it blew his brains out the right side.

Moving as fast as he could. Kelly stepped forward, pushing the guy’s body out of his way as he stepped around the corner of the shelter. The killer in the shelter stood up. He raised his hand in Kelly’s direction. Kelly pulled his trigger, placing a bullet in the center of his forehead. He didn’t wait to watch the guy fall as he turned to his left, addressing the other killer who was outside of the shelter. The guy urinated all over himself as he quickly turned around towards Kelly. He fired off a shot, but it went wild as two slugs from Kelly’s gun drove into his chest. For good measure, Kelly added another one into the center of his forehead, less than a quarter of a second later. The guy was dead before he hit the ground.

Kelly was really moving now, trying to get the hell out of there before the other three men came back from the spring. One glance at the girl in the shelter told him she was toast. Her body was cut up. He found the knife that did it sitting on the floor. Picking it up, he also took the gun from the second guy he shot in the shelter. Maybe CPR could have brought the girl back, but there was just no time.

Touching her cheek with his fingertips, he gave her a silent promise. “I’ll get them son of bitches for you, honey.” As he stepped over the body of the last guy he shot, he took his gun as well.

Running up to the girls on the ground. They were looking at him in shock as to what he just did. Neither one was crying as he cut them loose. Getting them to their feet, and running was another matter because they were cold, and stiff from being tied up. Taking one girl around the waist, he put another arm around the other one, then powered his body forward, using his strong leg muscles. He got the girls moving down the trail that was across from the shelter.

Behind them, Kelly heard the three men coming up from the spring at a dead run. Turning left, the girls, and Kelly entered the woods. The time, from the first shot he fired to the point of entering the woods, was less than a minute, but even being so quick. He believed the men saw them running away.

It was hard for the girls to run through the trees with bare feet, but Kelly himself has run through these woods many, many times in the past. He kept pushing the girls to move faster, and faster. He didn’t even want to look down to see the punishment their feet getting from the rocks, and roots on the ground.

Finally, Kelly found what he was searching for. The three ran over to an old stone wall that was crumbling in places. Kelly had seen it in the daylight before, and thought it was part of an old fence line. He helped the girls over to the other side of the wall before he himself joined them.

Out of breath, the girls sat down, and rested. Kelly looked over the wall, waiting for the men to show up, and he was pretty damn sure they would come. After all, the girls knew what they looked like, plus three of their friends were dead. The moon was full in the sky. There was plenty of light to see by as long as you didn’t turn on a flashlight, and blind yourself. Kelly figured he could rest a bit. Sitting with his back to the wall, he looked over at the young woman for the first time.

He froze in place.

The girls also seemed to be in a trance as they, too, stared back at him.

Sitting behind the wall. The three continued staring at each other, as neither of them could move a muscle, or turn their gaze away from each other. Maybe it was the high state of anxiety they were all experiencing, or because the girls could feel the power within him. Unable to turn their gaze away from one another, they sat memorized as three killers searched for them.

Tamra, the strawberry blond, was just totally beside herself. She wasn’t scared at all anymore, and the man who saved them was so beautiful, she couldn’t stop looking at him. He was a perfect male, huge, with a powerful body. He was turning her on in a big way. If their attackers didn’t have any guns, this one man would wipe them off the face of the earth; she was sure of it. The man wept confidence from every pore in his body. Everything about him was strangely wonderful, and beautiful. She didn’t even question the draw, pulling her closer to him. He had such a captivating effect on her; her mind spoke to him. “Who are you, my wonderful, and beautiful giant? I have just seen you kill three men, yet you are so gentle. Not only do I see it. I feel it.” Questioning herself, she asked, “My hero, what are you doing to me?”

Tamra couldn’t turn her eyes from his. She broke the spell when she spoke. “What is your name?”

“Kelly Winston Jr,” Kelly told her.

It was funny, Kelly thought. You meet someone on the city streets, and they’ll tell you, “Hi, I’m Kathy.” Then, you meet a person while someone is trying to kill you, and they recite their full names.

Tamra told him, “I’m Tamra Casey McIntyre, and this is my best friend in the

world, Janet O’Brian.”

She then directed her next comment to her friend sitting beside her. “Janet, what the fuck just happened?”

Her girlfriend beside her spoke in a thick, heavy northern Irish accent. Kelly knew without a doubt the woman was from the Belfast area.

Janet told her friend in a matter-of-fact way, “Well, this guy came out of thin fucking air, and then killed three of those suckers, but that isn’t the most amazing thing. What is frigging amazing is the fact he resembles an Olympus God. We also have the fact he’s turning you on in a big way. I know this because you’re sitting down, and I can clearly see you’re wet, even by the moonlight.”

Kelly almost busted out laughing. Nothing seemed to faze Janet; she continued to analyze the situation for Tamra. “Now, I think you, and I know. If we get out of this shit hole alive, we’ll be fucking this guy until the cows come home, but me, personally. I won’t stop screwing him until my vagina gives me a divorce.”

She then turned to Kelly. “However, I have just one question for you, Mr. Kelly Winston.”

Then the redhead just shut up, and stared straight back at him. Tamra knew her friend well, she kept her eyes locked on Kelly.

Kelly finally took the bait. He was liking these two women more, and more. “What would that be, Janet?”

“Well...are you planning on kissing us soon because if you’re not? I’m going to take one of those guns you have, and put a fucking bullet in your head,”

When Janet stopped talking, she kept smiling at him like her friend was doing. Kelly grabbed Janet first, and pulled her into his lap, deeply kissing her. They both were so damn wonderful. Kelly loved Janet’s Irish accent along with her red hair, and small, round, perky breasts, and fair skin. If they lived through this night, Kelly knew he had just found his second, and third alphas.

Janet was stretched out in his arms when he reached down, and touched her deeply. In her ear, he softly told her. “My love. This is no time, but I need your sent along with a taste, and I’ll find you anywhere in the world.”

When he let Janet go, he turned to Tamra, who pretty much leaped into his lap, and kissed him. Kelly told her the same thing he said to Janet.

As soon as Kelly looked both women over, he knew destiny had brought him straight into the arms of two undeveloped alphas, just like Tess. Only Alphas acted this way towards one another. Just in the same way an Alpha wolf would upon seeing an Alpha female in the forest. These women were being affected by the nearness of his male body, and the power from within him. Kelly knew their feelings for him would diminish somewhat overtime without further contact with him, but they would never fully forget this experience. In any case, they were already his, and Kelly was going to make damn sure they stayed that way.

Unlike the wolf, Kelly didn’t need to get their scent the way a wolf did. His hands worked very well, and indeed, the women enjoyed it more. It was so fortunate for him to find Tamra, and Janet, two women of kindred spirits.

Releasing Tamra from his embrace, he handed one gun to Janet, who then immediately passed it over to Tamra.

Kelly told them, “I’m going out there, to wait for them, when they get here I’ll ambush them. They won’t be expecting it.”

“So, stay here. If they show up, wait till the last second, then give them all you got.”

“Janet can shoot, but…

Kelly stopped Tamra’s last words by picking up her forearm, aiming the gun

over the wall, and told her. “Just hold it out in front of you, keep both eyes open, and nail them.”

Tamra looked down at the gun in his hand. “The safety is still on—”

Tamra stopped talking when she saw that Kelly’s gun was still ready to fire. She couldn’t believe what she just found out about Kelly. The man didn’t know guns very well. She thought to herself, “He took that gun away from that first guy, and if the safety wasn’t already off, he would have been a dead man.”

She quickly turned to Janet.

Kelly watched them talk quietly together for a moment. As soon as they were done, they both turned back to him, as Janet told him. “Kelly, we don’t want you to leave. We want you to stay right here, we won’t take no for an answer.”

“I have to go,” he told them. “There is no way are we going to have an OK Corral shootout. We’ll be dead. Listen, I can already hear them coming.” It sounded to him like they were coming at them in a strung-out three-man line. “With me out there, and you two here, your chances are better.” He didn’t say his were. He just said theirs would be.

“Janet, he’s right,” Tamra told her friend. “This is the best way, with both of us shooting from different directions.”

Janet knew to listen to her friend. Tamra’s father was an officer in the military. After her mother died, father, and daughter got closer together than ever before. Her father ended up teaching Tamra everything the military taught him. Tamra was always protecting her girlfriends when out on the town for the night. She could take out even the biggest guy with her bare hands alone. Tonight, the six men had guns on her, and her friends when they tied them up. There wasn’t much she could do to help her pals.

Tamra took Kelly’s gun, turned it over. “Honey, the safety is right here,” she told him, and using a finger, she turned the safety mechanism on. “There, now it’s on, and I’m scared out of my wits.”

The girls were worried about him. Kelly didn’t have the time to tell them all of his secrets. If they made it out of this alive, he may show them just how good he was with a weapon in his hand.

Taking each girl in his arms, he quickly kissed them both, telling them he loved them. He also gave them his cell phone so they could call the State Troopers, and inform them what was happening. Then he went back over the wall. He had given Tamra a gun with a full clip; in his right hand, he had the first gun that he used, which had three rounds left in it. He would use it to kill one of the guys, then use the last one on the two guys that were left.

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Phil, and Clark have been working together for Baxter State Park for almost fifteen years. Every once in a while, they played cards with two game warden friends, John, and Steve. The four were great friends. Frequently, in the past, they have worked together on official park business. Tonight was a little different for the group of friends. For the past few weeks, Phil has been kicking his friends’ butts in their low-stakes poker games.

Phil was fantastic at playing poker. He knew the three of them were ganging up on him tonight. However, Phil had a secret he’d never shared with his three buddies. In his youth, Phil was a card shark. He was banned from playing cards in many casinos. He’s never told his friends just how good he was because he enjoyed playing cards with them. Most of the time, he folded his hand so he didn’t win. But tonight, because they wanted to make an example of him, Phil was out to take every pot.

By the luck of the draw, John dealt Phil three ladies with an ace kicker. Phil suppressed a grin as he discarded one card.

John eyeballed him from across the table, but sled Phil a single card over to him.

Suddenly, the phone rang.

Everyone at the table stopped what they were doing, and looked over at the phone. Being in the park, things could get crazy with all the people visiting it, but not this late in the season. When they heard the phone ring, they all knew something terrible was going on.

No one talked as Phil spoke to whoever it was on the phone. Phil’s expression

said it all. He called John over to the phone, then said to his partner, “Clark.”

Clark, and Steve got up from the table. All three men started putting on gear: lights, hip belts with pistols, and overcoats. Steve grabbed gear for John, who was just getting off the phone. John took a high-powered rifle out of the gun cabinet. Everyone put on a headset so they could talk while driving there. They knew the area well, and with what was going on out there, they thought the only way to approach the situation was to go in hard, and fast. Find the girls, and protect them until the State Troopers showed up.

After making plans about what every man would do when they got there, the group of friends jumped on two high-powered ATVs, and took off into the night. Holding on to the machines for dear life, they sped up to seventy miles per hour on a flat open trail at one o'clock in the morning. They had seven miles to go, but they should have been there hours ago. They were told by the state cops to expect dead bodies.

John asked Phil over the radio, “Phil, you got to tell us. What was your last hand?”

That put a smile on Phil’s face as he gunned the ATV forward, and told his friends, “A full house.”

John, and Steve started talking all at once. “Oh, you son of a bitch...how the hell did you do that.”

“I told you, the sucker is blessed,” Clark informed the other two men.

Phil just laughed into his mic.

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The assholes were coming at the girls in a pretty decent line. They spaced

themselves out about forty feet apart as they advanced on them. Kelly knew the only ones who would be easily got to were the ones on both ends of the line. When the first one went down, the middle guy would come charging at him. If he could get at that middle guy without getting himself killed, Kelly felt he had a good chance of surviving this. If anything else went wrong, he would dive back over the wall, making them shoot at two different targets at once. Really, all they had to do was stall them, but Kelly had just given his promise to a dead girl. When Kelly Winston gave his promise to anyone, he’d kill a thousand men for that one promise alone.

Quietly, he found just the right hiding spot. The surrounding trees weren’t very thick. His hiding spot gave him a good view of the moon shining in one area where the guy would walk through. He would kill him, and when the middle guy came through, he’d drop him too. Kelly laid down behind a small tree just to the right of the killing zone. After covering himself with some branches to hide his body’s outline, he stuck out his gun hand, and waited.

Ever so slowly, the last three killers advanced closer to him. Kelly saw his target approaching, but beyond him. He couldn’t see anyone else through the trees. He knew where they were because he could hear them stepping on branches, or stumbling over an unearthed root in their path. Kelly held himself still because the human eye was attracted to motion, even in the dead of night. The guy on the end slowly walked into the kill zone, but Kelly waited. He had something special for this son of a bitch.

The guy got in just the right spot when Kelly suddenly sat up. The guy caught the movement in the corner of his eyes, and turned toward him. Kelly put two bullets into his chest, then one into his forehead. His body dropped like a rock, and fell to the ground. Kelly heard the killer in the middle running at him like a midnight freight train, totally out of control, threatening to derail.

He could hear the sounds of tree branches breaking as the guy pushed his way through the underbrush. Somehow, a wild shot hit Kelly low in his body on his right side. He felt the burning bullet shoot straight through him. He didn’t even flinch receiving the wound. His complete attention was on the second guy.

Finally, the killer stepped into the moonlight, where his buddy lay dying, emptying his gun in Kelly’s direction. Kelly fired off two rounds into his center mass, but on the guy’s last shot, before he too went down, Kelly felt one of his rounds hit him in the chest. The bullet hit, and spun him around, falling backwards, he too went down. The mortal wound burned like hell. Kelly knew he was a dead man.

There were things he could do to help himself, but he had to follow the rules that he himself had installed in his life many years ago. As soon as he hit the ground, he jumped back up, for there was one last thing he needed to do, and adrenaline would be his best friend over the next few minutes.

Animals use adrenaline all the time, and run miles after they are shot. Once, Kelly saw a deer run almost a hundred yards after the bullet went straight through its heart. With that thought in mind, Kelly ran as best as he could back towards the shelter. He had heard the thrashing of the last man turning around, moving back to the main trail. Moving toward the shelter, where this whole mess started. Kelly turned right on the main trail, and ran south toward the lake. He was only judging where he thought the guy would come out as he stepped into the woods on the opposite side of the trail. Hiding, he was now in a danger zone. He stopped moving around. If the guy didn’t come out soon, Kelly might not be able to raise his gun to kill him.

The killer came out of the trees sooner than expected. Being cautious, the man looked around before stepping out of the trees, and onto the open trail. Kelly knew he had to be scared out of his mind. He was on his own, and one alone man had just killed five of his buddies. The guy stepped further out of the brush, and surprise, surprise, surprise, it was another damn Mexican. That made three white guys, three Mexicans, and one girl who would die tonight.

The killer looked around as he came out of the bushes, and stood tall on the trail. With the bright moonlight shining down on him, he got his first good look at the man.

“That’s kind of funny,” Kelly thought to himself. “You’re not a wet back after all, and I’ll bet your two other friends are not Mexicans either. You’re from South America. What the fuck are you guys doing way the hell up here?”

Kelly was a bit too busy to see it before, but now he could clearly identify the South American. Kelly shot the foreigner twice in the chest, and once in the forehead, and that little sucker when down.

Slowly standing, he got moving back towards the shelter. He had to tell the girls they were safe, but the closer he got to the shelter, he knew he would not make it. Screaming for them, he realized one of the bullets that hit him went through one of his lungs. Staggering on, he couldn’t control his balance as he shuffled towards the shelter, still screaming for the girls. Finally, he spotted them limping out of the woods, when it happened. The big bad-ass Kelly went down like bedrock, crashing onto the ground in front of the shelter.

It wasn’t until after he hit the ground that Kelly finally looked down at himself. The whole front side of his body was covered in blood, but there was one good thing about the whole situation, he thought. That little hole in his lower right side didn’t bother him at all anymore.

“It’s the little things in life that make life worth living,” he told himself.

When the girls saw him, they both screamed. They could see the blood all over his chest, which also distracted them as they didn’t hear the ATVs come barreling down the main trail.

Both machines were being pushed past their limits. Ever since they left the park, all four men agreed to waste the ATVs to get to the shelter quicker. They were expecting to find one girl dead from the last report from the Maine Troopers. They were told there were now three killers searching for the last two women, and the one male who came to the girls aid. Knowing one man was standing alone against six others while trying to protect the women energized the four friends; they vowed to reach the women, and man at all costs.

Kelly saw Janet talking on his phone as they ran over to him.

He thought he was talking out loud, but Tamra had to lean over his face to hear him. “Tell...cops...all dead,” was all he could manage to say.

Tamra turned around, and said something to Janet.

Kelly could hear something off in the distance, but he wasn’t sure what it was. The pain was almost paralyzing him. Then he saw Tamra still holding in her hand the gun he gave her. As his body was slowly going into shock, he kept trying to take the gun from her, but she kept moving it away from him. Finally, understanding what he was trying to get her to do, she tossed it off to the side.

Kelly knew he was done for. He couldn’t feel his body anymore, and knew he would pass out any minute, but before he did. He placed his hands on the sides of Tamra’s beautiful face, and told her, “I love you.”

Too out of it to do anything else, he laid back, and closed his eyes, waiting to die. A nanosecond later, he was rudely slapped so hard on the side of his face that, for a moment, his face seemed to hurt worse than the hole in his chest.

Opening his eyes, Tamra was screaming at him. “Damn you! Don’t you pass out on me, stay the fuck awake; do you hear me!” She screamed at him. “Stay awake.”

He was then rewarded with another blow. She got his attention, but Kelly knew he couldn’t stay awake much longer. He was barely coherent when Tamra started screaming in her high-pitched voice, just like the girls were doing earlier tonight, sending chills through Kelly once more.

Janet was no longer on the phone, but was on the other side of him, across from Tamra. She bent over him, and kissed him on the lips. As she came back up, first one, and then another ATV came flying in by them.

All the guys on the ATVs knew they were coming into a hot LZ, so they came

in hard and fast. Not even bothering to stop the machines, they jumped off them while they were still moving at a rapid rate. The ATVs kept going, and crashed into the trees. One guy went down hard but he rolled, and came back up with his gun in his hand, pointing forward. As one, they split up as each man ran to the girls, and Kelly’s north, south, east, and western positions. Keeping their backs to the three, they scanned all around, looking for the killers. One guy ran up to the main trail with a high-powered rifle. Tamra thought the weapon looked like a Winchester.

The girls weren’t screaming anymore, but their tears started flowing. Suddenly, everybody looked up into the sky as a spotlight came on, lighting up the entire area. Both girls jumped to their injured feet, screaming, waving their arms at the helicopter hovering above them. It only took a minute for it to land nearby. Six big Maine State Troopers, each well over six feet tall, jumped out with their guns, daring anyone to mess with them as they ran over to Kelly, and the girls.

Tamra had pressure on Kelly’s chest wound as Janet ran up to one of the cops. The paramedics rushed over to Kelly,

“My friends, and I were swimming when they came at us with guns. There were six of them, they were totally wracked out on something. They tied me, and Tamra up while they worked on our friend Stacy. She just got engaged. We took this trip because of her engagement. They raped her, and cut her up, and did all kinds of shit to her while we watched. It was terrible, and she was screaming so much. Then that dead son of a bitch in the shelter choked her with a bootstring.”

“Suddenly, this wonderful man showed up, and took a gun from that dick head over there,” Janet pointed to the far-right corner of the shelter. “And shot all three of these assholes. Then he cut us loose...”

The whole time the cops were listening to her, a look of disbelief slowly appeared on all of their faces. Seeing the officers’ facial expressions, Tamra looked up from Kelly, and told the cops what Janet said was the truth.

Janet glanced over at Kelly, who was getting first aid from a paramedic.

Putting a needle into Kelly’s arm, the guy then placed the bag under his knee and pressed on it. The more of the life-saving fluid he could get into Kelly, the better off he would be. He could see the amount of blood loss just by looking him over.

When Janet finished her story with the police officer, she had tears streaming down her face. “His name is Kelly Winston Jr, and he’s a fucking hero. He barely even knows anything about guns. Tamra had to show him where the safety was because he was holding two guns in each hand, and didn’t even know the safeties were on.”

The officers stayed away from going inside the shelter, not wanting to contaminate the crime scene. One trooper signaled over to the others. “Hey, this guy over here has one in his forehead, and two in his chest, and this other asshole in the shelter looks like he has one in the brainpan.” Now, they were getting really interested. Janet told them where they could find the other bodies. Four of them ran into the

trees, but only two came back out.

One Trooper shook his head in disbelief. “Yup, he got them the same way as the others. This guy has to be the luckiest son of a bitch in history, or he’s a damn military sniper.”

They wrapped blankets around both girls when Tamra asked about Kelly’s condition.

“Is he going to live?”

One of the two paramedic answered her, “As long as his heart stays beating, honey, he has a chance.”

Both paramedics placed Kelly on a backboard, then tied him to it. Kelly wasn’t moving, nor did he have his eyes open. Yelling at everyone around them, one paramedic said, “OK, we need to get this guy the hell out of here right now.”

Four big cops rushed over, and picked Kelly up as two more carried the girls.

Tamra was carried by the cop who asked all the questions, she was openly crying as she told him.

“Kelly is a hero, and even if he dies, he will always be my hero. None of you saw how fearless he was. The man stood against six killers by himself.”

Over-come with grief over the loss of their girlfriend, and the craziness of the night. The Troopers put all three of them into the helicopter. The helicopter rose into the air, and sped off into the night for Maine Medical Center in Portland.

Two troopers were looking the crime scene over when one officer pointed to the helicopter lifting off the ground. He asked the cop standing next to him.

“Why in the hell didn’t that guy have any clothes on?”

# Chapter 3

# The Wolves Gather

After spending the day four-wheeling in her truck, Tess borrowed a stepladder from Fred, she washed, and waxed the truck, then drove over to her parents’ house. She saw the roses she gave her mom were still in bloom. Both her dad, and mother were excited about the engagement with Kelly. However, Tess didn’t tell them about the strange things that were happening to her or that she was in love with two different men.

One thing was for certain: she was going to have to do something special for Kelly when he got back. The diamond necklace he gave her just about knocked her out, and the hundred dozen long-stem roses he sent her had Gloria holding her while she cried like a baby. She spent a better part of that day trying to find homes for most of the flowers. She was even giving them away to strangers as they walked down main street. Gloria got a lot of them, and spread them throughout the restaurant.

Fred got a good smack on the backside of his head by Gloria when he jokingly told Tess there was so much screaming in the restaurant the day Kelly, and her were there, that all the mice in the cellar ran away. Even Tim hinted something about water leaking out of the walls by Kelly’s table. She should have smacked both of them but didn’t. The biggest part of her world was right there at the restaurant with Tim, Gloria, and Fred. She dearly loved all three of them.

After doing some shopping, she went back to the Freeloader to wait for Tim. With nothing better to do but get excited by thinking of Tim, or Kelly. Stretching out on the bed, she decided to play. She had been trying to stop doing that, but it has been getting harder because her body wasn’t listening to her anymore. Tess knew Tim would be along in a little while, so instead of playing, she got dinner ready, and put the stakes on low. Then she turned on the TV to watch the local news on channel six at six pm. As the news program was starting, Tess lay down on the bed with her bosoms propped up with some pillows.

Channel Six News has always been her favorite news program. The anchor, and sports commentator, and weatherman sat at a horse-shoe-shaped counter. Tess liked the way the anchor, Jane Wellington, dressed because she always wore low-cut blouses, which showed a good portion of her breasts, and her skirts gave Tess a delightful view of her legs. If Jane would give Tess the time of day, she might like to try some things like what Melissa did with her. In all the years since she last saw Melissa, she hasn’t touched another female; Tess couldn’t. The pain of losing Melissa was just too great. Melissa’s strange disappearance seriously broke her heart, Tess knew it would be an open wound she would have for the rest of her life.

Boys have always been the main dish, but women knew what another woman wanted, and they smelled good, and they were soft, and not hard like men. She knew the situation was getting ludicrous, but she didn’t have any choice, so she continued to play as she watched the news.

“Good evening. I’m Jane Wellington, and welcome to the Channel Six News. We have a breaking story that accrued approximately at one am on Monday morning at a back-country shelter just a few miles outside of Baxter State Park where...”

The TV now had Tessa’s completely undivided attention.

“...six men, and one woman died. Surviving the attack were two women, and one man. Three of the killers are from the State of Maine. John Harris, age thirty-six, and his brother Tony Harris, age thirty-two, both are from Millinocket, and one other man, Charley Lee, age twenty-nine from Bangor. All three men are known felons. However, the other three dead men appear to be foreign nationalists, and we have no further information about them. All six men were in the process of assaulting three women who were using the back-country shelter, near Jo-Mary Lake when, one by one, all six men were killed,...”

Pausing for effect, Jane smiled, telling her listeners, “Wait for this one folks, this is really good.”

Then she delivered the blow, “By the heroic actions of one Maine man. His name is also being withheld, but from what we have been told by the Maine State Troopers. Two women are alive, and suffered only light injuries to their feet, all because of the actions of that one man. What we have learned was, while attacking, and assaulting three women, one of the six men killed, one female.”

“Folks, after finding out what the girl’s defender did. I am telling you right now here on Channel six. This man is indeed our hero, here at this station. He was unarmed, and we were told, with no skills in using firearms. But after hearing the screams of the women, our hero walked into the camp unarmed, and took a gun right out of the hands of a killer, then shot, and killed three of the men. He cut the ropes holding the two girls who were still alive, and from what I have been told, he ran while he carried them both into the trees to hide. After finding a place behind an old stone wall, he gave one girl a gun to protect themselves. Then our hero went back out into the dark of the night, and found, and killed, the last three men, one by one, all by himself. It is unfortunate that our hero did receive two gunshot wounds, one directly to his chest, and another to the lower side of his body. The man just fell to the ground when two Game Wardens, and two Park Rangers who were called in from Baxter State Park stormed the area to protect the girls, and their superstar.”

Jane stopped the story again. “Folks, I just want to say a story like this comes only once every other century, or two.”

She then continued, “The Maine State Police Helicopter arrived, and six troopers with their rifles, and shotguns took control of the tragic situation. One girl told a trooper that the man who came to their aid was their savior, and Hero. Both women said that no matter whether he lives, or dies, he will be their hero until the day they die.”

“The police report said the man was a very large muscular person, which they are telling us is playing a big part in his survival today. We have been keeping in touch with Maine Medical Center here at the station since we found out about this story, and just a few minutes ago, they told us he is still alive. However, he is in critical condition. They really don’t know if he will live, or not. If you call to check on him, and can’t get a hold of the hospital, try us here at Channel Six. The phone lines here at the station, and at the Medical Center have been ringing off the hook since the public started hearing of the incident. It isn’t very often we get a statement that an untrained, unarmed man takes on six killers in the Northern Maine woods by himself while defending three women.”

“Wow,” Jane said as she finished the story. She looked over at her co-anchor beside her. “I’ve really have got to meet this guy-”

Tess was up, and moving so fast, she left the TV on, and candles burning in the bedroom. As she shot through the kitchen, she suddenly found herself on her back, on the floor. Quickly, she got back up without hardly any thought why she was on the floor in the first place. She then started picking up speed as she shot out through the cabin door. Racing across the back of the boat, she jumped on top of the dock, and made a beeline straight for her truck.

Tim was talking to the car lot attendant when he saw Tess running so fast across the lot, he couldn’t see her little legs moving. He saw the trail of blood rolling down the side of her face as she flew by five lanes over from him. He started running to her, and it confused him when Tess moving so fast, overshot her truck by thirty feet. She stopped, and it seemed to him like she did a two count, then resumed her fanatic flight back to her truck. Tim knew he would not catch her in time. He tried calling out to her, but that didn’t even faze her.

Tess jumped into the Range Rover, and started the engine, she slammed it into reverse so fast it seemed to Tim as if only six cylinders of the engine were engaged, when all four tires burned rubber, backing up, leaving four black skid marks on the ground. The smoke from the burning tires was so heavy it was pouring out all around the sides of the truck. Flying out at such a rapid rate, a cloud was developing over the cars in the area.

The truck was still moving backwards at an incredible rate of speed when Tess slammed the gearshift into “circle D,” overdrive. As the transmission gears caught, the truck burned rubber out of the parking lot with blue smoke pouring from the sides of the vehicle as the truck squealed in delight at the sudden release of all of its power.

Tim lost sight of her. He could only see a thick blue cloud of smoke, and twenty-five terrified people who got the hell out of her way as Tessa burned rubber all the way down main street. A cloud hovered over the area, engulfing every tourist, and shop owner who came running out of their shops trying to find out what was going on.

There was nothing Tim could do. Even if he drove after her, he knew she’d be in Europe in about ten minutes. Hearing the lot attendant behind him yelling out his name. Tim turned around, Tony was holding a fire extinguisher in one hand, as he pointed towards Kelly’s boat with the other. Tim looked over at the boat, flames, and black smoke were pouring from the stern of the cabin cruiser.

Tony started running towards the boat, but Tim stopped him. He had something he wanted Tony to do instead. Running up to him, he grab the extinguisher from the young man’s hands, and quickly told him. “Don’t call any fire trucks,” he told the kid. “I’ll take care of the boat. I want you to call the hospital in Bangor, and if you have to, call Maine Medical Center in Portland, and find Kelly Winston. If they give you any runaround, tell them you’re looking for your dad.”

“Tim, what the hell is going on, man?”

“Judging from what our little Miss Indy driver just did; Kelly is in serious

trouble. Now, get on the phone, and find him,” he told the kid.

Tim ran over to save the boat.

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Tess took it fairly easy leaving Belfast. She kept her speed down to twenty mile per hour over the speed limit, but as soon as she reached the outer limits of the town. She kicked the truck up to a hundred miles per hour. She was handling the monster truck like a pro. However, she had a very long way to go to get to the Maine Medical Center in Portland.

She almost crash once in town while taking a sharp turn at a high rate of speed. The truck was a well-built truck for its suspension, and durability, but it was not made for speed, and agility. As she rounded a sharp corner, the weight, and momentum of the truck bottomed out the right-side shocks, lifting the two left tires off the ground. If the truck wasn’t a heavy four-wheel-drive vehicle, Tess would have lost her life right there on that one turn before leaving town.

It took forty-five minutes for most people to get from Belfast, driving west on the Belfast Road to reach the highway. Route ninety-five was the main highway to get people from the southern parts of the state to the north. It took Tess a little less than twenty minutes to reach it. As she turned onto the southbound ramp of the ninety-five, she was talking to herself, trying to calm herself down. She failed to look, and see if there were any other cars on the highway.

Turning the corner, she flew down the ramp, picking up speed. There was one car on the ninety-five, and the guy didn’t see her, and almost got himself killed in two different ways. The first was he didn’t switch over to the outside lane, giving her room to merge onto the highway. He also freaked out as the big green truck cut him off, his car fished-tailed several times. On the third time, he almost lost his rear end at seventy mph.

The guy admitted, later to himself after he finished smoking his joint, that it was his freak out that almost got him killed.

Not knowing what was about to happen as soon as she hit the southbound ramp, Tess put her foot in the carburetor, and didn’t let up until the truck was flying down the ninety-five at 125mph. Normally, it was an hour, and a fifteen minutes to drive to Portland. Tess made it in a little less than thirty minutes. She should have died a half of a dozen times, but the good Lord cleared her path just for the sake of loving her.

On reaching the Medical Center, she ran into the hospital, and hoofed it for the

stairs. The welcome people at the front door tried to stop her, but she ran on through. She thought people were crazy. Your husband or son has a life-threatening accident, and people come to the hospital, and go right for those people at the front door and say. “I’m looking for so and so, where do I find them?”

“It’s called the ICU,” Tess thought to herself, and that’s right where she knew she would find Kelly. She also knew it because she could feel him there, and he sure wasn’t awake, and she could feel that as well.

Strung out by the insane drive to the hospital, by the time Tess got to the ICU floor, she could feel sweat building under her pits. She would have been able to smell herself if she weren’t moving so fast. Tess had no clue what she looked like. She was an emotional wreck running on fear, and adrenaline for the only guy in the world who has really been nice to her. No man has ever brought out the feelings inside of her the way Kelly did. Losing him wasn’t an option to her. She knew if anyone gave her a hard time in seeing him, she would kill somebody.

Since leaving Belfast, over, and over she kept telling herself. “There’s no way

God would take Kelly away from you, Tess. It’s just not going to happen.” She wanted to cry, but she couldn’t do that right now.

When she came out of the stairwell, she knew right where to go. Turning right, she marched past a little waiting room on the left which had a few people in it. Her little legs weren’t running, but she sure was moving pretty fast to achieve her prime objective.

Approaching the glass doors to the ICU, were two males, and one female nurse talking at a desk. They didn’t hear her approach. Tess has always found in situations like this it’s sometimes best to be brass, fast, and don’t talk to anyone.

Taking the plunge, the girl moved in on the double glass doors like Micky Mantle, sliding into home plate on a doubleheader with braces loaded, the score tied, and, three seconds on the clock. The girl gave it her all, but that tactic didn’t work. Tess figured the guys by the desk were good because, with no warning, they jumped in front of her, and stopped her. She sidestepped one guy, but the other guy grabbed a hold of her upper arm. Her next thought about what to do was only a whisper on the wind. What’s a little girl supposed to do when she couldn’t shoot them, or fuck her way through? Without giving the guy any warning, she bit him on his hand right behind his thumb.

The guy didn’t enjoy it at all as he quickly let go of her. “Son of a bitch, she

bit me!” He cried out, flapping his hurt hand in the air.

As soon as the guy let go of her arm, Tess tried again to go through the doors, but the other guy stood in her way. Without even thinking, she kicked him in the kneecap with every ounce of her weight behind it. The guy screamed out, took two steps back, then went down hard on his ass while rubbing the spot where she kicked him.

Tess cleared the doorway.

She surged forward, but the first guy grabbed her by both arms from behind.

She tried kicking his shins, but he kept moving his legs out of the way. Tess knew she was screwed. Anyway, he had a vise like grip on both of her arms.

Finally, her common sense took over. Yelling out at the top of her lungs, she screamed! “I am here to see Kelly Winston; he is my fiancé! We got engaged a few days ago so,...let me the fuck go!”

She tried once more kicking the guy holding her when two female voices suddenly spoke up behind the three.

“Take your hands off of her!” Both voices commanded of the guy. Then, one woman quickly added, “And do it right friggin now!”

Tess stopped squirming around to see who the voices belonged to. “Maybe I have some allies here,” she thought.

The guy let go of her arms.

When Tess turned around, two of the most stunningly gorgeous women she has ever seen in her life were looking at her in a state of shock. The red head even had her hand over her mouth. Tess didn’t have a clue how the stress of the day has suddenly transformed her. Now that she was standing still, she get a good whiff of herself. Her fear for Kelly, and the crazy drive here was making her fall apart fast.

“Now why can’t I look like you two,” Tess said out loud without realizing that she did.

The two women in front of her looked as Tess had always hoped she would look like one day. She knew they weren’t models because models were skin and bone. The women in front of her were physically fit. They were literally glowing with love that was constantly in motion, shining out of them. Tess watched it pouring out of them, yet she didn’t understand why no one else there didn’t see it as well. Neither the orderlies, nor the nurse seemed to notice the fireworks coming from the two women.

“Wow,” Tess said out loud, hardly believing the sight in front of her.

The taller woman had strawberry blond hair that seemed to lay perfectly where it should. Her skin was golden brown. Tess could tell she didn’t burn in the sun. She also had deep grayish blue eyes that fit her kissable face, and small soft perfect lips. Tess would have kissed her right here if she would have let her. The woman’s legs didn’t seem to have an ending, they just merged with her ass, which joined with her firm belly. Both women were wearing jeans, and a summer shirt. However, the woman with strawberry blond hair was doing something to Tess in a big way. Something unseen was drawing her closer together to both women. Tess didn’t know what it was, but it was the same feeling she felt the first time she met Kelly. Just being near these women, Tess felt an unquenchable craving.

The tall one began talking to her as she moved closer to Tess. The young woman walked in total confidence in herself. She transmit authenticity, and had a charismatic demeanor that forced you to pay attention to her. Tess just then realized the women were not much older than herself.

Unbelieving it herself, Tessa thought. “Oh, my God. I’m falling in love right here.”

“Hi,” the tall one said, coming over to her as she flashed a dazzling smile at her. “You can’t look like me, but you can be just as pretty. All it takes is good food, and lots of exercise.”

“My name is Tamra,” Tamra then pointed over to the redhead beside her. “And this is my best friend in the universe, Janet.”

Tess turned her attention to Tamra’s friend then froze in place as a low moan escaped from between her lips as she looked the tall leprechaun over. Tim had helped her a lot last night, but Tess knew she was soaking wet with these stark raving beauties so close to her. The pull drawing her to the two women was inescapable. Tess had no defense for it. She would have had an easier time climbing out of the Grand Canyon with both feet tied together.

Trying to snap herself out of the wonderful feelings that were building within her over these two creatures. She thought to herself, “Would you just chill the hell out?”

Janet was taller than Tess, and she was covered in freckles. Her breasts were

smaller than Tamra’s, just the way Tess liked them, like Melissa’s. Her eyes were green like hers, and she had a really bright, friendly face with a beaming smile. The woman watched her with what seemed to be a well-developed power of concentration. She was feeling Tess out, and not just looking at her with her eyes. Tess was sure Janet had great people skills that she herself lacked.

Tess then noticed their footwear. They both were wearing two pairs of socks, and what looked to be hospital footsies.

She asked them. “Where the hell are you two coming from, and can I go with you?”

Both Janet, and Tamra quickly glanced at each other, laughing out loud. They both knew what Tess was feeling, even if it wasn’t written on their faces like Tessa’s. It was undeniably written within the two women just as it was with Tess that all three of them could feel the attraction, and the inescapable desire quickly building within them.

Janet hooked her thumb over at Tess, and told her friend. “I like her. She’s cute.”

Seeing the orderlies standing on both sides of Tess, Janet told them in her sweet Irish accent. “Guys, I’ve seen this girl fight,” she pointed over to Tamra. “Her dad was a Navy Seal, and after her mom died, her father taught her everything and I really mean everything he knew. I’ve watched this girl beat the hell out of a lot bigger guys than the two of you.”

Tess moved quietly closer to the two women. It was funny that she thought of

them as women while thinking of herself as a little girl, and yet, they couldn’t be no more than a few years older than herself.

In their defense, one guy told Janet. “Hey, we were just trying to stop her. She can’t go in there like that.”

Tamra shot right back at him, “Did you even try talking to her?”

“Oh, yeah,” Tess thought, looking up at Tamra beside her. “I like you the best.”

Tamra didn’t take any crap from the orderlies, and they back down when she snapped at them. Tamra wasn’t just a fighter; she was a leader.

Tamra turned to Tess. “What’s your name, honey?”

“My name is Tessa Melissa Mitchell.” Tess didn’t have a middle name until she changed her name, and used her lover’s name. “Soon it will be Tess Melissa Winston. “I’m twenty-three, and I live in Belfast, Maine. I heard about fifty minutes ago about the guy who killed those six men. They didn’t give his name on TV, but there’s only one man in this country who could have done that, and that’s my Kelly.” Tessa’s tears finally arrived, and flowed down her cheeks.

Janet came over, and put her arm around the girl’s shoulders. “Tess, did you say you came from Belfast fifty minutes ago?”

“Ya, why?” She asked as tears continued rolling down her face. “My Range Rover isn’t built for speed, or I could have gotten here sooner.”

The two women were clearly shocked by her statement, they both knew just what a Range Rover was. Unbelieving it, Tamra asked her, “You drove a Range Rover damn near over 100 mph all the way from Belfast?”

“Well...a few times,” Tess told her. “downhill on the I295, I got it up to about 135 mph. She wouldn’t do much more than that,” she explained.

Janet, and Tamra just looked at each other. The little woman has shocked them at every turn, and they’ve only met her moments ago. They both knew they were taken by her. But Janet knew her best friend was a bit more than just taken with Tess, but Tamra was trying not to show it.

“Sweetie, let me look at you.” Tamra brought Tess close enough for Tess to smell her.

“How did you two get so beautiful?” Tess asked her. “God, I can hardly take my eyes off of you.”

Tamra’s blueish-gray eyes brighten up as she smiled at the young girl. “Thank you, Tess. That’s a wonderful thing to say.”

She turned to Janet questioningly. “What do you think?”

“Oh, definitely. This little road runner needs some chill down time then some girl talk, but first we need to get her cleaned up, and maybe find her a fresh shirt.”

Janet pulled at Tessa’s shirt, showing Tess where blood had dripped down the

side of her face, and onto her shirt.

Tamra asked Tess, “Where did you park this Range Rover of yours?”

“By the front door, and it’s still running,” Tess replied.

“Yup,” Janet told her best friend. “She is sweet, cute, and something I am not going to talk about right now. I’ll go down, and park her Moose Killer, and find her a shirt in the gift shop. I’ll meet you guys in the bathroom. And Tess, you go to the girl’s bathroom, not the men’s room, okay?”

Janet’s joke confused Tess, and had Tamra laughing.

“Come on Tess,” Tamra told her. “You’ll be OK in a little while. We got your back, honey.”

Janet had already left when Tess looked up at Tamra as the two new friends walked to the restroom, and said, “You two are the ones Kelly saved, aren’t you?”

“Yes, we are, and it’s only because of him we are alive today.” She added to herself, “We are also the reason Kelly was lying in there almost dead.”

Tamra first cleaned Tessa’s face, and then the cut on the side of her forehead, covering it with the bandage the nurse had given them.

Then she told her, “Put your arms up.”

Pulling Tessa’s shirt over her head, she made sure she didn’t disturb the bandage. Looking at Tessa’s chest, she jokingly said, “Nice rack honey.

Grinning, Tess told her. “There not as nice as yours.”

“Tess, you’re not giving yourself enough credit. You have a wonderful body, and Kelly must think so, too. Girl, you need to stop beating yourself up.”

Suddenly, with no warning, Tess took Tamra’s face in her hands, and kissed her. The abrupt gesture surprised Tamra, but she would not refuse this little woman’s affections. Wrapping her arms around the smaller woman, she kissed her right back. After a moment, they broke away, still holding onto each other.

“That wasn’t the first time you kissed a girl, was it?”

Tess agreed it wasn’t. “I...” She looked for the words. “I haven’t even wanted to, not in a long time. Not since, Melissa.” She then told Tamra about her lost love.

“Well, that sucks, that bummed me out.”

Embracing the shorter woman once more, Tess wrapped both of her legs around Tamra, locking them together. “Tess, you’re getting a bit hot, girlfriend…”

Tamra stopped in mid-sentence because of the look on Tessa’s face. Quickly, filling the sink with fresh cold water, she told the younger girl. “Drop’em, and clean yourself.” She added, ”Girl, you could use a cold shower,”

Tess did as she was told. “Cold showers stopped working days ago,” she explained.

Tamra looked Tess over when she was finished cleaning herself, then told her to put her pants back on, and sit back on the countertop.

“Well, nothing looks wrong with you, Tess. But I can see you have been playing a lot, and you’re rather red. Tell me, what’s been going on with you?”

Tess told Tamra everything that’s been happening to her ever since she first met Kelly Winston. “He’s human but, he isn’t like any man I’ve ever met. It’s like he has been hiding out on his island all these years. No one that I know of has ever been out there, but the people who have been working there, and with what I know, why hasn’t anyone on the mainland seen these workers? Tim’s in the Coast Guard. He said he has watched people out there working, but how did Kelly get them on, and off of the Island without someone seeing them? It’s like Kelly’s whole life is a damn mystery. Just look at the man’s body, and the size of his,…...the man is just damn big.”

Tamra nodded her head in agreement, Janet, and her saw Kelly up close in the woods. “The first night he makes love to me. I wake up two days later glowing, and the moon, and stars were talking to me. Tamra, Kelly doesn’t scare me. I know he would never hurt me. I myself would kill for the man. It’s just all the unanswered questions. And then there’s the fact that since I have been with him. I am out of control horny all the damn time.” When Tess finished her story, she was clearly discussed it with herself.

“OK, Tess. From what I heard, there really is only few problems here. Kelly comes out of his shell. He gives you an out of this world experience on his boat. Then he drops you, and his boat off at the docks. Now, you are what I would call perm-a-horny, just like perm-a-frost. Then you attack his best friend because you both had feelings for each other. Dose that sum it up.”

“Ya,” she told Tamra. “But I don’t think Kelly told me to have Tim just because I wanted him. I really think he was giving me a way to help myself with

this uncontrollable urge. Tamra, it’s really getting out of control,” she confessed.

“Tess, you need to calm down, and not because of whatever is happening to you. Because Kelly is in a bad way, and they will let you go inside. However, once inside the ICU, you must remain calm. In there, you can’t cry, or flip out. You’ll only be able to touch maybe his arm, or his hand, but that’s about it. All we’re going to do is to be with him for a few minutes.”

A single teardrop rolled down her cheek when Tess asked. “Tamra, is Kelly going to die?”

“Tess, I won’t lie to you. The odds, and doctors say he will, but just like you said. Kelly isn’t a normal man, and Janet and I agree with you. Something happened to us out there with him, and ever since then, we both can feel him even when standing in the parking lot.”

There was a knock at the door. Tamra let Janet in. “How’s the truck?” she asked.

“Well, the engine is sure hotter than hell. Tamra, it’s a fucking brand-new green safari truck. It must have cost well over hundred thousand dollars. I would have it checked out. You, and I both know those trucks are not built for high rates of speeds.”

Janet glanced over at Tess, who was still sitting on the countertop with her pants unfastened, and her shirt off.

“Ah, guy’s isn’t this a weird place for a slumber party?” She glanced back at Tamra, then back at Tess. “OK, what’s going on here? The sexual tension in this bathroom is off the scale.”

“Janet, do you remember the way we felt when we were with Kelly?”

“Are you kidding me?” she told her friend, shaking her head. “You had the gun pointed over the wall waiting for one of them assholes to show up. I had a few fingers on myself, and a few on you because you had to hold the gun. You, and I were so far gone after, meeting him. We would never have left that wall if we didn’t believe he wasn’t hurt. We would have stayed right there, and kept screwing each other all night.”

“Tess, Janet, and I have been best friends since grade school. My dad used to work for the federal government. One day, he just never came home. It took a while, but I finally realized I would never see him again. The military never gave me an explanation for his disappearance, and after a while, I kind of lost it. My mother died years before, so I had no one. Janet kept me clean, and forced me to eat because I stopped wanting to live. As the days passed, she started thinking about bringing me to the hospital because I was so depressed, and withdrawn. I wasn’t responding to her, or anyone. That’s when my childhood friend took off her clothes, removed mine, and made love to me. When she was done, she did it again. A few weeks later, we were still at my place, loving each other. I got better because of this wonderful woman.”

Tamra turned around, and put her arm around Janet’s waist. “Janet broke the social bearers, and loved me, anyway. We could have stopped when I got better, but we both just didn’t want to. I love her, and I love how she makes me feel. It may not have started out as a love affair, but it sure as hell ended up as one.”

What Tamra wasn’t telling Tess was that she wasn’t answering the door when Janet stopped by to see how she was doing. After coming to her home for the third time, Janet parked her car down the block, and around the corner so if Tamra was in the house, she wouldn’t hear her drive up. When Janet reached the home, Tamra was screaming inside, totally out of control. Without knocking, Janet kicked the front door in. She ran into the bedroom where Tamra was screaming in pain.

Entering the bedroom, she found her in bed holding a silver Colt forty-five revolver to her head.

She was going to kill herself. Janet knocked the gun out of her hand, and held her tight against herself. She wanted to bring her to the hospital, but then there would be a record of a suicide attempt. Instead, Janet put her in a cold shower. She joined her friend, then after getting her back to bed. Janet made love to her. Tamra didn’t stop her when she did it the first time, or the second. On the third time, Tamra reached out, and loved her friend right back.

“Whatever in the hell is happening to all of us,” Tamra continued. “Kelly started it, and we’ll just have to wait to speak with him. We’ll need to pray for him, and hope he gets better. He could be out of it for two, or three weeks or more.”

“For whatever reason, Tess. I really believe things will chill out once he is up, and feeling better. Then we will pin him down, and tickle him until he shits himself for putting you through what you’re going through.”

“I just have one question for you before we go see him,” Tamra told her. “Would you like our help to help you? I am not throwing us at you, and you don’t have to touch us at all. Janet, and I are doing this just for you, Tess.”

“So, if you want our help, tell me now.”

Tess slowly got off the counter while saying, “You don’t expect—”

“No, not at all,” Tamra quickly assured the girl. “Tess, we’re doing this for you alone. I am sure Janet, and I will be here for you anytime you need us. I know you’re in love with someone who you can’t find, and you’re in love with two men who are best friends, and right now, one of them is in there seriously injured. Tess, you have even more stuff going on with you than that. I can clearly see it. Girl, you’re getting close to being overloaded. We’re here for you if you want it. What’s your answer?”

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The hospital personnel let the three girls in to see Kelly, and Tess did as the

girls told her. No crying, or raising any fuss. Kelly laid on the bed. He wasn’t wearing his death face as people do when they were dying, but he sure looked close to death to Tess. The big, healthy man she knew before just wasn’t there anymore.

Kelly had tubes coming out of his arms, and chest with a monitor by his bedside showing his heartbeat, and blood pressure. There wasn’t anything in the room, but the things necessary to keep him alive. The three could only stay with him for a short time, then they were asked to leave. Each time they were in with Kelly, the nurse would watch over them as much as she watch over her patient.

Leaving the ICU, the girls would go to the waiting area, where Tess would break down, and cry. They would hold each other, and sometimes, they all three cried together.

That first week. Tess rented a furnished apartment in town, and although there were other bedrooms, they all slept in the same bed together. One night, she woke up, and found Tamra, and Janet making love. Moving closer beside them, she watched them.

Tamra turned her face towards Tess, and kissed the younger woman.

The days of that first week were the hardest because there was nothing to do, and neither of them was about to leave the hospital, and leave Kelly alone. Kelly had no family of his own to be with him. At the end of the first week, Doctor Radcliffe found the girls after lunch one day.

“Mr. Winston is one hell of a powerful man, that is for sure,” he told them. “I’m happy he is doing so well because, by all rights, he should be dead. If another man took a direct hit to the chest as he did, they would never have made it here alive. I believe Mr. Winston’s size, and his excellent health were the key factors for his reason to be living today.”

Tamra spoke up, “This is just a guess, Doc, but the bullet that hit his chest. It struck one of his bones, didn’t it?”

“Yes, it did, it smashed into a rib bone. That’s why he is having so many problems. I will say this. He is improving, but even saying that anything could still end things for him. Many people are talking about him here at Maine’s Medical Center, but if this man did what you say he did. Then everyone will respect his Hero status, and no one will be talking to the news service. I personally made sure of that myself.”

After the Doctor left, Tess asked Tamra. “What was that about the bullet?” Tamra understood all about gunshot wounds. Her father had taught her well.

“What the doctor didn’t say was if the bullet just passed through his body, he wouldn’t be in as much danger, and his recovery time would be a lot shorter. But since it hit a bone, the bullet, and bone broke apart, all the pieces went in different directions, causing even more damage to his body.”

“Tess, stop crying.”

She sniffled, wiping her nose with the cuff of her shirt sleeve. “But he did say Kelly is getting stronger.”

“Yes, he did.” Janet told her. “but we can’t count on that, just like the Doctor said. You feel me?”

Janet went on while smiling down at Tess. “Talking about feeling me, what was your hand doing on me this morning when I woke up?”

Tess immediately went on the offensive, she screamed at Janet. “What?...I wasn’t...that’s a lie...how dare you say that.”

The girl was suddenly cut off by Tamra. “Janet, stop getting her going. Why

don’t we all go out to Belfast tonight? I’m thinking maybe we need to take a trip out to this island, and see what we’re getting into. Well, who’s with me?”

Everyone agreed with Tamra to go check out Heaven’s Gate Island, except for Tim. He saw the girls come in while he was about to have dinner at the Fisherman’s Wharf. He caught them just before they took in the mooring lines on the Freeloader. Tamra, and Janet, he already met the day of Tessa’s speed run to the hospital. Tim even took the “Moose Killer” as he was told was Tessa’s name for her truck, and drove it to the car dealership, and had their mechanic look it over.

It wasn’t long before the guy drove it back out front to him. Climbing down from the big truck, the mechanic told him. “Everything looks wonderful to me, boss. She is running just fine,” he told Tim.

“Damn,” Tim cussed. “I know. It felt fine to me too, but Tess really drove it hard the other day.”

“I don’t think you, or this girl you’re talking about really understands this truck,” the guy told him.

“This baby here is a mother. She’s really hard to kill. The body is built like a tank, and the engine has been coated with Slick-TKO. One of the first things to break will be the windshield, and the tires. If you take real good care of her, you got this truck for life. Just be sure you give us a call ahead of time when you bring her in for maintenance. There are some items in her we’ll need time to order.”

“What’s Slick-TKO?”

“Oh, you never heard of that?” the mechanic asked him. Tim shook his head, no.

“Slick fifty was designed years ago to be put into a car’s engine. It coated the inside of the engine with a Teflon-like material. It’s a lot like what they did for frying pans you cook with.”

Tim could tell the guy was really getting into their discussion. Mechanics love to show people their knowledge of their craft.

“However, it worked, but like your frying pans. The Teflon it would peel off

over a short period. As I said, it worked, and it reduced the heating of the engine, and I am sure you know. Heat kills an engine.

“Well, this Slick-TKO is better than Slick fifty ever was, and there just isn’t anything better on the world market today. It is also so damn costly that normal people just can’t afford it. That’s another reason the truck costs so much. You shouldn’t burn a drop of oil over the next thirty years because of that Slick-TKO,

and if the engine’s temperature goes out of range even a little. Get the truck back

down here pronto, because there’s something wrong with it.”

Being the sport Tim was, he shook the guy’s hand, and thank him for sharing the information with him. Tim knew about Slick fifty, but not Slick-TKO. Tim worked for the Coast Guard, but he did so because it kept him on the water. Like Kelly, the two men loved the ocean. However, during his long boring duty watches, he has been taking on-line classes from the University of Maine at Orono, and other state colleges. Since Tim’s first day with the United States Coast Guard, he has learned everything there is to know about computers. He could build a string of them, and he even knew some of the bigger ones made for NASA, and large corporations. He also has earned another degree in engineering, and in his spear time at home he played with different locking systems. However, there was one thing no one knew about Tim, and that was his love for writing, and reading poetry. But if something was mechanical, and complicated. Tim wanted to know all about it. In short, Timothy Franklin Scott was an overachiever pretty much like Kelly.

“Hi guys,” he said as he approached the stern of the Freeloader. “Where are you three off to?” Tim damn well knew they were up to something. “Tess, didn’t Kelly tell you to keep the Freeloader in port while he was away?”

“No, he didn’t, Tim. We’re going out to see Kelly’s Island. We won’t bother anything. We just want to see it,” she explained.

Tim knew Tamra, and Janet were no harm, but Tess, he’s known for a long time. You couldn’t have enough spy satellites, listening devices, and private investigators watching over her. Tess was the type of gal who was always looking for trouble, and fun at the same time.

“Tess, honey. I want all of you to stay off that island until Kelly gets back. I may stand here with you, but I have eyes on that island.”

Tim wasn’t kidding. His Coast Guard boys were making extra passes by the Island, and Tim was paying for the extra gas for them to do it. He also has his fisherman friends, and a few folks on the other islands watching it for him. If anyone stepped one foot on Heaven’s Gate Island, Tim would get a phone call.

Tess just stared at him, thinking really hard. Tim already knew she’d try

something.

“Oh...we wouldn’t even dream of going ashore, Tim. I mean, after all, I’m supposed to get married to him, but I’m not going to trespass on the man that I love, and his island while he’s in the hospital. That just wouldn’t be right,” she

finished her lie.

“Tess, I’m not fooling around,” he told her, getting serious suddenly. “If I even hear of you three going near that island. I’ll have this boat confiscated, and all three of you will be arrested.” Tim knew you had to be firm with Tess, or the girl would walk right over you.

Clouding up, Tess spoke his name, and stomped her right foot, which pleased Tim because it made her tit’s jiggle. “Must be a no-bra day,”

“Tim!” Tess screamed, and stomped her little foot. “Why are you being like this?”

Then Tim had a brainstorm. “Because, my love,” he told her softly, “because I can, and because of what Kelly has invested out there, it’s nothing to be played with by anyone. If you want to honor your love for him, then stay off of that island.”

Tim could see what he told her had the desired effect on Tess. Instead of going out to the Island, they all had dinner with him at the Fisherman’s Wharf.

Everything he told the girls was true. Tim himself went out to the Island to check on it for his friend while he was in the hospital, and when he got there, he could have almost died. The Island was so surreal, and incredible; it shook him up for hours after he left.

Tim knew Heaven’s Gate Island had been in Kelly’s family for many generations. It was his family who named the Island. The Island was over a mile long and three-quarters of a mile wide. Over the years, Tim watched the Island being developed from the Coast Guard boat when he was on duty. He remembered a while back, Kelly brought out three heavy dredging cranes, and dozes from Portland. Two cranes were on barges with one running around on the Island. For eight months, they dug at the bottom of the seabed all around the Island’s land mass. The operators then piled all the sand mixed with dirt, and rock around the edges of the Island to give the Island some privacy. The Island only had one sandy beach, which was in one of the biggest inlets on the easterly side of the Island. Tim has been out to the Island, and its pier before, but in all these years, he’s never really been on the Island itself, nor has he seen the new house.

On the island’s western side, there was an inlet where one could dock a boat. The pier itself was in the shape of a “T’” with the foot of the “T” resting by the shoreline. It stretched out thirty feet across the water to the top of the “T” which was another thirty feet long. The pier was made hassle-free as it would rise, and drop with the tide. It rested on two-foot-thick piling’s that had been pounded into the seabed, and were sticking out of the water at high tide by four feet. The gangway for the pier was six feet wide, always rolling. and adjusting to the height of the tide.

Tied to the pier was one of the biggest lobster boats Tim knew they had made. It was a white opened ended boat with the name “Troller” written on both sides of the bow. Tim knew Kelly used it to bring in supplies, and heavy items out to the Island, and because of the nature of the boat, Kelly added weight in the bow, and stern to make it more stable in the water, but he also placed a tugboat bumper all around the craft to help stabilize the boat. Tim had been on board the Troller before while it was in Belfast, and he knew without looking. Kelly had a tugboat’s diesel engine crammed into the small engine compartment. Kelly was the type of guy who maximized everything he owned to make it run at peak performance. This was one reason Tim, and Kelly got along so well.

As the Captain of the “Cutter,” Tim’s Coast Guard boat. Tim was relentlessly drilling his crew. People’s lives were in their hands when they were the most helpless. Tim would admit that other than a supertanker, he could drive anything on the water, and the next boat on Kelly’s pier was a boat he had always wanted to drive.

It was a blue, and white Sun-Station 36 SSR. It was one mother of a fast boat. Tim knew boats like this one. This little racer would fit four people tight because everything about the boat was built for speed. The driver would be crunched up to the dashboard, and just the slightest turn of the wheel would spin the boat all the way around. The boat’s cruising speed with one person, Tim figured, would be at least 140 mph on a flat, calm sea. Running over the waves of the ocean, the boat would come flying out of the water, and sail forty or sixty feet before touching back down. Tim watched Kelly drive the boat so hard, he thought he would crash it.

Kelly would speed along when, without warning, he would suddenly cut the boat sharply to the side. The boat would let fly a wall of water twenty feet high. Kelly would then drive back on the same path he just come from. He did it as if he did it every day of the week. Written on the boat’s stern in round, swirling black, bold, loving letters was the name “Catherine.”

Tim didn’t know who Catherine was because Kelly had never told him what the name meant to him, and he never asked. He knew Kelly would only use the best fuel for the Sun Station. On the banks were the gas, and diesel pumps with their tanks buried beneath the ground. By the gangway was a workshop with a sound system. Attached to the wall was a fancy intercom system with a 10x10 flat screen

that caught Tim’s eye. There were also normal items for people who lived on the water scattered all around. He eyeballed the electric hoist to bring up heavy items from the Troller, or lift the boats out of the water if Kelly needed to.

A movement off to the side caught his attention. Down the path, he could see three rabbits hopping through the tall swale grass. That wasn’t too weird, but animal life on small islands was hard to maintain. Most people didn’t want to deal with the trouble they could give the residents. Walking on, Tim took the path to the house. He thought the house was off to the right, but as he reached past the sand dunes, the house wasn’t where it should have been. Turning to his left, Tim quickly stepped back because there in front of him sat a monster of a mansion. It scared the hell out of him. The enormous mansion didn’t look mean, or evil, but to look at the house, the home made a statement of its own.

The house told Tim one thing: “If you screw with me, I will fuck you up!”

The house was hands down the biggest damn house Tim knew of, not only in the Belfast area, but in the state of Maine as well. There had to be forty or fifty rooms in it. It somewhat resembled how he was told the old house looked, but this one was a lot bigger. It was two stories tall, and at the top of the roof was a round room with glass walls. The house had some type of thick, dark gray slate for siding. Tim has seen slate siding before, but not stuff this thick. He was sure they could make it, but it would cost a small fortune, and last for hundreds of years. As a matter of fact, looking around. Everything on the Island looked like it was all made to last a very long time. Even the windows of the home looked different. The house sat on a tall foundation, so the bottom of the windows started at the height of Tim’s head.

Slowly, he approached the side of the house, looking up at the window. He was getting a little spooked, being on the Island by himself. He got right up next to it, then reached up to touch the window but stopped himself.

“Oh, no way old man.” Tim told himself. “That wouldn’t be a good idea at all. Don’t touch the house.”

The windows were clearly bullet-proof glass. They looked to withstand a

high-caliber bullet. The house freaked him out so much Tim couldn’t get himself to turn his back on the home. He backed away from it before continuing on.

On the right side of the home, he found a huge, oversized pool with a deep end that was at least thirty feet deep. Seats were built into the edges of the pool all around so that people could sit together, and dangle their legs in the water. However, the pool was missing the diving board. A snake-like pattern of brickwork was laid around the pool, creating a wider walkway that led to the house. The walkway featured two double glass doors that swung outwards. There were the usual chairs, and cushions, and tables, and sun tanning chairs with little tables beside them. Kelly could easily sit over a hundred people out here.

Passing back by the front door, he stopped. He hadn’t noticed it before, but there wasn’t any doorbell, or knocker on the double front door. That in itself was strange. Tim didn’t know it yet, but the rest of the Island would prove to give him unanswered questions, much like Kelly’s home.

As far as Tim could see, the whole place had been planned, right down to the last tree, and rock. Covering the Island were trees that were evenly spaced out, and planted in just the right places. Tim knew Kelly was a sucker for detail, but the Island, and his home were something to be seen. The entire area was covered in green grass with high dunes all around the edges of the Island. Some dunes were covered in swale grass, while others were covered in green grass. Off in the distance was a large flat top dune that was about fifty by thirty feet across, but nowhere else did Tim see another one of its kind.

“That makes 85,” Tim said out loud, counting out the mysteries he has found since being on the Island.

As he walked through the trees, he saw birds, and other animal life running

around on the ground. There were gofers, squirrels, and even deer living on the Island. Small boxes were built in the trees for the birds, and squirrels to nest in. The animals on the ground had custom-made dens built from heavy aluminum planted into the ground, and they were everywhere. Then, he stumbled on a feeding area at the far southern end of the Island. The feeding troughs resembled round feeding troughs ranchers placed out in their fields for cows.

These, however, were larger, and had tall holding tanks to store the feed for the critters. Kelly even had smaller troughs that only little critters could get into, so the larger animals couldn’t eat their food. He found most of the troughs were empty.

Sitting close by was a large red barn with white trim, which wasn’t locked. Along both sides of the barn were many empty cages for different animals. Behind the barn, he found a large pond with houses in which all the ducks would sleep in. Someone must have clipped their feathers because they couldn’t fly more than a few feet off the ground. They seem happy enough to Tim, playing in their little pond.

Entering the barn, he found just about every kind of feed sack you could think of each weighing fifty pounds, or more. There was also an ATV with a six-foot-long flat trailer attached to it. It took him almost two hours to fill all the feed bins by himself. He could tell what feed went where because most of the bins had a little feed left in them, except one, so he topped the rest-off. Then he took the feed dust from the empty bin in his hand, and he knew what went there. Corn, it was for the deer herd. It also had the largest storage bin on the trough, and took a hundred, and seventy-five pounds of feed to fill it.

Finished with his task, Tim stood back, and told himself. “OK, that makes 86.”

Standing by the feed bins, he looked off into the distance at a few small buildings. There were a vast number of buildings all over the Island. Even the only beach on the Island had its own tropical cottages with grass roofs, and lots of glass walls. There was also an outside communication system on the wall, and another flat screen. All around the buildings were tables, and chairs with an outside shower that wasn’t enclosed. Inside the main building was a very large, oversized bed......bed?

“That’s 87.”

Also in the building was a large refrigerator, and a stand-up freezer, and a bathroom. Tim thought, you could pretty much live in there, and cook on the BBQ,

He moved on.

The last things he found were the gym, a rifle range, and tennis courts. Walking back towards the house, he stopped, and looked all around him.

He couldn’t help himself, and said it out loud, “The Plane Boss, the Plane.”

Tim could only shake his head. This was indeed Fantasy Island. However, he also knew it was a very dangerous place. No matter how it looked. He could feel danger all around him, but whatever made it that way, he couldn’t see it. He looked at the house again. It still scared the shit out of him, and only God knows what Kelly had in the damn thing.

In his engineering classes, Tim worked on building costs. Tim figured the

rebuilding of the new home must have cost Kelly between two to three million dollars. If you added everything on the Island, and he was sure there were water sports items like jet skis, and scuba gear. He even bet there were a few snowmobiles as well. Adding the cost of the house, and the other things on the Island together, Tim guessed the grand total of what was on the island was to be well over fifty, or sixty million dollars. He had no idea his friend of so many years was this wealthy. If Kelly had this kind of cash to rebuild the Island, then his true gross worth had to be astronomical. Tim knew anyone who could gather what Kelly had on the Island was so rich they were a very dangerous person just by their wealth alone.

He gave the house a wide berth, going back to the pier.

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Jane Wellington broadcasted a bright friendly smile for her viewers as she ended the Channel Six evening news telecast for the night.

“I hope you folks remember our Hero here at Channel Six, who, a few weeks back, went to the aid of three women at a backpacking shelter beside Upper Jo-Mary Lake. He found two women alive, and then he killed six killers by himself protecting them. He sustained two gunshot wounds, one in his chest, and has remained at Maine’s Medical Center in Portland ever since the tragic night that claimed the lives of seven people.”

“Well, I have some awesome news for all of you. Our hero is still alive, and they believe with some rehabilitation, he will make a full recovery. As far as I am concerned, what this man did was very heroic. He has had three women by his side who have kept a steady vigil with him every day since he was hospitalized. When they’re not with their hero, the women spend time in the Hospital’s chapel, or in the waiting area outside the ICU. Two of the women who have been at his side from the beginning, I am sure you already guessed who they are. That’s right, they are the two women who he saved at the shelter by Joe-Mary Lake. The other woman who ran to his side, I hear, is engaged to our Hero. We were all worried about their superstar, and I am sure all of your good thoughts, and prayers were there for him. Good night, folks. I’m Jane Wellington for Channel Six News.”

Before the State Police got Kelly to the hospital, his heart already stopped once. The med-texts revived him. The girls prayed for him, but they didn’t make a sound in the helicopter because everything in life revolved around Kelly alone. Landing on the hospital roof, they rushed him into surgery, where his heart stopped once more. His doctors got him stable enough to remove the bullet from his chest,

and repair some of the other damage done to his body. They also fixed the other smaller gunshot wound on his side, and then they stopped working on him.

After the first visit to the OR, they placed Kelly in a self-induced coma. Kelly would need other operations, but not till he was stronger. His two doctors, Radcliffe, and O’Neil would wait a few days before fixing the rest of the damage to his body

. Two days later, they operated on him again, and with high hopes, and a silent

prayer. Kelly was brought back to the ICU.

Two weeks later, Radcliffe convinced O’Neil it was time to take Kelly out of the coma. “We’ll keep a steady watch on him. If anything happens, we’ll knock him back down. I think he’s going to improve. Call it a gut instinct,” Radcliffe explained to his colleague.

“Yes, I am sure you’re right, Steve. I’m just worried. Man, the size of that guy is incredible. I have never had a man so big, and strong on my table. Steve, that fucking guy should be dead. I’ve never seen anyone make it through an injury like that before.”

O’Neil shook his head in agreement. “When we opened him up, and I saw the size of his heart, I almost died. The damn thing was the size of a moose’s heart. I can’t see God letting this guy die over a gunshot wound. Not after what he, and those two women went through out there.”

As soon as his doctors took him out of the coma, Kelly’s health improved at a faster rate than anyone had expected. Especially, for someone with his kind of injury. His recovery speed amazed his doctors, and nurses, and a week later, Kelly opened his eyes for the first time.

Janet just missed it because of the hot chili peppers she had on her pizza the night before. Tamra told her, “You do that every time you have pizza, and every time you pay for it. Learn girl.”

Tess was closest to Kelly as Tamra stood off to the side in the recovery room. Tess was calmly trying to love Kelly without disturbing him when Kelly blinked, and fully opened his eyes. Seeing his eyes open, Tess went from zero to hyperactive mode, and raced for Kelly’s side at the speed of light. She stretched out her hands, reaching for him, but came to an abrupt stop with a hard jerk. A firm hand had clamped down on the backside of her neck, stopping her forward momentum.

Looking up, and over her shoulder, Tamra had her by the neck, and she didn’t look to be very happy with her. “Under control, really. I’m OK. I’m OK,” Tess said,

repeating herself.

It was clear to Tamra that the young girl wasn’t under control. “Ya, I can see that. Chill out, and go get nurse Ratched,” Tamra instructed her.

Kelly couldn’t talk, so Tamra took the water that was kept in a cup by his bedside. Using a straw, she gave him a drink. He was very thirsty, and drank the whole cup, then he closed his eyes, and went back to sleep. Tamra said a quiet prayer

of “Thanks” before anyone came into the room.

Kelly would live, and the following day, he briefly woke up again. The day after that, he stayed awake a little longer, and could speak. He was getting stronger. It was as if his body’s strength was doubling itself every day. The development of his health surprised everyone at the hospital. Even his two doctors stood back, and watched as they lost control of the situation. Their patient’s body was taking control of itself, and his eating habits proved it when he started demanding more food from the nurses. The nurses pleaded for help from both of Kelly’s Doctors, but they only told them to give Kelly whatever he wanted to eat. Seemingly, his body was only waiting for them to take him out of the coma, then it took on a mind of its own, and freaked out the staff at the Maine Medical Center.

The first day, he was fully awake. Tess could hold him, but Tamra warned the girl. She would beat the hell out of her if she screwed up.

Tess was trying to be very calm as she approached Kelly. Being as careful as she could, she put her hand on the side of his face. Kelly put an arm around her as she buried her face into his neck, and started balling, uncontrollably.

Tamra went to grab a hold of her, but Kelly waved her off. He kissed Tessa’s face, and whispered words of love to her. Tess touched Kelly deeply that day with her jester. Kelly finally had his own family, who loved, and cared for him. He apologized to her for leaving her like he did, but he explained it was something that could not have been avoided.

The police came by when he was awake, wanting to speak to him. The questions they asked weren’t anything out of the norm. Except they wanted to know why he was nude when they found him. Kelly just said he was skinny dipping nearby when he heard the girls screaming for help. They were asking him how he could shoot so good when the nurse suddenly barged into the room and kicked everybody out. The nurse told the police officers Kelly needed his rest and for them to come back at another time. Getting ejected from his room so quickly and rather rudely, they didn’t have time to ask him other questions about himself, and the incident. The police never did come back. They had enough information, and evidence with the statements from both girls to prove what happened at the backcountry shelter.

As the police left, Janet walked over to Tamra, standing outside of Kelly’s room. “I see that was your handy work in there.”

“They don’t need anything more Janet,” She told her, as they both watched

the cops walk down the hallway. “We all know Kelly has secrets, and when he’s ready, he’ll tell us about them.”

During the days that followed, Tamra, Janet, and Kelly learned a lot more about themselves. Janet found Kelly had a boyfriend who she lived with who was madly in love with her, but the only problem was she wasn’t in love with him.

“He’s a wonderful man, Kelly, but I can’t stay with him just for his love. I need to have my own for him, and I don’t see that happening. I see you already know about me, and Tamra.”

“Janet,” he told her. “I didn’t have to guess, or be told at all. You, and Tamra are glowing with love. I’m never one to judge people. I like what I see going on, and I fully approve.”

“We both love Tess,” she told him. “That little woman will be something else if she can ever get to the point of taking what she wants. Anyway, I’ll have to go home soon so I can take care of this with Jarred. I’ve only waited this long because I know I’m going to hurt him.”

“Janet, you have a home with us. I am sure you know Tamra is coming home with me, and Tess. All you have to do is show up on the docks in Belfast, and we will come get you.”

Tears fell from her eyes as Janet wrapped herself around Kelly. Kelly already knew Tamra was his. It was the unspoken word, and the affection she gave him when no one was in the room that told him that. “I am yours forever,” she had said to him behind that stone wall, and Kelly knew she meant it. She promised him again at the hospital. “I will never leave your side.”

Kelly understood right then that he had his leading female alpha. He knew Tess, and Janet would not have a problem with it. Anyway, they were all alphas, and all alphas could make decisions without asking, but Tamra was someone entirely different. She was made to stand with him. Kelly knew she would not move to the side for anyone. Tamra was a woman who would gladly die with him.

Later, she told Kelly, “Don’t worry about Janet; she’ll be coming home with us. I know that girl.”

Kelly’s next step was he wanted one more Alpha for the group. He knew who that next Alpha was but getting him was going to be a bitch. Social structures played a key part in all relationships, as Tess herself was fighting with right now. However, this next Alpha would have decisions to make, or Tess, and him could keep letting society, and the manmade world rule their hearts, and lives.

Three and a half weeks after he woke up, Kelly told his doctors he wanted to go home.

Doctor Radcliffe pointed out to him. “Mr. Winston, I see you are doing better than anyone could have hoped for, but you need to rest, and get some rehabilitation.”

Kelly wouldn’t take no for an answer. “Doc, do I have a hole in my chest?”

“Of course not. That part of your body is healing nicely,”

“Then give me one good reason I should stay here. I am moving all around this bed, and just before you came in, Tess had her pretty little hands under the sheets. Let me tell you, that’s one little woman who knows how to handle me.”

Tamra bumped into Tess with her hips. Tessa’s eyes flared wide, looking up at the taller woman. “You, and I are so going to have a talk, little sister.”

“Mr. Winston, it’s what’s inside of you that needs the rest,” Radcliffe told him.

“Well, if that’s what I need, Doc, then I guess you are right. I need to rest, so I’m going home to get some. I now have two, but soon, I’ll have three very capable women to keep me tied down so I can rest. Doc, my home is twice the size of a city block, except for a CAT scan. I have almost everything that is in this hospital in my first aid room. I’ll have everything I’ll need at home,” he told them.

They couldn’t stop him, so they let Kelly go home. Janet changed her mind at the last minute, and said she’d speak to Jarred after spending a few days on the Island. It took all three of them to get Kelly into the Moose Killer’s back seat.

On the way home, Kelly forced them to stop, and get something to eat at McDonald’s. Tamra immediately told Tess not to go through the drive-through, and said she would go inside, and get his food for him.

Kelly happily told her what he wanted: four double cheeseburgers, two large Fries, and an extra-large coke. Everybody in the truck could see the relief on his face when Tamra didn’t argue about the food he picked. While she was gone, they all stayed quiet in the truck. Even Tess kept busy by playing with the Moose Killer’s side mirror. When Tamra got back, she told Tess to drive off while Kelly kept asking for his food from the back seat. Getting back on the road, she finally handed it back to him.

When Kelly opened the bag, there was a small salad, and a small ginger ale inside. He wasn’t happy about it, but he ate it. Every once in a while, he would toss a piece of lettuce onto the front seat between Tamra, and Tess.

Tim was waiting for them at the Belfast pier. With his help, it was easier to get Kelly out of the truck, and onto the Freeloader. Tim also picked up some food at the Fisherman’s Wharf. Tamra almost flipped out over his selection of fried chicken, and coleslaw, but she kept quiet because she knew Tim was only trying to help.

Tim drove the cabin cruiser out to Heaven’s Gate Island over calm seas. Forty minutes later, they docked at the Winston’s pier. Tim opened the shed, brought one of the electric carts around, and helped the girls get Kelly inside.

After Kelly punched a bunch of codes into the security panel at the front door, the doors opened. All five friends walked inside together as the lights came on by themselves. Everyone stopped at the threshold of the doorway, amazed, and in shocked, no one said a word as they took in the surreal beauty of the interior of the home.

