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Badge of Honor Series (Philadelphia Police)

Book I, Men in Blue

Book II, Special Operations

Book III, The Victim

Book IV, The Witness

Book V, The Assassin

Book VI, The Murderers

Book VII, The Investigators

Book VIII, Final Justice

For Sergeant Zebulon V. Casey

Internal Affairs Division

Retired

Police Department, the City of Philadelphia.

He knows why.	
Badge of Honor Series	
Book 5	
The Assassin	
ONE	

Marion Claude Wheatley, who was thirty-three years of age, stood just under six feet tall, weighed 165 pounds, and was just starting to lose his hair, had no idea why God wanted to kill the Vice Pres-ident of the United States, any more than he did why God had se-lected him to carry out His will in this regard, together with the promise that if he did so, he would be made an angel, and would live forever in the presence of the Lord, experiencing the peace that passeth all understanding.

He had, of course, thought a good deal about it. After all, he had a good education (BA, Swarthmore, cum laude; MBA, Pennsylva-nia) and as a market analyst (petrochemicals) for First Pennsylva-nia Bank & Trust, his brain had been trained to first determine the facts and then to draw reasonable inferences from them.

The first fact was that God was all powerful, which Marion ac-cepted without question. But that raised the question why didn't God, figuratively speaking, of course, just snap his fingers and cause the Vice President to disappear? Or blow up, which is how the Lord had told him He wished the Vice President to die?

Since He had the power to disintegrate the Vice President with-out any mortal assistance, but had

chosen instead to make Marion the instrument of His will, the only conclusion that could be reasonably drawn was that the Lord had his reasons, which naturally he had not elected to share with a simple mortal.

Perhaps, Marion reasoned, later, after he had proven himself worthy by unquestioningly carrying out the Lord's will, the Lord might graciously tell him why He had chosen the course of action He had.

And if that happened, Marion reasoned, it would seem to follow that God might even tell him how the Vice President of the United States had offended the Lord Most High.

There were a thousand ways the Vice President might have caused offense. He was of course a politician, and one did not need divine insight to understand how much evil they caused each and every day.

Marion suspected that whatever the Vice President's offense, it was a case of either one really terrible thing, in the eyes of God, or a series of relatively minor offenses against the Lord's will, the cu-mulative effect of which equaled one really terrible sin.

When the Lord had spoken with Marion, the subject of repen-tance and forgiveness vis-à-vis the Vice President had never even come up. Marion, of course, would not have had the presumption to raise the question himself, but certainly, if God wanted the Vice President to repent, to straighten up and fly right, so to speak, it would seem logical to expect that He would have said something along those lines. It was thus reasonable to assume that whatever the Vice President had done to offend the Lord was unforgivable.

But this was not, Marion had decided while having lunch at the Reading Terminal Market, the same thing as saying that the Vice President could not, or should not, make an effort to get himself right with the Lord. If the Lord was merciful, as Marion devoutly believed Him to be, He just might change His mind if the Vice President, figuratively or literally, went to Him on his knees and begged forgiveness.

It was even possible, if unlikely, Marion had concluded, that the Vice President was unaware of how, or to what degree, he had of-fended the Lord. But if that was the case, it would certainly be a Christian act of compassion, of Christian love, for Marion to let the Vice President know that he was in trouble with the Lord.

The question then became how to do so in such a way that he would not draw attention to himself. Obviously, he could not call the Vice President on the telephone. There would be several layers of people in place to protect the Vice President from every Tom, Dick, and Harry who wanted to talk to him.

The only way to do it, Marion concluded, was to write him a let-ter. And that was not quite as simple as it sounded. He would have to be careful to make sure the Secret Service, who protected the Vice President, did not find out who he was. Since the Secret Ser-vice would have no way of knowing that he was not some kind of nut, rather than working at the specific direction of the Lord, if they found out he had mailed the Vice President a letter telling him that he was about to be blown up, they would come and arrest him.

Going to prison, or a lunatic asylum, was a price Marion was willing to pay for doing the Lord's work, but only *after* he had done it. If he was in prison, obviously, he could not blow the Vice President up.

And from what Marion had seen on television, and read in books, the Secret Service was very skilled in what they did. They would obviously make a great effort to locate him, once the Vice President showed them the letter. He was going to have to strive for anonymity.

On the way back to the office from the Reading Terminal, he went to the Post Office Annex and bought two stamped envelopes. Then he went into one of the discount stores on Market Street and bought a thin pad of typing paper.

He often worked late, so no one was suspicious when he stayed in his office after everyone else had gone home. When he was ab-solutely sure that there was no one in the office but him, he went to the typing pool and sat down at the first typist's desk. He opened the top drawer and found two spare disposable ribbons.

He took the plastic cover off the typewriter, then opened it, and removed the ribbon on the machine, carefully placing it on the desktop. Then he put in a new ribbon. He addressed the envelope:

The Hon. Vice President of the United States

Senate Office Building

Washington, D.C.

And then he took the envelope out and tore a sheet of paper from the typing paper pad and rolled that into the typewriter. He sat there drumming his fingers on the desk for a moment as he made up his mind how to say what he wanted to say. Then he started to type. He was a good typist, and when he was finished, there wasn't even one strikeover, and Marion was pleased.

Dear Mr. Vice President:

You have offended the Lord, and He has de-cided, using me as His instrument, to disintegrate you using high explosives.

It is never too late to ask God's forgiveness, and I respectfully suggest that you make your peace with God as soon as possible.

Yours in Our Lord,

A Christian.

Marion carefully folded the letter in thirds, slipped it into the en-velope, and then licked the flap and sealed it. He put it into his breast pocket.

Then he removed the ribbon from the typewriter, put the old one back in, and closed the typewriter and covered it with its plastic cover.

He tore off the section of ribbon that had the impressions of the typewriter keys on it and put it into the second stamped envelope he had purchased against the contingency that he would make an error. He carried the envelope, the pad of typing paper, and the rib-bon he had used and then removed from the typewriter back into his office. He turned on his shredder and fed first the envelope with the used ribbon inside into it, and then, half a dozen sheets at a time, the typing paper. Next came the cardboard backing and cover sheet of the typing paper pad. The only thing left was the almost in-tact unused plastic typewriter ribbon. It was too thick to get into the mouth of the shredder, and moreover, he suspected that even if it had fit into it, it probably would have jammed the mechanism.

He took the sterling silver Waterman's ballpoint pen that had been the firm's gift to him at Christmas from

his pocket, and held it through the little plastic inside of the typewriter ribbon. Then he fed the loose end of the ribbon into the shredder. The mechanism drew the ribbon between the cutters. It took a long time for all of the ribbon to be drawn into the shredder, but it was somehow fascinating to watch the process, and he was a little disappointed when it was all gone.

He held the plastic center in his hand and left his office for the men's room. He went into a stall and flushed the plastic center down the toilet. Then he carefully washed his hands and left the of-fice.

He bought a Philadelphia*Ledger* from the newsstand at 16th and Chestnut Streets, and grew warm with the knowledge that he had done the right thing and pleased God. There was a headline that said, VICE PRESIDENT TO VISIT.

The meeting in the commissioner's conference room on the third floor of the Police Administration Building, commonly called the Roundhouse, was convened, and presided over, by Arthur C. Marshall, deputy commissioner (Operations) of the Police Department of the City of Philadelphia.

The police commissioner of the City of Philadelphia is a politi-cal appointee who serves at the pleasure of the mayor. There are three deputy commissioners in the Philadelphia Police Department. They are the first deputy commissioner, who is the highest ranking member of the Department under Civil Service regula-tions, and the two deputy commissioners, Operations and Admin-istration.

Under the deputy commissioner (Operations) are four Bureaus, each commanded by a chief inspector: the Patrol Bureau, the Spe-cial Patrol Bureau, the Detective Bureau, and the Command In-spections Bureau.

Present for the Roundhouse meeting were Chief Inspector Matt Lowenstein, of the Detective Bureau, and Chief Inspector Dennis V. Coughlin, of the Command Inspections Bureau, both of whom were subordinate to Deputy Commissioner Marshall. Also present were Chief Inspector Mario C. Delachessi, of the Internal Investigations Bureau; Chief Inspector Paul T. Easterbrook, of the Special Investigations Bureau; Staff Inspector Peter Wohl, commanding officer of the Special Operations Division; and Captain John M. "Jack" Duffy, spe-cial assistant to the commissioner for inter-agency liaison.

Internal Investigations, Special Investigations, and Special Operations in theory took their orders from

the first deputy com-missioner directly. In practice, however, First Deputy Commis-sioner Marshall and Chiefs Lowenstein and Coughlin exercised more than a little influence in their operations. There was no ques-tion in anyone's mind that Lowenstein and Coughlin were the most influential of all the eleven chief inspectors in the Department, and that both were considered ripe candidates for the next opening as a deputy commissioner.

Part of this was because they were first-class police executives and part was because they had long-running close relations with the Honorable Jerry Carlucci, mayor of the City of Philadelphia.

Prior to running for mayor, in his first bid for elective office, Jerry Carlucci had been the police commissioner. And prior to that, the story went, he had held every rank in the Police Department ex-cept policewoman. As a result of this, Mayor Carlucci felt that he knew as much, probably more, about the Police Department than anyone else, and consequently was not at all bashful about offering helpful suggestions concerning police operations.

"Okay," Commissioner Marshall said, "let's get this started."

He was a tall, very thin, sharp-featured man with bright, intelli-gent eyes.

There was a moment's silence broken only by the scratching of a wooden match on the underside of the long, oblong conference ta-ble by Chief Lowenstein. The commissioner watched as Lowenstein, a large, stocky, balding man, applied the flame care-fully to a long, thin, black cigar.

"Is that all right with you, Matt?" the commissioner asked, gently sarcastic. "Is your rope on fire? We can begin?"

"A woman is only a woman, but a good cigar is a smoke. Re-member that, Art," Lowenstein said, unabashed. He and Commis-sioner Marshall went back a long way too. Lowenstein had been one of Captain Marshall's lieutenants when Marshall had com-manded the 19th District.

There were chuckles. Marshall shook his head, and began:

"We have a problem with the Bureau of Narcotics and Danger-ous Drugs..."



"Is heroin coming through the airport?" he asked rhetorically. "Sure it is. I haven't heard a word, though, that anybody in the Air-port Unit is dirty."
Everyone looked at Chief Inspector Delachessi, a plump, short, natty forty-year-old, among whose Internal Investigations Bureau responsibilities were Internal Affairs, the Organized Crime Intelli-gence Unit, and the Staff Investigation Unit. Eighteen months be-fore, he had been Staff Inspector Peter Wohl's boss.
"Neither have I," Delachessi said. "Not a whisper. And what is it now—two months ago?—when that Airport Unit corporal got himself killed coming home from the shore, the corporal who was his temporary replacement was one of my guys. He didn't come up with a thing. Having said that, is somebody out there dirty? Could be. I'll have another look."
"Hold off on that, Mario," Commissioner Marshall said.
"What, exactly, is the problem with Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs?" Chief Lowenstein asked. "You said there was a problem."
"They want to send somebody out there, undercover," Marshall said.
"Inthe Airport Unit?" Lowenstein asked incredulously. "As acop?"
Marshall nodded.
"They've made it an official request," Captain Duffy said. "By letter."
"Tell them to go fuck themselves, by official letter," Lowenstein said.
"It's not that easy, Matt," Marshall said. "The commissioner says we'll have to come up with a good reason to turn them down."

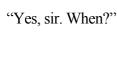






Officer Matthew M. Payne was Peter Wohl's administrative as-sistant, another gift from Chief Dennis V. Coughlin.
"I thought he might squeeze past," Wohl replied. Matt Payne had graduated from the University of Pennsylvania cum laude. Wohl didn't think he would have trouble with the detective's exam-ination.
"Well, hold off on congratulating him," Coughlin said. "Any of them. The results of the examination are confidential until Civil Service people make the announcement. No word of who passed is to leave this room, if I have to say that."
"Let's try this scenario on for size," Commissioner Marshall said. "And see if it binds in the crotch. Martinez's name does not appear on the examination list as having passed. He is disap-pointed, maybe even a little bitter. And he asks for a transfer. They've been riding his ass in Highway, Denny tells me, because of his size. He doesn't seem to fit in. But he's still the guy who got the guy who killed Dutch Moffitt, and he deserves a little better than getting sent to some district to work school crossings or in a sector car. So Denny sends him out to the Airport Unit."
Both Commissioner Marshall and Chief Inspector Coughlin looked very pleased with themselves.
If there's going to be an objection to this, it will have to come from Lowenstein. He's the only one who would be willing to stand up against these two.
Chief Lowenstein leaned forward and tapped a three-quarter-inch ash into an ashtray.
"That'd work," he said. "Martinez is a mean little fucker. Not too dumb, either."
From you, Chief Lowenstein, that is indeed praise of the highest order.
"Do you think he would be willing, Chief?" Wohl asked.