The foyer was very wide, with a very high ceiling about thirty feet high. There was a door on the right side of the room, and another one further down the same wall. There was only one doorway on the left, halfway down the other wall.

“The door on the left goes to a big front room with a fireplace, and the other two go to the kitchen, and dining area,” He explained.

Everybody was happy, he told them where the three doorways went, but it wasn’t the other rooms that had the girls going goo-goo over. It was, in fact, the white marble staircase that held their complete attention. The staircase was sixteen feet wide at the bottom. From there, it flowed up and in on both sides, to eight feet wide halfway up. Then, it flowed back out, and attached itself to the second floor. Resting on top of the banisters at the bottom of the staircase were two wolf heads made of cherry wood.

On their left, and off to their right were two out-coves part way up both walls, where stood two fine wood-carved figures of a timber wolf. Topping the room off was a gigantic chandler of crystals, and gold with what looked to be diamonds attached all along the rod holding it to the ceiling.

Tamra was the first one to speak. “Oh, my God, Kelly. You should have warned us. Your home is out of this world.”

Janet, and Tess agreed with her, but the home still scared the hell out of Tim.

Tess herself was having a problem being here. Shock finally was setting in, making her realize what she had gotten herself into. She would have been happy to have Kelly in a broken-down shack out in the woods, but all of this wealth wasn’t something she was used to.

Kelly looked at her, and told her. “Tess, there’s a bathroom right behind the staircase.”

“Thanks,” she said, then ran down the hallway on the left side of the stairs.

“Tim, do you think you could help the girls get me up the stairs?” “I don’t see why not, but shouldn’t you be staying downstairs?”

Kelly told him, “The bed chamber has its own dumbwaiter to the kitchen, and its own bathroom. Anyway, I want to be comfortable. Once you guys get me up there, you can take the Freeloader back to Belfast. We’ll pick it up later.”

The most important room in any home is the master bedroom. If everything isn’t right in that one room, it will throw off, and unrest the peace of any home. It wasn’t just their sex life that needed attending to. The bedroom needed to be

functional for all sleeping in there. Kelly understood that, and it’s also why he built his home in the same manner as the pack he first visited a long time ago.

The bed chamber had walls that curved inward with a high dome ceiling. The Alphas bed was on the left, and although anyone could sleep there, it was known as the Alphas bed. It was larger than the rest of the beds in the room. It also sat higher than the other beds so the leading Alphas could keep watch over the pack.

Kelly now had three alphas of his own, but they would share themselves with others who would occupy the other beds. In the center of the room was a large round play bed, which would fit eight to ten people. The Alpha would watch this bed more closely, making sure no one got offended, and also just enjoy the pack loving each other.

There were three other rooms attached to the bedchamber. One was a changing room with many closets, and another was a touch-less voice-controlled bathroom. In it were four copper tubs, and an eight-person walk-in shower, encased in glass, with water jets high, and low. There were toilet closets along with many sinks, mirrors, and cupboards. On one wall was a walk-in alcove with everything you would need while in the bathroom, or the bedchamber.

The last room had an assortment of items. There were massage tables, and a steamer for towels, and oils. There was also a king-size bed built into the floor, and an eight-person steam closet along with devices built into the ceiling. A member of the family would sit in one, and be played with by another member. In all three rooms, there were towels, and most importantly, body wipes everywhere. To help with cleaning in the bedchamber and play area, there were small touchless sinks with hot, and cold running water. Sex would be a big part of their lives. Any member of the family would find someone to fulfill their every desire.

In the playroom was a sliding glass door that faced to the east with an outside porch twenty by thirty feet long. It had a twelve-person hot tub, and comfortable outside chairs with tables, and umbrellas.

The Alpha had three females to share his life with him, and now he needed one more to work out his ultimate plan. However, Kelly made the house for more alphas than he had. Eventually, there would be another eleven Alphas living on the Island. All the other packs in the organization had Alphas, and Betas with children living within the groups. For now, there would be only be adult Alphas living on Heaven’s Gate Island, and there was a major serious reason for this.

Tim left, and the girls stripped Kelly. Tamra undressed, and gently wrapped herself around his naked form, and they both fell asleep. Hours later, Kelly woke, he asked both Tamra, and Janet to marry him. They both agreed. He then gave them their engagement rings.

Kelly asked Tess to run, and get a document on his desk downstairs in his office. When she got back, he told the girls. “By society’s standards, we cannot get married. Society no longer exists in our lives, and we will not live by their rules, and regulations. We will live by our own standards, and love how we choose. We will not be dictated to by anyone. However, no one can stop us from making a legal life-long commitment together. The beginning of this document describes our pack together. The only thing that can break your vows is death. Once you’re in, you’re in for life. There’s no going back. Once you three, and I repeat our vows, you’ll sign at the bottom, and I’ll give it to my attorney.”

“Do you all understand what I said? Do you wish for me to continue?” They told him to continue.

After reciting their vows, he gave the girls their wedding rings. Then he gave Tamra, and Janet their necklaces, which were just like Tessa’s. Tess took hers out, and put it on. Since Kelly gave it to her, she went nowhere without it. While in his office, she brought Kelly’s so he could put his on. Kelly told the girls to gather around him. They all held each other, waiting to hear what their husband had on his mind.

“I want to tell you, no matter what happens to me. Never ever forget this: I

vow to all of you that for the rest of my life, I will love you. For the rest of my life, I will protect you. Anytime I am away, I will send you flowers, candy, cards, gifts, and letters. And every chance I get, I will send for you, or come to you, and make love to you. I want all three of you to always remember there is no other man in this world who loves you greater than I.”

It was some time before the girls dried their eyes over Kelly’s personal devotion he made to them.

The last thing Kelly gave to Tamra, and Janet was a check. Janet, knew Kelly, was hurting for money from not working while she stayed with Tamra, and Tess while he was in the hospital.

When Janet saw the amount written on the check, her eyes popped wide open. “Kelly. Oh, my God. Thank you.”

Tamra didn’t even look at hers. She handed the folded check back to him, saying, “Kelly, I don’t need this.”

He didn’t take it from her, but only stared into her grayish-blue eyes, and asked, “Are you sure about that, Tamra?”

“Yes, I’m sure,” she told him. “Anyway, I still have a lot left over from what the government gave me.”

She tried handing it back to him again, but Kelly still wouldn’t take it. When he didn’t take it that time, Tamra knew something was up. Opening the folded check, she stopped dead reading it. The check was written out for her in the sum of 0.00 dollars.

“Tamra, I knew who, and what you were when I first looked at you in the woods. I know your heart. We three were destined to be together. If you, Janet, and I hadn’t met at that shelter, we would have just met somewhere else. Tamra, no one can run from God. You, and I don’t need words to speak, for we have the same heart, and mind. I love you, baby.”

Tamra, who was always the cool, strong, collected woman, busted out in a fit of tears, and covered her face into Kelly’s neck. Kelly thought that had to be the best thing that has happened to him since he got home.

The next item on the agenda that night was something Tamra, and Kelly had been discussing since Kelly woke up at the hospital. They told Janet, and Tess what it was, and that they didn’t have to be involved with what he, and Tamra were going to do, but when Tamra told Tess how she would look after all the training. Tess voted in for it even though what they wanted to do would be very dangerous.

Kelly then told Janet, and Tamra about the necklaces, and the two satellites that were orbiting around the earth. He asked Tess to step out in the hallway, and shut the door behind her. When she was gone, Kelly showed the girls how to use the necklaces.

He touched his own necklace, and spoke in a low whisper, “Tess, come in the bedroom hopping like a bunny rabbit.”

A moment later, Tess entered the bedroom, hopping up, and down as she entered the bedchamber. They all laughed at her naked form, bouncing up, and down.

“That was weird,” she told them, climbing back into bed with them. “I heard your voice in my ears, but I didn’t hear any sound.”

“The system is really simple,” Kelly told them. “It works just like the bone phone they had here in the US years ago. Vibration transmits the music on the collarbone, but our units work by laser. After the laser hits a bone, it travels throughout your whole body. Once it touches your inner ear, you hear it. Because of the satellites, we’ll be able to talk to each other almost anywhere in the world. There are black-out areas, but I’m working on getting a company from Japan to send up two more satellites. Then we’ll have world coverage. Our organization is also working on implants that will replace the necklaces.”

Janet was trying to get his attention. “What’s your concern?”

She explained, “You all know I want to focus on my photography, but I want to do what you, Tamra, and Tess are doing.” All three girls laughed as she finished with, “Hell, I’d follow Tamra into a minefield, and any bedroom in America.”

“Janet, I have a building behind the house for your photo lab. There’s a guy I know who helps me out a lot, between the two of you. Deck the hell out of the place with environmental controls, lighting, and whatever else you need. Then you can stay here, train with us, and do your photography as well.”

Janet couldn’t help herself but to fall in love with Kelly. The man had a natural way of putting people at ease. Even without his money, Kelly would still be a protector, a provider, an understanding lover, and a best friend. She was beginning to understand what Tess had been telling them about him, even without this inescapable desire that was drawing them all together. She would have followed him to the corners of the earth. She was in love with him, and with the other two girls as well.

Tess spoke up. “Kelly, I don’t really need any money right now. But the Moose Killer needs some maintenance, and new tires. It’s also time for her first checkup.”

Tess also had another reason she wanted the work done on her truck. Neither of the women told Kelly the two girls were with her when she let the truck slide sideways down a very steep embankment because of the burned-up tires. Tess almost rolled the truck before she got the huge vehicle back under control. They haven’t been four-wheeling since that incident.

Kelly was proud of her choice in picking the truck. He knew it would cost a lot to pay for what she asked. He assured her he’d take care of it. However, he knew the truck getting new tires wasn’t what Tess really wanted. She had been lightly playing with him since they been in bed.

“Tess, come here baby. You are long overdue,” Kelly told her.

Tamra barked at him. “Kelly, you’re not in shape for that.”

“I’m not going to be doing much,” he promised. “Get her on top of me. I won’t move a muscle. She can do all the work herself. You should have seen her on the Freeloader when we got engaged. You, and Janet get on both sides of her, and hold her up from smashing into my chest. I get to watch the show.”

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Living on an island, and in a house of this size, everyone had daily jobs, and recycling, and cleaning was part of it. Tamra, being a natural born leader, took over the household operations with ease. Paper products were to be burned, and food was fed to the crabs, and fish. Plastic, and metal had to be hauled to the mainland by boat.

Janet, and Tess, being animal lovers, took over the care of the critters on the Island.

While everyone was off doing stuff on the Island, Kelly was having a rough time being penned up in the bedchamber. Over time, he let everyone know it by driving everyone crazy with non-stop chatter on the communication necklaces. Tamra, tired of it herself, shut the bedroom door as she went in to speak to him about it. When she came back out, Kelly’s attitude changed really fast. A routine was put in place with Kelly, the household chores, and training for the girls.

Under Kelly’s direction, Tamra ordered cases of food from Hanna-ford Food Corporation. He designed the kitchen to hold a walk-in refrigerator with another room that had a walk-in freezer with enough shelf space in the outer room to hold eight, or nine months’ worth of can, and dry goods.

Days before Tamra released Kelly from the bedroom, Janet and Tess took the

Troller to the pier in Belfast. The shipment of food was delivered. Kelly had arranged for Gloria to help the girls out. Gloria was used to handling large food orders in the restaurant business. Once back to Heaven’s Gate, all three girls used ATVs, and flat beds to bring the food up to the house. Kelly could see the girls were proud of themselves for the hard day’s work. He told them he was proud of them.

Then Tess made the mistake of saying. “Thank God that’s over with.”

“Over with,” Tamra laughed as she watched Tessa’s facial expression suddenly drop. “That was the first order. The rest of the dry goods, and frozen meats are coming tomorrow morning.”

Kelly assured them with the second order, they wouldn’t need another one for many months. During the wintertime, he told them they would not want to place an order. Once the food shipment was in, they would only have to pick up fresh produce once every week, or so. With the household fully stocked, they could now concentrate on Kelly’s primary goal.

Tamra had the girls’ training by the time Kelly was moving about the house. He wanted to join in with them, but she place him on light duty. So, when they ran their morning run around the gravel track, he built around the outer edge of the Island. He would follow them in an ATV, and watch as Tess out run both women. The small girl could pick up speed faster than a jaguar. She was the fastest thing on the Island, and would beat the other two women back to the house every time. Waiting for them at the house, she would taunt, and tease the girls. Tess set the pace for the Island as they all started running five miles every morning before breakfast.

After breakfast, hand-to-hand combat training was taught by Tamra, and Kelly. Martial arts training was one of the popular courses they had on the Island. The course emphasis four of the arts; Tae Kwon Do, Tai Chi, Shinto-Ryu, and Hapkido. However, the most fun they had was on the rifle range. Kelly knew it would be a big hit, so he stocked up on a ton of ammunition. They also trained with crossbows, and long bows, and worked out with different knives, and swords. Janet was throwing knives better than all of them, even Tamra. Kelly had an arsenal of weapons waiting for all of them to learn how to master. On any given day at the range, they trained with weapons like the AK47, and the M-240, and the M60 as well as the newer version of the M16 assault rifle. They also trained with older types of weapons, like the Ingram, and the Thompson machine gun, and Colt AR-15.

Every day, they worked with a variety of handguns in many models: the nine millimeters, forty-five, and thirty-eight caliber, and a slew of other handguns. Two of the most interesting weapons they trained with were the Mac ten and Mac elevens. The Macs were used by Secret Service, and Terrorist groups as personal defense weapons. They were known as “Spray, and Pray Weapons” because they were small, and very hard to shoot with any accuracy. The rifle range was one area on the Island where, in the middle of the night, you could find one of them there learning how to control, and master a weapon.

Kelly started Tess out with a twenty-two-caliber long rifle, then a twenty-two-caliber pistol. By the end of the first week, she could hit whatever was in her path. He then gave her a thirty-eight-caliber Colt, then a nine-millimeter, and then a forty-five-caliber pistol. Tessa’s skills took off with whatever weapon Kelly gave her. Kelly’s reasoning was, Tess had always been small, and people could easily take her out, but not anymore. Tess could kill any bastard that tried to hurt her. The rifle range turned into Tessa’s pass time, and playground.

Kelly now had a tool he could use to control her with. If she missed behaved, he wouldn’t let her shoot at the range in her off time. He laughed so hard the first time he did that, Tess slept in another bedroom by herself for two nights.

Janet was good on the range, and mastered the weapons easily, but Tamra has been showing her how to handle guns for years. Kelly didn’t want to shoot, but Tamra finally had her way, and forced him to show everybody what he could really do with a firearm.

Kelly set up the range up for himself as they all stood back, and stared at him

in disbelief. There was no way in hell he was going to hit the targets with any accuracy because he placed them all too far away.

Kelly set a standing target at ninety-five yards downrange, and then placed another one, sixty-five feet to the right of the first one. He then put ten four-inch Christmas bulbs on a wire beyond the first targets at one hundred, and twenty yards, twenty feet apart. Then he placed a standing target in front of the wire. Kelly also set the floating target that simulates a person running, and set that back to eighty-five yards at eye level. Finished with the targets, he took two Glocks, and set them on the middle rifle bench. To it, he added an AK-63 Hungarian machine gun beside

them. After loading an AK47 with a shoulder strap. He placed it on his back, then he picked up two Colt 1911, forty-five caliber pistols, and turned to face his family.

“I love all of you, and you’re all doing great, but this is my range,” he stressed. “And I have been shooting here since I was six years old.”

Kelly walk to the front of the rifle bench where the two Glocks were resting. Tess was grinning so hard from ear to ear she thought her mouth was going to crack. Her husband was about to show them something no one has ever seen him do before.

Kelly faced down range with his arms relaxed down by his side. Without warning, he lifted both of his arms at the same time in a shape of a “V,” pointing each Colt at a different target down range. He emptied both guns at both targets at the same time. He had set the running target on a timer, as he got done with the first targets. The runner flew off its hook, and sped across the range, picking up speed as it raced two hundred feet to the other side of the range. Kelly already dropped the empty Colt’s in the grass, then picked up the Glock’s behind him, and ran with the target, and let both guns fly all at once. As soon as the guns were empty, he dropped the Glocks on the ground, and grabbed the AK47 on his back.

Dropping to the ground on his right knee with his right leg straight back behind him. He put his left elbow on his left knee, and leaned forward into his leg. In rapid fire fashion, he shot all ten four-inch Christmas bulbs out of the air, and then empty the rest of the thirty-two-round clip at the target in front of the Christmas bulbs. Dropping the AK where he was at, he raced back, and grabbed the machine gun from the rifle bench just as the running target took off once more to race back to the other side of the range. Kelly stood in place, and emptied the clip into the target.

Once done, they checked his shots, and found every round hit all the targets inside of the four-inch circle around the man’s heart. Not one of his rounds missed the target.

Tamra had her fingers in her mouth, whistling, and clapping her hands. Their man could kick ass with a weapon, and they knew he wasn’t done showing them what he could do.

He then told the group, “Not only will you all master every weapon Tamra, and I put in your hands, but you will master it in both hands, and in every position we can think of before you move onto another weapon.”

“Also, I am adding a new class to your routine. It’s called. BSBU 101. It stands

for “blow the son of a bitch up.” In this class, you will learn how to use C-4 and disarm, and build medium size bombs. I will be the only one teaching this class. Janet will also start teaching her own class on photography, camera, and film equipment. The knowledge she has is going to be very important to you later on,”

He then pulled Tamra off to the side, and told her, “Go easy with their left hand. You, and I know it can be a bitch to master. We’re looking for improvement, and not right away perfection.”

She told him she understood.

From that day forward, the lot of them improved like crazy on the rifle range. They saw what their husband could do, and it impressed the hell out of all of them. From that day on, incentives, and gifts were given for over, and above, and beyond excellence.

When Tessa’s birthday arrived, Kelly asked her what she wanted. She told him she wanted money. He already knew she drained most of the money he had already given her, but he also knew what she did for her parents, plus she paid for the Moose Killer. Tess was also advancing faster in her training than both of the women. He agreed, and he gave her the money she asked for.

The next day, she went to Belfast to meet up with Tim, who was going to help her get her birthday present. When she came home empty-handed, they all wanted to know what she got, but all she told them was the store had to order it, and she wouldn’t get it until next week. For the whole next week, Tess was on pins, and needles. No one could calm her down, not even Janet. Finally, the day came when she left to get her present.

Tamra told Kelly Tess was stoned high on something.

“Well, whatever this present is, it seems to be the world for her to have.” He told Tamra to wait, and see what she brought home.

Later that afternoon, Kelly watched Tim quickly drop Tess off at the Islands pier, but Tim didn’t even wave to him as he kicked his boat into high gear, and sped out of the inlet before Kelly could say a word to him.

Tess slowly walked up to him, carrying a large wooden case in front of her with the biggest shit-eating grin plastered on her face.

Watching Tim drive off, he asked her. “That was strange. What’s up with him?”

By Tessa’s behavior, Kelly figured they’d all know pretty soon. Together, they took her birthday present inside to show the girls. At the kitchen table, Tess opened the box, and slowly turned it around to show her husband, and wives.

Both of Tamra, and Janet were instantly horrified by what was inside the case. Nestled in the red velvet interior of the box was one of the most powerful handguns in the United States. Tessa’s birthday present to herself was a brand-new stainless-steel Wiley forty-four auto-mag.

Everyone around the table said the same thing at the same time. “No fucking way, Tess!” Then they all began talking to each other all at once.

Tess cut them off. “Be quiet!” She screamed at her lovers. Kelly could see the girl wasn’t screwing around.

Tess told them this was the gun she’d always wanted all of her life since she watched Clint Eastwood, and Charles Bronson use the gun in their movies. She pretty much told them she wouldn’t take it back, and that they were just going to have to deal with it.

Kelly could see Tess had made up her mind, but Tamra, and Janet weren’t backing down.

“Guys let’s see what she can do with it before we all make up our minds. You

two,” he indicated to Janet, and Tamra. “Need to hold your convictions until we see how she handles it.”

“Kelly, are you kidding me? That frigging thing will knock her the hell out,” Tamra told him. “She’s too small of a woman for that damn cannon.”

“Ya, it just might,” Janet piped in. “But it will probably break her wrist just before it hits her in the face.”

Kelly looked closer at the gun’s handle, and then at Tess’s little fingers. He could see her hand, and fingers would just make it around the handle of the friggin cannon. He ended up talking Tamra, and Janet into letting her try the weapon, but even as they both agreed, they were still not happy about it.

At the range, Kelly told Tess to feed one bullet at a time into the weapon.

Thinking of a repeating wild cannon going off scared the hell out of him. He knew Tess has always excelled at the range. It was her happy place on the Island. He figured if she thought she could tame the massive gun, then Kelly felt that’s just what the girl would do.

Tess fed one round into the chamber, then stood tall, right leg braced behind her, left leg straight out. Both arms extended in front of her with both eyes wide open. One hand held the handle, while the other supported the bottom of the gun. She was all set when she pulled the trigger, , the cannon went off.

“Ka-BOOM!”

The force of the cannon being fired knocked Tess off her feet. At the same time, the recoil from the gun forced the gun back, hitting her in the forehead while she was in midair. Hitting the ground on her ass, blood immediately started flowing out of the slight wound on her forehead.

Tamra jumped up screaming from where she was, and ordered her husband, “I want you to put a stop to this right now!.”

She could tell Kelly wouldn’t do anything about the situation, because he was clearly enjoying himself. She couldn’t believe it. He was smiling at Tessa’s struggling with handling the big gun.

Not even thinking about her head wound, Tess jumped up from the ground, laughing. “That one got away from me,” she told them. “Let’s try that again.”

Loading another round into the chamber, she took position when Kelly yelled for her to stop. Running over, he adjusted her fingers, and gave her some advice, then ran back.

“Go ahead,” he told her.

Tess pulled the trigger, and the cannon went off a second time, blowing her back three, or four feet right back on her ass again, but this time. The gun was still pointing down range. Neither of her two shots came even close to hitting her target eighteen feet away.

Tamra, and Janet both lost it. They were totally ticked off at Kelly, who was lying on the ground laughing so hard he was holding his gut. Both women were discussed with the whole situation. They started walking back to the house as Kelly laid on the ground yelling after them.

“Hey,” he yelled at their backs. “She kept the gun pointed down range that time. To me, that’s called control over the gun,” he told them. “She gets to keep it.”

Kelly, and Tess worked together with the gun for a long time, but Tess wanted

to learn how to control it, and that’s just what she did. There were other weapons Tess learned how to master, but Kelly knew one thing. His wife in all her glory of four feet eight inches tall, and weighing out at one hundred thirty pounds of pure muscle. She did mastered one of the most powerful handguns in the United States, and she was shooting it one handed with accuracy. Tessa’s true potential for the group was shining out of her at last. Tessa was a killer.

Tamra’s greatest strengths were weapons, hand to hand, and military tactics, and leadership. While Janet could spot a lie a thousand yards away, and was a quick thinker. Her reaction time was a lightning strike. Tessa’s was shooting and martial arts, and if she could see over the dash, and get her little feet to touch the peddles, she could drive anything on the road. She could handle almost anything at sea as well. Kelly showed her how to drive the “Catherine” just as good as he could.

After many months living on the Island, Kelly finally put Tess on the McMillan Tactical Rifle, which is a fifty-caliber bolt-action rifle. The rifle was great for taking out a truck’s engine block, and had enough power to kill well over two miles away. It weighed thirty-five pounds, and the bullet for the massive gun was over five inches long, and twice the thickness of a man’s finger. The rifle was just under six feet long. Tess mastered it within that first year.

The improvements each of his wives made in their training, knowledge, and

health over the following months, Kelly thought it was undeniably excellent. Because of him sharing himself with each of the girls, they were evolving faster than Kelly could have hope for. Their bodies was screaming for their past lives to release its hold of them as they broke free of the social, and physical, and mental barriers that confined them in the past. The girls were waking up for the first time of their lives as they thrived on Kelly’s love, their love for each other, and their love for God.

Alphas of the past were not as powerful as they were, except now, for the first time in the organization’s history. Alphas were being groomed, and developing all by themselves while they lived on Heaven’s Gate Island. Everyone on the island were Alphas to all Alphas everywhere in the world, and as for their humanity, they were more than human. The family was the next step in human evolution. Their defining qualities included being faster, smarter, and painless. They could learn how to do things no human being could. They were extremely powerful people. Even with their power, and their abilities, God created a natural order to life, and they too, had to follow it as did the rest of the world. When Kelly was shot, he should have died, as it was the natural order of things. However, his body protected him to some extent, but not so the Doctors or anyone could see how incredibly different he was. The world would someday see the Alphas for what they were, but that too, would have its own time, and place.

Tessa’s little body was on fire with desire as she accelerated in learning to master every weapon she could get her little hands on.

Tamra was learning how to focus on a level she never knew before. Her thinking, and concentration were rock solid. Kelly knew from the beginning she was a born leader. Tamra could take in any combat situation at a glance, and form the perfect tactical plan.

Janet looked into the wind, and under rocks. The girl had the uncanny ability to show up whenever the other three were talking about her. The things Janet felt inside of herself didn’t scare her. They were letting their presence be known to her. Janet could really feel, and see everything around her. Her body, and mind were tuned into the world, and everything living in it. At a glance, she could tell what someone’s emotions were, and she could spot a lie before you spoke the words. Janet was evolving into just a little bit more than an empath.

Kelly picked theses underdeveloped alphas because even with their personal problems. He knew they would excel at any given task, because their need to change was greater than everyone else. The hold that society had on people, along with their lack of desire to change, was what held people back from becoming greater than they are. All of that was removed from the girls when they came into contact with Kelly.

On the Island, they all were healthy, and fit, running five miles every day, while they ate nutritious meals cooked by Janet, and Tamra. While Tess, Tamra, and Janet were digging in, and sticking to their daily programs, and routines that were outlined for them. Kelly, on the other hand, seemed to get into trouble with the older women all the time. Tess always tried defending him, and back him up, but overtime, even she knew there was nothing she could do to help Kelly get out of the doghouse with Janet and Tamra. The last time he got caught by Janet downing cheeseburgers in town at the Fisherman’s Wharf. The time before that, Tamra noticed Tim, and Kelly spending more, and more time down at the Island’s pier. She came up from behind them from the woods instead of walking down the path from the house, and caught Kelly hiding whiskey bottles onboard the Freeloader. She realized the boys stayed down there so much, so they could drink without the girls knowing about it.

The very next day. Tamra got every bottle of booze on the Island, and locked them all away in a room inside the house. Kelly said nothing at first, but he bit the bullet, and apologized to the girls for not taking the training as seriously as they

He promised them he would toe the line, and do better. However, he finished telling them. He was still going to have a damn cheeseburger every once in a while, no matter what they thought. Tamra cooked Kelly a cheeseburger, and French fries for dinner that night. Tess, much to his delight. Fed each French fry into his mouth so he didn’t have to remove his hands from around the huge cheeseburger.

Working towards the same goals brought them tighter together than ever before. It motivated them, and drove them to succeed at everything they did. Being the only ones on the Island it was normal around the house to hear the sounds of lovemaking coming from all parts of the home during the day. They were sexual creatures, and they expressed themselves to the fullest, and if two of them were loving each other, and another one joined in, so much the better. The girls were learning to open up their feelings, and emotions, and their God-given talents because mankind didn’t have its hold on them anymore. The four created their own universe within a world that didn’t have a clue about their own potential.

The classroom in the cellar with all of its computers, and file cabinets filled with information, and courses was a daily part of their training. The room turned out to be a wonderful place for all of them to come together, and learn. Helping each other, they quickly advance in their knowledge.

Tess herself held a class on how to off-road with a car, or a four-wheel-drive truck. Her father wasn’t just a fisherman, Tess told them. He was a nut about cars, and trucks, along with running his own lobster boat. He took her four-wheeling as soon as Tessa’s mother would let her go with him. Tess took each of the girls one at a time, after explaining to them, using graphs, and diagrams, how to drive off-road. They would use the Moose Killer, and she’d show them what her daddy had taught her, along with the techniques she learned from the tactical driving courses Kelly sent her to. Under Tessa’s direction, everyone learned how to drive offensively, and defensively.

All three of them were excelling at everything that was placed before them, as they were taking more, and more time to help each other in their studies. By the time six months had passed, they were doing nighttime tactical maneuvers using paint ball guns while wearing night vision glasses. Sometimes they drilled in the dark of the moon, or when they had heavy rain or fog. They used their communication necklaces to talk to each other while playing out the war games. Loving the games so much, they would stay up all night, but then they would have to stick to their other programs the following day. They still had to do their five-mile run, and everything else they had planned for that day. No matter what happened, they trained six days a week, and then rested on Sunday. Everything they did was hard to get used to, but the more they worked at it, the more they wanted extra lessons, and more training. All three girls were dry sponges soaking up information as fast as they could. They had a plan for what they were doing. The three alphas were highly motivated, and loving their new life together.

Living with three women. Kelly had a habit of talking with his wives while they shower together. Tonight, he had Tamra pressed up against the glass wall with her legs locked on the inside of his elbows. He easily took her weight in his arms as Tamra leaned back against the glass.

“So, give me an overall run down.”

“Janet is really good,” Tamra said, talking quickly, “but needs more work with hand to hand. She is a hell of a lot better as a photographer. You haven’t seen the pictures she took of us making love the other night on the beach,...she doesn’t want to show them to you until she has them framed,...Tess has surprised the hell out of me, but you don’t seem too surprised I see. After she lost that weight, she just went nuts in every...mmmmm...direction. The girl is a bloodthirsty killer, but if someone else doesn’t kill her. I will. She been teasing me, and Janet, and were about fed up with it. If she can’t commit to us, Kelly. We’ll have no choice, but to set her straight.”

Kelly knew Tess had an insatiable appetite for sex, and he like that about her, but it was effecting his two wives because she was still asking for favors from Tamra, and Janet while not giving any love back to either of them. She had yet to make love to her wives, but soon that was all about to change, and Kelly knew it. Kelly understood people really good, and he saw something in Tess no one else had.

Kelly had many ways to help him judge a person’s personality in different areas of life. One of his ways was to have them watch a CD which showed a real horrifying death scene. One clip was of a little oriental guy kneeling on the ground with his hands tied behind his back. The guy had a hand grenade strapped to his forehead. Someone walked up, and pulled the pin out of the grenade, then ran away. The explosion that followed disintegrated the poor guy’s upper body.

When Tess seen it, she went off, and totally lost it. “Oh, my fucking word, Kelly. What the fuck! Did you see that poor mother fucker blow? Wow, show me another one, Kelly. Damn, that was awesome. I mean...”

She turned to him, being serious for a moment. “I’m sorry for the poor guy, but hey.” She threw her hands up in the air. “But I can’t help him now.” Then she started laughing all over again.

“Yup,” Kelly thought to himself. “Tess is one blood thirsty bitch.” And she

was just what he wanted.

Kelly ended up having to lock up the disks because Tess couldn’t get enough of them. Tamra watched Tess from the classroom doorway one day. Tess had the room’s lights turned off, and she was eating popcorn from a bowl in her lap. After being caught repeatedly watching the CDs, Tamra forced Kelly to lock them away.

“I agree with you,” Kelly told her. “Janet is having trouble with her coordination, and speed. I’ll see if I can give her some extra time during the evening. I believe it’s time to take us to the next level. What do you think?”

“Fine, fine step two,” Tamra quickly replied.

“Oh, there...Oh God, yes...Oh yes, OH!”

“Yup,” Kelly thought, watching Tamra scream out her passion as she held on to his neck. Tess had his two wives just about frizzled.

He smiled at Tamra as she laid back with her head against the glass wall as

sounds of pleasure emerged from deep inside of her. In a way, Kelly hoped the teasing never stopped. He was having the time of his life with his three wives.

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Sitting at the desk in the multipurpose office, Tamra went over the Island’s inventory for the last month. “Wow,” She thought out loud to herself. “Tess cannot be giving us the correct count of ammunition she used. These calculations are not coming out right. Why that little bitch? I’ll have her ass in a sling for this.”

Tess was an experience shooter now since she has been using the range for almost a full year. Kelly has been giving her personal instruction in all the weapons they had her shooting, and she has mastered each of them, one by one. She was also shooting her cannon one handed, and was hitting whatever she pointed it at. Tamra thought, Kelly sure did a bang-up job with her training. The change in Tess, and the rest of the family was nothing but short of amazing. Seeing a pair of legs suddenly appear in front of her, she looked up from what she was doing. Janet stood in front of her with tears pouring from her eyes.

Immediately alarmed, she reached for her. “Janet, what’s wrong?”

For an answer, Janet sat down in front of the desk with tears streaming down her cheeks. Tamra was concerned when first seeing her lover, but she knew the reason that caused this emotional outburst. It was something they both have been dealing with since they have been on the Island. She held her friend, lover, and wife, until she calm down. She didn’t even have to ask what happened because she already knew what was going on. It was all about Tess, and she was damn sure of it.

When Janet quieted down, she started talking. Wiping her eyes, she unloaded on her. “I can’t take it anymore, Tamra. She has done nothing to you, or me, and for me that’s the problem. You’re stronger than I am. I can’t put up with not getting her to open up to me. I love the little shit, and I need more from her. I almost told her a while ago when we were on the beach that I didn’t want to touch her anymore, but I did, and it’s like I’m being used.”

“Tamra, I know we started this when we met her, but I can’t handle it anymore. We’ve let this go on for way too long, and nothing has changed with her.” Then Janet’s tears started all over again.

Tamra remained quiet, and stroked Janet’s long red hair. She knew Janet was one hundred percent right. Tess was using them, and Tamra herself, being the stronger one, was about fed up with it as well. It was time Tess fully committed herself with them, or didn’t come to them at all. Kelly has amazed Tamra the most this past year. The man was so in tune with everything in life; that nothing seemed to escape his attention. She brought up the subject about Tess with him, and he simply told her, “You do whatever you need to do to fix the situation, and I’ll back you a hundred, and fifty percent.”

“Janet, you do know why she is having a problem with us.”

Snuggling in closer to Tamra’s embrace, she pressed her cheek against her shoulder, then answered her. “Ya, mostly it’s because of her endless love for Melissa, but she’s afraid of what may happen with her relationship with her father. But I also believe she is concerned with how other people may judge her in town.”

Tamra nodded her head. “Yes, that is right. And we need to keep that in mind. However, what she is doing with us isn’t right, and it’s about damn time we took care of it. Here’s what we are going to do. For the rest of the day, go into your photo lab, and put your light on outside so she won’t come in. Enjoy yourself in there for the rest of the day. Then tonight, take a bed by yourself, and go to sleep. Then tomorrow, this is what I want you to do...”

The next day, Tamra told everyone at breakfast they all needed a day off. She packed a lunch basket with plenty of beer, and food for Tim, and Kelly. Then she told them both to go fishing to get them off the Island. Tamra knew full well Kelly had a small flask of whiskey hidden on board the Freeloader, but she gave them the beer, anyway. She knew Kelly understood something was brewing, but he said nothing to anyone about it. While the boys were off island fishing, and Sandra was at her house gathering some of her things. Janet did as Tamra told her to do. She and Tess went, and did what Tess called the most ultimate fun on the Island. They went off to the range to shoot her cannon. When they came back for lunch, Tamra was laying naked by the pool pleasuring herself on one of the pool chairs.

Knowing what was going on, Janet went right into the kitchen while Tess stopped to watch her eldest wife. Tamra understood Tess very well, and as Tess has done a hundred times before in the past. She came over to get some love from Tamra. Seeing Tess walking over to her, Tamra quickly jumped up from where she was laying. Using the same hand she used on herself, she held Tessa’s chin with moistened fingers, and gave her a quick kiss before walking off into the house.

During lunch, Janet, and Tamra ate faster than normal, and since Tess was a slow eater, they left the kitchen before she was done herself. Tess went looking for them after lunch, and found the two in the crow’s nest making love. As she entered the nest, they already had for filled themselves, and got up to leave just as Tess came in the glass room. Kissing her, both women placed their mixed scent on the girl’s face, and lips. With no one advancing on her, and both of the women’s scent all over her. Tessa’s glossy green eyes sparked back into theirs.

By midafternoon Janet asked Tess to come to the beach with her. Tess followed her down in her two-piece suit while Janet remained naked for the short walk. After taking a quick shower at the beach, Janet laid out with Tess on the same blanket. Laying on her back, she gave Tess a full view of her form. Janet knew the younger woman was excited as Tess continued to stare over at her.

When Tess spoke, Janet turned on her side to look at her.

Tess took her hand. “Please, Janet.”

Janet let go of her hand, “Tess, I can’t do this anymore. It’s not right, and it’s not fair to me, and it’s not fair to Tamra. We both have put up with it so you could figure out what you wanted, and I’ll tell you the truth, Tess.” Janet leaned over real close, and looked into Tessa’s oceanic eyes. “Even after a damn year, you still don’t know what the fuck you want.”

Tessa’s eyes suddenly released a flood of tears. She tried wiping them away, but even more came pouring out.”

“Well, I love you both. Don’t you know that?”

“Yes, Tess,, and we love you too, but that’s not what I am talking about. You can’t commit yourself to any of us, Tess. You have been holding back your love for us, and you haven’t been shearing it with either of us girls, but Kelly, and Tim alone.”

Overcome by emotion, the poor girl started wailing as she choked back her tears. Wiping her eyes with her hand again, she cleaned it on the blanket.

“Are you telling I need to leave?”

Janet was waiting for that question to pop up. Tamra, and she planned this entire episode out in every detail yesterday. She jumped on Tessa’s last question like it was a forest fire.

“No! Of course not! I am not saying that at all. This is your home, and we are married. Tamra, and me just cannot handle not getting your full measure of love in return. We have kept it quiet between Tamra, and myself. We figured you would have understood by now. Tess, you don’t know how many times Tamra, and I have busted out in tears because of you. I guess yesterday was my last. Because I just can’t do it anymore. It hurts too much. I’m sorry, love.”

Janet could see Tamra’s plan was working, as Tessa’s protective walls were falling all around her. “I love you, and I want to...it’s not just my dad, you know.” She said in a matter-of-fact way. “I still miss Melissa like crazy. I can still smell her, Janet. Jesus, I still dream about her even after nine fucking years. I’m sorry, Janet.”

“OK, we may win this one yet,” Janet told herself. Now it was time to get this ball rolling, and send Tess off to her last leg on this voyage of love, , pain.

She grabbed both of Tessa’s arms in her hands. “Tess. You need to go talk with Tamra. She is in the reading room at this time of day, but it’s her you really need to talk to, not me.”

“I love you too.” The smaller woman cried.

“Yes, I know, and it’s mostly my fault this has gone on for so long. I know you love me, and I know you find me attractive. I know all of this stuff. However, you are madly in love with Tamra, and you have been since the day we met. Hell, I thought for sure you would go down on her in the bathroom at the hospital. Tess, it’s Tamra you need to speak, too. You, and I, well, we’ll always be buddies, and with any luck we’ll be lovers, but first go talk to Tamra.”

When Tess didn’t move, Janet ordered her. “Go on now, get this over with.” She told the younger woman.

Tess slowly got up off the blanket, and walked off in doom towards the house.

After she was gone, Janet jumped up, and ran to the beach house. Hitting the communication system, Tamra’s sweaty face appeared on the flat screen. Janet could see the top of her sweatshirt, she must have been stretching out.

“She’s coming at you from the beach with flowing tears, and a wet bottom, just like you asked. Good luck, my love.”

“Shit,” Tamra replied.

Turning around, she ran upstairs as fast as she could. She wouldn’t have much time. Jumping into the shower, she quickly rinsed off, then dried herself. After spraying a wall of perfume that Tess liked in front of her, she walked through the cloud, then she put on the lightest, most exposing thing she had.

Racing back down stairs, Tess, in her death march with her head hanging low, staring at the ground, was walking up the stairs on the front porch.

Tamra ran around the corner under the stairs, and quickly grabbed the first book her fingers found from the library. Running down the hallway to the last door on the left, she raced into the reading room just as Tess came around the corner. Her head was still down, staring at the floor wearing only the top part of her bathing suit, looking beautiful, and pitiful at the same time.

Tamra ran into the reading room, and dove onto one of the wide flat couches. Moments later, Tess walked into the room. Seeing Tamra laying there, stopped Tess short.

“Tamra, I need to speak with you.”

When Tess walked into the room, Tamra was resting on one of the couches. There were pillows under her as she read from a book with one leg pointed in the air, and the other dangling off the edge of the couch. Tess could have drooled over the sight in front of her. The older woman was wearing a long deep red dress that gave Tess a great shot of the curves of her body.

Tamra closed her book on her finger, and gave Tess her complete, undivided attention. “Yes, what is it baby, and why are you crying?” She asked her younger wife.

“Janet wanted me to come talk to you”

Tamra sat up, and faced her. “About what, sweetie”

Tess told her what Janet, and she were talking about a few minutes ago. Tamra could see Tess was on a verge of a breakdown, or a revelation. Both of which were going to hurt, and be painful to the poor girl, but they just didn’t have any other choice anymore.

Tamra stood up, and took a step towards her.

“What Janet told you was the truth, Tess.”

Just saying that much, Tamra watched as the flow of pain increased on Tessa’s face. Her chest was already heaving as her nostrils were being forced in, and out with each breath she took.

“Tess, ever since we met. Both Janet, and I have wanted you, but you were

dealing with some tough issues back then, and you’re still dealing with them today. Honey, you need to let that stuff go because it’s getting in the way of us loving you. It’s also not like an Alpha to be acting this way.” Tamra softly told her.

By this point, Tess had Tamra’s own tears flowing.

Tess opened her mouth to speak, but realized she didn’t have a clue what to say. “I...I guess I don’t know how...I’m sorry, Tamra. I don’t want to hurt any of you.”

No time like the present, Tamra thought. Pulling her dress over her head, she tossed it to the side. Planting her bare feet apart, she extended her arms toward the younger woman, and told her. “Tess, I am right here, and I need you. I can’t keep doing this either. It’s killing me, and it’s killing Janet. Tess, what do you want? If you want me, I’m right here. You need to make up your mind girl, and you need to do it right now.”

Tamra screamed at herself. “Why did you say that you stupid idiot?”

Tess didn’t answer her, so Tamra pushed her again. “There’s the fucking door, Tess. What do you want? The damn door, or me! Make up your frigging mind!”

Tessa’s next words were so low, Tamra could hardly hear her. She told Tamra, as she turned around, and took a step towards the door. “I will always love you.”

Screaming at herself, Tamra’s heart exploded. “’O dear God no. Damn it. No!”

Tamra started feeling sick to her stomach as Tess took another step toward the open doorway. She couldn’t run to her, she couldn’t touch the girl. Tess had to make this decision on her own, and now she has, and she was leaving. Tamra’s heart stopped beating when Tess stopped and turned back around to face her before she left the room.

Tess knew she’s been in love with, and has desired Tamra ever since she first met her, She stood in front of her like a beacon of light saying, “Come to me.” Tamra has always been in the very center of her, she was beautiful. Her strawberry blond hair streamed down both sides of her neck to lie to rest perfectly on her chest. Tess knew she had to have her, to love her, to merge with her life. But to do so, she would have to push aside the love she had for Melissa, and face how her family would feel about her, and how society would judge her. Finally, making up her mind. Tessa knew what she needed to do. She realized she couldn’t let her lost love, who may never return, and shame, control her life. Tamra was right. She was supposed to be a powerful alpha, and she knew it was about damn time she started acting like one. Without turning around, she reached behind her with her hand, and shut the door.

Kelly, and Tim came home late that afternoon, just slightly buzzing from drinking most of the day while they fished. Both men quietly looked into the master bedchamber, and found all three women in bed together.

The next morning, Tess kissed her wives as they slept, then she took the Catherine across to Belfast. She knew she couldn’t wait any longer; she had to do this fast, or she may lose her nerve. It was a calm morning, and the swells were small as she pushed the speed boat up to seventy miles per hour. She knew she shouldn’t push the boat so fast, but she had waited too long, and things had to be made right. She wasn’t about to lose her family because of her own stupidity. It took her only twenty minutes to take the normal forty-five minute trip to Belfast.

From the Catherine, she ran to the Moose Killer, and laid down four fresh tracks leaving the parking lot. She knew her father would be out on his lobster boat as she parked her truck in front of the family’s home, and ran into the kitchen, right where she expected to find her mother in the morning.

Seeing her mother standing by the coffee pot with her empty mug in her hand. Tess ran up to her, wrapped her arms around her, and started balling. Her mother, stricken with fright, dropped her mug on the floor, and held onto her only daughter.

After a while, Tess calm down enough to communicate, although there were still tears in her eyes as she told her mother about her life on the Island. She told her about the four of them considering themselves being married, devoting their life’s blood to the family. Tess didn’t tell her what they were doing out there, or what was hiding in the cellar, or what they were planning to do to the United States Government. She really only wanted to tell her about her relationship with her husbands, and wives.

“So, I made love to them last night, and all I want to do is go back home, and do it again. Mom, I’m not stepping away from this one.” Tess said, with her face dripping with tears.

“Tessa, I really don’t see what your problem is. Kelly, and Tim are both well-respected men in this town, and the girls, from what I hear, are well liked.”

“Mom, it’s daddy. He’s going to disown me when he finds out what I’m doing. You know how he feels about stuff like this, and what the bible says. He’ll stop talking to me.” With her confession, she broke down, and laid her head in her arms on the breakfast table. Her mother let her be.

After a while, Mrs. Mitchell spoke sharply to her, and as she did, she grabbed Tessa’s arms tight with both hands. “You been doing all the talking since you got here, and now it’s time you listen to me, Tessa Mitchell. Do you think everyone on the mainland here is stupid, and blind? Do you think we don’t already know that something more than meets the eye is happening out there on Heaven’s Gate Island? I could see it months ago that something was going on, but if there is one thing I do know, Tess. Is that you have never been happier in your life since your relationship with Kelly, and after the girls showed up. Gloria told me what Kelly had in store with you, and I was all for it. Hell, I filled in for your shifts until Gloria hired Cathy Johns from Wiscasset for your position. Kelly is a respected man around this town, and people jump in his way to help him out. Now, I don’t confess to understanding you making love to these women, but honey, if that’s what is making you happy, then by all means, love them with all your heart. Tess, even when your father finds out, no one is going to say anything about it to any one of you. Gloria, and I have your back, and so does Fred. Everyone around here knows Kelly, and Tim aren’t the type of men people want to piss off.”

“But mom what about daddy?” Tess cried.

“I have been married to that man for almost thirty-seven years, and take it from me. Your dad will listen to me, or I’ll knock him down, and kick him into next Sunday. That man is going to need some time to think about this one, but he won’t disown you, or I’ll put him in a frigging hospital.”

Tess knew her Mother meant just what she said. Her mother obeyed her

husband, and she was very easygoing with him, but when mom put her foot down. Daddy jumped ten feet without question. Tess realized early in her life. It was her mom who ran their household, and it was daddy who ran the lobster boat. They talk some more before Tess climbed back into her truck, and drove off.

Getting back to the speedboat, she was looking forward to a slow ride back to the Island. Her mom picked up her spirits, but her father still weighed heavily on her mind. Leaving the small harbor behind. She kicked her speed up to sixty...then eighty...then ninety...one hundred. At a hundred, and twenty miles per hour, she was hunkered down tightly under the windshield, gripping the small steering wheel for dear life. She didn’t have to drive the boat so fast, she just couldn’t help herself. That in its self was a good enough excuse to race the boat.

It was still early in the morning by the time Tess got back to the Island.

Everybody had already finished their morning run. They all were getting ready to eat breakfast, and have a cup of coffee when Tess ran in to the kitchen. Kelly, and Tim were cooking, and Sandra, and Janet and Tamra were laying out the plates, and utensils on the kitchen table.

Tess started taking her clothes off as soon as she got to the kitchen. Dropping her shirt, and bra on the floor, she unbuttoned her pants as she simply told them. “I need all of you in the bedroom for at least an hour, please.”

She walked out of the kitchen. Without looking back, she added, “Kelly, and Tim. I damn well better see Sandra in our bed chambers, or you better run, and put more than two miles between us before I put my scope on either of you.”

Pausing, before going into the great bedchamber. Tess looked back at her friends, lovers, husbands, and wives, and one woman whom she’ll be loving who would be her new wife. They were all filing up the white marble staircase with all of their clothing scattered in a line down the stairs, and into the other room.

Out loud, Tess told herself. “Life is so perfect here.”

Two weeks later, Kelly sat in his office watching the radar screen as a boat came into their inlet from the mainland. He hit the sound system. “Get decent,” He told everyone. “We have visitors coming in.”

Minutes later, Tamra found him by the front door. They both watched through a window as Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell slowly made their way up to the house. Kelly was about to call out for Tess when she came up behind them, and looked out the window, and saw her mother and dad in the front yard, the girl turned white as a sheet.

Tamra held her in her arms. “Breath, Tess and calm down. Now take a few deep breaths, and go meet them.”

Tessa’s hands were already shaking before she left the house. Everyone filed out on the porch to watch Tessa’s mother walk past her daughter with just a simple pat on her shoulder, then she came up the porch stairs.

Tess approached her father, and didn’t make it all the way. In short of reaching him, she burst out in a fit of tears, and dropped to the ground on her knees. Her father kneeled in the grass with her, and embraced her. Then he pulled her to her feet, and took her hand. They began walking away from the house.

Climbing up the stairs, Mrs. Mitchell greeted everyone. “Hi guys. Those two

will need a few minutes. They’ll both will be feeling much better once they’ve had a chance to talk.”

Kelly understood. Mrs. Mitchell knew everyone there except for Sandra. After introductions were made, he offered Mrs. Mitchell some coffee in the kitchen.

“Kelly, I would love a cup,” she told him. As he turned to take her into the house, she added. “but I’m sorry to say. I don’t think you, or Tim will have the time for a cup yourself.”

“Say again?” Kelly was puzzled. “I don’t understand.”

“Sir, I think my husband, and I will need some assistance. The stuffing box on the boat let go as we came into your inlet. It’s leaking bad enough if something isn’t done about it soon the boat will sink tied to your pier.”

Kelly told her, “Excuse us for a moment, Mrs. Mitchell.”

Tim ,and he raced to the pier, and sure enough, the small boat was already listing to the port side. Kelly looked inside. He knew it would be better to buy another boat than to fix this one. It was clearly ancient, and had been patched many times throughout the years. With Tim’s help, they got the boat, which was appropriately named “Tessa” into the boat cradle, and hoisted her out of the water. Once out of the water, Kelly looked inside of her, and, sure enough, the packing box was pulled away from the stern. The damn thing should have sunk on them while they were coming here, he thought.

Anyone who fished knows the stuffing box is what the propeller shaft went through at the stern of the boat, holding back sea water from entering the engine compartment. Any fisherman knew once the stuffing box goes on a boat, you can be flooded in a matter of just a few minutes. The only thing you could do is to get the boat out of the water, or beach her so she wouldn’t sink.

As Kelly got out of the Tessa. Tim asked him. “How you going to do it? After all, he is our father-in-law,” Tim said, laughing at him.

Kelly should have known. Tim knew what he was thinking. “Well, somehow we’ll have to get him to use the Troller for a while to check his traps, but the best way to get him to let us buy him a new boat is to destroy this one, so he doesn’t have a choice.”

“Come on,” Tim told him, climbing over the side of the lobster boat, “during my time in the Coast Guard. I’ve learned a few tricks.”

Kelly, and Tim climbed back into the Tessa, to destroy Mr. Mitchell’s boat before the man killed himself, and his wife.

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Tamra listen to the dial tone, someone picked up the other end of the line. “Barbra, hi...Ya, it’s me. I’ve been waiting a long time to talk to you. You haven’t been to your office. What? Oh, no, I didn’t leave a message. I have been calling every few days. I was getting worried about you.”

“I’m OK, Tamra. How are you? Is there anything wrong?”

“Well, no,” Tamra confessed. “Barbra, I met a wonderful man. I’m in love with him. I think he’s going to ask me to marry him. He’s the only other man that has ever come close to treating me as wonderful as my dad did. Me, and Janet met him while we were backpacking the Appalachian Trail.”

“What’s his name, and where is he from?”

“Barbra, he hasn’t even asked me to marry him yet, and you should see Janet.

I think she is in love with him too. I’ll tell you what, if he asks me to marry him, only then will I’ll tell you his full name. Knowing you, I know you’ll want to check him out. Also, you can only get in touch with me on my cell phone. I haven’t been to my house in Westbrook in like forever. Lately me, and Janet have been staying in Belfast.”

Barbra could hear the excitement in Tamra’s voice. “You’ve been bit pretty bad, haven’t you girl?” Barbra could almost see a tear drop roll down the young girl’s cheek when she replied.

“Yes, I guess I have.”

“Tamra, I just got back in the office but let me call you tonight, and we’ll talk.”

“Oh, OK. I’ll talk to you tonight. Bye.”

“Bye, Tamra.”

Barbra slammed the receiver down, and suppressed the feeling of throwing the phone against the far wall. Sitting back in her chair, she yelled out loud to an empty room.

“Dam it all to hell, girl. That isn’t what I, or your father wanted for you.”

Back at Heaven’s Gate Island, Tamra turned to Kelly, standing beside her. “Well, did she take the hook?” He asked.

“She took it alright. I think she’s shitting it out of her ass right about now.”

“Good. Watch what you say to her tonight. She is going to be very important to us.”

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Tim has always been a good friend to Kelly, and with their busy training, Kelly has seen little of him. He knew Tim’s enlistment was coming up soon, but Tim still hadn’t told them if he had decided about staying with the Coast Guard. However, Tim was doing something that was really bothering Kelly. The Alpha knew Tess, and Tim had made love while he was away, but the man had yet to even touch Tess since then. That’s what was making Kelly mad. You don’t hold back your affection for someone like that. Kelly always believed love should be freely expressed.

Kelly called him, and asked if he could look at the house’s computer. There was a problem with the way it was operating. Kelly also made the decision to turn the girls loose on Tim while he sat back, and watched the fun. He told Tim they were dressing up for the girls’ benefit, and for him to be sure he wore something nice for them.

At dinner that night, all three women wore long dresses that split up the side of their legs, showing a tad more than just their thy. For Tess, the girls put on her a dress that was too loose. During dinner, she sat down at the dinner table beside Tim. The top of the dress popped open, exposing her small breasts. She fixed the problem, but the dress would only open up again. Finally, she left it open for all to

see.

Tim, always the gentleman, kept his eyes looking right back at hers when he talked to her.

Doing what Tamra told her to do, Tess moved around in her seat, which forced the bottom of the dress to slide around her waist, exposing her short legs. Kelly knew from where Tim sat he had to see Tessa’s full form right between her thighs. The view of her body had to get a hell of a lot better when Tess sat on the edge of her chair, and leaned all the way back. Kelly knew Tim to be an honorable man, but he himself was getting a major kick in the ass out of Tess, displaying her form at the dinner table.

Tessa was acting as grown-up as much as it was humanly possible when Tim

had enough of the display. Kelly choked on his dessert when Tim told Tess to stand up. Taking his belt off, he put it around her waist, putting an end to the burlesque show.

“Tim, I’m sorry. I thought I grabbed a small, but this must be a medium,” she told him. “Thank you for your belt.”

He only smiled at her, and covered her hand with his, then quickly let it go.

After dinner, drinks were served in the front room in front of the fireplace. Tamra sat beside Tim. Tess was on his other side, and the two women weren’t giving the guy an inch of room to himself. Both girls tried holding his hands while they talked, but Tim kept letting go of them as they talked about events since the girls had been on the Island. Tamra asked if he’d decided about reenlisting just as Janet brought Tim another drink.

Tim again told them he hadn’t made his mind up yet.

Leaning over, Janet handed him his drink, clearly exposing her cleavage to him. Tim didn’t even bat an eyelash as he stared straight back into her bonny Irish eyes. With Tim being trapped between the two women, Janet quickly leaned all the way in, giving him a kiss that he wouldn’t return.

Kelly couldn’t handle it anymore, and had to leave the room over that one. It was almost too much fun for him to watch his girls throw themselves at the man. Giving the guy a break from the girls, he took Tim into the cellar.

After looking over the computer in the classroom that Tim helped Kelly pick out. Tim told him flat out, “Kelly, there’s more wrong with this computer than you know about.” I believe I can fix it, but it will take me days to work it all out by myself. There’s a good friend of mine who just retired. She lives twenty minutes south of Belfast. I trust this lady good. I’ve known her for a long time. She helped me with a lot of my computer classes. If you don’t mind her being down here, I think we could both fix it in one day.”

He then added. “Anyway, she’s your kind of people.”

Kelly has always trusted Tim’s judgment, and he also trusted the man with his boats, the computers, and his wives, so he didn’t hesitate when answering him.

“Call me as soon as the both of you can come out together.”

The girls tried to get Tim to stay the night, but Tim wasn’t having anything to

do with that. Tess kissed him good, and long, and both Tamra, and Janet pressed their bodies against his as they too, kissed him good night on his turned cheek.

Kelly received a call from Tim the next afternoon. He told Kelly his friend, and he would be over early on Sunday morning. Tim also told Kelly after talking to his friend, she thought the difficulties with the computer were more problematic, and might take longer than what Tim told him the previous day.

Having anyone new on the Island worried Kelly, but since Tim vouched for her. He dropped his guard, and let Tim bring his friend out to the Island. There was also a reason Tim told him she was “his kind of people.” He was looking forward to meeting Sandra.

Sunday morning on the front porch, Tim introduced Sandra to Kelly, and the girls. Kelly liked Sandra right away, and Tim was totally right. She was indeed their kind of people. Sandra was thirty-eight years old. She was a beautiful brunette as tall as Tim, with a bright, charming smile. Her breasts were larger than the other girls, but her body was screaming at Kelly. She was doing something for him in a big way. Sandra had those wonderful full baby making hips that Kelly liked, and he was loving the vibes she was giving him. Right away, Kelly could see that Sandra was another unknown alpha.

Alphas would be drawn to them, but that didn’t mean Kelly would take them all into the family. How the rest of the family responded to them, and how they would fit into Kelly’s long-term goals would matter as well.

When Sandra was introduced to them, the girls, being off duty, were all wearing red string bikinis under short Irish green lingerie house coats. The women didn’t shake hands but kissed each other on the cheek like old friends. Kelly was the only one to see it when Sandra put her hand on Tamra’s ribs, and brushed it against the side of her breast. The two also lingered in their kiss for just a second too long. Tamra was beaming after Sandra kissed her. Kelly didn’t have to ask where she was sleeping that night.

After looking at the house’s computer system, Sandra told him, “Kelly, you have your computer trying to control too much in the wrong way. Just what you have it doing in your study tells me that. Your radar alone takes a mega chunk from the computer’s memory. This little RTRO can work a hell of a lot better than it’s doing right now,” she told him.

Kelly bought the computer from the company who makes computers for

NASA, and other governmental use. It was operating very slowly. He knew it was overloaded when it shouldn’t be.

The computer was called a RTRO-XRT5. It stood five feet tall, and four and a half feet wide in its own watertight temperature control room behind a wall of glass in the classroom. The computer ran everything in the house, the bathrooms, the lights, and flat screens. But the one of the biggest systems it ran was the Island’s radar. It also watched the refrigerators, and freezers, and it controlled a very dangerous aspect of the house, and the many fail-safe systems that prevented a false trigger. In all respects, the house was alive even if no one was on the Island. Tim was right, you don’t touch the windows.

Reaching for information about her. Kelly asked, “Sounds like you know this system pretty well.”

“Know it?” Sandra replied bluntly. “I built it, and designed a hell of a lot of its components myself. Kelly, I was one of the lucky ones who kind of jumped past college, sort of... and went straight into Cal-tech. All I ever wanted to do was to learn about computers. When I was twenty-five, I went to work for the company you bought this computer from. Within ten years, I was running my own production floor.”

She smiled into Kelly’s eyes. “Just call me a miracle child. I have love affairs with computers all the time. Anyway, years later, they asked me to take a position in the office to get me prepared to manage the plant after a few more years.”

Sandra suddenly stopped talking, and gave Kelly a sexy grin. He smiled back at her. He really was falling for her.

“So, what happened?” He asked.

“I just up, and quit right then, right out of the blue. The company couldn’t teach me anymore, and I’m not a management person at all. I fought them suckers in the front office the whole damn time I worked there. I made a shitload of money but retired early, but now because I quit. I have a major problem in my life.”

Kelly, and Tim started laughing when she finished with, “I’m bored out of my fucking mind.”

“Tim told me what I needed to know. I brought some electronic components, and other gear with me, but it’s still going to take some time to fix this little computer, even with Tim’s help. So, you better find me a bed because I’ll be here until tomorrow at least. I’ll know more after a few tests. I’ll do the rebooting myself. But this means everything in the house will be on manual until Monday, and you’ll not have any radar for security till then.”

Kelly told her to fix the computer. He, and the three girls would stay armed until they finished. Tim, and Sandra worked on the computer all day with brief breaks that always involved Janet, and Tess hanging over Tim, and Sandra cooing over Tamra. Kelly found Sandra, and Tamra talking by the cellar door in the afternoon. He walked over to them. After giving each of them a kiss, he moved on. All four women were getting along really well, and Tamra had already talked to Kelly about Sandra.

By eleven thirty that night, Tim called the alpha back down to the cellar. When he walked into the classroom, sitting behind a watertight wall of glass, sat a fat computer with all its panels removed. The computer looked to be hot-wired to the extreme. There were sensitive micro filament wires coming out of it everywhere, and then leading back into the computer. The room was clean, and everything the two had messed with was piled high outside the door of the computer’s room.

Sandra seen the surprised look on Kelly’s face, and immediately told him. “I know what you’re thinking. If I didn’t know what we just did for you, I’d think the same damn thing to myself.”

“Kelly, your computer, as of tomorrow, will run at peak performance for the life of the computer. I personally have always wanted to rebuild one of these little models like this for years. With the new slave drives, we have more than tripled your memory, and she will never slow down on you again. Matter of fact, this computer, and its processor cannot go any faster. It’s working well past the speed of light as it is, and here’s the significant part: you should never have to open it up for service again. Tim, and I removed some older components ,and added a few better ones. There can now only be two things that may go wrong with it. You still can add a program to it in the wrong manner, or one of these wires may burn out. Find the wire, replace it, and you’re done. If we were at the corporate office, we would have redesigned the body, and you wouldn’t have all the wires sticking out of it, but this is the best we are going to do with it here,”

Kelly was amazed. He knew the computer, but to rig it to perform, and respond as Sandra was telling him, that was fantastic.

All he asked was. “How much?”

Sandra walked into his embrace, and gave him a long, open mouth kiss on his lips. Keeping her arms around his neck, she told him. “I don’t know what you’re paying Tim, but if I tried doing this back at the company that built it. It would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars.”

She named a sum. Kelly didn’t even flinch.

“And remember, this is a house call, and it’s considered a lot more money.” Then she added. “However, I need a good long vacation around other people instead of being cooped up at home all the damn time. Let’s say we settled for a few months’ vacation here on the Island. You pay for the new components plus forty thousand in cash.”

“Done.” Kelly didn’t even have to think about that one.

She continued, “I am going to have to warn you about tomorrow when we reboot the computer. It will take a good hour, or more, while she checks all of her programs, and systems to be sure everything works properly. Everybody needs to be outside when that takes place because the house will come alive. Windows, and doors will open, and showers will come on by themselves while the computer is testing the water temperature, and lighting level in every room. Even the Island’s sound system will be tested. Tim also added something very special for just for you Kelly, and you’ll hear that tomorrow as well.”

Sandra paused. Kelly thought she had finished speaking, but then she quietly added. “Kelly, there is an enormous program in your computer system, and I didn’t touch it; you can ask Tim. Believe me, we both didn’t want to screw with it at all. We don’t know what it is, and I sure as hell don’t want to know either. It has more fail-safe systems hooked to it than any maximum-security prison I have ever seen. I doubt if Fort Knox has the security that this one program has,” she told him.

“Tomorrow, after the computer is finished checking the house’s systems, the foghorn will sound off ten times. After that, there will be a break of thirty minutes, which will give you time to get to your study to watch, and direct the computer as she checks that one program. It will only appear on your flat screen in your study.”

Warning him again, she told him. “It’s going to take a hell of a long time to get through that one program because the computer will slow down when messing with that one system.” Saying that, she kissed him once more on the lips then let go of him.

“OK, I’m off for a shower.” As she walked out of the classroom, she called out. “Tim, I’ll see you later, buddy.”

Sandra came up out of the cellar to find Tamra waiting for her. After kissing

her, she asked. “I’m ready for a shower. How about you?”

“Yes, I am but, we can’t go into the master bedroom that area is for family. We do have a nice-sized bedroom down the hall. I made sure it has everything we’ll need, and I can come down, and get you something if you’re hungry.”

The next morning, Sandra got the computer ready. She cleaned the room spotless, then closed up the glass doors. She found everyone outside by the pool. Noticing the girls were nude in the summer’s heat, she took off her clothes as well. It was like everyone was waiting for a bomb to go off when she directed Kelly to use his own voice to tell the computer to reboot.

He cleared his throat by the outside communication panel, and said, “Computer...”

He was about to go on, but the computer answered him back. The girls sitting at a table by the pool laughed in surprise when a young, sweet, sexy female voice said, “Yes, baby.”

Looking over at Sandra, he asked her, “I supposed this was Tim’s surprise.”

She shook her head no. “That doesn’t come until later,” she informed him. “These responses can be easily removed if you don’t like them.”

Kelly tried it again. “Computer, reboot.”

This time, the voice rang out of the speakers told him. “Kelly, haven’t you worn me out enough for one day?”

All three girls started laughing again by the pool, but Kelly looked disapprovingly at Sandra, who was laughing at the expression on his face.

“That one was mine,” she told him. “But those kinds of responses are still affirmative responses, and the computer is doing what you told it.”

Kelly told Sandra he wanted those voice responses removed today.

Sandra was right; the house came alive for half an hour as each system was checked to be sure they would all work, and not fail. While the computer was rebooting, Sandra pulled Kelly over to a blanket on the grass. Laying on her back, she opened herself to him.

Totally enjoying the surprise invite, he just started loving her when she

stopped him. Taking hold of his face in both of her hands, she told him, “Kelly, listen. Tim’s surprise is coming.”

Kelly raised his head to listen as Sandra told him. “When no one is home, and the houses’ censors see anyone on the Island, this is the response that Tim put in the computer.”

Everyone was quiet, when without warning, the Islands’ foghorn sounded off. As the sound vibrated across the Island, and with the speakers set at max volume. Tim’s voice screamed out from the speakers. “Get off my island! If you mess with me! I will fuck you up!”

Sandra, and Kelly were still locked together as the girls started laughing again from the poolside table. Taking a hold of Kelly’s waist, Sandra began pressuring him to for fill her needs, but before he gave Sandra his full attention.

He told everybody. “Guy’s, I think that last one we will be keeping.”

All three women were content as they sat back, and watched the two from the table by the pool. With nothing better to do, Tess opened a bag of popcorn, and shared it with Tamra, and Janet. They now had another alpha to love.

On Tuesday morning, Tim showed up to a different household than the one he left on Sunday night. He could see the difference as he walked up to the side of the house by the pool. All three girls were nude. As soon as they saw him, they ran up to him, pressing themselves on him as they kissed him, and, of course, Tim turned his head to receive the kiss on his cheek. When he asked where Sandra was, they told him she would be sleeping for a while. For lunch, the girls had the midday meal ready by the pool, and they were all over him again.

Tess dove into the pool, and got out with water rolling off her naked form. She asked for a bite of his sandwich, which he gave her, but Tim kept his eyes high on her.

Later, Janet cornered him coming out of the bathroom behind the staircase. Walking him up against the wall by the cellar door, she put her arms around his neck.

The red head told him, “I have never seen a man so scared to death by a bunch of women in all my life.”

“I’m not scared,” he replied.

Taking his hand, she placed it on her bare breast. He quickly removed it.

“Not scared, huh?” she asked.

He shot back at her, “Just because I won’t touch you, and do whatever with a bunch of committed women does not mean I’m scared of you.”

“Tim, we live as wolves do, in a pack, and we do not live with the outside customs of the world. On the Island we have our own customs, and if you haven’t noticed, all of us like you. We are married in a sense that we have signed a contract saying we have devoted our lives’ blood to the pack, and we did this with full knowledge. We’ll stay with the pack for the rest of our lives.”

“Tim, all of us here on the Island are alphas. You too are an Alpha, that’s why

we want you.”

Janet grabbed his member through his shorts, but Tim booked it back into the bathroom, slamming the door shut.

That afternoon, all three women got together to come up with a battle plan for what they were going to do with Tim.

Tess started the conversation by saying, “He has been a noble, and honorable guy ever since I have known him.” She told both women. “That’s why he’s acting this way. He’s always been like this,”

“No, I don’t think so, Tess,” Janet told her. “The man’s hiding something pretty deep, and I can feel it, but so far, he’s been able to hide it from me. The more I am around him, the more I’ll know.” She turned to Tamra, and lowered her voice. “Do you think he’s like gay? If he is, Kelly needs to get involved?”

“Janet, gay, or not. Kelly wants him in our family,” Tamra told her. I’ll fuck one of the rabbits out back if I have to. Girls, I’ll tell you what we’re going all out tonight. Tess, you attempt to seduce him before he try’s leaving. I’ll come up behind you to support the effort. Janet, three may be too much for him, but hang around in ear shot, and jump right in if you feel you need to.”

“Ladies, get them little bunnies wet tonight; put your scent all over your bodies. We’ll tag team the son of a bitch. We’ll break him if we have to rape him.” Determined to have Tim in their pack, she added, “That Alpha will be ours.”

Later that night, Tim was going home, even though Tess had already asked

him to stay. When he walked out of the front room to leave, he headed for the front door.

Tess appeared behind him by the cellar door under the stairs. “Tim is there something wrong with me?” she asked, standing in front of him without a stitch of clothing on. “You don’t seem to love me anymore. You once told me you loved me. Tim, I want your love back in my arms.”

It only took one look at her to see she was upset. Tim took a few steps towards her. “Tess, life isn’t so simple,” he told her.

Tamra had enough. In a flash, she appeared out of nowhere, and stepped in between Tess, and Tim. “Really, tell us about it, big boy. You have three of the most beautiful women in the country trying to jump your bones, and you want to talk about life!”

She shoved him hard against the wall, and held him there with both hands. “What about all of us, and the feelings we have for you? Are you trying to tell me you’re not holding your feelings back from us? Janet told us all how you feel about us. You know what were are offering you. So cut the bullshit, and tell us what your problem is.”

Tim knew he had had enough. This game of cat, and mouse has been going on for far too long. Ready to step off the crazy train, he took a deep breath. Suddenly he grabbed Tamra by both arms, spinning her around he shoved her hard up against the wall, the back of her head bounced off the sheet rock.

Speaking in a loud voice, he told her, “I only have one damn thing to say to

you, lady!”

Tamra screamed right back in his face, “What!”

Tim held his hand to her, and said, “Will you marry me?” Sitting in Tim’s open hand was the family’s engagement ring.

With all the shouting that was taking place, Janet came out of hiding. “What in the hell is going on here?” She wanted to know, looking first at Tim, then at Tamra.

The expression on Tamra’s face dropped. “Girls, we have been had.” Then she screamed as loud as she could, “Kelly!”

The foray’s intercom system suddenly came to life. The sound of Kelly’s

voice came out of the speaker. It sounded like he was trying not to laugh, but he was failing at it badly. They all walked over to the noise coming from the speakers. The flat screen showed Kelly with his forehead on his disk as he pounded on the top of it with a closed fist, laughing his ass off. He was laughing so hard when he leaned back in his chair; he fell over backwards, and onto the floor. For a minute, his whole body was out of sight behind the desk, but the laughter stopped. They couldn’t see him on the floor, but they heard him start laughing again.

Tamra told him she was coming down the hall to speak to him personally, but he didn’t stop laughing. He just raised his hand above the desk. In his bear’s size paw, Kelly was holding a Colt forty-five revolver.

“Enjoy yourself in there, sweetie,” she threatened. “Because you can’t live in there forever.” Turning back to Tim, she held out her left hand, and told him, “Yes, Tim, I will marry you. I believe you will make a wonderful husband.”

She removed Kelly’s wedding band to accept Tim’s engagement ring. Tim put the ring on her finger, and then he kissed her. Turning to Janet, he did the same thing, but when he came to Tess, he told the young woman, “I have always loved you. Will you marry me?”

Tears poured down Tessa’s cheeks as Tim put the ring on her finger, and like the others. The ring match with the one Kelly had given her, two engagement rings, became one ring.

Tim picked up Tess in his arms, while Janet, and Tamra followed them both upstairs, and into the bedchambers. Both women understood Tim needed to make love to Tess in a way that has been years overdue.

By order of all three women, Kelly had to cook, clean, and do any damn thing they wanted him to do. Later that night, he made dinner for the four lovers. Leaving their dinner in the hallway by the door to the bedchamber. He knocked once on the heavy door, then quickly ran away, still holding onto the forty-five in his right hand.

Sandra woke up glowing a few hours after dinner.

Kelly thought they would have fun all by themselves. She stood up for the girls, and told Kelly what he did was wrong, but Kelly explained to her. He didn’t plan what happened with Tim at all. He confessed to her he expected Tim to do something like this. That’s why he was watching them on his computer screen in his study. Kelly knew Tim understood him, and the girls really well. He also knew Tim

would only perceive it was just a matter of time before they, too, would come for him.

As Sandra laid in Kelly’s arms in another bedroom, he shocked her when he told her another secret. Tess wasn’t Kelly’s first pick for the family. Tim was the first one Kelly had picked. He told Sandra it was just a matter of time letting God’s plan work out for all of them.

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Kathy Ann Henderson, at 16 years old, was a pretty, and tall flat chested blond hair gal who had a dynamic personality. Her mother died in childbirth, and her father raised her by himself. It wouldn’t be until many years later when her father would die while Kathy was in basic training. Kathy was a girl who was driven to achieve perfection. She had a drive in her that was unnatural, and it pushed her on, no matter what the odds were against her.

Even when her team lost a La Crosse game at school, which wasn’t often, she would step back, and say to herself, “OK. Now I know. That wasn’t the way to win.”

Being who she was, Kathy wasn’t the most popular with the boys in school. She liked boys, but that wasn’t the problem. Kathy’s problem was she didn’t want them inside of her. She had goals for her life, and she was going to make it happen. Having some guy getting her pregnant was not in the equation of her life right then. In high school, there were very few guys who understood her at all. It was only these select guys who Kathy would place her body into their hands. She would openly date them, and later they would park in the woods beside a sparkling lake. They would get totally naked, and she would allow them to bring her to orgasm, and she would gladly do the same for them too, but these guys knew Kathy didn’t want

their peckers anywhere between her legs.

Kathy was a strong, athletic girl. She wasn’t the kind of gal that a guy could push her shoulders down to get at her because, as a few guys found out, she would pound the piss out of them. Upon leaving High School, she enlisted in the United States Army like her father. With the things he taught her along with her own natural skills. Kathy was more than ready to meet the challenge of the United States Military.

After basic training, she had a long history of military, and government service. She started her career as an Air Born Ranger in the United States Army. However, fate decided that wasn’t good enough for the woman. Durning her first covert operation supporting CIA operators during the Cuban missile crisis. It was Kathy’s fast, clever actions that not only made, and saved the mission, but she brought home three men alive, along with two dead teammates, all by herself.

The woman got notice because young Kathy Henderson was a powerhouse, and the CIA wanted her. They recruited, and trained her. Kathy excelled at everything she was made to do.

It was during a night exercise as the moon was high in the sky over a grassy field in Southern Virginia when Kathy finally gave herself unto a man’s love. Her own body’s desires could not be denied any longer. However, even after that, she still didn’t want a relationship with anyone. She knew the danger of her work, and didn’t want any ties left behind. Kathy was achieving her dream, and she kept everybody off to the side because her military career came first in her life. She was advancing so raptly in her training that she wasn’t through four months of training with other CIA candidates, when she was asked to help the instructors in hand-to-hand combat, and the dangerous helicopter line jumps.

After seven months, she was told to report to Deputy Director Joseph Booker

at CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia. The day Kathy arrived at CIA headquarters was the day Kathy Ann Henderson became Barbra Felecia Stone, and the Deputy Director gave Barbra her code name, because it was just how Kathy achieved all of her goals.

He called her, “Strider.”

Strider was still Kathy to those who knew her as Kathy, but if anyone went searching for her as Barbra Stone, red flags, and whistles would go off at Langley. Her cover story they had in place, and the CIA itself would protect her at all cost. Officers like her were a valuable asset to the United States Government, and very costly to train.

Strider wasn’t a CIA Agent. That term outside of the military got mixed up with CIA officers. A CIA Agent was an informant usually from another country. It was CIA officers who got agents to be informants, and this was also a key factor for an officer’s advancement at the Central Intelligence Agency. An officer’s career with the CIA didn’t last long without an officer bringing in informants, and information into the organization.

It has been almost twenty years since those early days in Barbra’s career. Strider now retained the title of Associate Deputy Director of Covert Operations for the Central Intelligence Agency. Barbra answered only to the Deputy Director,, and the Director of the CIA. She was now just over forty years old, yet she still held the beauty she once had. Barbra was just under six feet tall with short blond hair, and she walked like a tiger, tough, surefooted, looking pissed off all the time. Marines sharply snapped too when she walked by them as she wore the ever-present stern face of someone who has made the military her life. When she wasn’t in an operation, or training new recruits. She worked at Langley, and was well known to be a bitch to anyone who failed to meet the standers of the United States Military. Barbra, in all respects, was at the peak of her life, and career.

Because of her work, she traveled a lot. The only way friends could get a hold

of her was through calling, and leaving a message at Langley.

A Marine was trying to catch up to Barbra as she walked through the hallways of the Central Intelligence Agency in Langley, Virginia. As the marine approached her from behind, he gave her a wide berth around her, and then turned to face her, handing her a slip of paper. Everyone at Langley knew who she was. Barbra wasn’t the type of person you would tap on the shoulder from behind.

Years before, she had just got back from an operation that went sour, when the Deputy Director told her to come in immediately. Barbra was totally pissed off as she walked through the hallways of the CIA when a Marine brushed against her in passing. The guy had three cracked ribs before he hit the wall, and suffered a concussion when the back of his head slammed onto the floor. No charges were filed on Barbra, for it was the Marine’s fault. Everyone knew you didn’t touch officers like Strider in any manner. They were the best of the best, the elite crop of the United States Military. The Deputy Director also realized he was more to blame than anyone else for not giving her time to cool down, and adjust after a difficult mission.

Taking the piece of paper from the marine, Barbra’s facial expression went

from “I’ll kill you” to a wide, bright smile. “Thank you, Marine,” she told the guy, taking the message from him. Even though his name, which Barbra took into memory, was written on his chest. She called all Marines, Marine. Unfolding the paper, her warm smile got even brighter. The note had one word written on it: “Butterfly.”

After lunch, Barbra got back to her office and picked up her phone. The other end rang a few times before it was answered by a young, sexy female’s voice.

“Hello.”

“Tamra, it’s me. I just got back in town so I don’t know how long your message

was waiting,” Barbra could find out, but this was like family. “Anyway, what’s up?” She asked.

“Barbra, I was hoping you had some time off. I need to see you,” she told her. “I’m living on Heaven’s Gate Island now. Barbra, Kelly finally did it! He asked me to marry him! The guy is as wonderful as my dad. I want you to at least meet him before we get married. His full name is Kelly Winston Jr, and we haven’t set our wedding date yet. We were thinking of a June wedding.”

“Wow, OK.” That was a mouthful, Barbra thought to herself. She also a felt a stabbing pain in her chest just hearing Tamra talk about her father. Barbra, and her father had hoped Tamra would come into the service of the government, as did her father. However, today, Tamra sounded excited, and happy. Anyway, no man would marry her until Barbra checked out who this son of a bitch really was.

“Tamra, I am so happy for you. Listen, I need to see if I can get cut loose here. It could take a few days. I’ll call you again on Sunday night, and we’ll talk.”

“OK, I’ll be waiting. Love you, Bye.”

Barbara hung up the phone, and then called the Deputy Director. She wasn’t going to bother the Director of the CIA over getting some time off.

She spoke into the phone. “Hi, Mike. I’m taking a few weeks off...no, no, no, there’s nothing wrong,” Barbra said, laughing into the phone. It has been the Deputy Director’s job to force Barbara into a vacation more than once. “I’ll be in town a few more days before I leave. I’m going to spend some time on an island called Heaven’s Gate off the coast of Belfast, Maine. It’s about an hour due east from Belfast.

After getting the go-ahead from Mike, she thanked him, and hung up.

Out loud, she told herself, “OK, one more call, and I’m out of here.”

She reached for the phone again. “This is Officer Stone. I need whatever we have on a guy by the of named Kelly Winston Jr. He lives on an island called Heaven’s Gate off the coast of Belfast, Maine.” She replaced the receiver. “This shouldn’t take too long. Even if we have something on the guy, it shouldn’t be too much information.”

It was getting near the end of the afternoon, and Barbra still hadn’t received the intelligence she had requested about Mr. Winston. She was about to call them back when there was a knock at her door. A young Marine with a large, sealed pouch came in.

She signed for the report.

After the marine left, she looked down at the pages sitting on her desk. Out loud to an empty room, she yelled, “Holy fucking hell! Damn it all to hell!”

Sitting in front of her there were four reports written at different times in the past. Each report was at least eight inches thick. It took the rest of the day to scan through the information to come up with an opinion. When she was done, she picked up her phone, and told the Deputy Director’s secretary on the other end of the line.

“This is Officer Stone. I need to see Mr. Cunningham about speaking to Director Mellon right away.”

Hanging up, she put the reports back in the pouch they came in. You couldn’t just go walking around CIA headquarters, letting everyone see confidential information.

As she went through her office door, she repeated, “Oh fucking hell.”

# Chapter 4

# Out in the Open

Following the chain of command, Barbra first went to the Deputy Director to explain why she needed to see Director Mellon. Barbra has always liked Mike Cunningham. Mike was forty-one years old, and he has been the Deputy Director at Langley for twelve years, but recently he has been thinking about leaving his government job to go sailing. Barbra always got a good laugh out of that thought. She knew it was more than just sailing. Mike wanted to build, and carve out sail boats by hand, and he also wanted to live a little before he got too old to enjoy life. Like herself, Mike joined the military upon leaving high school, and has made a life serving the United States Government. He was a little too easy of a person for Barbra to be around. As Mike, and she found out during a company trip to Seattle, Washington, a few years back.

Some after-dinner drinks led them both into Barbra’s hotel room. Mike had his firm hands on her, and Barbra’s body was trembling to his touch, but before anything more could happen. He stopped what he was doing, and let go of her. Fixing his clothing, he got really apologetic, but they didn’t have to talk about it.

With Mike as Deputy Director of the CIA, and him being Barbra’s superior, the situation could never work out. That one night in Seattle was the only time they spent together as lovers. Over the years, they learn not to put themselves into situations that put them alone together.

Later, Barbra got a big kick in the ass when she realized he was keeping close tabs on her when she was on an over sea’s assignment. His phone calls, and messages were all business, but Barbra knew better. He was worried about her, or as Barbra hoped, he just wanted to talk to her.

Mike was a little shorter than herself, but she liked his stout body, and male scent. He fit just fine in her arms. Mike was a muscular person with a firm body he kept fit by working out daily. With his short blond hair, and handsome face smiling down on her, Barbra knew he would not have any trouble pleasing her.

Mike listened to what Barbra had just found out about Kelly Winston. Then he made a call asking the Director to see him, and Barbra right away. As Mike, and Barbra walked into the outer office of Roger Mellon, his secretary stood, and knocked on the Director’s door. Opening it, she announced both Barbra, and Mike, and led them directly into the Director’s office.

Roger Christopher Mellon was the father figure for the only independent government, organization in the United States Government. He was fifty-two years old, and has like most officers at the CIA, has spent his whole life in the service of the United States Government. His close-cropped brown military hair cut was already getting gray on the sides of his head, and he wore reading glasses that never seemed to leave his hands or his face. Most of the time, he would stand behind his desk as he talked to you. Roger would shift his glasses from one hand to another as he spoke with you, and sometimes he would stick them on top of his head or push them up over his eyes, but never once has Barbra known the man to set his reading glasses down on his desk. They were either in his hand, or on his face.

Roger has been working with the CIA for nine years ever since the last director

suddenly died of a heart attack. Washington needed someone in the new opening, and they needed someone in it fast. President Bush, and his National Security Advisor, Stephen Hadley, at the time chose Roger Mellon as its new Director.

Roger hit the CIA like a two-hundred-and-eighty-pound linebacker going for the winning goal at the Super Bowl, and the man hasn’t let up since, nor has he let his superiors, or the CIA down. He took over his new command, and surprised everyone with his brilliance, using his own manner of leadership, that brought the respect of his superiors, and those below him. At his age, Roger was gaining weight around his waist, but his job had nothing to do with him running around out in the field. Roger spent most of his time in his office, and going back, and forth to the Pentagon, meeting with the President, and other cabinet members while handling national crisis of the Union.

There were no formalities in his office. It was all business. The Director looked over the reports that Barbra, and his deputy brought to him, but he listened to the two as he browsed through them. The Director was well known for taking what his officers told him as fact, and the Deputy Director backed up what their officers said. Then later, when he had time, Roger would go over the reports more thoroughly. The way Roger looked at it was. If he couldn’t count on his own people telling him the truth, then why in hell did he have them working here in the first place?

Mike did most of the talking at first, and explained how Barbra found out about

this issue with Mr. Winston. Then he gave the Director his own thoughts, and then

handed it off to Barbra to finish.

“Sir, there isn’t any one thing that directly shows Mr. Winston is in fact breaking any laws,” Barbra told the Director. “Or we would have nailed his ass already, and I looked over all those reports pretty damn thoroughly. His financial reports show him to be extremely wealthy. My problem is there is just too much speculation about the content of those reports. There are indications of arms sales connected with this guy from all over the world. And that’s not talking about the explosives we believe he has received from outside the United States. Most of the munitions we think he has is military grade C4 plastic explosives, which is illegal as hell if he has any out on that island.”

“This guy has also been hiring people from all around the world to come to his island. That fact didn’t bother me too much until I found this.” Pulling a piece of paper from one report, she handed it to the Director.

“That report is about one of our officers who was trying to recruit a Chinese

Nationalist. The guy ended up telling our officer about thirty Chinese who arrived in our country, and lived off the coast of Maine for 10 months, then returned home to China a few years back.”

“Sir, there’s more in that report like that to back up the allegations about the Chinese Nationalists. Mr. Winston, as far as I can tell, has brought people to his Island from Japan, South Africa, and Egypt. Hell Sir, from all over the damn world, and here’s the contradiction. The man is a well-known recluse, yet half the fucking world is showing up on his doorstep over the last few years. Sir, that rich son of a bitch is building something, or doing something on that island he doesn’t want anyone to know about. And for whatever reason, no one here at Langley hit on these four reports until I opened up his file myself.”

“Sir there just isn’t one damn thing about this whole mess that makes any frigging sense at all,” Mike told him.

“Wasn’t Tamra Kirkpatrick’s father an officer of ours sometime back? I believe he never came back from-

Lost for the mission name he was searching for, Mike filled in the words for the Director. “That would be Operation, Ski Lift, sir,” Mike told the Director the officer’s real name. “The officer was John Kirkpatrick.”

Barbra answered the Directors’ next two questions for him.

“Sir, I was there with them on that operation. We lost three operators, and I

have stayed in contact with his daughter, ever since. Tamra wants me to meet Mr. Winston out on Heaven’s Gate Island before she, and Mr. Winston get married.”

Barbra didn’t add when none of the families didn’t receive any compensation from the government for losing their family members on that black op called “Ski-Lift.” Barbra showed the CIA, and the federal government just how pissed off she could get, and she damn near lost her career, and her life in doing it.

Barbra knew she overreacted because she strapped on her sidearm, marched into the Deputy Director’s office, and “Demanded” that the government compensate these family members for their loss.

Mike knew Barbra wasn’t fucking around when she barged into his office. The woman was ready to put a bullet into anyone who got in her way. The Marines were called in to handle the threat but were ordered not to interfere unless Barbra discharged her weapon. They got to her as Barbra stood in the Deputy Director’s office holding her gun in her hand. She showed no facial expression as tears poured down her cheeks as eight Marines pointed their M16’s at her from two different doorways ready to kill her.

Mike knew he had an unstable person on his hands as soon as she walked into his office. The woman who he once held in his arms, and has worked with for many years was not the same woman who stood in front of him that day. Barbra told them she was fine after her last op, but in fact, she wasn’t. She was a long way away from being fine. Her training helped her to mask her genuine emotions, and impeded her ability to ask for help. Mike, thank God she had a good excuse for her behaving the way she did, because he couldn’t have done anything to help her. The powers at be would have booted her ass out of the CIA so fast that it would have turned back the fabric of time. Mike was the only person at Langley who really knew what triggered Barbra’s actions that day.

Before the first check was cut for any family member of that operation who

didn’t make it back, they unofficially placed Barbra on emergency leave. First, she went to a hospital in Maryland for three, and a half months, then she had two months’ leave at Fort Bragg while fifty people watched her every move. They then reported their findings to the Commanding Officer of the base. At the end of two months, the Commanding Officer at Fort Bragg gave a voice evaluation to the Deputy Director, who passed on the evaluation to the Director. Barbra was very lucky the CIA was protecting one of its own when she really needed it the most.

Because of that incident, firearms were not permitted to be carried into CIA headquarters by anyone, but only by the security detachment of Marines on duty.

Barbra already knew what the Director would say about Kelly Winston, really it was a no brainer. Someone need to find out what was happening on that island. The fact that there were Chinese Nationalists living off the coast of Maine for ten months without the government knowing about it worried the hell out of the Director, and Deputy Director.

“Barbra, I haven’t looked in your jacket recently. But from what I know about you, I know damn well you haven’t taken a vacation in the last year.”

The director looked straight at her, and asked. “Am I right?”

“Yes, sir. It’s been fifteen months.”

“OK,” he told her. “When you get out there, take your sweet time, and get in touch with us every once in a while. I don’t think Mr. Winston will open up all of his secret doors to you just because of your pretty little face. Make it look, and feel like a real vacation, and take your time in doing it. A working vacation can sometimes be better than the real thing,” he told her.

The following Sunday night, Barbra called Tamra, and told her she would fly out early on Tuesday morning, and would see her in Portland Maine. Barbra’s flight from Virginia was plain, and boring. However, her thoughts were consumed with worrying about Tamra, and Janet, and the engagement with Kelly. Whatever in the hell was happening on the Island, she would deal with it one step at a time. She was already thinking of ways of getting the girls off the Island, and what to do with them if it came down to her hiding them from the government. She sure as hell wasn’t about to let Tamra, and Janet get mixed up in a national security mess that could land both girls in a federal prison for many years.

Her fight landed in Portland at twelve-thirty. Tamra met her at the exit gate, she looked wonderfully fit, and beautiful to her. Barbra brushed off the dissatisfaction written on Tamra’s face over Barbra wearing her Army fatigues. As they made their way through the parking lot. Barbra was wondering what Tamra was driving for a car when they stopped by a heavy green truck with black fat lettering painted across the hood that read, “Moose Killer.”

Barbra said in an unbelievable tone of voice as she eyeballed the heavy truck. “You have got to be kidding me; you’re driving a Range Rover? “Honey, I don’t believe we have too many wild elephants, and rhinos around here.”

“It’s not mine; it belongs to Tess. She lives on the Island. We have six people living there now. Me, and Janet keep our own cars at my house in Westbrook. Finding a parking space at the docks in Belfast can be a pain. Our lives are on the island, and water now. If we really need a car right away, we rent one,” she told her.

Tamra didn’t bother taking route one home, which would have taken them forever with the summer traffic, and people vacationing in Maine. Driving up I-ninety-five, the conversation got pretty quiet as they made their way up the highway. Barbra could tell something was on Tamra’s mind, so she sat back, and enjoyed the ride. She figured, Tamra would tell her what was bothering her when she was ready.

Once they got off the ninety-five, and onto the Belfast Road going east, the surrounding view got really pretty, with pine trees, and a few lakes, and ponds. As they drove through the little town of Belfast. Tamra pointed out a few shops where she wanted to take Barbra to buy some clothes for her. Tamra knew damn well there wasn’t a two-piece bathing suit in Barbra’s carryall.

“Tamra, I do have my own clothes.”

Tamra shot right back at her! “Yes, I can see that. You showed up here for a vacation, and to meet the family, and you’re dressed in your warrior fatigues. You will never change; I already half expected you would do this,” she told the older woman.

Barbra didn’t even try to defend herself. She was military, and felt out of place in normal clothing.

“I’ll change at the Island. Anyway, people leave me alone when they see me wearing these. Remember, I’m Miss Military.”

Her little joke didn’t lighten Tamra’s mood. Tamra pulled into their parking spot, then showed Barbra the Winston’s pier.

“We can fit all our boats here at the same time. Kelly is buying a fast boat just for Tess because she does most of the running around for all of us. But don’t say anything to Tess about it because the boat hasn’t been delivered yet.”

Then she showed Barbra the Freeloader. Tamra had her sit inside the cabin so they could talk.

Barbra loved the big cabin cruiser. Looking around the interior of the cabin, she could imagine taking it out into deep water to fish for swordfish, or tuna. Snapping herself out of her own thoughts, she could see Tamra still had something on her mind.

Sitting down facing her at the table, she said, “OK, spill it. Something has you worried. What’s got you so nervous,… the wedding?”

“Barbra, we need to talk about some things before we can go to the Island.”

Barbra kept quiet. She wasn’t about to interrupt her.

“We don’t live like people do here in town. Our lives out there are private, and safe, and if I need anything, and Barbra, I do really mean anything; Kelly, and Tim will get it for me. Barbra, you’re going to have a hard time, you won’t understand my relationship with my husbands, and my wives until-”

Barbara immediately stuck both of her hands out with her fingertips pointed in the air. “Whoa... let’s back up a bit. Did you just say wives, and husbands? Tamra,

I thought you didn’t get married yet.”

“Yes, Barbra, I did. Janet, and I have already married into the family. The two of us have been lovers for a long time. It happened after I realized Dad was never coming home. I was going to kill myself with his Colt when Janet found me, and stopped me. That’s when it happened. Janet made love to me to help me forget the pain of Dad’s loss. We have been lovers ever since,” she simply said.

Barbra’s head was spinning around so fast she wished she were in a jungle somewhere in the world, killing something. It never even dawned on her that Tamra would have lesbian tendencies. Not once since she has known the girl has she even suggested on having a relationship like this with anyone. Barbra was speechless. She just told Tamra to finish what she had to say, and she would hold her questions for later.

Tamra then told Barbra the story of how Kelly found them in the woods, and almost everything else that has happened since then.

“So now we all live out there, and we have a routine that we follow and knowing you. I know you’ll love the place, and you’ll be happy when you work out with us. Barbra, I am trying to prepare you for our lives out there because we hide nothing that’s in our lives from family. You’re the only actual family I have from before, and it is really going to hurt me if you don’t feel like you’re fitting in. We are a bit strange if you don’t understand our customs.”

For a moment, Barbra said nothing. It was pretty damn clear that there was a hell of a lot more going on out there than what she knew about. It was also apparent they wanted her here, and that her coming here wasn’t just to meet Mr. Winston. This visit with Barbra was all about a worldly person coming home to meet the family for the first time, and not just about meeting Tamra’s soon to be husband.

“Well,” Barbra thought. “This is certainly going to make my job a lot easier.”

“Tamra, you have hit me with some whoppers in the past, but this one sure does take the cake. I have so many questions in my head that it might be best if we just go out there. We’ll work on my questions as we go. It sounds like you’re living a complicated life, and I think it’s going to take me a while to understand it.”

“It really isn’t Barbra, and it’s more orderly than the life I had before. Okay, let me call Kelly, and tell him we’re on our way.”

Then she surprised the hell out of here when Tamra touched her cross she was wearing, and then spoke into the air in front of her.

“Kelly, everything is OK. We’re leaving now. We’ll be home soon, love you too.”

Barbra raised an eyebrow, and just said one word, “Communicators.”

“Yes,” Tamra told her.

Seeing Barbra’s confusion, she added. “It’s like a more advance unit similar to the Bone Phone that never really sold well here in the US years back.”

Barbra knew what she was talking about, and the government was working on units like hers, but as far as she knew they haven’t been able to get them to work as proficiently as Tamra’s.

On their way out to the Island, Tamra told Barbra of the customs the Winstons had, and what to expect when they reached the Island. When they got to the pier, the Alphas were waiting for them. They all stood in line, as if waiting for inspection. Tamra had Barbra sit on the edge of a tall stool standing in front of all of them as she introduced them one at a time to her.

Tamra motioned for Janet to approach. “Barbra, you know Janet.”

Barbra smiled as Janet stepped up, and place her thigh in between Barbra’s

leg’s. Within the time, she held her. Barbra could feel Janet’s sex pressing on her leg, and she knew Janet could feel hers, too.

Deliberately, Janet kissed her softly on the lips, but Barbra didn’t flinch an

inch. It was fairly plain to her they were welcoming her in their own way. The affection she received didn’t really bother her. In her years of service, she has had to do some rather strange, and even weirder things for the United States Government during her career.

Then Tess stepped up, and did the same thing, but the small woman added. “You, and I are going to be good friends.”

Barbra smiled at her, and told her she hoped they would be too.

The next woman was a little younger than Barbra. “Hi, I’m Sandra, and I’m still kind of new here, so I know how you are feeling right about now. We’ll talk later, and I’ll help unconfuse you,” Sandra told her, laughing.

Tim stepped up to her, and then Kelly.

Kelly welcomed her, and Barbra told him, “You have got to be one of the biggest son of a bitch I’ve ever met.”

Everybody laughed as Tamra told her. “And he is big in every way, sweetie. Trust me, all of us know it, but Kelly is also the kindest, and most gentle man I have ever known. But never underestimate him, Barbra. Kelly is without any doubt the smartest person on the planet.”

The rest of the night was uneventful as the family followed Tamra’s lead. Barbra, and Tamra got in one of the Island’s electric carts along with Kelly, and Janet as they showed off the Island to Barbra. When they reached the rifle range, Barbra told them to stop. Getting out of the cart, Tamra watched Barbra’s trained eyes as she took in the rifle range. She knew Barbra wasn’t missing any detail, and neither would she forget anything she saw or heard.

After the range, they all went to the gym where there were treadmills, step climbers, and a dark blue floor mat that took up most of the space in the center of the gym. The fitness area also had a flat screen that was hard wired into the wall. Janet told her there was a computer screen in every room in the house, and that they all were connected to the main computer in the homes cellar.

The most outlandish item in the gym was several round steel rings standing twelve feet tall. There were foot straps on the bottom of the inner ring, and hand-held bars at the top with a body brace hanging from the steel struts to hold a person inside the center ring. She was told Kelly built it, and he called it a Human Giro.

Tim, and Janet helped Kelly strap into the thing as Tamra was telling Barbra about it. “Almost everybody gets sick when they first use this,” she pointed to the tile floor around the machine, along with a mud sink in the floor by the wall. “The benefits we get from the Giro are huge. It helps us to not get disorientated when we are tumbling, and turning at high speeds.”

Kelly indicated to the others he was ready.

Everyone stood back from the machine as he slowly turned headfirst. Slowly rotating all the way around, he came back up facing the same way he was before. As he completed his second spin, he picked up speed with every revolution he made. Soon his body was a blur of oscillating motion within the steel rings.

Using his body weight, Kelly leaned to one side. His body sped off in that direction. Increasing his speed some more, he did it in another direction. Next, Kelly threw his body from one direction to another in a maneuver so fast he did it in a blink of an eye.

The machine, by this time, looked to Barbra like one big, round, super-fast ball of rings in rotation with the blur of Kelly’s body within the rings. After a few minutes, his speed slowed down, and then a red light came on telling everybody it was coming to a stop.

Barbra was pretty impressed with Kelly, and his contraption. She knew NASA had things of this nature to help astronauts, and pilots get used to gee forces of rockets, and airplanes, but this one was compact for its size, and was of a different design. She also figured like the NASA people. Kelly would be pretty disorientated when he got off of the thing, and would have to take it easy the rest of the night. But to Barbra’s consternation, she was stunned when Kelly Winston stepped off the Giro, and walked in a straight line right to her.

She clapped her hands at him.

“I’ll give you that one, Kelly,” she told him. “That was pretty impressive.”

Barbra didn’t let the shock show on her face as she gave him praise, but she knew for a human being to go through those gee forces while rotating their body that fast, and then be able to walk afterwards was indeed short of amazing.

“Oh yes, that was just fucking wild,” Barbra silently thought to herself.

What Kelly just showed her was that you could turn him around, and around, then throw him, and, like a cat, he would always land on his feet. Kelly could control any direction he was going in, and spring back at you faster than anyone would ever believe. He also showed her by what he did that Kelly Winston Jr was the one of the most dangerous men Barbra has ever encountered in her entire life. She herself was a trained soldier. The best of the best that the United States had to offer, and by what Kelly Winston just did, was something Barbra knew no other living man could ever do.

Leaving the gym behind, they walked up to the house. Barbra could now get a better look at how the home was built. What she got from it was the same impression that she got when she glanced at it from a distance. It scared her. The house was by all rights a well-made, and very wonderful looking home, but there was just something about it that bothered her. The bullet-proof windows on both floors were just the tip of the iceberg. She also knew Kelly had bought a megaton of titanium for the Island, and, try as she could, she didn’t know where he put it all except it had to be built into the house’s walls.

What Barbra wouldn’t know until later was that the walls of the house, and

cellar were built with three different layers of titanium along with concrete, re-bar, and steel protecting anyone in the house from attack. The cellar’s ceiling, and walls were over twenty feet thick. Kelly built the cellar to withstand repeated attacks using 3,000-pound bunker busting bombs as a scale. The house wouldn’t be thereafter a direct hit, but anyone in the cellar had a very good chance of surviving an attack. In short of a nuclear strike, no one could kill them as long as they stayed in the cellar.

Walking inside the mansion, Barbra immediately saw that there was a big difference inside the home then the outside appearance. Everything about the inside of the dwelling showed the love, and warmth, and compassion of their lives. The immense room holding the grand staircase she fell in love with, as she was sure the other girls did upon seeing it. On both walls on either side of the grand staircase were family pictures. She notice there were a lot of empty spots on the walls.

Tamra told her those were for new members of the family who have yet to join the family. Which told Barbra they were expecting a hell of a lot more people to marry into their little group.

They took her up to the second floor.

Tamra told her. “Off down that way are bedrooms with a small staircase to the

first floor, and one going up into the crow’s nest. I’ve already picked your bedroom where you’ll be sleeping. Tim will get your bags, and put them in there later.”

“In though this door here,” she pointed to the only door to the right of the stairs. “Is our lair, where we all sleep. This area of the house is very private, and only family members are welcome here. Barbra, what I am trying to say is that to us you are family, and you are more than welcome in here with us.”

With that said, she open the door, and let Barbra walk in ahead of her as the rest of the family followed behind. Barbra had thought they would hide everything from her when she got here, but the family seemed more than willing to let her see anything she wanted.

The first room of the bedchamber was huge, with many oversized beds that allowed six or eight people to sleep in one bed alone. Everyone filed in behind her. Some of them jumped up on a bed, and laid down together. It was the enormous round bed in the middle of the room that caught Barbra’s eye. Tamra told her that it was the most active bed in the entire room.

Barbra noticed the pictures on the walls were totally different from the ones downstairs. The ones in the bedroom were all black, and white photos of them making love. There were other pictures of them holding each other in loving manners, and poses. The expressions on their faces were unmistakable, of people who were absolutely in love with each other.

Barbra only had two things to say about the framed pictures. “Janet, you hit the bullseye on every one of these photos. They are outrageously beautiful. All of you look fantastic.” Then Barbra spotted a picture of Tim, and Kelly with Tamra. With a wide grin, Barbra pointed at the picture as she looked over at Tamra.

Tamra turned her palms up in the air and told her, “Believe me, Barbra, you need to try that. It was surreal, and wonderful to have my two husbands loving me together.”

The touch-less bathroom off the bed chamber Barbra like, but the world’s society already had that technology. However, it was the four large claw foot copper tubs is what caught Barbra’s eye.

“Barbra, you’ll be able to have a bath in one real soon,” Tamra told her. “Kelly got those from Scotland. They are well over three hundred years old. You may use any of these rooms anytime you want to. Your family, and you don’t have to ask. It’s your right to use the Island, and what’s on it as your own, and if you don’t want to sleep alone, you can sleep in the great bedchamber with us.”

Tamra stepped in close to Barbra, staring straight into her brown eyes. “Barbra, even if you’re not in our bedchamber, and you don’t want to be alone. You can be with anyone of us at any time. As I tried to tell you before, our pack here takes care of each other in every way. Like I said before, your family. No one will try to force you into doing something you do not want to do.”

Then she turned around, and looked directly at Tess, and raised her voice. “Am I right, Tess!”

Tessa was getting rather cozy with Sandra on one of the beds, but Tamra’s voice snapped her out of it. “Hey, I’m cool. I told you I’ll behave,” the small woman told Tamra.

Tess was a beautiful young woman, Barbra thought. With her light sandy hair, and evergreen eyes, even Barbra thought she was attractive, but Barbra was no fool. She knew that little woman could cause more mischief than an entire school of kindergartens. Tamra already warned Barbra about Tessa’s behavior before they got to the Island, and Barbra had to admit. She could see what Tamra had told her was true. Tess was a very cute, and sweet, hellacious young woman.

The only other room of interest to Barbra was the cellar door, which they later passed by, but didn’t open for her. Barbra felt if she asked them to open the heavy vault door, they would have. Even though she wanted to get down there in a bad way, Barbra let it slide for now. She knew damn well everything she wanted to know about the family would be down there.

As they left the door behind them, she asked Kelly. “Kelly, you’re not paranoid, are you?”

He told her a flat out, “No.”

They showed her the first aid room next. The ER had recovery rooms, and in it as Kelly told his doctors was everything, but a cat scan. The last room they visited before they let Barbra rest before dinner was Kelly’s study. Tamra had told Barbra all about his study on their boat ride out to the Island.

“He’ll let us in the room with him, but he can be very touchy about moving

things around, and it’s just best we be careful while we’re in there,” she told the older woman. “Once you see how his office is set up, you’ll understand why.”

Kelly opened the door for Barbra, but only she went inside. She stopped a few feet from the threshold. Tamra could see Barbra was pulling in information about the room as fast as she could.

It was obvious to her that Kelly’s study was a room for multitasking. It was an intelligence room where Kelly controlled their lives, and made things happen. He had two big flat screens on an oversized oak desk with all kinds of controls, and lights inserted into the top of the desk. Off to one side, there was a wall screen to the right of his desk that was four feet by six feet in length. On it now was a radar picture of what was all around the Island. Kelly also had different handguns, and rifles hanging on one wall. Barbra was sure there were a few more under and around his desk where no one could see them. In the middle of the room was a table with a mock-up of the Island, and there was a six-by-eight-foot table with no chairs around it. There also were no windows in the room. Barbra knew better than to ask, but she was sure that the walls were not normal. The room had no clutter in it, and everything had its place. Almost nothing else was visible, and had already been put away.

Barbra turned around in a military spin, retracing her steps back through the doorway. Proceeding down the hallway with the family, she asked Kelly in a quirky voice. “Mumm, tell me Kelly. You’re not planning to launch any astronauts into space anytime soon. Are you?”

Kelly noticed Barbra kept using the same tone of voice when talking to him. He knew it was a pattern he was going to have to deal with eventually, but for now. Tamra was running this show. Everyone was doing as she told them, even him. Tamra, and her were really close. To not take her advice could put what they were really doing on the Island in jeopardy.

Over the following weeks, Barbra took to their routine as a bird does to the air. She had no problem with any of it. She even made everyone pick up their pace in their morning run, much to Tessa’s enjoyment. Tess always thought everyone should run at her speed of mock three around the Island. Barbra just told them their pace was too slow for the short distance they were running. Kelly had to admit it felt good to run a bit faster than they were used to.

Barbra was also giving them a change of pace in other areas of their lives as well.

On the first day at the rifle range, everybody got out their personal weapons. Kelly also had Tess take out a few machine guns: the M60, a Mac 10, a Springfield, and an M249 Saw. They lined them up for Barbra to inspect, except for their personal weapons, which they kept in their shoulder holsters. Barbra didn’t show any reaction to the illegal weapons Kelly had, but both Tamra, and Janet could feel her disapproval of them. Walking down the line of guns, she stripped some of them, and checked them out, then put them back together like a pro.

Tess was first in line after the machine guns.

Barbra stopped short, and asked her in her unbelieving tone of voice, “I know this is a dumb question, but is that your personal weapon? A forty-four auto-mag!” she asked.

Tessa squinted her eyes up at the taller women in suspicion about her question. “Ya, I got it for my birthday. Why?”

“Let me see it,” Barbra told her.

Tess hesitated, then told her in no uncertain terms, “Listen, sweetie. You are cute, and I have to admit, I have some strange, and wonderful feelings about you.” Then Tess raised her voice, and screamed. “But I’ll be fucking damned if I’ll, hand over to you my personal weapon!”

Tamra, and Janet beat Kelly to the punch. “Tess!” They both yelled at the girl.

Barbra didn’t even take her eyes off the little wildcat. “I’ll give it back, I promise,” she told Tess, flashing her a smile.

Everyone could see Tess like that because she returned the smile right back at Barbra. She then handed Barbra her gun, handle first.

Barbra checked the weapon over. Then in one fluid motion spun around in a crouch really low to the ground using a two-handed grip on the weapon. The right hand holding the handle, and the left hand supporting the bottom of the gun. Barbra unloaded the gun down range at a target fifty feet away. Every one of her rounds hit the target.

She then handed the gun back to Tess, who quickly loaded it. On the Island, they all knew Tess couldn’t handle seeing an unloaded weapon lying around anywhere. As soon as she got it loaded, Tess completed the same maneuver Barbra did, and spun around, and unloaded the massive gun at another target right beside Barbra’s. Every one of her shots hit, but it was obvious to see that Tessa’s hits were grouped a hell of a lot tighter together than Barbra’s.

“I see you’re pretty good with that howitzer,” she told Tess. Turning to Tamra,

Barbra told her. “I’m really beginning to like the little munchkin.”

She then directed her next comment back at Tessa. “What other guns are you good with?”

Tess went down the long list of weapons she could shoot and the ones she liked

the best. “I really love them all, but my favorites are the forty-four auto-mag and the McMillan Tac-fifty.

Barbra was getting more impressed with the group every day. If she rated their skills, she would rank them as good, if not better than her own people she trained herself. This sure wasn’t how she thought of them before coming to the Island. These people weren’t terrorist, or survivalist or wackos. They may live like a pack of wolves and their sex life was interesting, to say the least. Yet, the only illegal things she has seen so far were the weapons and she really didn’t think they were getting an army together to invade the United States. However, Barbra knew when she found what she was looking for, it would have Kelly’s fingerprints all over it.

It seemed to Barbra that Sandra was the smartest one of the bunch, as the older woman didn’t want to get into the training all that much. Sandra seem to act more like a housewife to all of them than anything else. She was a person who enjoyed serving others. She showed it by cooking, and getting them cold drinks throughout the day. So far, it was just the three girls, Kelly, and Tim, who concerned Barbra the most.

Tess was telling Barbra about the McMillan since Barbra never shot one of them herself. “It’s not hard to shoot, really. It’s like the rest of the guns I have trained with. You just have to pay more attention to the weather conditions. The temperature, and humidity really kicked my ass until Kelly brought me to the classroom, and I learned math in a different way. It was a bitch to think differently, but I finely did it. My first kill shot was a little over a mile away. Sandra loves computers, and I love weapons, and trucks. Kelly thinks I’m a great shooter because of my size.”

Barbra also knew Tess was sure trying to get into her pants pretty damn hard, and when the time came, she would set the girl straight, just like she was going to have to do with Kelly. Eventually someone was going to have to tell her about whatever in hell was going on out here on the Island. You didn’t train like they were doing, and have the weapons they had for no reason. The family had a goal, but whatever it was, they were still keeping it from her. They all ran through their drills on the range, and everyone acted professional, and was really top-notch shooter’s.

Later, after lunch, they went to the gym, and Sandra joined them. Barbra took control over the mat just as she did on the rifle range. The training they were doing on the Island was what Barbra has been doing for a living for most of her life. They all followed her lead without question.

When Kelly stepped up for a match with her, Barbra just told him to sit back down. She didn’t have to see Kelly on the mat to know he was indeed skilled in hand-to-hand combat. The man’s enormous frame just had a way of telling people, “You don’t want to mess with me.”

Barbra expected to see excellence on the mat with all of them, and that’s just what she got with all three girls, including Tim. Sandra had some nice moves. Her lower body mass gave her an advantage over a bigger opponent. However, it was obvious to see she needed a lot more training than everyone else. Overall, Barbra was very impressed with how well the crew has done to get them to this stage in their development.

There was one person left in the group to step on the mat, and Barbra was dying to see just how good Tamra was, and if she had improved over the years.

Barbra, and Tamra squared off. They began slowly at first by jabbing, and

blocking, and running through some sidekicks. Barbra would stop the match from time to time, and give advice to her as they went.

Finally, the time came that everyone was waiting for. Everybody got to their feet more to get out of the way if they had to then to see the match better. Both Barbra, and Tamra started putting body armor on their forearms, chest, ribs, legs, and hands. Barbra told Tamra to give her everything she had without breaking any bones, or them killing each other.

Tamra attacked first, Barbra blocked her blows. Suddenly, Tamra dropped close to the mat, and spun around Barbra’s legs too fast for Barbra to act. She hit her with two kidney punches before Barbra could spin around to counter the blows. After that, both fighters picked up speed. Barbra went nuts on Tamra. It was all Tamra could do to block her while keep getting pushed back by the older woman. She had no time to attack because Barbra was all over her, giving the younger woman everything she had.

Then it happened. Tamra got pissed, and went ballistic. Knocking Barbra back, she went to hit her again, but. She surprised Barbra by throwing her to the mat. Tamra kicked her three times in the ribs before Barbra could get out of the way.

Barbra jumped back up off the mat.

Tamra came at her in a series of blows, and sidekicks, not holding an ounce of strength back as she laid every blow with everything she had. Then Tamra did it again. She threw Barbra down, and kicked her until Barbra moved out of the way.

As soon as Barbra was up off the mat again, Tamra once again went nuts with one blow after another, knocking Barbra back.

At that point, everyone could see Barbra had enough of getting the shit kicked out of her. The next time Barbra hit the mat, she rolled off to the side to avoid the kicks, then got back up on her feet. The two of them just stood there, beating the hell out of each other. They stopped blocking mostly, and were just landing blow after blow on their upper, and lower bodies.

Watching them fight on, Kelly was getting concerned, and wanted to stop the match. It was getting to where it was more about them killing each other. The match wasn’t productive. Reluctantly, he let the girls fight on.

The match reached into its ten-minute round when Barbra tucked her body low, and grabbed Tamra, and spun like a spring throwing her across the mat. Those watching could see Tamra never expected it. Her body was out of control in the air, but just before she hit the mat. She straightened herself out, and landed on her feet. Tamra’s legs took in the fall’s force, then she sprang back at Barbra so fast, Barbra knew if she made contact with her, she was going to kill her. At full speed, Tamra charged, but Barbra didn’t move an inch as she watched the younger woman advance on her.

Just before Tamra made contact with her, Barbra screamed. “STOP!”

Tamra’s forward momentum was so great, she let herself fall to the mat to stop herself in time. When she stopped, she was less than a foot from Barbra. They both were breathing heavily, and were bruised, and had scratches on them with rivers of sweat running down their bodies.

Sweat poured off of Tamra as she laid on the mat trying to control her breathing.

Barbra bent over her, resting her hands on her knees as she gave Tamra praise. “Girl, you’re better than your old man ever was. You were totally unpredictable, Tamra. That was just fucking fantastic.”

Tamra told Kelly, she, and Barbra were going up to the house while the rest of the group finished with the day’s training. Once upstairs in the bathroom, Barbra didn’t stop her when Tamra helped her to remove her clothes. When they both got into the shower, Barbra tried to grab the soap, but Tamra took it from her hand.

“Barbra, I’m trying to wash your body, not come on to you,” she told the older woman. “Anyway, you have always acted more like my older sister since I have known you. I wish you would chill out some. Ever since you got here, you have been pretty uptight, and don’t seem to relax very well at all.”

“I’m fine, Tamra. I just don’t shower with many women, and the place between my legs where your lathering up hasn’t had many visitors.”

Barbra had to admit, letting the younger woman wash her really didn’t bother her. Over the years, the two women had built a close friendship that has endured. The common bond between them for their love of Tamra’s father has kept them close all of these years. After showering, Tamra had Barbra sit on the edge of a stool in front of the bathroom mirrors. She told her to keep her legs open. Barbra didn’t have a clue what she was up to, but whatever it was. It seemed important to her.

Opening a drawer beside them, Tamra took out a tube of something. Spreading some cream on her fingers, she turned back to Barbra.

“Do you trust me?” Tamra asked, holding up her hand with the cream on it.

“Well, yes, of course, but...”

“If you trust me, then you need to let me do what I can for you, and this stuff.” She held up the cream again. “You’re going to be in love within a minute from now. Hold still while I spread it on you.”

Tamra coated her with the cream where the unwanted blow landed. Barbra could feel the stuff working because, suddenly, the pain from the injury wasn’t there anymore.

“Wow, I love the it. It’s working fast. I feel wonderful even after that kick.” Glancing back at the tube in Tamra’s hand, Barbra noticed there was no label on the tube, just some kind of design with wavy lines. “Do you mind telling me what it is?”

Barbra already knew she would not like Tamra’s answer. In all of her years working for the Federal Government, Barbra herself has been injured many times, and not once has she seen a medication like what Tamra was holding in her hand.

“It’s not Novocain, or anything like that, is it?” she asked.

Tamra laughed at her. “No Barbra, our organization developed it. With the type of people we are, we need better drugs than what’s out on the open market.”

“And what organization would that be, Tamra? None of you have told me anything about it since I’ve been on the Island.”

Tamra put the cream away, and then gave her a direct answer for the first time.

Barbra, our people have been in hiding for many years. Because of that, there has never been a name for the organization. You can’t keep something a secret if you named it. I know you have a lot of questions. You need to let this be... for now,” she told the older woman.

“Right now, I want to talk with you. We’ve been noticing that you, and Tim have been getting friendly. If you want him, you can have him. You won’t offend anyone here. Everybody would do anything you asked them. If you asked Kelly for a million dollars, he would give it to you. As I said before, Barbra, your family and that means everything to us here on the Island. Everything here is yours to use anytime you want, and that even means any male, or female on the Island. It’s all up to you what you decide to do.”

Tamra knew just what she was doing, even if Barbra didn’t. It was her job tonight to rip down the walls Barbra has built to defend herself. Tamra was out to make sure Barbra felt like she belong here with them. Getting Barbra to the Island wasn’t all about getting the family into the CIA. It also wasn’t all about Kelly’s hidden agenda. More to the point, it was about building a family with some very special people in it.

The question came up, so Barbra pushed it. “So, I guess I could just go into the cellar anytime I want, and look around.”

“Barbra, I am not going to lie to you. There are some highly illegal items, and some very dangerous things down there. However, there is also an excellent reason we have them. We also have a special room down there that means everything in the world to us, and to tell you the truth. Without it, all of us would surely die.”

“We can look at the cellar tomorrow, but right now, I want you, and me to spend the rest of the night together, and have some girl talk. Now, would you like Tim for a night, or until you leave? I know he wants you because he told me he did.”

Barbra was having a wonderful time on the Island, and it really hit her hard

when everybody treated her like she was part of the family. Over the years, she has been out in the world, changing, and losing so many lives that she forgot what it was like to be a part of a real family unit. Yet, the fact remained. She was afraid of those feelings, and kept pushing them deeper inside of herself. All she ever did was work. She wasn’t any different from Director Mellon, or Mike.

“Tamra, I can’t just take your husband, and bed him. I haven’t been made the way you guys are,” she told Tamra, then she added quietly. “It’s been some time for me since I have had anyone in my life.”

“You, and Daddy had to have been lovers as well as teammates. I know you both always tried to cover it up when I was around you.”

“Yes, we were,” Barbra confessed. “We didn’t feel it was right to let you know about our relationship, and let you see our feelings for each other. Either one of us might not have made it back home from a mission. We both didn’t want to put you through that. So, we stayed as teammates in front of you...”

Tamra watched Barbra’s face. Tears were slowly building in her eyes.

“...and when we were other than with you. Well...we fucked like rabbits everywhere we went. We even made love a few times while on a mission together. However, with our job, it would have been stupid to get married. We just enjoyed each other’s company whenever we were free.”

Barbra noticed Tamra’s eyes turned a deeper grayish blue when she asked, “Was it you who sent that money to me after...well? After we realized he wasn’t coming home?”

“Tamra, there’s a lot of information that you shouldn’t know about. But yes. I had something to do with that. I wasn’t well around that time. I just got back from a mission where I was captured, and tortured. I got the living shit kicked out of me. They interrogated me for days, and I didn’t think I’d make it home, and when…”

Barbra knew she was crying now because her tears were pouring out of her eyes.

“...I did, and I found out they didn’t help the families...damn it, Tamra. I am not supposed to talk about any of this.”

Barbra totally broke down in Tamra’s arms when Tamra said it herself because Barbra herself couldn’t say it.

“Barbra, my dad lost his life when he, and five other men went after you to get you back, and bring you home. Only you, and two other men came home from that mission. I know this because I have a rich, wonderful, and loving husband. I needed to know what happened to my father, and Kelly got that information for me, and it cost him dearly to get it.”

Sitting on the stools in front of the mirrors, both women wept. For a long time, they held each other, not saying a word. Neither one wanted to stop sobbing for someone they both loved so much. After a while, their tears subsided, and Tamra was washing Barbra’s face as she finished the story for her.

“So, I walked into the Deputy Director’s office waving my gun around, and that’s why you, and the other families received the money. Then, they put me in a hospital for a while. That’s why I haven’t been with anyone. Years ago, I came close to making love with someone who works at Langley, but it just wasn’t meant to be.”

“Barbra, I want you to relax while you’re here. And start wearing a damn bathing suit. You have a wonderful body. You’ve been walking around in your jungle uniform since you’ve got here. Girl, it’s time you started walking around like the sexy female that you are, and not a military auto bot.”

“Come with me,” She told her. “I have something planned just for you, and it will do the job nicely.”

Naked, both women went into the playroom. Tamra had Barbra lay down on one of the massage tables.

Then she called out, “Computer privacy.” The door to the bed chamber bolted

itself shut, locking them both in. “There, no one will come in, and no talking while I do this for you.”

Applying warm oil on Barbra’s back, the Alpha released her charm as she looked over Barbra’s body. “You still are a very attractive woman, Barbra. Tim is going to have so much fun with you,” she told the older woman.

“I never said I would do that,” Barbra quickly pointed out.

With a grin on her face, Tamra went to work on her shoulders. She massaged them for a long time because the woman’s muscles were hard as a rock. As she made her way down her back, and beneath Barbra’s shoulder blades, Barbra relaxed, enjoying the rub down. The mature woman let out little sounds of pleasure from between her lips. Working on, Tamra massaged her firm butt, then quickly slid her hand deep down between Barbra’s legs.

Barbra let out a sudden moan.

Tamra’s smile kept getting bigger as the Alpha forced Barbra’s body to relax, and enjoy herself. After working on her thighs, and calves, she turned her over. Barbra immediately opened her eyes, but the Alphas will was stronger. Barbra immediately relaxed, closing her eyes.

“You will have Tim, Barbra. Because I know you will. Your body is craving to be touched, and loved.”

Finishing her arms, Tamra worked her chest, then slowly moved down to her belly. Making her way further south, Barbra’s breathing got very heavy as Tamra approached her legs.

Tamra’s task tonight was two-fold. The first was she wanted to make sure Barbra felt like she was fitting in on the Island. She also wanted to make sure Barbra didn’t refuse Tim when he came for her. When she was finished with her, Barbra wouldn’t be able to resist him.

When she lifted her hands from her, Barbra was a lump of mass laying on the table, breathing like an animal. Tamra knew Barbra wanted to be loved in the worst possible way, but it took someone who loved her to show Barbra just how badly she really needed it.

Laying on the table with her eyes closed, Barbra enjoyed the afterglow.

Tamra leaned over her, and whispered in her ear, “That is what we call here on the Island a full body massage. If you ever want one, just ask any of us. We’re here to take care of you. Now, stay and rest for a minute. I’ll get a hot bath going for you.”

The woman didn’t want to move a muscle when Tamra came for her, but Tamra got her up, and into one of the great tubs that she, and the girls loved so much. They were deep, with sides that curved outwards. When you sat in one, the sides almost came up to eye level, and you could stretch your legs all the way out.

While Barbra was in the tub, Tamra was in the bedroom putting bright lavender nail polish on Janet’s toes while Janet did hers in red.

Tamra called out to her, who was still in the tub. “Sandra, put some cheese, and wine in the frig beside you.”

She could hear Barbra reaching out for the small refrigerator beside the tub.

“I’m sleeping in here tonight,” came Barbra’s reply. “And I doubt if you’re getting me out tomorrow morning.” As an afterthought, she added, “By the way. I love the bidet. I’m sure that gets a lot of use around here.”

“You got that right,” Tamra declared. “With two men, and four women living in this house, it’s in continuous use. Kelly’s going to put in another one pretty soon.”

Laughing more to herself, Barbra told her. “Hell, I am sure it’s nice just to have someone in your life giving you the chance to use it.”

That put a smile on Tamra’s, and Janet’s faces. The older woman was changing really fast in just a few brief hours since Tamra gave her the massage. Tamra knew Barbra understood she didn’t do what she did to her out of sexual perversion. She did it because of her love for Barbra.

Barbra admitted to her afterwards that she had denied her own desires for far too long. Tamra was sure Tim had a good chance of getting her. Tim was a younger man by a few years. Tamra knew Barbra was going to love him. Tim was very gentle as he was noble, and was wonderful to be in his arms.

The door to the bedroom opened. Tess walked in. Tamra, and Janet smiled at her as they continued painting each other’s nails.

When Tess walked off into the bathroom, Tamra shook her head at Janet, and told her, “That girl is looking for trouble, and she is about to find it.”

Janet thought that was funny. They both waited for the show to begin as both women stopped what they were doing, and listened to the two women talking in the bathroom. Tess finally asked if she could help wash her legs while they talked. Tamra thought everything was going just fine until she heard a splash of water hitting the floor. That was followed by a very loud slap that sounded like a facial blow, and the gurgling sounds of someone being choked.

Alarmed, Tamra called out, “Is everything OK in there Barbra?”

“Oh, we’re just fine dear,” Barbra reassured her.

That was followed by some sharp words from Barbra, but her voice was too low for Tamra, or Janet to hear what was being said. A minute later, Tess came walking out of the bathroom with the front part of her shirt wet, and a red hand-size print on the side of her face. There was another one around her neck that was so profound they could see the marks from Barbra’s long fingers wrapped around Tessa’s neck.

Tess did her best to avoid her wife’s eyes on the way past them as she headed for the bedroom door.

Out loud, Tamra told her younger wife. “I told you not to mess with her, didn’t I?”

Later that night, Tamra was getting ready for bed when she got a call on the house’s communication system from Tim.

“Tamra, I have Barbra here. We’ve taken a bedroom down the hall.”

Tamra had been watching the two all night. They were getting really friendly as the night passed. When she last checked on them, they were on the front porch talking.

“That’s great news, Tim. Be careful with her. Like I said, she hasn’t been around a man in a long time. Tomorrow, the rest of us are going into town, so you two will have all day together. Tell her we won’t be back until the following day but get her into our lair tomorrow night. Then, after we show up, there’s something I want you to do.”

The following morning, everybody left the Island before Tim, and Barbra woke up. Tess, and Janet went over to Tessa’s parents’ house, and Sandra went to her home to check on it, while Kelly, and Tamra drove into Portland to shop, and take care of some business at the family’s bank. They all planned to meet back up in town at the Fisherman’s Wharf for a late dinner.

Tamra didn’t mind eating at the Wharf anymore, with the help of Tess, who talked Gloria into serving the Winston’s large types of salads and other healthy foods instead of the rich, fried, fatty food that brought in the tourist crowd. They all could come into the Wharf more often, and not have to eat the kinds of food that were killing the world’s population. Then, one day, Gloria had the foods that they ordered on the menu. She told them that people seemed to like to have a different healthy choice every once in a while when having dinner at the restaurant.

“Are you guys ready to order?”

Gloria was taking their order tonight, but they were still missing one family

member. They asked her to give them a few more minutes.

“I am getting a little worried about Sandra, Kelly.”

“Yes, Tamra. I know. I have been watching it develop. I think it’s about time we do something about it.”

When ordering their dinner a few minutes later, Kelly asked, “Gloria, is it possible Tim could park his boat over-night at your dock? There is a problem with his pier. They should have it fixed in a couple of days. Anyway, he’ll be in early to get it.”

She told him she, or Fred wouldn’t have any problem with it.

After dinner, they all drove over to Sandra’s house, which was south of Belfast. No one talked in the Moose Killer on the way there. When they got to her home, they all walked inside without knocking. After a few minutes, Kelly came out carrying Sandra in his arms. He put her in the back seat while the rest of the family went through her home, brought her personal items out, and put them in the truck. It took forty-five minutes, and they all did a last walk-through before leaving. Still, no one talked on the ride back to Belfast. Tess parked as close to the Freeloader as she could to load Sandra, and her things into the boat without being seen by anyone.

Kelly drove the cabin cruiser out of port, but when they got to the spot, they were still offshore about a half mile. There were just too many rocks, and sandbars that came, and went in the area to risk getting any closer to shore at night with the Freeloader. Kelly kissed them, and told them he wouldn’t be back on the Island till the early hours of the morning. Saying that much, he took a plastic bag in his teeth that held his shorts, and a shirt, and dove naked over the side of the boat.

Tess drove the rest of the way home.

Using an electric cart along with an ATV, and flatbed trailer. They got Sandra, and her belongings inside of the house. Having undressed out in the hall, Tamra and Janet half carried Sandra into the bedroom, and laid her on one bed as the rest of them quickly filed in, and found a bed for themselves.

Barbra sat up on the alpha’s bed when they walked in, but Tim got her to lie back down. Tamra laid down on the alpha’s bed, close to the two lovers.

Everyone had their orders for the night. No talking, no sexual contact, just go to sleep. Tamra’s job was to make sure Barbra didn’t wig out, and tried to leave, and Tim knew what his job was. Laying close to Tim and Barbra on the Alpha’s bed, Tamra kept her eyes shut once she laid down. After a while, she could hear Tim making his move, but Barbra was giving him a bit of a hard time. Tamra only smiled because she knew Tim all too well.

Finally, after a few minutes, she opened her eyes. Barbra was helping Tim get between her legs. To Tamra, it was one of the most beautiful sights she has ever seen. As the two made love, Barbra tried to be quiet so the others wouldn’t hear her, but she failed, badly. Her body refused to be silent. Tamra would have laughed out loud if this didn’t mean so much for the family to have Barbra as one of their own.

Forcefully, Tim started laying into Barbra, and the older woman was kicking up a storm. She knocked the bedding off them. Tamra could see their entire length of their bodies lock together in the heat of passion. Then, doing as Tamra told him, Tim kicked up his lovemaking on a much grander scale.

Barbra couldn’t even move as her whole body shook, and trembled as she held on to him. Loudly crying out, she screamed, vocalizing the passion Tim was giving her as his love entered her, energizing her.

Tamra laid back down on her pillows, and closed her eyes, and tried to get to sleep. They now had her. She would be very important to all of them.

Later that night, Kelly got back, and broke the rules, and made love to Tamra.

Kelly set her off so quickly. Tamra could only glance once at Barbra to see how she was handing the intimate contact. The grin Barbra had on her face told Tamra everything. Tamra shut her eyes, and loved Kelly right back. Kelly was the Alpha of all Alphas he could break as many rules as he wanted.

Next morning, Tamra took Barbra aside. This day was going to be a very important day for them, and it could also get one, if not all of them, killed. Tamra asked Barbra how she felt about the night before.

“Tamra, I’m fine. I felt kind of funny at first, but in a good way. However, Tim did something to me last night. I don’t know what in hell it was, but I want him to do it to me again.” Both women laughed together when Barbra finished with, “I couldn’t help myself. I jumped him in the shower this morning.”

“Everything is wonderful, Tamra, but I know we are going to have a rough time in the cellar, and it’s all going to be directed at Kelly,” she told her.

There wasn’t much anyone could do about it. They would all just have to ride

it out. After breakfast, Tamra placed two gifts on the kitchen table in front of Barbra. She told her they may be two unique gifts, but they go together.

Barbra opened the first one. Inside were twelve golden roses, and an engagement ring. Tamra told her they needed to ask her as a group to marry them, and that nothing would change except they would need her to vow a lifelong commitment to the family.

Barbra said nothing, but she picked up the second gift. Inside was a necklace just like the one Tamra, and everybody had on except hers had a numeral one behind her cross, and not the number three.

“It’s a number one because of who you are to us. You’re not our mother. and you more than likely won’t be lovers to all of us, But you are older. and wiser. You wouldn’t fit in any other spot in our lives, but as number one.”

Everyone could see that got to her because Janet had to hand her a napkin to dry her eyes. “For most all of my life,” she told them, cleaning her eyes. “The military has been my family, but the older I got. The more I realized it wasn’t an actual family.” Wiping the last teardrops from her eyes, she added, “I really want to accept what you are giving me, but I cannot do that just yet.”

Then, Barbra set the box down on the table. and raised her voice. “Not until I know what the fuck is going on around here! If you want me in, then I need to know everything before I can make my decision.” With that, she folded her arms across herself. and sat back in her chair.

Since she has woke up, Tamra could see Barbra has changed since the other day. She was softer, and nicer, and she was hanging on Tess, and Tess was loving it. But as soon as she started talking about the secrets in the cellar, she changed right back into officer Stone.

They took her to the vault door. Tamra surprised the hell out of her when she frisked her. “You think I have a gun, or a knife on me, Tamra?”

“No, Barbra, I don’t. But being a CIA officer, you might have some kind of recording device, and anything like that is not allowed in the cellar. Barbra, we are about to show you every one of our secrets, and if you ask everybody here, we will all tell you the same damn thing. The outside world cannot know what is down in the cellar.”

Kelly got her attention.

“Barbra, this vault door was made by a bunch of different people, and me. If you got us all together. No one could safely open it when it’s locked.” As Kelly talked, he opened the vault. “If anyone tries to disarm it; it will blow this house, and the Island all to hell.”

“On the Island, I have hundreds of pounds of C-4 buried out there in the ground, and there is a thousand times more explosive power under this house. That is how important it is for no one from the outside world to know what’s down there,” he told her.

Barbra, and the rest of the family followed Kelly downstairs where they had chairs set up because the entire event would take a while. Everybody sat down, and waited for Tim to close the house up, and set the alarms.

Barbra still hasn’t reacted to anything Kelly has told her, but they all knew that

was about to change. The rest of the family was told to stay out of the way, and let Tamra, and Kelly handle Barbra.

Kelly first told Barbra about the organization, and their reason for their existence, to save the planet, and life in this world. He explained about the Adams family, and baby Tess, and what would happen if the United States couldn’t defend itself, or was wiped out by a nuclear attack. He told her with the help of all the groups together. They would rebuild the United States Government as it was before the attack to ensure that the United States Constitution would still be enforced protecting the human rights of every American Citizen

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Kelly was being very open with her, but Barbra also felt Kelly was keeping

something from her; for now, she’d kept her mouth shut. She knew Kelly’s words were just the beginning of the bombshell he was going to lay on her today.

“All we want to do is to be the government’s last stand of defense to protect the country, and ensure freedom for the United States. Our organization has a lot of technology that the world doesn’t have, but we won’t share that with them until they get closer to learning about it themselves. We’re not about to hand a gun to a three-year-old Barbra, but we will help in an indirect way so no one knows about us.”

Tamra spoke up, and told Barbra. “Our secrecy is our greatest weapon.”

“Barbra, everyone here on the Island is different since they all have had contact with me, but really the biggest differences about us is that we feel differently

than the rest of the world. Barbra, you too are now a little different from the way

you were before you came here.”

He asked her, “Do you feel different today than you did yesterday?

“Well, yes,” she told him. “But I just had a wonderful full night,” she explained.

“No, Barbara, that’s not it, and you will understand more later. You are different now because of our love for you, and because of Tim loving you. We told Tim to share what’s inside of him with you, but not so much that you would sleep for two days. Tell me this. When he was making love to you last night, didn’t you at some point feel as if he was inside of you? I’m not talking about his body being inside of you. I am talking about his presence being inside of you.”

“Kelly, I will not commit myself to anything right now, but I will say this. I felt something, and when I did. I had a hard time in handling it.”

“That’s just what I was talking about. Soon, Tim is going to open his gate, and flood all of himself into you so you will understand without a doubt what I am talking about here.”

“Barbra, it’s because of these processes that we have a few unique abilities the rest of the world doesn’t have. We’re a hundred percent human, and we can be killed. I was shot in the chest, and lived only because my body wasn’t about to let itself die. I could have healed faster, but that would cause more people to know about us. We do have rules we need to follow, and some of them we can break, and others we cannot.”

Tamra pointed over to a swinging double door with no lock or doorknob. “Barbra, I want you to go slow, and I mean really slow,” she told her. “Stick your head through that doorway. Then we can show you the rest of what we have down here.”

Barbra stood, and walked over to the door as Tamra instructed her to do. She didn’t react when she looked inside the room, but they all could see her body stiffen up as she stuck her head inside. She then slowly backed out of the room while raising her hand with one finger pointing in the air, like she was going to ask a question, but didn’t. Shaking her head, she sat back down in front of Kelly, and Tamra.

“Barbra, that other door over there,” Tamra told her, pointing to another door on the far side of the room. “What’s inside of that room is the most important thing in our lives. There isn’t anyone here who cannot live without what’s in that one

room. We will show it to you, but we need to get through this other stuff first,” she explained.

Kelly brought Barbra’s attention back to him. “Barbra, it was me who brought you here, and I did it for a reason. It’s time the United States Government knows about us. However, the only one we want to know is the President of the United States. We don’t want other people to know, or eventually, the word is going to get out about us. We also want what you, and Tamra’s father wanted for Tamra, and that’s another reason we train so hard. Except for Tamra, and me, everybody has built themselves up to a level that is totally outstanding, and it’s something they didn’t have to do. Janet, Tess, and Tim, a little over a year ago, didn’t have any of the skills like they have today. Sandra really has no interest in it, but she is willing to learn, and stay on the home front when we’re not here, and that’s okay with all of us. We love her, and she can take care of the Island while we are away.”

“Anyway,” he told her. “I hate leaving this house alone with what’s in it. We

need someone here all the time. Come, let me show you what else we have down

here.”

With that, the tour started.

They first brought her into the classroom, and showed Barbra the computer that ran everything in the house. Barbra told them she liked how the room was set up with its computers that were hard wired into the main computer. There were also blackboards, and flat screens on the walls. She even went through some programs in the file cabinets.

Afterwards, they went into the weapons room. Making her way down each aisle, Barbra put to memory everything she saw. Kelly had racks of weapons that extended for twenty feet, with both sides of the racks filled with illegal weapons. There were many types of machine guns, rifles, and shotguns. By looking at the lot, she knew if mankind made it, there was at least one of them in that room. Hanging on the walls were weapons of all types and sizes. On another wall, there was every type of hand-gun Barbra could think of. There were also Billy clubs, tasers, axes, knives, and swords. The firepower in that one room alone impressed her, and concerned her at the same time.

The next room connected to the weapons room held all the ammunition for the weapons in the armory. Along with hand grenades, there was other bomb making material. Barbra also found Kelly had a large stack of C-4 military grade M112 sitting on the floor. She estimated there had to be hundreds of pounds of the stuff. With what weapons, and explosive power they had, she knew the Winstons could take over a small country if they wanted to.

Then, she saw the electronic device sticking out from the backside of the C-4.

Kelly notice she saw it. “Barbra, that isn’t the explosive power I was talking about that is under the house. This here is just one of them. The primary force behind this house no one can get to because it’s under the cellar about forty feet. The C-4 here, like all the rest, is under the control of two different computers. One computer is buried deep under the classroom, and trust me, you would only want me to get at it. The other you saw is in the classroom, and the whole shebang has so many fail-safe systems hooked to it there is just no way for it to go off by accident. I started working on this design when I was seven years old, and didn’t finish it until I was thirteen. Trust me, the computer program is safer than anything the United States Government, or the rest of the world has to this date.”

He then told her about the cellar. “If the Island were attacked, or submerged under water, the doors you saw coming down here, and the hatch at the top would close by itself. The cellar is environmentally controlled by the computer in the classroom. Witch keeps this place dry so all the guns, and metal down here will never rust. Using air scrubbers to remove the CO2 from the air, plus along with extra tanks, the air will always be fresh down here.

Barbra walked back through the archway into the weapons room. She stopped, and checked a few weapons out. She picked up a Colt AR15, and asked Tess if she could shoot it. Tess told her that was one of the first rifles she mastered. Still holding the weapon. Barbra stopped, and turned to Kelly with that questioning look of hers like she did in the outer room, but she just shook her head, and they moved on.

Tamra directed Barbra to the end of the room. The far back wall opened up into a large out cove which held huge containers with just about every kind of currency in the world. Barbra almost ask how much money there was, but then again, she kept quiet, and they moved on.

The next room slowed her down some as it had bazooka’s, and flame throwers and handheld SAM rockets, and Stinger Missiles, and other laser guided rockets. She stopped at the end of the room, and slowly turned to Kelly again, but she held her tongue.

Tamra saw something change in Barbra’s body language. She told everyone to go back, and sit down while she, and Kelly finished the tour with Barbra. From here on out, until the rest of the tour was over, Tamra knew Barbra was going to have the hardest time accepting what they had down here.

Before they continued on, she told Barbra, “If we are to protect this country, and the world. We cannot do it with our bare hands alone.”

As the three walked into the next room, the two alphas could see the items there clearly affected Barbra. Quickly walking through the room, she looked over the many cases laying on the shelves in the room. Opening every other case, she looked at the contents inside of each box. For the fifth time, she stopped, and turned to Kelly as if to say something, but instead, she quietly closed each case, and they moved on.

In the last room of the armory, Barbra saw things she didn’t have a clue whatever they were. She was pretty damn sure they were all designed to kill human beings. She was almost too afraid to ask Kelly what they all were. When she came across the last item sitting on the floor by itself, she stopped by it. It was a large square metal cube a little bigger than the size of a college dorm refrigerator. There was one dimple on the side wall of the box.

Pointing her right foot at the object, she asked. “Kelly, what is this?”

Kelly looked as if he wasn’t going to answer her, but Tamra urged him on with a nudge of her shoulder, and a nod of her head.

“The rest of these items in this room act differently than that one cube. I made that one special. It’s a bomb that makes an air born virus to kill human beings only. Some of these weapons in here only kill human life while others will take outbuildings as well. They can kill thousands, except for that one cube.”

Barbra slowly turned to face him. She damn well knew she would not like the answer to her next question. Quietly, she asked him. “Kelly, what’s the power of that cube?”

Kelly looked over at Tamra before he answered her. Once again, Tamra nodded her head at him.

“That’s a planet killer,” he told her. “That’s why there’s only one of them.”

Ever so slowly, Barbra turned all the way around to face him. Tamra’s first thought was she going to hit him. Her eyes weren’t the eyes of Barbra’s Stone any longer. Strider stood in front of them, and Tamra knew she was getting ready to kill. She had yet to strike out at Kelly, but her body language alone was letting them both know the clock was ticking. Her destruction was indeed coming.

Tamra knew the whole day was blown all to hell at this point. Barbra wasn’t taking any of this good at all. She knew the only thing holding Barbra back was her feelings for the family, and her. The cellar would have already turned into a bloodbath if she didn’t care about them. Tamra began praying Kelly would not try to kill Barbra as well. If they tried to hurt each other, she didn’t know if she could stop either of them. Tamra herself was now caught in between them. She hurried them on to the last item to show Barbra. It was at the end of the cellar, past the sleeping, and living quarters.

The three walked up to a five-by-five-foot hole in the cement floor which that had a fence around it. Barbra looked down into the hole. A latter was attached to the wall. She was sure there was scuba gear down there because she could see water a few feet below a room off to the side, just above the waterline.

Once more, she turned to Kelly, and asked in her quirky little voice. “Kelly, you have a sub down there, don’t you?”

Kelly wasn’t talking at all at this point. Tamra figured they would be trying to kill each other at any moment.

She answered Barbra for him, “It’s a fifteen-man sub, and there is a horizontal shaft under the water that leads out to the ocean. At the end of the shaft is a bulkhead that the computers watch, and with all the censors, and cameras in place, there is no way anyone can come in through from the ocean without the house knowing about it. We keep the sub moored there inside the bulkhead.”

Finished with the tour. Tamra quickly brought them both back to where everyone was waiting for them, sitting in their chairs. The rest of the family could feel something wasn’t right with Barbra. They all stayed quiet, and out of the way.

Kelly stood facing Barbra, as Tamra stood off to the side behind him. They all knew Barbra was totally beside herself because she kept walking back, and forth across the room while talking, and mumbling to herself. Every once in a while, she would stop and look over at Kelly. Then, she would repeat the process all over again. After a while, she settled down somewhat, and was only pacing back and forth when, without warning, she spun around, and sent a right fist straight into Kelly’s face.

Tamra watched the blow coming, but Kelly just stood there waiting to take the hit. Just before she hit him, Tamra grabbed Kelly by the back of his collar, and

yanked him backward.

Barbra’s fist missed his face, forcing her body to spin all the way around. When she turn back at him, she screamed at the top of her lungs right in Kelly’s face. “Are You Out of Your Fucking Mind!”

She lowered her voice a tad, and added, “I work for the CIA. I’m one of their highest-ranking officers they have. I go after people like you, and fuck them up, and take away their little fucking toys. They sent me here because you have a file over two fucking feet thick all about you and your fantasy Island. I came here to check you out, asshole.”

She was about to continue with her rant, but something Kelly said stopped her dead in her tracks. Barbra froze in place as the shock of it hit her.

“Yes, Barbra. I know you did,” He quietly told her. “I expected it, and the reason I expected it. Is because I wrote those four reports word for word myself. Barbra, I’m really a very smart guy. I’m so smart, not even my family understands how intelligent I am. I have been here on my Fantasy Island for nine fucking years waiting for the damn CIA to get here. That’s how fucking smart I am.” With that, Kelly turned around. Not saying a word to anyone, he went upstairs.

Everybody in the cellar was stunned, and amazed, along with having their

mouth hanging wide open. To organize, and plan something of that magnitude was unbelievable to everyone. That is everyone but Tamra.

Tamra was ticked off at Barbra, and her outburst towards the man she loved. She was ready to let Barbra know it. Butterfly stepped up really close to Strider, and told her in a very low tone of voice. “Kelly doesn’t lie, Barbra. The man has never lied in his life. If he told you aliens were invading the earth, then you better damn well believe him. He’s a super genius that’s why he is so damn sure of himself. Barbra, you just offended the man that I love, who is also my husband.”

Then she raised her voice, and screamed in her face. “And you’re going to have to do something about that pretty fucking quick!”

Tamra let that sink in, then lowered her voice even more, and told her. “I think it’s time you go in our last room over there.” She pointed to the door across the room that Tamra told her about before. “It’s the only place in the world where I can find all the answers to my life. We are all hoping you can find what you need in there, and maybe, just maybe.”

She suddenly screamed in her face again. “You’ll stop thinking like everyone

else on this fucked up planet!

Tamra took her by the arm, and brought her over to the door. “All of us will be in the kitchen waiting for you. Take all the time you need,” she told her.

She made sure Barbra went into the room before they all went upstairs. Kelly was in the kitchen cooking two cheeseburgers when they all came in. Walking up to him, Tamra kissed him first, then everybody either hugged him or kissed him, showing him their support.

Tim kissed him, then he put his arm around his friend’s shoulders as Kelly told him in return. “The other cheeseburger is for you, buddy.”

Both men started laughing because they knew Tamra wouldn’t say anything about the burgers, and that’s just how Kelly lived his whole life. He used every situation to his advantage. Everyone was fixing something to eat for lunch when Barbra came in from downstairs. She had the stain of tears streaming from her eyes as she walked up to Kelly. Taking him in her arms, she held him close as she gave him a long open mouth kiss, using everything she had to deliver it. No one spoke as they all sat down to eat, and waited for her to join them. When Barbra sat down at the table, they all looked at her. She bowed her head, and they said a prayer of thanks.

After lunch, she was holding the ring, and necklace in her hands while everybody waited for her to say something. She pushed both items into the middle of the table and told them all. “Before anything else can happen today. I need a few things.”

Softly, Tamra asked her. “What do you need, Barbra?”

“First, I want every fucking stick of C4 removed from the ground out in the yard. I will not live with a frigging minefield in my front door yard, and one other thing. Kelly, that last item you showed me down there. Can you dismantle it?”

“Nope,” he told her. “Those cubes are made so they cannot be defused. The only thing we can do is blow it up but trust me. You do not want to do that anywhere on this planet.”

“What will saltwater do to it?” she asked. “Would the ocean set off the virus?”

“Oh, no. That cube may be powerful as hell, but it’s still very fragile. The ocean would kill it, and do so over a short period, too.”

“What about the virus inside of it?”

“The virus isn’t made until the cube blows up, so there’s no danger of contamination.”

“OK then,” she told him. “Tomorrow, I want you, and Janet to take it for a ride.”

“Janet, you don’t know the ocean like the rest of us here do. I want you to cover up, and remove any navigational equipment on the Freeloader. Then you, and Kelly take that thing,” she stressed. “And get rid of it. Put Kelly inside the cabin. Close the curtains, and put a blindfold on him so he can’t see the sun or anything. Then just drive off in different directions, and get yourself lost out there somewhere.

“Then,” she ordered her. “dump that damn thing over the side, and take off again, and get lost one last time. Once you’re done, you can let Kelly out, and he won’t know where its location is.”

“Is this going to work for you, Kelly?”

“Yes,” Kelly told her. “But it’s going to take a hell of a long time for me to remove all the C-4 by myself.”

“You won’t be doing it alone,” she told him. “it’s going to be an all-hands

effort. C4 is a safe item. Even shooting it with a bullet won’t set the shit off. You pull the detonator, and you’re done. Hell, I have burned the stuff out in the field to cook dinner with before. We’ll watch you defuse a few, and then we’ll all get involved.”

“Now, there is just one last thing.” Everybody looked at her as she added. “Is somebody going to propose to me so we can get married, or what?”

They all jumped up from their chairs at once, but Tamra beat everybody to her. Barbra was then married into the family, and as was the family’s custom. The wolves retired to their lair.

The next day, a boat left Heaven’s Gate Island, it steered a course to the southeast for a while, then to the northeast, then south again. It appeared to be if anyone was watching that the boat was lost. Suddenly, it stopped in the middle of nowhere. A woman started fishing off the stern while drinking from a glass that was sitting on top of a box under a tablecloth. Suddenly, the wind got caught in the overhead fold-out sun cover, and fell down, covering the whole back of the boat from view. After a while, the woman got it put away, and her table and fishing pole were gone. Then she just drove off.

It wasn’t until late in the afternoon that the Waldo County Sheriff’s Department called the Island looking for Sandra. Sandra wasn’t operating on all cylinders that morning. She said nothing to anyone when she found all of her things in the house. It was plain to her that something was about to happen. She was thankful for the distraction of the morning events with Barbra because it took everyone’s eyes off of her, at least for a little while. Then they all spent some time in the bedchamber together. By the time the afternoon came, Sandra was feeling much better, but she forgot there was still an issue on the table about her. Her entire world came crashing down on her with the call from the sheriff’s department.

The cop told her that her house had caught fire, and burned down to its foundation. Sandra started crying, and didn’t notice everyone appearing from all over the house except for Barbra, who would be sleeping for a few days. The officer told her it seemed like the fire started in the basement. Somehow the furnace caught fire, and then it took out the rest of the house.

“Ma’am, it happened in broad daylight, and your neighbors called the fire and rescue as soon as they saw the smoke, but they didn’t have any chance to stop it.” He apologized, and asked her to stop in as soon as she could to file a report.

When Sandra set the phone down, and turned around, every one of her wives,

and husbands was standing all together staring at her. She went white as her hands started trembling. Sandra knew where this was leading, and it was confirmed when Janet, and Tamra took her hands, and brought her into the front room. Everybody followed in behind them. When they sat her down in a chair facing Kelly, her worst fears rang true. She started weeping. One look at the far wall on the other side of the room confirmed they were going to kill her.

Kelly’s voice was low, and soft-spoken as he talked to her. He told her that her actions were upsetting the rest of the family, and that everyone has come to him at least once about this issue. His next words hit her so hard it snapped her head up like he hit her on the chin. He told her she had a choice to make. She could stay, and live on the Island, or she would need to leave and never come back.