"Yeah, I think so," Coughlin said. "I already had a little talk with him. No specifics. Just would he take an interesting undercover as-signment?"
You sonofabitch, Denny Coughlin! You did that, went directly to one of my men, with something like this, without saying a word to me?
"What we would like from you gentlemen," Commissioner Marshall said, "is to play devil's advocate."
"Will the commissioner hold still for this?" Lowenstein said.
"No problem," Commissioner Marshall said.
The translation of that is that there was a third party, by the name of Carlucci, involved in this brainstorm. The commissioner either knows that, or will shortly be told, and will then devoutly believe the idea was divinely inspired.
"What we thought," Coughlin went on, "is that Peter can serve as the connection. We don't want anyone to connect Martinez with Internal Affairs, or Organized Crime, or Narcotics. If Martinez comes up with something for them, or vice versa, they'll pass it through Peter. You see any problems with that, Peter?"
"No, sir."
"Anyone else got anything?" Commissioner Marshall asked.
There was nothing.
"Then all that remains to be done," Coughlin said, "is to get with Martinez and drop the other shoe. What I suggest, Peter, is that you have Martinez meet us here."



"Now's as good a time as any, wouldn't you say?"

Officer Matthew M. Payne, a pleasant-looking young man of twenty-two, who looked far more like a University of Pennsylva-nia student, which eighteen months before he had been, than what comes to mind when the words "cop" or "police officer" are used, was waiting near the elevators, with the other "drivers" of those at-tending the first deputy commissioner's meeting. They were all in civilian clothing.

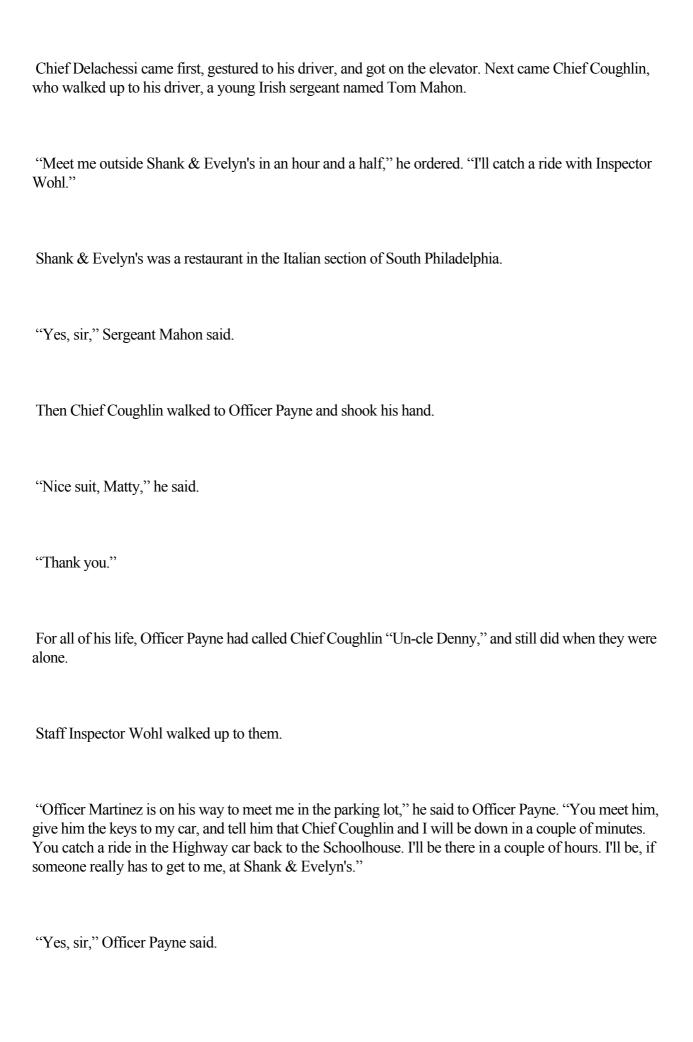
Technically, Officer Payne was not a "driver," for drivers are a privilege accorded only to chief inspectors or better, and his boss was only a staff inspector. His official title was administrative assistant.

There is a military analogy. There is a military rank structure within the Police Department. On the very rare occasions when Peter Wohl wore a uniform, it carried on its epaulets gold oak leaves, essentially identical to those worn by majors in the armed forces. Inspectors wore silver oak leaves, like those of lieutenant colonels, and chief inspectors, an eagle, like those worn by colo-nels.

Drivers functioned very much like aides-de-camp to general of-ficers in the armed forces. They relieved the man they worked for of annoying details, served as chauffeurs, and performed other ser-vices. And, like their counterparts in the armed forces, they were chosen as much for their potential use to the Department down the line as they were for their ability to perform their current duties. It was presumed that they were learning how the Department worked at the upper echelons by observing their bosses in action.

Most of the other drivers waiting for the meeting to end were sergeants. One, Chief Lowenstein's driver, was a police officer. Matt Payne was both the youngest of the drivers and, as a police officer, held the lowest rank in the Department.

There was a hissing sound, and one of the drivers gestured to the corridor toward what was in effect the executive suite of the Police Administration Building. The meeting was over, the bosses were coming out.



Chief Coughlin and Inspector Wohl went back down the corri-dor toward the office of the police commissioner and his deputies. Sergeant Mahon and Officer Payne got on the elevator and rode to the lobby.
"What the hell is that all about?" Mahon asked.
"I think Coughlin and Wohl are being nice guys," Matt Payne said. "The results of the detective exam are back. Martinez didn't pass it."
"Oh, shit. He wanted it bad?"
"Real bad."
"You saw the list?"
"I respectfully decline to answer on the grounds that it may tend to incriminate me," Matt Payne said.
Mahon chuckled.
"How'd you do?"
"Third."
"Hey, congratulations!"
"If you quote me, I'll deny it. But thank you."

Matt Payne had to wait only a minute or two on the concrete ramp outside the rear door of the Roundhouse before a Highway Patrol RPC pulled up to the curb.
He went the rest of the way down the ramp to meet it. The driver, a lean, athletic-looking man in his early thirties, who he knew by sight, but not by name, rolled down the window as Highway Patrolman Jesus Martinez got out of the passenger side.
"How goes it, Hay-zus?" Payne called.
Martinez nodded, but did not reply. Or smile.
"We had a call to meet the inspector, Payne," the driver said. While the reverse was not true, just about everybody in Highway and Special Operations knew the inspector's "administrative assistant" by name and sight.
Payne squatted beside the car. "He'll be down in a minute," he said. "I'm to give Hay-zus the keys to his car; you're supposed to give me a ride to the Schoolhouse."
The driver nodded.
I wish to hell I was better about names.
Payne stood up, fished the car keys from his pocket, and tossed them to Martinez.

"Back row, Hay-zus," he said, and pointed. "I'd bring it over here. If anyone asks, tell them you're waiting for Chief Coughlin."

Martinez nodded, but didn't say anything.
I am not one of Officer Martinez's favorite people. And now that he busted the detective exam, and Charley and I passed it, that's going to get worse. Well, fuck it, there's nothing I can do about it.
He walked around the front of the car and got in the front seat. Martinez walked away, toward the rear of the parking lot. The driver put the car in gear and drove away.
"You have to get right out to the Schoolhouse?" Matt asked.
"No."
"You had lunch?"
"No. You want to stop someplace?"
"Good idea. Johnny's Hots okay with you?"
"Fine."
"You have an idea where McFadden's riding?"
"Thirteen, I think," the driver said.
Matt checked the controls of the radio to make sure the fre-quency was set to that of the Highway Patrol, then picked up the microphone.



going to break it to him easy."
"I tried the corporal's exam three years ago and didn't make it," the driver said. "Then I figured, fuck it I'd rather be doing this than working in an office anyhow."
Was that simply a conversational interchange, or have I just been zinged?
"I'm surprised Hay-zus didn't make it," Matt said.
"Yeah, I was too. But I guess some people can pass exams, and some people can't."
"You're right. You think McFadden knows we passed?"
"He told me this morning at roll call."
"So that means Martinez knows too, I guess?"
"Yeah, I'm sure he knows."
Was that why Hay-zus cut me cold, or was that on general prin-ciples?

Detective Matthew M. Payne, of East Detectives, pulled his un-marked car to the curb just beyond the intersection of 12th and But-ler Streets in the Tioga section of Philadelphia.

There was a three-year-old Ford station wagon parked at the curb. Payne reached over and picked up a clipboard from the pas-senger seat, and examined the Hot Sheet. It was a sheet of eight-and-a-half-by-eleven-inch paper, printed on both sides, which listed the tag numbers of stolen vehicles in alphanumeric order.

There were three categories of stolen vehicles. If a double aster-isk followed the number, this was a warning to police officers that if persons were seen in the stolen vehicle they were to be regarded as armed and dangerous. A single asterisk meant that if and when the car was recovered, it was to be guarded until technicians could examine it for fingerprints. No asterisks meant that it was an ordinary run-of-the-mill hot car that nobody but its owner really gave a damn about.

The license number recorded on the Hot Sheet corresponded with the license plate on the Ford station, which had been reported stolen twenty-eight hours previously. There were no asterisks following the listing. Two hours previously, Radio Patrol Car 2517, of the 25th Police District, on routine patrol had noticed the Ford sta-tion wagon, and upon inquiry had determined that it had been re-ported as a stolen car.

The reason, obviously, that this Ford station wagon had attracted the attention of the guys in the blue-and-white was not hard for someone of Detective Payne's vast experience—he had been a detective for three whole weeks—to deduce. The wheels and tires had been removed from the vehicle, and the hood was open, sug-gesting that other items of value on the resale market had been removed from the engine compartment.

The officer who had found the stolen car had then filled out Phil-adelphia Police Department Form 75-48, on which was listed the location, the time the car had been found, the tag number and the VIN (Vehicle Identification Number), and the condition (if it had been burned, stripped, or was reasonably intact).

If he had recovered the vehicle intact, that is to say drivable, he would have disabled it by removing the coil wire or letting the air out of one or more tires. It is very embarrassing to the police for them to triumphantly inform a citizen that his stolen car has been recovered at, say, 12th and Butler, and then to have the car stolen again before the citizen can get to 12th and Butler.

The officer who had found the car had turned in Form 75-48 to one of the trainees in the Operations

Room of the 25th District, at Front and Westmoreland Streets, because the corporal in charge was otherwise occupied. The term "trainee" is somewhat mislead-ing. It suggests someone who is learning a job and, by inference, someone young. One of the trainees in the Operations Room of the 25th District had in fact been on the job longer than Detective Payne was old, and had been working as a trainee for eleven years.

The trainee did not feel it necessary to ask the corporal for guid-ance as to what should be done with the Form 75-48. The corporal, in fact, would have been surprised, even shocked, if he had.

If the car had been stolen inside the city limits of Philadelphia, the trainee would have simply notified the owner, and, in the name of the district, canceled the listing on the Hot Sheet. But this Ford had been stolen from a citizen of Jenkintown, Pennsylvania, just north of Philadelphia. It thus became an OJ, for Other Jurisdiction.

First, he assigned a DC (for District Control) Number to it. In this case it was 74-25-004765. Seventy-four was the year, twenty-five stood for the 25th District, and 004765 meant that it was the four thousandth seven hundredth sixty-fifth incident of this nature occurring since the first of the year.

Then the trainee carried the paperwork upstairs in the building, where EDD (East Detective Division) maintained their offices, and turned it over to the EDD desk man, who then assigned the case an EDD Control Number, much like the DC Number.

The EDD desk man then placed the report before Sergeant Aloysius J. Sutton, who then assigned the investigation of the re-covered stolen vehicle to Detective Matthew M. Payne, the newest member of his squad.

Theoretically, the investigation should have been assigned to the detective "next up on the Wheel." "The Wheel" was a figure of speech; actually, it was a sheet of lined paper on a pad, on which the names of all the detectives of the squad available for duty were written. As jobs came into East Detectives, they were assigned in turn, according to the list. The idea was that the workload would thus be equally shared.

In practice, however, especially when there was a brand-new de-tective on the squad, the Wheel was ignored. Sergeant Sutton was not about to assign, say, an armed robbery job to a detective who had completed Promotional Training at the Police Academy the week, or three weeks, before. Neither, with an armed robbery job to deal with, was Sergeant Sutton about to assign a recovered stolen vehicle investigation to a detective who had been on the job for ten or twelve years, especially if there was a rookie available to do it.