Sandra understood right away what Kelly was talking about. If she left the Island, she knew she would never make it to the mainland alive. She understood this when she came here, and she had agreed to all of it. Her life when she got here was so wonderful. However, the things she knew could never get to the outside world, and with her doing the things Kelly was talking about placed every one of their secrets in jeopardy.

Over, and over, she cried, pleading with Kelly. Kelly let her go on, so she herself could hear how bad she sounded to everyone there. Tears were dripping down her face, and onto her shirt, getting it wet. As she ranted on, her body overheated, and her face turned beat red. Sandra was getting scared for her life.

Kelly looked over at Janet. She nodded her head at him.

Seeing Janet’s nod, Kelly gave Sandra a way out of the mess she was in. He told her there was a plan they all came up with that would satisfy their hunger for her blood, but she would have to stay on the Island for many months, and at least two of the girls would have to be with her if she went off Island at any time. Then, at the end of their plan, they would trust her again, and he would either give her another house or give her the value of her old one.

“Sandra don’t disappoint us. We all fully understand what’s going on with you. I shouldn’t have to add if you do get away from us; I have taken your scent, and tasted you many times. I can find you anywhere in the world,” he told her. “Do you want to beat this thing, or not? We all need your answer right now.”

Sandra said nothing as she launched herself at Kelly with such speed it surprised everyone in the room. Kelly saw it coming. Her impact on his body didn’t rock him back an inch. Crying all over him, he picked her up in his arms to let her

rest in the bedchamber with Barbra.

Sandra wasn’t out of the woods, for she would have a few dreadful weeks coming up in front of her. Everybody went off to finish the tasks they were doing as Tamra, and Kelly went upstairs to put Sandra to bed. The wall in the front room would be empty for a while, but maybe in a few months they could put back the liquor bottles back on its shelves.

Sandra did have a few bad weeks, but with everyone’s support, and love, she was finally coming back to them. By the end of two months, Janet had Kelly pull the watch off of her. The liquor bottles went back to where they belonged in the front room. Sandra had no notion of leaving the Island. She even turned down trips to Portland, and Boston. After a while she started looking prettier, and healthier than ever before, and she finally got serious with her training.

Then, one day, Kelly watched from his office as Sandra went down into the basement to go to their special room. He watched her as she was spending more, and more time there than ever before. Seeing her descending into the cellar, Kelly said to himself, “That’s right, sweety. Everything you’ll need will be in that room, and then tonight. Just you wait, and see what I am going to do to you. You won’t wake up for a week.”

The Alpha laughed out loud as the vault door shut by itself.

For weeks after Barbra was married into the family. She was still trying to find a way around the biggest problem she, and the family had. Her trouble was, what did she tell Director Mellon about the Island, and everything that was on it? She knew if word got out about the things in the cellar, all hell would break loose. Kelly was right. He indeed needed someone on the inside of the government to help him get through to them. Kelly admitted to her later that he didn’t know who from the CIA would come out to the Island. However, after meeting Tamra, and Janet, he felt pretty sure it would be Barbra who would make first contact with them.

Barbra grinned to herself every time she thought about Kelly. The guy was just so damn cocksure of himself. He was now on the phone hiring some people to come out to the Island to build a helicopter pad big enough for a Boeing Chinook Helicopter to land on the Island. He had already started staking out enough room for the twin blades of the helicopter before Barbra even got to the Island. Once built, the pad would be big enough for any aircraft in the United States Military to land on. Kelly even told her he was building small guest cottages so visitors could live in them while on the Island. He confessed to Barbra when the President of the United States stayed on the Island, the Secret Service could stay in the cabins. That got Barbra shaking her head again, and forced her to take a few extra laps around the Island.

Tess was always joining Barbra on her midday runs. Barbra could see the girl

was a natural born runner, and fast as hell. Even her long legs couldn’t keep up with Tess on Barbra’s best day. She had to admit, Tess did show signs she was a killer, and a blood thirsty one at that. The girl could shoot, and fight with the best of them and run like the wind. Barbra rounded a turn, during her run that Tess called cliff-side, because of the abrupt drop to the water below. Both she and Tess have been getting along really well lately, and last night, Tess nicely asked to snuggle, and sleep with her. It didn’t feel awkward at all anymore for Barbra to have the naked bodies of the rest of the family pressing on hers during the night. Ever since the bathroom incident with Tess, the little woman has behaved herself whenever she was around Barbra.

Every day on the Island, Barbra stood back, and watched as the entire island came alive with activity as they all came together living like a pack of civilized animals.

Kelly, and Tim, and Janet did another food run. Kelly for filled one of Janet’s biggest wishes on that resupply run. Tim called ahead, and told everyone to meet them on the front porch when they got back. As the three walked up to the house, Janet was carrying two excited English Springer Spinals puppies, while Kelly carried a third one. The girls went nuts over the puppies. Kelly could see the joy in their eyes as Janet told them their names.

“The tricolor one,” she told them, “is Timber, and the one with the liver spots behind his nose; that’s Willow, and this little guy,” she held up the last puppy, “Is Woody.” They all laughed when Janet picked up all three puppies in her arms at the same time with a smile that stretched across the universe.

Barbra knew she had been delaying the inevitable. The outcome of her report could get the family killed. However, she couldn’t keep hiding here on the Island, and she really did want to see Mike.

“Mike, I am telling you right now,” she told him over her cell phone as she walked alone on the beach. “You have to come out here. I’ll have a report made up for you to read before we go out to the Island.”

“Mike, even if I showed up at Langley, and gave you the report to you there. You still would be coming out here, anyway. Trust me, this is the best way. And you better give yourself a few days out here,” she told him. “You’ll be needing them.”

“Barbra, if this came from anyone else, I’d say you’re fucking nuts. Alright, you sold me. Give me some time to come up with a good excuse to tell Roger. I’ll clear my schedule, and get back to you as soon as I can.”

“Okay, I’ll be waiting. Bye.”

Barbra knew Mike was about the only one in the CIA who could call the Director by his first name. This also meant that Mike had a lot of clout with the second most powerful person in the United States Government. Barbra was counting on him to protect the family from the government, and to help Kelly get closer to the President of the United States.

Two weeks later. Mike showed up driving a rental car wearing his full-dress summer blue Marine uniform. The first thing he did was to check out the sail boats tied to the pier in the small harbor. Standing in the Freeloader’s stern, Barbra was still laughing at him as he walked up to her.

“Man, you will never change,” she told him. She directed him to get on board,

then brought him inside the cabin cruiser.

“Every man needs a hobby,” he told her as he sat down at the small table.

Mike kept looking up at Barbra as he read through her report. He finally said, “Barbra, there’s something different about you. I can see it, but I don’t know what it is just yet.” Once more he started to read the report, but he stopped, and told her. “Barbra, you’re in love. I have known you for years. I know you inside, and out, but I have never seen you so female before.”

He sat back in his chair. “It’s this family, isn’t it?”

“Just finish reading that report,” she told him. “Then we’ll talk about it, but what you said is about right. I do love them.”

Barbra let him read her narration of the events since she’s been on the Island. She knew the report would be hard enough for him to believe without any interruptions. When he was finished, Mike went back through some items, then looked at Barbra, where she waited, leaning back against the door frame to the cabin. She had on a pair of white shorts, and a red bathing suit top with sandals on her feet. Mike knew he should never have come out here. He had already admitted to himself years ago that he was in love with her. Barbra looked gorgeous, and he still remembered the way her body felt when he had his hands on her many years before. He’s never forgotten it in all of these years.

“Did you crack your head on the side of the pool again? You must think I’m fucking crazy. You want me to ask the frigging director of the CIA to bring in a millionaire, and his family into our mix so they can work for us? Have you gone

completely insane? Is this why you got me to come up here?”

Barbra gave a little laugh. “Well,... yes. That is what I am asking of you.”

“Mike. This is what I feel is best for the situation. You need to see these people yourself. If any of our own men went up against this family, I would put my money on the Winston’s every time. The reason is because I have seen them in action. Hell, Mike, I watched Tess, who’s only twenty-four years old, and less than five feet tall. She took a fucking McMillan, and hit a target just over a mile away when the target was floating on the damn ocean. Mike, how many people do you know who could have made a shot like that?”

“Then there’s Tamra, you know her. Well, she kicked my ass in hand to hand a few weeks ago. If I didn’t stop the match, she would have killed me. When was the last time that you know of when someone has taken me down on a mat? And Mike, she’s a hell of a lot better than her old man ever was.”

“Next, we have Janet. That girl is something beyond belief. There is something about her I am not even going to try to explain to you, because I can’t. You need to see her for yourself, and never lie to her, Mike, because she’ll know it right away. Then there’s Kelly Winston. I am not going to lie to you. The guy is full of mystery. He just—”

Lost for words, Barbra stopped talking, and then continued, “In any event, what this guy, and his family can do for us, you yourself already read in that report. Plus, what Kelly has on that Island you’d be stupid not to keep them close so we can watch all of them. Hell Mike, the man is a fucking patriot. His family line goes all the way back to colonial times. He ,and his family are direct descendants of John Quincy Adams. Kelly Winston pisses red, white, and blue all fucking day long. You yourself read how he met Tamra and Janet. The man has six confirmed kills when he met the girls, and the guy was not only naked at the time, but he was also unarmed.”

Mike didn’t respond, which forced Barbra to add, “Come on, Mike. What more do I have to say to get you to look at this family?”

Barbra knew she was getting to him because Barbra knew Mike. She also knew he wanted her. However, her one report would not be enough for him to make a decision. Mike was and has always been a military man. The CIA came first in all things in his life. Barbra knew he was just like she was a few weeks ago, a robot. When he stood up, she knew she had him because he tapped his leg with the report, as she has watched him do many times in the past.

When Barbra beamed a smile at him, she thought the guy would melt right

there in front of her. She turned her face away, and acted like she didn’t see his reaction. Going topside, she started the cabin cruiser while Mike took in the mooring lines. They left port.

Barbra was calling the Island on the radio when he joined her topside. “Heaven’s Gate, Freeloader.”

Kelley’s deep, baritone voice boomed out of the speaker. “Freeloader, Heaven’s Gate.”

Barbra told him. “ETA forty-five.”

Kelly confirmed. “Forty-five, aye.”

Mike turned to her as she set the Mic down. “You guys aren’t too talkative?”

She grinned at him as the wind whipped through his blond hair. “We all know what we are doing, Mike. We are so in-tuned that we don’t have to ask each other what’s going on, just like one of our black ops. Anyway, I want you to know that your visit here is one of the most important things in Kelly’s life right now. You are considered to be an ambassador, and a highly respected man on the Island. Mike, the guy spent thousands of dollars to get his house, and front yard fixed up for your visit.”

Mike tilted his head forward while squinting his eyes at her. “Thousands?”

“Ya, I’m not kidding. It took thirty-five people to do the work in two days, plus everyone on the Island helping. They also charged him a lot to get people out this far. It was a rush job,” she explained.

When they reached the inlet to the Island, Barbra was telling Mike about the customs the Winston family had. “Because of their customs, men do kiss men when greeting, or saying goodbye. However, they won’t do that with you. You’re not family. Within the group, they pick and choose whomever they decide to sleep with. To the family, love was love, and they express it openly. They also don’t use terms like, gay, or lesbian, those words are considered rude, and distasteful. On meeting them, the women are going to kiss you, and press themselves firmly against you. How long that kiss lasts will be up to them, and not you,”

Mike’s bewildered expression stared back at Barbra, forcing her to laugh at him.

“Don’t worry,” she told him, chuckling to herself. “If there is one thing they are not going to do, is piss you off. Oh ya, if you see some nudity, don’t freak out. These people don’t wear a whole hell of a lot of clothing, and before one of the women comes onto you, they will ask you first; that’s part of their customs. So, if something happens between you, and one of them, just keep cool.”

Looking off into the distance, Mike told her, “Sounds like we are entering a foreign country,”

Barbra nodded her head in the direction of the shoreline where the family stood waiting for them. “Trust me, Mike. You are going into a foreign country, and those six people standing on the beach are the sole owners of this country.”

“Are you beginning to understand what I have been telling you?”

“Yes, I’m thinking you were right.” Entering the inlet, Mike eyeballed the sailboat tied to the pier. “I think I needed to come out here,” he told her.

There were four boats tied to the pier: a sailboat with the name “Strider” on the stern, a speed boat named “Catherine,” and a lobster boat, and a skiff with an outboard motor. There was also an old lobster boat sitting up on block and tackle on the shore with the name “Tessa” written on the stern.

Reaching the pier, Tim rushed over, and hooked up the mooring lines as Barbra, and Mike stepped onto the dock, and walked to the shore. Everyone was waiting in line for him. Tim came around them, and took his place at the end of the line. Kelly was the first one to approach him as Barbra gave the introductions.

“Kelly. This is Mike Cunningham, Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. Mike, this is Mr. Winston.”

Kelly held out his hand. Mike took it, and Kelly pulled him in for a quick embrace, he quickly let go of him.

“Please call me Kelly, Mike. We do have our customs, but we like to keep things on a first-name basis.”

Kelly stepped to the side as a beautiful strawberry blond, taller than him, approached him. She wrapped her arms around him. and kissed him good. and long on the lips, then she stood back while holding onto both of his hands.

“Hello and welcome Mike, I’m Tamra Casey Winston. It’s wonderful to finally meet you. I have heard a lot about you throughout the years from Barbra.”

Next, a redhead came up. and did the same thing as Tamra.

When a short woman stepped forward, Mike knew it had to be Tess. She walked up, and took a hold of him, pressing her lower body into his thigh, giving him a little grinding hip action as she stuck her tongue into his mouth. She didn’t do it forcefully, but she sure did let Mike know he could have her anytime he wanted her.

Mike heard Tamra clearing her throat behind the young girl. Tess immediately, let go of him then stood back. After Tessa’s welcome, Mike was almost speechless.

Once introductions were finished. Tamra took Mike’s arm as Kelly walked on the other side of him. They all strolled up the path to the house. Kelly told him they would show him around the Island tomorrow, and that they would tour the house as soon as they got there.

Mike looked behind him.

Tim, and Sandra had his luggage while Janet, and Tess were holding hands as

they followed the group. Mike told them he loved the house as soon as he stepped into the home. On the first floor, they walked around and showed him different rooms, but as they passed by the vault door. Mike didn’t even react seeing it. They brought him up to the second floor, and stopped by a door at the top of the stairs.

Tamra told him, “Mike, you are an honored guest in our home, and being one, we are going to show you something only family normally sees. Now, I can’t let you go in and see everything, but you’ll be able to look into the family’s lair.”

With that, she opened the door.

Mike stepped up to the door’s frame, but didn’t go past the threshold. “Wow, Tamra. That is one heck of an enormous bedroom,” he told her. “It’s huge, and look at all of them comfortable beds. They do say the bedroom is the most important room in any home.”

“Does everybody sleep in here every night?”

“Yes, for the most part, but we also sleep in one of the other bedrooms from time to time. It’s nice to get away, and be by yourself every once in a while,” Tamra told him. “This here is our lair, and we consider it, like you said. It’s the most important room in the house.”

After touring the dwelling, they all went into the living room for drinks, and conversation. Kelly got Mike talking by asking if he sailed.

Mike glanced over at Barbra but addressed Kelly. “Looks like you already know the answer to that, Kelly. Yes, I love sailing,” he told him. “And if I can ever get away from government service, I hope to build sailboats just for the sake of building them. My father built them when I was growing up, and I learned just about everything I know from him. I’ve had the passion for them ever since.”

Lying, Kelly told him. “I’ll look at the weather tomorrow,” He already knew the weather would be perfect for sailing. “And if the conditions are OK. I’ll let you, and Barbra take the Strider out for a ride. We just bought her for Barbra, but she’s going to need someone to show her how to operate a boat of that size. Tim, and I have taken her out, but only for a shake-down cruise to see how she handles.”

“Being brand new,” Tim threw in, “her ropes are tight. She’ll respond with the slightest touch. Have you handled a forty-footer, like the J-122?”

Mike assured Tim, he has indeed sailed much larger boats than the one they had tied to their pier. In fact, Mike knew the 122. It was one of the most commonly used sailboats to race with. It was also used for deep-water cruises to travel around the world. He has always wanted a craft like it for its high performance, low CG keel, and moderate seven-point two draft. The boat had a jib sail forward of the main mast, with very little deck space aft of the mainsail. The steering wheel for the boat was almost four feet across. It was so big its bottom end was submerged into a slot in the deck itself. Mike didn’t have to look twice at the Strider to know Kelly already had sonar, and radar installed in the little racer. Below the deck, there were two bedrooms. One of which was in the stern, and another was in the bow. In between the bedrooms was a kitchen, and two couches with a table between them.

“Kelly, you really couldn’t have picked a better boat to buy. Once Barbra gets use to that boat, she could take it anywhere in the world all by herself.”

Barbra could see Kelly’s offer perked up Mike’s attitude big time. Mike has always been a nut about sails, and the wind, and ocean. She already knew he would fit in here on the Island with no problems.

Kelly had already signaled to everyone they would go after Mike next, but they would first hook up Barbra with Mike, and that would take precedent before Tamra would take the lead, and bring him into the family, if she could. Barbra had already told them he wouldn’t be an easy catch because something from his past still had a hold on the man. Janet told them it was a woman’s love that was the key to Mike’s past, and she was sure of it.

Mike turned the after-dinner conversation around from sailing back to their family. There were pictures everywhere of them hanging on the walls in the hallways, and in the front room. The love and devotion these people expressed together in their framed pictures was short of amazing.

Turning to Janet, he asked, “Did you take all of these wonderful pictures I see in the house?”

“Almost everyone,” she told him. “Although Tess, Tamra, and Sandra have learned a lot of my own skills. They can handle a camera pretty good, almost as well as I can. I still prefer to take all the family photos. All of us have brought our own skills to the family table to share, and learn from. Tamra, and Sandra share their love of cooking, as you found out tonight, and even Tess has her own hobbies.”

Mike already knew about everyone in the room from Barbra’s report, and the skills they each had, but he wanted to know some personal things about them as well.

“Tess, what are your hobbies?” he asked the little woman.

Stone serious, she replied from where she sat on the couch, “Do you mean other than killing people?

Seeing the unapproving expressions from the other women, the small girl quickly added, “Tim has been teaching me poetry. We write it, and read it, and discuss it. I was a waitress for most of my life, and I hate cooking, but not because I can’t cook. Mostly, I love reading novels before I go to sleep.”

“You’re a girl after my own heart, Tess.”

They all could see Mike knew how to get on the good side of Tessa because he had her smile beaming right back at him.

“What kind of novels do you like to read? Fiction, or non-fiction, or maybe romance.”

Tess gave a little laugh. “Believe me, Mike, not romance. A girl gets more

romance around this house in a week than she needs in a lifetime. I like spy novels. My favorite author is Tom Clancy.” As Tess said it, her expression softened as sadness developed within her eyes. She dropped her gaze into her lap. “I love his work. He’s the best.”

Mike knew what he was about to say was wrong, even as the words left his mouth. Barbra quickly grabbed his hand, and everyone in the room either shook their heads at him, or were waving their hands behind Tessa’s back to shut him the hell up.

“Didn’t he...” He covered it up pretty good with, “...didn’t he write Rainbow Six, Tess.”

“Yes, he did,” she told him, still looking far off in her lap. “But I think his best work was some of his first novels he wrote about Ryan, Clark, and Ding. Like, the

Sum of All Fears.”

Barbra leaned over, and whispered in Mike’s ear, “Clancy’s death hit Tess really hard. It’s best if you change the subject,” she told him.

The rest of the night passed uneventfully until later at bedtime. Tamra and Janet stood outside of Mike’s bedroom waiting. Both women were wearing pretty much nothing but their necklaces. Tamra had on a deep green see-through nightie with heels, and Janet had on a black lace one to offset her fair skin and long red hair. They wore no perfume, but they were both decked out, and painted up with their natural scent hanging in the air all around them. Their plan was simple: get the man thinking about sex if they could do nothing more than that.

Barbra had already told them he would be a hard catch. “So don’t press him too much,” she warned the two women.

Kelly spoke to Janet, and Tamra from his study. “He took his nightshirt off, and only has his bottoms on. He’s reading that sailing book I gave him. His vitals say he is calm and relaxed. You’re a go, good luck,” he told the two.

“OK, we’re going in,.”

Tamra knocked on the door, and swiftly they both entered the room so fast Mike didn’t have time to get out of bed. Startled by their sudden presence in his room, Mike’s expression went scared as soon as he saw what the two women were wearing.

Seeing his reaction, Tamra quickly hopped into bed with him, and got really close to him, sliding her right hand under his pillow, folding her long legs underneath herself. As planned, Janet attacked his right side so he couldn’t escape. Sitting on the bed, she turned on her side, and leaned on his pillows while tucking her legs under her. Now they had the man trapped.

Tamra broke the ice by placing her hand on his chest. “Mike, you’re frightened. Your heart is beating so fast. You’re not going to have a heart attack, are you?” She rewarded him with a star-burst smile while Janet flashed him a wide leprechaun’s grin.

“Why are you two in here? Barbra said I wouldn’t be disturbed,” he told them.

“Mike, we came to say goodnight to you,” Janet told him. “But if you’re thinking we came in here to seduce you, Tamra and I can deliver that for you, no problem.”

“No,” he quickly told her, shaking his head. “Ladies, you have me at a disadvantage. What about your customs?”

“These are our customs, Mike. We’re making sure you have everything you need, and also to say goodnight to you. Settle down honey, we’re not going to jump you,” Tamra informed him.

Mike tried to relax as much as he could with two of the finest women in the country halfway naked, and in bed with him.

Flat-out, he told them, “I can’t believe you two just jumped in bed with me like

this. You may be saying goodnight, but you have other motives, that’s for damn sure.”

As Tamra talked to him, she ran her fingers along the side of his chest, curling one of her fingers around some of his chest hair. “Mike, we wouldn’t embarrass you. So, take it easy,” she reassured him. “Now tell me, what do you think about Barbra? All of us have been watching you two stare at each other ever since you got here. We think there might be something there between the two of you.”

Shaking his head again, he told both of them. “Barbra and I are co-workers, and nothing more. I am her superior, and that kind of thing might go somewhere else, but not at Langley.”

He quickly added, “Did she say something about me?” He wanted to know. Mike first looked to Tamra, and then to Janet for an answer.

“Mike, I have this thing about me,” Janet told him, brushing her fingers through his hair. “I know what people are feeling, and I can spot a lie at a thousand yards. So, what I am telling you is Barbra is hot after you as you are to her.”

He tried to say something, but she put two fingers up to his lips. By the way, his eyes lit up; they knew he could smell her scent she had placed on her fingers.

“Furthermore,” Janet continued, “whether you want to admit it or not. There is something there between the two of you, and it’s not going , by itself. Mike, I am an alpha, and I know you, and Barbra want each other so bad that it’s killing you both to even be in the same room together. It’s written all over you for anyone to see. You two need to take care of this, or the both of you will regret it for the rest of your lives.”

Tamra took hold of his chin, and turned his face towards her. She knew the man didn’t have any self-control over the situation he was stuck in.

“She’s right, Mike. Even if nothing comes from it at least you, and her can get this desire out of you. It’s not good to stuff your feelings like this, and it’s going to help both Barbra and you. I know for a fact she wants you and she hasn’t wanted any other...” (It was only a little white lie, Tamra thought.) “...man since my father, and you know how long that’s been.”

Mike was speechless when Janet took his face and turned it to her. With her hands on both sides of his face, she lovingly kissed him as she stared back at him with her evergreen eyes. When she was done, she pointed over at Tamra.

Slowly, as he turned his head to her, Tamra leaned over him, pressing her breasts against his bare chest, giving him a kiss. Both women then told him, “Good Night.” Then, they left as swiftly as they arrived.

Mike looked down at his hands. He was still holding the book he was reading before the girls barged into his room. Setting the novel face down on the bed to save his place, he started talking to himself as he first went to the door to the hallway, and locked it. Then he walked into the bathroom.

“That water better be damn cold,” he said, slamming the bathroom door shut, and locking it as well.

The next day, Mike was back to his normal military self. Kelly took him, and Barbra out to the sailboat that was delivered a few days before. After a little instruction, he watched Mike, and Barbra motor out of the inlet. Going back to his study, Kelly watched them by radar, and sometimes from the camera mounted on top of the crow’s nest.

When they came back later that afternoon, Tamra saw how one brief boat ride with Barbra could take the military right out of that man faster than anyone on the Island could ever do. She had nervously hung around the house all day like a mother hen waiting for them to get back. When Kelly told her they were coming up the path from the pier. She, and Tess watched for them from a bedroom window. A minute later, Mike, and Barbra appeared holding hands as they slowly came up the path. Tamra was so happy for Barbra she let loose a few tears. Tess held on to her lover as they both watched Mike kiss Barbra.

Later that afternoon, out of the blue. Mike told everybody he wanted to stay on the Island a few extra days. He said he desired to spend a week with them, as he personally wanted to evaluate their skills himself. The very next day, Mike took the Strider out during high choppy seas with strong winds, and heavy rain.

Worried, Tamra asked Kelly as she watched the boat head out for deeper water on the radar screen in Kelly’s study.

“Isn’t it a bit dangerous for him to go sailing by himself?” she asked him.

“Yes, it is, and that’s why he’s going,” he told her.

Kelly wasn’t concerned. He knew Mike could handle the big boat just fine by himself. Kelly understood what Mike wanted, and it was the same thing Tim and he felt from time to time themselves. To be alone with the wind, and the sea. The added danger of the weather would also heighten Mike’s experience with the boat. Mankind could never harness nature, but that hasn’t stopped man from enjoying the harshest storms out in the open waters of the ocean.

Days later, they were having an afternoon BBQ by the pool. All the girls were wearing only the bottoms of their two-piece suits. Tamra watched Mike as he laid relaxing on one of the chairs by the pool. The man couldn’t keep his eyes off Barbra’s halfway-naked body. Since getting to the Island, Mike hasn’t acted anything like he did when he first showed up on the Island. He stopped wearing his uniform, and wore shorts, and a T-shirt during the day. He was beginning to fit in with the rest of the family. Tamra made her move when Barbra went inside to get more iced tea for everyone.

As Barbra disappeared inside for the drinks, Janet could feel Tamra’s intentions. Walking with her over to where Mike was lying in a chair. They both laid down on either side of him, and pressed their bodies against his.

When Barbra came back outside and saw the three of them together, she laughed. Mike wasn’t protesting their affection at all. Showing him her approval. She went to him, and openly kissed him for the first time while he had both of his arms around the two women.

Later that night, after dinner, drinks were served in the front room. Silently,

one by one, they all left the room until Kelly, and Tamra were the only ones left with Barbra, and Mike.

As soon as they said goodnight to the two uncommitted lovers, Barbra told Mike. “Come with me. I want to show you something you haven’t seen about the house.”

She took him upstairs to the crow’s nest. Inside the nest, Mike saw an enormous bed in the middle of the glass room. The walls and roof of the nest were made of glass, except for a four-foot section that went all around the entire room. Barbra pushed a few buttons on a control panel by the bed. The roof lifted on one of its sides, and tilted vertically, then slid down the outside of the wall to rest below them. Pushing more buttons, the glass walls in four-by-eight sections tilted out from the top of the nest to rest below their feet on the outside of the room like a daisy.

Except for the ever-watchful moon, and the stars made for lovers, they were alone. What happened in a Seattle hotel room years before, the two relived all over again in a flash of rapture that took hold of their hearts, and demanded they respond to their needs. Thousands of stars were shining their love down on them, clothing them in a blanket of light. Barbra was beaming as much as the moon.

She felt his hand touch her shoulder. Turning to him, Mike came into her arms, kissing her till the last star beam fell from the sky. When he let her go, Barbra was so enthralled by the kiss she didn’t know he had been unbuttoning her blouse as he gave her his love. When her pants slipped to the floor, the stars sang to them a song of a lover’s desire. After helping Mike out of his clothes, their two bodies pressed together for a deep, naked kiss under the twinkling sky.

Laying his lover down, she opened for him. They made love from a desire that started many years before. The last thing Barbra remembered was looking up at the moon as Mike made his way inside of her. As her emotions overtook her, she could have sworn the moon was smiling down at them.

A few days later, Mike, and Barbra told the family they both needed to get back to Langley. Barbra said she would be in touch as soon as she could but said she may be out of contact for some time. Everybody spent what time they had left together. Tamra even stopped Tess from running off to the rifle range, and made her entertain, and act like a young lady.

Tess has watched Mike closely since he got on the Island, but she knew he was off-limits to her. It was Tamra, Janet, and Barbra’s job to bring Mike into the family. However, the day before Barbra, and Mike left. Tess watched from a crack in his bedroom door as Tamra tried to seduce him. Tess could see he wanted her, but something was still holding the man back. Tamra had her robe fully open, exposing her body to him as Mike’s hands roamed around her innermost places as they laid on his bed. Tess never found out if he gave in to Tamra or not. Janet came up from behind her without warning. Grabbing her by the back of her hair, she yanked her away from the door.

They rode back in Mike’s car from Ronald Reagan Airport. Before they got to the main gate to Langley, Mike pulled off the highway, and they parked for a few minutes. When they finally reached the base, they both snapped back into their military personalities as if they never left them. Once getting checked into the main complex, they went their separate ways with just a nod of their heads. By spending so much time on the Island, they would be swamped with work.

Barbra’s troubles were double fold. Not only was she dealing with her report to the Director about her findings with Kelly, and Heaven’s Gate Island. She also needed a plan on what to do with them, and then get the Director to agree with her. Her first report, much like the one she gave Mike, there wasn’t anything more she could do but lie about what she found on the Island. There was no way she could put into the report everything she knew about the Island or the Winstons. The federal boys would storm the place and raid it. Barbra knew Kelly would make sure there was nothing left on the Island when they came for them, and more than likely, no one on the Island would survive. For the first time in her career, Barbra drafted a false report for the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. There wasn’t anything she wouldn’t do to protect these people who have become her family. She loved every one of them, and she would be damned if she would let the federal government harm them in any way. The family had nothing but good intentions for themselves, their country, and the rest of the world.

Her second report wasn’t as hard for her to write because she already knew what she wanted to do with everybody in the family. Tess needed a big-time attitude adjustment that she would only find at boot camp. She was very good with her skills, but she was a danger to herself, and the rest of the group with her wild behavior. However, Barbra also wanted to know just how good Tess really was, and there was only one way to find that out. But first, the girl needed to grow up. Barbra knew Tess would never be able to do that on Fantasy Island.

The best place for her, after basic training, would be with the rest of the CIA wannabes at Langley. From Langley, she would be shipped out with the rest of her group to the surrounding military bases for training in Virginia and Maryland.

While Tess was in basic training, and then later on with the CIA wannabes. The rest of the family would be called down for their own indoctrination into the CIA. By the time Barbra’s little family came home, they would be more than a match for anyone. Barbra put both reports together, and sent them up to Mike. He would, in return, give them to Director Mellon. She wanted to bring them up to Mike herself, but she had to act normal.

“Whatever normal was,” Barbra thought to herself, sitting in her office. Since

she has been out to the island, normality didn’t exist anymore; somebody threw it away!

While she waited for word from Mike, there were items needing her attention. One training program she started had e-mailed her. After a few phone calls, she found she was needed on site for a few days. It wasn’t until the following week she received a call from Mike, telling her to report to his office. When Barbra got there, she was made to wait in the outer office before she was told she could see him.

Twenty minutes later, Mike, and her walked into the Director’s office, where Roger was waiting for them. He was in his regular pose, standing behind his desk.

He waved both of their reports at them as they came into the room, and started the meeting with, “Are you two kidding me? Both of you are putting your weight behind this?”

Mike took it from there. “Sir, under the situation, I would rather have these people on our side than off somewhere doing God knows what. There wasn’t anything in Mr. Winston’s file to pin him down on any real charges. As we said before, there was a lot of speculation, and even the report of the Chinese being off the coast of Maine couldn’t be validated.”

“The man’s Island, as I and Officer Stone have said, is a place of peace, and wealth. Mr. Winston has a home worth several million dollars sitting out there, and yes, he has some illegal weapons. I saw them for myself, but he doesn’t have them stocked piled. He only has maybe two, if not just one type of any given weapon. He’s been using them to train with his family, and he’s been doing this since he was a very young child.”

“Roger, the man, and his entire family line are patriots. We have tracked Mr. Winston’s family heritage all the way back to John Quincy Adams himself, and I’m telling you right now, Roger. After meeting this man, if another country were to hurt the United States. I’m confident Mr. Winston would use all of his influence, and wealth on our behalf. I am not joking, sir. I met the man Roger, he is the biggest son of a bitch I have ever saw.”

That was Barbra’s clue to get in there with Mike. She broke into the conversation. “Sir, the Winston family has been training for a long time. I went through, and checked out what they know. Sir, I love my job, and I know we have the best of the best working for us, but with a little of the right training, this family would kick the hell out of our best. I have known Tamra for many years, just the other week, she kicked my ass in hand to hand, which is something very few people have ever been able to do.”

“Then there’s Tess. Sir, I have never seen anyone like her before in my life. She’s four-foot eight, and twenty-four years old. I watched this girl hit a target dead center, when the target was floating on the ocean, over a mile away. Sir, you know how long it takes for us to train someone who can make a shot like that.”

“They all need some brush-up work, and they need to be around the military, and get that under their skin, plus some classroom time, but in the end, sir. In just a few short months, you will have five of your finest operators who have skills none of our own people have. We would be stupid not to use them.”

“Yes, they are a bit different, and sometimes down, and right-out weird,” she told her superior. “But they are not out there trying to hurt the United States. I pity the son of a bitch who tries because this family will stop at nothing if anyone hurts our government, or the people in this country.”

Barbra stopped there. Anyway, it was all in the report. But the Director had to make up his own mind; he would not do that because they were telling him.

Roger shook his head at her. “I agree with you on their skills, but this has never been done to my knowledge. Sure, we’ve had civilians, and other non-military personnel doing intelligence work for us before, but never do I recall them working directly with black operations. I’ll have to see what the regulations say about this. I’ll be in touch with both of you.”

Mike knew what was going to happen next, and he had already tried to talk Barbra out of it, but he knew her mind was made up.

Barbra got the Director’s attention. “Sir, there’s one last thing. This is not a threat, sir, but I do feel I need to inform you. If we do not take them into our fold, I

will be putting in my resignation.”

Shocked, Roger asked. “Barbra, you’re going to risk your whole fucking career over this?!”

“Yes, Sir, I am,” she told her superior. “I will risk a hell of a lot more than that. These people have become my family. Sir, do you know what that means for a person like me who had no genuine family of their own but only the military all these years? I’ll kill to protect them. Sir, no disrespect to you or the good old USA, but the military has been my job. I myself didn’t know the differences until they showed me.”

The director took a closer look into Barbra’s eyes, then softly told her, “That’s it. I saw it when you came in here, and now I recognize it for what it is. I see the love in your eyes, I know it all too well myself.”

“That’s wonderful, Barbra. I am happy to see you finally have a family of your own. You’ve been walking around here like a God damn robot ever since I got this job. I’ll let you both know as soon as I make my decision.”

A week went by, then three, and still there was no word from the Director. Friday afternoon came. Barbra called Mike, and told him she was going home for the weekend. It was funny, Barbra thought, how good it felt to say, “I’m going home for the weekend, and to have people who loved her, and were waiting for her to come home. It gave her such a wonderful feeling, she couldn’t wait to get back to the Islan, and see everyone.

Tim, God bless him. Picked her up in Portland with the Freeloader, and, of course, they spent a little time drifting in the sea of love before going to the island. She was trying to get him off the blanket that was laid out on the stern when her cell phone rang. Tim watched her face as she took the call. She only said a few words, then put the phone down, and told Tim to get them home. While she put away the things they had taken out for their little afternoon romance, she noticed Tim talking to someone through his necklace as he drove the boat. It really didn’t matter.

Soon everyone will know what that conversation was all about.

As they walked up to the house, Tamra and Kelly and the rest of the pack were waiting for them out on the front porch. When they reached the stairs, and neither of the two still didn’t say anything to the family.

Tamra finally cracked. “Damn it, Barbra,” she screamed at her. “Was that him, and what did he say?”

Barbra kept her face blank as she got the courage to tell them. All of their expressions on their face’s dropped when Barbra didn’t respond. Deadpan, she

finally told them, “The Director thought long and hard about it, and said, we’re

bringing you all in!”

The girls started howling, but Kelly yelled for quiet. He knew Barbra wasn’t finished with her little surprises just yet.

Grabbing Tess by both arms, Barbra told the small woman flat out, “Baby girl, it is time for you to grow up.”

Tess crunched up her face at her and said, “What do you mean by that?”

“What I mean is pack your bags because as of tomorrow, you’ll be in boot camp at Fort Bragg in North Carolina for the next twelve weeks.”

She explained her plan for the family. During, or after basic training, she didn’t want Tess training with the rest of the family. It was time Tessa went out on her own. Barbra would be the one who would set up Tessa’s programs, and keep tabs on her. Barbra also didn’t want Tess to have any visits with anyone on the weekends, nor would she be allowed to come home until her training was finished. She told them Tess needed this time to herself. To sink, or swim, as she pointed out.

When Barbra told Tessa that, the young girl immediately started crying. Tamra

went to hold her, but Barbra jumped in between her and the younger woman. She told Tamra to leave the girl alone.

“Don’t you see?” she said. “It’s this very reason Tess is still like she is. Stop coddling her, and force her to grow up. If you don’t, it will probably get one, if not all of you killed someday.”

Tamra started to say something when Kelly settled the matter. “Tamra, she is right, and you know it. Leave her be. Tess, this night is for you. We’ll all spend our time with you only. You’re going to be gone for a while, so you better soak it up.”

When no one came to comfort her, Tessa’s tears dried up really quick, which made Barbra laugh even harder.

The very next morning, Tess was sent to basic training at Fort Bragg in North Carolina. Barbra called home a week after Tess left, and informed everyone to come down for their own indoctrination into the CIA. They were told they would keep up with their practice of running every day with time spent on the rifle range, and hand-to-hand exercises. Further training would be held at the surrounding bases around the Maryland and Virginia area.

“While attending classes at one of the Navy bases in Norfolk,” she told them. “You’ll be permitted a walk-through on a nuclear-powered sub to familiarize yourself with the sub, and understand its tactics, and capabilities. The same goes true for an aircraft carrier, and other naval ships. On one of the Air Force bases, you’ll learn how to parachute out of a plane, and learn how the Air Force fits into the military machine. I’ll have your programs all ready for you when you get down to Langley. I want you all to be there in two weeks.”

True to her word, two weeks later, they were only at Langley for a day when they flew out to Norfolk Naval Base to further their knowledge of the United States Navy. They spent a few weeks getting to know naval operations domestically and abroad. They learned where they operated, and specific details of different ships, and their maneuvers. Because subs and aircraft carriers worked directly with CIA black operations, they spent a lot of time on board these ships while they were in, and out of port. It was already understood that the team would keep themselves ready at home until they were called for by the Deputy Director or Barbra about an assignment. They would be held in reserve until otherwise needed. With their training completed, the crew flew back home to wait for Tessa’s arrival.

Tessa’s mom and dad picked her up from the airport, and let her off at the docks just as Tamra was hooking up the mooring lines from the Freeloader to the pier. When Tamra turned around and saw her younger wife, she put her fingers to her lips, and exclaimed, “Oh, my heavens. Tessa!”

The younger woman liked the surprise she gave Tamra. Laughing, Tess ran into her arms, after a brief look around them. They kissed as only two lovers can do after being apart for such a long time.

Breaking free, they looked into each other’s eye’s as Tamra put her hand alongside of Tessa’s face. “Tess, you look so different. Not in a bad way,” she told her. “You look beautiful.”

Tess watched the tears gathering in her wife’s eyes. She gave her another kiss for them alone.

She did feel different, and Tamra seen it as she ran towards her. Tessa was walking on the balls of her feet like a cat, but it was her movements of her body that knocked Tamra out. The girl was sure-footed and walked with the confidence of everything around her. She moved like a tiger. Tessa’s body was alive in the manner only people like Tamra, and Barbra, and Kelly would notice. Her body wasn’t only on fire, it was finely tuned, self-aware and deadly. Her training, and the exercise, and people she has been around also helped to mature her. Tamra didn’t think Tess could be any more beautiful in her life. She was standing taller, and wasn’t slouching, and being soft all over like a girl, because Tessa had finally indeed blossomed into a wonderful woman. She looked like she gained weight at first, but Tamra could see it sure wasn’t fat. Tess was all mussels. They were on her arms and legs, her whole body was tightly tuned like a well-oiled machine.

Tess held on to her wife as she wiped Tamra’s tears away with her fingertips. Tamra couldn’t help herself. It’s been months since she last saw her. As the two made ready for the Freeloader to leave port and go home. Tess told her about the training centers she went to, and about her experience while she was gone.

“Basic training was a joke,” she told Tamra. “I could have done it with my eyes closed. I spent most of my time in classes learning about the military, and running through their exercise courses. Once I left Fort Bragg, they flew me to Langley. I hardly ever saw Barbra while I was away, but knowing her, she was probably somewhere off in the background, so I wouldn’t know she was around. She wasn’t even in sight when I showed up at Langley, and reported to the main gate like they told me to. After a Marine checked my ID, a jeep took me to my barracks where I slept when I was there, which wasn’t a whole hell of a lot. All the women who were in my sleeping quarters heard I was coming in, they were all waiting for me as I walked into the barracks. They had me laughing so hard I had tears dripping down my face.”

“Why Tess? What were they doing?”

Tess told Tamra that everybody had been informed that a young woman who was experienced in weapons, and martial arts was coming in to further her training. They were told that she was raw, and for all of them to be careful about how they treated her. They were also informed she wasn’t true military personnel and didn’t have a military background. If there were any problems, they needed to contact Strider. Everyone at Langley knew who Strider was and in their way of thinking. If Strider was this young woman’s handler, then this new woman must be a female, “Rambo, and a walking death machine like Strider herself.

When Tess walked into the barracks, she had on flat, soft shoes, and a light blue summer dress that went down to her shins, and she was wearing her cross, and, of course, her hair was fluffy, and ran down onto her shoulders. As soon as the group of women in her barracks saw her, they all started talking all at once.

“Is this a fucking joke?” one woman said as another one went on, “They tell us they were sending us a war machine, and it’s a little girl in a fucking dress.”

That’s when Tess started laughing. These women were harden people, most of them have been in the military for a while, and have been living around people like Strider. They were tough, serious people, and they didn’t expect to see Goldilocks come through the front door, but even in their disbelief, they welcome the newbie to the barracks.

“So, did they treat you OK? I’ve been around the military,” Tamra told her. “They can be a little hard to put up with.”

“They weren’t mean to me, and they said, “Hi” when I walked by them. Everybody just kind of tolerated me. At first, it was really hard being away from home, I kind of stayed by myself a lot when I got down there.”

The introduction to her new life wasn’t easy for Tess. The women in her barracks had their little groups who they hung around with. Tess didn’t have anyone for herself. She wasn’t sleeping very well since she got there, then one night she couldn’t take it anymore. She started crying in her rack. One woman heard her sobbing, and came over to her, and rubbed her back till she fell asleep.

The woman’s name was Kim, and the two started up a friendship. They talked before bedtime and during the day. Kim was astonished when she learned Tess had three wives, and two husbands. A few of the other girls heard about it, and sat in with them, making up their own little chat group. None of her new friends judged her. Matter of fact, they wanted to hear as much as Tess was willing to tell them about her relationships with her spouses.

Word was getting around about Tess as she went to her classes, but no one disrespected her or caused her problems. In the barracks, the other women did have respect for her, but it wasn’t the same kind of respect that they showed towards other members in the barracks, or to the military personal on base.

After a few weeks, Tess did well in all of her classes. She was told she would be in hand-to-hand training the following morning.

The next day. The women in her barracks who were going to the training put on their sweats, and together they jogged over to where it was being held. Everyone on the Marine base jogged wherever they were going unless they had class. An instructor made everyone form a half circle around him as he worked with someone in Tessa’s group.

Tess watched everyone closely. She didn’t want to miss anything, and it helped her to understand where people were at in their training. Time was running out and she didn’t think they were going to call on her when suddenly, she heard her name being called. Standing, she faced the instructor.

The guy was taller than she was, and she knew he was strong from watching him, but Tess had also been watching how he moved his body. She had to admit his body movements were predictable.

The instructor had read the report about Tess, but the guy couldn’t believe what he read. The little girl standing in front of him should have been getting her hair , or her nails painted, and she shouldn’t have been here waiting for him to kick her ass. Her file said to press her, and press her hard to see how she handles herself. So that’s what the guy did.

“I want you to come at me with everything you have and don’t hold back. We need to understand how you move,” he told her.

Tess waved her little finger across the mat at him. “I really don’t think you want me to do that,” she warned the guy.

The guy persisted, and kept trying to get her to advance on him. Tess still didn’t move. The instructor went to trick number two. He started taunting her, and then, finally, he insulted her. The guy was safe to that point until he screwed up, and used the “C” word.

The match was over in about three, or four seconds. The word just left his mouth when Tess charged at him in full hyper mode. She already knew what he was going to do when she leaped up at his face, and he did just as she expected. He brought one of his arms up to protect his face. Tess grabbed his raised forearm, using her left knee along with the power of her forward momentum. She busted three of his ribs with her knee. As the guy was lowering his arm, she fell off to the guy’s left side. Grabbing his wrist, before his arm straightened out, Tess twisted her little body in midair, and yanked on his wrist, popping his shoulder out of joint. The guy was holding his ribs in pain as Tess hit the floor, kicking out at his left knee. She broke it like a wishbone.

The guy collapsed on the mat. He was on the floor crying out in pain, while everybody in the class jumped to their feet. Other instructors nearby came running over to them. One instructor yelled over and over the magic word, “Stop! Stop!”

Which ended the match, and stopped Tess from killing the guy. While the medics were on the way, an instructor told everyone to go back to their barracks. By the time Tess got back to her barracks, word was already spreading about what she had just did.

A few of the women in her barracks told her, “Damn girl, where the fuck did that come from, and “Jesus, Wildcat that son of a bitch will not forget you baby.”

Walking up to her later that night, Kim told her. “Why am I not surprised?”

No one sent word to Strider as to what had happened, but the incident was

reported to the CO of the base. When the commander’s yeomen told him of the situation, the guy himself couldn’t believe it. He knew of the woman, and Strider was the one who explained her being here, but he still didn’t believe what happened himself.

He told his yeoman to send “Wildcat” back tomorrow and see how she fares.

“It had to be just an accident,” the Commander explained. “Sounds like she ran into him, and grabbed his hand in her fall. Send her back in tomorrow,” he told his company clerk.

The next afternoon, the same yeoman was back, standing in front of his commanding officer, holding Tessa’s progress report.

The yeoman told his commander, “Wildcat has no injuries. However, the instructor has a broken nose, three busted fingers, and a dislocated shoulder, sir.”

The Commander sat up straight in his chair and thought for a minute. “Get a hold of Strider right now. I want to speak to her. Then tomorrow put Wildcat back in, but this time...”

The Commander had the yeoman write out a clear set of instructions for how to handle the little Wildcat, with orders they were to be carried out to the letter. The very next day, Tess was standing back in front of another instructor, but this time, the instructor had body armor on.

Tess could see this guy wasn’t making any rash moves this time. He was talking really sweet to her.

“OK, I just want you to come at me but move slow,” He repeated. “We’ll go one blow at a time so I can see what you are doing, and how you are about to strike. Then I’ll show you what I would do.”

“OK, let’s try this,” he told her.

Wildcat’s reputation started to gather on other bases where she had her training. People got out of her way when she was walking down the hall, and she heard other people talking about her as she passed by them. She didn’t have to go to her hand-to-hand class as much but, when she did, only a few people were there to watch. Tess knew then that she was working with the best the base had to offer. To her, that was all the respect she wanted from these people. She knew how good she was. It was they who didn’t understand her.

On one of the Army bases, they sent her to the rifle range. When the instructor of the range heard she was coming. He called in their top shooter to work with her.

Peter told her. “Your probably pretty good with a handgun. What’s your personal weapon?”

With a bright smile, Tess proudly told him, “Forty-four auto mag.”

The guy had heard a lot about the woman, so he didn’t disbelief her. “I don’t think we have one of those on base, but I will check. I heard you can shoot a McMillan, we have one of those, but if you’ll humor me. We’ll start with a nine-millimeter, and work our way up. It will go fast because I already have a bunch of weapons set up so you can knock them off our to do list as fast as you want too.”

It was obvious that word was getting around with the instructors about her because they all were taking her very seriously. That first day at the rifle range, Tess shot all the hand weapons that her instructor had brought over from the armory. She aced them all. She found her instructor was no slouch with a weapon himself. He corrected her as she showed her knowledge, and skill at shooting, and dismantling the weapons.

After that first day at the range, Wildcat started gathering a small crowd whenever she was shooting. People hung around waiting to watch her shoot. After a warm-up with some rifles, her instructor brought out the six-foot-long, thirty-five-pound McMillan fifty caliber tactical rifle. He placed the heavy gun on the ground, and told Tess to get comfortable with the weapon, pointing down range at her first target a half of a mile away.

Once her trainer seen she was ready, he laid down on the ground beside her so he could relay wind speed, distance, and the land grade to her. A sniper could shoot by themselves, but on really long shots, it helped a lot to have a spotter.

Tess pulled back the bolt action on the rifle, letting it go she slid the six-inch shell into the chamber, then she began adjusting her sights at the first target. Finishing with that, she didn’t move her body as she stared down range at the target. She told Peter she was ready. The man was about to call out the information she would need when Tess pulled the trigger and the gun went off. When the weapon discharged, the guy jumped up on his knees, and brought up a pair of high-powered field glasses to his eyes.

“Well, I’ll be a son of a bitch,” he told her. “You nailed it all by yourself.”

Laying on the ground with the butt of the rifle against her shoulder, Tess turned

her right hand up and explained. “It’s a nice day, and it wasn’t that far away. Easy shot,” she told him.

She then unloaded the gun down range, and not one of her shots missed the target area.

Peter was totally impressed, and he told her so. He then directed her to her next target a mile and a quarter away. This time, he watched Tessa’s body more than anything else. He could almost see when she was ready to pull the trigger as her body slowed down as she relaxed into her shot.

Tess fired and got a direct hit. Her instructor told her to shoot at will. Tess fired off every round in the clip. Every shot was a direct hit on the target. Peter could see she was having trouble getting herself focused on her first shot, but once she found the center of the target. She would kill it with every shot after that. He had a feeling her next shot at almost two miles away was going to be a harder shot for her.

Tess took her time and settled into the moment. She then asked for the information, and adjusted her sights after she received each response from Peter.

Peter expected to watch Tess shoot soon after receiving the data, but something seemed to be bothering her. Repeatedly, she kept sniffing through her nose. He finally asked her what was wrong.

Tess slowly, and as carefully as she could set the butt of the McMillan on the ground so as not to disturb her shot too much.

Then she stood up, and answered him. “Yes, there is, but I’ll handle it,” she told him.

After telling someone to watch the rifle, Peter followed Tess over to a bunch of guys who were standing around watching the shooting. There weren’t too many places on base where people were free to smoke. The range was one of those places. A few guys in the group were smoking cigarettes as they watched Tessa shoot.

Tess approached them. She told the men that the smell of their cigarettes was screwing up her shot, and they either had a choice of putting them out, or she would shove them up their asses..

Peter had a concerning look on his face as they walked back to the McMillan. He told her she couldn’t let things like that disturbed her to the point of it screwing up her shot.

Tess confessed, “Oh, it wouldn’t have made me miss,” she assured him. “I just can’t stand the smell of them damn things. People are so afraid of dying, but they suck them things down like nothing. Smoking is killing people off one by one every year. You might as well put a damn gun to your head,” she told him.

Peter, being a non-smoker himself, started laughing. He was really starting to like the little Wildcat.

In the days to come, the range turned into a no smoking area by silent agreement when Tess was on the range. Tessa’s last target of the day convinced Peter that Wildcat could hit anything she could see. What assured him of this was when Tess emptied the McMillan at a target just over two miles away, hitting the target dead center with all five of her shots. Wildcat was considered an ace. Her reputation on all the bases she went to grew, and people made damn sure they didn’t set her off. For the first time in her life, Tess gained the respect of her peers.

As the months passed, she had two more courses to go through before she could go home. One program she needed to learn how to run through a mockup village while shooting bad guys while not hitting the civilians. They timed everyone, and her same weapons instructor told her if she would use a lighter weapon other than her forty-four auto-mag, she could decrease her time.

Tess told him she wouldn’t have anything to do with that. She didn’t care if she beat everyone’s time like all the other guys were trying to do. Her working with her own gun in her hand meant everything to her. A few weeks back after finding out the base didn’t have a forty-four auto-mag she could use. Barbra called home and had Sandra mail her gun to her. They made her keep it at the armory, but it gave Tess comfort knowing she at least had her baby close by.

Then one morning, she was told to report to building four one four for duty in her sweats. Tess already had an idea what was in four-one-four before she even got there. Training with eight others. They would breach into rooms, and houses to take out the bad guy before he gets you or kills the hostages. For the first few weeks, they learn what to do, and what not to do. Then they put everything they learn to use. The instructors knew Tess was about the fastest one in the group. She was also short, so they put her up front while the others followed on her ass as they entered a room or building.

Until the instructors could see they were under control, they just held out their

Finger, and said “Bang” when they shot someone. After the first week, they were given paint ball guns to run through each exercise. A week later, everyone used their personal weapons with live ammunition until the end of the class. They weren’t the pros who did this kind of work every day, but they were damn close by the time it came for Tessa to go home.

“So even though I didn’t see Barbra much, or any of you. I had a good time

down there, Barbra told me how proud she was of me before I came home. I guess I learned a lot, and I grew up some.”

Tamra knew Tess didn’t know it but Tess was never really alone while she was away. Barbra was watching her, and Kelly had every spy he could get, gathering information about her the whole time she was away. Everyone on the Island knew who Kim was, and how Tess, and she turned out to be great friends. Barbra, and Kelly both had a spy network of people watching her for them. Barbra would call home, and she and Kelly would share information. Kelly already started gathering training supplies in the areas where Tess passed a course, or class, but only marginally. He planned on helping her in these areas after she got back to the island, for he felt she could maximize her knowledge, and talents with a little more help.

They were halfway home when Tamra noticed Tess stopped talking. She sat in her chair across from her, lost in thought, staring out across the water.

Tamra slowed the boat down so they could talk without the wind in their faces. “Why are you so quiet all of a sudden?”

“Tamra, I know how I acted when I was last here, and I loved that part of my life. But when I left, I had a really hard time not being around all of you. At first it drove me crazy, but I got used to it and it didn’t bother me as much.”

Laughing, Tamra asked. “Getting a little horny this close to home baby,”

“Tamra, it’s worse than that,” she confessed to her lover. “Ever since I woke up this morning. I have taken three cold showers and played two different times, hoping to cool myself off, but nothing is working. Since I left the base, I have changed my panties three times. It’s starting all over again. I was fine while I was down there. Tamra, what’s wrong with me?”

Tamra let go of the steering wheel, and reached for her wife, bringing her into her embrace.

“Tess, there is nothing wrong with you, and you have blossomed into a wonderful woman. I could see it the second I saw you. Why do you think I was crying?”

“Just because your questioning what’s happening to you now shows you’ve changed. You are not acting like the small little girl Janet, and I first met. You have been away from us for a long time, your body wants to revert to how it acted before. Honey, you just need your husbands, and your wives. We have a long get together planned just for you as soon as we get home. I believe things are going to work out just fine for you. Wait and see, I know I’m right,” Tamra told her.

“Tamra, I can’t wait.”

Quickly discarding her clothes, she dropped them on the deck of the boat. Moving herself in front of Tamra, she placed her bottom against the boat’s console beside the steering wheel.

She began untying Tamra’s bathing suit top as Tamra told her. “OK, lover. But this will make us a little late getting home.”

Tamra took hold of her and found the girl was on fire. Tess buried her face into Tamra’s neck as the little woman searched for Tamra’s breast.

Letting go of the wheel briefly, Tamra picked up the radio’s handset. “Heaven’s Gate, Freeloader.”

A moment later, Kelly’s voice came out of the speaker as a shudder went through Tessa’s body for the third time since Tamra placed her hands on her.

“Freeloader, Heaven’s Gate, go ahead.”

“Heaven’s Gate, were going to be a little late because—”

Looking down at Tess. Her hands were really having a good time playing with her. As she watched, Tessa reached past her, searching for the boat’s throttle. As soon as she had it in her little hand, she dropped it all the way back, stopping the boat dead out in the middle of nowhere.

“…aww...Heaven’s Gate, we’re going to be late...ah.. I’ll be in touch as soon as I... Gate... I’ll...be back. Out.”

Kelly knew what was going on out there on the ocean currents. He immediately called everyone to the pier. All four of them jumped into the Catherine, and drove off. It wasn’t long before they saw the Freeloader floating in the distance. As Kelly, and Tim put the Freeloader’s bumpers between the two boats, Tess, and Tamra came out from inside of the cabin naked. They floated there for two hours, welcoming Tess back, even Kelly, and Tim had tears in their eyes. Then they took their lover home to continue partying for her return, and listen to her adventures. It wasn’t until the wee hours in the morning when Tess finally fell asleep, sandwiched between Kelly, and Tamra while Sandra, and Janet had Tim between them.

The entire crew was only home for a month when the first signs of the weather changing appeared on the Island. Snow still covered the land as the trees and shrubs began to bud, with the promise of warmer temperatures, spring just around the corner. Timber, Willow, and Woody came running through the kitchen as they chased each other out through the dog door. The three dogs grew fast over the past few months, they were big for their age, but they still acted like puppies.

Kelly was reaching for the hamburger to grill a cheeseburger while Tamra was taking a nap. Tess came into the kitchen and caught him in the act, scaring him. He relaxed, seeing it was only Tessa wearing her normal one-piece bathing suit while leaving her chest topless.

“If Tamra wakes up,” she said, balling him out. “And smells that your dead meat. She’s not going to believe I cooked it like last time.”

Kelly picked up his smaller wife, sitting her on the countertop, and began kissing her as he brought his hand between her legs.

“You just tell her Janet cooked it for the dogs, she won’t question her, or you about it.”

“Trying to smooth me over with sex will not help you, buddy. Anyway, Barbra is on the phone. That’s why I came looking for you.”

“Oh great, there goes the burger,” Kelly said, letting go of Tess then walked out of the kitchen.

Tess yelled at his back, “Hey, I didn’t say I wanted you to stop what you were doing, you know!”

As soon as Kelly started talking to Barbra, he knew something was up because she only said, “Hi.” Then she started talking about current events as if she were just touching base with him.

Then she told him, “I’m sure you’re dreading this summer because the grass will start growing, then you’ll have to cut it every week and remove the dandelions out of the yard.” She went on a little while longer before ending the call.

Kelly put the phone down, and told the house’s computer. “Full alarm, ten seconds.”

Tamra woke up with a start as the alarm blared across the Island and inside the house. Jumping up, she bolted for the door and ran for the stairs. Tess was just coming from the kitchen as the dogs scared by the alarm, ran back inside the house in a hurry. Tess was the first one to enter the front room as Tamra turned to follow her in. Janet arrived, and soon after, Tim, and then Sandra showed up. The alpha’s being too fast for the dogs were the last three to run into the living room with everyone else.

“Sandra. and Janet, you two hold down the fort,” Kelly told them.” Normal routine. Just keep checking. and watching everything. My study is open to both of you. Everybody else pack two day’s clothes. We leave immediately for Langley.”

Kelly could see the disappointment on Janet’s face. He pulled her close to him. “Sorry honey, Barbra said she only wanted the dandelions. Anyway, there probably won’t be any gun play or excitement. It sounds like a reconnaissance mission, boring stuff for you,” he told her.

Covering up her disappointment, Janet told him, “Well, somebody damn well better bring back gifts for Sandra. and me because this place could be cleaned out by the time you get back. That’s just food for thought,” she told him, stressing her point.

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Steve Spencer was a redneck, born and raised in Florida. Like a lot of Floridians, he had an attitude. Steve didn’t give a shit about anybody but himself, and what people could do for him, and more so with women. Steven wasn’t a dumb guy. He did well in school, after he left high school he took on meaningless jobs so he could continue living the same lifestyle he always had. Steve was the type of guy who while driving, would throw an empty beer bottle out of the window at a person backpacking down the side of the road. People just didn’t matter to him. He also liked his women helpless. Most of his dates were so drugged up when he took them home they couldn’t tell you what he looked like the next day. Steve would take a girl to her apartment, and would use her in any manner he wanted, and it didn’t matter if they were passed out or not. Steven was a manipulator, and a date rapist.

Why would the organization want someone like Steve in the first place isn’t what was amazing? Somehow, he fell through the cracks, he answered all the questions in the right manner, and all three of his interviews were late in the afternoon, so he never spent any quality time with each interviewer. However, it was Steven’s own paranoia which attributed to him having a clean criminal record. The only attribute about Steve that a place like the organization might want was that Steve really was a smart guy when he wanted to act like one. However, Steven was missing one cookie short of a dozen, and to give him more credit would overestimate the man’s abilities. The man was smart in some areas of life, and about the world, but Steven had one problem he would never be rid of. Steve was always looking out for himself first. He was a greedy man looking for a fast buck, and he dreamed of being rich. At twenty-nine years old, Steven got bored, and applied for a job in the organization just to see what would happen. He passed all the psychology tests and written exams. Steve was really good at covering his tracks. He had to be good, or someone would find out who he really was. Steve didn’t have a split personality, and he wasn’t bipolar. Steve was just Steve, and it would take the divine power of God himself to change his behavior, and thought patterns. Being who he was, Steve jumped around from different bars a lot because he found if he spent too much time in any one bar, he might run into a female who may remember some things he did to her. He left his job one afternoon, and was going to a place called “The Bar,” down on the waterfront in Washington, DC. The place was for real alcoholics, so he was sure to find a female tonight. Keven also told him he would meet him there.

Steven liked Keven, even if the guy was a foreigner. Keven really listened to him, and didn’t look across the bar as he talked to him. Steve thought he was building a wonderful friendship with the man. Keven, and he would sit in a bar and drink, and do the usual, and talk about Steve’s work while Steve hit on every woman in the place until he found a prospect for the night.

Driving into the parking lot, Steve looked over at the big white sign over the front door. Written in tall fat black letters, the sign read, “The Bar.”

Keven was found sitting inside, against the back wall, so he could watch people at the bar, and those coming in through the front door at the same time.

“There you are,” Keven said as he pushed a bottle of beer over to Steve as he sat down. “I knew you’d be on time. I got this one for you just a minute ago.”

As Steve sat down, Keven suddenly laughed at him. Steve just looked at him.

“Oh, come on. I saw you eyeballing that chick at the bar. Don’t worry about her,” he told him. “I’ve been feeding her drinks just for you. She isn’t ready yet; anyway, I have somebody watching her, so no one will screw with her. We still got some time to talk.”

Steve made sure no one in the bar heard him when he told Keven. “From what I heard; it’s going to happen sometime over the next few days. I’ll be putting everything together. I do all the grunt work for everybody down there, but I’ll have some time to myself. What do you want me to do?”

“Beside you,” Keven quietly told him. “Under my coat. Slip it in your pocket and do what it says. I’ll give you the rest when it’s confirmed.”

Steve did what he was told, then got up to go over to the bar, but stop, he asked Keven. “Dude, what’s her name?”

The foreigner started laughing at him again, “Dose it really fucking matter, Steve.”

# Chapter 5

# One left standing

The wind coming from the speeding boat as it hopped and skipped over the ocean waves, blew Tamra’s strawberry blond hair back as she glanced at everyone laying on the deck of the boat. Her boat had two twin Evinrude 300hp outboard engines. Tamra was pushing the little craft to its limit over the choppy waves. Even when it came flying out of the water, and then slammed back down again, she didn’t ease up on the throttle. She knew she wasn’t going to stay coherent much longer. She has been under a lot of stress with no sleep for days. She also had a bullet-wound in her side, she could feel the blood dripping down her right leg. Her crew, and her have been running for their lives ever since they got to South America. And right now, there were five boats trying to overtake them ever since they left the mouth of the Amazon River.

Tamra figured they had to be seventy miles off the coast by now. Reaching for the radio, she looked all around her. As far as she could see in front of her, and all around, was nothing but open ocean as the mainland had disappeared in the distance, far behind them. The five boats were getting closer to her every minute, and would have her in their gun sights really soon.

The screaming, whining pitch from the boat’s engines was making so much noise along with the wind hitting her in her face. Tamra screamed into the hand-held microphone as loud as she could.

“Rough Rider, Rough Rider. This is Kate Johnson,” she told them. “I am an American citizen. I have dead, and wounded on board. We need your help.”

Then she added, “Rough Rider, Rough Rider, where the fuck are you!? I need you now!”

Looking back at her family behind her. Kelly appeared dead with a chest wound, and another hole in the side of his upper body. Tim was doubled over with a gunshot wound in his belly. She was thankful he finally passed out because of blood loss. At least she didn’t have to hear him crying out in pain anymore. Tess was lying beside him, out for the count, due to a head wound. A bullet had grazed across the side of her head, and there were more holes in both of her legs. One bullet must have passed through both legs, as one of her legs was twisted around in a deformed manner. Her leg must have been shattered by the bullet as it smashed into her femur bone. With the rough ride from their boat, blood was all over the deck as it mixed with salt water that splashed inside. A small river of red sea water spilled out through the drainage holes built in the sides of the craft.

They were betrayed by the very people who sent them here, and Tamra wanted some payback. She didn’t give a shit who got in her way. People were going to die at Langley.

Their trip started out like a vacation, just as Barbra told them when they showed up for their first assignment at the Central Intelligence Agency in Langley, Virginia.

The IDs Barbra gave them got them through the main gate, but getting into the headquarters of the CIA itself proved to be a lot harder. Even after showing their IDs to the Marines inside, they still had to wait until Barbra came down to get them. Only then were they allowed to walk through the metal detectors, and receive their temporary passes. Tamra noticed the passes would only give them access to just a small area of the complex.

Tess wasn’t happy with the welcome they received, and made damn sure the Marines at the front door knew it until Tamra chilled her out with a few words. Tamra herself was used to dealing with these CIA types, and knew it was best to do as they were told.

Barbra took the four of them to the third floor and down a long hallway to a door that wasn’t marked. No one talked, or looked at them in the hallways. It was like they were trying to hide who they were from the Winstons. They didn’t even acknowledge them as they passed by them in the hallway.

Barbra placed her right thumb on a scanner by a door. The panel slid open.

When she got them into the room, Kelly asked her. “How in hell did you work around here for twenty years? I’d put a damn gun to their heads.”

“Listen guys, the first few weeks here always suck,” she explained. “No one knows who you are, and everyone is suspicious of you. As you have seen, there’s pretty much no conversation in the hallways. Deal with it. Once you get to be known here, everybody will be friendlier, and you’ll be able to walk around unleashed.”

She then waved her hand at the material in front of them. “As you can see by what’s on the table, is what you are here for, but we’ll leave everything alone until Mike gets here, and we’ll both brief you.”

Half an hour later, Mike walked into the room. He made sure the door was shut before he kissed Barbra and then said, “Hi” to Tim, Kelly, and the girls.

Tamra wasn’t happy by Mike’s hello. Going to him, she kissed him. After her kiss, Kelly could see the guy didn’t know what in hell to do. Mike just pushed on with the briefing.

“This is an easy first mission for all of you. All we want is intelligence on the

Dominguez’s drug operation they have up in the Mountains. Ortega Dominguez,” Barbra passed out photos, and other information sheets as he spoke. “is the guy who has built this cartel into a multi-million-dollar business. He’s a slick little shit, and he appeared to have downsize his business in Brazil in order for the United States, and the South American government would leave him alone. As it turns out, he has increased his business by setting up shops in other countries. That even means here in the States.”

“Kelly, we learned about these operations when you, and the girls got involved with these people up in Maine. Three of the men you killed up there have been setting up drug labs across the northern part of the country. We believe one of the men you killed assassinated, Senator Samuel Johnson’s from Connecticut a few years ago. We don’t have a clue how many labs they have or where they are within the United States. With the Intel, you guys get along with other surveillance we have on the cartel. We are planning at a later date to take these suckers off the map.”

“Are you giving us leeway to get a little more pay back?” Kelly asked, thinking of a dead woman killed on the Appalachian Trail, whom he still owed a debt to.

“No,” Mike told them all at once. “You four are to avoid all contact with this cartel. What happened with you, and the girls, for lack of a better word, was fate. The three Brazilians were up there opening another drug lab, they got careless, and so high on their own drugs they lost their minds. When they saw the girls in the lake, they acted like the true killers that they were.”

Mike look directly into Kelly’s eyes. “Kelly, I’ve gone over that report several times. What you did in Maine was impressive.”

Both Tamra and Tess, who was sitting on either side of Kelly, leaned over and kissed his cheeks.

“Because of your actions, and because of Tamra and Barbra, and what all of you are doing on your island played a big part in bringing you guys into our little family. But I am going to stress to you. You are to have no contact what-so-ever with this cartel or any other cartel while on this operation.” Stressing his point, he told them. “Am I making myself understood?”

They all agreed there would be no contact. When he got his order understood, Mike continued, “All we want you to do is go backpacking for a few weeks in the Amazon Mountains.” He added, “It should be rather enjoyable.”

Pointing down at a large-scale map on the table, he told them. “We need a count of their men, and whatever is at each of these sights. The Intel will tell us how well organized they are so we can add it to what we already know about them. Really,” he told them. “This trip is so easy. I could have hired a bunch of college kids, but it’s better to have people who know what they’re doing just in case the shit does hit the fan. And make sure you tell Janet I’m sorry, but all we needed was two couples for this trip.”

“People go up there a lot to go backpacking,” Barbra told them. “All you have to do is get near these places, then disappear for a day or two, and check them out. Once back on the main trail, continue on to , area. As long as you don’t let them see you by their encampments or on the trails to their sites, everything should be fine. But if something does happen, you will have a contact to help get you out of South America, and a safe house where you can hold up in if you need it.”

They flew the Winston’s to Manaus International Airport in the Amazon. After going through customs, they met up with their driver. He waited for them at the customs exit, holding a sign with their cover names written on it: “Johnson and Standish.”

He told them his name was Carlos, but they didn’t get much more information out of him other than that. The man’s attitude wasn’t friendly, and he said very little to them as he quickly showed them to their car.

Their plan was simple. Once they had the information they needed. They would leave the mountains and would stay one night in town, and meet up with their driver, and fly back out the next day. It was a simple plan, doing the same thing other backpackers were already doing.

Leaving the airport, their driver passed every car they came to as he raced up BR20 towards BR230. Speeding along in heavy traffic, Carlos would pull up dangerously close behind another car, suddenly passing the leading car. He was then forced to cut off the other driver to avoid the oncoming traffic.

In the back seat, Tamra turned to Kelly sitting beside her. Tess was looking

through the back window as the other driver in the other car gave them the bird, with

two fingers pointed in the air, and not one.

“I don’t like this son of a bitch,” Tamra said, indicating their driver. “He hasn’t bothered to speak with us since the airport, and if he doesn’t slow down. I’m going to knock him out.”

“Ya, this isn’t right,” Kelly agreed with her as he watched them pass another car. Reaching over the front seat, Kelly tapped the driver alongside of his head.

Startled by the jester. The man let the car drift into the oncoming lane. He jerked their car back into their lane, just missing a head on collision. The guy gave Kelly a dirty look in the rear-view mirror, but he didn’t dare say anything to him. There really wasn’t anything he could do to Kelly because he was such a big guy, anyway there were four of them.

Kelly told him in English. “Slow the hell down, or I’ll really give you a tap.”

The guy was a bit ticked off, but Kelly sure knocked his attitude out of him. It also told them their driver understood English better than he first let on. Kelly knew eighty-two-point two percent of the population in South America spoke English. Having the agency pick one driver who did not speak English would have been almost unheard of.

As their driver took them deeper, and deeper into the dense jungle, he opened up to them, and confessed today was his wife’s thirty-seventh birthday. Another driver didn’t show up for work so he was forced to drive for them himself, missing his wife’s party.

Driving slower, they made their way up to BR230, which ran north and south. Turning north at the junction, later that night they reached deep into the jungle at the end of the road in a small town called Labrea.

After dropping them off at a tiny run-down hotel, Tim asked Carlos about their gear.

“In the trunk,” he told him. Pointing down the street, Carlos said they could find boats to take them across the river. He also gave them his phone number so they could call when they wanted a ride back to the airport.

Inside the trunk of the car, Tim found large boxes which had been assembled back at Langley. An officer then took the boxes on a military flight to South America, he himself placed them into the trunk of the car just minutes before their driver picked them up. The people they were using had been used by the CIA in the past. They were considered trustworthy. They knew not to mess with anything that was in their care.

Anyway, the boxes were tamper proof. If anyone opened them, the team would know it. Taking them out of the trunk, Tim looked them over, and told Kelly they were still intact.

When they checked into the hotel, Kelly made plans with its owner to hold their luggage until they came back. He paid extra for the service, but expecting their bags to be here on their return was far-fetched.

They put all of the gear in Kelly’s and Tamra’s room, while Tim and Tess took the room next door to them. Everything they needed for the trip was in the boxes: backpacks, gear, food, clothes, and weapons.

Mike wanted to give them Beretta nine millimeters for the trip, but Kelly told him, if he wanted them to go, Mike would give them Colt forty-fives instead. Both men knew, over many years, that there had been a debate about which was the better handgun to use. The nine-millimeter, or the heavier forty-five caliber. They say you can shoot better with the lightweight round of the nine-millimeter because of the light recoil from the gun, but then you may have to shoot the guy a few times to take him down. The forty-five had a heavier round with a stronger recoil. It took an expert to fire it repeatedly, and hit all of your shots in your target area.

Kelly told Mike, “We are the experts. That’s why you called us here in the first place, so give us the forty-five’s.”

Reports about the two weapons showed that in a war and battle situations, the fighting men have always said the nine-millimeter was too lightweight round, and they wanted the heavier forty-five caliber. As far as Kelly was concerned, if you didn’t follow the advice of a war veteran. You were a dead man. Kelly realize the nine-millimeter had its purpose, but he felt it was made more for Police Officers. It also was an easier gun to conceal on your body. As city cops knew, city thugs loved the nine-millimeter.

When Tamra, and Tim got back from finding some food, that wouldn’t make them sick. They went over their plans for the next few days. While they were out getting dinner, Tamra told Kelly they also hired a boat that would take them across the river in the morning.

They were dropped off on the other side of the river at dawn. The four found a huge grassy field with an old dirt road running through the middle of it. From the pier, the road led off into the jungle and disappeared from sight. For hundreds of miles in front of them, there wasn’t a town, a gas station, or a residential home. From here on out, they were on their own.

Following the tote road all day, they moved as fast as they could. When it got dark, and because of the easy grade of the road, they kept hiking. By nine o’clock that night, they still haven’t seen anyone on the road. They made camp off to the side of the road and a little way into the jungle. They did well covering thirty-seven miles, but they still haven’t seen the mountains, and have yet to climb to the top of the ridge line.

The next afternoon, they found and followed a narrow trail going northeast, leading them deeper into the dense jungle. By mid-morning of the third day, they could see the mountains, and the 14,000 foot climb they would have to hike in order to get to the top. Late into the night on the fourth day they kept hiking. Using their headlamps, they reached the top of the ridge line, and made camp off trail again.

The following morning, Kelly and Tamra woke to sounds coming a little way from their campsite. They all had agreed to keep the weapons put away until a situation required for them to take them out. Empty-handed, he and Tamra went to find out about the disturbance. The closer they got to the source of the noise, they knew what they were going to find.

Entering a clearing, Tess and Tim laid on the ground, locked in the arms of passion in front of a beautiful panoramic view of the jungle spread out as far as the eye could see. The morning sun was just coming up off the horizon as they laid wrapped in each other’s arms on their sleeping pad. Laying on her back, Tim was on top of Tess. The two lovers stopped what they were doing as Kelly and Tamra approached them.

Tess tilted her head back, and saw the disapproval written on Tamra’s face.

“Hey, this is supposed to be a bloody vacation,” she told her wife. “Anyway, I think we earned this after doing a death march for damn near five and a half days to get here.”

Both Kelly, and Tamra looked at each other and laughed. Kelly told Tamra he would get their sleeping pad. Touching her arm before he left, he added. “Don’t start without me.”

Tamra knew Tess was right. They did hike hard to get here. But now that they were on the ridge, she planned on slowing down. The four laid out in the morning sun and made love. When the girls grabbed each other, the boys ran off to get breakfast. Now that they reached the mountains, they needed to act like backpackers, and do miles because there wasn’t much else to do but hike their milage.

Once their bodies were satisfied with each other, Tim boiled water, and they cleaned up, and broke camp.

Out in the jungle, water wasn’t to be trusted at all, especially for feminine cleaning. If you drank it, you would want to get your ass back to town within two, or three days, or you just might think about putting a gun to your head. Getting the shits from drinking contaminated water in the Amazon was the least of your worries. There were also many forms of parasites that would grow very large inside of you while they fed on your body for its nutrients. This was one reason Kelly wanted to bring the extra gear, even if it made their packs heavier.

Kelly himself was carrying seventy pounds of gear on his back, busting out the miles with his heavy frame. While Tim was right behind him carrying over fifty-five pounds. All four of them were carrying 240 pounds’ worth of gear that would keep them alive for about three weeks. Both men were carrying extra white gas for washing water alone. As any long-distance backpacker knows, if your lady friend doesn’t have a way to get clean, sex is pretty much out of the question in the outback.

For their drinking water, they used Polar-Pure, which contained iodine crystals in a small bottle. You put stream water in the bottle, then add the iodine water to a liter of contaminated water. Twenty minutes later, you have potable water. Tamra agreed with Kelly. Iodine tablets were lighter to carry. However, Polar-Pure tasted better than the tablets. It also didn’t leave iodine particles in your water jug. But try telling your female hiking buddy to use iodine water to clean with, and you’ll wish you had brought two tents with you, instead of one.

The day was uneventful, yet wonderfully beautiful, even with the hot temperatures, and high humidity. The trail they were on looked fairly used, but the hiking season wasn’t in full swing. They didn’t see any other hikers on the trails. By day’s end, they came to the first spot where they needed to use an obscure trail to find the first part of their objectives. By the next morning, they ditched their packs in the trees. Arming themselves, they took water, and finger foods with them, and left the trail. Working their way through the jungle, they made their way to the first site.

The encampment was in a little hollow down a hill they were coming over. Splitting up, Tamra went with Kelly, and Tim stayed with Tess as they each

searched for a different spot to perch from.

As Kelly, and Tamra got closer to the camp, they noticed the trees, and brush were cut back to about twenty-five yards around the encampment. Inside the camp, there were small and large canvas tents that could hold up to twenty people to sleep, or work in, along with two other small buildings. One building had a 12-foot antenna, and a satellite dish on top of it. There was one car and a four-wheel-drive pickup sitting by the front gate as four guards walked around the outside of the camp, watching over ten workers who were putting up the fence.

They were building a command post that was clear to Kelly. Once they were ready, they would cook, and bag their product inside the large tents. From their position, they could only get a partial view of the camp. Kelly was sure where Tim and Tess were, they would have a better advantage seeing the rest of the place.

The encampment looked fairly new to Kelly. It couldn’t have been only a month old, but whoever was building it was doing so in a half-hazard way. All the brush wasn’t cut back far enough, and the fence should have been the first thing that was put up. There was also only a token of men guarding the place. Whoever was building it didn’t feel security was very important, which proved what Barbra and Mike had said about the Cartel. They were so powerful they didn’t think they would be molested by anyone.

Tamra, and Kelly settled in for the long night. One of them would snooze while the other watched the site. Just as it was getting dark, a four-wheel-drive truck arrived. A young woman got out, and walked up to one man putting her arms around his neck. The driver of the truck turned the truck around and left.

“Everybody needs a little love,” Kelly whispered to Tamra, kissing the side of her neck. She pulled his hand from between her legs, and quietly told him to stop it.

At first light, a half-track showed up with seventeen men in the back. Rifles, and machine guns were taken out of one building, then passed over to the men in the truck, then the truck left.

Tess and Tim met back up with them later that morning. They moved away from the camp they compared what they saw. Both parties agreed. There were eight guys watching the place until the girl showed up. Tess thought they were going to mix their product in the tents.

“Until they finish putting up that fence, there wouldn’t be any product in the camp,” Tamra told them. “We also may be between growing seasons.”

“I’m sure they’re growing right now,” Tim told her. “The weather feels about right, but when are they going to harvest the crops? That we won’t know until we find one of their fields.”

Tim did get in close enough, using his field glasses to see a large stash of weapons in one building. He told them he saw a stockpile of weapons and other items, but he wasn’t sure what they all were. This site, they all agreed, was a command site, and not just one used to make their dope. Not being able to get more information. They made plans to come back before they left the mountains for another look.

Finding their stashed backpacks, they got back on the main trail, and continued on toward their next site.

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Days later, two men were crouched down on a hilltop as they watched four Americans hiking through a mountain pass. Antwan had sent men searching all over these mountains when they learned they were finally here. The cartel’s forces were being stretched to its limit, workers were now being used to help with the search. The small guy with Mauricio was called Alvaro. He was a picker, and not good for anything but carrying the pack as far as Mauricio was concerned.

Alvaro’s job was to take care of the equipment, and carry most of the gear on the four day turn around hike up the mountain, and then back down to base camp. The peasant’s working with the cartel’s forces was stressing everybody out, for the laborers knew nothing of the business end of their operation, and were constantly screwing things up.

As soon as the Americans were out of sight, Mauricio turned to the little guy beside him. “Yes, Alvaro. It’s them alright, get the radio,” he told him.

Their radios were only line-of-sight radios, but with any luck. Mauricio hoped to pick up one of the teams of men searching in the area, and inform them about the Americans. That’s if Alvaro could ever get him the damn radio. Getting impatient with the worker, he turned around looking for him.

Alvaro had dumped all the contents of the pack onto the ground, and was frantically searching through the pile of gear.

Mauricio screamed at him. “Where is the fucking radio?”

Alvaro knew he screwed up, and it was his fault. He knew what would happen

when the bigger man found out he forgot to bring the radio with them. The last pack Alvaro used; the straps cut into his shoulders. He dumped out the gear, and got another pack. In the process, someone must have taken their radio from the pile without him knowing about it.

Alvaro looked up at Mauricio standing over him. He could see it coming because the big man’s face was getting red, as his right hand clenched into a fist. Little Alvaro was a lot smaller guy than Mauricio. He knew he was a sitting duck, but if he ran. Mauricio would just shoot him in the back. Alvaro just stared up at Mauricio, and waited as the bigger man punched him in the face. Kneeling over Alvaro’s body, Mauricio delivered blow after blow into Alvaro’s face.

“You incompetent little son of a cockroach. You have one fucking job to do, and you can’t even do that right. Well, fuck you! Now, I’ll have to walk back twenty fucking miles because of you. Well, no more you son of a bitch, not again.”

Mauricio grabbed his lighter backpack, and swiftly began walking back by himself, the way they had come earlier that morning. Walking back alone. He left Alvaro’s beaten, bloody body twisted up on the ground, stashed in the bushes with his throat cut. He would just tell Antwan the little shit ran off, as they were known to do. Anyway, he knew Antwan didn’t give a shit about these people. All Antwan cared about was Antwan.

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Over the following week, the Winstons got a pretty clear picture of the Dominguez’s Mountain operation and coco leaf crop. However, it was the buildup of troops in ever-increasing numbers on the trails that told them the cartel was searching for someone. From a distance, they watched the cartel’s men walking on the same trails they were using. Twice that day, they had to bushwhack through the jungle in order to get away from the men.

At the last place they were at, Kelly and Tim stripped off their clothing, and got into the camp in the middle of the night. While there, they heard the men talking about a group of people the cartel was looking for. Kelly figured it had to be their party they were talking about. All four Winstons agreed to stay off the trails for a day, or two bypass the last three sites to wait and see what developed.

Later that night, they stealth-camped on top of a mountain peak so they could watch all around them, and work out their next move.

Tamra told the group, “Kelly, they’re herding us. I know it. I don’t think they know our exact location, but they sure seem to be narrowing it down pretty damn

fast”

Tim pointed out. “I think we need to get the hell out of here as fast as we can.” Tess agreed with Tim.

The decision was made. Tomorrow, they would leave the mountains as fast as they could. They also took out their weapons and strapped them on. They would sleep with them until they got back to town. However, the closest and only town they could go to was Labrea, where they started from, but that was over a week away at a fast-hiking pace by trails that the cartel’s was now using.

After a dinner comprising of macaroni and cheese with crackers, and a Snickers bar for dessert, Kelly told everyone he wanted to keep watch that night. He told them all to turn in early. Kelly knew the others would need a good night’s rest more than he would. He himself had a different way of sleeping than the rest of his family. Like a wolf, he could keep part of his conscious mind awake while his body could relax and get some rest. That night, he didn’t sleep in the tent with Tamra.

It wasn’t more than a few hours after he laid down when startled, Kelly’s body became wide awake. Jumping to his feet with his gun in hand. He ran through the trees, looking down the sides of the peak. They were strung out in a long line, slowly working their way up the jungle incline. Kelly had no problem seeing, and hearing them as fifteen men slowly made their way up the side of the peak they were camped on. They were really close to them, too close. If Kelly didn’t get back to the others, they would be caught in their tents.

Racing back to camp, and because it was quicker getting them out. Kelly ripped a hole in the door to Tim’s and Tessa’s tent. He then hauled them both out in one motion, still in their sleeping sacks. As they stood up, he told them to strip.

He just made it over to Tamra’s tent when she suddenly stepped out. Taking her shirt, and shorts in his powerful hands, he ripped them off her body.

Naked, both Tess and Tim ran over to the two as Kelly kneeled down and drew on the ground with his finger.

“We have zero time, fifteen men,” he pointed at the ground. “Starting here to here. Tess, you and Tim will take the back left side. Tamra and I will take the right. We’ll meet in the middle. Watch those stray rounds. Aim for center mass only.”

“Now, move it!” he told them.

Tamra, Tess and Tim realized Kelly wasn’t kidding. They all could now feel the men coming. They were dangerously too close to their camp by the time Kelly got the family going. As ordered, in pairs, they ran to the outside man in the line. Coming up at the men from behind... charging, they shot each guy as they ran down the line. It was over before it began. The men didn’t stand a snowball’s chance in hell against the four. The line of men thought they were going to surprise them, but a group of highly motivated people, faster and smarter than them, surprised them with an all-out charge. Out of the fifteen men, only two were able to discharge their rifles, but the shots went wild. No one in the family was hit.

As the last shot of a forty-five was ringing across the mountain tops. The two teams of men camping at the mountain’s base thought the four Americans were dead. They went back to sleep. They would hike up, and check out the bodies in the morning. In any event, they were watching both trails going to, and coming from the peak. Even if one, or two of them still lived, they were trapped.

Too hyped up to rest, Tamra walked back and forth across the camp. She stopped, took a drink from her water bottle, and then chewed on a power bar that she had retrieved from her pack. With food still in her mouth, she informed Kelly. “Those suckers are not even cartel forces. One look at the way they handled themselves, along with their weathered faces and hands, would tell you these guys are workers. I’ll bet they weren’t even trained.”

She stopped talking when Tess walked over to them, holding something in her

hands. “Tamra,... guys, you better look at this. I just found it on one of the guys we just nailed.”

Tess handed Kelly a little box with a small black rubber antenna sticking out of it. There were two gauges on its face, one for signal strength, the other for direction, and right now, the needle was pointing through Kelly. Everybody followed him as he turned around, and walked over towards their backpacks that were laying all together on the ground.

Tim followed and watched Kelly with fascination. When Kelly stopped in front of the backpacks, Tim tossed one pack off to the side. The second to the last pack he threw, the needle moved to follow where the pack landed. Quickly, Tim dumped out the continence of the pack, then moved away from the pile on the ground while still holding the empty pack. The needle followed Tim and the empty pack.

Not even bothering to use a flashlight, he searched inside the backpack. After

a minute, he pulled a small device from inside the pack. The needle on the box followed it wherever it went.

“What is it, Tim?” Tess asked.

“It’s a GPS logger. You can buy them anywhere on the Internet and follow the precise movement if you’re using a computer program like Google Earth. This one must have a range restriction to conserve battery power. They didn’t know when we would get here, but now that they know. They turned it on, and can now track us. This is why we kept running into them on the trails.”

Disbelieving it herself, Tamra pointed out. “Kelly, the only place the packs could have been messed with was after they were dropped off. There’s no way our driver, or anyone could have done that in that short time frame. You don’t suppose it happened at Langley, do you? It had too!”

“Tamra, I don’t know anything at the moment, and I am not going to judge

anyone at Langley just yet. Do you know the hell we would raise by pointing fingers at Langley? They would tear that fucking place apart, looking for anyone who may have had a hand in this. No, it doesn’t look good for us right now. I think we need to even up the playing field.”

Tamra glanced over at the pile of weapons they had gathered from the field workers. They were old with a lot of rust on them, pretty much they were crap. The cartel wasn’t about to waste their suitable weapons on the workers. Tamra knew they were going to need better weapons to get them out of here alive, there was only one place she knew of where they could get their hands on a few machine guns.

Kelly watched her eyes, knowing just what she was thinking.

“So, what’s our next move?” Tess wanted to know.

Placing his hands around her waist, giving her a quick kiss on her lips, Kelly told her. “We are going to do what the sailors did back in the early 1700s. They called it Running for Smoke-N-Oakum,” which means we are going to haul ass, and not stop until we get the hell out of here.”

Tamra told them about her plan of going back to the first site that had the stash of weapons. Neither of them knew how they were going to go about getting the gun’s once they got there, but they all knew this was the best possible plan they had. They were being targeted by the cartel. They had to have better weapons in order to survive.

Their situation was so dire, that Kelly told them it was time to break a few rules. Dumping all the gear out of Kelly’s pack, they stuffed as much food into it as they could. Also, in the pack, they placed four one-liter water bottles, and a cell phone that wouldn’t be of much use until they got out of the mountains. They were naked, with only their weapons strapped to them, as they got ready to leave. Like a wolf in the woods, the four were almost invisible when naked, but because of the weapons, they could be seen. However, that couldn’t be helped.

Tamra had no clue how Kelly was running while wearing the heavy pack. He had to be burning through his energy ten times faster than the rest of them. She was going to have to force extra food into him. She knew he would only try to give it to Tess, and herself.

Passing by a cliff, Tim tossed the tracker off the edge, hoping to buy them some more time. Coming off the mountain peak where they camped, they came upon a group of men in their tents with a few sleepy guards on duty. Quietly backtracking, they bushwhacked through the dense jungle, picking up even more speed as they went. Within two hours, they were eighteen miles away from the mountain peak, where they killed the fifteen workers. They still had another fifty to reach the weapons locker. If they keep the pace, and stop sparingly, Tamra believed they could be there by mid-morning.

They stayed running in the jungle, unless there was a trail that was going their way. When the sun rose, they were getting close to the main trail that had first brought them up into the mountains, and also the trail that lead to the first cartel encampment.

Stopping for a break, they consumed the last of their food. Tamra made damn sure Kelly ate everything she gave him. Overnight, the four consumed a week’s worth of food, yet their bodies were still screaming for more. As they laid down on a nest that Tim and Kelly made, they slept for three hours before continuing on.

By the early part of the afternoon, they were hiding in the trees in front of the first site they checked out. The workers had completed the fence around the camp, but there were the same number of men guarding the place. The workers were gone, as was the Toyoda pickup. In place of the pickup was an old green half-track army truck that could carry twenty men. The brush and trees still weren’t cut back far enough around the sides of the camp, letting them get close to the front gate.

“OK, what now?” Tess wanted to know.

When Tamra told them what she wanted them to do. Tess and Tim disagreed

with her, but Kelly stepped in and told them her plan would work, even if it was dangerous for Tamra.

As ordered, Tim and Tess got in place as close as they could to the front gate. When the guards had their backs turned, Tamra ran onto the road, and dropped to her knees on the ground in the middle of the tote road. Bent over, hiding her gun in her belly with her face touching the ground, for the second time in his life, Kelly heard that ear-piercing scream of Tamra’s. It told anyone who heard it she was a female in a life-threatening pearl. Tamra’s act was so good it made Kelly’s skin crawl.

On the second breath, she added in Portuguese. “Help me...!” tears streamed continuously down her dirty face.

The effect was as Tamra expected. Every male in earshot came at a dead run to the front gate, surrounded the woman they found crying on the ground. She was dirty, naked, and crying uncontrollably. The guards were trying to calm her down to find out what was wrong as the last man ran up to them.

From her bent-over position, Tamra flipped over on her back and opened fired at point-blank range. Tess and Tim unloaded their own forty-fives from the bushes. The guards didn’t stand a chance. They were caught totally off guard. As anyone who has ever survived a war will tell you, surprise is everything.

Tamra didn’t miss her mark when calling this situation. They needed all the men in one place without the threat of seeing a male with her. The sound of a woman’s voice in trouble will always call every male who could hear her, to her.

As the last man fell to the ground beside her, Tamra stood, then froze in place as another guy suddenly appeared out of nowhere, twenty-five yards in front of her, raising his gun in her direction. She knew she was dead meat and would never make it.

Just before the guy got his gun all the way up, Kelly quickly stepped out into

the open off to the Brazilian side, firing off a round into the air. Kelly was using a two-handed grip on the weapon while pointing the gun at the guy through the wire fence. If the guy only knew what was about to happen to him, he would have taken Kelly’s bullet. He dropped the gun.

Tess, and Tim ran up to the gate as Tamra step through and took the guy’s gun off the ground. The cartel member looked to be in his mid-thirties, and by the gold rings on his fingers, and wealth of chains around his neck, they knew this asshole had to be the one in charge. Searching the buildings, Kelly found a naked and frighten, twenty-year-old girl in the building with the satellite dish on top of the roof. Going inside, he shoved the cartel member on the bed beside the girl. It was confirmed she was his girlfriend when she wrapped her arms around him.

While Tess was watching their six at the front gate, Tamra and Tim quickly went through the camp as Kelly held the guy, and his lover in the command building. Kelly made sure there weren’t any other weapons in the room. As he was looking around the room, the guy jumped up off the bed, but a backhand across the face from Kelly sent the guy flying back down on the bed with a busted lip. Knowing there was nothing he could do against a man so large. The guy sat quietly while his girlfriend cried softly beside him.

Tamra walked into the room talking to Kelly, but she quickly shut up when she saw his expression.

Kelly looked at the girl. “Get rid of her,” he told her.

Calling out for Tim, she handed him some of the girls’ clothes. “Get her dressed, and tie her up in one of the tents,” she told him. “Someone is bound to come along pretty soon.”

After Tim left, Kelly picked up something from the table, he handed it to her. Tamra knew she was about to find out something she would not like by the way he was acting. Taking what Kelly had in his hand, Tamra saw four pictures of Kelly, Tess, Tim, and herself. They were all taken outside of CIA Headquarters in Langley, Virginia.

Tamra suddenly dropped into a chair at the table, slowly looking over at the guy who was about to kill her just moments before. She held his eyes with her own. She could see he was getting a little uncomfortable with her stare down. When she spoke, her voice was so low, Kelly could hardly hear her. He knew she was getting really pissed off about what they just found.

“Kelly, we need weapons, food, water and clothing. Tell Tim to take out that truck using the fifty-caliber we found in the weapons locker. Load all the weapons we need into the car, along with some food. Before we leave, we’ll use the C-4 from the weapons locker to blow the radio and weapons building. I’m going to stay here, and talk to our little friend. I think he, and I are going to have a meaningful relationship. But before you leave, tie his hands and feet to the bed, then get that shit done, because we have to get the hell out of here pronto.”

As he was leaving, Tamra was removing the man’s pants. Kelly knew better

than to stop what she was going to do to the guy. They needed information, and he was the only one alive to give it to them.

Tied up on the bed, the guy knew he was screwed. He struck out with the only thing he had left. “You fucking bitch! You’ll never make it out of here alive. I have men all over these fucking mountains looking for you.”

“Sweetie, that’s not nice talking like that,” she told him. “Now, tell me what your name is.” With his pants down around his ankles, Tamra sat down on the bed beside him.

“Fuck you! You God damn bitch!”

He didn’t make it further. Using one powerful hand, Tamra grabbed his face, forcing the guy to stop talking. Waving her finger in front of his nose, she told him. “Don’t you ever say the GD word around me. It’s the worst word anyone can use in vain,” she told him.

Antwan already knew he was dealing with some crazy people. And it was totally confirmed when the woman grabbed his male member with one hand, then put the other through his hair at the same time. He could see she was indeed an attractive woman even with the blood of his men splattered all over her chest and face. However, he couldn’t comprehend why in the hell they were all naked.

“No freaking out,” she told him. “Things will go faster if you listen to me. What is your name?”

That time, he told her, “Antwan Dominguez.” Antwan hoped the Dominguez name would make these people think twice before they screwed with him.

The woman didn’t stop stroking him, as she told him, “I see. It was your little brother who raped, and killed my friend Stacy up in Maine. Ya, well. Kelly took care of that rapist.” With a smile on her lips, she told him, “I saw him myself, and he was fucking dead, man.” Stressing her words she added, “He had two holes in his chest, and one in the head. But what I really want to know about Antwan. Is how did you get those pictures of us, and who put that tracking device in our backpack?”

When Kelly came back, Antwan was screaming and swearing so much Tamra met him at the door. “Are we ready?” she asked him.

“Yes,” he told her. Looking at what Tamra was holding in her hand, he asked. “What you planning to do with that, Tamra?”

Flat out, she told him, “We need information. I’ll get it. Keep Tim and Tess

out of here. I’ll be done in a minute.” Quickly, she gave him a kiss then closed the door on him.

“OK, sweetie. We’re in a bit of a rush, so you only have one chance.” Tamra sat back down on the bed, and resumed what she was doing before.

“Who put that tracker on us, Antwan, and who took those pictures?”

Antwan didn’t answer her. Seeing he wasn’t going to answer her, Tamra took the razor blade she found in the room, and placed it on his manhood.

Butterfly asked him nicely one last time, “I need an answer honey, or I will disfigure you for life baby.”

For an answer, Antwan started swearing at her, but it didn’t last long. Dragging the blade across him, she gave him a small but deep cut. Antwan started screaming his head off, bucking his hips, trying to move out of the way of the blade. He was in so much pain, Tamra knew the man didn’t even realize the amount of blood that was gushing from the small wound, soaking into the bed.

Wiping his face with her other hand calmed him down somewhat. Then, she took a firm hold of him again.

“This is it, Antwan. I want to know who planted the device, and took our pictures.”

Antwan didn’t say anything at first, but the bitch was going to cut him again, so he told her everything he knew. After he told her, she questioned him again. Realizing she had what she wanted. She took him in her hand again, and quickly cut him.

Antwan was screaming his foolish head off as Tamra walked out the door. Kelly was waiting for her with a jug of water, as he listened to Antwan’s cry’s coming from inside the building. He dumped the water over Tamra, washing the blood off her. As she was drying herself with a towel, Kelly stepped into the building, and put Antwan out of his misery.

Tim killed the truck’s engine with the fifty cal.

Kelly set the timers for the charges to go off. All four jumped into the car then drove off, leaving the seven dead men laying in the middle of the road. The girl was

tied up in one of the tents, and wouldn’t be hurt by the blast after they left.

The charges went off a few minutes later as Kelly was passing out lunches he found among the food at the camp. As he handed the food back to Tess and Tim in the back seat, Tamra knew he was up to something because of the shit-eating grin he had on his face. Since she was driving, Kelly was feeding her lunch to her when Tess sounded off from the back seat.

“Kelly you dolt. You smashed my Twinkie, man. There is just something majorly wrong with you. You don’t go messing with a girl’s Twinkie,” she scolded Kelly.

“Hey, someone had to get it, so I picked you. Deal with it,” he told her as both of her husbands, and Tamra laughed at her.

Tess didn’t eat junk food very often, except for the Golden Twinkies. Back home, Janet and her sneaked a case of twinkies up the path, and around the back side of the house with no one seeing them. They hid them in Janet’s photo lab, then they retraced their steps, and came into the house through the front door.

The next day, when they reached in to retrieve one of the golden snacks, they found the entire case missing. Left behind was a note reading, “Nice try, Tamra.”

Both girls were mad as hell with her over that one, they didn’t let Tamra forget it. Tess happily ate the smashed Twinkie. Anyway, they were all still starving by releasing so much energy the night before. Unhindered, they could run for miles non-stop, but they did it at a cost, and they had to feed. Like a wolf, they would eat anything, dead, or alive, that got in their path to keep their bodies going.

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Later that night. Micheal didn’t know what to expect when he walked into the study of Ortega Dominguez. Micheal was very close to Ortega as he has been working with the Cartel since Ortega put his first Coco plants into the ground. There were a few others who were close to Ortega, but Micheal was the most trusted person in the Cartel family. As Ortega’s chief of security, he controlled everything on the grounds of the mansion, and the coco fields out in the mountains. When Micheal spoke, Ortega’s own words came from his mouth, everyone did as he told them without question.

Being Ortega’s chief of security, Micheal designed the second floor of the mansion into a maze of rooms. In the event of a raid or attack by another cartel, the home was constructed in such a way. The maze of rooms on the second floor would give Ortega extra time to escape through his secret panel in his bedroom. The passageway led the way into the cellar where there was a tunnel system for Ortega to find his freedom.

Ortega was sitting at his desk when Micheal came into his office. The office was covered in wealth, as was the rest of the mansion. Everything in the home was in brand new condition. One wall was covered in flat screen TVs, showing camera angles from all around the outside of the home. Built into Ortega’s oak desk was a phone system, so Ortega could call to any room on the estate.

Micheal glanced over at the nine-foot regulation pool table as he entered the room. Ortega, and he have played many games on it over the years, but Micheal knew there wouldn’t be any games played on that table anytime soon. The first blow to the family came when they learned of the death of Ortega’s youngest son in America. That shock still shook the family and was still felt throughout the entire organization. Fernando was liked by all of them. He was expected to take his father’s place one day. Micheal regretted what he had to tell the man tonight.

Ortega could see the distress on Micheal’s face as he came into his study. Sitting in one of the chairs in front of his desk, his chief of security sat down with a heavy sigh. Setting some papers down on top of the desk, and with a concerning voice, Ortega asked. “Micheal, what has happened?”

“Sir, as you know, the Americans arrived, and we tracked them down. We sent a group of armed workers in to deal with them, but things didn’t happen like we thought they would. All fifteen workers were found dead, and the Americans were nowhere to be found. They must have gone around our patrols through the jungle. We also found the tracking device at the bottom of a cliff.”

“Micheal, make sure the workers’ families are compensated for their loss. As for the Americans, they will turn up eventually. There isn’t anywhere they can hide without us finding them. This is just a setback, and that’s all,” he told him. “That one guy alone is so damn big, one look at them will tell anyone they don’t belong here.”

The workers were a concerned for Ortega as they needed a good relationship with these people, or it could hurt the growth, and making of their product. Ortega knew how to deal with people within and outside the cartel. He used people like a mechanic would use a tool. Micheal waited for Ortega to stop talking before he delivered the bad news.

“Sir. I had to send some men to check on Antwan at the new site because no one was answering the radio there. When our men arrived, they found eight dead, except for a young girl who was tied up. Sir, your son Antwan was among the dead. The gun locker, and the radio were blown up, and Sir, someone…”

Micheal thought about what he was about to tell Ortega and stopped talking. He knew a man like Ortega didn’t have what he had by being emotional, and easy to fly off the handle, but he hesitated anyway. Ortega has always been a cool-headed calculating son of a bitch. He was also the worst kind of killer because, as Micheal knew, the man didn’t have a conscience.

The steel in Ortega’s voice rang through when he spoke in a clear, calm tone with no emotion as he pressed his friend to finish what he started.

“Just say it, Micheal.”

“Sir, I don’t know how the Americans managed it, but the girl told us it was the Americans we were looking for. I don’t understand how they got seventy miles from where they killed the workers to Antwan’s site in one night. I just can’t see how it was done, but by helicopter alone.”

Ortega sat back in his chair and quietly asked. “What did they do to my last son, Micheal?”

Micheal didn’t know what to say, so he told him what his men had told him a few moments ago.

“Sir, Antwan was tortured. They cut his manhood.” He quickly added, “I don’t believe they let him suffer for very long because he also has a bullet in his forehead, and two in his chest.”

“Sir, who in the fuck are these people to do something like this? These assholes are not the normal covert people that we have dealt with before in the past. They act nothing like governmental people. Whoever they are. They are something else, but. I just don’t know who,” he confessed.

As soon as he finished giving Ortega the bad news, Micheal watched his friend of many years transform into something he had never seen before. The true animal came to the surface from where it has always remained hidden until that very day.

Ortega’s hands started trembling as blood pumped to his face at an incredible rate. His chest started heaving in and out as he placed his forearms on his expensive desk. He spoke in a clear, loud voice. “Micheal, get in touch with our contact in Washington DC. I want to know who those people are. I want to know where they live and if they have any family. I want to know who their offspring are, and where they go to school. Spear no expense, I want you to find those fucking sons of bitches, and bring them to me here, and put their...”

Micheal watched it coming but still couldn’t believe it. The always cool-headed Ortega losing control for the first time since Micheal has known the man. The man’s face was in a total rage as spit flew from his mouth as he repeatedly

slammed his fist down on top of the desk as he finished his demand.

“...dead fucking bodies on top of my God damn desk and I want them now, Micheal. Now! Pull every spear man from the operations in the mountains and search every fucking town in the area. If anyone, even a fucking cop, gets in your way, kill the son of a bitch! Tell the other cartels around us to get the fuck out of our fucking way! I am sick of these fucking Americans! I’ll kill the God damn President of the fucking United States. If they want a fucking war. I’ll give them a fucking war they’ll never forget!”

As soon as he could, Micheal backed out of the room while he kept telling Ortega he would find these people himself, no matter to cost or life. Ortega was still screaming at him as he left the room, shutting the door behind him.

Micheal knew this wasn’t good at all. What Ortega was telling him to do was to start a war with the biggest superpower in the world. He knew from experience that this kind of war always ended up badly for everyone. As he watched, Ortega lose it. He knew many more people were about to die, but he did as he was told. By radio, he called in men to reinforce the guards at the mansion, then he sent more out to find the four Americans. Soon, he would join one group himself. He told his men to stay in every town from Labrea to Altamira, and Trairao with groups of men running up and down BR230, searching for them. There was only one road in and out of there. They would be spotted eventually. There was no other place for them to run to, but deeper into the Amazon jungle, and with one more phone call. He knew they would never make it through customs at the only airport in Manaus. The American Embassy was way over in La Paz, which was on the east coast, well over seven hundred miles from Labrea. He knew they wouldn’t go there. It would only be a matter of time before they found them.

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While driving through the night, Kelly tried calling the contact Barbra had given them, but they were still too deep in the dense jungle. And even though they had a big jump on getting away from the cartel. They knew better than to show up at the airport. Instead, they went for the safe house in Itaituba, which was an eight-hour drive south of their turn-off that would have brought them back to the airport.

Tess brought up the thought of using the Transamazonica highway that followed parallel to BR230. It would be a lot less populated but would have taken them even longer to reach Itaituba. Anyway, they would need a four-wheel-drive truck to track through the deeply rutted path. At one time, the Transamazonica highway was the only way to get out to the deep jungle, that is until urbanization finally came to the area.

When the sun came up, Tamra could see all around them. They were driving down a steep mountain tote road. Coming out of the mountains, the land stretched out before them was relatively flat, as everyone in the car was either asleep, or dozing. Tamra easily spotted the bridge ahead of them, a campfire was burning beside the bridge, there were many men gathered around it. Not willing to risk being spotted, she quickly drove into the first opening through the trees she could find. The road she choose hasn’t been used in years, and still driving at a high rate of speed, Tamra was unwilling to stop the car until she got them out of sight from the main road, and the men across the bridge. Their little car was thrown one way and then another as it hit rocks and tree roots in their path. After they plowed through some small bushes, they finally came to a stop. By then, everybody was wide awake, and wanted to know what in hell was going on.

Kelly’s first words got Tim. and Tess giggling in the back seat. “I see you and Tess have been hanging out in the “Moose Killer” again. Can you tell me why you ditched us in the trees?”

Tamra got out of the car. “Come with me babe, and I’ll show you,” she told him.

Taking the crew through the trees alongside of the road, they slowly approached the bridge over a little river. Being on higher ground than everyone on the other side of the river, they could easily see the seventeen men. and their halftrack truck. and one car. There were a few large tents set up and a fire pit that was burning off to the side of the road, right by the bridge. The bridge itself was just wide enough for a truck. which was made of timber found in the jungle with long poles supporting it. It was a simply built bridge, for it was only needed to span a small gap so vehicles could get across the river.

Finding out what laid in front of them. The four pulled back to discuss the situation. They knew they couldn’t just drive down there with guns blazing. They would be cut to ribbons in no time, and with them being across the river, a sneak attack wasn’t a good idea. There also was no way they were going back around the mountains, and chance running smack into the same men who have been tracking them. Going across this bridge, and down this road was their only choice they had.

As they discussed what to do, Tamra sat back and watched as Tim, and Kelly kept looking at each other until she couldn’t stand it anymore.

“OK, one of you better talk, so spill it” she told them.

At the same time, both of her men told her, “We blow the bridge.”

Tim explained, “Back at the command site, we found about a hundred pounds of C-4. They made caves with it when not using a fenced in compound. We took seventy-five pounds and used the rest on the camp. We get the men in the truck, while the truck is going over the bridge, we light her up. All we need is a diversion.”

Tamra came up with the diversion, but it was a risky one at best. And Tess had to agree to it because she would be the one in the direct line of fire. Getting back to the car, Tim used the tools that were in the trunk, and took off all four doors on the vehicle, while Kelly got the package ready for that night.

Kelly has been playing with plastic explosive since he was a kid. He knew an eight-pound block of C4 would easily destroy a square steel beam. So, twenty pounds of it would take out the bridge and its timbers, with no problem. It wouldn’t totally destroy the truck, and kill all of its men, but the fall would take care of most of the men. Tim would have to be the one placing the package on the poles because he was light and strong.

Kelly would cover him as long as Tim was under the bridge, while Tess would watch from above with the fifty caliber in case the two were discovered. Tamra would wait on the other side of the road, and if any shooting started, Tess and Kelly would return fire. The men would have to drop back behind their truck and car. Tamra could then open fire on their backside from across the river.

The last thing they did was to bend the window frames down, and shoved the doors into the back seat of the car. They were doing everything they could do to protect Tess because she would be the one under direct threat of the cartel’s bullets. If the doors didn’t deflect, or slowdown the rounds coming at her. They would at least block her from the cartel’s gun sights. As darkness settled in, they drove the car closer to the road. Ripping small trees out of the ground, they placed them in front of the car to give them cover. Then they waited.

Once it got dark, everyone got into place by the river. Tess had the fifty-caliber, and Tamra was over on the other side of the road while the boys were up stream getting ready to take a swim.

The river was deep, but the current wasn’t very strong. In any case, the guys wanted to take their time and not make a sound. The men were camped out close by the bridge. There was no reason to keep someone on the bridge because they would hear a car, or truck long before it got to them. Some guys were already in their tents while others were sitting around the campfire talking.

Slowly, the guys made their way down along the shoreline until they were under the bridge. They could hear the men talking around the campfire as they got out of the water. Tim slipped the package around his shoulder, then worked his way up the bank to where he could get a hold of the outer two beams. Working hand over hand, he made his way to the center of the bridge. While hanging by one hand, he placed a piece of rope over the top of the beams. He then tied it off with half hitches, then quickly made his way back to the bank.

The best plan was always the simplest one. All the C4 had to do was to hang close to the beams and not even touch them. Once Tim got off the bridge, he and Kelly waited in the bushes by the river for first light.

The animals in the jungle told the four that sunrise was on its way. Twenty-five minutes later, the sun peeked its bright shining eye over the treetops. When the men started coming out of their tents to gather around the fire, Tamra took Tess in both arms and kissed her thoroughly. Then she told her to get going. Neither of the three would know when Tess would make her appearance. They had to be patient, and wait.

Reaching their car, Tess drove it from their hiding spot. Taking her time, she made her way down the dirt road towards the bridge while eating a Twinkie with one hand while steering with the other. She didn’t want to drive like a madman and get the guys in the camp all freaked out. She was just on a weekend drive, during the early morning hours. The way she looked at it. The slow-moving car would let her get closer to the bridge while allowing her the time to do what she needed to do.

Reaching the river, she could see the men coming out of their tents. The four who were around the campfire slowly walked over to the bridge as she approached. They all had weapons in their hands, but no one was pointing one at her just yet. Spacing themselves apart, they stood in the middle of the road on the other side of the bridge, waiting for her.

Tess made it look like she was going to cross the bridge, but at the last second. She gunned the little car, cutting the steering wheel hard to the right, then slammed on her brakes. The car’s rear end spun around, and stopped in the middle of the road, broadside to the bridge. The driver’s door faced the gun men across the bridge.

The cartel’s men didn’t know what in hell to think. They just stood there, staring at her. The car had all its doors stacked in the back seat, and there was a naked, sandy-brown hair little girl smiling at them.

Tess didn’t give them any more time to question the situation. With her right hand, she quickly pulled a mac ten from beside her, and cut all four men down in one volley. The other guys coming over from the camp dove for cover when Tess let loose with her weapon.

Dropping the gun in the road, she gunned the car back into motion. Spinning the car back around, she drove off back the way she came. Tess had the road all mapped out in her mind. There was only one turn she had to make or she would be dead meat. That turn would hide her from the cartel’s men and their machine guns. Taking her foot off the gas pedal, she swung her legs over onto the passenger side floorboard then dropped her little body down on the floor. While still driving at a high rate of speed, she held on to the steering wheel with one hand as she laid on the gas pedal with the other one. Watching outside the driver’s door at the side of the road told her where she was at in the road. All she had to do was keep the car straight, and make that one friggin turn.

“Tamra, I’d like to see you try this,” Tess proudly told herself.

She had just hit the floorboards when, suddenly, bullets slammed into the back window, and all over the rest of the car. Tess tried to get closer to the floor, as there were just too many rounds being shot at her. They were everywhere, searching for her to kill her. The dashboard, and wind shield got hit, pieces of plastic, and glass fell down on top of her, making it hard for her to see. Her little car started fish tailing as she went around the curve in the road. Tess knew she wasn’t going to make the turn as the car went over the bank and then rolled into the trees.

Tamra was concerned for Tess, but she was smiling as her wife drove up, and cut the men down on the bridge like nothing, then drove off. A few shot at her driving away, but one guy directed everyone except for two men to get into the truck. As they drove across the bridge chasing after Tess, Kelly lit up the C-4. The bridge didn’t survive the blast. The truck turn on its side, falling thirty-five feet into the river below.

Then, two things happened all at once. Kelly and Tim came out of hiding, and

shot the men who were in the water. They then turned their attention to the other two guys on the other side of the river.

Tamra was ready, she took out one guy by the bridge with the fifty cal. She was getting set to take out the other one when the boys opened up on the last guy. He ran for the only cover he had behind the car. From where she was lying on the ground, Tamra could just make out his feet under the car. She took aim at the side of the car facing her, and let loose her gun once more. The car wasn’t any match for the big gun as the bullet drove straight through the car like butter, and into the chest of the guy on the other side of it.

Leaving the sniper’s rifle on the ground, Tamra ran for Tess with everything she had. Kelly and Tim made sure no one was alive in the river, then they too followed after Tamra.

When Kelly got to the car, it was on its side with its roof crushed in. Tamra was on top of the car trying to get at Tess, who was still inside of it. He picked her up by her waist, and put her off to one side. Then, using his great strength of his powerful legs, he pulled the car back onto its wheels.

Tim soon arrived, but he just stood back so as not to get in Kelly’s way. Kelly ripped one side of the roof off of the car then peeled it back. He then began throwing the heavy doors off to the side that had piled up on top of Tess. When the last door was removed, Tamra and Tim could hear Tessa’s voice inside the car.

“Well, you sure took your sweet bloody time in getting here,” she told Kelly. Popping her head up out of the car, she looked around her. “Hey, does anybody see that box of Twinkies out there on the ground somewhere?”

She wasn’t hurt much, but she did have some cuts and bruises. If it wasn’t for the doors protecting her from being shot or crushed by the car. She would have suffered a lot more damage. Tessa was walking a little slower as they went back to the river. But she kept telling them how proud she was of making the turn and getting out of harm’s way.

Bewildered, Tim stopped and pointed back at the crushed car, but before he could say anything. Kelly warned him with a shake of his head.

“Let her have her victory; she earned it,” he told him.

Since they were leaving the mountains, Tamra left the sniper’s rifle where it

was. In any case, the damn thing took up too much room in the car. After getting their guns and ammo, and what was left of the C-4. They crossed over the river using the upside-down truck, and checked out the car on the other side of the river. Tim hot-wired it, and they loaded up and drove off down the road.

Behind them laid a movie scene with smoke trickling from what was left of the bridge. The overturned truck was in the water, and the dead men were floating downriver. Twenty minutes later, two trucks full of men passed by Tessa’s crushed car, and stopped at the bridge they could no longer use.

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“Sir, I am telling you, these guys are some real smart cock suckers. I have never seen anything like them in my life. I’ve pulled all our workers away from the search for these guys. They don’t have the skills to help us and will only get slaughtered by these Americans.”

Micheal stopped talking to listen to Ortega on the other end of the line.

“Yes,” Micheal told him. “I have them rebuilding the bridge. We can’t keep going way around the other way. Don’t worry, Sir. These assholes won’t get by me. I have my best men here, blocking the road with more reinforcements in town. We’ll get them. They have nowhere else to go.”

Micheal slid his phone back into his pocket, and walked over to two of his men standing idle by their truck, which was parked halfway across the southbound lane on BR230.

One guy asked Micheal, “Is what we heard about Antwan true?”

“Yup, they split him like a piece of firewood,” he told the guy. “Not that I give a shit about what they did to him. He was useless, and his father knows it. Now, killing Fernando, that was a damn shame, but no one knows who did that.”

Micheal directed his next comment to the other man standing there. “Anthony, get some more men from town out here. We may be needing them,” he told the guy.

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With Tess now driving, Tim and Kelly got what sleep they could in the compact car. Tamra herself moved over, giving Kelly more room in the back seat. She knew she wouldn’t be sleeping anytime soon. Kelly grabbed her, and put his arms around her. Many people have died. Tamra had a bad feeling that a lot more would soon follow. If they weren’t careful, they themselves would be the next ones.

Someone at Langley had sold them out, and she wanted the blood of the son of a bitch on her hands. Antwan told her he was always the last one to know what was going on in the family business. So, he bugged his father’s study because he wanted to know what his father’s interest were in America. From that listening device, he found out where his father was going to set up meth labs along the Canadian border in the United States. He also told Tamra; his father had an informant selling him information from within the government. However, he only knew Spencer’s last name, he could only guess who planted the tracker in their backpacks, and took their pictures. Antwan didn’t have any other information other than that because his father stuck him out in the mountain ever since his fight with

his brother many months before.

Kelly could feel the tension in Tamra’s body. She was wound up tighter than a twelve-day clock. “Tamra, I want you to chill out.” He brushed the hair from her eyes. “There’s nothing we can do at the moment but to try to stay alive. We all know Barbra, or Mike had nothing to do with this. We’ll get a hold of them as soon as we can.”

“Kelly, don’t you realize? It could have been Director Mellon who’s behind

all of this to take all of us, and the Island out. All Antwan told me was he heard his father say Spenser’s name, but he never said Spenser had anything to do with this. Kelly, they may be come for all of us, and the Island. The girls at home don’t know what’s happening, their sitting ducks.”

Kelly was quiet for a minute as he thought about what she said. “Tamra, there are too many variables with too many unanswered questions. We don’t know anything yet, but only what we have at face value. Now, I want you to get at least an hour’s sleep. I’ll stay awake,” he told her.

“Kelly, I don’t think I’ll be able to sleep for a week,” she told him, resting her head on his chest.

Kelly knew she would never sleep in the car’s confinement, but he wanted her to at least relax for a while. All four of them only had a little over three, or four hours of sleep in the last two days. Kelly knew he would have to knock Tamra out to get her to sleep. She would never relax her guard for as long as they were under the threat of the cartel. The way the cartel had so many men looking for them told Kelly this was just the tip of the iceberg.

Once they got into town, the actual war for survival would start. He said nothing to her, but he had an unquenchable desire to get a hold of Barbra, and the Island as fast as he could. The girls needed to put the Island under lockdown until they returned from South America. The United States Government could be doing just what Tamra feared, and they had to be ready for them. They couldn’t bring their necklaces with them, and they would need an over sea’s operator or a satellite phone to call home, both of which would be hard to find this far into the jungle. Their best course of action was to head for the safe house, and try to get a hold of their contact Barbra gave them. Their next hurtle would be getting gas for the car. He was pretty sure the gas station would be watched, or the owners would inform the cartel they were there as soon as they moved on. They needed more gas or a new vehicle with a full tank.

“Tess, take it easy on the peddle. We need to save as much gas as we can. Our

first town won’t be for another eight, or ten hours.”

“We’ll make it,” she assured him, looking down at the gas gauge. “This little four banger will still have some to spare when we get there.”

True enough, the gas held out as they made their way down, and out of the mountains. When they started out at the command site, the road was rutty and wildly unkempt, but once they reached the edges of the mountains, the land turned flat. In a few hours, they started seeing houses, and buildings alongside of the road.

Tamra woke Tim, and Kelly as they came to the intersection of their dirt road and BR230. It was still early in the morning, there weren’t many other cars on the highway.

BR230 was mostly paved with miles that were still nothing but dirt. Tamra knew if it was the rainy season, their little car wouldn’t have made it out of the mountains, let alone drive down BR230. Turning south, they planned to stop in Humaita, which was a little town just past the turnoff to Manaus Airport.

As they reached the outskirts of the town, Tess yelled out from the front seat. “Cartel!”

A pickup carrying many men went passed them going the other way towards Labrea. It was still too dark to see inside of their car as the truck sped by them and didn’t turn around. The alphas had their personal weapons over their shirts, and kept a machine gun in their lap as they drove through the sleepy little village of Humaita. No one was around when they pulled into an open gas station at the southern end of the township.

Tim jumped out, and left his door open as he pumped the gas.

Tamra’s door stayed open when she paid for it. As she came back to the car, Kelly jumped out, and ran up to a window of the building. After looking inside, he then ran back to the car.

Tamra told Tess, “Whip the car around, and floor it back the way we just came.”

Tess didn’t hesitate, and did as she was told. Laying down rubber, they sped back up the road for a mile. Tamra then told her to spin the car back around, and floor it back past the gas station. She told Tess to get the car going as fast as she could.

Over the wind blowing in through the windows, Tess yelled back, “We’re only going to get about eighty miles an hour with the four of us in here.”

“That’s OK, Tess. I just wanted the gas attendant to see us head back the other way. I’m hoping she’ll be back watching television as we come back by her. Kelly seen her talking on her phone. I hope they think we are going towards Labrea, and not Itaituba.”

Before they reached the gas station, Tess let off the gas pedal letting the engine quiet down. The car flew passed the gas station doing eighty-two miles per hour. As soon as they left the gas station behind them, Tess put her foot back into the carburetor, and they flew down the highway.

Tamra knew they wouldn’t be able to stick to the road much longer. The sun was coming up. The early predawn light was already shining through the foliage in the east. They passed by a dirt road she wanted Tess to turn into, but because of the speed, Tess was pushing the little car. They were well past it before Tess could react.

Suddenly braking the car hard, Tess dropped the clutch, and slammed the car into second gear. Turning the wheel, she popped the clutch, and the little car went sideways as the front tires burned rubber, grabbing for traction on the pavement. Not even bothering to slow down for the turn, she turned onto the dirt road.

Speeding down the road, it took them a few miles out, where they found another less used road. It didn’t take them long to find a parking spot, with Tess pushing the little car. She drove the little front wheel hard around ruts, and through muddy spots without slowing down. Just before they found a spot for the day, they skidded sideways around a huge, thick mud patch, then climbed diagonally up a very steep hill. Tess gave the little car all the power it needed to get them over the top of the ridge.

She was smiling, and softly humming to herself as she set the parking break. She noticed everyone in the car was staring at her.

“What...? She asked them.

Kelly told her. “Your enjoying yourself way too much.”

“Hey, what can I say?” she told her spouses opening her door, and getting out. “I’m a girl in my element.”

Kelly understood in her new life, Tess was more at home driving, and killing than anything else. Neither of them has had any proper sleep in days. They have been killing people left and right just to get them where they were. Yet Tess was having the time of her life as the whole Dominguez drug cartel was chasing after

them.

They made another nest under some trees, and tried to get some sleep with the high humidity, making them drip sweat from their bodies as they slept. Even with the joy ride they got with Tessa’s driving through the jungle road. They were all still agitated, and troubled by their situation. They could have called Mike, or Barbra, but that wouldn’t have helped them out much, and it also might put them in more danger, with the informant still at Langley. Adding to their anxiety, their contact has yet to answer his phone.

Kelly knew Tamra most of all was taking their predicament worse than any of them because of her father. Since she was a little girl, her father had installed a sense of honor and patriotism in her heart for the Federal Government, and her country. Finding that informant, and killing him was at the very center of her being. It was also another thing that was driving her to get them out of South America. But if it was the Director of the CIA who set them up, that fact remained on the table and would soon be explored.

Kelly stripped Tamra of her clothes, then rubbed her down until she fell asleep. When he woke up hours later, she was already awake, and staring into his face.

“I love you,” she told him.

“I love you too, but how much sleep did you get?”

“Enough,” was all she would tell him.

Tim woke up shortly after them, but Tess was still sleeping as if she was in her own bed at home. Tamra woke her up, and told her they needed to get moving.

Driving slower, they made their way back to the highway. It was getting dark by the time they reached the road, but it was still early in the evening, there were other cars on BR230. Tess waited until three cars drove by. Getting in between the second, and last car, she used them as cover. It wasn’t long before another truck with men in it went by them going the other way again, but when the four cars came up on a slow-moving truck with more men in it. Tess took the next road off to the right as soon as she saw them.

Hoping there would be fewer people on the highway, they found a parking spot, and waited. Hours later, they continued driving south, and didn’t run into many other vehicles. Their safe house was outside of the town of Itaituba just before the Basia Hidrovia River, which emptied into the Amazon River a few miles downstream. The house was a single-story country home with a long driveway leading to the

dwelling. They drove by it once before finding a place to park in the trees.

Because they couldn’t get a hold of their contact, and the information the cartel had on them. Tamra, and Tess waited until Kelly, and Tim had enough time to go through the field and bushes at the rear of the home.

The house looked dark, and quiet to Tamra. She signaled for Tess to advance

from her position in the field in front of the home. Closer to the house, there was less vegetation. The girls were slowly losing their cover when, without warning, Tess opened fired on the house’s windows on the left side of the front door.

Tamra didn’t hesitate, and opened up on the two windows on the right side. When return fire came at them, the girls dropped to the ground, firing one more volley, then made themselves as small as they could against the hard ground. The fire storm directed at them suddenly stopped when all hell broke loose from inside of the home. A small war was raging inside the dwelling, making the way clear for the girls as they ran towards the house.

Tamra hit the front door with her whole body, busting it open but falling in the process. Tess didn’t hesitate. Jumping over Tamra, she ran further into the house. By the time they reached Kelly and Tim, the firefight was over, and five more men were dead. Their fears were confirmed, their safe house was a trap.

Tim was Muchin on a taco filled with Tripas and yellow cheese as he came out of the kitchen. “I’ll say this for them. These guys know how to shoot, but they don’t know diddlely shit about tactics.” Tess took a bite from Tim’s taco then started gathering any ammo they could use.

Tim turned to go back into the kitchen to bag up some food when Kelly’s phone rang. No one moved as they watched him answer it. Kelly could hear small arms fire in the background as the guy’s first words sent chills through his body. The voice on the other end didn’t say who he was, but Kelly knew he had to be their contact.

“They know you’re at the house! You’re on your own. Go to Sao Luis, or Tirirical, or any big city on the coast and hide. It’s doubtful, but if I get out of here alive. I’ll call Langley myself. The Dominguez Cartel has gone fucking crazy looking for the four of you. They want all of you really bad. I don’t know what the fuck the four of you did to them, but they are totally ticked off. Trust no one, and get to the coast with the rest of the tourists and hide!” he told Kelly.

Kelly could hear gunfire getting closer to the phone just before the phone went dead in his hands. He screamed, “Get out! Get out now! Move!”

They all ran out the back door, and raced across the field towards their parked car. Tim didn’t have time to grab the bag of food, but Tess had seven, or eight magazines for their machine guns. Getting to their car, she threw the ammunition in through the open window. Jumping in the driver’s seat, she started the vehicle. Everyone kept a weapon in their lap as they drove back to BR230. Just after they turned south towards the coast on BR230, two trucks, and a car came racing down the highway from the south, they turned onto their safe house road.

Tess pushed the little car as fast as it could go, passing every car they came to. and asked. “OK, where the hell are we going now? The road will split up ahead. There’s a large town down there along the Amazon River, but if we stay on this road. The coast will be another nine hours away, at least.”

Tamra thought about it for a moment. She told Tess to take BR163 into the city of Santarem. “We’ll hold up for the day at the waterfront. With it being Sunday, the docks won’t be open, we’ll find somewhere to hide until it gets dark. Then we’ll steal a boat. and get the hell off this damn road. They’re going to catch us eventually driving around out here.”

“We need a phone as well,” Kelly reminded her. As soon as they got on the

road, Kelly took the battery and chip out of the cell phone. and chucked it out the window.

Glancing over at Tamra in the back seat, Kelly told her, “I don’t think we’ll be getting out of here without any help.”

The look in Tamra’s steel-gray eyes told him she was thinking the same thing.

“Tess,” Tamra called to her from the back seat, “be careful when approaching that turnoff. I expect there’s going to be trouble there.”

They reached the turnoff as the sky was getting brighter. They all saw Tamra

wasn’t wrong about the trouble. Seven men were stopping each car driving south. Tess stopped behind the last car in line, making sure she had enough room to pull out if she needed to.

There were four guys with weapons checking each car as they came up to them, and there were three more guys by a half-track, blocking a good part of the southbound lane.

Tess was grinning from ear to ear in the driver’s seat as she looked over at Tim sitting beside her. “Be brass, fast, and don’t talk to anybody,” she told him.

Looking in the rear-view mirror, she added, “Hey guys, are we ready?”

Tamra noticed. Kelly and Tim were all set. She told Tess to hit it.

They were the fourth vehicle in the line by the time Tess got the car moving, but without squealing her tires. The little car quickly surged forward around the other three. The men in the road were bringing their weapons up, but Tess got the car up front before they could fire off a shot. Even before Tess stopped the car, Tim cut loose with a barrage of lead from his window while Tamra did the same behind him. Being caught in the middle of the open road with no cover, their rounds slammed into all four men, killing them.

From the back seat, Kelly threw a piece of C4 under the truck. As soon as the men saw Kelly throw something, the three guys by the truck quickly ran away from it. When the plastic explosive went off, it ignited the truck’s gas tank, sending a huge fireball of flames high into the air. The heavy truck rolled over onto its side.

Kelly started shooting over the roof at the other three guys when Tess sped off down BR163.

“I think we left a few alive back there,” Kelly warned them. He and Tamra looked out the back window.

“We should be able to lose them in Santarem. It’s a pretty big city,” Tess yelled

back.

Tess continue her brake neck speed until they reached the city limits, then Tamra slowed her down. It may have been Sunday morning, but there were still many people on the streets going in, and coming out of the shops. As they were driving down a quiet street, Tamra told Tess to pull over.

She got out of the car, and went into a store. A few minutes later, she came back out and almost made it to their car, when a big Buick that was slowly cruising down the street opened fired on her. Diving for the cover of a parked car, Tess and Kelly returned fire out of their windows. The Buick backed up to get out of range of their guns, giving Tamra the chance to jump into the car, still caring the bag she had when she left the store.

The tires squealed as Tess quickly drove off. She turned down the first side street they came to. Their little car could pick up speed fast, but the larger vehicle had a lot more horsepower. Tess knew they couldn’t outrun them, so she cut every corner as sharp as she could, trying to gain a little more distance between them. The men in the other car shot at them, but the streets were short, and Tess kept turning down a different side street.

Tamra screamed at her from the backseat. “Tess, get us the fuck out of here.”

She yelled back, “Sorry, our car is out matched. Give me a minute,” she told her wife. “I think I have an idea.”

A few bullets crashed through the back window, missing them all, but putting a few holes into the windshield in front of Tess.

“Make it damn quick girl,” Kelly told her, firing off a few rounds out of his own window.

Tess kept her eyes on the other car through the rear-view mirror, and waited to make her move. Finally, she watched it happen. The chase car was a lot heavier vehicle, as it came screeching around the last corner, the driver lost his momentum as he let his car fishtail around the corner. The car almost spun all the way around. Tess told the others to hang on as she took her gun and Tim’s weapon, and put them in her lap. Taking the next corner as fast as she could, she slammed the car into second gear, and took the parking brake in her right hand. Pulling all the way up on the e-break, she popped the clutch at the same time. The front tires locked up squealing, sending blue smoke flying into the air as the car’s engine over revved, and everybody in the car was suddenly forced forward.

Before the car came to a complete stop, Tess opened her door, and dove out onto the pavement. Rolling across the city street, a few people walking on the sidewalks stopped in shock, watching her dive out of the car.

Tim grabbed the steering wheel, reached over, and hit the car’s brakes, stopping the vehicle.

Tamra and Kelly stuck their guns out of the back windows, but Tess was standing in their line of fire.

Tess stood in the middle of the road with a Mac 10 in each hand, waiting for the chase car to come flying around the corner. The big Buick didn’t make it halfway through the turn when Tess opened up on it with both machine guns at the same time. People walking down the street screamed, and ran for cover as the chase car, just missing Tess, drove itself into a building across the street. Tess continued fanning her guns left to right as she walked up to it, killing the three men inside. After emptying both clips, she ran back to their car. Tossing the guns at Tim, she told him to reload them.

Jumping into the car, she slammed the car into first gear. Dropping the brake lever down, she burned the tires up, gaining speed. After turning down another side street, she could see Tamra’s face in the rear-view mirror. She didn’t look thrilled with her.

“Hey, I didn’t have time to tell you, OK. Things were happening pretty damn fast back there,” she explained.

“Did you get hurt hitting the road?” Kelly asked.

“Well, no. I didn’t get hurt,” she told the others. “But the Twinkie I had saved in my shirt pocket is toast.” Reaching in her pocket, she pulled out what was left of her destroyed Twinkie, and threw it out the window.

Her husbands, and wife laughed at her.

“You guys really shouldn’t laugh at a girl’s Twinkie. That’s just plain rude,” she told them as she took a sharp city turn at a high rate of speed.

Tamra slowed her driving down. They didn’t see any more of the cartel’s men as they made their way down to the waterfront. Getting to the docks, they picked an area where they hope there would be little activity. Driving by a few buildings on a wharf, Tamra told Tess to stop.

On the other side of the building was a parking lot with access to a few piers’ which had a bunch of boats tied to it. However, they needed to do something about the car. They pushed it over the side of the wharf and let it sink to the bottom of the tidal water. The car could still be seen in the twenty feet of water, but only on close inspection. Tim picked the lock, and opened the door to a building, and they all went inside. The building must have belonged to the owners of the pier next door, as it was filled with boat parts, and tool boxes. Both sides of the building had a lot of windows except for the back of the building. They all laid, or sat down on the wooden floorboards in the storage area to stay out of sight of the windows.

Kelly told them they had two ways out, through a door on the side that had the pier, or back through the door they just came in.

Tim told them the water in the bathroom worked, but for them not to drink the water.

“I would rather have some drinking water,” Tess told him from where she sat wasted on the floor. Tamra removed a bottle of water from her bag, and handed it over to Tess. Then, she gave each of them a bottle. The last item she took from the

bag was a cell phone. They all watched her as she stuck it in her shirt pocket.

“When are you going to call Barbra?” Kelly asked her.

“Soon as we are rested,” she told him.

Kelly knew Barbra was about the only person Tamra trusted in the CIA right now. He also knew they were wearing themselves out fast. They had to get out of this running situation as soon as they could. Since the mountains, they all have had very little food, or sleep. It was only their bodies adrenaline pumping through them, which has kept them going. Looking around at his family. Tess has been getting the most sleep out of the four of them, but Tamra has hardly slept since before all of this began. He knew better than to try to get her to relax. He could tell from her body language; Tamra was cocked, and ready for anything to happen. Over the last few days, her facial expression remained emotionless while the blue in her gray steel eyes has all but disappeared. She was in her zone as she took in everything at a glance, watching for anything that they could use to their advantage. Kelly knew if something didn’t happen for them soon, they would more than likely all die. He was fearing just what Tamra was thinking. That their luck may soon run out.

The only advantage he knew they had was the C4 they had been caring with them, along with the electronic detonators they took from the weapons locker up in the mountains. Taking a block of C-4, Kelly molded half of it into a ball, and stuck a detonator into it. Tim watched what Kelly was doing, and came over, and helped him. In short order, they had a pile of C-4 balls with detonators stuck in them and another forty pounds sitting off to the side. They split the forty pounds into two canvas bags they found in the storage area, and added the C4 balls to each bag. If they got separated with any luck, each party would have a bag with them.

While the boys made the bombs, Tamra followed Tessa’s lead and cut her pants into shorts, then she taped three magazines to each one of her thighs. She also added a small silver snub-nose thirty-eight pistol that she picked up while at Antwan’s camp. She then had Tess duct tape a long-curved machete to her naked back, then she put her shirt over it. They all knew they were getting ready for a war that was sure to come if they stayed in the area, but for the moment, they couldn’t leave. The sun was high in the sky, and they didn’t want to be caught on the water in the daylight. In any event, they all needed to get some rest.

Tamra grabbed her weapon, and told everybody to relax, as she would be standing guard.

She first walked over to the windows on the side of the building where they dumped the car. The wharf road they drove down looked cleared and quiet. Moving over to the other side of the building, she looked out the windows there. The parking lot had quite a few cars in it, probably because of the weekend with people boating. She could see a lot of the boat slips were already empty. One guy was out there getting ready to take his boat out on the river. If it was dark, she would have taken it from him without question. It was big enough for their purpose as it had two twin Evinrude 300hp motors on the stern, and was without a doubt the fastest boat tied to the piers.

The parking lot was lower than the river, with a cement walkway along the riverfront with a four-foot-high retaining wall against the side of the parking lot. Steps leading up to the river from the lot were in the middle of the retaining wall. Across the street was an old, run-down hotel, and other shops that were not open for the weekend. Other than the guy with his boat, everything looked peaceful.

Hoping Barbra was in her office, Tamra kneeled between some stacked boxes, and with the help of an overseas operator, she placed her call. She tried calming herself. She didn’t want to sound frantic, but too much had happened since they have been down here. Too many lives have been lost, and she feared her family would be the next ones. When Barbra answered her phone, it all came out in a flood of emotion.

“Barbra!”

Barbra went on high alert as soon as she heard Tamra’s voice. “Tamra! What’s

happened?”

“We were set up. We’ve been running for our lives ever since we got to the mountains. I think our contact is dead, and there was cartel waiting for us at the safe house. We’re hiding in a building by the Amazon River in Santarem. The cartel is searching the town for us. I don’t know who set us up at Langley Barbra, but I’ll kill every son of a bitch that gets in my way. If any of your people hurt any of mine Barbra. I’ll fucking kill every one of them. Do you understand me?” she threatened.

“Tamra, calm down. There’s no one here who wants to hurt any of you. You need to trust me on that.”

“Really, there’s no one!” Tamra almost yelled into the phone. “Barbra, you have an officer right now who is selling information to the Dominguez Cartel. I know where the drug labs are located that those three guys were setting up.

“Tamra, who is selling information?”

“Spencer, he works out of Langley. He’s doing it right out of your own fucking

office. I got that information from Antwan Dominguez before Kelly put three holes

into him.”

Surprised, she asked, “So have you had contact with the cartel.”

“Contact! Barbra, there’s a line of fucking dead bodies from Santarem all the fucking way back to the mountains. They had pictures of the four of us, and we also found a tracking device planted in our backpacks. We’re in a fucking war zone down here.”

“Oh, my God! Tamra, you have to find a safe place to hide. I’ll get you guys the hell out of…”

Tamra stopped listening to Barbra because some of Ortega’s men were looking through the windows of the building they were in. They must have found the car and were now checking out every building on the wharf. As she watched, three guys with guns were looking into the building’s windows as another one tried to open the door.

“Barbra, it’s too late. They just found us. I love you,” she told her, and hung up the phone.

Barbra was yelling at her not to hang up as Tamra closed the phone, and dropped it on the floor. If these guys were here, then there would be a lot more coming, no phone call was going to help them get out of this mess. Tamra knew their luck just ran out. It was full daylight. She knew many more people were about to die, including her loved ones. There wasn’t anything she could do, really. They were already trying to come in through the door. Running low across the building, she woke the others. They all just made it outside on the other side of the building as the cartel’s men busted into the building through the door they first used. Tamra didn’t want to fire a shot. They would need as much time as they could get in order to grab a boat, and get the hell out of here. They just made it to the sidewalk by the retaining wall when the killers exited the building and saw them.

This group of men was a bit smarter than the others because they spread

themselves throughout the parking lot, hiding behind cars before they opened fired on them. The four had no chance of getting one of the boats. Ducking behind the retaining wall, the first rounds of bullets assaulted them.

Kelly, and Tim ran over to the other side of the stairs coming from the parking lot while Tess stayed with Tamra on the other side.

Glancing behind her, Tamra saw the guy getting his boat ready, was quickly trying to remove the stern line holding the craft to the pier. She didn’t even think about it as she took her Colt out, and from sixty feet away, shot him in the head. His body fell off the pier, falling face-first into the river. Tamra could hardly believe what she just did. She killed a noncombatant for his fucking boat, but what other choice did she have? If they were going to survive, and live through this day, they would need a fast boat. Killing him was the logical thing to do.

There were only eight, or ten men shooting at them behind the cars in the lot, but within a matter of just a few minutes, two trucks pulled up, and another forty men jumped out. They all positioned themselves before firing at them. As long as they stayed behind the wall, the cartel’s bullets couldn’t get at them, but the longer they stayed there. Tamra was sure more gunmen would be on the way. They needed to get the hell out of here and now!

Kelly looked over at her with a ball of C-4. He made a motion as if to throw it

at the men shooting at them. She nodded her head in agreement.

Tess grabbed a ball and threw it toward where the heaviest shooting was coming from, while Tamra held the trigger in her hands. Tim and Kelly were doing the same. Counting to three after Tess threw the ball, Tamra pressed the trigger, and the C-4 blew up. Sounds of the explosions bounced off the buildings all around them as a cloud of dirt and smoke reached high into the air. The C-4 also ignited the park car’s gas tanks when it came in contact with them. Cries from the cartel’s men were everywhere when they, too, were caught in the blast.

In-rapid secession, Kelly threw all of his balls.

Tamra shook her head disapprovingly at Tess as the small woman had a huge grin on her face as she made a show of pulling the pin out of a grenade using her teeth, then she lobbed the ball over the wall as if she was in a WWII movie. The bombs killed a lot of the men, but there were still many more shooting at them. They moved back when the C-4 came at them, most of them were now hiding behind the only few cars left in two different groups, with a few others scattered around the parking lot.

Tamra chucked her bag over to Kelly. Together, he and Tim stood, throwing the bags as hard as they could. Tess, and Tamra gave them cover fire, but as soon as their men let go of the bags, another round of bullets assaulted them.

Tim cried out, holding his midsection. He fell to the ground as Kelly was knocked flat on his back. Both of her men were out for the count on the sidewalk.

Tamra knew there was nothing she could do for them but to follow the plan through. Even as their men went down, she ran down the retaining wall towards the building they had just come from. Tess ran to the other far end of the parking lot. As she ran by Tim, she picked up his trigger, and set off his bag. Both bags went off almost at the same time. Three huge fireballs rose into the sky as Tim’s bag set off the big gas tank used for storing gas. The concussion from both bags going off at the same time blew out every window of every building in the area.

All of a sudden, the shooting stopped.

Tess and Tamra looked down the wall at each other. As one, they flooded their bodies with every ounce of adrenaline they had left, then charged into the parking lot like wild animals, seeking revenge for their men.

Tamra’s first man she found alive brought up his gun to shoot her, but she was on him so fast he couldn’t get out a shot as she ran by him, quickly breaking his neck. She was twenty feet from him before his body hit the ground. The next two guys she found, she shot one with her forty-five, and ripped out the other guy’s throat with her left hand. Then she put her gun away because it was slowing her down. Killing every man, she found alive on her side of the parking lot, she made her way towards the two large trucks in the street.

None of the men stood a chance against her as she either snapped their necks, or ripped out their throats. In a total rage, she had forgotten all about the machete taped to her back. One of the last guys she found alive behind the truck had many gold rings and necklaces on. She knew this guy was important. Grabbing his hair in her hands, she tilted his head back, then ripped out his carotid artery, using her teeth alone.

As Tamra was coming around the first truck, she watched Tess running faster than she had ever seen her move, but the guys under the other truck got a lucky shot, taking out her legs. She went down hard into the dirt and stopped moving. Watching Tess get hit made Tamra totally lose any sense of humanity she had left in her.

Running over to the men under the truck, she pulled one guy out from under it and ripped one of his arms off. Blood was pouring out from his shoulder as she twisted his head completely around. In despair, the other guy tried crawling back to the other side of the truck, but Tamra was already there waiting for him. She pulled him up off the ground by his head so she could look into his face. The look of horror in the man’s eyes as he looked back at her bloody face told Tamra what she wanted to know. Ripping his head from his body, she threw it down the street as hard as she could.

Pulling out her forty-five, she then ran as fast as she could, and shot, and killed every wounded man that was left alive in the parking lot. As she passed by Tess, she picked up her body, and ran to the boat of the man she shot earlier, and laid her on the deck. Kelly was the hardest one to get in the boat, and at one point, she didn’t think she could do it. Summoning every ounce of strength, and every drop of adrenaline she had left, she flipped him into the boat.

As they were pulling away from the pier, smoke was rising eighty feet into the air from the burned-out cars in the parking lot, and what was left of the large gas tank. The place looked like a battlefield. Not one car in the lot was untouched, bodies and body parts covered the ground everywhere.

Tamra had just put her boat into high gear when suddenly she found herself lying flat on the deck. Quickly, she got back to her feet, feeling very dizzy. Checking herself over, she was covered in blood from the waist up. There was a bullet hole in her lower right side with an exit wound coming out of her back. It was one thing, releasing all of her adrenaline all at once, but along with the blood loss, she wasn’t sure how much further she was going to be able to make it.

Racing down the river at full speed, it wasn’t long before they came to the mouth of the Amazon River. Open ocean laid in front of her. As soon as she got out of the river, she went through the boat and found some clothes. She was having trouble concentrating as she plugged the holes in Kelly’s chest. Then, she wrapped up Tessa’s legs, and found her head wound wasn’t as bad as she first feared. It was just a graze.

However, Tim was another story. He was awake, and crying out in pain with a bullet-wound in his midsection. She knew he could live for a long while, but he had an extremely painful wound. His vitals were already getting weak. She wasn’t sure how much longer he would last. It would take about an hour to get to where they were going. With any luck, they would find some help once they got there.

Looking up from what she was doing, three boats came flying out of the mouth of the river. Racing in her direction as two more were coming from the shoreline.

Jumping up, she staggered to the steering wheel and opened the throttle wide open. They were only a few miles behind her, but Tamra knew damn well their boats were faster than hers. All she had to do was get within radio range, and they would be OK, but that was miles away. She didn’t know if they would still be out there, or not. The battle group was supposed to be in this area until the fourth of March, but at the moment, she was having trouble remembering what today’s date was. She knew it was Sunday. She thought it must be the third of the month. If she was right, they would still be there, but if she were wrong. Then they would be dead, and it really wouldn’t matter.

With nothing more to do, she sat down, held tight onto the steering wheel, and prayed for help.

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Captain Paul Mitchell on board the USS Theodore Roosevelt CVN 71, wasn’t a happy camper today, and his crew on the bridge knew it. They did their best to stay out of the man’s way. Their ship left Newport News Shipyard in Virginia on the first of February to take part in a Naval exercise with the Brazilian Navy and other NATO allies. The operation was called JTFEX/TMD, it was to last almost a full month. The ship was scheduled to return on March the fourth. Everyone on board the aircraft carrier handled themselves great Paul thought, there were only minor repairs along the way.

The exercise itself went well for the most part, except for yesterday when a Dutch nuclear-powered sub sunk the Roosevelt along with eight other US ships, some of which were part of the carrier’s escorts. It was only March 3rd, but Paul had enough fun, and decided to return home early by a day, and take their time getting back to the States.

Known as the “Big Stick,” the Roosevelt was launched in 1984. Being a Nimitz Class Nuclear Powered Super Carrier, it has built up several awards and commendations. Among these were five “Battle E” awards, the “Navy Citation” and “Unit Commendations,” along with a “Batten-burg Cup,” and other citations for their CVW1 air wing, which was always present whenever the ship was deployed. The ship was named after President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who coined the phrase, “Speak softly, and carry a big stick, you will go far.”

The ship’s CVW1 air wing was comprised of four fighter squadrons of Super Hornets F-18s, and a squadron of EA-186 Growlers with electronic warfare capability, and fighter attack capabilities. With their E-2C Hawkeye flying, the plane extended the ship’s radar from a hundred and fifty to over three hundred miles all around the supercarrier. Even without its air wing, the ship had its own protection of Ram missiles, and Gatling Cannons, which could spit out thousands of rounds in a matter of seconds, and knock down planes, and missiles as far away as ten miles.

The Roosevelt also had its squadrons of Marines on board protecting the ship, and its arsenal of nuclear weapons. A Marine’s life onboard the ship wasn’t an easy one. Their drills were always considered live drills. Any time of day, or night, they could be called on, and you could find Marines running through the passageways, pointing their M16 at you. Even half naked, they would challenge you with their guns while holding a towel wrapped around their naked form. If you didn’t get out of their way, they would put you down to the deck in any manner they wanted. It was well known throughout the ship when the Marines were activated. They had sole control of any area on the ship. When activated, they would only take orders from their own men in their squadron, or from the XO, and captain of the ship.

“Captain, those six boats are getting really close to us,” the first-class petty officer of the watch informed Paul.

“Are they going to ram us, Petty Officer Richards?” came Mitchell’s ironic reply.

Paul knew the boaters would miss them by twenty minutes, and cross in their wake. He understood Richards was only doing his job of keeping him informed, but Paul just wasn’t in the mood for any bullshit today.

“No sir,” his first class told him. The guy tried to lighten the captain’s mood with a smile, but the look he got back from Paul killed his smile in mid-grin.

Suddenly, the radio man called out, “Captain, you better get in here. One of the boats coming our way is giving our call sign.”

Sitting in the captain’s chair, Paul jumped to his feet, quickly crossed the bridge to the radio room. As he entered the small, dark, compact room, he heard the panic of a woman’s voice through the speakers.

“Rough Riders, Rough Riders. This is Kate Johnson. I am an American citizen. I have dead and wounded on board, I need your help.” Then she added, “Rough Rider, Rough Rider, where the fuck are you? I need you now!”

“Sir, she must have been calling for us all along. She can’t have a very good radio because we only just now received her.”

“Rough Rider, Ruff Rider. I am being chased by five boats. I need your help. Please, dear God, where in the hell are you?”

Paul told his radioman to answer her, and get her on a different channel. The channel she was using was a public one, and the people in the boat chasing her may be listening to her conversation.

Leaning out of the radio room door, the captain yelled “All stop” to his crew handling the helm.

Tamra didn’t know how she was even standing. She couldn’t feel her body

anymore. She was numb all over. The boats would have her in fifteen minutes, and the last time she checked, Kelly and Tim barely had a heartbeat. She was reaching for her radio’s microphone again when a man’s voice came from the speaker.

“Kate Johnson, Rough Rider. Turn to Bravo Charley one three Whiskey.” Then he repeated it. “Kate Johnson, Ruff Rider. Turn to Bravo Charley one three Whiskey.”

Too tired to repeat all of it back to him, Tamra just told him, “Aye.” Then she switched her radio to the channel he wanted her on.

Back on the bridge of the carrier, the captain’s first-class petty officer came up behind the captain as Tamra’s voice was heard in the room once again.

“Rough Rider, Kate Johnson, I need your help! Where are you?” Tamra knew

she was close for her little radio signal to reach them, but she couldn’t see anything but open ocean all around her.

“Kate Johnson. What’s going on? Report.”

“I work for Mike Cunningham. Most of my team are still alive, and were being chased by the Dominguez cartel. We need your help!”

In the radio room, the captain was first to speak. “Mike Cunningham, that’s the fucking Deputy Director of the CIA. This is a special Ops gone sour. I’ll bet my last dollar on it,” he told the men in the room with him.