Since he had reported for duty at East Detectives, Detective Payne had investigated eight recovered stolen vehicles. During that time, nine had been reported to East Detectives for appropriate ac-tion.

Actually, Detective Payne knew more about auto theft than all but one of the detectives who had passed the most recent examina-tion and gone to Promotional Training with him. In his previous assignment, he had had occasion to discuss at some length auto theft with Lieutenant Jack Malone, who had at one time headed the Auto Theft Squad in the Major Crimes Division of the Philadelphia Po-lice Department.

Lieutenant Malone had recently received some attention in the press for an investigation he had conducted that had resulted in the Grand Jury indictment of Robert L. Holland, a prominent Delaware Valley automobile dealer, on 106 counts of trafficking in sto-len automobiles, falsification of registration documents, and other auto-theft-related charges.

Detective Payne had learned a great deal from Lieutenant Malone about big-time auto theft. He knew how chop-shops oper-ated; how Vehicle Identification Number tags could be forged; how authentic-looking bills of sale and title could be obtained; and he even had a rather detailed knowledge of how stolen vehicles could be illegally exported through the Port of Philadelphia for sale in Latin and South American countries.

None of this knowledge, unfortunately, was of any value what-ever in the investigation Detective Payne was now charged with conducting.

Detective Payne had also learned from Lieutenant Malone that the great majority of vehicular thefts could be divided into two cat-egories; those cars stolen by joyriders, kids who found the keys in a car and went riding in it for a couple of hours; and those stolen by sort of amateur, apprentice choppers. These thieves had neither the knowledge of the trade nor the premises or equipment to actually break a car down into component pieces for resale. They did, how-ever, know people who would purchase wheels and tires, genera-tors, air-conditioning compressors, batteries, carburetors, radios, and other readily detachable parts, no questions asked.

Very few thieves in either category were ever brought before the bench of the Common Pleas Court. Only a few joyriders were ever caught, usually when they ran into something, such as a bridge abutment or a station wagon full of nuns, and these thieves were al-most always juveniles, who were treated as wayward children, and instead of going to jail entered a program intended to turn them into productive, law-abiding adults.

Very few strippers were ever caught, either, because they were skilled enough to strip a car of everything worth a couple of dollars in less than half an hour. They waited for the local RPC to drive past, in other words, and then stripped the car they had boosted se-cure in the knowledge that the RPC wouldn't be back in under an hour.

But under the law, it was felony theft and had to be investigated with the same degree of thoroughness as, say, a liquor store bur-glary.

In practice, Detective Payne had learned, such investigations were assigned to detectives such as himself, in the belief that not only did it save experienced detectives for more important jobs, but also might, in time, teach rookies to be able to really find their asses with both hands.

Carrying the clipboard with him, Detective Payne got out of his car and walked to the station wagon. He was not surprised when he put his head into the window to see that the radio was gone from the dash, and that the keys were still in the ignition.

Moreover, these thieves had been inconsiderate. If they had been considerate, they would have dumped this car by a deserted lot, or in Fairmount Park or someplace not surrounded by occupied dwellings. Now he would have to go knock on doors and ask peo-ple if they had seen anyone taking the tires and wheels off the Ford station wagon down the street, and if so, what did they look like.

An hour later, he finished conducting the neighborhood survey. Surprising him not at all, none of the six people he interviewed had seen anything at all.

He got back in the unmarked car and drove back to East Detec-tives. Not without difficulty, he found a place to park the car in the tiny parking lot, went inside, found an empty desk and a typewriter not in use, and began to complete the paperwork. Once completed, he knew, it would be carefully filed and would never be seen by hu-man eyes again.

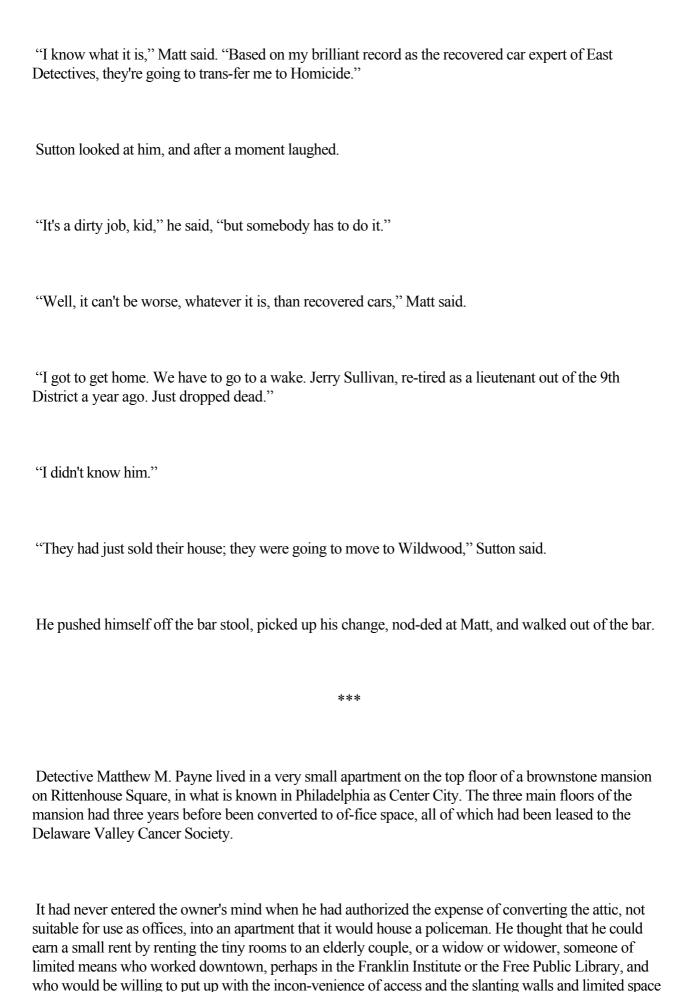
At five minutes to four, when his eight-to-four tour would be over, Detective Payne became aware that someone was standing behind him. He turned from the typewriter and looked over his shoulder. Sergeant

Aloysius J. Sutton, a ruddy-faced, red-haired, stocky man in his late thirties, his boss, was smiling at him.
"I wish I could type that fast," Sergeant Sutton said admiringly.
"You should see me on a typewriter built after 1929," Payne re-plied.
Sutton chuckled. "You got time for a beer when we quit?"
"Sure."
The invitation surprised him. Having a beer with his newest rookie detective did not seem to be Sutton's style. But it was obvi-ously a command performance. Rookie detectives did not refuse an invitation from their sergeant.
"Tom & Frieda's, you know it?"
Matt Payne nodded. It was a bar at Lee and Westmoreland, fifty yards from East Detectives.
"See you there."
Sergeant Sutton walked away, back to his desk just outside Cap-tain Eames's office, and started cleaning up the stuff on the desk.
What the hell is this all about? Jesus Christ, have I fucked up somehow? Broken some unwritten rule? It has to be something like that. I am about to get a word-to-the-wise. But what about?

Tom & Frieda's. Sergeant Sutton was not in the bar and grill when he got there, and for a mo-ment, Matt was afraid that he had been there, grown tired of wait-ing, and left. Left more than a little annoyed with Detective Payne.
But then Sutton, who had apparently been in the gentlemen's rest facility, touched his arm.
"I'm sorry I'm late, Sergeant."
"In here, you can call me Al. We'remore or lessoff duty."
"Okay. Thank you."
"Ortlieb's from the tap all right?"
"Fine."
"What you have to do is find a bar where they sell a lot of beer, so what they give you is fresh. Most draft beer tastes like horse piss because it's been sitting around forever."
He is making conversation. He did not bring me here because he likes me, or to deliver a lecture on the merits of fresh beer on draft. I wish to hell he would get to it.
"You got anything going that won't hold for three days?" Ser-geant Al Sutton asked as he signaled the bartender.
Matt thought that over briefly. "No."

At five past four, Matt Payne left the squad room of East Detec-tives and walked down the street to





be-cause it was convenient and, possibly more important, because the building was protected around the clock by the rent-a-cops of the Holmes Security Service. Downtown Philadelphia was not a very safe place at night for people getting on in years.

Neither, at the time of the attic's conversion, had it ever entered the owner's mind that his son, then a senior at the University of Pennsylvania, would become a policeman. Brewster Cortland Payne II had then believed, with reason, that Matt, after a three-year tour of duty as a Marine officer, would go to law school and join the law firm of Mawson, Payne, Stockton, McAdoo & Lester, of which he was a founding partner.

Matt's precommissioning physical, however, had found some-thing wrong with his eyes. Nothing serious, but sufficient to deny him his commission. Brewster Payne had been privately relieved. He understood what a blow it was to a twenty-one-year-old's ego to be informed that you don't measure up to Marine Corps stan-dards, but Matt was an unusually bright kid, and time would heal that wound. In the meantime, a word in the right ear would see Matt accepted in whatever law school he wanted to attend.

Despite a life at Pennsylvania that seemed to Brewster C. Payne to have been devoted primarily to drinking beer and lifting skirts, Matt had graduated cum laude.

And then Captain Richard C. "Dutch" Moffitt, commanding of-ficer of the Highway Patrol of the Pennsylvania Police Depart-ment, had been shot to death while trying to stop an armed robbery.

It was the second death in the line of duty for the Moffitt family. Twenty-two years before, his brother, Sergeant John Xavier Moffitt, had been shot to death answering a silent alarm call. Six months after his death, Sergeant Moffitt's widow had given birth to their son.

Four months after that, having spent the last trimester of her pregnancy learning to type, and the four months since her son had been born learning shorthand, Sergeant Moffitt's widow had found employment as a typist trainee with the law firm of Lowerie, Tant, Foster, Pedigill & Payne.

There was a police pension, of course, and there had been some insurance, but Patricia Moffitt had known that it would not be enough to give her son all that she wanted to give him.

On a Sunday afternoon two months after entering the employ of Lowerie, Tant, Foster, Pedigill & Payne, while pushing her son in a stroller near the Franklin Institute, Patricia Moffitt ran into Brewster

Cortland Payne II, whom she recognized as the heir apparent to Lowerie, Tant, Foster, Pedigill & Payne. She had been informed that Young Mr. Payne was not only the son of the presiding partner of the firm, but the grandson of one of the founding partners.

Despite this distinguished lineage, Brewster Cortland Payne II was obviously in waters beyond his depth outside the Franklin In-stitute. He was pushing a stroller, carrying a two-year-old boy, and leading a four-and-half-year-old girl on what looked like a dog har-ness and leash.

As Mrs. Moffitt and Mr. Payne exchanged brief greetings (she had twice typed letters for him) the girl announced somewhat self-righteously that "Foster has poo-pooed his pants and Daddy didn't bring a diaper."

Mrs. Moffitt took pity on Mr. Payne and took the boy into a rest room in the Franklin Institute and diapered him. When she re-turned, Mr. Payne told her, he was "rather much in the same situation as yourself, Mrs. Moffitt."

Specifically, he told her that Mrs. Brewster Cortland Payne II had died in a traffic accident eight months before, returning from their country place in the Poconos.

Three months after that, Mrs. Moffitt and Mr. Payne had shocked and/or enraged the Payne family, the Moffitt family, and assorted friends and relatives on both sides by driving themselves and their children to Bethesda, Maryland, on Friday after work and getting married.

Six months after their marriage, Brewster had adopted Patricia's son, in the process changing Matthew Mark Moffitt's name to Payne.

When, the day after Captain Dutch Moffitt had been laid to rest in the cemetery of St. Monica's Roman Catholic Church, Matt Payne had joined the Philadelphia Police Department, Brewster Payne did not have to hear the professional psychiatric opinion of his daughter, Amelia Payne, M.D., that Matt had done so to prove that he was a man, to overcome the psychological castration of his rejection by the Marines. He had figured that out himself.

And so had Chief Inspector Dennis V. Coughlin of the Philadel-phia Police Department. Denny Coughlin had been Sergeant John X. Moffitt's best friend, and over the years had become quite close to Brewster Payne, as they dealt with the problem of Mother Moffitt, Matt's grandmother, a bellicose

German-Irish woman who sincerely believed that Brewster Cortland Payne II would burn in hell for se-ducing her son's widow into abandoning Holy Mother Church for Protestantism, and raising her grandson as a heathen.

Over more whiskey than was probably good for them in the bar at the Union League, Denny Coughlin and Brewster Payne had agreed that Matt's idea that he wanted to be cop was understandable, but once he found out how things were, he would come to his senses. A couple of weeks, no more than a month, in the Police Academy would open his eyes to what he had let himself in for, and he would resign.