Paul knew just what was about to happen, and he also knew what he was going to have to do in order to put a stop to it. This is what the man did for a living. He controlled the might of the United States Navy in his hands, and he has worked with the CIA on more than one occasion. In the past, he has seen operations go sour before. Not only did he have to deal with the five boats, but soon there were going to be some very hyped-up and highly motivated CIA operators on his ship. Paul knew the first thing he need to do when he got them on board is to calm them down, and keep his Marines the hell away from them. The man had a shit storm coming his way, and he was the one who had to deal with it.

Paul turned to his FCPO, who was still trying to get his attention.

“Sir, the Normandy, and Anzio have broken off from the battle group, and are now under full power.”

Both ships, Paul knew, were only trying to protect the carrier, and that they

were more than a match for five tiny boats with their guided missiles, and the five-inch guns on the bow of their ships.

Turning back to his radio operator, Paul told the third-class petty officer to contact the battle group, and tell them the lead boat was friendly, and no one should fire on those other five boats unless directed to do so by him.

He then looked back to his FCPO, and the guy who was close by in the air. The First Class didn’t even have to think about it. “Major Thompson, Sir.”

“OK.” He turned back to the radio men. “Tell Major Thompson to give them assholes a haircut. Let see if we can’t slow them down some. Then Thompson can land and refuel.”

Paul knew they had one plane up there waiting to refuel, and he also knew

without asking that it had plenty of fuel to make one pass on the boats. He turned back to his first-class petty officer.

“Scramble two Knight Hawks, and get them out there. When you’re done with that, get some Marines down to the forward elevator, and tell them to remain cool. We’re trying to help these people, not kill them.”

He then directed his next order to the men in the radio room. “Also, someone

call Langley Virginia, and tell Mike Cunningham because of him we are about to start a fucking war with South America. Get him on the horn, immediately!”

A man’s voice boomed out of Tamra’s speakers, “Kate Johnson, turn your heading to two six four.”

Tamra’s mind was clouding over so much at this point she couldn’t tell two six four from seven eight nine.

“Rough Rider, Kate Johnson, I need north and south bearings. There’s no compass on board.”

“Kate Johnson, turn north by northeast. Turn north by northeast.”

“Rough Rider, how far away are you? I can’t see you; they’re going to get within shooting range of me any minute!”

The radio operator could hear the stress in Tamra’s voice. He tried to soothe her fears, “Kate, calm down girl, were just over your horizon. You are only minutes away from us. We have help coming to deal with the other boats. You should see them at any minute. When you get to us, go to the forward starboard elevator. We will lower it to the water level. The medical teams will assist you there,” he told her. “Hang in there girl, you’re almost home.”

Tamra picked up a machine gun, and off a few rounds at one of the leading boats, but because of the rough ride of her boat, and the fact that she was having trouble seeing. Her shots went wild, and short of hitting them.

A moment later, a Tomcat came flying in really low and fast over the water. At first, she thought it was going to fire on the boats. The plane was so incredibly low, water vapor got sucked up into its wake as it passed over the ocean. None of the men in the other boats seen it coming. As the jet flew low over the lead boat, the boat’s left side lifted out of the water. If it weren’t for the weight of all the men inside, it would have flipped over. As the boat slammed back down, it veered off, almost colliding with one of the other boats on its right.

The jet was well past them, and was already climbing high into the sky when all the men in the boats hit the deck, raising their arms, protecting their heads. Now they knew without a doubt the military was in the area, and knew their time was running out.

Looking forward in front of her, Tamra could now make out the aircraft carrier off in the distance. There was no mistaking the ship because it was huge and long as it stretched out across the horizon. Racing towards her position, two cruisers were under full steam. Their bow’s rose and fell, going over each wave. Tamra knew they would not get to her before the five boats got within firing range of her.

Wiping her eyes with a rag, she found blood all over the cloth. Cleaning her eyes did help to clear her vision some, but she was still lightheaded, and sick to her stomach and ready to drop. She had to hang on a little while longer. As she watched the cruisers make their way toward her, two dots flying low in the sky raced to her position from the carrier’s direction.

As rounds from the cartel’s guns begun slamming into her boat, Tamra started trading shots with the boats who were close enough to shoot at her. When she looked up next, and saw what the two dots in the sky were, she would have cried if she had the strength. She knew just what they were. Coming to their rescue were two MH 60 Knight Hawks with their hellfire missiles and six barreled Gatling guns. Both helicopters weren’t sparing the gas reaching her.

Hovering in midair, Tamra’s boat passed underneath them. Their rotor wash blew down on her from above. Hovering, they cut loose with their twenty-millimeter cannons, and opened fired in a strafing line in front of the five boats. Water shot up sixteen feet into the air wherever the rounds hit. A sound system came on, telling the boats to break off contact, or they would be fired upon next. Without delay, all five boats broke contact, turned around, and drove off back the way they came. Not giving them an inch of leeway, the two Knight Hawks stayed with them as they fled back towards the mainland.

Minutes later, Tamra drove in between both cruisers as they too, followed the group of five boats.

Paul had everyone on the elevator ready for when Tamra reached the ship. He ordered the elevator to be lowered as the two ship’s doctors with their medical team got ready with their life saving equipment. Four marines and their Sargent stood by the captain on the elevator as it was lowered down to the water.

Watching Tamra’s boat come towards them, Paul could see she wasn’t letting up on the throttle as she got closer to the ship. He was about to yell to everyone to get the hell away from the edge of the elevator when Tamra let up on the throttle and slammed her boat in reverse. As the two 300hp engines caught, her boat slowed, turned sideways, and stopped with a bump against the side of the elevator. As soon as the boat stopped moving, Tamra hopped out, giving the medical team more room in the small craft.

Everyone on the elevator hesitated, horrified by the sight in front of them.

Right away, Paul could see Tamra was on her last legs, and knew damn well she would not be making it much further. From where he stood, he could see the steel in her gray eyes had been contemplating death for some time. Even with her being totally wiped out, he knew she was still ready to embrace death or dish it out, as her facial expression remained emotionless and empty. The woman was cocked and ready, even though she was weaving back and forth, dying to rest. Paul has seen it a dozen times before, and he knew Tamra was a trigger waiting to go off at any second. Her chest and face were literally covered in dried blood. She had a forty-five in a shoulder holster, with two clips taped to her left leg, and a small handgun taped to her right thigh, with bulges in both of her front pockets. She also had a handle sticking up from her back. The woman was a walking arsenal.

The bottom of her boat was covered in blood, with three bodies lying on the deck. Paul knew these people didn’t just come through a shoot-out. They came from a war that involved hand-to-hand combat. Paul has seen operators come back dead and shot up before, but never in his career has he had to deal with an explosive situation like the one he was seeing right now in front of him. He figured only himself, and his sergeant were probably the only ones there who knew of the danger they all were in.

Paul opened his mouth to yell to all of his people when it happened. A young marine, seeing a helpless woman who was ready to give out, but carrying weapons, approached her, then he told her.

“I need to take your weapons.” The marine then did the stupidest thing anyone could ever do, Paul thought. He touched the back of her arm.

All hell, suddenly broke loose.

Tamra quickly broke the man’s arm, then smashed his face in with her knee as she jumped straight up into the air, crushing his nose midway into her jump. The three other marines rushed forward to aid their buddy, but Tamra was already back on the deck, spinning in place faster than a fastball. She hit the next Marine in his Adam’s apple, taking him off his feet. When the guy hit the deck, he was doing all he could do to just breathe. The last two marines got lucky, because she only threw them over the side of the elevator into the water.

Paul couldn’t believe it even as he watched it all happen. The best thing he could do was nothing. Paul knew the woman wouldn’t attack anyone as long as she herself wasn’t attacked first. Still disbelieving it, Paul watched as Tamra dispatched the last guy into the water, then pulled out her forty-five in a two-handed grip, pointing it at the group of men on the elevator. Paul’s fears suddenly came alive as he heard his Marines above them in the hangar bay, lock and loaded their weapons, getting ready to shoot down on her to kill her.

Raising his hands in the air, he spun around, looking up at the hanger deck above him, and screamed, “Hold your fire! Everybody don’t fucking move. Hold your fucking fire! Nobody fire! Nobody moves!” He pivoted back to Tamra.

“Kate. No one will harm you, but you have to disarm. Do you understand what I am saying, girl? Disarm, you’re safe now,” he told her, trying to calm her fears.

Paul could see the woman was so far gone; he didn’t think she knew what he was saying to her. Her whole body was still in-flight mode. She was an animal. Paul knew inside of herself; she was still just trying to survive. Kate held her gun pointed towards them, as she kept trying to look up to see the threat that was above her. Her body started swaying back and forth again.

The captain put some authority into his voice when he told her again, “Kate, I am telling you to disarm. This is my ship, and you will do as I damn well tell you. Now Disarm!”

No one on the elevator moved. Even the med techs in the boat stopped working on the wounded. The woman wasn’t responding to the captain’s order. Paul was trying to come up with a way of disarming her when a weak female’s voice spoke up from the back of the boat.

“Baby, you need to disarm. Drop your guns honey.”

Still holding her gun out in front of her, she seemed to hear the girl’s voice from far away, even though they were only twenty feet apart.

Cocking her head to the side, Butterfly said. “Wildcat?”

“Yes lover, it’s me. Now, disarm and do it right now,” she told her wife.

Slowly, Tamra took the gun in her hands and ejected the clip, then dismantled the weapon in two seconds flat, and let it fall to the deck in pieces. She then reached for the snub nose thirty-eight, and did the same thing. After ripping off the two remaining clips on her leg, she dropped them onto the deck. Reaching into her pockets, she pulled out two balls of C-4 with a detonator sticking out of both of them. Everyone watching flinched as she dropped them to the deck.

Tamra’s body was finally shutting down on its own. She stumbled from a standing position as she removed the machete from her back. The medical team went back to work on the three injured, and removed them from the boat, and laid them on the elevator.

Paul and his Marine Sargent kept their eyes locked on Tamra. They both watched as her body unwillingly started shutting down on its own.

“Somebody catch her before she hits the deck,” Paul ordered.

Moments later, Tamra fell like a tree face first, but the Sargent caught her in time. She was out like a light before he even touched her.

After tying their boats stern to the elevator, the sergeant opened the boat’s throttle. As he jumped back on board the elevator, he dropped both balls of C-4 on the deck of the boat. Another marine was cutting the ropes holding the craft. While the elevator rose to the hanger deck level, they watched the small boat move away from the ship. When it got far enough away, the Sargent triggered the C-4, and the boat blew all to hell.

While rising to the hanger deck level, Paul went over to Wildcat to get some answers. She was awake, but he knew she probably wouldn’t be for long.

“I know you need to rest,” he told her. “But I need to know what in hell is

going on here.”

“Were CIA operators on a reconnaissance mission gathering intel about the Dominguez cartel? We were sold out by an informant working at Langley.” As she told him about Spencer, Tess watched Paul’s eyes go wide open. “They have been trying to kill us ever since.”

Tears started rolling down her face, leaving streaks on her cheeks. “We left bodies everywhere we’ve been. They caught up to us in Santarem. There had to be forty or fifty men shooting at us at the boatyard. I think we killed them all.”

“The four of you killed fifty men?” Paul asked in disbelief.

“No, Sir. We killed a hell of a lot more than that since the mountains. Hell, we killed at least a hundred cartel men, plus one civilian within the last three, or four days. We had seventy-five pounds of C4 we took from them, we been blowing them to hell ever since. Tamra has a better count of the dead than I do. I got hit back at the boatyard, and don’t know what happened after that.”

Paul believed what she was telling him, but he was having a hard time in computing all of it in his mind. Two women, and two men out running a drug cartel, and killing a hundred men would stop any man in his tracks, and force him to scratch his head. He talked with her some more until he was satisfied with her answers.

When a Third-Class Petty Officer ran onto the hanger deck telling him Mike Cunningham was on the horn. Paul ran for the stairs, telling the guy to transfer it to his wardroom.

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Two days later, Tamra opened her eyes as someone was just about to inject

something into her Iv.

“What in the hell do you think you are doing?” She asked the guy as if he didn’t have her permission.

“It’s a painkiller,” he explained. “We’ve been giving you one every twelve hours.”

Tamra quickly sat up, pulling the Iv from her arm.

The captain had already given everyone explicit orders regarding all four of their guest. They were considered special guest, and were to be given leeway because they were not true military personnel. A marine was to stand guard by the bedside of each guest, making sure no one bothered them. If they went anywhere on board the ship, a marine was to accompany them wherever they went. Only the ship’s medical personal were to have any contact with them.

Tamra looked around, but curtains blocked her view. “Are any of them dead?”

“No,” her doctor quickly told her. “They’re all very much alive, Butterfly. Although Tinker is still in serious condition, Mammoth isn’t as bad as we first feared. The bullet hit Mammoth at a really sharp angle. It went in, and out through the side of his body without hitting a chest bone. He got very lucky. However, one round went through both of Wildcat’s legs, shattering the bone in her left leg. Her head wound was only a graze, but it’s going to take some time for her leg to heal.”

“Butterfly, the captain left explicit orders for the care of all four of you but, Wildcat is awake, and has been asking for raw meat to eat?”

Tamra listen to the guy, then told him. “Doc, I really appreciate everything you’re doing for us, but we’re not your average everyday kind of people. I want you to stop loading us up with painkillers. Doc, if we can’t feel, we can’t heal. Reduced our dosage, and it will help us out a lot more than over medicating us. And if we ask for raw meat, give it to us. All of us live in Alaska, you know that raw meat is the best thing for anyone in our condition. I don’t know what you have been told, but these three people aren’t just my teammates. Their also my husbands and my wife. I know what they need.”

Tamra got out of bed and tried to stand, but almost fell to the floor. Her marine, who was standing nearby, caught her in time. She told him to pick her up, and take her to see her family. After she kissed both men, who were both asleep, she went to see Tess, who looked dopey, but awake. Tamra’s marine stood close behind her with his hands on her hips as she and Tess held each other, and kissed.

From the expression on their doctor’s face, the young marine could see the guy didn’t like losing control over his sick bay, and be told what to prescribe to his patients. But neither he, nor the Doctor showed any reaction to how Butterfly and Wildcat were loving each other.

Again, Tamra told their doctor to make sure Tess was given raw meat, and for someone to feed it to her. Then she ordered her marine to take her to see the captain. She was thankful he was in great shape because the poor guy had to climb up six flights of steep stairs in order to reach the ship’s island, and the captain’s wardroom. Arriving at the Captain’s office, she told him to walk right in without knocking. The marine hesitated, but one look at Tamra’s expression, and he did as she told him. Since the day they showed up, stories about the four of them made their way around the ship, and about the weak, almost comatose female who took out four big marines faster than anyone could follow her movements. The marines on board the ship knew Tamra’s beautiful feminine looks were deceiving. They believed she was indeed a skilled killer, and would treat her with the utmost respect. Being held in high regard by the crew, Tamra knew she could take certain liberties to her advantage. When she was carried into the captain’s office, she wanted to take the man off guard because she had a demand for him.

The two men inside the office turned their heads at the rude interruption. The captain opened his mouth to yell at the person coming in but stopped short seeing Tamra in the arms of a marine. Both men quickly came to their feet as the marine carried her into the office, putting her in one of the chairs in front of the captain’s desk.

Sternly, Paul told her. “Kate, you need to be in bed. You haven’t healed enough to be running around the ship.”

“Trust me Paul. My husbands and wives keep me in bed way too much. I have to sleep in another bed chamber just to have time to myself. And call me Butterfly. Kate was my cover.”

Both men in the room wore the tan khakis an officer wares on board Naval ships. The officer standing next to her tried helping the captain.

“The captain is right, Butterfly. All of you need a month or two worth of rest. We didn’t think half of you even had a chance when you showed up.”

“John, we are a hell of a lot more resilient than any of you may realize,” she informed him.

John slowly looked over at his captain. His name tag pinned on his chest only gave his rank and last name.

Seeing his expression, Tamra told him. “Oh, I know your name, John. And that you’re the XO on board. Just as I know, Paul here has been married for twenty-four wonderful years to a sweet gal from Austin, Texas. But you, John. You really need to stay away from the strip bars off base. That stripper you picked up in Norfolk last year almost got you into trouble with those drugs she had on her.”

“Now, you wait just one damn minute,” John said quickly, going on the defensive.

“That’s enough,” Paul told both of them. He directed his next comment to his XO. “You better let me handle this myself. I’ll talk to you in a little while.”

Paul saw something coming from Tamra, and thought it would be best if he got his XO out of the way. Once John was gone, Mitchell sat back down behind his desk.

“OK, you got rid of him. What do you want?”

“Paul, I thought it would be best if we talked alone, that was the fastest way I could think of. Both of you are right. I do need to rest, and I am starving to death right now.”

“You’ll be able to get plenty of sleep on our way home. We were going back a day early, and you almost missed catching us. It’ll take us another week to get into US waters.”

“See, that’s what I needed to talk to you about, Paul. That isn’t going to work for us. We want to go home right now.”

“That’s impossible. Do you realize how far we are from the United States.” As a matter of fact, Tamra did.

“Paul, one of my jobs is information, and I am great at my job. That’s why I know all about you, and John, and just about anything about this ship. We four are highly specialized operators unlike the CIA has ever had, and when we want something, Paul. We take it. Without looking, I know you have on your flight deck a Grumman Greyhound which is outfitted with in-flight refueling. With one gas stop in the air, we can be back in the states within a day, and be back home to our island a day later. That, Paul, is what we want you to do for us.”

“Sweet Jesus, you’re not asking for much,” He almost asked her if she understood what that would cost the Navy, but he was pretty sure she already did. “Butterfly. I don’t have that kind of authorization to give that to you.”

“Yes Paul. I realize you don’t, but you can get it. When you talk to Mr. Cunningham. Tell him when we get home. I’ll tell him where the drug labs are located in the United States. You can also tell him to keep the fucking federal government off of our island.”

The words slipped out of Paul’s mouth before he could stop himself. “You sure have some attitude lady,” he told the woman sitting in front of him. Paul realized he just made a huge mistake. When Tamra came into his office, she looked weak, tired, and worn out, as if she needed to be in bed. But when Paul sounded off to her, her entire demeanor changed in a flash of a second.

Butterfly quickly stood up to her full height with gray blue fire in her eyes. She no longer looked to be the fragile woman with a gunshot wound in her side. It took only a fraction of a second, but standing in front of Paul was the same warrior who beat the hell out of four of his marines in a flash of a few seconds when she was totally exhausted. Butterfly was now showing Paul just how powerful she was right here in his wardroom.

Slowly, Tamra walked around his desk, totally confident of what she was doing.

Mike Cunningham had assured Paul they wouldn’t hurt anyone on board as long as they weren’t provoked. Paul was thinking of calling out for the marine out in the passageway when Butterfly began speaking to him. Her tone of voice was really low, but very calm. Paul thought it was the deadliest aspect about her.

“You listen to me, roger ram jet. I have been a fucking patriot all of my life, and on my first mission, someone in the United States Government sold us out. Almost half of my fucking family was wiped out.” Tears began to trickle down her cheeks; Tamra hoped she wasn’t overplaying the situation.

“I don’t know who for sure is trying to kill us. Was it the Dominguez cartel, or is the United States Government using the cartel to do its dirty work? If anything more happens to my family, you and the fucking government will have a war coming at you that you will not win. You don’t have a fucking clue who you are dealing with. Get me and my family home, and get us home now!” she ordered him.

Paul stood up when Tamra came around the backside of his desk. As she

reached him, she collapsed in his arms. He caught her, and put her in his chair as he reassured her.

“Butterfly, I’ll do what I can, and I’ll talk to the Deputy Director, but this isn’t my decision to make.”

“Paul, do you even know who Mammoth is?”

The Deputy Director told Paul they were CIA operators who had some unique skills, unlike their other operators, but he knew that isn’t what she meant.

He said, “No. I guess I don’t.”

“Paul, I am not joking when I tell you. Mammoth is one of the richest men in

the United States, he could buy you your own aircraft carrier. If word ever got out, he was being held here against his will. I think you can imagine what would happen, Paul.”

“Butterfly, no one is being held here and I told you. I’ll do what I can to get you guys home.” Paul watched as Tamra’s skin tone slowly turned back to white. He needed to get her back to the infirmary, and soon.

“I’m taking you back to your bed if that’s all you need.”

“No. There’s one more thing,” she told him. “I need to call home. Will you put it in through here?”

It took a few minutes for the call to be placed. While they waited, Paul brought a chair around his desk to sit by Tamra. He learned a little more about the operation, and the events that got them all to his ship. He still found it hard to believe as he told the Deputy Director of the loss of life during the operation, but Tamra confirmed what Wildcat told him.

“I don’t know how the four of you could even survive through that. The four of you should be dead. I’m sure your skills and training helped you, but anyone else would have died. I am sure this operation will set a record even by CIA standers.”

The phone rang.

Tamra reached over, and picked it up. “Hello.”

Janet’s voice was heard on the other end. “Tamra! I thought we weren’t supposed to hear from you guys for another few weeks?”

“Janet, listen. I don’t have a lot of time. Just do what I tell you. Hire a doctor, and a few interns, and bring them out to the Island. After that, shut the Island down. Put it under lock down until we get home, and kill any son of a bitch who comes out there. Do you understand me, Janet?”

“Yes, of course. I’ll do whatever you say, but where’s Kelly, Tess, and Tim? Are they OK?”

“No, Janet, we are far from being OK. We all got shot up. Tim was hurt the worst with a belly wound, and Kelly was hit in the chest again. We’re coming home,” she told her.

Janet exclaimed, “Oh, my God, Tamra!”

“Were all alive for now, Janet. We’re on board a US aircraft carrier off the

coast of South America. Just get that doctor, and pay whatever you have to but get him out to the Island, and keep him there. I hope to be home in two, or three days. We will come in by helicopter. And make sure the first aid room is ready for three people.”

During her conversation, Paul was watching Tamra questioningly. When she got off the phone, he said. “So, you guys really do live on an island?”

“Yes, we do. It’s called Heaven’s Gate Island. It’s off the coast of Maine. Paul, I know all of this sounds strange to you. But there is a hell of a lot more at stake here than just the lives of the four of us. We need to get home before something even worse happens. Everything I am doing here; I really am trying to protect the United States, and the four of us at the same time.”

Paul called out to the marine in the passageway. He wanted to get Butterfly back in bed as soon as he could. He walked down with her so he could check on the others. When Paul walked into the sick bay, Tess was being fed raw steak by her marine, who was cutting it, and feeding it to her. Paul was almost too afraid to ask Tony what in the hell was going on.

Tony saw the captain’s expression as he came into his sick bay. The Doctor told him, “That’s what I was told to feed them, and this one here.” He pointed over at Tamra, who was getting into bed. “Even told me to reduce the pain killers I’ve been prescribing them.”

“Is any of this going to hurt them?”

“For them, probably not. For anyone else, hell yes. However, the raw meat is rich in protein and vitamins as long as they can stomach it. Look at her.”

The doctor pointed over at Wildcat. Tess was wiping up the last bit of blood on the plate with her fingertips then cleaning them with her tongue.

“That’s her fifth steak so far. Captain, I am really starting to feel out of my depth around here.”

“Why is that?” Paul asked him.

“I can treat their wounds, but they have been here two and a half days, and Wildcat still seems to be starving to death.”

“How are they doing over all? Your reports tell me Tinker’s injures are more serious than the others.”

“Tinker is holding his own, and it’s the best we can hope for right now, but

Mammoth’s vitals are showing signs of improving. However, he has been draining his Iv bag on a regular basis, I still don’t know where in hell all of that fluid is going to.”

“Captain, we’re going to be needing a water buffalo.”

Paul was watching Tamra’s marine hand her a plate of raw steak when he snapped his head back to Tony.

“Say again? Why is that?”

Miller nodded in Mammoth’s direction. “When that guy wakes up, we’re going to be needing one just to feed him alone.”

Paul could see the Tony was fed up with the whole situation. The Doctor walked off into the other room talking to himself as the captain looked at the four team members. He wondered just who in the hell these fucking people really were?

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As soon as Mike got off the phone with Captain Mitchell, he called Barbra to his office. He wasn’t in the mood to be dealing with any of this crap. Captain Mitchell needed Mike to request flight orders from COMNAVSURFLANT: Commander of Naval Surface Forces, United States Atlantic Fleet. Mike was tired. He has had little sleep ever since they received Tamra’s frantic phone call about the security leak at Langley.

It took less than a day, but Steven Spencer now had an army of people following him everywhere he went, without the guy even knowing about it. Director Mellon told Mike personally he wanted to know how many pieces of toilet paper the man used when he went to the can. They bugged his apartment, and his car. There wasn’t a place he didn’t go to where they weren’t recording his conversations, and taking pictures. So far, Spencer hasn’t been in contact with his South American buddy, but when he did. They planned on taking them both into custody. The guy couldn’t make a run for it even if he were aware they knew about him. The twenty-four-hour surveillance they had on him would prevent him of that. Mike, and the Director of the CIA wanted his contact, and they wanted him really bad.

And now Tamra’s demand of her team to be flown home has landed in Mike’s lap. “She said what?” Barbra asked, shutting the door to Mike’s office behind her.

“She let the captain know if they didn’t fly them all home at once, she was going to have a meltdown on board the ship.”

“Mike, she’s scared,” Barbra told him. “Half of the family was shot all to hell during a lousy reconnaissance mission. Tim’s condition is still touch and go, and I don’t think Kelly has woken up yet. They may have blown the hell out of the Dominguez cartel, but they were in a war down there. She wants all of them to be safe. She’ll find that on the Island.”

“Barbra, she believes our government might have had something to do with what happened to them down there.” He asked her, “What in the hell did we do?”

Barbra walked around his desk pulling him to his feet, and kissed him. “Mike, you know my report about what’s on our island wasn’t exactly accurate. I know you understood that after being out there yourself, you took my word as it was. For that I thank you, but until you marry me, and marry into the family. I cannot tell you why Tamra fears the government is after them.”

“Barbra, you know how I feel about you. I can’t even think about that while all of this other stuff is still going on.”

“Mike, this is the CIA and there will always be shit going on. Did you really believe Kelly bought me a forty-foot sailboat? Mike, he bought that damn boat for you, not me.”

Mike smiled as he placed his arms around her, pulling her closer to his embrace. “Yes, I got that impression, and I love spending time with you on it. We still need to do something about Tamra. They all need to be debriefed. They have information that we really need.”

“Then get them home and defuse the situation. Anyway, I think they all earned it and remember, it was the CIA that hired Spencer in the first place. Indirectly, we were the cause of their problems down there.”

“You and I also need to go home, and talk to them.”

“Captain Mitchell said Tamra put the Island under lock down.”

“Ya, I know. Knowing them, it could be a bit risky going out there.” She kissed him again, then smiled. “But don’t worry about it lover. I’ll do my best to protect you, sweetie.”

Mike’s phone rang.

When he set the receiver back down, he quickly picked up the remote control, and turned on the flat screen on the wall.

“Their showing something on the Early Morning Show we need to watch,” he told her.

The program just started as the screen came to life. “Good morning, welcome to the Early Morning News. My name is Tiffany Johnson.”

Tiffany gave everyone a smile made for champions, but anyone watching her could see she was very serious this morning as she gave her opening statement.

“A Japanese airliner carrying a hundred and sixty-seven passengers was fired

on by a North Korea fighter jet over the Sea of Japan early yesterday evening. The machine gun fire sheared off part of the left wing to the Airliner. We were told the plane almost inverted it’s self in midair before the heroic actions of the pilots regained enough control over the aircraft to crash into the Sea of Japan. Moments later, a Mitsubishi fighter jet belonging to the Japanese Air Force returned fire, and shot down the North Korea jet.”

Mike knew all about this. Half the state department, including him and the rest of the CIA, has been going over the situation all night. North Korea told them the event was caused by pilot error. Mike knew that was bullshit. Anyone who had to deal with these aircraft knew the guns on those planes didn’t go off by accident.

**“**Fishing boats and merchant ships from both nations watched in horror as both plains fell out of the sky. Ships in the area rushed to their rescue, and began pulling people out of the water as fast as they could. We don’t have an exact count of the dead, but we were told about a hundred people either died in the crash, or drowned during the event. They fear the pilot’s to the Japanese Airliner didn’t survive the crash.”

“The pilot of the North Korea aircraft ejected himself out of his plane moments after his plane was fired on. Japanese authorities picked him up hours later, and have been holding him to question him about the midair incident. Japanese authorities believe the North Korea jet may have been shooting at the Mitsubishi fighter when the Airliner got in the way.”

“President Kim Jong-Un, the Supreme Leader of North Korea, declared that Japan has no right to criticize the establishment of North Korean air defense zone, which they say is in accordance with international law. The capital city of Pyongyang was also demanding the Japanese government to release their pilot back to them at once. Kim Jong-Un has increased their naval forces by sending another aircraft carrier battle group into the area of the Sea of Japan. Nonstop flights from North Korea’s Air Force are now patrolling the area around the crash site, and along their eastern coastline. North Korea warned Japan, and the United States, and NATO allies to keep all air and surface craft out of their waters, and air space, or they would be shot down, or sunk by force.”

“Japanese officials have assured North Korea, and the United States they are merely holding the pilot until an investigation has been made into the cause of why the airliner was fired on. The North Korea pilot is now being held on a military base in Okinawa, Japan, in order to protect him from the thousands of demonstrators who are angered over the loss of their countrymen, and because of North Korea’s contemplative actions.”

“When asked if President Obama would beef up Naval forces in the area of Japan. We were told our forces have already been increased in anticipation of further conflict between the two nations. Japanese officials have told the Obama administration. They are waiting for the situation to cool down before diving for the remaining bodies, and the black box in the airplane’s tail. No further comment was given by the White House over the conflict with Japan and North Korea.”

“Back here in the States. A Marin County man who fell into the San Francisco Bay on Friday was allegedly trying to throw his wife off of the San Mateo-Hayward Bridge during a heated argument, San Mateo County’s district attorney said.”

“Anthony Clinton, forty-six, of Mill Valley, appeared in court Monday to be arraigned on one felony count each of attempted murder and domestic violence in connection with the bizarre attack which took place on the bridge at around 4:25 am on Friday morning.”

“Also, in the news. In Phoenix, Arizona over the weekend. Police say fifty-one-year-old Tony Peterson killed his estranged wife and daughter along with his brother-in-law. Peterson’s wife and daughter, previously had moved out of the home, but Mr. Peterson was supposed to leave the house while his wife and daughter gathered some of their belongings. Peterson showed up at the house, and shot his brother-in-law, who was waiting in his truck before he chased down his wife and sixteen-year-old daughter, and shot, and killed them both. After setting fire to his wife’s body, Peterson fatally shot himself.”

“Wow, those poor families. Tiffany, I thought I read the crime rate was down from a few years ago,” Scott asked.

“Some crime didn’t even drop at all, Scott. Murders dropped about two percent. But even saying that there were still 12,664 murders in the United States in 2012, 8,553 of them were caused by gunfire alone. However, throughout the whole US, only thirty-two murders were executed and put to death that year. Which, to me, sounds like the taxpayers are paying for the housing of over twelve thousand new people every year in our prison systems.”

“Across the United States in 2012. There were 1,214,462 violent crimes that occurred nationwide. The United States is also reported to have the highest cases of reported rapes in the world. Every year at least 90,000 women and children are attacked, and raped, with one out of every six white Caucasian females, and one out of three Native American females being raped every year. In the State of Maine alone, one out of sixteen rapists will walk free, as sixty-one percent of sexual assaults are never reported. Out of those reported, 50.8 percent are arrested, with only eighty percent of those arrested ever seeing prosecution and fifty-eight percent receiving a felony conviction. Of the thirty-nine percent of rapes that are reported to police, there is only a 16.3 percent chance the rapist will end up in prison.”

Tiffany set her report down, and looked directly into the camera.

“Folks, I know these numbers sound harsh, but this is a fact of life we live with every day, and we never think about it. I believe as the world gets more populated, these numbers will continue to increase. There is so much information on crime statistics it’s hard to weigh it all out. The statistics produced by the FBI alone need to be written in a simpler fashion, as it’s very hard to get a clear picture of what’s really happening in our country. Because of that, one might think the federal government is deliberately covering up what is going on across our nation.”

Tiffany continued with her report.

“Elsewhere in the news. We received this next footage from two American

tourists vacationing in South America. The Americans were there to backpack the mountains of the Amazon for a month. While they got ready for their trip, they stayed in a little town called Santarem, along the Amazon River in Brazil. However, on their second day in Santarem, they found themselves with front row seats to a war. The fact is, we don’t really know who any of these people are in the footage, and we can only guess it may have been a war between cartels. Except for the two young women, who you will clearly see are American citizens.”

“This footage that you are about to see was taken from the tourist’s second-floor window of their hotel room. Our film editors here at the Morning Show have been trying to clean up the picture, but it is still hard to make out anyone’s faces. However, the actions of these two women are nothing but astonishing. I must warn you. You are about to see a battle still in progress, and there are many bodies lying on the ground. If you have any small children in the room with you, please have them go into another room for a moment, as the content of this next report is

violently disturbing.”

“Whoever these two women are on this footage, it looks as if they are moving at an incredible rate of speed. Our editors here at the morning show figure the footage must have been damaged. We could only clean up the video some. Anyway, brace yourself folks, this isn’t going to be pleasant at all.”

The picture shifted from the Washington, DC studio to a parking lot with a mess of overturned cars on fire beside a river. There were two enormous craters in the ground sixty feet apart with thirty, or forty dead bodies, and car parts scattered all over the lot, and out into the street. The small building with its gas tank for the boatyard was in pieces. Flames of gas were still shooting twenty feet into the air out of its pipe. Two troop transport trucks that were parked in the street in front of the parking lot were the only two vehicles not destroyed in the firefight. The result of the conflict was so devastating, and catastrophic to human life. there wasn’t anything in the area that wasn’t touched by the brutal force of the battle. Every window in the area was blown out. The entire wall of the three-story building on the other side of the parking lot was demolished by the fragments from the battle.

On the right side of the screen, three men were pointing their weapons at someone, there were more men behind the transport trucks, and hiding behind overturned cars.

Suddenly, a small girl appeared by the burning gas tank. She was moving too fast for a human being, the camera had trouble getting a clear picture of her, or of what she was doing to the men she found alive. But as she ran away from each man, they fell to the ground, not moving.

On the left side of the parking lot, a tall woman with blond hair showed up closer to the camera. She shot three men hiding behind some cars. Then she put her gun away, and started using her bare hands as she ripped out the throats of every man she found alive. The girls were inhumanly fast, and got on the guys before they could even defend themselves. The tall female reached one of the big trucks in the street, she killed two the men behind it. The camera’s picture froze just as she bit into the neck of the last guy behind the first truck. In the background, the smaller woman was caught falling to the ground as her legs got shot out from under her by two guys under the other truck.

“We’re going to stop the footage right there,” Scott told them. “It just gets more gory and uglier at that point.”

He directed his next comment to Tiffany. “Tiffany, that had to be some kind of terrible movie being played out.”

“No, Scott. I am afraid it wasn’t,” she assured him. “However, the South American government isn’t confirming that it even happened, but I talked to the American couple who filmed it, and they convinced me—”

Barbra was already reaching for Mike’s phone as the Deputy Director shut off the TV, and yelled, “Barbra, get a hold of every damn station in the country, and get me every piece of that damn video! Then find those people who taped it, and bring them home!” He ordered.

“Son of a bitch!”

Mike slammed his fist down on top of his filing cabinet. He couldn’t believe what he just saw. The film didn’t clearly show it, but Mike was sure of what he saw. Tamra and Tess were ripping out the throats of those men with their bare fucking hands and teeth.

“Did you know about any of this? I mean, what they can do?” he asked Barbra. Barbra was still talking on the phone as Mike spoke to her. After she got some people working on the Deputy Director’s request, she set the phone down.

“I told you I can’t answer questions like that, Mike.”

“Barbra, did you see what they did? Oh my God. They were up against a fucking army of men!”

“Yes, I saw it,” she told him in a matter-of-fact way. “I saw them fighting for their lives against a force that by all rights should have killed all of them. They’ll be home soon. I think we both need to go out there. You can ask them for yourself about all of this. I don’t think they’ll lie to you, Mike.”

# Chapter 6

# Last line of defense

Mike got Captain Mitchell his authorization to fly the Winstons home. Paul loaded them into a Grumman Greyhound along with medical personnel, and flew them all to MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa Bay, Florida. For the last leg of the trip, a Boeing Chinook helicopter would transport them the rest of the way to Heaven’s Gate Island. The trip took less than two days, but it was still hard on the injured men and women.

Kelly woke up a few times during the flight, but there wasn’t any improvement at all with Tim. The pilot of the Chinook helicopter radioed Heaven’s Gate Island before they reached Maine to inform Janet, and Sandra that their family was almost home, and to make sure everything was ready for them when they arrive.

The following day, Barbra and Mike slowly made their way into the inlet of Heaven’s Gate Island. The Island was deathly quiet. Barbra stood on the bow of the boat, making it abundantly clear to anyone watching who she was. As they approached the docks, she told Mike to stop the boat twenty feet short from the pier.

“What’s wrong?” He asked as he stopped the boat. “It seems quiet to me,” he told her.

It was true; there was only a light wind blowing the swale grass on top of the dunes. Mike couldn’t see anyone nearby, or around the dunes, but he knew Barbra had better instincts than he did in these situations.

“Someone is watching us,” she warned him.

Finally, she told him to go ahead and dock the boat they loaned from Tessa’s father. Barbra explained to Mr. Mitchel this was a surprise visit, and they didn’t want to call for a ride out to the Island. As soon as Mike put the boat in gear, gunfire cut across the bow in front of the boat, sending pieces of wood flying as the bullets chewed up the pier. Mike dove for the safety of the boat’s deck, but Barbra didn’t move an inch as water splashed up getting her wet.

Screaming up at the empty dunes in front of her, she yelled out. “Oh, would you just cut out your fucking bullshit?”

Leaping off the bow, she jumped the twenty feet onto the pier, then ran up the path between the dunes as fast as she could. Her eyes had caught movement from the right side of the path. She figured that’s where the gunfire was coming from.

As she came around the sand dunes, Tamra was coming off a mound carrying a machine gun in each hand. She stopped thirty feet from Barbra. Slowly, Barbra walked towards her as she ordered the younger woman to drop her weapons.

Tamra was unwilling to do as Barbra told her. She stepped closer to Tamra. “Think about what you’re doing, Tamra. You just shot at me. Of all the people in the fucking world to shoot at. You know damn well I am on your side, so drop the guns.”

Barbra kept her eyes locked on Tamra’s. Tamra’s eyes quickly looked behind her. Mike must be approaching them. The reality of the situation must have finally caught up to her because Tamra dropped the guns in the grass at her feet.

“Tamra, all of these secrets about all of us, and what we have hiding in the damn cellar are making all of you guys paranoid. The government, and the CIA for that matter aren’t trying to harm anyone of you. I understand why none of you want to let the rest of the world know what is really happening out here, but Kelly’s paranoia has you guys shooting at shadows, not to mention your own damn family members.”

She could see by the younger woman’s expression that Tamra wasn’t going to hold in everything that she, and the rest of them went through. She already had tears streaming down her cheeks.

“You don’t know what we went through. We were running for days killing everybody we fucken ran into. I even killed a damn civilian, Barbra. He was a fucking innocent person. He didn’t have a thing to do with any of it. They found us in Santarem because you guys let that fucking rat into the CIA. I want him, Barbra. I want his fucking blood in my mouth and on my hands. I want his bloody scent all over me,” she screamed at the older woman.

Barbra spoke softly to her wife. “Look who you’re talking to, Tamra. I am the one person in the world who does know what you all went through down there. Tamra, shit like this happens every once in a while. Deal with it. We’ll have Spencer and his contact soon, but there is no way I will give him over to you, even if I could. After we’re done with him, he’ll be going straight into a very special penitentiary. He’ll sit in a six by eight cell, and won’t be able to talk to, or see another human being, but his guards for the rest of his life. Hell, he’ll only see the sky for an hour once a week. Tamra, most men like him don’t last very long in there. You guys were set up, but even saying that. Mike, and I need your report, and we want it right now.”

Mike slowly walked up from behind Barbra, and he took Tamra in his arms.

Kissing her, she held onto him. After she quieted down, they sat on the grass as she told them everything that had happened. Both Mike and Barbra were astounded by the story she told them. When she was done, Barbra pulled Tamra to her feet and placed her arms around her.

“Remember when I told you I was the one person who understood what you went through?”

Tamra nodded her head, “Yes.”

Barbra got Tamra, and Mike both laughing when she finished with. “Well, after hearing your report. You just might want to forget I said that.”

Walking together to the house, Tamra told them to stay close by her because they were still under lockdown. They followed her to the side of the home, then they climbed over the porch railing. Quietly, they made their way towards the front door. Approaching every window, Tamra stopped, and looked inside before moving on. Reaching the front door, they found it was cracked open a few inches.

Tamra got really close to it. “Janet?”

Somewhere inside the house, they heard Janet’s voice, “I’m here.”

Tamra told her before opening the door, “Lockdown is lifted. Two are with me. Stand down.”

When they walked inside, Janet was getting off the rug on the second floor holding a Saw Machine gun while Sandra came around from behind the staircase carrying a Swedish K nine-millimeter. Janet descended the stairs with her guns tripod hanging down from the front of her weapon. Both women had hand grenades pinned to their bulletproof vests. Sandra had extra ammo sticking from her pockets, while Janet had hers lying around her neck. Everyone went in to see the three injured in the first aid room.

Walking into the ER, Barbra noticed none of the nurses, or the Doctor paid any attention to the three of them being armed to the teeth. Tess looked to have her color back on her rosy cheeks, and was being fed by one of the female nurses as they came in.

“Hi guys, I’m Stephanie.” An attractive blond-haired nurse said, smiling at them. She looked at Tamra. “Tess won’t eat unless I feed her,” the nurse told her.

“Ya, I bet she won’t,” Tamra said, eyeballing Tessa, who tried her best to look helpless, and fragile, but failed miserably. Tamra kissed her, and Barbra gave her a hug, and a kiss, then they moved on to Kelly and Tim.

Doctor Patterson was just finishing taking Tim’s vitals himself when they walked over to them. Barbra first went to Tim, who was asleep. She kissed him, brushing her face against his as she took his scent.

“He’s doing well, considering the location of his injury,” the Doctor told them. “Belly wounds are difficult to repair, and usually require repeated surgery because of the thin tissue in that region. I see no sign of septicemia, and because of that, I don’t think any of his sutures are leaking. He’s doing well, but we’ll keep a twenty-four-hour watch on him until he’s out of danger.”

“Tamra, what in the hell are you guys doing?”

Kelly woke up, and saw all the firepower in the room, and was immediately concerned. They went over to him, and after getting a few kisses, and hugs from both women, and a handshake from Mike; he asked her again. “Well, what the hell’s going on?”

“Target practice, baby, nothing more.” She lied to him with a smile and another kiss.

Kelly looked over at Janet and Sandra by Tessa’s bedside and said. “Oh, yeah really. When was the last time we used hand grenades at the rifle range?”

Tamra just held onto him, and nobody else would look him in the eye.

When no one answered him, he asked. “Do we have any rabbits? I’m starving. Maybe you should butcher one of the deer. We haven’t done that in a while.”

After debriefing three of the family members, Mike could now complete his own report, and deliver it to Roger, who had been waiting impatiently ever since they heard about Spencer. When Mike got back to Langley the next night, he found the team that had been following Steven had caught him meeting with his Brazilian contact. An army of men moved in on them at a downtown restaurant in Washington, DC, as both men came outside. They caught them unaware. They were now in detention cells waiting to be interviewed.

Over the next few weeks, Mike was very busy. He knew Barbra was back from the Island, but he had very little time to give her. It was so late by the time he left work; he just went home alone. Anyway, he was feeling very different after Barbra and he spent their first night together in the crow’s nest. Not that he was feeling poorly, as a matter of fact, he felt great. However, it was his thought process which told him something was happening to him. Barbra told him to expect something, and that it would happen over a period of time as she slowly shared more of herself with him. All Mike knew was he felt like a thousand bucks, and his thinking was crystal clear. It seemed people were paying even more attention to him when he was speaking with them.

Spencer sang out like a brass band as soon as Mike walked in to talk to him. He answered all of Mike’s questions, leaving out no detail of his actions. The man’s spine seemed to have been ripped from his body by being caught, but the Brazilian was a different story.

When Mike started pressing the man, the guy let slip some information, which started a landslide of intelligence he gave Mike. Leaving his interrogation room, Mike saw the strange look in the guy’s eyes. He clearly didn’t understand why he gave Mike the information so easily.

Roger, and a few other officers who were watching the exchange by camera were laughing, and clapping their hands when Mike came out of the interview room. Laughing, Roger slapped him on the back, telling him he did an excellent job. Roger then directed Mike, and Barbra to come up with a plan to take out the Dominguez cartel.

Just being near Barbra, Mike felt empowered by her. The Island, and everyone on it was never far from his mind. He loved being there, and it wasn’t just because he could go sailing. The thoughts of Tamra, along with Janet, and her thick Irish accent, kept him warm throughout the day. Mike realized he would have to decide what he was going to do about the situation with the family. He loved Barbra, and the rest of them, but changing his life after all these years wasn’t a simple thing for a man like him to do.

Three and a half weeks after leaving the Island, he went back because Barbra told him there was something he needed to see. She met him at the Belfast pier with the Freeloader, they spent two wonderful hours making love out in the ocean currents before going home.

When they drove into the inlet of the Island, Barbra told him. “Tamra, Kelly,

and Tess want to be on point during the Dominguez operation.”

Mike cocked his head to the side. “I don’t see how that could be possible. There is no way they could have healed in time. Tess alone will be in a cast for the next two months at least, and the raid has already been scheduled.”

“That’s why you’re here,” she explained. “There is something you need to see,” she told him.

After docking the boat, they took the path to the house, but instead of going in through the front door. Barbra took them around to the side of the house where the pool was. Turning the corner, Mike stopped dead in his tracks as he stared in astonishment at the Winstons around the family pool.

Incredibly, Tess was nude as usual. She was getting out of the pool as Kelly stood off to the side, directing her.

“Make a tighter ball, Tess. It’ll increase your speed, and give you more height,” he told her. “Try it again.”

She ran back onto the lawn. Turning back to the pool, and with no hesitation, she ran at the pool with everything she had. Mike couldn’t even make out the form of her body. She just was moving too fast. All of a sudden, she dropped to the ground, and formed into a ball, and rolled. Just before she came in contact with the stonework around the pool, she sprang up into the air in an arc sixteen feet high, and dove into the deep end of the pool, without hardly making any ripples on the water.

“Hey, there you are.” Kelly said, turning around. “I thought we might have to come after you two.”

Kelly accepted one of Mike’s hands, and gave him a bear hug, squeezing the air from his lungs with his other arm.

“We’ve been waiting for you,” he told them.

Mike tried covering up his surprise over Tessa’s performance, and recovery but failed badly. He knew damn well she shouldn’t be walking for months with a busted femur bone. When Tess got out of the pool, she ran over, and got him wet giving him the family’s customary kiss, and a hug, but no hip action this time.

Janet and Sandra were topless, and greeted him in the same fashion.

Kelly was just finishing kissing Barbra when Mike asked. “Where’s Tim? How is he doing?”

“Why don’t you ask him for yourself? He’s right behind you,” Kelly told him.

Mike turned around, Tim and Tamra were coming out of the house together through the double glass doors. Tim was wearing shorts, and no shirt. Mike couldn’t see anything wrong with him, or any of them, for that matter. They all seemed perfectly healthy.

Tim greeted him, then Tamra kissed him. He took her into his arms and gave it right back to her. Breaking free, she held onto him, and asked. “Are you ready to marry us Mike, or do you still have cold feet?”

Mike knew she wasn’t screwing around; she was being very serious. He didn’t know what to tell her. Looking around at everyone there, they were all intently watching him. That’s when he noticed Tess handing Barbra her necklace. He noticed everybody there had their necklaces on as well.

He didn’t let go of Tamra as he directed his next comment at Barbra, “You little bitch, you set me up.”

Barbra told him flat out as she placed her necklace around her neck. “Hey, whatever it takes to get the job done is my motto. Mike, you needed to come out here. You and I, both know it.”

Tamra brought Mike’s attention back to her. “You have been getting closer to me, and the rest of the family for a while now. I have already talked to everyone, and we all believe you’re ready, but there’s still something in you holding you back from us. Your job is one of them, but Janet told us there was something else hidden deeper within you. We all know there’s something disturbing in your past that is keeping you from getting closer to the family. We all think it’s time we show you one of our greatest secrets.

“Please, come with me,” she told him.

Taking him by the hand, Tamra drew him inside the house as everybody followed them. She brought him to the cellar vault. The heavy metal door was already open when they got there. They all descended into the cellar.

At the bottom of the stairs, Mike saw tunnels leading off from the room they were in. A double swinging door with no lock, or doorknob was on one wall, and on another was a normal door, Tamra stopped in front of it. She turned to face him before she opened it.

“Mike, you are about to see something very few people in this world have ever seen. No one who has ever been in this room has come away from it unchanged. Mike, all of us here are part of an ancient society that’s so old that we ourselves really don’t know how old it is. The organization has been hiding secretly from the rest of the world for thousands of years. To this date, we haven’t wanted to hurt anyone, but mankind is slowly killing themselves and our planet. The people in this world should have already started evolving into their next stage of development, but they haven’t. It’s because of their thinking process, and the screwed-up societies of the world are the reason. You’re killing and hurting each other, and you’ll never stop. Our organization is now ready to do something about it. Only Kelly understands what may, or may not happen. Because he is alive today, we know. We will change the world whether people want it changed or not.” She finished with, “After you go into this room. All of us will know if we should let you off this island alive.”

You can go inside now,” she told him.

Mike was trying to absorb everything Tamra was telling him, and he had about a thousand questions, but first. He wanted to see what was inside of that room.

Tamra opened the door for him. As soon as he crossed the threshold, Mike almost fell to his knees. The brutal force of energy in the room, hit him so hard, it made his heart race, and left him gasping for air. Holding onto the wall with both hands for support, he forced himself to breathe. The air he was breathing didn’t feel like air at all. He was breathing an overpowering flood of love, understanding, and death. It sent his head spinning as he took in each breath. He could feel it downstairs below him, and it knew he was here; it was waiting for him. Mike paused a moment, trying to get used to breathing the thick air.

Looking down the stairs, the stairway was eight feet wide. At the bottom, he could see a black marble floor. Slowly, while holding the wall for support, he made his way down the stairs. He could hear everyone following behind him. With each step he took, he could feel the force getting stronger the closer he got to it. When he reached the bottom step, he couldn’t move, as his emotions were consumed by the overpowering feelings from the object in front of him. It was almost too much for any human being to deal with, as his whole body was whitewashed in a tsunami of feelings, thoughts, and desires.

In awe, he looked around the room. They were in a cave-like room made of pure gold covering the walls, and ceiling. Everywhere around the room was a sea of wealth on the floor, and walls. Everything in the room directed you to the center object. There were stacks of gold bars, and silver along with an immense pile of diamonds laying on the floor. Mike didn’t know about art, but on the walls were

paintings, small and large. Torches were spaced out on the walls with bright blue, yellow, and white flame casting shadows all around the great room.

Mike thought the lighting for the object itself was the most wonderful aspect of the display. All of the lighting was hidden. You couldn’t see where the colored light was coming from. There were thousands of different colors directed around the object, and on the wall behind it, but only the color of solid white rested intensely on the object itself.

Tears poured continuously from his eyes. He didn’t bother wiping them away. No one had to tell him what he was looking at, and it wasn’t fake because his skin was crawling on fire, and his heart opened for the only God there ever was, or will ever be. Standing in front of him was the cross of Jesus Christ, Mike believed it was real with his whole being.

The old cross stood all by itself on a black marble floor. There was nothing holding it in place. It was about seventeen feet tall, and it was indeed made of a tree. The upright was rounded, and so was its cross member. You could see where the branches were cut away after the tree was chopped down. Mike walked up closer to it, but he didn’t make it far before he fell to his knees when he saw the red stains soaked into the wood of the tree. Blood stained the wood where his feet, and hands were nailed to the cross. Mike reached out his hand to touch it, but he couldn’t bring himself to do it.

Tamra and Janet, grabbed hold of him as he broke down, crying for God, for himself, and for the rest of humanity. He remembered what they had done to Him before they had put Him up there, and Mike was now truly feeling it for the first time in his life. He could feel the pain, and love as everything rushed at him so fast his mind, and body couldn’t handle it. Black spots swarmed in his vision just before he passed out.

Sometime later, when he came too, Tamra, and all the girls were around him, holding him up. He looked around the room. Kelly and Tim had their hands on his shoulder.

“Kelly. Oh, my... why didn’t you warn me?”

“Trust me Mike,” Kelly told him. “The Cross has been in my family for a very long time, and it wouldn’t have made any difference. No one can be truly prepared to meet God. He’s just too powerful.”

Mike looked back to the Cross, he said to no one in particular. “Don’t you think the world needs to see this? Shouldn’t this be on display somewhere?”

“Mike,” Janet said to him. “Think about your statement, and about what would happen if the world knew about the cross. Wars would start over it, millions of people would die, and if that didn’t happen, someone else would want to destroy it. We don’t have any proof, but we believe the organization started with his cross. We believe they started protecting it after he died, and we continue to do the same to this day. If the world could get to where we could trust the safety of the cross to be displayed. We would love to share it with the rest of the world, but that day has yet to come.”

He had to agree with Janet’s logic. Nations everywhere would want ownership over it. He was also sure there were select groups of people who would definitely

try to destroy it.

After a while, he was getting accustomed to the shock of being in the room. Looking around, he saw something off to the side that he had missed before. Standing, he walked over, and saw an assortment of items lying in a small pile on the floor near the cross. The first item that caught his eye was, Tom Clancy’s novel, “The Sum of All Fears.” Written on its cover in a thick red marker were the words, “I Will Always Love You.” There was also an old silver Colt forty-five pistol, and even a whiskey flask wrapped in leather.

Mike’s hands were shaking as he took his wallet out and removed a picture from it. Tamra and Barbra came up to him, and asked who the girl in the photo was.

Their question started his tears flowing again as he answered them. “Her name was Cheryl. We were nineteen when it was taken. A few weeks later, she disappeared. We know someone took her, but we never found her body, or the person who was responsible for her death.”

Barbra urged him, “You can leave it here if you want to.”

Laying the picture on top of Tessa’s book, he turned back to the family who were waiting for him. They were all looking at him. He didn’t understand why until Kelly extended his open hand. Laying in Kelly’s hand were five engagement rings and six thin gold bands. Mike took one of the engagement rings, and a gold band in one hand, and went to Barbra first.

They all slept in the great bedchamber that night. Two days later, after their morning run, they ate breakfast. At the breakfast table, Kelly handed Mike a folder. Inside the folder were instructions for Mike and Barbra. After reading through it a few times, Mike looked over at Kelly as he finished his breakfast of eight eggs, an enormous pile of fried potatoes half the size of the plate, twelve link sausages, four slices of toast, a large glass of whole milk, and a large orange juice.

“You know, eating like that is going to kill you,” he pointed out. Kelly just

smiled at him as he wiped his mouth with a cloth napkin.

“He’s not allowed to eat like this all the time,” Tamra explained. “This is a special breakfast because of the wedding. Tomorrow, he goes back to fruit, granola, and skim milk. You’ve been sleeping, and didn’t notice how he couldn’t get to sleep last night. However, you saw how he pushed all of us to hurry to finish the run this morning. Mike, you’ll soon find Kelly uses everything in his life to his advantage.”

“Well, I don’t see any advantage in this folder, Kelly. You’re laying yourself, and the Island wide open. Even if we can do what you’re asking. People are going to know about you, and the whole family. Are you sure you want us to do this?”

“It has to be done Mike,” Kelly told him as he washed off his empty plates in the sink. “Even if I have to blow this island all to hell. It has to be done. Your people know some of what we can do because of that video taken at Santarem, but not everything. Right now, we have a foothold in the United States Government with us working for the CIA. We are highly valuable people to them. I think they will be willing to listen to us now.”

Sandra stayed behind when the rest of the family left with Mike and Barbra. Sandra told Tamra she didn’t mind being on the Island by herself. She had the animals with her, and she could always spend time down in the room with the cross. She confessed; she has never felt alone in the immense house. It was her home.

While Barbra and Mike were talking to Director Mellon, the Winstons were made to wait in his secretary’s outer office. After an hour, they were told they could finally see the director. They all filed in a line from the left to the right, facing Barbra, Mike, and Roger. Roger was already told the group wouldn’t talk about themselves on any subject other than what Roger already knew about the family.

Roger said he wouldn’t grill them about anything, but he did have one question

he wanted an answer to. Coming around his desk, the much shorter older man approached Kelly, getting right in his face.

“Mr. Winston, I see you have another one of my men in your little family,

and I don’t know if it’s a damn blessing, or what the hell it is just now.” Then he got up even closer to him then asked, “But tell me this, are you planning on seducing any more of my people into your little family?”

“Not offhand, Sir,” Kelly replied. “We’re a special outfit, and we require talented people. But you, sir, would be more than welcome.”

Roger quickly backed away from Kelly, while shaking his head. “No fracking way, Mister. That will not happen. My wife would cut off my balls, and eat them for dinner to make damn sure I didn’t go sniffing around your island.”

He then moved over to Tess, and asked her. “May I look at your wounds?”

Tess wore a pair of shorts just for his inspection. She turned sideways, giving him a better view of her wounds. Roger looked down at her legs. Tess pointed to a few dimples on the side of each leg.

Roger then turned to Tim, who pulled up his shirt, then he moved on to Kelly, who took his shirt off.

Turning away from them, he told everyone to leave except for Mike. Barbra was the last one out of his office. She finally watched it happen for the first time since she’d known the Director. As she was closing the door, Roger sat down heavily in his chair. Running his fingers through his thinning hair, he set his reading glasses down on top of his desk.

Mike told everyone to go wait for him back in his office while he finished up with the Director. It took another hour for him to get back with an answer to Kelly’s request.

After Mike closed his office door, he told the group waiting for him. “Kelly,

if it wasn’t for your injuries healing so fast, and most of all, that damn video footage in South America, Barbra, and I would be out of a job right now. The man now knows we aren’t telling him the whole truth about what’s going on at the Island, and he is totally ticked off. I called him by his first name, and he went up one side of me, and down the other.”

Mike turned around, and stuck his butt out. “Please, tell me. Do I even have an ass left?”

Smiling at him, Barbra rubbed his butt. “You have a beautiful ass, sweetie,” she said, kissing him, trying to lighten his mood.

“But did he take the bait?”

“Yes, he had to, Janet. Two of his most trusted officers were telling him to, but it was the video that really did it. Roger has had our top people working on the footage ever since we got it. Even though it was unbelievable to everyone. They kept coming back to the same conclusion: they know everything on it was real, and wasn’t made up. Hell, even the President has already looked at it after we got done with it. They’re already checking into your island, and everything.”

Mike, watched Kelly reached up, and touched his necklace with his hand. “Lock her down babe. We will be home soon.”

“Kelly, they’re not going to do anything to us. They’re checking all of us out more thoroughly because of everything that happened with that reconnaissance mission. And now that your request is on its way to the White House, expect them to want a closer look. Anyway, President Obama has already given explicit orders after he saw that video. No one is to hassle any of you or go out to the Island. We were all told everything was to remain status quo. I even have an assignment for you.”

“When do you think we will see the president?”

“Tamra, knowing the man’s schedule, it could be a year from now. However,

it could be a hell of a lot sooner, but you didn’t want anyone to know what’s in the cellar.”

“Kelly, Roger asked for one thing from you. He wants to be in on this thing with the President, and I really don’t blame him. He is your connection to Obama, after all.”

“Fine,” he told Mike. “I thought I might try to keep another person from coming to the Island, but if he needs to be in, it’s OK with me.”

Kelly knew it would work for their benefit, anyway. Because they, in return, could call on the Director once Kelly got his little pack up to their level of power. Right now, the United States Government was very interested in them. Kelly knew trust would grow once they got the President out to the Island.

Both, Janet and Tamra looked disapprovingly at Tess when she asked with a big grin on her face. “Uh, Mike...what’s this little assignment you were talking about?”

Mike glanced at Tamra and Janet before answering her. “We want to wipe

Ortega Dominguez, and his cartel off the map.”

“Awesome, count me in,” she told him without even thinking about it.

“Well, actually, we want all of you,” he confessed. “Other than Sandra, of course.” He went on to say it wasn’t set to take place until the following week, and that all of them would have to go home until then.

Before they left, Mike warned Kelly. “As I said, by presidential order no one is to hassle any of you, or go out to the Island. However, don’t be surprised to find a few pleasure boats fishing near the Island from now on. I expect after this next operation the President is going to be taking a much bigger interest in all of us.”

Kelly lifted the lock down once they got home. He had to trust the government at some point. The boats that Mike told him about showed up soon afterward, but they kept a respectable distance from the Island. For further insurance, Kelly made a few tracking programs for the house’s computer to watch over them.

He then checked his satellite camera. When it came on, he was looking at a picture of Tamra laying by the pool while Tess rubbed lotion on her naked body. Without him doing anything, the view widen out by itself giving him a view around the house as it slowly panned over the rest of the Island.

Kelly said to himself, “You people are so damn predictable.” He touched his necklace. “Guy’s, watch out. We have eyes in the sky.”

The following day, the Island’s alarm went off while Kelly and Tim were down at the pier working on one of the boats. All the girls came down to tell Kelly, and to see who was coming into their inlet. They hardly ever got visitors. The girls noticed Tess getting excited as the boat got closer to the pier.

“Tess, who’s in that boat?” Tamra asked. “And why didn’t you tell us about it?”

“I think it’s Stephanie, one of the nurses we hired,” she informed her. “And I didn’t know she was coming. We all got along really well. I asked her to stay, but she had other obligations she needed to see to. She just told me she would come back as soon as she could.”

Accusingly, Janet asked her, “So you were playing footsies with her while she was here working?”

“Oh, no way,” Tess told her. “Even when it wasn’t her shift, she wouldn’t.”

“Anyway.” Tess laughed out loud with a broad smile on her face. “It’s you, Janet, who she really wants, and not me.”

Taken aback, the redhead asked, “And what makes you think that?”

“She was always watching you while she was here. I caught her doing it a hundred different times. And before she left, she told me there was a shamrock on the Island, and she wanted it.”

Tamra accusingly asked her lover. “Uh,... do you want to confess to us about anything, Janet,”

“Hey, I didn’t...I never said…”

Janet stopped in mid-sentence. She could see Tamra, and the rest of the girls were getting a big kick out of her discomfort. “We had a few interesting conversations while she was here, and that’s about it,” Janet told them. “But, like Tess said. Stephanie was a very professional woman when she was working.”

The girls waited on shore while Stephanie’s boat only stopped long enough to drop her off. She was wearing shorts, and a T-shirt as the boat approached, but quickly took them off when she seen the girls wearing their bikinis. Underneath her clothes, Stephanie had on a shamrock green bikini. Everyone got a good look at her sleek, smooth body, and sizable breasts. Her long blond hair hung down in a ponytail almost to her waist. The woman had a pair of impressive an energetic legs. It was obvious she liked to keep in shape.

Tim held the boat for her as she got on the pier, and when he let it go, she kissed him. Walking by Kelly, she pressed herself firmly against him and kissed him too. Then, she turned, and walked towards the shoreline.

Stephanie’s pace quickened the closer she got to the shoreline. And there was no doubt who she was coming for because she couldn’t take her eyes off of Janet as she walked down the pier.

Tess only got a simple smile and a quick kiss on her cheek as she walked past her. Stephanie went straight for Janet.

Both women had a smile smeared across their faces. Carefully, as if not to break her, Stephanie placed her left hand on Janet’s waist as her right hand went behind her neck as she pulled Janet into her. They kissed, it seem to everyone they weren’t ever going to stop.

The boys continued to watch the pair from the pier.

Finally, breaking free. Embarrassed, Stephanie looked at the other girls, and laughed. “I’m sorry. I have been thinking about this for weeks ever since I left. It’s been driving me crazy.”

“Don’t worry about it honey” Sandra told her. “The love of an Alpha will make you do things you would not believe.”

As the girls walked up to the house, Stephanie and Janet were holding hands as they went up the path.

Tess looked up at Tamra, walking beside her, and asked, “Well?”

Tamra looked back at the pier, where both of her men were still watching Stephanie walk away. “Oh, ya. She’s in as far as the boys are concerned,” she told Tess.

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Mike called, and told them all to come down to MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa Bay Florida, and for them to bring with them whatever weapons they desired to use during the operation. Barbra made their flight arrangements. When they got to the airport, no one asked for their tickets as they were escorted right up to the doors of the airplane. The security officer never checked their bags, and he also took them around the metal detectors.

Tamra had to chill Tess out while walking through the airport because she was walking around with her cannon strapped under her jacket with an “Aren’t we bad attitude” written all over her.

A stewardess directed them to their first-class seats. Tess stretched out in hers, she was asleep before the plane reached the runway.

Turning to Tamra, who was sitting next to him. Tim pointed over at Tess, who was snoring softly in another seat.

“How in the hell does she do that?”

“She’s an animal,” was Tamra’s only answer.

They flew out of Portland Maine, and arrived at Tampa Bay International Airport, where a van was waiting for them to drive them to the military base. It took another twenty-five minutes for them to reach the small lecture hall within the base. As they walked into the building, the entire group of special forces inside suddenly jumped to their feet. Everyone looked friendly towards them, but they wouldn’t stop staring at them.

Tess, of course, removed her jacket to show off her baby hanging under her left arm.

Barbra had a huge grin on her face as she waved to them from across the hall, directing them into the back room. Inside were two men looking over aerial photographs, and a large-scale map of the Dominguez compound. Both men were in their mid-thirties. After introductions were made, the Winstons learned Allen’s team, and his thirteen men would handle the cartel’s crew who were outside, and inside the barracks. While Tony’s team comprising of two other men, would not only be covering the Winston’s six, but would also help to clear out the ground floor of the home, along with Janet and Tim.

After the barracks was taken out by one of the helicopters, Allen would send a few men in through the front door to help support them on the second, first floor of the home. However, Barbra told them she didn’t believe there would be much resistance inside the house. It was up to Kelly, Tamra, and Tess to find Ortega on the second floor before he escaped.

Barbra told them, “This Ortega fella is a crafty little shit. He had his security officer who, by the way, Butterfly. You killed behind that half-track in Santarem.”

She then pointed to an area of the home on the table. “This same guy designed the second floor into a maze of rooms to give Ortega extra time to escape through a hidden access in his bedroom. We believe the access panel goes to a tunnel system. If Ortega reaches that, we’ve lost him. And we need to hit him early in the evening because he is always in his office on the second floor on the other side of the house at that time of night.”

She gestured at the home again. “We believe his bedroom is way over here, which should give you guys time to get to the second floor before the guy disappears.”

“Were you able to get what we asked for?” Tamra inquired.

Barbra reached into her briefcase, and pulled out a clear, thick plastic bag with a cloth napkin inside of it. “The guy has been sticking close to home ever since the four of you wiped out half of his men. But a few days ago, he went into town, and we got this.”

She handed the small bag over to Tamra, who opened it, and stuck her nose

inside. She breathed in deeply a few times, then handed it over to Tess and Kelly.

“Oh yes, I got him. The chef went a little heavy on his ingredients for the hollandaise sauce, but that maze of rooms will not help Ortega at all now.”

Barbra noticed Tony and Allen exchanging looks at Tamra. Everyone was told

a group of highly trained people would spearhead the operation, and that any oddity or mannerisms about them were to be dismissed, and forgotten about. Furthermore, they were told once in a firefight with them not to be surprised, or taken back by their actions. They were to work with them as best as they could. That’s why Barbra was grinning from ear to ear when they came in, everyone in the hall stood up, and were staring at them. They were all waiting to see what these professional killers looked like. They were surprised to see the family resembled nothing like what they all thought. The Winstons looked like people who live next door to you, except for Mammoth, of course.

“Wildcat, once the sentries on the fence line are taken out by our guys waiting on the ground. It’s going to be up to you, and Mammoth, and two of Tony’s men to take out the guards on the back side of the house before you land. If anyone of them gets a shout out or a shot off, you’re never going to land, and get to Ortega in time. Everything is depending on the four of you. Count on at least two or four men being behind the house. Once that is done, your Knight Hawk will drop all of you off, and you’ll enter the home. Tony will tell the second Knight Hawk to fire a hellfire missile at the barracks before Allen’s team lands. They’ll do any mopping up of the area outside.”

Barbra flew out with them that night on a Greyhound. They reached the USS Theodore Roosevelt the next day. The Roosevelt had been ordered back down along the eastern side of South America’s coastline to be the platform for the operation in Brazil. The ship would stay seventy-five miles off of the coastal town of Belem during the entire operation. Their three Knight Hawk helicopters they would use were already on board, and the pilots had already been briefed.

Once on the aircraft carrier, Barbra went over the operation with everyone. She checked their weapons, and the helicopter’s weapons’ systems several times before she said she was satisfied, and announced that the operation would be executed the following night.

Twenty-four hours before the mission started, they all had to themselves. At the captain’s request, Barbra, and the Winstons, and both team leaders were to have dinner with him. If Captain Mitchell was amazed at seeing Tinker, Wildcat, and Mammoth walking when they came aboard, he didn’t show it.

The next day was all business. Everyone had their game faces on, and even Tess wasn’t screwing around. At the appropriate time, they all gathered on the hanger deck with their equipment. Their gear was checked over one last time. If any of their gear, or weapons gave them the slightest bit of doubt, it would fail on them. It was replaced.

Shortly afterward, word was passed down from the flight deck. The twenty-two members of the assassination team gathered on the carrier’s elevator. As their heads rose above the flight deck level, three dark gray Knight Hawk helicopters were spaced out in front of them.

The MH 60S Knight Hawk was a multi-tasked helicopter. It was used for anti-surface warfare, surveillance, and reconnaissance, special warfare, intelligence, mine detection, and various other tasks. Its weapon system consists of many varieties of machine guns, and missiles. For this mission, they would use the GAU machine gun, also referred to as the Mini-gun, which is a six-barreled weapon that could shoot six thousand rounds per minute, and is capable of firing on targets as far away as half a mile. The Knight Hawks nose-mounted radar system would work in conjunction with the Hellfire missile to take out the cartel’s barracks. The Hellfire missile was an air-to-surface missile made by Lockheed Martin. It was sixty-four inches long, and seven inches in diameter, and it traveled up to nine hundred and fifty miles per hour on its thirteen-inch wingspan. It also costs sixty-eight thousand dollars to manufacture one of them. The helicopters also had two sliding doors on each side of the craft, but Tamra’s team would only use one of them.

They were all told to climb aboard their perspective helicopter, and they were in the air, and away. Everyone was tense before the firefight, even though they had more than enough men to get the job done. However, anything could still go wrong.

One Marine asked Tess what the picnicked basket was all about, that she strapped against her seat. “We tend to be really hungry after a fight,” she simply told the guy.

The marine just shook his head. He couldn’t understand how anyone could eat after killing over a hundred men. The things he had learned about these people made him unsettled, but by talking to them, the guy found they were just like anyone else.

Then she shocked him once more when she removed her black shirt, and asked him to tape a machete on her back that she had wrapped in a towel. Putting her shirt back on, the handle stuck up just above her collar. The rest of the family eyeballed her but said nothing.

“And that.” The same marine asked about the machete.

Smiling at him, she told him. “Oh, that. That’s just insurance.”

The guy laughed out loud, and sat back. He was starting to like the little one.

Their snipers were already on the ground waiting to take out the guards at the front gate, and those in the towers along the fence line. Everyone was in contact with each other. Each Knight Hawk had its radar jamming equipment on as they flew in whisper mode, low over Brazil’s countryside.

Tamra, and her crew were in the first Knight Hawk, followed by the second one who would fire on the barracks. Their pilot called out the mileage as they got closer to the compound. When they got within a half of a mile, their pilot told Kelly’s crew there were three men behind the house, and a bunch more out in front of the mansion. They all got in place because as soon as they fired their weapons at the men behind the house, hell was coming for dinner.

Reaching the quarter mile marker, the lead pilot radioed the ground teams to take out the guards along the fence line. At the same time, he turned their helicopter broadside to the home. Hovering at 1500 feet in the air, Tony already had the door opened as Tess, Kelly, and the other two snipers took aim.

Kelly called out, “One...two...three.”

They all four fired at the same time. Three bodies fell to the ground behind the house as their pilot whipped the Knight Hawk back around, and dived for the backside of the mansion as fast as he dare to let the helicopter drop. The nose of the helicopter was pointing almost at the ground as he quickly closed the gap to the house. At the last second, he braked the craft, pulling the nose up as hard as he could. They came to a jarring stop a few feet above the ground.

They all piled out.

The Winstons kicked themselves into overdrive as soon as they hit the ground. Kelly was in the lead as he plowed through the back doors of the home. The doors blew apart, and shattered as if a Hellfire missile blew it all to hell. Barbra told them before they left to give this operation everything they had, and not to hide what they could do. The President, and Roger were waiting to see what they could do in action.

Tony and his two men had only taken three steps from the helicopter as the fire storm of Winston’s entered the house. Tim and Janet, quickly ran together through the first floor, looking for men. Women would only be hurt if they were shooting at them, and children were not to be harmed. They both ran through the house quickly dispatched the few men they found on the ground floor. When they heard the sounds of the barracks exploding outside, they went out through the front door just as Allan, and his team were jumping out of the third Knight Hawk. The cartel’s men, who were out front of the house, were dazed by the blast of the Hellfire missile. They ran for cover as Allen, and his men shot at them.

Tim and Janet, separated, and started ripping out the throats of what was left of the cartel’s men. Working together, the battle at the front of the house was over even before it began.

Kelly, Tamra, and Tess raced for the stairs.

Kelly ran by a guy so fast going upstairs the man didn’t have time to react. Kelly wanted Ortega, and he wanted him in the worst way, just like the rest of the family. The man had hurt their family members, and they all wanted his blood on their hands for what he has done.

The guy on the stairs barely had any time to react when Tess’s cannon went off, killing him. A second later, the Hellfire missile blew the hell out of the barracks. Machine gun fire erupted all over the outside of the house as Tess followed Tamra through the second floor.

Kelly split up on his own, and by Tamra’s orders, Tess was to follow her. The women could feel what direction Kelly was in, they knew he went for the master bedroom in case Ortega was in it or nearby. Because of Ortega’s scent trail, the girls knew Ortega was caught in between Kelly, and them. They were getting close to him when Tamra, following a hunch, broke off of the sent trail, and went through a few rooms that came out at the top of the stairs. To their right was a long hardwood floor balcony with a doorway on the right, and another balcony on the left, leading to another part of the house.

Ortega came out of the doorway on the right, and froze in place when he saw Tamra, and Tess. The man was trapped. The girls knew Kelly would be coming through that door any second.

When Ortega saw them, he glanced behind him then he ran along the other balcony. His only hope was to hold them off until his men could get to him. He couldn’t jump over the railing because he was too high up, and he couldn’t go back the way he came because someone else was on his tail. He open fired on the girls as he raced across the balcony seeking the cover of the other room.

From their doorway, Tamra had a clear shot at Ortega as he sprinted across the balcony. She was just about to pull her trigger when, with no warning, she was thrown across the balcony, and landed hard on the stairs. Looking up, she watched Tess run towards the doorway where Kelly would come out of. Ortega was shooting at her, but with Tessa’s speed, she stayed ahead of the bullets as they slammed into the wall behind her. Halfway to the door, she slid on the hardwood floor like she was coming into home plate. Ortega’s rounds were landing all around her. Tess tucked her little legs underneath herself, and popped her body up on her knees. She fired off one round at Ortega over the railing. When her cannon went off, the round slammed into Ortega’s machine gun, knocking it out of his hands.

Ortega looked down at the useless weapon. He knew he was doomed. The magnum slug destroyed the bolt action on the weapon. He didn’t know who these people were just yet because things were happening too fast, and it confused him when the little girl threw the other woman down the stairs. He thought she was helping him for a moment until she shot at him. The situation got even more confusing for him when Tamra ran for Tess just as Kelly stepped out onto the balcony, pointing his Colt at Ortega.

Tess slid into Kelly’s legs, knocking him down onto the floor.

“What the hell is going on here?” Ortega yelled at her.

Quickly getting to her feet. Tess put her weapon away. Smiling at him, she ran along the balcony while pulling the machete from her back with her right hand.

She gave Ortega his answer. “What’s fucking going on here is that you are all mine, mother fucker!”