Matt did not resign. On his graduation, Denny Coughlin used his influence to have him assigned to clerical duties in the newly formed Special Operations Division. He had knocked on Patricia Moffitt's door to tell her that her husband had been killed in the line of duty. He had no intention of knocking on Patricia M. Payne's door to tell her her son had been killed.

He had explained the situation to the commanding officer of the Special Operations Division, Staff Inspector Peter Wohl. Coughlin believed, with some reason, that Peter Wohl was the smartest cop in the Department. Peter Wohl had been a homicide detective, the youngest sergeant ever in Highway Patrol, and had been the youn-gest ever staff inspector working in Internal Affairs when the mayor had set up Special Operations and put him in charge. Wohl's father was Chief Inspector Augustus Wohl, retired, for whom both Denny Coughlin and Jerry Carlucci had worked early on in their careers.

Peter Wohl understood the situation even better than Denny Coughlin thought. He understood that Matt Payne was the son Denny Coughlin had never had. And his father had told him that Denny Coughlin had been waiting a suitable period of time before proposing marriage to John X. Moffitt's widow when she surprised everybody by marrying the Main Line lawyer.

Inspector Wohl decided it would pose no major problem to keep Officer Matthew M. Payne gainfully, and safely, employed shuf-fling paper until the kid came to his senses, resigned, and went to law school, where he belonged.

That hadn't worked out as planned, either. Ninety-five percent of police officers complete their careers without ever once having drawn and fired their service revolver in anger. In the nineteen months Officer Payne had been assigned to Special Operations, he had shot to death two armed felons.

Both incidents, certainly, were unusual happenstances. In the first, Wohl had loaned Young Payne to veteran Homicide detective Jason Washington as a gofer. Washington was working the Northwest Philadelphia serial rapist job, where a looney tune who had started out assaulting women in their

apartments had graduated to carrying them off in his van and then cutting various portions of their bodies off. Washington needed someone to make telephone calls for him, run errands, do whatever was necessary to free his time and mind to run the rapist/murderer down.

Officer Payne had been involved in nothing more adventurous, or life-threatening, than reporting to Inspector Wohl that Detective Washington had secured plaster casts of the doer's van's tires, and that he had just delivered said casts to the Forensic Laboratory when he happened upon the van. The very first time that Officer Payne had ever identified himself to a member of the public as a police officer, the citizen he attempted to speak with had tried to run him over with his van.

Payne emptied his revolver at the van, and one bullet had en-tered the cranial cavity of his assailant, causing his instant death. In the back of the van, under a canvas tarpaulin, was his next intended victim, naked, gagged, and tied up with lamp cord.

The second incident occurred during the early morning roundup of a group of armed robbers who elected to call themselves the Is-lamic Liberation Army. Officer Payne's intended role in this opera-tion was to accompany Mr. Mickey O'Hara, a police reporter for the Philadelphia *Bulletin*. His orders were to deter Mr. O'Hara, by sitting on him if necessary, from entering the premises until the person to be arrested was safely in the custody of Homicide detec-tives and officers of the Special Operations Division.

The person whom it was intended to arrest quietly somehow learned what was going on, suddenly appeared in the alley where Officer Payne was waiting with Mr. O'Hara for the arrest to be completed, and started shooting. One of his .45 ACP caliber bullets ricocheted off a brick wall before striking Officer Payne in the leg, and another caused brick splinters to open Officer Payne's fore-head and make it bleed profusely. Despite his wounds, Payne got his pistol in action and got off five shots at this assailant, two of which hit him and caused fatal wounds.

The circumstances didn't matter. What mattered was that Payne had blown the serial murderer/rapist's brains all over the wind-shield of his van, thus saving a naked woman from being raped and dismembered, and that he had been photographed by Mr. O'Hara as he stood, blood streaming down his face, over the scumbag who had opened fire on him with his .45 and lost the shootout.

Denny Coughlin had been spared having to tell Patricia Moffitt Payne that her son had just been shot in the line of duty only be-cause Brewster Payne had answered the phone.

There had been another long conversation over a good many drinks in the Union League between

Denny Coughlin and Brew-ster C. Payne about the results of the most recent examination for promotion to detective. There had been no way that Officer Payne, who had the requisite time on the job, could be kept from taking the examination. And neither Chief Coughlin nor Mr. Payne doubted he would pass.

It was obvious to both of them that Matt was not going to resign from the Department. And within a matter of a month or so, per-haps within a couple of weeks, he would be promoted to detective. He had never issued a traffic ticket, been called upon to settle a do-mestic dispute, manned the barricades against an assault by brick-throwing citizens exercising their constitutional right to peaceably demonstrate against whatever governmental outrage it was cur-rently chic to oppose, worked a sector car, or done any of the things that normally a rookie cop would do in his first couple of years on the job.

"The East Detective captain is a friend of mine, Brewster," Denny Coughlin said, finally. "I think Personnel will send Matt there. He'll have a chance to work with some good people, really learn the trade. He needs the experience, and they'll keep an eye out for him."

Brewster Payne knew Denny Coughlin well enough to under-stand that if he said he thought Personnel would send Matt some-where, it was already arranged, and with the understanding that Chief Inspector Dennis V. Coughlin would be keeping an eye on the people keeping an eye on Matt.

"Thank you, Denny," Brewster Cortland Payne II had said.

When Matt drove the Bug into the parking garage beneath the Delaware Valley Cancer Building (and the buildings to the right and left of it) he found that someone was in his reserved parking spot. Ordinarily, this would have caused him to use foul language, but he recognized the Cadillac Fleetwood. He knew it was regis-tered to Brewster C. Payne, Providence Road, Wallingford.

When he had moved into the apartment, his father had told him that he had reserved two parking spaces in the underground garage for the resident of the attic apartment, primarily as a token of his af-fection, of course, and only incidentally because it would also pro-vide a parking space for his mother, or other family members, when they had business around Rittenhouse Square.

Until three weeks before it had never posed a problem, because Matt had kept only one car in the garage. Not the battered twelve-year-old Volkswagen Beetle he was now driving, but a glistening,

year-old, silver Porsche 911. It had been his graduation present from his father. From the time he had been given the Porsche, the Bug—which had also been a present from his father, six years before, when he had gotten his driver's license—had sat, rotted actually, in the garage in Wallingford. He had for some reason been reluctant to sell it.

Three weeks before, as he sat taking his promotion physical, he had realized that not selling it had been one of the few wise deci-sions he had made in his lifetime.

One of the dumber things he had ever done, when assigned to Special Operations out of the Police Academy, was to drive to work in the Porsche. It had immediately identified him as the rich kid from the Main Line who was playing at being a cop. He would not make that same mistake when reporting to East Detectives as a rookie detective.

The battery had been dead, understandably, when he rode out to Wallingford with his father to claim the car, but once he'd put the charger on it, it had jumped to life. He'd changed the oil, replaced two tires, and the Bug was ready to provide sensible, appropriate transportation for him back and forth to work.

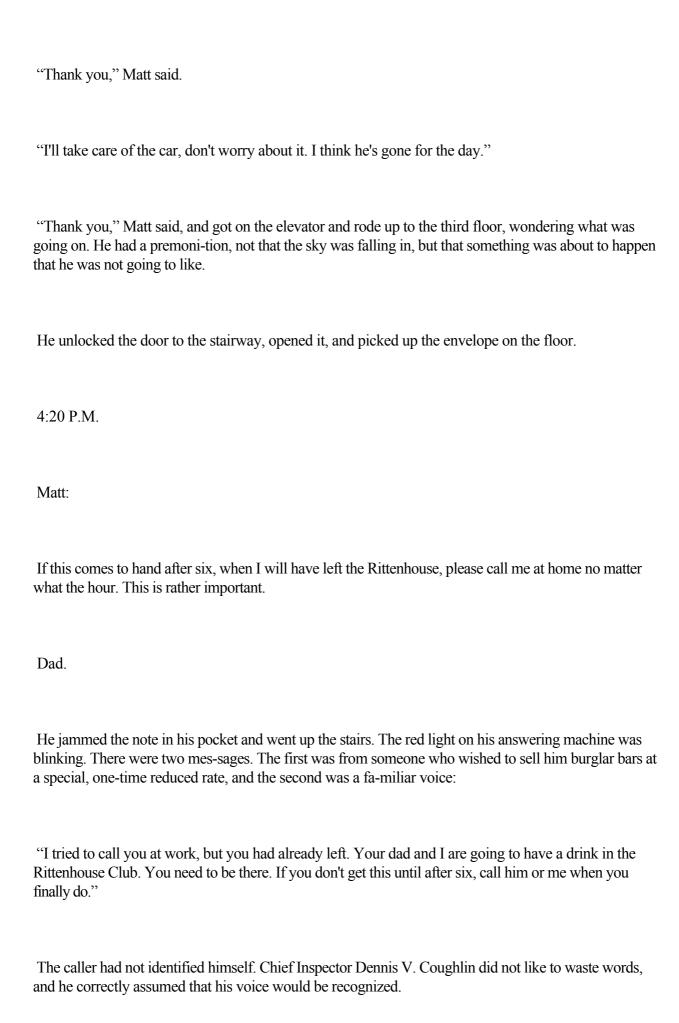
The Porsche was sitting in the parking spot closest to the eleva-tor, beside the Cadillac, which meant that he had no place to park the Bug, since his mother had chosen to exercise her right to the "extra" parking space. He was sure it was his mother, because his father commuted to Philadelphia by train.

There were several empty parking spaces, and after a moment's indecision, he pulled the Bug into the one reserved for the execu-tive director. With a little bit of luck, Matt reasoned, that gentleman would have exercised his right to quit for the day whenever he wanted to, and would no longer require his space.

He walked up the stairs to the first floor, however, found the rent-a-cop, and handed him the keys to the Bug.

"I had to park my Bug in the executive director's slot; my moth-er's in mine."

"Your father" the rent-a-cop said. He was a retired police offi-cer. "He said if I saw you, to tell you he wants to see you. He'll be in the Rittenhouse Club until six. I stuck a note under your door."





Matt hung up, looked at his watch, and then quickly left his apartment.

Matt walked up the stairs of the Rittenhouse Club, pushed open the heavy door, and went into the foyer He looked up at the board behind the porter's counter, on which the names of all the members were listed, together with a sliding indicator that told whether or not they were in the club.
"Your father's in the lounge, Mr. Payne," the porter said to him.
"Thank you," Matt said.
Brewster Cortland Payne II, a tall, angular, distinguished-looking man who was actually far wittier than his appearance sug-gested, saw him the moment he entered the lounge and raised his hand. Chief Inspector Dennis V. Coughlin, a heavyset, ruddy-faced man in a well-fitting pin-striped suit, turned to look, and then smiled. They were sitting in rather small leather-upholstered arm-chairs between which sa a small table. There were squat whiskey glasses, small glass water pitchers, a silver bowl full of mixed nuts, and a battered, but well-shined, brass ashtray with a box of wooden matches in a holder on it on the table.
"Good," Brewster Payne said, smiling and rising from his chair to touch Matt softly and affectionately or the arm. "We caught you."
"Dad. Uncle Denny."
"Matty, I tried to call you at East Detectives," Coughlin said, sit-ting back down. "You had already gone."

"I left at five after four, Uncle Denny. The City got their full measure of my flesh for their day's pay."

An elderly waiter in a white jacket appeared.

"Denny's drinking Irish and the power of suggestion got to me," Brewster Payne said. "But have what you'd like."
"Irish is fine with me."
"All around, please, Philip," Brewster Payne said.
I have just had a premonition: I am not going to like whatever is going to happen. Whatever this is all about, it isnot "let's call Good Ol' Matt and buy him a drink at the Rittenhouse Club."
THREE
"Are we celebrating something, or is this boys' night out?" Matt asked.
Coughlin chuckled.
"Well, more or less, we're celebrating something," Brewster Payne said. "Penny's coming home."
"Is she really?" Matt said, and the moment the words were out of his mouth, he realized that not only had he been making noise, rather than responding, but that his disinterest had not only been apparent to his father, but had annoyed him, perhaps hurt him, as well.
Penny was Miss Penelope Alice Detweiler of Chestnut Hill. Matt now recalled hearing from someone, probably his sister Amy, that she had been moved from The Institute of Living, a psychiatric hospital in

Connecticut, to another funny farm out west some-where. Arizona, Nevada, someplace like that.

Matt had known Penny Detweiler all his life. Penny's father and his had been schoolmates at Episcopal Academy and Princeton, and one of the major—almost certainly the most lucrative—clients of Mawson, Payne, Stockton, McAdoo & Lester, his father's law firm, was Nesfoods International, Philadelphia's largest employer, H. Richard Detweiler, president and chief executive officer.

After a somewhat pained silence, Brewster Payne said, "I was under the impression that you were fond of Penny."

"I am," Matt said quickly.

I'm not at all sure that's true. I am not, now that I think about it, at allfond of Penny. She's just been around forever, like the walls. I've never even thought of her as a girl, really.

He corrected himself: There was that incident when we were four or five when I talked her into showing me hers and her mother caught us at it, and had hysterically shrieked at me that I was a filthy little boy, an opinion of me I strongly suspect she still holds.

Butfond?No. The cold truth is that I now regard Precious Penny (to use her father's somewhat nauseating appellation) very much as I would regard a run-over dog. I am dismayed and re-pelled by what she did.

"You certainly managed to conceal your joy at the news they feel she can leave The Lindens."

The Lindens, Matt recalled, is the name of the new funny farm. And it's in Nevada, not Arizona. She's been there what? Five months? Six?

There was another of what Matt thought of as "Dad's Significant Silences." He dreaded them. His father did not correct or chastise him. He just looked at the worm before him until the worm, squirming, figured out himself the error, or the bad manners, he had just manifested to God and Brewster Cortland Payne II.

Finally, Brewster Payne went on: "According to Amy, and ac-cording to the people at The Lindens, the problem of her physical addiction to narcotics is pretty much under control."

Matt kept his mouth shut, but in looking away from his father, to keep him from seeing Matt's reaction to that on his face, Matt found himself looking at Dennis V. Coughlin, who just perceptibly shook his head. The meaning was clear: You and I don't believe that, we know that no more than one junkie in fifty ever gets the problem under control, but this is not the time or place to say so.

"I'm really glad to hear that," Matt said.

"Which is not to say that her problems are over," Brewster Payne went on. "There is specifically the problem of the notoriety that went with this whole unfortunate business."

The newspapers in Philadelphia, in the correct belief that their readers would be interested, indeed, fascinated, had reported in great detail that the good-looking blonde who had been wounded when her boyfriend—a gentleman named Anthony J. "Tony the Zee" DeZego, whom it was alleged had connections to organized crime—had been assassinated in a downtown parking garage was none other than Miss Penelope Detweiler, only child of the Chest-nut Hill/Nesfoods International Detweilers.

"That's yesterday's news," Matt said. "That was seven months ago."

"Dick Detweiler doesn't think so," Brewster Payne said. "That's where this whole thing started."

"Excuse me?"

"Dick Detweiler didn't want Penny to get off the airliner and find herself facing a mob of reporters shoving cameras in her face."

"Why doesn't he send the company airplane after her?" Matt wondered aloud. "Have it land at Northeast Philadelphia?"



"No. Absolu	ately not!"
"for these brother"	reasons," Brewster Payne went on, ignoring him. "For one thing, Penny thinks of you as he
	of me as the guy who pinned the tail on her," Matt said. "If it weren't for me, no one would she's a junkie."
	that term, either, Matt, but that's Amy's point. If you appear out there, in a nonjudgmental riend, wel-coming her back to her life"
her brother. 1	eve you're going along with this," Matt said. "For one thing, Penny does not think of me as I'm just a guy she's known for a long time who betrayed her, turned her in. If I had been t there for six months in that funny farm, I would really hate me."
in her counse	Amy, and the people at The Lindens, feel that Penny is ready to resume her life is because, eling, they have caused her to see things as they really are. To see you, specifically, as o was trying to help, not hurt her."
I just don't b	elieve this bullshit, and I especially don't believe my dad going along with it.
"Dad, this is	so much bullshit."
"Amy said t	hat would probably be your reaction," Brewster Payne said. "I can see she was right."
	's a moot point. I couldn't go out there if I wanted to," Matt said. "Uncle Denny, tell him that I up my sergeant and tell him that I won't be in for a couple of days"
"I'm disappo two together	sinted in you, Matty," Chief Coughlin said. "I thought by now you would have put two and."



"Presumably. And return the next morning."

Shortly afterward, after having concluded their business with Detective Payne, Chief Coughlin and Brewster C. Payne went their respective ways.
Matt spent the balance of the evening in McGee's Saloon, in the company of Detective Charley McFadden of Northwest Detec-tives.
Perhaps naturally, their conversation dealt with their profes-sional duties. Detective McFadden, who had been seven places below Matt on the detective examination listing, told Matt what he was doing in Northwest Detectives,
Charley had been an undercover Narc right out of the Police Academy, before he'd gone to Special Operations where he and Matt had become friends. On his very first assignment as a rookie detective, he found that his lieutenant was a supervisor (then a ser-geant) he'd worked under in Narcotics, and who treated him like a detective, not a rookie detective. His interesting case of the day had been the investigation of a shooting of a numbers runner by a client who felt that he had cheated.
Matt had not felt that Detective McFadden would be thrilled to hear of his specialization in investigating recovered stolen automo-biles, and spared him a recounting. Neither had he been fascinated with Detective McFadden's report on the plans for his upcoming wedding, and the ritual litany of his intended's many virtues.

The result of this was that Matt had a lot to drink, and woke up with a hangover and just enough time to dress, throw some clothes in a bag, and catch a cab to the airport, but not to have any breakfast.

At the very last minute, specifically at 7:40A.M., as he handed his small suitcase to the attendant at the American Airlines counter, Detective Payne realized that he had, as either a Pavlovian reflex, or because

he was more than a little hung over, picked up his Chief's Special revolver and its holster from the mantelpiece and clipped it to his waistband before leaving his apartment.
Carrying a pistol aboard an airliner was in conflict with federal law, which prohibited any passenger, cop or not, to go armed ex-cept on official business, with written permission.
"Hold it, please," Officer Payne said to the counter attendant. She looked at him with annoyance, and then with wide-eyed inter-est as he took out his pistol, opened the cylinder, and ejected the cartridges.
"Sir, what are you doing?"
"Putting this in my suitcase," he said, and then added, when he saw the look on her face, "I'm a police officer."
That, to judge from the look on her face, was either an unsatis-factory reply, or one she was not willing to accept. He found his badge and photo ID and showed her that. She gave him a wan smile and quickly walked away. A moment later someone higher in the American Airlines hierarchy appeared.
"Sir, I understand you've placed a weapon in your luggage," he said.
"I'm a police officer," Matt said, and produced his ID again.
"We have to inspect the weapon to make sure it is unloaded," the American Airlines man said.
"I just unloaded it," Matt said, and offered the handful of car-tridges as proof.
"We do not permit passengers to possess ammunition in the pas-senger cabins of our aircraft," the American Airlines man said.

Matt opened the suitcase again, handed the Chief's Special to the man, who accepted it as if it were obviously soaked in leper suppuration, and finally handed it back. Matt returned it to the suit-case and dumped the cartridges in an interior pocket.

By then, the American Airlines man had a form for Matt to sign, swearing that the firearm he had in his luggage was unloaded. When he had signed it, the man from American Airlines affixed a red tag to the suitcase handle readingUNLOADED FIREARM.

If I were a thief, Detective Payne thought, and looking for some-thing to steal, I think I'd make my best shot at a suitcase advertising that it contained a gun. You can get a lot more from a fence for a gun than you can get for three sets of worn underwear.

"Thank you, sir," the man from American Airlines said. "Have a pleasant flight."

A stewardess squatted in the aisle beside him.

"May I get you something before we take off, sir?"

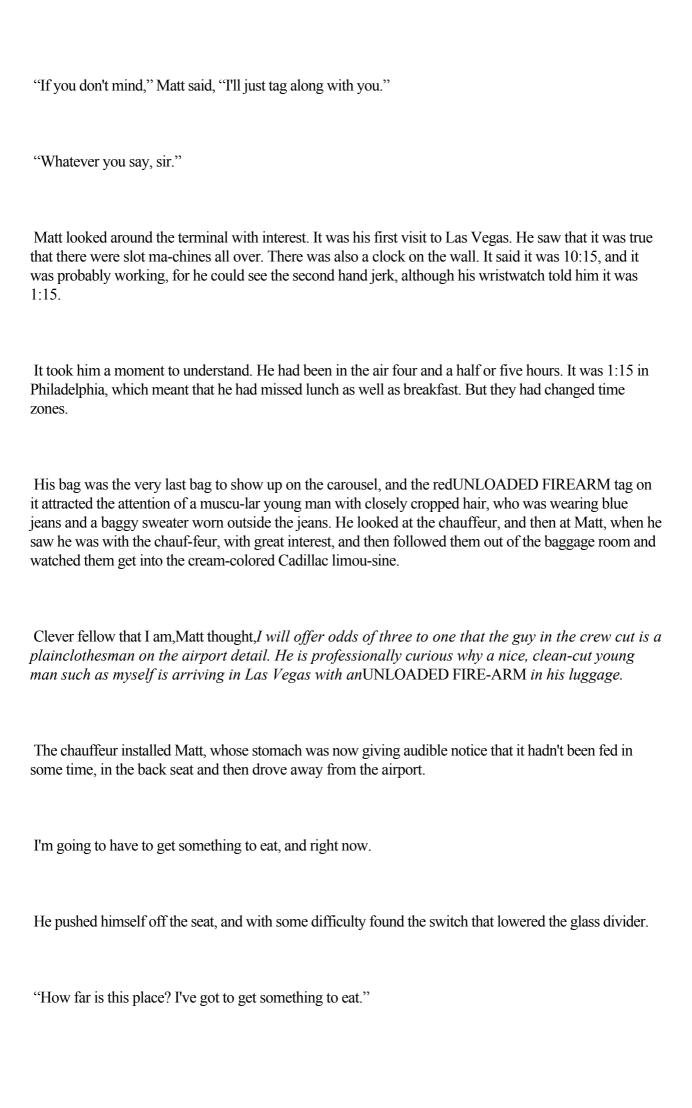
"How about a Bloody Mary?"

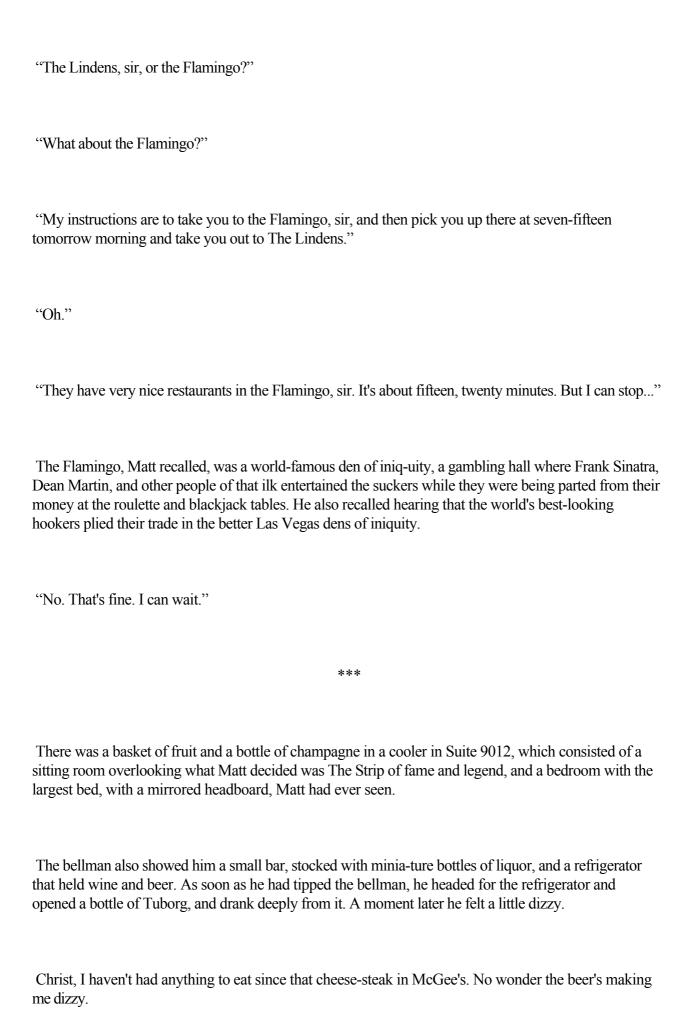
"Certainly, sir," she said, but managed to make it clear that any-one who needed a Bloody Mary at eight o'clock in the morning was at least an alcoholic, and most probably was going to cause trouble on the flight for the nice passengers in first class.