She may have been a little girl, but she was the fastest thing Ortega had ever seen, and he was sure she was strong as well. He was beginning to get worried because none of his men were showing up. He knew he would not defend himself without some kind of weapon. Additionally, he was aware that the linen closet would be of no help to him.

The woman who was thrown on the stairs reached the big guy on the floor. Ortega did the only thing he could do. He ran into the room, which was the only choice he had left.

Tamra was screaming Wildcat’s name as Tess followed Ortega into the room, shutting the door behind her.

Running towards the room, Kelly, and Tamra could hear Ortega’s screams

coming from the inside as they raced across the balcony. Gun in hand, Tamra opened the door to the room. Tess was in mid-swing with her machete as blood from the long blade was being thrown all over the walls and ceiling. A large, thick red puddle had spread across the floor from Ortega’s body. Kelly and Tamra stood back, and watched as Tess cut, and hacked Ortega into little pieces. By the time she was finished, Tess was covered in Ortega’s blood. When she was done, she dipped two fingers into his blood, and wrote a message on the wall.

When she was finished, she simply walked past Tamra, and Kelly without saying a word to them. Kelly looked down at what was left of Ortega on the floor and said. “Oh, shit. This sucks.”

After successfully completing the operation, only two of their men were lightly wounded. The women, and children who were in the home were told to run for their lives because the South America Army would be coming in as soon as they left. The helicopters came back, and they all loaded up, and flew off as a column of heavy trucks, and Humvees busted through the front gate.

Tamra and Kelly didn’t talk during the ride back to the ship. Janet and Tim knew they were pissed off at Tess big time. Both Alpha leaders stared her down during the entire ride back to the ship.

As soon as they got airborne, Tess cleaned her face, and hands of Ortega’s blood, and then she dug into the basket of food. She offered some cold chicken to Tamra and Kelly, but Tamra’s expression didn’t change, nor did she or Kelly accept any food.

Janet, Tim, and Tess were the only ones eating on the way back to the ship.

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Back at Langley. Roger asked Barbra, “What did she write?”

“She wrote on the wall, “If you fuck with my family again. I’ll kill every one of you motherfuckers,” Barbra told Roger.

“Sir, she shouldn’t have done what she did, but it really works for us better than what we planned for ourselves.”

Roger sarcastically asked him. “Pray tell Mike, in what manner does a human being getting hacked to death with a machete work for us?”

“The cartels, and everybody else will think it was a revenge hit on Ortega personally, and not an American CIA assassination plot.” He told his superior. “They all know the precision work we do. Tess cut Ortega up into little pieces, which had to make a hell of a mess. I really don’t think we will get any heat from this one at all.”

“What about disciplinary actions with her?” Roger reminded them. “You have said nothing about that?”

Mike told him. “Sir, I think it’s best if we let the family handle this one. I will be speaking to her myself, but if there is going to be any punishment for this. I think we need to let Tamra and Kelly handle this themselves.”

“Kelly would never hurt her. I can’t see that man ever hitting any female.”

Barbra agreed with him, “No Sir, he wouldn’t. Kelly could never do anything like that. However, Tamra she’s another story. I have never seen her this mad since I have known her. I even felt it was necessary to separate them once they got back on board the ship. Sir, we have our own way when doing things, and I agree with Mike. Let them handle it. Tess may get her ass kicked, but on this one, she deserves everything that’s coming at her. But that’s not to say we shouldn’t go up one side of her, and down the other when we see her.”

When everybody got back home, Sandra knew something was wrong as soon as she saw them all come through the front door. Tamra greeted her, and Stephanie, then she asked Sandra if she would bring dinner up to her in one of the bedrooms when she could. Then Tamra went upstairs, where she stayed by herself until the next morning. After Sandra brought her breakfast,, Kelly and Tamra went into the cellar, and locked the vault door so no one could come down. After an hour, Tess was called down to the cellar along with her forty-four auto-mag. The vault door was locked again.

Tim, Sandra, and Janet nervelessly waited in the foray while Stephanie was asked to spend some time down at the beach or gym by herself.

Kelly was waiting for Tess when she came down into the cellar. He noticed she was expecting something, but Kelly really didn’t think she understood the trouble she was in. He took her weapon from her, and unloaded it as they walked into a storage room. Tamra and he had already taken everything out of the room earlier and stacked it in the hallway.

Tamra was on the other side of the empty room, leaning back against the wall with her legs crossed, and her arms folded in front of her. Her expression was blank, but her grayish blue eyes drilled into Tess from across the room. Her eye contact alone told Tess she wanted a piece of her.

Kelly took Tessa’s gun, and placed it in a vise he had on a small table in the room.

Getting concerned for her pride and joy, Tess screamed. “Kelly, what are you doing? Kelly, don’t do that.”

She kept pleading with him, but he just told her to be quiet.

When he was done clamping the weapon down, he turned to her, and told her, “You screwed up big time in South America, and Tamra, and I are totally pissed off because of your actions. Even the Director, and Mike, and Barbra want a piece of your hide once were done here. All of us are sick, and tired of your antic’s Tess, and were taking measures to make damn sure they don’t continue to happen.”

Saying that, he reached into a drawer in the table, and took out a hacksaw, then he laid it on her auto-mag. Tess immediately tried to take it from his hands.

“Kelly, I’m sorry, but please don’t destroy my gun.” She pleaded with him as she continued to try to take the hacksaw from his hands.

Kelly just pushed her away from him.

“Destroy it,” He laughed in her face. “Tess, I will not do that. I’m going to do something better than that. You know I would never raise my hand to you, but whenever you pick up your gun again. You’re going to remember this day, and know how angry I am with you.”

Saying that, and before Tess could stop him. Kelly took the hacksaw, and cut a small groove on the side of the gun. He placed the cut so Tess would see it whenever she fired the weapon. By the time he was finished, Tess had tears flowing down her face.

“Tessa, if you ever do anything like what you did in South America during an operation. You will never see this gun again, and I will not let you have another one like it on this island.”

Tessa’s mouth was hanging wide open as Kelly picked up the table, gun, and all, and carried it into the hallway, shutting the door behind him.

He left her alone with Tamra.

Kelly had a good talk with Tamra that morning because he wasn’t about to let Tamra just kill Tess. Tamra assured him she only wanted to scare her a little. However, she told him no matter how mad she was with her. She would always love her ,and would never want to hurt her.

Kelly put his back against the wall, listening to the women talking inside the room. Their voices grew louder. After a few minutes, they started screaming at each other. All of a sudden, the door to the room blew outwards, and fell on the floor with Tess laying on top of it.

Tess didn’t even wait. Jumping up, she ran back into the room after Tamra.

Tamra grabbed a hold of her by her hair, and threw her into the far wall, but Tess came right back at her. Over and over, Tess tried to break through Tamra’s defenses, but she always ended being tossed across the room. Kelly knew they weren’t playing around because from there, things just got worse as they both kicked it up a notch with their inhuman speed.

Kelly knew for sure one of them was about to die. Never in his life did he feel more helpless because he couldn’t stop it. It had to be played out until it was finished, whatever the outcome was.

When the door to the cellar finally opened. Tim, and the two girls watched in

disbelief as Tessa’s overheated body came hobbling out of the cellar, holding onto the wall for support. Sweat was running down her face, and chest as she tried to keep standing upright. Her ankle was damaged, and she couldn’t put any weight on her foot. Her right hand was also limp, which she held close to herself, protecting it. She had scratches, and cuts, and bruises all over her body. It didn’t look like a part of her that wasn’t damaged in some way. She had gone into the cellar fully clothed, but she didn’t have a stitch of clothing on her now, but for what looked like a part of the waistband to her pants wrapped around her hips. Her left eye was swollen shut, and her lips were split in two places as blood ran from her nose and down her lips, and onto her chin.

The three rushed over to help her, but Kelly’s voice stopped them. “Leave her alone,” he ordered them as he, and Tamra stepped from the cellar.

Tamra didn’t have any clothes on either, but she wasn’t anywhere near in the same condition Tess was in. Her face was untouched, and there were some deep cuts on her as well as a lot of scratches, but none of her bones looked broken.

Janet immediately went off, and directed her anger at her best friend and lover.

She was ready to rip into Tamra. Pushing Tamra back with her hand, she screamed at her childhood friend. “What the fuck is wrong with you? How in the hell could you do this to her?”

Everybody crowded in close, and they all started talking all at once.

Then Kelly did something none of them has ever seen Kelly do before. He raised his voice, and bellowed. “Shut the hell up and be quiet!”

Everyone quickly stopped talking, and took a few steps away from him once they heard the wolf within him. The sound scared them as Kelly let the Alpha inside of him come out. In the past, he has given a lot of leeway to all of his husbands, and wives, but when he barked his command. It brought them all back into reality of who the pack leader was in this family.

“Tamra did nothing wrong,” he told them. “Her actions are justified by Tessa’s own behavior. Plain and simple, Tess challenged Tamra. My sweet lord, we all should be thankful no one died. They both were able to keep their love for each other close to their hearts to remind them what they meant to each other. If they would have forgotten that, then someone would be dead right now.”

Sill hugging the wall, Tess was trying to make her way down the hall, and up the stairs. “Tamra, I love you,” she told her without turning around.

“I love you too baby,” Tamra called out to her.

Tessa’s affirmation touched Tamra. A second later, Tess dropped, and hit the floor. Tim rushed over picking her up in his arms.

“Tim, take her to the first aid room, and you too Tamra, and I don’t want to hear any lip about it. Come on, let’s go.”

Sandra went,, and called Stephanie up from the beach. When Stephanie was on her way to the first aid room, Sandra stood back, and watched them all walk down the hallway. Saying mostly to herself, she said. “What this family really needs is a talented surgeon in the family.”

A week later, Barbra called and told Kelly, she and Mike were fine, but they both were too busy to come home after the operation. She asked him to write up a proposal for the President’s visit.

Kelly understood just what details they wanted. It was the one thing the government boys were concerned about: security. Kelly looked up at his flat screens, which showed two people on a boat fishing. He has been keeping track of the government boats, he gave each team a name. There were four of them that rotated in shifts. He laughed, thinking about the Baker team a few days before when he watch one guy break his fishing reel. Kelly continue to watch the guy as he tried to fix it, but Kelly knew that fishing reel. They were cheap. Once they broke, they were useless.

Jumping into the Catherine, he raced the half mile out to them. When he pulled alongside of their boat, he tossed the guy a new reel, and told him, “Here, try that one. It’s a hell of a lot better than the one you have.”

Laughing to himself, he drove off. Kelly knew he shouldn’t have done it, but he couldn’t help himself. Now the government boys knew they were watching them, and the boats didn’t fish as much as they did before. They also stayed closer to the Island, and didn’t hide what they were doing unless other boaters were in the area.

Kelly understood just what the Secret Service wanted him to write up. Opening a drawer in his desk, he took out a folder he already prepared. The proposal told them that the President should consider Heaven’s Gate Island as the President’s own home, or Camp David. The President could go into any room, or building on the Island, and would be treated with the utmost respect while there.

However, only two of Obama’s detail would be allowed to come into the home unarmed, and do a walk through on the first, and second floors. They could not enter the family’s lair, or the cellar. They could, however, explore the rest of the Island to their hearts content, and this matter was not negotiable. He also told them the Island was their home, and Kelly would not let them turn this meeting into a military issue. A summer dress code would be in forced for the meeting. In the last part of the proposal, Kelly informed them that all questions would be answered to the President’s satisfaction for as long as the President was the only one to have the knowledge of that information.

Ten minutes after his conversation with Barbra, Kelly faxed the information they wanted to her office in Langley.

Island life returned to normal.

The family didn’t get any recent assignments from Mike. Tess was called down to face Roger, and Mike over her actions in South America, but she didn’t tell the family about it when she got back. Barbra got such a big kick out of the conversations Tess had with the Director, and Deputy Director that she called home, and told everybody what took place.

Kelly and Tim enjoyed themselves watching, and directing both women as they replace fifteen sheets of drywall they both destroyed during their dispute. Mostly, it was Tessa’s body hitting the walls, which destroyed the sheet rock, but Tamra was told by Kelly to help her. The boys set up a TV, and drank beer, and watched the Pat’s kick Green Bays butt, while the girls did the work on the room. Once the room was finished, they continued their training.

Stephanie was married into the family.

A week later, the Island’s alarmed system suddenly went off early during the morning hours. Kelly, and Tamra ran into his study to watch a boat coming to the far southern end of the Island. Watching the minor blip on the screen, it beached itself on the end of the Island. Things like this have happened before, but not very often. In any case, Sandra and Stephanie were told to lock up the house as the rest of them went to find out who the intruder was.

Hiding behind the sand dunes, they surrounded the man sitting on the rocks in front of a ten-foot boat with an outboard motor. The guy didn’t know they were watching him as he continue to stare out across the ocean.

Janet noticed right off, there was something wrong with him.

Kelly told her to follow him as they broke cover and stepped onto the beach. The rest of the family was too far away to hear anything being said, but the guy jumped to his feet when he saw Kelly, and Janet approaching him. After a few minutes of talking to him, the guy tried to push his boat back into the water, but Kelly stopped him.

After a while, Janet and Kelly walked away from him to talk. When they broke apart, Janet walked up the sand dunes towards the others.

Kelly told Sandra to lift the lock down, then he sat down on the rocks with the stranger. Everybody rushed over to Janet to find out what was going on.

Tamra reached her first. “What’s the story with him? The guy lose his fishing pole or something?”

Janet waited until all of them were walking back to the house before she answered her. “He’s not really a man, he’s more of a young man. His name is Wade, and he’s twenty years old. He’s another underdeveloped Alpha who is here because he was drawn to us, but the guy doesn’t understand what’s going on. He’s kind of confused about himself right now.”

“Confused about what?” Tess asked.

“Tess,” Janet told her. “he’s like you were before you came to the Island, but his thinking process, and mental condition is in a lot worse state than yours ever was. He needs to calm down so I can get a better read on him. Kelly’s not going to let him go anywhere. He’s putting him in one of the cabins while he’s here. All of you should go back to the house while I make sure his cabin has everything he’ll need. And Tess, when they come up from the pier, Kelly wants you, and me to talk with him. The guy was pretty scared when we approached him. Let’s see if we can calm him down somewhat, and get to know him, if he’ll let us.”

Kelly, and Wade drove the boat into the inlet, and docked it. Then, he showed Wade to his cabin, and told him he could stay on the Island for as long as he wanted.

When Wade was introduced to Tess, Kelly and Janet quickly glanced at each other. The attraction between the two was unmistakable, Janet could not only feel it, but she watched as Wade settle down the second he got near her. They were kindred spirits, and Janet knew Tess was just what Wade needed.

After telling the girls to bring him up to the house for dinner, Kelly left them to themselves.

The young man told the girls his name was Wade Donald Sappier. He was

from Biddeford, Maine. The girls didn’t press him with their questions because they could hear the nervousness in his voice, and watched as his hands trembled as he talked. Janet was amazed every time Tess got close to him, or touched him because the guy would calm down. After a while, she made Tess sit next to him on the couch.

In Wade’s honor, they had a BBQ swimming party by the pool that night. Kelly didn’t think the kid could handle a formal dinner. As the girls played in the pool with him, Janet, and Tess gave Kelly an update.

“He is telling us the truth, Kelly,” Janet told him. “For whatever reason, he walked up to Belfast, once there. He felt compelled to jump into the first boat he found, and drive it out here. He’s dealing with some pretty heavy issues. I believe it’s these issues that are making his life a living hell. You can hear it in his speech pattern, and how he stresses his words to make a point, and the way he keeps repeating himself. We have all been around people like him before. I’m not a psychiatrist, but I think he is a Bipolar, and with that comes ADD, and a slew of other problems. Hell, he could even have PTSD, but as a whole, I like him. He’s really sweet,” she told Kelly.

Janet smiled over at Tess. “And Tess, and Wade are sure getting along really good,” she added.

“Ya, I like him too,” Tess told Kelly. “He is cute with his youthful appearance, but he’s like a cat standing on a hot tin roof. Society might call him nuts, but if he’s this excitable with his clothes on. I’d love to see him with them off,” Tess said half-jokingly.

“Tess, if you want him, then take him, but not until Stephanie checks him out, and gives him a physical. Just look at him. You can see he hasn’t been eating very good. The kid has bones sticking out all over him.”

The three looked over at Wade getting out of the pool. His ribs were clearly in need of fattening up, and his slim arms, and legs proved he got little exercise.

“I find him very interesting,” Kelly confessed to the girls. “There’s more to Wade than what meets the eye, but we need to go ever so slowly with him.”

“Tess, do you remember what Barbra did to Mike?”

“Yes, she only let a small part of herself into him over time.”

“Right, but with Wade. I just want him to feel you, and then draw back real fast. I want you to keep doing that for a long time. Get with Janet, and the both of you stick to him like glue unless Tim or I’m with him. Let’s see how he responds to both of you, and the rest of us. I really do like him, but he could turn into a wild animal, and we do not want that happening because we’d be forced to kill him.”

“Janet, keep digging into his home life. We need to understand that before we offer him a home here on the Island. And Tess, let Wade know I’m having Tim take the boat back to its owners tomorrow.”

Just before dinner the next night, Stephanie, and Kelly sat in front of the fireplace in the front room as she gave him her report.

“There’s nothing really wrong with him, Kelly. Other than what we already know about him. He is undernourished and needs some weight put on him, and he needs some new clothes. I think he’s been living, and sleeping in what he has on him. Clean him up some, and add some weight, and he’ll be a hot little number,” she told him with a grin.

Kelly knew just what was running through Stephanie’s perverted, dirty mind. “Forget about it, Stephanie. Tess has him for now. So, pass the word, until further noticed Tess is the only one to be with him. Wade needs to come out of his shell before a bunch of wild women go jumping all over him.”

Kelly was buying the kid some time as they all got to know him, and giving Kelly’s private investigators time to gather more information about his life. Tess, and Janet took Wade into town, and bought him some new clothes. Wade lived in the cabin for a long time until Kelly moved him into one of the extra bedrooms inside of the house. Over time, with love, and friendship they all gave him, he improved, and the real Wade Donald Sappier came out of his shell to become a part of their lives.

Wade became the first family member to track them down on a gut instinct to become a part of a family that he had only felt from across the ocean waters. He did it because the wild world around him felt crazy, and out of control to him, but inside of himself. His heart, and his God-given instincts drew him to an island from a distance of a hundred sixty-three miles away. Kelly wasn’t sure if Wade realized he first felt the draw from his hometown in Biddeford, and not Belfast. Wade was indeed a special Alpha in the making, Kelly couldn’t wait to start his training.

Kelly had eight alphas in his little family with the ninth one on the way. The house was full of noise, and sounds of lovemaking, and conversation coming from many of the rooms during the day. Their lives were full of activity, and training. Kelly loved his home, and the family he had acquired, but he dearly wanted some babies. However, he knew that was not to be. All of the girls were told to make sure there would be no pregnancies until they completed the last step in his plan. Until they heard from the President of the United States, they would continue on as before.

Sandra, Wade, and Stephanie were training every day. Sandra found two buddies with Wade and Stephanie working out with the group. The three were having the time of their lives. Sandra may have been the older of the two, but she could easily take the younger two down on the mat anytime. Everybody pulled together, and helped the three sharpen their skills. Kelly noticed Wade, and his skills with firearms, and hand to hand increasing at a rapped rate.

Wade stood five feet seven inches tall, and his body was now loaded with mussels because of the training and non-stop activity on the Island. However, Wade and Tess alone shared a love together no one else on the Island had. They both loved to run. When they ran, they would run as fast as they could around the entire island. No one in the family could keep up with them. The two were just too fast.

Then, one late summer afternoon, Kelly was forced and ordered out of his own home by Tamra, Janet, and Barbra. Barbra and Mike had made a surprised visit that weekend. Kelly thought they would all have fun scuba diving, or fishing. No one would tell him why they kicked him out of his own home. Winter was coming, and it was getting dark early as he approached the side of the house that evening. Sandra had brought him a sandwich early in the day, but he was getting hungry as he came to the side door by the pool. He found everyone already outside, Tim was cooking cheeseburgers on the BBQ.

When Tamra saw him, she sat him down at the table by the pool, and stuck a beer in his hand. Tim and Janet brought him two plates; one was loaded with French fries, and coleslaw. The other plate held three huge bacon double cheeseburgers.

Looking from the beer in his hand, then back to the food, he asked his leading

wife. “OK, what do you people want from me?”

“Kelly, we don’t want anything from you, just eat, and enjoy,” Tamra told him.

Everybody sat down, and eat dinner with him. Afterwards, the girls removed the dinner plates, then Mike shut off the outside lights. Kelly was about to question what the hell was going on when Tamra and Sandra came outside carrying a gigantic birthday cake in the shape of a cheeseburger. On top were eight candles with “plus one” written in frosting. Since they have known Kelly, he still wouldn’t tell them when his birthday was. Kelly was a man who gave, and didn’t expect, or wanted to receive from others.

After he blew out his eight candles, he asked. “What makes all of you think this is my birthday?”

Barbra answered for them. “I checked your file at Langley.”

“Barbra, what’s in that file is full of half-truths, and most of it is a pack of

lies,” he told her.

“Oh, we all know that, and we also know the only one who really knows when your birthday is you, and you’re never going to tell us. So, we all picked today, September 26, as your birthday. Happy Birthday my love.”

She kissed him, and then they sang happy birthday to him.

Afterwards, they all turned around, and looked up at the night sky, and waited

Kelly stood between Tamra, and Barbra as the first of the fireworks started. At one point during the display, Tamra looked over at Kelly. He had tears in his eyes. As each tear drop fell, she watched the loneliness of those years he spent alone on the Island fade into his past.

After the fireworks display, they all gave him their presents, but it was Wade’s gift everyone saw touched Kelly the most. Everyone knew Wade didn’t have any money if he had any at all. Being on the Island, he didn’t need any, but somehow he had managed to buy Kelly a gift?!

When Kelly opened the long box, he stared at, and admired the knife inside of it. It was a Black Bear Classic; a double edge combat knife with a total length of thirteen and a half inches with eight inches of blade weighting at twelve point seven ounces. The knife’s handle had a sub-hilt a finger width away from the hilt itself.

“What’s the extra piece of metal on the handle for?” Sandra wanted to know.

“It’s so no one can knock it out of your hand easily. It also gives you more power to drive it into someone without your hand slipping, it also helps you to pull the blade back out. You put your index finger between the hilt, and sub-hilt. The rest of your fingers go behind the sub-hilt. Wade, I love it, but this is one hell of an expensive knife. A knife like this cost six to seven hundred dollars. How in the hell did you ever paid for it?” Kelly asked looking up at him.

Wade didn’t say anything, and kept his mouth shut.

Kelly reached into his pocket, and pulled out an old gold coin. He tossed it over to Wade, who caught it in the air. Kelly took the coin from the money bins in the cellar that morning. He knew the value of the coin was eight times greater than what the knife was worth.

“And the reasoning behind the coin?” Janet piped in.

Tamra explained, “When someone gives you a knife, you give them a coin in return, or it cuts the friendship. It’s an old tradition.”

It wouldn’t be for months before Wade joined the family. Everybody knew Kelly wanted Wade in the family for some specific reason, but Kelly kept that reason to himself. In truth, Kelly really did liked the kid. It took balls to jump into a ten-foot boat, and drive off across the open ocean on a hunch, and not even know where in hell you were going. As he did with Tess, Kelly paid special attention to Wade’s training, and Tess was never too far from his side.

Over the next year, three more underdeveloped Alphas would find their way to the Island, and into the hearts of the Winston family. Kelly’s plan was unfolding just as he wanted it to as he watched the rest of the world around them slowly crumble, and fall apart.

A few years back in Lewiston Maine, a mother put her child into an oven, and then turned it on because she believed the child was the devil. Only yesterday, a couple who were recently engaged were arrested in Pennsylvania for stabbing, and choking a man to death just for the thrill of killing him. They then went out to dinner afterwards to celebrate the event. Almost ninety thousand women, and children are being raped, and abused every year in America alone. There were over eight hundred thousand aggravated assaults within the United States, and mankind caused all the violence. The United States now had more people in their prisons than any other country in the world. Kelly read in the newspapers as their statesmen bragged, telling people that the crime rate was down since the early nineties. Kelly admitted rape was down by ten thousand people, but nobody bothered to consider the other eighty thousand women, and children who were victims of these crimes. The plain fact was the crime rate has been climbing higher the longer man has been on the planet. Sure, people had better homes, and there were a lot more jobs, and the crime level dropped back by a few thousand every other year. However, it would climb back up four, or five times greater in the preceding years, and wouldn’t go back down to where it once was.

Throughout his whole life, Kelly watched all of it happen. That was his job. He alone could feel the pain, and suffering in the world, and if he wasn’t made the way he was. He could never handle the enormous pressure that came with the job. Finally, after many years, he was ready to open the eyes of the world’s leaders, but first he needed to meet the President of the United States.

After many weeks of waiting, Kelly finally received a phone call from the

President’s secretary. The woman gave Kelly a date when President Obama wanted to visit the Island she asked if the date, and time was agreeable with him. Kelly told her it was. She then told him someone would call him about further instructions for the president’s visit.

President Obama would not show up for another three weeks. Kelly hired a house crew of thirty, and a yard crew of forty. The last time Mike came to the Island both crews had to rush to get the job done. This time, he wanted to do a better job, inside and out. He didn’t just want the lawn cut. He also wanted a lot of the trees trimmed back, and the beach raked, and some new landscaping put in. The workers stayed on the Island for five days with all of the extra work to be done.

Then the day came when Kelly received the phone call he has been waiting for ever since talking to the President’s Secretary. He was in a pretty jolly mood as he answered the call because he already knew how this conversation was going to be played out.

The person on the other end of the line was the head of the President’s Secret Service detail. After introductions, the guy explained what would happen when the President landed on their Island. He told Kelly how the event would take place, outside, and inside his home. He also told Kelly, President Obama wasn’t to be touched, and how they needed to conduct themselves while the President was on the Island.

Kelly hung up the phone while the guy was still talking to him. It was time they gained a little bit of respect from these people. This was his home, and he wasn’t going to let them tell him how to behave, and what to do on his island. He knew they were dying to find out more about them. They would never turn down his invitation. They were just playing their political game, and Kelly was showing them what they could do with it. It only took a few minutes when his phone rang again.

“Hello?”

“Mr. Winston, I’m sorry we were cut off somehow,”

“No problem, What were you saying?”

Again, the Agent went through, and explained how things would be when the President was on the Island. For the second time, Kelly hung up the phone. Setting the receiver down, he started laughing to himself. He waited in his office for another phone call, which he knew would be from either Director Mellon or Mike. He was betting on Director Mellon, he was sure by hanging up on the Secret Service, it was going to cause some big waves. Twenty minutes later, his phone rang again.

“Hello.

Over the other end of the line. Roger yelled at him. “Do you have a fucking mental deficiency, or something? I just got off the phone with the Secret Service, who tells me you keep hanging up on them. What is your malfunction?”

Kelly knew he was switching the rolls they have been playing since the government first came to know about his little family. He also knew it wasn’t going to be easy for the United States Government to see his island as its own sovereignty nation. However, it was most important to Kelly for them to realize that they were indeed dealing with a country within a country, and they had the power to back that up. They already knew they weren’t normal human beings. If they wanted to know more about them, they would have to do it on Kelly’s terms, and not theirs. Working for the CIA was only a medium Kelly used to meet his goal, and it was damn time they realized it.

Kelly stressed his point when he addressed the Director with a warm smile in his voice. “Roger, this is my home. Anyone coming out here better realize that fast. I gave explicit instructions about the President’s visit in my proposal. The President is to consider my home, his own, but that doesn’t work the same way for his whole military forces. He is welcome in any room in my house, and that even means my cellar, but I’ll be damned if I’ll let my island be overrun by his armed muscle. I gave them explicit instructions, I won’t work it any other way.”

“Roger, what do they think I’m going to do, assassinate the President of the

United States, and you at the same time? Roger, you know all of us here, well...

except for Wade, of course.”

Roger noticed Kelly called him by his first name, talking to him as an equal. Roger was still Kelly’s superior, but Kelly didn’t even bother using the word “Sir” when addressing him. He had to smile at Kelly’s tenacity. Roger’s been around the political block a few times, he understood what Kelly was doing. Kelly was trying to gain leverage, and after seeing for himself what Kelly’s family could do. He was pretty sure Obama would give that to him. Since returning from South America, the President discreetly ordered a few people to check closely into the lives of the Winstons while they were being watched on the Island.

Roger laughed when he found out about the fishing reel Kelly threw to one of his officers. He knew what the Secret Service was doing with Kelly was the same as what Kelly was doing to them. It really was just political red tape to be worked through to come to an understanding between both parties, and that’s all.

“They have their own way of doing things, Kelly. I have no control over them. Hell, they won’t even listen to the President half the time. That’s their job.”

“I can understand that, Roger. I have my own way of doing things as well. Roger, if I know them at all, the President hasn’t even looked over my outline for his visit. Get him to look it over, if there is something they really must change, maybe I’ll be able to look the other way.”

“The President is going to be wanting some very direct answers from all of you, Kelly.”

“Then he will get a direct answer to his questions. Roger were not going to hide any longer. And what you already know, what we can do is just the tip of the iceberg, but first, there has to be trust, and then a friendship can be developed.”

“You’re talking to the wrong person about trust, buddy. We don’t trust anyone around here, but I’ll see what I can do. I understand having your home overrun by them would piss me off as well. I’ll be in touch.” With that, he hung up.

It took a few more days, the Secret Service called back by the end of the week, and told Kelly they would accept his proposal. However, they wanted to change a few items. Kelly agreed to the changes they wanted to make. After all, he put the revisions in there, so they had something to change to make them happy. Kelly wasn’t stupid.

The President wasn’t scheduled to show up for his visit until the early part of the afternoon. Kelly got up by four-thirty, and drank his morning coffee in his den instead of the kitchen so he could watch the screens. Over the next six hours, more cabin cruisers, and fast-moving boats arrived around the Island. Even Tim’s old Coast Guard boat stayed close by within the area. They all kept a respectable distance of half a mile from the Island. When the President was on the Island, they would all close in to within three hundred feet of the shoreline.

Tiring of watching everything develop by radar, he went out, and sat on the front porch with Tamra. Two F-18s flew low over the Island when Tamra pointed off into the distance at three helicopters coming their way.

“Here they come, Kelly,”

The helicopters looked small from this distance, but Kelly knew they were the

large VH 3D Marine heavy transport helicopters carrying the President, and his Secret Service detail. They were headed straight for their island. What was about to take place on the Island with the Secret Service was the only part of this whole affair that Kelly was nervous about.

Every one of the Winstons was armed to the teeth. Wearing bulletproof vests, and carrying A 4 assault rifles along with their sidearms, and combat knives. Kelly wanted the government to realize this island belonged to them, and that they would die protecting it. The Secret Service was told for as long as they were inside the house, the Winstons would stay fully armed. Kelly required a summer dress code for this meeting, not just because he wasn’t about to let them turn this event into a military affair. Moreover, he did it so that none of the President’s men could easily hide any concealed devices.

Tamra was refilling Kelly’s glass with iced tea when a man’s voice spoke through the house’s sound system. “Heaven’s Gate Island, Heaven’s Gate Island, this is Sky Hawk Two Niner Three. Requisitioning permission to land.”

Kelly spoke up from where he was sitting, “Sky Hawk Two Nine Three, permission granted.”

Two helicopters broke off from the pack, and began circling low over the Island as one landed on their pad. Its blades were still rotating when a man jumped out wearing shorts, and a light summer shirt with a radio headset. He quickly jogged up to the front porch, and addressed Kelly from the lawn. Even in his summer attire, the agent was all business.

“Mr. Winston, request permission to spread out our detail, and do a walk-through of your home.”

“Granted,” Kelly told him.

“And your weapons, sir?” the agent asked him.

“As agreed, they will be put away as soon as the walk-through is finished, and not a moment before.”

“Very well Sir.” The agent began turning away, but Kelly stopped him.

“A word to the wise,” Kelly told the guy. “If any of your people step on the flowers around the house. You’re on your own because the girls will beat you to death.”

The guy didn’t even crack a smile. He told Kelly they’d be careful of the bushes, and flowers. When the agent spoke into his headset, men started pouring out of the helicopter. Some ran up around the back side of the house while others jumped on the ATVs Kelly provided for them. As soon as the helicopter was empty, another one landed, and more men jumped out. Kelly could see they had all this planned out as they covered a good part of the Island, blocking it off in sections.

Another unarmed agent came up, and joined his buddy in front of the porch. Kelly, and Tamra walked them both inside the house.

Tess was where she was told to be in the foray. He noticed she had switched to a Saw Machine gun, and must have had two hundred rounds of ammunition lying around her neck. Tim was in the back hallway with his M16 as both he, and Tess guarded the front of the house, and the cellar door. Wade, and Stephanie were guarding the second floor, and Sandra was sitting in Kelly’s study with the dogs, watching everything unfold.

Barbra was the only one not on the Island. Mike would only tell them she would be out of contact for a while.

Tamra followed one agent through the house, and Kelly followed behind the other one. The inspection wasn’t as thorough of a search as Kelly expected. It took less than forty-five minutes. Tamra was already on the front porch when Kelly, and the agent he was following walked back outside.

Kelly’s agent turned to him. “Your weapons, sir?”

Kelly hit the call box at the front door. “Everybody disarm. Wade, and Tess. Collect all weapons.”

Tess came outside, and took Kelly’s, and Tamra’s gear from them. Opening the cellar door, they took all the guns downstairs, shutting the vault behind them.

Marine One, carrying the President of the United States, had been circling over the Island. They were told they could now land. Tamra went back inside the house, shutting the door behind her, as Kelly sat down on the front porch waiting for President Obama.

The President’s helicopter landed, and the President and Mike got out. Because of some crisis in the Union, Roger Mellon could not visit the Island with the President, Mike Cunningham came in his place.

After a few words with his Secret Service people, the president and Mike made their way up towards the house.

President Obama was almost six feet tall. He clearly was a man who wasn’t into manual labor. He had a slim form, but he walked with confidence, and had an easygoing appearance. Kelly wasn’t fooled one bit by Barack’s appearance. The man ran a country. He didn’t get to where he was by being a pushover. Kelly knew him to be a very smart individual who, among other things, was once a senior lecturer who used to teach courses in constitutional law at the University of Chicago. Kelly understood Obama to be a powerfully fierce, and intense individual who would never cower from a fight. In short, Barack Obama was an Alpha, but this Alpha wasn’t underdeveloped.

Kelly had given the White House strict instructions about his visit. He told them there would be no fanfare involved. The event was to be considered a meeting of two compatriots. The President, and Mike, Kelly saw they weren’t following his instructions about wearing summer attire, but that was to be expected. Barack, after all, was the President of the United States, and he was going to let Kelly know that during his entire visit. But as the President looked up at Kelly sitting on the front porch in shorts, and a summer shirt, he laughed to himself, and removed his jacket, and tie as he climbed up the steps.

Kelly stood. Mike, in his service uniform, made the introductions. The two men shook hands, and all three men sat down.

Obama opened the conversation with, “Mr. Winston, you have given me the impression you’re a bit of a hard ass.”

“Not really. Sir, but I have been known to be a pain in the ass,” Kelly shot back at him.

Kelly wasn’t about to start a war of words with the President. He thought the man was likable. Obama was the kind of person who radiated authenticity, as he used his charismatic personality to charm people along with his benevolent manner to win people over to his side. There was nothing wrong with that, Kelly thought. After all, the guy was a politician. But Kelly was done with people pushing him around. He had a goal, and he was going to make it happen at any cost.

“By the way,” Barack told him. “I know you faked those four reports you managed to get into the CIA without us knowing about it. It took a real genius to do what you did, I might add it was also illegal as hell.”

When Kelly didn’t answer him, he continued, “OK, you made it happen. Now you have me here. I’ll forget those reports, and the deception you, and your family have been portraying yourself to this point. But I want to know what in the hell happened in Santarem, and how you can do the things I saw in that video. I also want to know how all of you healed so fast. Tess alone should have been in a cast for three months, and Tim, and you should be dead. None of you received any medical attention for an hour and a half after you were shot. Mr. Winston, normal people cannot survive wounds like that, and certainly not for the length of time all of you did.”

“Sir, I’ll tell you what you want to know, but you are going to have a very hard time believing what I am about to say to you. But first, we need to go inside, so all of the listening devices you have trained on us can’t hear what I’m saying.”

Kelly took the President into his study.

Once there, he explained about their organization, and told the President their prime purpose. To assist the United States with technology without letting the rest of the world know they existed, and for them to be used as a last resort to fight their greatest enemy. Also, in a worst-case scenario, to help rebuild the federal government, and its military powers while following the United States Constitution to guarantee the protection of human rights.

“How many other cells of yours are out there in the world?”

Kelly noticed the President deliberately used the word “cells” and not “groups,” or “packs.” The man was testing him from the start.

“Sir, I am the only one who knows everything about our organization, and I will not share that information with you, or anyone else. We’re not terrorists, Mr. President,” Kelly stressed. “Nor are we a group of cells. We are closer to a pack of wolves than anything else. In a few minutes, you will understand why I say that.”

“OK, Sorry. Poor choice of words,” Obama apologized. “I’m wondering about your technology, and how you could defend the United States if you had to.”

“Mr. President, if needed, we could kill every human being in a country anywhere in the world in less time than it takes for you to blink your eyes. The destruction will only affect human beings, and not one animal, plant, or building will be affected. However, we do have things that will take down buildings. We can do this on a grand scale, or on a small one.”

“What about on a global scale?”

Barack still wasn’t pulling any punches with him.

“Mr. President, we cherish life everywhere on the planet. We’re here to preserve it, not kill it. We’re here to help you because the population in the United States is on the right track to evolve, but you’re missing the mark. You need some help. That’s why I am here.”

“To create super-humans,” Obama asked.

“No, Sir. Only those in my family will have abilities like you saw on that video taken in South America. The world would be in chaos if everybody could do what we can do. And I’m sure as hell not going to share any of this with the military. We’re only here to show you how to be better than you are with hopes that, in time, you too, will evolve naturally. But Mr. President, if the nations of the world don’t start trying to be better than they are. The world is doomed, and everyone will die. God told us we live in a fallen creation, but he didn’t say how long our world would be here. We still have a long time to live in peace with each other.”

“So, the wounds that you received in South America didn’t kill you because of this evolution process from the Adam’s child.”

“Yes, Tess changed everything. Our thinking changed because we wanted to change it. Our thoughts affect how we live. It changed our behavior, and God blessed us because of it. There is so much more to life than what people know. It’s been your own thinking process, and your society’s mannerisms that have been holding all of you back from the things God wants to show you. That’s the simplest way I can explain it to you, sir.”

The three men stayed in Kelly’s office for hours with the President, asking question after question until he understood everything Kelly was telling him.

At one point during their conversation, Barack excused himself. Kelly followed him by monitors as the President went outside, he spoke to the same Secret Service guy who had first approached the house.

Kelly relaxed, and then smiled when he heard Obama tell the guy, “We won’t

be going back to Washington tonight, so make preparations. I’ll be staying in the house, and get a hold of the Vice-President. I need to speak to him immediately.”

When Obama came back into his office, Kelly decided it was time to bring him down into the cellar. Mike went off in search of Tamra as Kelly wanted to be the only one giving the President the tour of the cellar.

Tess, and Wade were sitting close together, staring at a computer screen as the two men walked into the classroom. When Kelly introduced them, Tess kissed Obama’s cheek as Wade stood tall, and proudly shook the President’s hand.

“Sorry for disturbing you,” The President told them as he glanced at the computer screen. “Good lord, what are you two studying? Isn’t that Abstract Algebra?”

“Yes Sir, I’m helping Wade,” Tess told him. “Wade is good at working his way through this stuff, but it really helps to have another person going through the same problems together.”

“Tess, didn’t you quit high school in the tenth grade?” The President asked. He then pointed at the screen. “But you understand this math?”

Tess agreed. She quit school early, then she added, “Sir, I understand a hell of a lot more than Abstract Algebra. I play with Complex Analysis on my own just because I like the challenge. Sir, I didn’t learn how to kill a man over two miles away with a six-foot rifle with a General Equivalence Diploma.”

She reached out beside her, taking Kelly’s hand. “Everything I know, I learned from my husband, and from everybody else here on the Island.”

Obama turned his attention to Wade. “And I believe you have never even been to high school, from what I recall. Tell me how you came to be here on the Island?”

Everyone on the Island knew the President would know just about everything there was to know about them before they came to the Island. Kelly told everybody

to answer all of his questions if one was put to them.

Wade told him his story, and Kelly could see him getting nervous, but then Tess brushed her hand against Wade’s.

“Wade, Kelly has told me how you share yourselves with new members of the family. Why did Tess have to be so gentle with you? I know you have had some

problems in the past, but frankly, seeing, and hearing from you now. I don’t see

anything wrong with you.”

“I still get a little jumpy, sir. All of my problems didn’t fade away, their all still inside of me. The only difference now is they don’t control me like they did before, but I still feel them. I was a mess when I came out here. All I knew at the time was something was telling me to steal the boat, and with me being who I was. I didn’t know what in hell to do. In the end, I guess, I figured at least I might die driving off into the open ocean. But I think something was using that feeling to get me to come here. Anyway, the Island was here. I met Tess, and fell in love with her the second I saw her.”

“Sir, when we share ourselves with someone, it’s because it’s needed, and we know it’s righteous. We can’t share ourselves with just anybody. If we did, we would create monsters we’d be forced to kill. That has happened before in the past, from what I am told. The family was really worried about me when I first got here. Kelly took the chance even though he knew I was borderline. That’s why he told Tess to go slow with me as Kelly, and the rest of the family watched over me like a hawk.”

They let Tess, and Wade get back to their studies as Kelly continued with the tour. The President stopped in the doorway, and stared at the armory in front of him.

“Kelly, I am really astounded at what you have done with everybody on the Island, but why? Take Tamra as an example, and her suicidal tendencies. She hasn’t tried to hurt herself since she has been with you. Has she?”

“Once, sir, when her, and Janet first got here. The computer woke me, and told me she came down into the cellar. I found her in this room sitting on the floor with a hand grenade in her right hand, and the pin of the grenade in her left. But if you’re worried about any of my family members. Mr. President, you can trust them as much as you trust me. They’re all doing great, their past lives will forever remain in the past.”

“No, I wasn’t even thinking that at all, Kelly. But what about Tim? He’s ex-Coast Guard, and there isn’t anything on file about mental disorders, nor does he have a criminal record. Is he the only one, for lack of a better word? Is he normal?”

“Mister President, this isn’t misfit Island, if that’s what you’re wondering. There are only a few on the Island like Tess, and Tamra, and Wade who had problems before they came here, but that’s why I picked them. Their desire to change was greater than other people. Alpha’s, like them, tend to be more powerful than others because of their willingness to change. Tim really was my hardest decision I had to make. I won’t talk about his problem before he came into the family. There was just something about the guy that stopped me from ending his life. By all rights, I should have killed him. Maybe it was my love for him that stopped me, or maybe it was his strong desire to change. It was like what Wade said. It was needed, and he wanted to change, but society wouldn’t let him. I felt compassion for him, and he hasn’t let me down since. He’s my brother, and husband. I love him dearly.”

As they were talking, Obama was looking down at an old Tommy gun

invented by John T Thompson in 1919. Kelly picked it up, and handed it to the President to hold while they continued their discussion.

“Sandra’s problem,” Kelly told him. “wasn’t anywhere near as severe as everybody else. And Janet kept hers hidden from people until you lived with her.”

“You mean her violent outbursts?” Obama asked, pulling back the breach on the Thompson to look inside the weapon.

“Sir, it was more than just out-bursts. She would have conversations by herself that would get so violent she put holes in the walls, hurting herself in the process. She’ll still talks to herself today as she works on a jigsaw puzzle, but that’s the worst of it. I am thankful her scars on her arms are gone.”

“I know about Tess, and Wade,” Barack said, chuckling. “Them two are two peas in a pod. You’d have to be blind not to see it. But what about the rest of the family?”

“Barbra, and Mike, and Stephanie, there has never been any issue with them. We all have our favorite wives, and husbands, but we share our self openly with everyone. Barbra, and Mike are a big item, and so are Tess, and Wade. Then there’s Stephanie, who is madly in love with Janet. Sandra tells us she loves us all evenly.”

They left the guns behind them, and walked through the last room in the armory. Different types of devices, some of them twice the size of a refrigerator, were sitting on the floor in the room.

The President stopped by one, and asked, “Kelly what is this?” He pointed to a device on the floor.

“It kills people, and buildings,” he simply told the President.

“I already figured that, but how many people?”

“Depending on the weather, anywhere between fifteen to twenty million. It’s one of the bigger ones we have. I have one, or two larger ones than this, and I can make bigger ones, but then it’s harder to transport them.”

The President didn’t reply, he just stared at Kelly.

Kelly explained. “Sir, none of these are for the United States. If we are to be the last resort for our country, we are going to be needing weapons of mass destruction. These three over here,” Kelly pointed to three other black boxes on the floor. “I only built these because I was bored, and that’s the God’s honest truth. I don’t really need them. Making bombs is kind of a hobby of mine,” he explained.

“Kelly, if it did come for the organization to get activated, would all the other

groups get involved?”

“There’s a yes, and no answer to your question, sir. They will help me if I need it, but the only time they would go openly active is if someone killed me or crushed the United States Government, and its military powers. Then they all would be activated.”

“Are you telling me just the ten of you could take out another country?”

“That’s another yes, and no answer, sir. My family, and I could take out another country if we thought it was necessary. However, I alone by myself could do it, and I’ll kill millions of lives if I had to. The way I look at it is not the amount of people I can kill. It’s how many do I need to kill in order to achieve my objective. If you’re worried about someone killing me. Sir, I am rather hard to kill. It would be very difficult for someone to do it. Anyway, no one wants to come after me, or every pack in this world will rise up, and strike back. I am very important to them. I will have their protection no matter where I go in the world.”

“Sir, come with me, and let me show the last two things I want you to see. I realize you don’t believe my words, but soon you’ll see what I am saying to you is the truth.”

Kelly brought the President to the swinging door across from their special room with the cross of Christ.

“When we go into this room, do not react,” he told the President. “You will not be harmed. They’re going to be all over you, but they’ll calm down. Watch the big male, and female Alphas. They’ll control the pack.”

Surprised, the President asked, “Kelly, do you have wolves down here?”

Kelly laughed out loud, and then smiled at the President. “Oh, yes. I surely do,” he told him pushing his way through the doorway. “Come on, this is going to be fun,” he told the President.

They walked into a huge dimly lit room that brightened up as they entered. The room was very wide, as it was long. The smell of bark, and dirt hung on the air like a thick blanket. There were ten gigantic boxes, with one larger than all of them in the center of the room. All the beds had wood chips in them. Some had a few pillows, or a blanket with comforters bunched up on top of the wood chips. Laying on top of each nest were fourteen of the largest timber wolves Barack Obama has ever seen in his entire life. The wolves stood up in their beds as they came into the room. The biggest wolves in the pack looked to weigh over two hundred pounds each.

The two big alphas jumped down off the center nest, and slowly came toward the two men with their heads down low, softly growling. The wolves were silver, and gray with brown backs with light tan fur on their lower body parts, along with a bushy tail almost nineteen inches long. Some wolves were of different sizes, but the biggest were without a doubt the alpha male, and female who was cautiously approaching Kelly, and the President of the United States.

Kelly told the President to stand still as the alpha male stuck its nose between Obama’s legs, and inhaled deeply. When it stood up on its hind legs, the President braced himself, taking a hold of the huge paws as the wolf looked straight into his eyes. The animal smelled his ears, and breath, then it dropped to all fours. Kelly grabbed the President’s shoulder to steady him when the enormous wolf wagged its tail, and brushed its heavy body against the President’s legs as it circled around him.

When the wolf was finished, off to the side, Barack noticed Kelly suddenly sat down heavily on a nest, and let out a deep sigh of relief.

“I take it this was a test,” he told Kelly. “And I would never have made it out of here alive if he didn’t like me.”

“Oh no, Sir. If he didn’t like you, you would not have, and we would have been at war with the United States for killing you. These wolves, as you might have already guessed, are the descendants of the same wolves who protected Tess, and the Adam’s family. They have never left us in all of these years. Over time, we have become one, and have incorporated each other’s behavioral habits. Because of Tess, nature, and mankind finally came together, living as God wanted us to. Sometimes at night, the wolves, and the rest of us hunt together for the animals here on the Island. The doors in the house are fully automated, and the computer lets them in, and out whenever they want, but by morning, they’re all in bed with the rest of us upstairs. We live together, eat together, and love together. Sir, if you think we’re fast, you should see these guys move. Only a few of us can keep up with the wolves when they’re at a full run.”

Obama braced himself once more. The female Alpha stood up with its paws on his chest as she let Barack scratch the back of her neck. Pushing the top of her head under his chin, the massive wolf wagged its tail.

“That one you’re holding is, Александра,” Kelly said, giving Obama the female wolf’s Russian name. “It’s pronounced—”

“AhleekSAHNdrah.” The President pronounced it for him. “It means in English,” he told the female wolf. “You're called Alexandra, and your name means Defender of Man.”

“The male is Феофилакт.” Kelly waited to see if the President could figure that one out by himself.

After a moment, the President reached over Alexandra’s back, and patted the alpha male’s head. “Then your Feofilakt, which is pronounced Fiyowfihleykt, and means, Guarded by God. Kelly, are the rest of the wolves similarly named?”

“Yes, we are pretty big on our traditions,” Kelly told him.

The rest of the pack couldn’t wait any longer. The two alpha wolves, and Kelly moved out of the way as they greeted the President all at once. They swarmed all over him as they all wanted his attention at the same time.

Leaving the room, both Alpha wolves followed them into the hallway as Kelly told the President, “They’re not going to leave your side for a while,

but they’re a hell of a lot smarter than any dog.”

“I love them, Kelly. I think we’ll get along just fine,” Obama told him, stroking Feofilakt’s heavy coat.

They stopped in front of the only other door in the hall.

“Sir, this is the last thing I have to show you other than the house. You’ll be going in alone with the wolves. They’ll stay out of your way while you’re down there, but I need to warn you. It’s hard to breathe when you first go in there. The longer you stay in there, the easier it will get to breathe, and the clearer your thinking will become. I’ll wait for you with the rest of the family by the pool. Sandra just informed me dinners is in an hour but take your time. We’ll put your plate in the oven, and keep it hot, and answer more of your questions.”

“Also, sir, your phone will not work in the house, but as soon as you come outside. Please tell your Secret Service all the wolves will be coming outside with you. Have them all back away from the house while they’re outside.”

“I’ll make sure they all pull back, Kelly. I would hate to see anyone of these wonderful creatures hurt.”

Kelly just stared straight into the President’s brown eyes, and in a matter-of-fact way told him. “Mr. President, I’m not worried about my wolves,” he said. “It’s your men I’m concerned about. Your men, with their sidearms, and rifles, are no match for these wolves. Every single one of your men will die if they do anything stupid to provoke these animals. These wolves have lived with us for a long time, and they may look domesticated to you, but they are far from it. They are as wild today as they were when they first came into our lives.”

Saying that much, Kelly turned around, and walked upstairs, leaving the President staring at his back.

It finally hit Barack what he had walked into as he watched Kelly go up-stairs. He knew about the Winston’s abilities, and he had seen the proof of their healing capability. All of which surprised him, and was one of the key factors for this visit. But even after Kelly told him about the organization, that still didn’t worry him too much. The United States has dealt with groups like this in the past, and present. The weapon stockpile did worry him some, and he did believe the devices Kelly had were, in fact, real. But after meeting the wolves, and then hearing Kelly’s statement about them. It hit Obama like a ton of bricks. Kelly was telling him the truth about everything. Barack just now realized he was standing in the basement of a family who were the most powerful, and dangerous human beings on the face of the planet. It unnerved him in a way no one has ever made him feel in his life. He was glad Kelly was already upstairs, and didn’t see his hands trembling as he opened the door in front of him. The two wolves followed him into the room.

An hour later, Barack walked out onto the patio, where they all were waiting for him. As he came out of the house, he had a stunned look of amazement on his face. Everyone there could see gone was the sure-footed politician who was the commander, and chief of the greatest superpower in the world. The President’s men nearby seen it too, and started coming towards him, but he held up his hands telling them he was OK. He then ordered them all further back as the wolves filed out of the house behind him.

Surrounding the Winston’s at the table, the wolves were eager to receive a scratch and a treat.

“You believe me now?” He asked the president as Kelly sat at the head of the table.

“Yes, Kelly. I believe you. Is this how the organization started?”

“We really don’t know for sure, Mr. President, but that’s what my family, and I have always believed.”

Kelly then introduced Barack to the rest of the family. All the girls kissed him on the cheek, and remained very respectful as they all sat down for dinner. The President led the dinner off with a word of thanks, and was happily surprised to find that part of their dinner course was clams broccoli, and pork chops. When dinner was over, the girls were cleaning up the dinner plates as Kelly, and the rest of the men talked over Manhattan cocktails.

“Kelly, I believe you understand me more than I understand you. You have orchestrated everything before this event to get me here. Yet, I sense there is more to your motives than what you have been telling me. I believe you will protect the good old USA, but what do you want from me? I know damn well there is something, and it’s going to be bigger than anything you have shared with me so far.”

Kelly knew this question was going to come up, eventually. He figured the President would see through him, but Kelly waited as long as he could because Barack Obama was a man vulnerable to criticism. He didn’t take it lightly. Kelly has watched him on TV when someone would criticize, and express negativity towards him, or what he was doing. The man would react like a tiger, and would pounce on the issue as if it were his prey. Kelly, as well as the rest of the family, knew that the evening was about to get a bit exciting.

“Mr. President, do you believe we could have on this planet a utopia like world?”

Obama knew right away he was being set up, but he wanted to know what was on Kelly’s mind, so he answered him, “No, I don’t believe that is going to be possible. In another two, or three thousand years, maybe. But not anytime soon.”

Leaning forward, Kelly placed his forearms on the edge of the table. “You are so wrong.” He looked over at Janet. “Close your eyes, and tell us what you see around us.”

Janet did as she was told. “Well, I see everything around the house, and down to the helicopter pad, and the beach.”

“Tell us what you see.”

“Well,...Tamra, and Sandra are putting the dinner dishes in the dishwasher while Stephanie puts the left-over dessert in the refrigerator. The springers are finishing their treat that Stephanie just gave them, and Tim, and Tess are feeling each other up in the food closet off the kitchen... nope, Tess just took off her underwear and…”

Quickly, Kelly cut in, “Forget about them two; what about outside of the house?”

“Well, most of the President’s detail are just standing around watching us. The pilots are sitting in the doorway of the helicopter away from us smoking a cigarette so we can’t see them. And one of the Secret Service guys is trying to clean wolf scat, or dog poop off of his shoe behind my photo lab.”

Kelly told her that was enough when the President took out his phone. After he put it away, Barack said, “OK, you sold me. Can all of you do this?”

“We all can feel the environment around us to some extent, but only Janet, Tess, Tamra, and I have the greatest range. However, Janet is the only one in the family who can see with her mind.

“Tell me what you can feel, Kelly,” Barack asked him.

“Sir, I feel all life everywhere on the planet, but mostly I feel the pain, and suffering of people all around the world. I feel the world, Mr. President, as all of you kill each other. The rape, the aggravated assaults, the killing, it all has to stop. Families are turning on their own kind, and people are kicking others out of their lives because they don’t understand what they are doing. More than a hundred million people worldwide are homeless, and it’s not getting any better for any of them. One of the biggest reasons I kept Wade on the Island was because I couldn’t send him back out into the world. Only a fraction of the world’s population is even trying to change these things I have been talking about. Our own political system is working against us. It needs to be restructured so the Federal, and States governments are working towards the same goals. They should also be working for their constituents, helping them change from the inside out. I will make the killing stop no matter what I have to do, Mr. President. That’s why you are here tonight, sir. You’re going to help me.”

Setting his cocktail down in front of him, Obama told “Kelly, what you’re asking for is a worthy cause, yet it’s impossible.”

Barack realized there were a lot of politicians out there working towards their own ends to gain a seat of power in the federal, and state governments. But there were also a lot of them trying to bring about the changes Kelly was talking about. Barack believed steady progress would, in time, improve the country, and the world, but it wasn’t going to happen overnight. Mankind just wasn’t that smart.

“No, it isn’t Mr. President. That’s where you are wrong. Everything that a man does comes from his thinking. The mind affects our reality, our behavior, and actions. It affects everything in our lives, and the lives of people all around the world. Mr. President, it’s your thinking process that is screwed up. The way to a utopia world lays in changing your thinking, not just your environment, and the government. Change the world’s thinking, and you’ll find paradise, but don’t change the world’s thinking, and I’ll kill every fucking one of you.”

“Sweet Jesus, Kelly. Now you’re talking genocide.”

“Oh no, I am not,” he assured the President. “It’s more of an extinction, not genocide. You see, all of you will be gone, and the new breed of human being will populate the earth in harmony with each other, nature, and God.”

Kelly really didn’t believe it would ever come to an extinction, or even genocide. In truth, he was setting Obama up for a personal demonstration.

“You’re crazy to even think like that, Kelly.”

The wolves could feel it coming long before everyone else at the table. As one, they rose to their paws, and surrounded Kelly, and the President while pointing themselves away from them. Their heads were low to the ground as they started snarling at the Secret Service men off in the distance. The wolves knew the Alpha was coming out of himself, and he was ticked off.

“Am I!” Kelly screamed at the President, quickly standing up at the head of the table.

Suddenly, a dark force emanating from Kelly penetrated into everyone all around the inside, and outside of the home. Kelly could smell their fear as many things happened all at once.

The Secret Service men moved towards the President while pulling out their guns as they ran. Everyone who was at the table knocked over their chairs, trying to get away from the animal emerging from Kelly as he screamed at the President of the United States at the top of his lungs.

“I have had enough of all of your bullshit! You don’t have to live with what I know, and you don’t have to feel it every fucking day of your life like I do. Sir, you may consider yourself an Alpha, but you mean nothing to me. You can’t kill me, and even if you did, this entire planet would be extinct except for my family, and the rest of the organization. What I am telling you, and the rest of the fucking world is you don’t have a choice anymore. You either change your fucking behavior, or I’ll start killing off every fucking one of you.”

Sounds of dishes breaking, and doors slamming came from inside of the house. The President could only sit, and watch in awe as the whole Winston family, and wolf pack moved so fast that Barack could hardly see their blurred bodily forms.

The Secret Service people had their guns out, ready to shoot Kelly. The Agent who first introduced himself to Kelly was taking aim at the back side of Kelly’s head when, in a blur of motion, his gun was ripped from his hands, and he was knocked to the ground. His radio headset was also gone. Every Agent on the Island soon found they no longer had a weapon, or radio. All across the Island, the President’s men were disarmed one by one in a blink of an eye. They all continued running empty-handed towards the President's position.

One wolf jumped over the two men sitting in the helicopter. The guys jumped off the craft, and onto the pad as the animal position itself in the doorway. The wolfs head hung low as it flashed its fangs, snarling, and growling at the men as saliva dripped from its mouth.

Five wolves stayed surrounding Kelly and Obama, stopping the President’s men from reaching him.

Tamra suddenly appeared at Kelly’s side, trying to calm him down as the Secret Service were held at bay by the wolves who were slowly edging their way towards them.

Obama knew the situation had gotten out of hand. Something needed to be done fast as the wolves were about to tear into his men. Jumping to his feet, he raised his hands, yelling at his men, and everybody all around him.

“Stop this,” he screamed. “Everyone, just stop right where you are. No one moves. There is no need for any of this.”

“Mr. President,” one agent yelled over at him. “They made an aggressive move. They took our weapons.” The guy couldn’t believe it. What more did he have to tell Obama? Every one of his men felt he was in danger.

Barack knew what the guy was thinking. “The only one who is in any danger around here is all of you, not me. There is no way this family would ever hurt me. It’s just not going to happen!” he told them.

Barack directed two of his men to move out of earshot, and stay there. The rest of his people he ordered them all to go back to the helicopter pad to wait for him there. Only then did he turn his attention back to Kelly, and the rest of the Winstons. The wolves, and the Winstons were showing up one by one, laying weapons, and headsets they gathered on top of the table that once held their wonderful dinner.

“Kelly, I had my doubts at first, but as I already told you. I don’t anymore. Let’s all just sit, and calm down, and talk this out.”

Tamra, and Tess sat on either side of Kelly consoling him as the rest of the Winston sat down around the table. Unable to rest after the excitement, the wolf pack continued to circle around the table while staring off into the distance toward the helicopter pad. A few of the wolves moved away from the table to watch the two agents nearby.

“Mr. President, that was the first time in my life I have lost my temper. I

wouldn’t make that same mistake twice if I were you,” Kelly warned him.

Barack got mad in return, but not because of Kelly’s threat. However, he kept his voice even when he told him. “You were talking about killing everybody in the world. How can I not be emotional about that, Kelly? Did you really expect me to just sit here, and put up with it?”

“Sir, we don’t want to hurt anyone. All we want is for people to change their damn behavior. You’re slowly killing yourselves, and the planet. It never stops. Our ice caps are melting, and the air on the planet is turning sour to the point. Before long, we won’t be able to breathe it. Mr. President, your society is fucked. Most of our politicians are self-serving our country for riches, and fame, not because they want a better world. The amount of crime in the US alone is astounding. There are over ninety thousand females being raped every year in this country, and those were the ones that got reported. Aggravated assaults every year are well over eight hundred thousand victims. Sure, we may have had a drop in these crimes by ten thousand people over the last few years, but what about the people who were affected by these crimes? What’s being done for them, or our planet that your slowly killing? Nothing is being done. I’m tired of it. Something has to change. The numbers on crime statistics here in America alone keep getting bigger every year as the population rises. Sir, the world has truly gone mad.”

“Kelly, I deal with those numbers every day, and I am working to lower the crime rate, and get better health care, and housing for everyone. I ran for the Presidency to change these things. It’s not as easy as you might think. If you have any suggestions, I’ll gladly listen to them.”

Sandra immediately spoke up, “Sir, the United States Government is screwing up, but that isn’t the genuine problem we have here in America. The real problem is all of us living here. We alone have the power to change the government and shape it the way we want it. People have grown soft in letting the government control their lives. No one wants to bother with changing the status quo of our country. They want to complain about the problems, and be left alone with no consideration for the rest of the world. The population in the United States as of 2013 was 315,000,000 people. However, in the last Presidential Election we had over 197,000,000 who registered to vote. Yet only 126,000,000 of them bothered to vote in the last election. Less than half of our population even bothered to show up at the polls to change our country on election day. Our government is screwing up big time, but it’s the American people who are letting them do it. Sir, numbers do not lie; only people do. Here in the great state of Maine’s last gubernatorial election, there was a population of 1,300,000 people, with only 565,000 people bothering to turn out to vote. As I said before, our biggest problem isn’t the Federal, or State Governments. Our biggest problem is the people of the United States. Only through changing the status quo of our lives will we change our government. It’s all about changing us first, and then it’s up to us to change the world. It will not work any other way.” Finishing her rant, she reached over, and scratched the ears of one wolf sitting beside her.

“I believe giving offenders of sexual violence, aggravated assault life terms will change people’s attitudes,” Janet offered. “Teach the people in America that we will no longer stand for crime in our country. If they want to commit a crime within our borders, they better be ready to pay the piper.”

Wade declared, “We need to remove all the head shops, and stores where it’s legal to buy marijuana, and dope paraphernalia, and make it illegal in all our states. A few years back, cops used to go after dope smokers, and growers with a vengeance. Now, pot is a drug of tolerance, and even more people are using, and growing it than ever before. A few of our states have already made the stuff legal to carry a small quantity.”

“Our court system is a fucking joke,” Tim threw in. “Their enforcing the three strikes, and you’re out policy on crime, but that didn’t help our court systems, and it sure hasn’t stopped people from committing crimes either. As a matter of fact, it told people they could screw up really good two times before the hammer came down on them. When a child does something wrong, his father, and mother make the punishment hurt. That’s what will make people stop, and think. First, offender of drunk driving, their licenses should be taken away for eight years, and add a thirty thousand dollar fine, and four years in jail. Second OUI offense, remove their license for life with a fifty thousand dollar fine, and fifteen years in jail. Stop screwing around with people’s lives, and show them they either act right, or get the hell out of our country.”

The President had a wide grin on his face when Tess spoke up. He already read her file, and he expected something pretty good from her.

“Sir, I agree with everything I have heard tonight, but there are some better ways to handle hard-core criminals like offenders of sexual violence, and aggravated assault, and murder. It’ll help with the overpopulation of our prison’s system too. What we need to do is take these suckers out back behind the courthouse, and shoot the motherfuckers in the head. Hell, Sir. I would be more than happy to volunteer my time, and I’ll even pay for the bullets, and my gas to get there.”

Kelly interrupted her, “Honey. Do you think you can come up with anything a little more constructive than that?”

Tess leaned forward on the arms of her chair. “Kelly, you know them sons of bitches deserve it—”

Tamra suddenly cut her off. “Tess! Straighten out. If I hear another cuss word from your mouth, you and I will go a few rounds. Now apologize to the President for your poor vocabulary, and answer your husband’s question,” she ordered the younger woman.

Obama almost burst out laughing. He could see Tess wasn’t happy about it,

but she did as she was told.

“Sir, sorry for my trash mouth,” she told the President, sitting back in her chair. “It gets away from me sometimes. What our country needs is right in front of you, and none of you see it. They need love. We need to spread our love across the world. It should be displayed on every billboard, and on every TV in America. We need to bring back the wholesome family values that we had but lost. Sir, we are losing ourselves through our own independence. Mr. President, we’re just too damn independent, and everyone wants a family to love them, but they’re not willing to go through the hoops to be a part of one.”

“Wade, I hope what I’m about to say doesn’t offend you, but Mr. President take Wades family as an example. One of his brothers wants nothing to do with him. They won’t even have a lousy cup of coffee with him because of his problems, and the way he was before. Wade spent most of his time by himself before he came to the Island because of his problems. People can change, sir, and a lot of them want to change. It’s the ones who don’t want to change who we’ll have trouble with.”

Tamra cut in right behind her. “Mr. President, take the twelve-step program of AA. The program was designed to help a person to change their thinking and ultimately their lives. It was the only way some people could stop drinking, or using drugs. Our country needs to be whitewashed with these programs. These twelve-step programs can be fitted for almost any subject. They should be in our schools, and most importantly, in the courtrooms. Anyone who commits a crime should be made to go to these programs, and make the offenders pay a fee to support the program. There are many other methods, like AA, that can also help. The thing is to get people into them, and paying for them.”

Finally, Kelly stepped back into the discussion. “Sir, some of what we talked about the country is already doing. My point is that you’re not doing enough of it. Sir, you’re our commander, and chief, and, right now, the father of our country. Well, from where I am sitting, Daddy. You and the White House are not doing your fucking jobs. We need to streamline, and reorganize our political system so it’s working for the people, and not just for the politicians, and government. Helping people improve their lives helps them evolve into the people God wants us to be. Giving them more houses, and jobs and welfare money isn’t going to change them. If you change a person’s thinking, they are not going to want to be on welfare. Teach people how to fish so they can eat for a lifetime. Their lives will improve as they strive to live. Granted, my little family here has had a helping hand because of me, but I am living proof that mankind was destined to evolve, and you cannot argue that fact. Sir, our world doesn’t have much time. We need to do something about it soon.”

Obama quickly glanced over at Tess. “I liked most of what all of you said. This is why I got into government work. To make a difference in our country, but what you’re all talking about will take time. Kelly, you’re not going to start power-playing us, are you?”

“If you mean am I going to start killing off people here in the USA, or the rest of the world? No. I have no timeline for something like that. But I do need to see improvement from you, and this country. I need to see that the government is honestly trying to help its people to become better than they are. I want to watch what you’re doing, and find ways to increase your efforts. I’m not going to leave you alone in the dark. I plan on helping you through the whole process as much as I can. I don’t believe I was born to be a killing machine, Mr. President. I’m here as an example to show you some of the things a human being can become. The United States is not in any threat by any of us, but it sure is in deep distress.”

“How do you mean?”

Kelly just said two words. “North Korea.”

“Yes, I would think of North Korea as a big problem, but it’s not a threat to us, Kelly.”

“Sir, I don’t think you have the information system we have in the organization. What I have been told is North Korea is a major threat to the United States, and to the rest of the world. So don’t be bullshitting me with your half-truths, Mr. President.”

“I meant what I said, Kelly. We know North Korea is making ICBMs. However, if you have any information on the topic, I really want to hear it.”

“Sir, North Korea is right now making two ICBMs at this time,” Kelly told Obama. “But they already have made four, and one is pointed at Japan, and the other three are pointed at the United States. I call that a fucking threat, sir.”

Obama was clearly shocked. Barack knew he had to take Kelly seriously. The man just wasn’t a bullshitter. Everything he has learned about Kelly, and his family tonight has shown him that.

“Are you sure about this, Kelly?”

“Sir, I told you before our organization is scattered everywhere in the world. And I am absolutely positive they have three missiles pointed at us, and the attack is coming. When will the attack come? I am not sure just yet. It could be weeks, maybe months, or years. I need to watch the situation, and gather more information before I can make that determination.”

# Chapter 7

# Light speed

Startled, Tamra woke with a jolt. She looked around the great bedchamber, but the room was dark, and quiet. Everyone was sleeping peacefully. Tess was curled up in her arms, with Stephanie on the other side of her. Both alpha wolves were in bed with her. The rest of the wolf pack was scattered all around, sleeping on the beds with the rest of the family.

Confused, Tamra sat up, feeling everything around her, trying to find the reason that had disturbed her slumber; then it hit her: Kelly!

He was supposed to be in Boston for a few days on business, but something was wrong, and Tamra knew it. She searched for him, and found he wasn’t in Boston. Matter of fact, he felt thousands of miles away from there. Quickly, she got up, and quietly left the bedroom without waking the others.

First, she checked the phone to see if there was a message from him. Not finding one, she started to get a really bad feeling in the pit of her stomach. Tamra knew something wasn’t right. As she made her way to his study, she quickened her pace. Passing under the stairs, and by the time she turned the corner, she broke into a run. Rushing through the doorway into Kelly’s study, she turned on his computer. Out of habit, she brought up the radar screen. She glanced over at the screen as one of Kelly’s flat screens on his desk came to life, all by itself. The picture on it showed Kelly sitting at his desk.

He spoke to her, “Tamra, my love. I don’t like what I am about to do, but there isn’t any other way around it. I have been watching the situation closely. Because of the events of last week, I am sure the United States will be hit with at least three ICBMs. I cannot let that happen. Girl, I’m on new ground here. I don’t really know what exactly is going to happen to me. There are documents in my safe for all of you, and there are instructions in there that I need you all to follow. You’re going to have to be strong, and take the lead over our family for a while. I really had hoped it wouldn’t come to this, but North Korea is forcing my hand. If they do what I think they are about to do. Nukes are going to start falling in many countries. Japan will be the first one hit followed by the United States. I cannot let this happen. The world’s leaders need their eyes open, and this is how we are going to start.”

Tears were clouding Kelly’s eyes when he said. “I love all of you.” The screen went black.

Tamra wiped tears from her eyes, then reached over, and hit the alarm system for the house. At full volume, the sound was deafening. She let it ring out then turned it off, and told everyone through the house’s sound system to come to Kelly’s study.

Everyone quickly poured into Kelly’s den, followed by Feofilakt, Alexandra, and the Springers. Tamra waited until they were all there before she replayed Kelly’s message. Worried, and scared expressions were written on all of their faces when Kelly’s message ended.

Sandra, and Stephanie had their arms around Wade, and Tess.

Across the desk, Tamra looked to her childhood friend. “Can you see him?”

Janet stared at the floor, and concentrated. She shook her head, sat down, then tried again. Her breathing rapidly sped up as her efforts increased, straining to locate Kelly.

Finally, she let out a deep breath. “I’m not sure. I can’t see the area where he is at very well. He’s blocking me. It’s only a guess, but I believe he’s somewhere in Alaska.”

“Tess, what about you?”

Tess didn’t even have to think about it. “He is blocking us, that’s for damn sure, but I agree with Janet.”

Tamra agreed with both of them. Kelly was trying to hide from them. When he broke his connection with his leading alpha, that’s what woke Tamra up.

Reaching over, Tamra picked up one of Kelly’s phones on his desk. They had a new telephone system in the house since the Presidents first visited. They need a secured phone line if they were to communicate with the President, or Director Mellon. This one phone was connected with the Warrenton Training Center in Northern Virginia. The US Army administered WTC on behalf of the Federal Government. They had many departments. One department was a CIA signal intelligence facility. There was also training schools for various federal departments, and agencies. Additionally, the WTC was also a relay facility for the Department of State’s Diplomatic Telecommunications Service.

The triple-digit number Tamra dialed went directly to Roger Mellon, director

of the CIA. If Roger wasn’t in his office, the call would be forwarded to him wherever he was at. It took a minute to find where Roger was and to make sure the call was secured.

When Tamra heard someone pick up the other end of the line, Roger’s sleepy voice spoke. “Yes, Tamra. What can I do for you at this early hour?”

“Roger, are you near a secured computer terminal? I have something here you need to see right away!” Roger immediately gave her the codes. Tamra punched the message through to him.

Roger’s first question when he got back on the line was an obvious one. “Where’s Kelly now, Tamra?”

“We think he’s in Alaska. I believe he’s going through Russia from Alaska, and then down into North Korea.”

“Tamra, you need to be direct with me. I fail to see how Kelly, by himself, is

going to cause very many problems. Is he carrying one of them devices I was told you guys have in your cellar?”

“Roger, Kelly is the fucking device. Once triggered, he’ll kill millions of people. If he wanted to, he could make mankind extinct. The things we have on this island are powerful, but what we have is nothing compared to what an Alpha of all Alphas can do by themselves. Roger, you need to find him, and kill him, and don’t try shooting him. Dropping a damn bomb on him would be the best way.”

“Tamra, there’s got to be another way. Anyway, from what I know about you guys, I doubt if we could even find him. I am sure he is in the woods running.”

“Yes, Sir. He’ll stick to the jungle all the way there.”

“Tamra, can you guys stop him if you catch up to him?”

“Maybe,” she told him. “Tess, and Kelly have a unique relationship compared to any of us. Kelly picked Tess for a very precise reason. She is also faster than anyone on the Island, and even she doesn’t know how fast she really is. But me, and her, we are the only ones in the pack who can sneak up on him without him knowing about it. He’ll spot anyone else hundreds of miles away before you get near him. Roger, Kelly has a huge jump on us, and I am sure he is moving even faster after he felt all of us probing for him.”

“Okay, sit tight,” Roger told her. “I have something in mind. I’ll call you back

within the hour.”

When she got off the phone, everyone was watching her closely. They all could see Tamra’s mind was made up, and that she was doing what she thought was best for the family, and the world. They all knew better than to go against her, and challenge what she was doing. It would have resulted in bloodshed, and death, and they all knew it.

Janet spoke softly to her, “What are we going to do now, Tamra? We can’t

just let them kill him.”

“Janet, they couldn’t find Kelly, even if they wanted to. We wait, and pray. I am betting there’s only one course of action for Roger to take. I believe he is on it right now.”

Tess came over to her with tears dripping down her face. Tamra held the younger woman in her arms.

Holding onto Tess, Tamra’s mind was spinning out of control as she went through every different scenario she could think of to change the outcome, but she always ended back at one thing. There was nothing she could do that would make any difference.

She didn’t know how in hell they even got to this point. Living on the Island they would go through a peaceful time of loving, and training when all of a sudden, all hell would break loose for no reason.

President Obama, and the Winstons talked throughout the night when he last visited. The Secret Service, and Barack took off in their helicopters as the sky was getting light. Kelly seemed to have lost a lot of weight off of his shoulders during the night, and even with the lack of sleep. He was in a superb mood. He tossed Tess into the pool, then Tamra. They all jumped in before they rested in their bed chamber making love.

Then, out of the blue, he announced they were taking a vacation in the Northern Maine woods. Running in the woods was better than any vacation to a faraway beach, or resort. Kelly checked the weather. Hot temperatures were expected for the next two weeks. They rented a few box trucks, and for the first time in the wolves’ lives; they took them all into the woods with them. For a solid two weeks, they played in Maine’s outback. That first twenty-four hours they covered a great distance. At night they play games with each other, showing off their hunting skills. Kelly let Feofilakt, and Alexandra do some of the hunting to get food for them.

After all, an alpha wolf were the hunters, and killers of the pack, and they also were the only ones to have pups. It took some extra coaxing from Feofilakt, and Alexandra to get all the wolves back into the trucks, and back on the Island.