The Bloody Mary he had on the ground before they took off had made him feel a little better, and the Bloody Mary he had once they were in the air made him feel even better. It also helped him doze off. He became aware of this when a painful pressure in his ears woke him and alerted him to the fact that the airliner was making its descent to Las Vegas. The stewardess, obviously, had decided that someone who drank a Bloody Mary and a half at eight A.M., and then passed out, had no interest in breakfast.

Primarily to make sure that he still had it, he took the envelope containing the tickets from his pocket. There was something, a smaller, banknote-sized envelope, in the NESFOODS INTERNATIONAL Office of the President envelope he had not noticed be-fore.
He tore it open. There were five crisp one-hundred-dollar bills, obviously expense money, and a note:
Dear Matt:
I am not much good at saying "Thank You," but I want you to know that Grace and I will always have you in our hearts and in our prayers for your selfless, loving support of Penny in her troubles. Our family is truly blessed to have a friend like you.
Dick
"Oh, shit," Matt moaned.
"Please put your chair in the upright position and. fasten your seat belt," the stewardess said.

There was a man wearing a chauffeur's cap holding a sign forMR. PAYNE when Matt stepped out of the airway into the terminal.
"I'm Matt Payne."
"If you'll give me your baggage checks, Mr. Payne, I'll take care of the luggage. The car is parked just outside Baggage Claim. A cream Cadillac."





He ripped the cellophane off the basket of fruit and peeled a ba-nana. And noticed that there was an envelope in the basket.
Flamingo Hotel & Casino
Dear Mr. Payne:
Welcome to the Flamingo! It is always a pleasure to have a guest of Mr. Detweiler in the house.
A \$10,000 line of credit has been established for you. Should you wish to test Lady Luck at our tables, simply present yourself at the cashier's window and you will be allowed to draw chips up to that amount.
If there is any way I can help to make your stay more enjoyable, please call me.
Good luck!
James Crawford General Manager
It took Matt only a second or two to conclude that Mr. James Crawford had made a serious error. Dick and Grace Detweiler might feel themselves blessed to have a friend like him, and they might really have him in their prayers, but there was no way they were going to give him ten thousand dollars to gamble with.
Detweiler probably entertains major clients out here, and the general manager made the natural mistake of thinking I'm one of them, someone in a position to buy a trainload of tomato soup or fifty tons of canned chicken.

The possibilities boggle the mind, but what this nice, young, nongambling police officer is going to do is find someplace to eat and then come back up here and crap out in that polo-field-sized bed.

To get to the restaurant from the lobby, it was necessary to walk past what he estimated to be at least a thousand slot machines, fol-lowed by a formidable array of craps tables, blackjack tables, and roulette tables.

He felt rather naive. As far as gambling was concerned, he had lost his fair share, and then some, of money playing both blackjack and poker, but he really had no idea how one actually shot craps, and roulette looked like something you saw in an old movie, with men in dinner jackets and women in low-cut dresses betting the an-cestral estates in some Eastern European principality on where the ball would fall into the hole.

The restaurant surprised and pleased him. The menu was enor-mous. He broke his unintended fast with a filet mignon, hash-brown potatoes, two eggs sunny side up, and two glasses of milk. It was first rate, and it was surprisingly cheap.

He started to pay for it, but then decided to hell with it, and signed the bill with his room number.

Why should I spend my money when I'm out here doing an un-pleasant errand for Dick Detweiler?

He walked past the blackjack, craps, and roulette tables and was almost past the slot machines when he decided that it would really be foolish to have been out here in Las Vegas, in one of the most fa-mous gambling dens of them all, without having once played a slot machine.

He looked in his wallet and found that he had a single dollar bill and several twenties. There were also, he knew, two fifties, folded as small as possible, hidden in a recess of the wallet, against the possibility that some girl would get fresh and he would have to walk home.

He took one of the twenties and gave it to a young woman in a very short shirt who had a bus driver's

change machine strapped around her waist.

She handed him a short, squat stack of what looked like coins, but what, on examination, turned out to be one-dollar slugs.

He found a slot machine and dropped one of the slugs in and pulled the handle. He did this again seventeen times with no result, except that the oranges and lemons and cherries spun around. On the nineteenth pull, however, the machine made a noise he had not heard before, and then began noisily spitting out a stream of slugs into a sort of a shelf on the bottom of the machine.

"Jesus Christ!"

There were more slugs than he could hold in both hands. But the purpose of the waxed paper bucket he had noticed between his ma-chine and the next now became apparent. Successful gamblers such as himself put their winnings in them.

And wise successful gamblers such as myself know when to quit. I will take all these slugs—*Jesus, there must be two hundred of them*—*to the cashier and turn them in for real money.*

He didn't make it to the cashier's cage. His route took him past a roulette table, and he stopped to look. After a minute or two he de-cided that it wasn't quite as exotic or complicated as it looked in the movies about the Man Who Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo.

There were thirty-six numbers, plus 0 and 00, for a total of thirty-eight. The guy with the stick—the *croupier*, he recalled somewhat smugly—paid thirty-six to one if your number came up. Since there were thirty-eight numbers, that gave the house a one-in-nineteen advantage, roughly five percent.

That didn't seem too unfair. And in another minute or two he had figured out that you could make other bets, one through twelve, for example, or thirteen to twenty-four, or odd or even, or red or black, that gave you a greater chance of winning, but paid lower odds.

Since 0 and 00 were neither odd or even, and were green, rather than black or red, the house, Matt decided, got its five percent no matter how the suckers bet.

And he also decided that since he had already made the mental decision to throw twenty dollars away, so that he could say he had gambled in Las Vegas, there was no reason to change simply because the slot machine had paid off.
He would now be able to say, he thought, as he put five of the slot machine slugs on EVEN that he had lost his shirt at roulette. That sounded better than having lost his shirt at the slot machines.
Six came up.
The croupier looked at him.
"Pennies or nickels?"
What the hell does that mean?
"Nickels," Matt said.
The croupier took his slot machine slugs and laid two chips in their place.
Obviously, a "nickel" means that chip is the equivalent of five slot machine slugs.
Matt let his two-nickel bet ride. Twenty-six came up. The crou-pier added two chips to the two on the board. Matt decided it was time to quit, since he was ahead. He picked up the four chips, and felt rather wise when the ball fell into a slot marked with a seven.
He waited until the wheel had been spun again, odd again, and then placed another five slot machine slugs on the green felt, this time on One to Twelve.

Nine came up. The croupier took the slot machine slugs and re-placed them with three nickel chips.
"Sir, would you like me to exchange your coins for you?"
Obviously, it was for some reason impolite to play roulette with slot machine slugs.
"Please," Matt said, and pushed the waxed paper bucket to the croupier.
"All nickels?"
"Nickels and dimes," Matt said.
Two small stacks of chips were pushed across the table to him.

Matt yawned, and then again.
Jesus, what's the matter with me? I was just going to get some-thing to eat and then crap out. How long have I been doing this?
His watch said that it was quarter to six.
Time to quit.

He watched the ball circle the wheel and then bounce around the slots before finally dropping in one.
Obviously, it is time to quit. I have been betting on 00 every fourth or fifth bet since I have been here, and that's the first time I ever won.
As the croupier counted out chips to place beside the chip he had laid on 00, Matt said, "Quit when you're ahead, I always say."
"You want to cash in, sir?"
"Please," Matt said, and pushed the stacks of chips, nickels, dimes, and quarters in front of him to the croupier.
He wondered where the cashier kept the real money to cash him out. There was no money, no cash box, in sight.
The croupier put all the chips in neat little stacks, and then said "Cash out." A man in a suit who had been hovering around in the background came up behind the croupier, looked, nodded, wrote something on a clipboard, and then smiled at Matt.
The croupier pushed a stack of chips, including some oblong ones Matt hadn't noticed before, across the felt to him.
"What do I do with these?" he wondered aloud.
"Take them to the cashier, sir," the croupier said.
Matt reclaimed his waxed paper bucket, and as he dumped the chips into it, he recalled that the polite thing to do was tip the croup-ier. He pushed one of the oblong chips across the table to the croupier.

"Thank you very much, sir," the croupier said. It was the first time, Matt noticed, that he had sounded at all friendly.
He walked to the cashier's cage and pushed the waxed paper bucket through what looked like a bank teller's window to a gray-haired, middle-aged woman.
She put all the chips in neat little stacks and then counted to her-self, moving her lips. She looked at him.
"Would you like me to draw a check, sir?"
What the hell would I do with a check? I couldn't cash a check out here.
"I'd rather have the cash, if that would be all right."
The gray-haired woman took a stack of bills from a drawer and started counting them out. Matt was surprised to see that the bills were hundred-dollar bills, and then astonished to see how many of them she was counting out into thousand-dollar stacks. When she was finished there were four one-thousand-dollar stacks, one stack with six hundred-dollar bills in it, and a sixth stack with eighty-five dollars in it, four twenties and a five.
"Four thousand six hundred eighty-five," the gray-haired woman said.
"Thank you very much."
"Thankyou, sir."
I don't believe this.

Matt divided the money into two wads, put one in each pocket, and walked out of the casino.
watt divided the money into two wads, put one in each pocket, and walked out of the easilio.

The first thing Matt Payne experienced when he woke up was an-noyance. He had fallen asleep with his clothes on. And then he re-membered the money and sat up abruptly. It was still there on the bed. No longer in the one thick wad into which he had counted it, three or four times, but there.
He counted it again. \$4,685.
Jesus H. Christ!
He put the stack of bills in the drawer of the bedside table, then undressed and took a shower. He wrapped himself in a terry-cloth robe, went back into the bedroom, sat on the enormous bed, took the money from the bedside table, and counted it again.
Then he laid on the bed with his hands laced behind his head and thought about it.
The first thing he thought was that he was a natural-born gam-bler, that his quick mind gave him an edge over people who lost at roulette. He knew when to bet and when not to bet.
That's so much bullshit! You were just incredibly lucky, that's all. Dumb beginner's luck. Period. If you go back down there and try to do that again, you will lose very dime of that, plus the two fifties mad money.
The thing to do is put that money someplace safe and forget about it.

He figured that he might as well round it off, to forty-five hun-dred, keeping one hundred eight-five to play with, and then he changed that to rounding it off to four thousand even, which left him six hundred eight-five to play with, which meant lose.

He took out his toilet kit, and with some effort managed to cram forty hundred-dollar bills into the chrome soap dish.

He looked at his watch. It was quarter after three. That was Phil-adelphia time. It was only a little after midnight here, but it ex-plained why he was hungry again.

With his luck, the restaurants would be closed at this hour. He would be denied another meal.

That's not true. Withmyluck, the restaurant will not only be open, but the headwaiter will show me to my table with a flourish of trumpets.

The headwaiter made him wait for a table, as the restaurant was even more crowded at midnight, Las Vegas time, than it had been when he'd had lunch, or breakfast, or whatever meal that had been. He had a martini, a shrimp cocktail, and another filet mignon, and then went back to the casino.

He went to the same roulette table and gave the croupier one hundred eight-five dollars, specifying nickels, and promptly lost it all.

He moved away from the table and decided he would see if he could figure out how one bet at a craps table, as he had figured out how one bet at roulette.

There was a man at the head of the table rolling dice. He looked like a gambler, Matt decided. He had gold rings on both hands, and a long-collared shirt unbuttoned nearly to his navel, so as to display his hairy chest and a large gold medallion. And he had, one on each side of him, a pair of what Matt decided must be Las Vegas hookers of fame and legend.

Matt moved to what he hoped was an unobtrusive distance from the gambler and tried to figure out what was going on. Ten minutes later, the only thing he was fairly sure of was that the gambler was a fellow Philadelphian. The accent was unmistakable.