Janet shot thirty rolls of film that first week alone. It was the best family vacation they have ever had together. Roger's communication equipment was waiting for them when they got back to the Freeloader. Tim, Kelly hooked it up later that night.

A few days later, a man drove into their inlet unannounced with Tamra, and the boys off-island fishing in the Freeloader. Janet talked to the guy down at the pier while Tess watched from the shore. After a few minutes, Janet turned him away.

As he drove out of their inlet, Tess walked over to her. “What’s up with him?” she asked her lover.

“Trust me, we don’t want to know. If he comes back, get your cannon. That man has some evil shit in him.”

“Maybe I should get the McMillan,” Tess wondered out loud, watching the boat leave their harbor.

“No. Let the world have him, Tess. If he was really that bad of a person, I wouldn’t have let him leave here alive. He’s just a creep,” she told her.

Later that same week, Stephanie came home with a girlfriend who she used to

work with. They all liked the woman right off, but Kelly put his foot down. He told the girls before another female could be introduced to the family; another male would have to be found. The girls really liked Stephanie’s friend a lot, they all wanted her on the Island. It didn’t take but two days for Janet, Tess, and Tamra to find a new male friend. They brought him home, and Kelly had no choice but to let Stephanie’s friend, and the man they found stay on the Island.

Everett, and Rhea were later married into the family.

Both of the newbies jumped into the group’s training, and advance really fast with the help, and love they received from the rest of the family. Kelly ended up turning the rifle range over to Tess, Tamra took over the martial arts, and hand to hand classes. Tim added a computer course to their routine, and Stephanie and Rhea started first aid classes emphasizing on field dressing bullet wounds, and other combat traumas. The Island was alive with activity, and with more people on it. The household chores got lighter for everyone. Barbra, and Mike weren’t home very much because they were always busy working, and with Tamra taking care of the gym, and Tess on the rifle range. Kelly had a lot more time to himself.

Tamra should have noticed something was wrong when Kelly started keeping to himself in his study, and even when he came out of his hole. He remained quiet. As the days passed by, she watched as a worried expression took hold of Kelly’s face. She gave him full body massages which help to relieved his stress for a while, but then things got worse with North Korea, and Japan.

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“Good morning, welcome to the Early Morning News Show. My name is Tiffany Johnson, and here’s the news we have for you at this hour.”

“A while back, a North Korea pilot shot down a Japanese Airliner over the Sea of Japan. The plane crashed into the sea in an area controlled by the North Koreans. The North Koreans have refused to allow Japanese officials into the area to retrieve the planes’ black box, or the bodies. They informed the Japanese government until they gave them their pilot back no one would be granted access to salvage anything from the plane.”

Tiffany took a quick breath, then continued. “Yesterday, a firefight started between the Naval forces of Japan, and North Korea when the Japanese got fed up with North Korea’s antics, and an attempt was made to reach the submerged airliner. Three Japanese Naval ships were fired on, and each one was hit, and sunk. During the engagement, only one of the North Korea ships sank into the ocean during the battle.

Another one, from what we were told. Just made it back into port before it sank into the Wonsan Harbor. Lives were lost on both sides. Japan, and North Korea are now at a full state of readiness. We have received no word of what President Obama is doing to prevent a war between the two countries. Our White House correspondent tells us the President has been in contact with North Korea, and Japan since the incident occurred. Other countries like Russia, and our NATO allies have condemned the actions of the North Korea’s government.”

Scott spoke to her, standing by the weatherboard. “Tiffany, this sounds like war to me.” He added, “If the Japanese keep getting hit like this, the United States is sure to come to their aid.”

“I am afraid so, Scott. Things don’t look good right now. China, and Russia have been in contact with the North Korean government to try to cool the situation down. But as of right now, both the Japanese, and North Koreans are getting ready

for an armed conflict between the two countries.”

“Folk’s, I think we all need a break, but stick around as Scott has some surprises for you in this week’s weather. We’ll be right back after these messages from our sponsors.”

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Everyone was waiting for Roger’s return call in Kelly’s study. No one was willing to leave. Tamra was still sitting in Kelly’s chair with Tess in her lap when the phone rang. She reached around Tess, and picked it up. Waiting for the clicking sounds to finish making sure her connection was secured, she waited for him to speak.

Instead of hearing Roger’s voice over the line. She was surprised as the voice of the President of the United States said, “Tamra?”

“Yes, Sir. I’m here.”

“I just got off the phone with Director Mellon. He has told me about your situation. If I got you to Russia by tomorrow, could you stop, Kelly?”

“Maybe, Sir. Just like I told Roger. Mr. President, no one can really stop Kelly from doing anything, and that’s what he wants you, and the world’s leaders to realize. I believe he is out to stop the North Koreans from nuking us, but he’s also using the issue to make a point. But if he listens to anyone, he’ll listen to his leading Alpha. That’s just how he is built, sir.”

“And that’s you.”

“Yes, Sir. That’s me. If you get me, and Tess to Southern Russia, I believe we’ll have a chance of finding him.”

“Okay,” he told her. “I have a carrier task force moving into that area now. I also have two F-14’s waiting for you at Loring Air Force Base in Northern Maine. I am assuming both of you can handle about a seven-hour flight at high gees.”

“Yes Sir. Better than your own pilots,” she told him.

“OK, then. Get yourselves ready. I have a Black Hawk coming to pick you up. That’s the only thing we have at the moment to get you out to Loring. The F14’swill fly you to the Ronald Reagan Aircraft Carrier in the Sea of Japan. From there we’ll drop you off into Southeast Russia. You’ll be on your own from that point.

The President paused, then added, “Tamra, in your own words. How sure are

Sure are you about the start of this nuclear war?”

“It’s imminent Sir! I have seen Kelly unsure of things before, but if Kelly says something is going to happen, then baby, it’s coming.”

“I’m almost willing to let him do what he’s doing, but that’s still killing millions of lives. I’ve had the better portion of the government on alert all week, I have also raised the country’s threat level to Def-Con Two. I’m also getting our merchant ships loaded with FEMA in the area of North Korea. We’ve been burning the candle at both ends to be prepared for whatever may happen. You work your end with Kelly, and we’ll continue to make preparations for an event that may, or may not occur. Get in touch with me as soon as you find Kelly.”

“Will do, Sir.”

The line went dead.

Forty minutes later, the Black Hawk landed on the Island. The girls took nothing with them but the clothing on their back. Where they were going, they wouldn’t need much of anything. Everyone hugged, and kissed them before they got in the helicopter. The crew in the helicopter glanced at each other as the women kissed, and said goodbye. However, they had been forewarned with strict orders about the two females they were picking up.

Twenty minutes later. A First Lieutenant met them as they got off the helicopter at Loring Air Force Base in Northern Maine. The guy let them know right away he wasn’t happy with what he was ordered to do. He brought them into a ready room to put on their flight suits.

“If it wasn’t for Colonel Anderson ordering me to do this,” he told them. “I’d say you people were out of your mind. You, and your friend here,” He glanced over at Tess, who was scarfing down cold pizza that was left over from dinner. “Will be flying at Mach two, and if you don’t know it. Mach two is twice the speed of sound, almost 1500 miles per hour. Except when you refuel, you’ll be flying at forty

thousand feet for about seven hours.”

He stared straight right into Tamra’s blueish steel eyes. “Because of the high gees of the flight, you’ll be lucky if you’ll be able to crawl out of the fighter once you sit down on the carrier. Carrier Strike Group Nine will meet you in the North Sea of Japan on the Northeastern side of Russia. Once reaching the carrier, you’ll fly out by helicopter to Primorsky, Russia. When you see Lake Khanka in the West, you’ll know China is right on the other side. You’ll be about a few hundred miles north of the North Korean border at that point.”

“Watch those border crossings,” he warned them. “China, and North Korea, and Russia will have a shitload of military everywhere. So, stay out of sight,” he told them.

The Lieutenant glanced back at Tess again as she reached for the two-liter bottle of coke for the third time. He wanted to tell her she might want to go easy on the food, and fluids. They wouldn’t have another bathroom break for seven hours. However, Colonel Anderson’s orders were explicit. Stay out of their way, and get them on the planes as soon as possible.

Their pilots were already in the jets when the girls got in the seats behind them. With the help of the Lieutenant, and the ground crew, they strapped Tamra, and Tess into their own fighter.

The Lieutenant clipped in the last strap on her chair as he told Tamra. “I sure as hell hope you two know what you’re doing. With this little speed run of yours, everybody in the world will know where you’re going.”

“What do you mean? The F14 has radar jamming gear,” she told the officer.

“It sure does,” He informed her. “But you’ll be flying so high, and at such a tremendous velocity. You’ll be leaving a vapor trail for everyone to see from the State of Maine clear across northern Canada all the way to the Bering Sea, and the Sea of Japan. Good luck,” he told her, climbing down the side of the jet.

Both planes taxied out to the runway.

To Tamra, it really didn’t matter who knew they were coming as long as Kelly didn’t know. Tamra already gave Tessa’s pilot explicit instructions about her excitable wife. She knew Tess would be hyped up to be in the plane, and the com link between her, and Tess were to stay open until they got into their flight.

Tessa’s F14 was the first one to take off at an almost near-vertical climb. Tamra could hear Tess flipping out in the other jet as it’s after burners turned on as it shot into the sky like a rocket. She could clearly hear the stress from the gee forces in Tessa’s voice, but that didn’t stop her wife from having fun.

“Yeeeeeeeeee, fucken ha. Clime baby, clime,” Tessa yelled into her mic. “Oh

my God, Tamra. Let’s do that again. I want to do that again. Tamra, can we do that again?”

“Settle down, sweetie. We have a long ride ahead of us.”

“Screw the ride,” she told her wife. Tamra listened to Tess talking to her pilot. “Hey, can you roll this sucker? Man let’s have some fun on the way there. It’s the simple things in life that are important,” she told him.

Tamra’s own plane shot into the sky just moments after Tessa’s. Her plane quickly rose up beside Tess’s. After only a matter of a minute, or two, she looked over at Tess in the other plane beside her. The sun was already off the horizon, Tessa’s head was nodding off to one side. She was already asleep. Tamra radioed over to Tessa’s pilot, telling him not to worry about her.

Seven and a half hours later, both planes descended to land. Tamra called over to Tess, waking her up to get her ready for the sudden jolt of landing on the carrier. Tamra got herself ready for landing. She leaned forward, and pressed her upper body into her straps. Her plane was the first one to touch down at a hundred and twelve miles per hour. She felt the plane’s hook catch the cable on the ship, as the pilot turned on his after burners just in case the hooked missed. They were down, and stopped in almost a second, and a half.

After taxing off the runway, Tamra shock the ship’s crew when she jumped down from the cockpit, sixteen feet onto the flight deck. Her own pilot was slowly getting out of the plane, climbing down the side of the craft. When Tessa’s plane came in, both women took a quick bathroom break. Then they were directed by Airedales over to a waiting Knight Hawk helicopter. The crew of the Knight Hawk had food waiting for them.

The girls dug into it as they flew west toward mainland Russia. The co-pilot turned around in his seat. Speaking through his mic, he told them. “The Russians know we are here, but not why. However, all of their military might not have received the word just yet. So, if you see anyone, stay the hell out of sight. You’ll have to get to the coastline of Russia for us to pick you back up by using the satellite radio we’re giving you. The carrier group has been ordered to stay close to the North Korea, and Russia’s boarder to wait for your return.”

The guy in the back aft of the aircraft then handed Tamra ,and Tess two heavy backpacks they brought with them.

“What’s this?” Tess asked the guy.

“Survival gear, and food, among other things,” he explained.

Tamra took hold of her pack. It weighed close to forty pounds.

The guy was having a problem as it was dropping off two beautiful women into the wilds of Russia by themselves, but what Tamra, and Tess did next surprised the hell out of him. As the guy watched, both women took a few items out of the packs, then handed the packs back to him. The aft crew member looked at the little pile of gear the women took from the bags. Maps for both of them, two water bottles, and a few granola bars.

Dumbfounded, the airman asked, “Is that all you’re taking with you?”

The girls assured him it was. The guy couldn’t believe it. He stuck his head up front, and spoke to the pilot without using the radio.

The copilot turned back around at the girls. “Are you sure that’s all you want to bring with you?”

They both confirmed that’s all they needed.

The copilot said something to his aft crew member, and the guy shrugged his shoulders, and turned back to Tess, and Tamra.

“OK, it’s your funeral. You must know where there’s a seven-eleven somewhere out there because, as far as I know, where you two are going, there’s nothing out there but bunny rabbits, and wolves.”

Instead of the backpacks, the guy gave them two hip belts to put their gear in. Just before they reached their destination, Tess and Tamra took off all of their clothes, which made the heads of all three crew members spin around, and look at them.

The pilot, being a mature older man, ordered his crew to put their eyeballs back into their heads. He was already informed by the Captain of the Ronald Reagan

that some weird shit was coming their way. Orders by the captain told him and his crew to do as the women asked, and not to hinder them in any way.

The crew of the Knight Hawk dropped them off in a small clearing, then backed off at a distance, and hovered. They were told to wait to make sure the women were OK before they flew back to the carrier.

The excitement of being in the woods again over-took both women. They could hardly contain themselves flying here from the carrier. As soon as the Knight Hawk took off, they rolled in the dirt, and rubbed their naked bodies in the grassy field. The rich smell of the earth, and nature all around them, along with the wind blowing on their naked bodies, was an aphrodisiac to them. They were home.

As the helicopter crew watched the two women in the clearing, all three men in the aircraft were stunned by the sudden actions of the women rolling around in the tall grass.

“Oh, my God!” The aft crewman cried through his mic, totally beside himself.

“Have I just died, or are we caught in some weird porno movie? They’re fucking each other, for Christ’s sake.”

The pilot quickly snapped up his visor, and spun around to his shipmate behind him, who knew by the pilot’s expression he’d overstepped his bounds.

“They call it making love, Robert. And if you would stop screwing those strippers off the main drag in town. You just might find a woman who could show you what genuine love is all about.” He then added, “We’re out of here guys.”

The Knight Hawk turned in mid-hover, and flew off the way they came, even as the co-pilot tried unsuccessfully to get the pilot to stick around for a few more minutes.

The pilot yelled at him, “You are out of your mind if you think I am going to hang in the air with the two of you lunkheads, watching them make love,” he told them. “No, thank you.”

Back on the ground. Tess, and Tamra embrace one last time before they split up. Tess would zig-zag across the landscape because she was faster, while Tamra would stay closer to the coastline as they searched south for Kelly’s scent. If they didn’t catch his scent by the time they got to the border of North Korea, they would wait for him north of the border.

They made their way south as quickly as they could. Their bodies were using

a lot of their energy in their search. Both women were hunting, and killing as they went. They were miles from where they were dropped off, and eighty miles apart when it started getting dark.

Tamra got a drink from a stream, and then told Tess, “Baby, we need to sleep. Find a place to make a nest.”

“OK, as soon as I finish this,” she told her wife.

Tamra laughed to herself. She didn’t even have to ask her next question. She already knew the answer. “I bet you passed up on all the cottontails, and you’re eating a squirrel, aren’t you?” There were rabbits all over the place, but Tess loved bunny rabbits, and would only eat one if she had too.

“Yes, but these are different squirrels than back home. They’re really colorful, and pretty tasty.”

Finishing her dinner, Tess found a little hollow, and made a nest out of grass and brush to help block the wind while she slept. When the sun came up, they were already hunting, and moving south towards the border. Three days went by, and their routine didn’t change. They gorged themselves on any animals they found during the day, and before they slept as they continued to search for Kelly. On the afternoon of the fourth day, they were hundreds of miles from their drop-off point when Tess stopped Tamra in her tracks.

“I’ve got him, Tamra!”

“He’s already gotten by us then.”

“I’m afraid so,” she told her. “I just found his nest he slept in.”

Tamra had been praying they didn’t miss him because she knew what they would have to do in order to catch up to him. If she could only get to him. She knew he would listen to her, but getting to Kelly would not be easy.

“Tess, do you have a lock on him, or just the general direction he’s in?” Tamra

didn’t want to probe for Kelly herself. The less mental energy directed from their direction, the better off they would be.

“I have a good lock. I can feel him, Tamra. He doesn’t know we’re here yet, but he’s hundreds of miles in front of us. How in the hell did he get so far ahead of us?”

“He’s Kelly, Tess. The guy has more damn secrets than any other man I know.

I’m sure he knows we’re coming, just not when, or where. That nest you found must have been the only time he’s slept since Alaska. Tess, I’ll start working my way over to you, so don’t get too far ahead of me. We need to stay fairly close together as we haul ass. Save your breath for the mileage,” she told her.

They crossed the border into North Korea with no problems, and another three days went by, and the border was far behind them. They stayed within forty or fifty miles of each other in case Kelly tried to double back on them. Gone was the luxury of hunting while they ran. They were forced to eat at night, dropping bigger game like musk deer, wild boar, and monkeys. When they finished their meals, only bones and hide remained behind. Their bellies always seemed to be empty. The further south they went came the danger of a larger population, and fewer wild animals to eat. More than once, they had to hide from people, but they were slowly catching up to the Alpha. Kelly had a longer trip, and was slowing down, thinking they were no longer after him.

It was in the middle of the night, and they were still running when Tamra told Tess. “It’s necessary for us to take a break, and get some rest. We’re going to catch up to him tomorrow. We’ll need all of the rest we can get.”

They were now in highly populated areas, and had been forced to steal goats, and other animals from farms as they went by them. They also knew without a doubt where Kelly was going. The Capital City of Pyongyang laid directly in their path, less than two hundred miles from where they were. They already discussed what they were going to do when the time came. They would get as close to him as they could, and then Tess would use her speed to reach him. Kelly was fast, but not faster than Tess. Tess would be about useless after her speed run, but Kelly would never just leave her on the ground helpless. That would give Tamra time to catch up to him.

That night, their bodies were screaming to be fed. They stopped, and ate whatever they were carrying with them, or found in the area. The amount of energy it took to maintain their running speed took every bit of nutrition from them. If they didn’t eat large amounts of meat, their bodies would start to feed off of their muscles.

Tamra woke up early, before the sun rose, and went over to a nearby farm. Killing a mule, she ate from it right in the guy’s field before the sun came up. She gorged herself on the wet, warm meat, knowing full well she was going to need every ounce of food she could get into her body today.

Finished with breakfast, her face, chest, and hands were covered in blood as she called out to Tess, “Sweety, are you awake?”

“Ya, I got up early to find something to eat,” Tess told her.

“Tess, Kelly’s going to feel us coming real soon. As soon as he does, you kick

it into high gear. I’ll be right behind you as fast as I can go. We’ll stop for nothing, and if anything gets in our way, kill it.”

“Are you ready?”

“Yup,” She told her.

“Then let’s get moving,” she said, already on the move herself.

Miles away, Tess stayed even with Tamra as both girls placed their bodies into a hyper mode they rarely use. They weren’t trying to hide themselves anymore as they ran through farms and right down country roads. Everything around them seemed to be frozen in time as they ran by people standing in their front yard as they hauled ass to overtake Kelly.

They were moving at such great speed all morning, and into the early afternoon when suddenly. Tess screamed in Tamra’s ears, “Tamra, he’s got us! He’s got us!”

“Go girl! Go!” Tamra screamed back.

Tamra probed ahead of her, and found him. They weren’t very far from him. Kelly seemed to be doing OK, but he was picking up speed really fast. He knew they were behind him.

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President Obama understood what Kelly was trying to do, and he even agreed with him to a point. The new information he had received was the North Koreans had missiles pointed at the United States. But this wasn’t the first time a government has threatened the United States with nuclear weapons. The US had to deal with the Cuban Missile Crisis, Hitler, and people like Osama Bin Laden, and his Sunni Militant Islamist organization. The President was sure North Korea wouldn’t be the last country threatening them with violence of using nukes against them.

Barack believed diplomacy did work when the governments were willing to talk things out, but right now, North Korea wasn’t talking to anyone. All communications between other countries, and North Korea had come to a complete halt. The North Koreans were not talking to anyone anymore, not even the Russians. Japan was the trigger to start a nuclear war, and Obama knew it. The Koreans have been gearing up getting ready for this one for years. The morning, the girls reached the Ronald Reagan Aircraft Carrier in the Sea of Japan. Obama placed the Navy, and the Air Force at Def-con One, and the rest of the country at Def-con Two. The North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) was fully maned at Def-con One, waiting for any sign of missiles coming at the United States from any direction. The federal government has been under full alert for the past few weeks, and no one was going home anytime soon. There was still too much to be done.

Barack wasn’t just gearing the country up for a nuclear strike; he was also playing a hunch he had because of Kelly. He mobilized the federal government’s FEMA program to render aid, but not just for the United States. Obama was indeed burning the candle at both ends. As far as he was concerned, he knew one of two things was about to happen.

One, North Korea was going to start a nuclear war first by striking Japan, or something enormous was going to happen to North Korea because of Kelly. With the rising tension between all three countries, Obama was betting on Kelly, knowing full well the girls were trying to stop him at the same time.

The Prime Minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe, has stayed in contact with President Obama all week. Shinzo agreed to do everything in his power to prevent a war with North Korea. Obama knew it was in his best interest to help defused the situation. Both the United States, and Japan were giving North Korea time to cool down, and think rationally. However, Shinzo still refused to hand over the fighter pilot who shot down the Japanese airliner. As tension climbed higher because of North Korea, President Obama gave Shinzo his assurance that if Japan were attacked, the United States would strike back to stop the aggressor. When Obama was told the girls were on the ground in Russia. He sent a message to Shinzo to expect something to happen with the North Korea situation soon.

Earlier in the day, Barack had his people set up a big-screen TV in the Oval Office. The picture on the screen was taken by satellite at a height of sixty-six miles over the capital city of Pyongyang in North Korea. An outline of the city was on the TV screen, showing the Taedong River snaking its way through the middle of the capital. The picture also showed the surrounding countryside for two hundred and fifty miles out from the city.

Over the past week, the Oval Office has been in a constant state of flux. However, everything increased when the President raised the country’s awareness to Def-con one, “Cocked Pistol.” The United States was now ready to unleash its armament of nuclear weapons, as the full might of its naval, and Air Force prepared themselves to destroy anyone brass enough to hurt the United States or Japan. President Obama knew they were only dealing with maybe three, or four missiles, and if that was the case, his Joint Chiefs of Staff, Martin Dempsey, assured the President that the Missile Defense Agency should be able to kill all of the missiles. The only problem was that the Missile Defense Agency, also known as “The Star Wars Program,” was never fully tested with live incoming missiles. The program was relatively new.

Back in 1983, Ronald Regan was the first president to propose using ground-based, and space-based weapons systems to protect the United States against nuclear attacks. Because the program was so new, chances were one, or two missiles could make it through America’s defense network.

In the Oval Office, Martin Dempsey looked back at the TV screen. The picture now showed a split screen of the city of Pyongyang, and the facility that housed North Korean’s nuclear weapons in the northeastern part of the country. When Dempsey commented on the picture of the city of Pyongyang, the President only told them he wanted to watch the city, but he didn’t give anyone in the room an explanation. His comment raised eyebrows from the three men with him in the room, but no one questioned the President about it any further. They continued to discuss the situation as they watched the TV screen.

“I can’t see them doing it. One good nuke strike on them will take out more than half of their country,” The Secretary of Defense, Chuck Hagel, told everyone in the room.

“True enough Chuck,” Dempsey said, glancing over at him. “However, never underestimate the power of human stupidity.”

“They’re just pissed the rest of the world isn’t taking them seriously.” Rand Beers, Secretary of Homeland Security, put in.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff looked back at the TV as a movement on the screen caught Martin’s eye.

Not bothering with formality, Martin called out for the President. “Barack!” Martin’s eyes were glued to the TV.

Everyone in the room snapped their heads back to the TV, first to look at the

facility in Northeastern Korea, but nothing had changed there. No missiles were

flying.

“What is it, Martin?” The President asked, quickly coming over to them.

Martin got close to the screen, and pointed with his finger. “Am I losing my eyesight, or are there three objects coming across the mountains north of the city at an extremely high rate of speed?

Whatever it was. They were moving at an incredible rate of speed. As they watched, it knocked down, and destroyed everything in its path, leaving an empty trail behind it. In its wake was a dust storm of rock, dirt, and debris. The trails were about sixty miles long, when all at once, in a blink of an eye, one object plowed through ninety miles of forest, and then it stopped dead with a blinding flash of light.

“What in the hell was that?” Martin asked, looking over at the President. One look at Obama told the rest of them this was why the President was watching the city of Pyongyang.

The President told his staff, “What you are witnessing is a National Security matter, and I will not answer your questions about it. Everything you see here tonight; you will forget any of this ever happened.”

With that said, Barack sat down heavily in a chair, and continued to watch the screen.

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Tess was already running pretty fast when Tamra urged her on. She has always

loved to run on the beaches back home, and through the trails in the woods. Her little body always had a natural stamina that pushed her to the brink of collapse, but ever since, she has been with Kelly. She has never reached that point where she didn’t have any more energy to give to her run.

Tess was scared for Kelly, and what he was about to do. She was highly motivated to stop him. When Tamra told her to go, Tess opened her mind, and forced her body to go beyond anything she had ever endured before in her life.

The energy in her body fed upon itself, which created more energy. The process doubled, and then tripled. Each time, it created more, and more power. Inside of Tess was a growing sun feeding on itself, giving her an endless supply of power, and energy. As the energy built within her, it poured from every pour in the girl’s body, creating a force field all around her, protecting her. Within the first hundred feet, the surrounding force was twenty feet wide. Then, suddenly it became self-aware. It projected her, carrying her along a path to whatever destination she chose. Tess wasn’t running anymore as the force that encased her took on a mind of its own. It was on a straight course for Kelly, blowing down trees, and anything that was in her path.

Tess no longer went around obstacles but went through them instead. Kelly was just under a hundred miles away, but Tess would get to him within a second as the first human being in history approached the speed of light while still on the

ground.

Tess was chasing after the only man who ever really loved her. The first one who believed in her. He was the first man who really turned her on in every way. Kelly was the sun, and the moon, and stars to her, and he was scaring her silly by what he was about to do. The carnage she left behind her was undeniable, but it was necessary if she was going to reach him. Cars blew up, and were thrown to the side as her force field hit them. Homes fell apart as she went through them. The few people who got in her way, she turned to ash as her force field touched them. A second after it started, it ended a hundred miles away with the clap of thunder, and a blinding flash of light, and it was over.

Kelly almost made it to his objective when he felt Tess, and Tamra behind him. They must have been tailing him for a while without him knowing it. Tamra was still some distance from him, but it was Tess he was concerned about. Kelly knew what she could do, even when she didn’t. Tess had always been one of his special Alphas as he knew she would be even before he took her from Josh. Tess, and Wade were alike in a lot of ways, but their biggest bond they shared was they both wanted to change who they were, more than any of his wives, and husbands. They wanted to be better than what they used to be. It was that drive that fueled their bodies to change. Kelly knew the need to change started in your thinking, and Tess, and Wade were living proof of it.

He could feel Tessa’s body transforming as he probed her. He knew she was scared about what he was about to do, and he knew she was also afraid of losing him. Tessa’s love for him was changing her so fast, Kelly doubt the girl even knew what was happening to her. But Kelly had to stop her, and he knew what he was going to have to do in order to do it.

Kelly let her advance on him, and then, at the last moment. He opened his mind, reached out, and hit her. He held back the force as he wrapped his love around her as best he could, but the speed she was coming at him with was just too great. Even at the distance, he could hear the slap of thunder, and see the bright flash of light as Tessa’s body was thrown back from the direction she came. Kelly did everything he could for her. He even manage to drop her in a small river a few miles from where he made contact with her. Her body would be super-heated , even though the shock of the cold water wasn’t good for her. It would be a hell of a lot better than letting her burn herself up laying on the ground.

Tamra screamed in his ear. “Kelly, you son of a bitch. If I ever get my fucking hands on you. Oh, my God. What did you do to her?” Tamra could feel Kelly doing

something to Tess. Her wife wasn’t where she

was a moment ago, and Tess wasn’t talking to her. Tamra shifted direction, and ran for Tessa with everything she had left in her.

“I can’t let any of you stop me, Tamra. This has to happen. If it didn’t happen to North Korea, then it would just be a different country. They need to stop playing with the lives of the world. They do not have that right. Only God has that right, not man.”

“Kelly, I can’t believe you would hurt Tess. She would die for you, Kelly. Hell, we all would. Damn it, she was just scared for you!”

“Tamra, I need to go. My mind is made up. I am tired of the pain ,and hate in this world. It’s time I do something about it. I love you, baby.”

Tamra continued calling for him as she ran, but he wouldn’t answer her back. Running down a steep mountainside, Tamra could see steam rising from the river Kelly dumped Tess in. By the time she got to the riverbank, Tess was in the middle of the river barely hanging onto a rock with one hand. The water all around her was violently bubbling as steam rose high into the air.

Tamra dived into the river. She got to Tess just as her hand slipped off the rock. Grabbing Tessa’s arm, Tamra felt like her hand was on fire. She quickly let go. Tessa’s body was still way too hot to touch. Instead, she grabbed her by her hair, and hauled her to the riverbank. Finding a shallow area, she placed rocks all around her to keep her from floating away, and to keep her from going under the water. Not being able to do much more at this point, she resumed her frantic run for Kelly.

A little while later, she was only a few miles from him when Tamra felt Kelly trigger himself. The road she was running down was a straight shot into the city. As Kelly detonated himself, there was a flash of bright light as a heat wave effect came at her at the speed of sound. Just before it hit her, she braced herself for the impact, but the force just passed through her with no effect.

After it passed, nothing around her seemed to have changed. The flowers, and

Trees, and grass all around her looked normal. However, the closer she got to the city. She saw the horrific sight of hundreds of bodies littering the ground; they were everywhere. They all seem to have just dropped, and died while walking down the street or driving their cars. There were so many people in her way she had to jump over them, and go around them. After a while, she stayed in the street, and ran as most of the cars had swerved off to the side of the road after the event.

Pushing on, she found Kelly laying on the ground on the side of the road. Reaching him, she found he wasn’t breathing, nor could she find his heartbeat. She immediately started CPR. After a few minutes, she checked him again. There still wasn’t a heartbeat, and he still wasn’t breathing.

“No Kelly. Damn you!” She screamed at him.

Tears started flowing down her cheeks. Not bothering to wipe them away. Tamra started CPR again, but after fifteen minutes, something was telling her to stop what she was doing. There was still no change in Kelly. Whatever was telling her to stop came from deep within herself. Crying even harder, she stopped the CPR and held Kelly in her arms. Crying even harder, her body quickly started heating up, then it began overheating. Tamra could feel it coming as her body started violently shaking uncontrollably. A force inside of her was quickly building its own power. She had no control over it. It was growing stronger, and stronger, and stronger with every passing second.

She didn’t know what in hell was about to happen, but whatever it was. She knew it was going to be explosive as hell. Over and over, the feeling kept telling her to let it happen, and not fight it. With tears pouring down her face, she closed her eyes, and let go of herself, giving into the power. As the brutal force emerged from within her, Tamra knew without a doubt she, and Kelly were going to die.

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Amazed, Dempsey, Beers, and Hagel sat with the President as they watched a ninety-mile path of jungle was knocked down in a blink of an eye. That was followed by a blinding flash of light just outside of the city limits. Moments later, a much bigger, and brighter one encompassed the city of Pyongyang. After the brighter flash, a rippling effect rolled across the landscape, spreading away from the city in every direction. Suddenly, there was another startling bright flash of light within the city.

Martin pleaded with the President. “Sir, you got to tell us what in the hell is going on,”

The President looked at the three men for a moment, then responded, “Martin, it’s the future, and it’s about evolution, and change. That’s all I am going to tell you for now.”

“But Sir, these events. Are these people with us, or are they working against us?” Martin wanted to know.

“Martin, believe me,” The President told him. “They have their own agenda.”

Obama gave his Joint Chiefs of Staff an order. Dempsey picked up the phone, and made the call. They all turned back to the TV. The picture got blurry as the satellite adjusted itself to street level. The new footage showed dead bodies lying in the streets. As it panned out, there were more bodies. As the camera continued to scan across the city, everywhere they could see people were lying dead in the streets of Pyongyang.

Chuck Hagel was the first to speak, “Oh, my God. The whole damn city is dead.”

Barack gave another order, and Martin made another call.

The four sat, and watched a much higher, and wider playback view of the event as the rippling effect rolled out from the capital city to wash across more than half the country.

“It’s a hell of a lot worse than any of you think,” Obama sadly told them.

When Tamra woke up, she was laying across Kelly’s chest. She felt completely drained of every ounce of energy, and nutrition in her body. Her mouth was dry as sand, and her head was pounding to the point of it splitting open. Her body was screaming at her for food. She knew immediately she was starving to death. She must have been out for hours because it was almost dark. However, she found Kelly was breathing, but he still had a weak heartbeat. She had to get him the hell out of there, but when she stood up, she passed out.

Waking back up, she didn’t think she was out no more than a few minutes that time. Slowly, she got to her feet, and staggered over to the sidewalk. People died as they walked down the city streets. One body had a medium size dog hooked on a leash. Tamra could see the poor thing was scared to death as its body was trembling with fear as it watched the alpha approach. Picking it up, she stroked it a few times before breaking its neck, then she ate it. There wasn’t much meat on the animal, but its blood was full of nutrition. She wasn’t as light-headed, or sick to her stomach after she finished the small meal.

Pulling a dead woman out of her car, she drove it up beside Kelly. Getting Kelly into the back seat was a bit of a problem because he was so big, and she was

weak. After a few intense minutes, she was able to roll him into the back seat. They drove off the way she came.

Whatever happened to her drained her. She had to stop the car, and rest her head on the steering wheel a few times before they got out of the city. Trying to relax, she listen to the sounds all around her. The noise in the city sounded strange. It was very hushed, and quiet. There were no voices, only the sound of the wind, with machinery still running everywhere. A few fires had broken out, and they were slowly spreading throughout the city. She thought about stopping at a store for some food, but there were a lot of farms outside the town. They would be her first stop.

At the first homestead, she came to, she killed a mule, and drained it’s blood into a bucket as best as she could, then she dumped it down Kelly’s throat, making a total mess of the back seat. Drinking some for herself, she ripped a sizeable chunk of meat off the hind quarter of the animal, and ate from it as she drove off.

Tess wasn’t much further away, but Tamra knew she was going to need a horse

to carry her back to the car. Tess was small, and light, but she herself was in no condition to be carrying her. She could hardly keep herself upright. The countryside was littered with farms, which made it easy to find another animal. Parking the car in some trees, Tamra didn’t think anyone would find Kelly. Since, before entering the city, she hasn’t seen another living human being, just dead bodies everywhere.

Tess had managed to crawl out of the water since Tamra was last there. Tamra checked her vitals. They were weak, but she seemed okay. Feeding her some of the mules’ blood, Tess woke up enough to grab a hold of the bucket as Tamra fed her. She was back asleep by the time Tamra got her on the horse.

Kelly was still where she left him with the car.

Butchering the second animal of the day, she fed him, and Tess before driving off. She didn’t know how far the path of devastation of human beings went. However, she knew they needed to get the hell out of North Korea before anyone alive found them, or she herself dropped from exhaustion. Her whole body felt as if it’s been through a potato masher. The frantic run for Kelly, along with very little sleep, and whatever happened to her in Pyongyang, was taking its toll on her. She didn’t understand what happened when she found Kelly, but whatever she did. It seemed to help him, although it almost killed her to do it. The food, and water helped, but she needed to sleep, and rest, except for the moment that was one thing she couldn’t afford to do. If anyone seen the three of them, they would be horrified by the sight. Their bodies were covered in dried blood, sweat, and dirt. The car seats were covered in red from feeding both Tess and Kelly. Adding to that was the pile of raw horse meat Tamra was eating from sitting on the seat beside her. She continued to munch on the meat as she drove. The west coast was about ten hours away, but they need to get to Russia. She hoped, and prayed she could find a boat

big enough to pull another South America trick. Hopefully, no one will be

shooting at them this time.

During the night, they drove through the Hamgyong Mountains in Northern

Korea without any trouble until they approached the city of Chongjin on the Northeastern coast of the country. The town was the first sign of life Tamra has seen since Pyongyang. There seem to be a lot of people on the streets, even at such an early hour of the morning. People stared at them as they drove by, but no one tried stopping them.

Tamra decided to bypass the city to avoid further trouble but still found people walking the roads. They seemed to be confused, not knowing what to do, even when they saw three naked Americans driving down the street in a car covered in blood.

Tamra knew she had to get the hell off the roads. They were coming upon the border, and knew there would be a shitload of trouble waiting for them there. Before they reached the city of Najin, she turn off onto a small peninsula which had a little fishing community called Ijin-dong. The township was on the southern side of the headland. Tamra didn’t see any people on the road, so she followed the dirt road east past the township, and finally came to the Sea of Japan.

Picking up Tess in her arms, she hid her in some bushes, then half dragging, and half carrying Kelly, she put him beside her. Just the effort of moving them forced Tamra to lie down with them for a few minutes. She then ditched the car in the trees, and took out the satellite radio they gave her. They were supposed to be picked up on the coastline in Russia, but Tamra knew they would never make it. Anyway, she hasn’t seen a boat since they been on the coast. She herself was ready to drop, and she was sure the border guards would not let three naked Americans covered in blood across their border, especially after what happened yesterday. Her radio should reach any of the US Naval ships, or sat-com system setup in Japan.

“To any US Naval vessel. This is Butterfly. I need your help. I have two wounded.” She repeated the message a few times, then waited.

It only took a few moments when she received an answered back. “Butterfly. Butterfly, this is the USS North Carolina. We read you five by five. We’ve been waiting for you, girl. Please keep your com-link open, and stay where you are, as we have been tracking you via satellite. We’re coming to get you. Is Mammoth, and Wildcat with you?”

“North Carolina, Butterfly. That’s affirmative, Mammoth and Wildcat are injured. Mammoths vitals are extremely low, and he’s not doing well at all. Wildcat, I think will be OK. At this time there are no North Koreans around us, but there is one small village on the south side of the peninsula where were standing on. I’ll let

you know if anyone shows up.”

“Butterfly, North Carolina. Don’t worry about the North Koreans. They have bigger problems of their own right now but keep us informed. ETA for extraction is in forty-five minutes. Carolina out.”

While they waited, Tamra woke Tess to get her to eat what was left of the horse meat with her. Kelly was still out cold, and couldn’t swallow solid food. Thirty-five minutes later, a submarine surfaced less than a quarter of a mile from the beach she was standing on. Tamra watched as the crew on board rushed to inflate a rubber raft. Once done, they put a motor on it. Two guys jumped into it, and raced towards the beach they were standing on.

Tamra knew the captain would want to get the hell out of here as fast as they could. So, when the guys picked up Kelly, she managed to get Tess in her arms, and put her into the raft.

Getting to the sub, the captain was yelling, and rushing everyone to hurry, and get the injured inside. The rubber raft they removed the motor, then cut holes into it instead of waiting for it to deflate. They left it where it was on top of the sub as they submerged back under the water.

Hours later, in the Northeastern Sea of Japan, off the coast of Russia, the Winstons were transferred over to the USS Ronald Reagan. Captain Christopher Weeks approached Tamra as her crew was brought onto the hangar deck. The injured parties were being carried on board in stretchers. Tamra was now wearing the dark blue coveralls of the North Carolina.

Chris already had his orders about the three, so Tamra’s first words out of her mouth didn’t surprise him.

“Captain, we need to get home,” Tamra told him.

She glanced over her shoulder at Kelly. The ship’s physician, and his assistants were already working on him. The doctor handed some vials of blood to a man waiting by. As soon as the guy took them, he ran for the stairway. Kelly’s face, and his whole body looked withered, and old.

“Yes Butterfly. I have been authorized to do just that, but first let our medical

staff check Mammoth, and Wildcat over before you leave. I already have a Grumman waiting for you, and your team on the flight deck. I even had the Airedales put some coolers loaded with red meat for you on the plane. Wildcat seemed to be doing pretty good, but let’s get Kelly’s blood work before you guys take off out of here.”

Tamra could have told them what they would find that the I-V, and blood they were giving Kelly was going to be the best they could do for him. She already knew what was wrong with him. He was starving to death. He was already past the Rubicon. It took all the energy in his body to do what he did. Now he laid on the hanger deck looking like he spent a year in a German prison camp in Auschwitz. He didn’t have an ounce of nutrition left in his body. He looked seventy years old with his flesh hanging off his bones.

After a while, an enlisted personnel ran out onto the hanger deck. He handed the doctor a sheet of paper. Tamra, and the Captain walked over as the doctor shook his head in disbelief, reading the slip of paper again.

He addressed the captain when he noticed him and Tamra approaching. “Don’t ask me how in the hell this could have happened to him so fast. But this guy is starving to death, and I doubt if he’ll ever recover. His organs are already showing signs of shutting down. He’ll have problems taking in the nutrition from the blood, and I-V. We may prolong his life by forcing solution into him, but there isn’t anything more I can do here. This man needs to be in a hospital, and the trip home alone will probably kill him.”

The captain looked questioningly at Tamra.

Everything in Tamra told her to run for home as fast as she could. She didn’t know why, but something was calling her back to the Island. It was a faint feeling, but that feeling was screaming at her to not give up. Somehow, someway, there had to be a way of saving Kelly’s life.

She thanked the captain, and the doctor for everything they had done. “Sir, I need to get my husband, and my wife home as fast as it is humanly

possible. I don’t understand it myself, but if I get him home. I believe he has a chance, but if I don’t. I know he will die right here on board the ship.”

Not wasting any more time, the captain ordered the wounded to be placed on board the Grumman without further delay. Within minutes, they were in the air flying a more direct route over Russia, and the top of the world. They landed at Loring Air Force Base in Northern Maine sixteen hours later. They were met by an Air Force Chinook helicopter, and taken to Heaven’s Gate Island. The family had already been forewarned they were coming home, but Tamra didn’t tell them about the condition Kelly was in. She only told Stephanie to get the doctor back to the Island.

Watching out of the window of the helicopter, the rotor wash blew the newly

fallen snow on her family as they all stood back, watching them land. The weather reports showed six inches of snow already fell with another eight expected by tonight. Tamra could see the family was expecting the worse, but she knew they were not ready to see the condition Kelly was in.

She got out of the way as Stephanie, Rhea, and the doctor quickly climbed into the aircraft. Use to dealing with life, and death situations, neither one reacted when they saw Kelly. After looking him over, the doctor ordered both of them to be taken inside. When they took Kelly out of the helicopter, the rest of the family could see what happened to him. The look of horror on their faces told Tamra they now understood Kelly was going to die. He was wearing his death face, and it looked to Tamra as if he could die at any minute. Everyone had tears in their eyes as they got their loved ones into the house, and out of the cold winter air.

Much later, Tamra stood in the doorway to the first aid room, watching Janet, Sandra trying to get answers from the doctor about Kelly’s condition. Doctor Paterson wouldn’t answer them. Both women broke down crying when Stephanie, and Rhea pulled them off to the side, and out of the man’s way.

Tamra got some rest flying home, but she didn’t know what to do with herself now that she was on the Island. She couldn’t eat or sleep, and she didn’t want to talk to anyone or stand there watching someone she loved slip away, and die right in front of her.

Instead, she went into Kelly’s study, opening his wall safe. She took out the pack of information Kelly told her about. In it was what she expected. There was a lot of personal stuff for each member of the family. Some files of some members were sealed, and were only to be opened by the person in question.

From the information in the files, she learned the Island was to remain in the Winston’s hands for as long as a Winston lived on the Island. If there were no Winstons alive, , willing to live on it, Kelly left instructions to let the island go; “Wild.”

As for the Cross of Jesus, Kelly left a simple statement. “For God so loved the

world that he gave His one, and only son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”

Under that, he wrote, “We can only be caretakers. The decision isn’t ours to make what happens to the Cross.”

The last folder she looked at was larger than all the other folders Tamra looked over so far. In it was Kelly’s financial portfolio, and written in large bold red letters on the cover was a man’s name with his address, and phone number with the words, “Call him immediately.”

Looking it over, amazement isn’t the only word Tamra would use over what she found inside the pages of that folder. Shocked beyond belief would be a better term to describe her feelings at what she found. Not that she finally found out how wealthy Kelly was, because he was indeed a very wealthy man. It was to her utter astonishment, she now understood how big the organization really was, and it was indeed even bigger than she ever realized.

The information in the pages of that folder also told her a lot about her husband, and how smart he was. Kelly was an incredible genius who could surpass the greatest thinking minds of the known world. Kelly had so many things going on at once, Tamra didn’t know how in hell he could even sleep at night. He had arranged his whole life around the family, and the organization’s goals, and their wealth. The amount of wealth at Kelly’s disposal was staggering. It was in the trillions of dollars. It would take a team of corporate lawyers a hundred, and thirty-seven years to find out just what in hell Kelly was doing with all of that wealth.

Tamra spent a few hours looking the folder over. She confessed she could only understand some of what was in it. When she finally put it away, she realized another reason Kelly was so important to the organization. Kelly consolidated all the investments, and holdings of the entire group. In short, Kelly was the banker for the biggest secret organization in the world’s history. He was the key person who made things happen for all the groups everywhere. He laundered money, and broke up huge long-standing corporations to meet their own ends. He did whatever he had to do to get the job done, and he must have affected the world economy as he did it, Tamra thought.

She couldn’t let Kelly die. He was probably the most important person on the entire planet. She let her tears flow as she laid her head on his desk. Over and over, she tried to do what she did for him in Korea, but nothing happened. A thought suddenly stopped her in the middle of her crying fit. With wet, blurry eyes, she frantically started digging through Kelly’s desk. It had to be in there somewhere.

Finally, she found it. Picking up the phone, she placed a call.

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The cameraman held his hand in the air, counting out to airtime. Two women sat behind a horseshoe-shaped counter. When the countdown reached one, Jane broadcast a bright smile as she opened the night’s special.

“Good evening, I’m Jane Wellington. Tonight, we have a special telecast for

you brought to you by Channel Six News. We are waiting for a worldwide broadcast from the government of North Korea. Not even the White House knows what they are about to tell us. Joining us to help discuss this special telecast is Tiffany Johnson. Tiffany is part of our sister affiliate, The Early Morning News Show, in Washington, DC.”

Jane turned toward her guest. “Thanks for joining us, Tiffany.”

“No problem, Jane. I am happy to be here. Jane, what do you think the chances are North Korea is backing down on their promise of an armed conflict with Japan?”

“I think it would be wonderful, Tiffany. But North Korea has never been very truthful in the past. Over the last year alone, they have been stubborn over every issue, and at times they wouldn’t even talk about the most important items on the agenda.”

“Yes, nuclear weapons.” Tiffany agreed with her. “I know the might of our military forces have been gearing up for a conflict for the past week. However, even with President Obama putting the Navy, and Air Force on Def-con One. I am still going to be optimistic about this broadcast. North Korea wouldn’t want to talk to the world, and then attack Japan, or us. That just wouldn’t make any sense at all.”

“I hope you’re right, Tiffany. This whole situation has been scarier than Operation Desert Storm. I hear that-” Jane interrupted herself by holding up her left hand in the air while reaching up, and touching the receiver in her right ear.

Looking forward into the camera, she said, “Ladies, and gentlemen, here is North Korea’s broadcast.”

The picture change to a man in a North Korea uniform standing in Kim Sung Square under a tent. Military people were rushing around, going in, and coming out of the buildings behind him. The stress on the man’s face was as obvious as was the man’s fatigue. He looked as if he has been living out of his uniform for a week. He had tears clouding his eyes. When he looked up to speak, one tear drop slowly rolled down his cheek. When he spoke, it was in perfect English.

“I am Admiral Sung-jin Yie of the People’s Army of North Korea. An unnatural disaster has occurred in North Korea three days ago. There have been no bombs dropped on us, nor have our missiles been launched. Our scientists, and military who are still alive have checked for germ warfare, viruses, and other biological agents. There has been no contamination of any kind that we could find from a nuclear, or biological event. Over half of our country men are now dead. The body count hasn’t stopped rising since the event. As of a few minutes ago, we estimated the amount of dead to be well over—”

An officer stepped into the picture, and handed the Admiral a slip of paper. Taking it from him, he read from it. “12.6 million North Koreans have died already.”

The Admiral was openly crying now. “North Korea’s government has fallen. The epicenter was here in the Capital City of Pyongyang. Our supreme leader Kim ll-Sung, and his family are dead, as are our top generals, and party members of the Workers Party of North Korea. KIM ll-Sung and the rest of the government were in session during the event, because of the situation with Japan. It looks as if everyone died at the same time. There is no sign of a violent struggle of any kind. They all just simply fell to the ground, and died. More than half of my countrymen are gone, and we expect more from disease, and malnutrition. We are pleading to the world for your help. Before this event is over, we estimate our losses will be up to sixteen to seventeen million human beings. Our population was only at twenty-four million just three days ago. We’re asking the world to please help us. We need your support, and most importantly, your love!”

The man broke down, and turning his back on the camera.

The picture switched back to Jane, and Tiffany at Channel Six. Jane had her hand over her mouth, with tears streaming down her face. She was frozen in place, and couldn’t say anything.

Tiffany sat beside her, stunned, and speechless.

Finally, Tiffany snapped out of shock long enough to speak for Jane. “I think we better go to a commercial.” She was reaching out to put her arms around Jane just as the picture changed.

Later that night, the President of the United States addressed the Nation, and the world. The presidential seal flashed across millions of television screens around the world. Soon, it was replaced by a picture of President Obama standing in front of his desk in the oval office. The somber appearance on his face, and the concerning look in his eyes told the world what they already knew. He jumped into the matter at hand.

“Good evening, my fellow Americans, and the world. Earlier tonight, we all received a message from Admiral Sung-jin Yie of the Peoples of North Korea Army. I am here to tell you what he told you was the truth. More than half the population of North Korea is now dead, and many more will continue to die if something isn’t done to help that country. I have already talked to Admiral Yie, and the United States has sent a team over to help discover the cause of this unprecedented catastrophe. Never in the history of mankind has so many people lost their lives simultaneously without cause. After speaking with our NATO alliances, the United States is telling the world that North Korea is now under the protection of the United States of America, and our NATO allies. China, and Russia are guarding, and holding their borders to the north, and on the east coast. While South Korea, and the United States do the same safeguarding their Southern, and western seaboard.”

“A massive movement is being made by the United States to render aid, supplies, and manpower to that country. Because of the situation between Japan and North Korea before this event, I already ordered FEMA, and other merchants’ ships loaded with aid into that region before this event ever took place. I was preparing for the worst outcome between Japan, and North Korea. In any event, this aid will arrive by sea, and air in North Korea within the next twelve hours.”

“I want to place this image in all of your minds,” Barack told them. “Take the State of Pennsylvania, and cut it in half. Now scatter twelve million bodies throughout half of that state. Every one of those twelve million people needs to be dealt with. Even if every person left in North Korea helped with the process, they would still be overwhelmed by an impossible margin. North Korea is asking China, and Russia for aid. I expect they will help, so we are not in this alone. Over the next several days, I expect even more countries to step forward to give aid to North Korea. I do, however, want to give a fair warning to profiteers, and other countries who plan to use this opportunity to make a profit by their loss.”

The President leaned forward into the camera, and pointed his finger into the air. “Don’t,” he warned them. “Don’t even think about using North Korea to profit from. Because the United States, and the United Nations, and other countries will come after you.”

“What we are doing here is a humanitarian mission, and nothing more, it’s a mission of love. It’s thinking like profiteering is what has been holding our world back from becoming something greater than it is today. We’re killing each other, and our planet, and it’s our thinking which is the most dangerous thing to all of us. Just look at the crime in your own cities. It grows bigger every year as our prison systems are getting overcrowded. We keep building more prisons, instead of fixing the one thing that is the cause of all our problems; our thinking.”

“America, we have made some great leaps improving our lives here in this country. Two hundred years ago, people of my race were once slaves. I hold the highest office in the federal government as the President of the United States. If that isn’t an improvement in itself, I don’t know what is. Hundreds of thousands of our people in our countries every year are hurt, and killed because of crime, and it never stops.”

Barack stepped closer to the camera.

“There were ninety thousand cases of females being raped in this country last year alone. That number includes women, and children. There are, on average, fourteen thousand murders every year, here in the States. Assaults are almost over a hundred thousand every year, and folks, these numbers are conservative. I didn’t sacrifice my life to fail at making a real difference for our country, and the world. It’s time all of us changed. The world needs to change, and America needs to change. The status quo of our lives must change if we are going to make a difference in our own countries, and the world around us. We are not going to do that unless we change our thinking, and the way we behave towards each other.”

“I am in the process of writing up new legislation to change our laws, and our political system to gear our country into that change. Most of you out there are open to change, and there are a lot who desperately want change in their lives. Well, here’s your chance,” he told them.

“There will be people, mostly criminals, who will fight this change in our nation. I’ve got a surprise for people like you. I am going to remove the three strikes, and you’re out policy in our court system. There will be tougher, and harsher punishments for your crimes. If you’re convicted of rape in our country, you should get a life term in prison without question. First offense of drunk driving, loss of license for six years, and three years in jail. Second OUI offense, loss of license for life, and six years in jail. If you want to hurt, and kill the citizens of the United States, then you will pay dearly for your crimes. It’s time we make punishment hurt in this country, and across the world.”

“This is also a time to flood our societies with love by creating programs designed to show people how to change their thinking, and ultimately their lives. If you break a law in our country, there needs to be a program for you. I’m not talking about traffic tickets here guys, I’m talking about criminals. It should be the government’s job to show you how to change, and live better lives. The federal government isn’t here just to give you welfare, more jobs, and a place to live. That kind of thinking didn’t work in the past, and it will not work for us in the future.”

“Do any of you know why we don’t live in a utopia like world today? It’s because we don’t believe it could ever happen, that’s why. It’s our thinking that has been holding all of us back, all of these years. I am going to spend the rest of my life proving that to you. In the future months, and years ahead, your government is going to show you how to change, and live healthier, happier lives. America, your well-being, and the safety, and the harmony of our country is my greatest concern. I am the President of the United States. I am the Alpha of this country, and I will care for all of you, as if you were my very own. God Bless and Good night.”

The following afternoon, Tamra, and Sandra were in the kitchen making some tea for her, and the girls. Tess was improving. She was staying awake long enough to eat something, then she would fall back to sleep. Tamra realized Tessa’s little speed run could have killed her if she would have maintained it for any length of time.

Kelly, on the other hand, wasn’t doing any better. His heartbeat was erratic, and faint. His breathing was so shallow, she couldn’t tell if he was breathing at all or was it just the machine pushing air into his lungs. Doctor Paterson took her aside this morning, and told her he didn’t think Kelly would make it through the rest of the day. Tamra didn’t say anything to the others. Kelly’s death itself would cause enough pain in the family without her lighting off any warning flairs.

Barbra came home presumably from a mission, but Mike had to get back to work because of the North Korea crisis. Wade was taking the events with Kelly hardest of them all. She finally had to order Stephanie to keep him out of the First Aid room. Tamra herself had to stay strong for everybody. She would keep up the front until she could be alone, then she would let herself cry.

Lost in her own thoughts, Tamra was just going through the motions of trying

to get through the day.

Sandra stood by the sink, watching her make a pot of green tea. Suddenly, she reached around her, and took the spoon out of her hand.

“Tamra, that’s enough,” she told her.

Without knowing what she was doing, she overloaded the kettle with too much tea. Instead of fixing her mistake, Sandra put her arms around her, and held her close. Tim’s voice suddenly broke the silence in the kitchen. His deep voice boomed out through the house’s sound system. “Believe it, or not, we have an airplane trying to on our helicopter pad?”

Tamra and Sandra ran to the front door, and out onto the porch. Janet showed up behind them holding an A4 assault rifle in her hands, followed closely by Barbra, and the rest of the family. They all watched as the plane slowed its forward movement as it came in very low over the Island. Stopping its forward movement, it hovered in mid-air over the helicopter pad. Slowly, it lowered its self-down on its thruster's onto the pad.

“That’s a British Sea Harrier FA-2,” Barbra told them. “But that is not the British Air Force. The symbols have been removed. That’s a private plane,” she told the group.

The pilot shut the plane down, then open the canopy, then jumped down off the aircraft. Taking off the helmet, they could see she was a female with long, red hair. She then unzipped her flight suit, and threw her things back into the aircraft, and closed the canopy. Turning around naked, she walked through the foot of snow towards the house. She was a tall woman with the grace of a gazelle. Each stride of her long legs flowed into each step she took. The cold, and snow didn’t seem to bother her at all, and she didn’t rush to meet them. Matter of fact, it seemed to Tamra like nothing could make this woman rush to do anything. She was an Alpha. A leader, and she was very sure of herself. Tamra thought she was one of the most striking women she has ever seen in her life. She knew the woman to be in her early forties, but her body would confuse anybody. Her large breast were firm, and she had the most powerful long feminine legs Tamra has ever seen on a woman. Her skin was fair, and as she got closer to them, Tamra noticed her long fingers, and freckles all over her body.

She smiled up at them as she got closer to the porch.

“Oh, my God. Who in the hell is that?” Janet said to no one.

“That’s Catherine,” Tamra informed them.

“How do you know, Tamra? None of us have ever met her before,” Tim said.

“I know because I called her last night,” she explained.

As gracefully as she walked, Catherine just as gracefully came into the lives of the Winstons. She called each of them by name as she quickly kissed each one in turn. But when she got to Tamra, she was totally sure of herself as she kissed Tamra with all of the love, and passion she possessed in her body. Her kiss didn’t say, “I want you.” It was more acknowledging Tamra, letting her know Catherine recognized her as the pack’s leader. Catherine also did something else to Tamra during the kiss. When she finally pulled away from her. Tamra felt better, differently than she did before. The gloom of the day was somehow lifted from her for no reason at all.

Tamra didn’t let go of Catherine after the kiss. “You better promise me you’ll do that again,” she told Catherine.

Catherine held her face in her hand, smiling back at her. She spoke in a thick Irish accent. “Yes, of course love, but first let’s go see Kelly.”

Without waiting for them to show her the way, she walked into the house ahead of them, and down the long hallway towards the first aid room.

Matching her step beside her, Janet asked. “You can feel him, can’t you?”

Catherine laughed at Janet’s question. She kissed her on the cheek as they walked down the hall.

“Janet, I could find Kelly anywhere on this planet, even if I was deaf, dumb, and blind,” she told her.

Arriving in the first aid room, Catherine was immediately concerned when she saw the shape Kelly was in. He was drained of life. She kissed him, and held him, and took his scent. Then she stood back, and told Stephanie to get a backboard.

Stephanie questioningly looked first from the Doctor, and then to Tamra before saying, “If we move him, we might kill him.”

“If we don’t move him, he will die anyway,” Catherine simply told her.

Tamra told Stephanie to get the backboard.

As they were strapping Kelly to the backboard, Catherine told them. “I have known Kelly for a long time. He likes to play the big tough guy, but in truth, he’s far from it. He picked each one of you with great care, and he had a very good reason for selecting each of you. Tamra, you, and Janet fell into his lap, but both of you were just what he was looking for.

“Tamra, you’re about to learn something about yourself you never knew. It’s a bit risky, but I’ll be there to help you.”

They finished tying him to the board. “OK, let’s get him upstairs, and into bed,” she told them.

It took some doing, but they got him upstairs. As they arranged his body on the Alpha’s bed, Catherine turned to Tim.

“When we’re done, make sure you have a gallon of blood, and plenty of meat ready. If me, and Tamra are so out of it, and we can’t eat or drink. Plug us into an Iv

with blood, and saline solution. That should revive us enough to eat.”

“And what happens if we can’t revive you?” he asked her.

“If that happens, then it really won’t matter, now will it? Just make sure my body stays here on the Island with Kelly, and do not send me home to Scotland. Now, promise me you’ll do as I asked.”

Tim assured her it would be done.

With that, she crawled into bed with Kelly, telling Tamra to undress, and get on the other side of him. When Tamra laid down beside Kelly, Catherine pulled one of her legs over Kelly’s lower body so her hip was halfway riding on his.

“You’ll want as much contact with his body as you can get,” the older woman told her.

“But what are we doing? I don’t understand?”

“Tamra, what happened in North Korea? When you found him.”

“I told you. I held him, and was feeling the love I had for him as I cried.”

“That’s what we’re going to do here, but slower this time. You remember how you felt after you tried it by yourself?”

Tamra shook her head. “Ya, I was completely drained, and I kept passing out.”

“Well, this will kill you sure as shit. I have only been able to do this once before myself. It will drain your life force out of you, and put it into him. If you knew what you were doing in Korea, you wouldn’t be alive right now, but Kelly would be fine.

“OK,” the older woman told her, “Go slow. We’ll love him, and touch him as

we go. We’ll build the love up together.”

Both women began caressing, and loving Kelly’s body. Everyone else stood back, watching both women, and Kelly.

After several minutes, the two women were also touching each other. As soon as they did, a yellow glow formed out of nowhere, surrounding the three. The glow intensified, brighter, and brighter, till everybody had to shield their eyes from the aura. After a few minutes, the glow slowly lost its yellow tint, and the aura suddenly turned solid white. The force of light was so sharp, and powerful it continued to grow, forcing everybody from the bedchamber, and out into the hallway. The light shined under, and through the cracks in the door, they all backed away from it.

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Days later, Tamra woke up in the first aid room. She had an Iv sticking out of her arm, and Rhea was bathing her. Her health improved rapidly after that. Catherine was already awake, and walking days before her. They told her Kelly was still in bed, but he was doing a lot better as each day past. He would wake up, and eat, then go back to sleep. It would be months before he was out of bed, and walking around.

Life on the Island returned to normal.

Warmer weather was moving in as the winter gave way into summer. The wolves never left Kelly’s side. A few of them stayed with him the entire time. Everybody started training again, and Tess began wasting ammunition, shooting her damn cannon at the range. Tamra didn’t have to heart to stop her.

Tamra herself felt different ever since she, and Catherine saved Kelly’s life. She learned on that day how to love in a way she has never experienced before. The emotions she felt with Catherine, and Kelly went beyond anything she could ever describe. It was a state of being. It was harmony in constant motion with ecstasy. Love was just the steppingstone from which Catherine, and her leaped from into an abyss of euphoria, and rapture like state of mind. Tamra thought she was going to die the moment it began. As time stopped to have all meaning as waves of passion flowed from Catherine, and her to wash over Kelly with the intensity of God’s love. The experience grew bigger than the room they were in, bigger than the world. As it continued to expand, she lost all contact with her body. Losing their bodily forms, the three co-existed in the feeling of love, and energy alone.

One moment she was loving Catherine, and Kelly, and the next she woke up. She has dreamed of the experience, and the emotions of the event every night since then. Catherine told her to enjoy the dreams while she had them, because as with everything in life, they too will diminish, and leave her.

It was Saturday morning. Kelly was still in the bedchamber when Tamra sent Tim to Portland. As she watched his boat come back into their inlet on the radar screen, she called everyone out to the porch. She told Janet to bring her camera equipment, and to give Wade a camera to help video the event.

Tamra made sure Tess was sitting beside her as they waited for Tim to come up the path.

Catherine had a huge grin on her face as she watched Tess as two people

walked up the path, and made their way over to the house. A pretty brunette woman was with Tim. They were holding hands as they walked. The woman was as tall as Tim, and had long legs. She couldn’t have been no older than twenty-five years old.

Tamra, and Catherine watched Tess closely.

As soon as the two got close enough for them all to see the woman’s face, Tessa’s whole body froze as every muscle in her body suddenly went on high alert.

They were still some distance from the house when Tessa screamed, “Melissa!”

Not waiting a second further, Tess leaped from her chair, and hit the ground running without touching the porch stairs. She was at Melissa’s side, covering the two hundred feet in less than a second. Tamra thought she was going to run Melissa right over, but she stopped short in front of her. Wrapping herself around the other woman, they both started balling.

As the rest of the family approached the two, Tamra told everybody to let them be. She knew there was no stopping Tess at the moment.

Melissa’s tears streamed down her face as she stroked Tessa’s hair, and ran her hands down her body, soothing Tessa’s high-strung emotions. Embracing, the two repeatedly kissed each other.

Janet took a bunch more shots, then pulled Tamra aside. “Where did Kelly find her?” She wanted to know.

Tamra only learned about the mystery behind Melissa’s strange disappearance after she went through Kelly’s files in his safe. Kelly’s men found Melissa in Taiwan many months ago. It seemed Melissa’s mother had a secret pen pal who was in the

United States military, stationed in Japan. The guy wasn’t divorced yet. He was still living with his wife, so the two lovers kept their relationship quiet. They stayed in contact through their computers. One day, the guy just up, and asked her to come, and spend some time with him in Japan. On a lark, she agreed to go. Not knowing how long they were going to be gone for. The woman put their household things in storage, then flew to Japan not telling anyone where they were going, or why. A month later, Melissa’s mother, her pen pal died in a ferry accident as they crossed from Hokkaido Island to mainland Japan. Very few bodies were ever recovered from the strong ocean currents.

Melissa was left alone in Japan to fend for herself. She quickly met a really nice Japanese man who took care of her. Melissa, being a young woman, fell for him, and he had her using heroin within a few months of meeting him. He ended up taking her to Taiwan, and left her with some people who used her sexually, feeding her drugs to keep her with them to prostitute herself. A white female prostitute in that part of the world was a rare item, and highly prized. Kelly got a few ex-military people he knew, and they forcibly took Melissa from the people in Taiwan. However, because of Melissa’s poor health, and mental condition. Kelly didn’t want to put her in a hospital in the States. Instead, he shipped her to Scotland, where she could get better care from Catherine’s family. The organization, and Catherine’s pack had better technology to deal with Melissa’s condition, and her other problems.

After a while, the two women quieted down somewhat. Tamra slowly directed everybody into the house. Introductions to the family would have to wait because Tess needed Melissa’s full attention right now. The two women weren’t showing any signs of drying their eyes as they continued to hold on to each other as they walked to the house.

Barbra stepped up to Tamra. “So, I guess we have another family member?” she asked.

“Looks that way to me,” Tamra replied.

“Tamra, I am sure Kelly knows all about this, but what are we going to do with her?” She nodded her head at Melissa. “Tamra, she’s not an Alpha, she’s a Beta?”

Tamra stopped walking, and looked straight into Barbra’s brown eyes. “No one’s perfect Barbra. Not even you.”

Turning around, she put her arm around Barbra, and Tess as they all walked up to the house together.

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Even the stars in the heavens grow old, and tired. Time affected everything, even the seasons of the world. Leaves once green turned brown as God’s plan unfolded, and shaped, and groomed the lives of man.

Everett was buried on the Island beside Feofilakt. The two always had a special bond together, Tamra thought. Alexandra still refused to take a new mate as she continues to lead the wolf pack by herself. Pavel tried taking Alexandra as a mate, and take over as the leading male Alpha of the pack, but Alexandra nearly killed him in the attempt. He was still in the first aid room, fighting for his life. There was going to be more bloodshed when Alexandra died, as the rest of the wolves would fight over both leading Alpha positions. One, or maybe two of them would die in the struggle for dominance over the pack.

Somewhere in the world, Sandra, Stephanie, and Melissa were off on a CIA reconnaissance mission together. Meanwhile, Mike and Barbra, both retired at the same time. They were now sailing through the Straits of Gibraltar on their way home for the holidays. The two seem to spend more time on their sailboat than they did on dry land.

Director Mellon was still working for the CIA, and he got Wade his training with the rest of the CIA wannabes. Wade told Tamra he was thinking of joining the Marines, but she believes Kelly talked him out of it.

That left Rhea, Tess, and Janet, and herself to take care of the kids at home. They had four children now, with one more on the way. When the girls started popping out babies, Kelly was glowing all the time. He went overboard in his own way, and childproofed the entire house. There was a fence around the pool now and a play area with its own tent over it to protect their children from the sun. They were normal children, for the most part. Their reflexes were a bit faster, and they seemed to catch on rather quickly, but they weren’t showing any signs of having abilities like their parents.

Except for Brandon. Tessa’s child seem to always have either a wolf with him or one of the wild rabbits or one of the deer they had on the Island. Tamra has even found a few field mice sleeping with him as he slept at night. Coming from Tessa’s belly, she expected Brandon to be more animal than human.

The holidays, and Kelly’s birthday were the biggest events of the year on the Island. Everybody would come home. Tamra thought it was wonderful when they had everyone at home all at once. The house was filled with chatter, activity, and love. Catherine stayed with them for a good part of each year now. Tamra always smiled at that thought. Catherine had two families loving her.

Janet, and Rhea were laying down with the toddlers, taking their noon-time nap in the kid’s bedchamber in the cellar as the rest of the adults enjoyed the summer air around the pool.

President Obama, and his family were on the Island for a weekend visit with his girls, Malia, and Sasha. At the present time, the girls were at the bottom of the pool as Tim taught the girls how to scuba dive. Michelle, Obama’s wife, watched over her children in the water as they practiced sign language, and performed tasks Tim had in place for them to do. A Secret Service officer had his own scuba gear on, and was following the girls from around the sides of the enormous pool.

With her second child growing in her belly, Tamra was laying back in a chair with an umbrella, relaxing with her hand on her slightly swollen belly as she listened to Kelly, and the President of the United States argued while they played Scrabble.

“I think you’re cheating,” Barack accused Kelly. “You guys are so fast. How would I even know if you weren’t searching the pile for a letter when my head was turned?”

Questioning Kelly’s character wasn’t something Kelly took lightly from anyone. Tamra could see Obama was really getting to him even though Kelly knew the President was only doing it to rattle his cage.

Kelly took three of his letters, and laid down the word “Sub.”

Obama then took his last six letters, and placed them under Kelly’s word, making it read, “Submarine,” giving Obama a triple word score, and winning the game. He laughed out loud in Kelly’s face.

Kelly called over to Tamra from across the table. “This guy is frigging impossible,” “He talks through the whole damn game, and won’t shut the hell up, then he accuses me of cheating, yet he’s kicking my ass.”

He directed his next comment at Barack, “Let me get my combat knife Wade gave me. I’ll give you some blood. Maybe that’ll shut you up.”

“Aww, come on, Kelly. Don’t be like that. You have to be able to handle the pressure,” the President told him.

“The water which supports a boat can also sink it,” Kelly shot back.

Calling over from beside the pool, Michelle told Kelly, “I tried to warn you,

Kelly. But you didn’t listen to me. He’ll just keep doing it to you. He loves Scrabble. You should see him when he loses, he gets pissed?”

“I don’t lose,” Barack sharply told his wife.

Michelle gestured “OK” with her forefinger touching her thumb, and three fingers sticking up in the air. “You do when you play with me, buddy.”

The conversation stopped as Tess, and the family’s newest candidate for membership came back from the rifle range, where Tess was showing Clifton how to shoot her cannon. Clifton was a surgeon at Maine Medical Center in Portland. Sandra had been spending a lot of time off the Island by herself, and she wouldn’t tell anybody what she was doing. Then, one week, she came home with Clifton, and everyone knew what she was up to. She had been hanging around different hospitals trying to find a surgeon for the family. She picked Clifton. After getting Kelly’s approval, Clifton was allowed to spend all of his free time on the Island. None of the girls advanced on him because that was up to Sandra, but Sandra was called away on a job last week. Tess was spending time with him while Sandra was gone, and the two turned out to be really good friends.

“Kelly, would you watch my gun for a few minutes while we take a break? I want to show Clifton the crow’s nest.”

Kelly told her he would safeguard the weapon. He placed the Wildey forty-four auto-mag on the table beside him.

Tess, and Clifton said hi to the President, and then Tess gave him a kiss on his cheek. She then waved to Michelle.

“Hi, Michelle.”

Mrs. Obama smiled back. “Hi, Tess.”

When the two went inside, Barack turned in his chair to Tamra. “Boy, she sure

has changed. She doesn’t act anything like she used to. She’s matured beautifully, and carries herself very well.”

“That’s what having babies will do to a woman, Mr. President. Tess changed as soon as she delivered Brandon. She is a lot more serious, and down-to-earth now. She is even more considerate of her behavior when she’s around the kids. I kind of miss the old wild Tess. She was unpredictable.”

With a smidgen of pride, Tamra added, “Tessa finally grew up. She’s a mom

now.”

Kelly, and Obama started another game of Scrabble.

Barack asked him, “Do you want me to spot you a few points?”

Kelly growled at him, “In your dreams.”

They had been playing for only a few minutes when the house’s sound system suddenly came on. Everybody on the patio, and around the pool could hear Tessa moaning, as sounds of heavy breathing came from Clifton.

Clear as a bell, Tess screamed out, “Doctor, Doctor, there’s something wrong with me. I need you to fix me. Slam that thing into me baby. Oh, God, yes! Give it to me, Doctor, give it to me!.”

Right away, Tamra knew what had happened. Because the room was made of glass, Kelly had put the sound system right by the bed in the crow’s nest. One of them must have turned it on by accident.

Simultaneously, several things happen at once.

Tamra jumped up from her chair, and raced for the intercom system, but Timber, Willow, and Woody were in the kitchen looking for morsels left behind on the kitchen floor when they heard Tessa’s voice outside. All three dogs ran out through the dog door to find Tess but crossed paths with Tamra going for the sound system. The dogs took her legs out from under her. Tamra went down, protecting her belly as she fell to the ground.

Kelly quickly jumped up, hitting the edge of the table, knocking their game all over the table, and onto the grass. He put his strength into his legs, and moved as fast as he could, but no one had cleaned up from the kids’ activity before nap time. Laying on the grass around the table were the discards of heavy paper from the kid’s playtime. Kelly stepped on a few large pieces of paper, making him slip, and fall. His forward momentum knocked him into President Obama sitting in his chair. The President’s chair got knocked over with Obama in it. He landed hard on top of Kelly’s back, who was face down on the lawn.

Without warning, the sound of a gunshot filled the air. “Ka-Boom!”

A four-inch hole suddenly appeared in the sound system’s speaker, which also silenced the sounds of Tess, and Clifton screwing in the crow’s nest. Everybody looked over to who fired the weapon.

Obama’s Secret Service officer stood by the table holding Tessa’s smoking gun in his hand. Barack opened his mouth to say something to him, but the guy beat him to the punch. In his defense, the officer bunched his shoulders up, and waved his hand at the pool.

“Sir, your kids were coming out of the pool. Something had to be done.”

True enough, Malia was already out of the pool as Sasha was coming up the ladder behind her. Totally annoyed, Obama looked down at Kelly underneath him, then he looked over at Tamra, who was lying on the ground. Willow was licking her face.

Timber, and Woody were still running around trying to find Tess.

Barack placed his forearm across Kelly’s shoulders, and pushed his face deeper into the grass as he asked Tamra, “What was that you were saying?”

Totally disgusted with her younger wife, with a wave of her hand, she responded, “Oh, just forget it.”

Over by the pool, doubled over. Michelle was laughing her ass off at her husband, who was lying on top of Kelly’s naked back. Their two children looked from their father, and then back to their mother, totally bewildered over the whole situation.

What secrets are hiding behind the family, and their organization? Who is really is Kelly Winston Jr? Learn how the Winstons deliver another blow to the world, forcing mankind to stop killing humans, and destroying the planet. Find out what happens to the Cross, and discover something evil, and as powerful as the mighty Alpha’s. You will find all of these answers, and more as the trilogy continues in my next novel: “For The Love of Peace.”

Soon to be released by December 2024, my third novel to the Alpha series: “Elapsing into Love,” with a forth book coming out in the spring of 2025

About the author

Since he was a young teen, the author has always wanted to write a best seller, one of those enjoyable Saturday, and Sunday afternoon novels, one might read on the weekend. To achieve his dream, he took creative writing, and poetry courses at schools like, (UMO) University of Maine in Orono, Maine, and (BCC) Burlington Community College in Vermont. However, it wouldn’t be for years after college when he would write, Inescapable Desires, For the Love of Peace, and Elapsing into Love. This series started because of his concern for the violence human beings are spreading across the world, and the killing of our planet that happens on a daily basis. It was normal everyday life that was the invisible force driving the author to write these three novels.

After receiving an honorable discharge from the United States Navy, Mr. Rivers held citations such as a Coast Guard Meritorious Unit Commendation for participating in drug operations in the Caribbean, along with two letters of Appreciation from the USS Forrestal (CVN-59).

After the Navy, he spent years backpacking the Appalachian Trail, the Pacific Crest Trail, the Long Trail in Vermont, and the International Appalachian Trail that wanders into Canada. Many years before, he also hiked in the mountains of Norway. To date, Mr. Rivers has backpacked well over 14,000 miles across the United States. Today, he enjoys spending time walking the trails around where he lives with his Coonhound (Birch). Each summer he grows a vegetable garden in the back yard, and shares the harvest with his neighbors. He expects to write his next book by the spring of 2025.