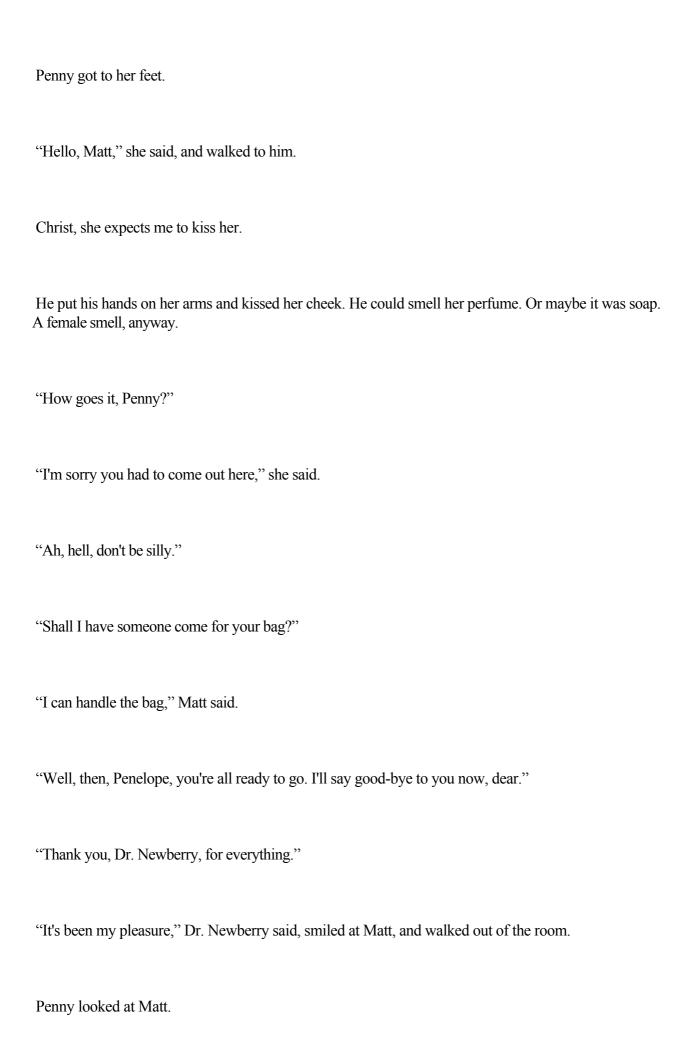


eyes. He had never been with a hooker.
Was this the time and place?
Get thee behind me, Satan! Back to the roulette table.

The Lindens was a forty-five-minute drive from the Flamingo. Matt was sorry that he had let himself be ushered into the back seat of the limousine. He certainly could have seen more of Las Vegas and the desert upfront than he could see from the back seat, through the deeply tinted windows.
But he had been more than a little groggy when he left the Fla-mingo. He had lost the seven hundred dollars he had walked away from the craps table with, gone to bed, woken up, and—absolute insanity—decided he could take a chance with another five hun-dred, and then had compounded that insanity by taking a thousand dollars, not five hundred, from the soap dish and going back to the casino with it.
When he'd finally left the table, at quarter past six, Las Vegas time, he had worked the thousand up to thirty-seven hundred. Since that obviously wouldn't fit into the soap dish, and he didn't want to have that much money in his pockets, or put it in the suit-case, he told the man in the cashier's cage to give him a check for his winnings.
By the time they had made out the check, and he'd taken another quick shower, they had called from the desk and told him his lim-ousine was waiting for him.
There was nothing he could see for miles around The Lindens, which turned out to be a rambling, vaguely Spanish-looking col-lection of connected buildings built on a barren mountainside. There was a private road, a mile and a half long, from a secondary highway.
There was no fence around the place. Probably, he decided, be-cause you would have to be out of your mind to try to walk away from The Lindens. There was nothing but desert.

In front of the main building, in an improbably lush patch of grass, were six trees. Lindens, he decided, as in Unter den Linden.
A hefty, middle-aged man in a blazer with retired cop written all over him saw him get out of the limousine and unlocked a double door as Matt walked up to it.
"Mr. Payne?"
"Right?"
"Dr. Newberry is expecting you, sir. Will you follow me, please?"
He locked the door again before he headed inside the building.
Dr. Newberry was a woman in a white coat who looked very much like the cashier in the Flamingo.
"You look very much like your sister," Dr. Newberry greeted him cordially. Matt did not think he should inform her that that must be a genetic anomaly, because he and Amy shared no genes. He nodded politely.
"It was very good of you to come out to be with Penelope on her trip home."
"Not at all."
"We believe, as I'm sure Dr. Payne has told you, that we've done all we can for Penelope here. We've talked her through her prob-lems, and of course, we believe that her physical addiction is under control."







"Fuck you, Matt!"
He wondered if she had used language like that before she had met Tony the Zee DeZego, or whether she had learned it from him.
She picked up her bag and marched out of her room. He fol-lowed her. The rent-a-cop in the blue blazer, who, Matt thought, probably had a title like director of Internal Security Services, was at the front door. He unlocked it.
"Good-bye, Miss Detweiler," he said. "Good luck."
Penny didn't reply.
Matt got in the back seat of the limousine with her.
"Well, so how was the food?"
"Fuck you, Matt," Penny said again.
FOUR
It is accepted almost as an article of faith by police officers as-signed to McCarran International Air

It is accepted almost as an article of faith by police officers as-signed to McCarran International Air Field, Las Vegas—which does not mean that it is true—that the decision to have a large number of plainclothes officers, as opposed to uniformed officers, patrolling the passenger terminal was based on the experience of a very senior Las Vegas police officer in the French Quarter of New Orleans, Louisiana.

The legend has it that the senior officer (three names are bandied about) was relaxing at a Bourbon Street bar after a hard day's work at the National Convention of the International Association of Chiefs of Police when an unshaven sleaze-ball in greasy jeans and leather vest approached him and very politely said, "Excuse me, sir, I believe this is yours."

He thereupon handed the senior police officer his wallet. (In some versions of the story, the sleaze-ball handed him his wallet, his ID folder, his wristwatch, and his diamond-studded Masonic ring.) It came out that the sleaze-ball was a plainclothes cop who had been watching the dip (pickpocket) ply his trade. (In some versions of the story, the dip was a stunning blond transvestite with whom the senior police officer had just been dancing.)

In any event, the senior police officer returned to Las Vegas with the notion, which he had the authority to turn into policy, that the way to protect the tourists moving through McCarran was the way the cops in New Orleans protected the tourists moving down Bour-bon Street, with plainclothes people.

They could, the senior police said, protect the public without giving the public the idea that Las Vegas was so crime-ridden a place that you needed police officers stationed every fifty yards along the way from the airway to the limo and taxi stands to keep the local critters from separating them from their worldly goods before the casino operators got a shot at them.

And so it came to pass that Officer Frank J. Oakes, an ex-paratrooper who had been on the job for almost six years, was standing on the sidewalk outside the American Airlines terminal in plainclothes when the white Cadillac limo pulled up. Oakes was wearing sports clothes and carrying a plastic bag bearing the logo-type of the Marina Motel & Casino. The bag held his walkie-talkie.

The white Cadillac limo attracted his attention. Even before he took a look at the license plate to make sure, he was sure that it was a*real* limo, as he thought of it, as opposed to one of the livery limos, or one operated by one of the casinos to make the high roll-ers feel good. For one thing, it wasn't beat up. For another, it did not have a TV antenna on the trunk. Most important, it wasn't a stretch limo, large enough to transport all of a rock-and-roll band and their lady friends. It looked to him like a real, rich people's pri-vate limo, an analysis that seemed to be confirmed when the chauffeur got out wearing a neat suit and white shirt and chauffeur's cap and quickly walked around the front to open the curbside door.

The first person to get out was a female Caucasian, early twen-ties, five feet three, 115 pounds. She wore her shoulder-length blond hair parted in the middle, a light blue linen skirt, a pullover sweater, and a jacket-type sweater unbuttoned. There was a single strand of pearls around her neck. She did not have a spectacular breastworks, but Officer Oakes found her hips and tail attractive.

A male Caucasian, early twenties, maybe 165, right at six feet, followed her out of the limo. He was wearing a tweed coat, a tieless white shirt, gray flannel slacks, and loafers. Oakes thought that the two of them sort of fit the limo, that something about them smelled of money and position.

The chauffeur took a couple of bags from the limo trunk and handed them to the American Airlines guy. Then he went to the young guy, who handed him the tickets. Then the young guy looked at Officer Oakes, first casually, then gave him a closer look. Then he smiled and winked.

It was ten to one that he wasn't a fag, so the only thing that was left was that he had made Oakes as a cop. Oakes didn't like to be made, and he wondered how this guy had made him.

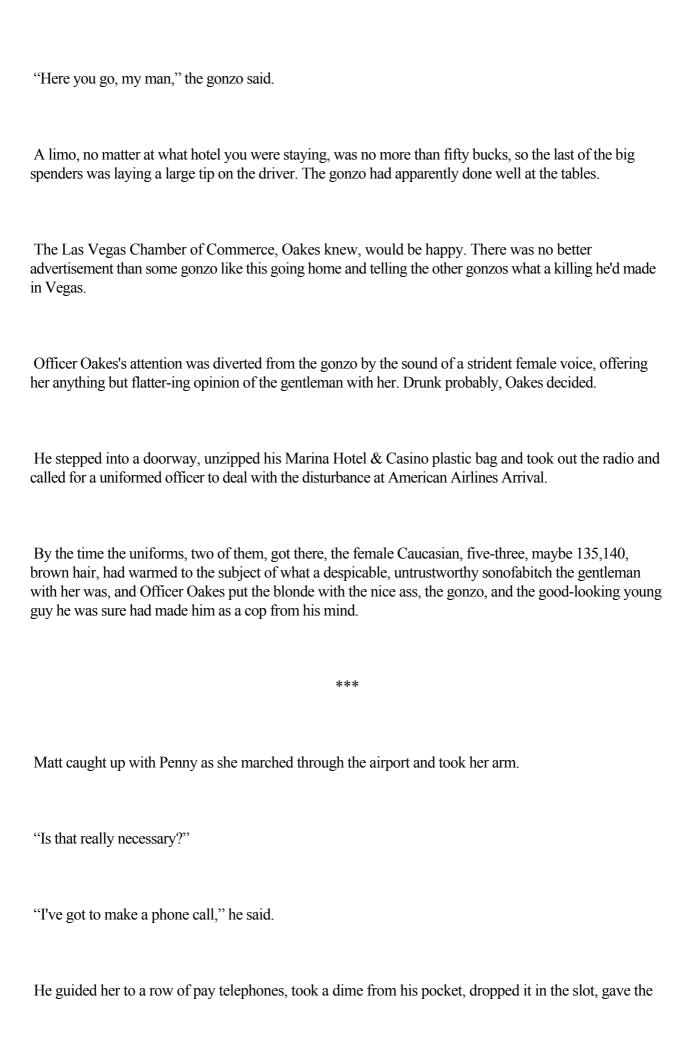
The chauffeur got the tickets back from the American Airlines guy, handed them to the young guy, and then tipped his hat. The blonde went to the chauffeur and smiled at him and shook his hand. No tip, which confirmed Oakes's belief that it was a private limo.

The chauffeur got behind the wheel and drove off. The blonde and the well-dressed young guy walked into the terminal. The more he thought about it, Oakes was sure that he was right. The guy had made him as a cop on the job.

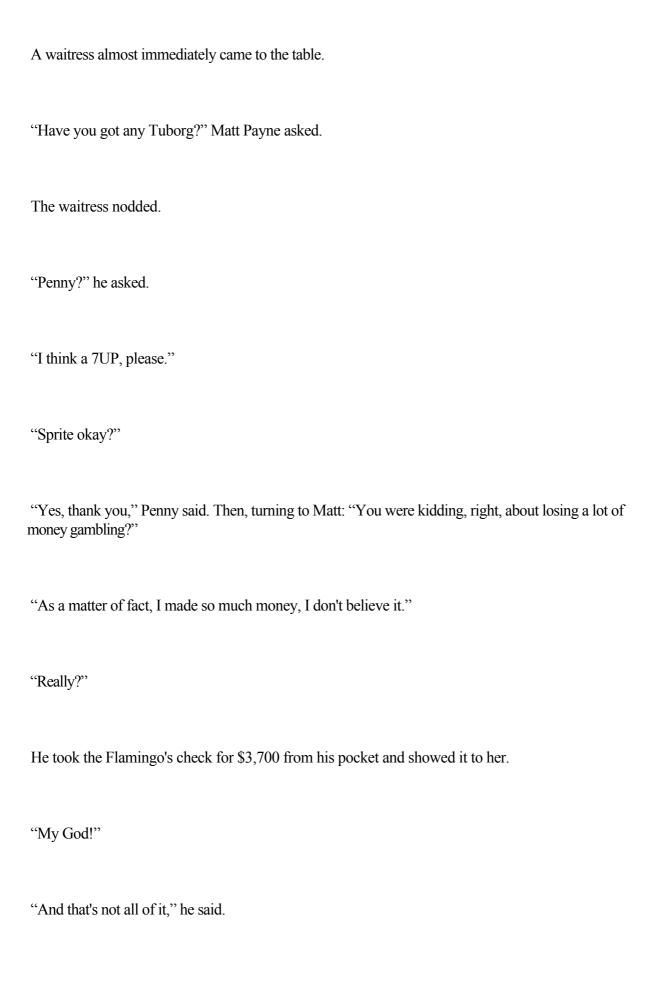
Another limo, this one a sort of pink-colored livery limo that looked like it was maybe five thousand miles away from the sal-vage yard, pulled into the space left by the real limo.

A real gonzo got out of it, a white male Caucasian in his late twenties or early thirties, maybe five-ten and 170, swarthy skin with facial scars, probably acne. He was wearing a maroon shirt with long collar points, unbuttoned halfway down to expose his hairy chest and a gold chain with some kind of medal. He had on a pair of yellow pants and white patent-leather loafers with a chain across the instep. He had a gold wristwatch and a diamond ring on one hand, and a couple of gold bracelets around the wrist of the other.

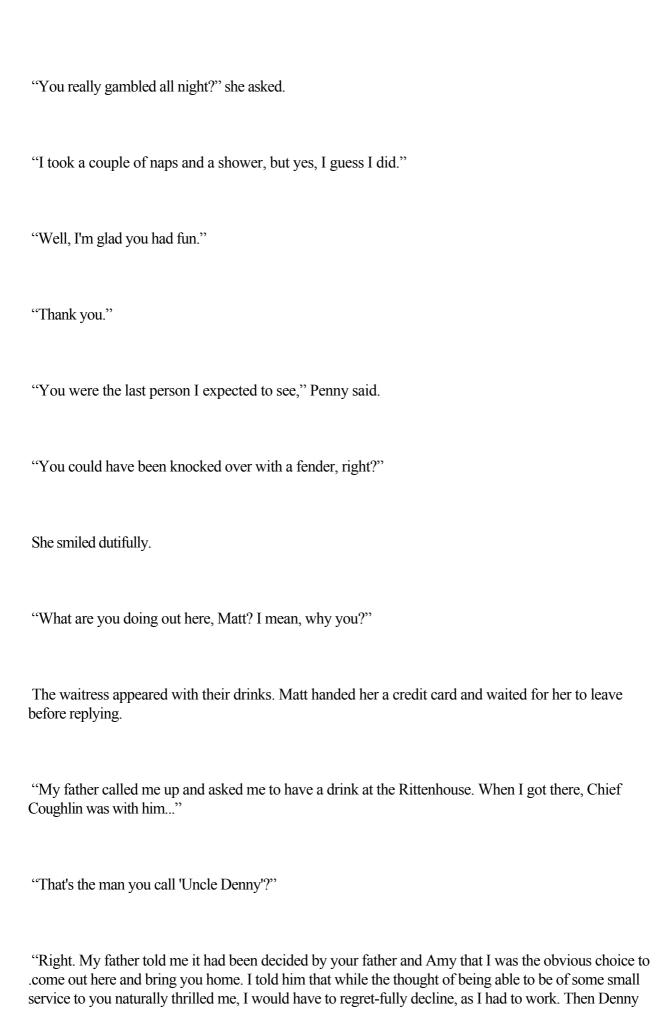
He got out and looked around as if he had just bought the place, made a big deal of checking the time, so everybody would see the gold watch, and then waited for the limo driver to get his bags from the trunk. Cheap luggage. He waited until the guy had carried his bags to the American Airlines counter, then pulled out a thick wad of bills, hundreds outside, and then counted out four twenties.





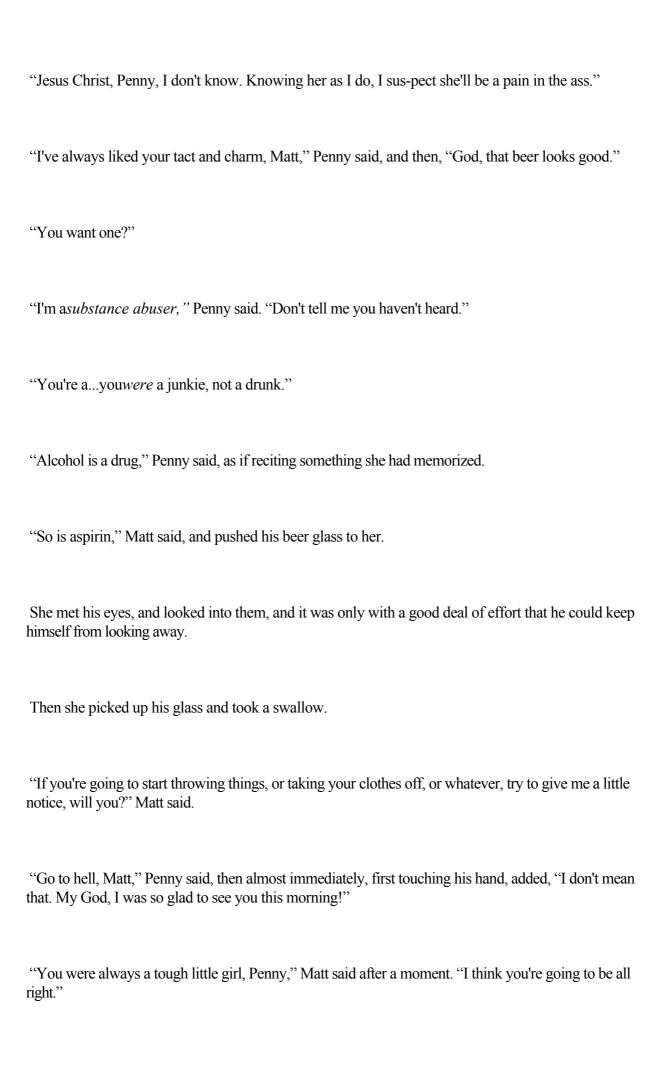






Coughlin told me your father had talked to the mayor, and that was no problem. So here I am."
"You're still a" Penny asked, stopped just in time from say-ing "cop," and finished, "policeman?"
"No, Precious Penny," Matt said. "I am no longer a simple po-lice officer. You have the great privilege of sitting here with one of Philadelphia's newest detectives. M. M. Payne, East Detective Di-vision, at your service, ma'am. Just the facts, please."
She smiled dutifully again.
He smiled back and took a healthy swallow of his beer.
Matt Payne felt nowhere near as bright and clever as he was try-ing to appear. As a matter of fact, he could recall few times in his twenty-two years when he had been more uncomfortable.
"Then congratulations, Matt," Penny said.
"Thank you, ma'am," he said.
"But that doesn't answer why you? Out here, I mean?"
"I think the idea, I think <i>Amy's</i> idea, is that I am the best person to be with you as you begin your passage back into the real world. Amy, I hope you know, is calling the shots."
"She's been coming out here," Penny said.
"Yeah, I know," Payne said. "For whatever the hell it's worth, Penny, even if she is my sister, the word on the street is that she's a pretty good shrink."









"Mobster. There's a difference. He was a low-level mobster. We can't even find out why they hit him."
"And the people who did it? They're just going to get away with it?"
He looked at her for a long moment before deciding to answer her.
"The bodies of two people with reputations as hit men, almost certainly the people who hit your boyfriend, have turned up, one in Detroit and one in Chicago. The mob doesn't like it when innocent civilians, especially rich ones with powerful fathers like you, get hurt when they're hitting people."
"They're dead?" she asked.
He nodded.
"Good!"
Something between contempt and pity flashed in Matt's eyes. He stood up and looked around impatiently for the waitress. When she came to the table, he quickly signed the bill and reclaimed his credit card.
"I haven't finished my beer," Penny said coldly.
"You can have another on the airplane," he said, as coldly. "Let's go."
"Yes, sir, Mr. Detective, sir," Penny said. The waitress gave the both of them a confused look.

"You're in luck, Mr. Lanza," the not-too-bad-looking ticket clerk at the American counter said. "This is the last first-class seat on 6766."

"When you're on a roll, you're on a roll," Vito Joseph Lanza said with a smile. He pulled the wad of bills with the hundreds on the out-side from the side pocket of his yellow slacks, flicked it open, and waited for her to tell him how much it was going to cost him to up-grade the return portion of his thirty-days-in-advance, tourist-class, round-trip ticket to first class. Then he counted out what she told him.

She made change, handed him the upgraded ticket and a board-ing pass, and said, "Gate 28. They're probably just about to board. Thank you, Mr. Lanza."

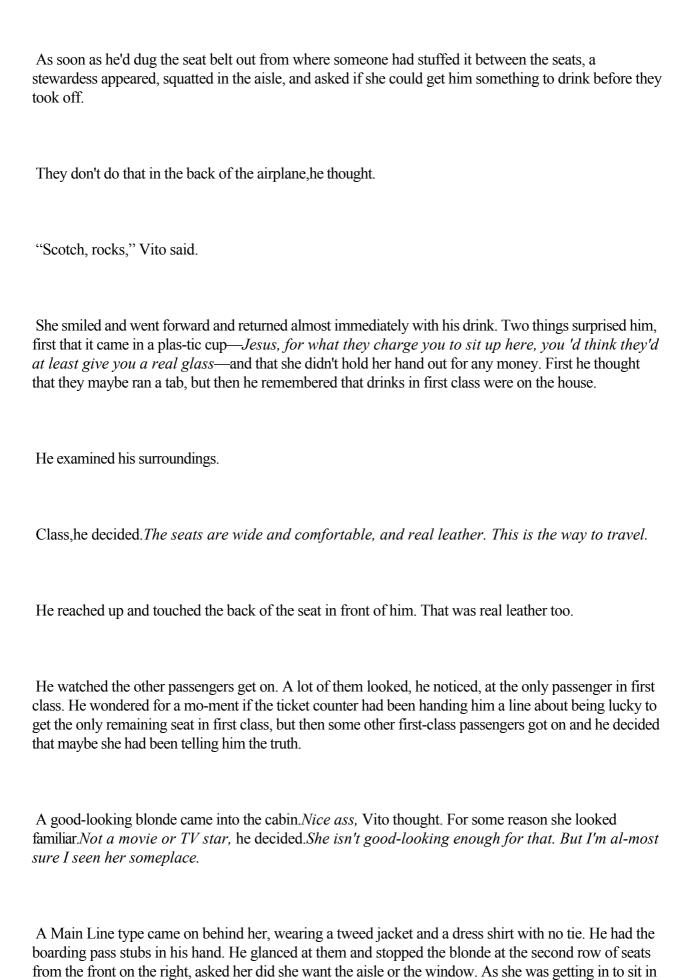
"Yeah. Right. Sure," Vito said, stuffed the wad back in his trou-sers, and looked around for directions to Gate 28.

They were not yet boarding Flight 6766, non-stop service to Philadelphia, when he reached Gate 28. He leaned against the wall and lit a Pall Mall with the gold Dunhill lighter he'd bought in the casino gift shop just before going to bed about three that morning.

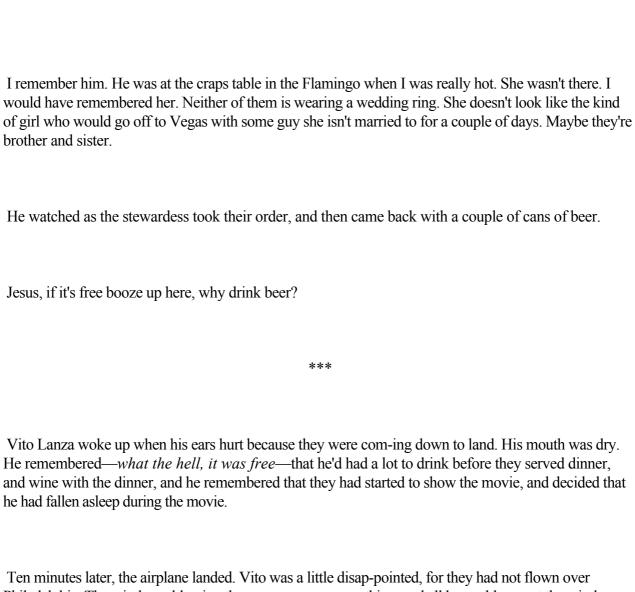
I probably could have picked up another couple of grand, if I'd have stuck around, he thought, but the cards had started to run against me, and the one thing a good gambler has to know is when to quit. I certainly wouldn't have lost it all back, but I would probably have lost some, and quitting the way I did, I sort of have the Dunhill to show for quitting when that was the smart thing to do.

He had taken only a couple of puffs when the ticket lady got on the loudspeaker and announced that they were preboarding. Women with small children, people who needed assistance in boarding, and of course passengers holding first-class tickets, who could board at their leisure.

Vito had to wait until a couple of old people on canes and what looked like a real Indian-Indian lady with three kids got on, but he was the first passenger in the first-class cabin. He checked his boarding pass, and then found his seat, on the aisle, on the left, right against the bulkhead that separated the first-class compart-ment from the tourist-class section.



the window seat, the young guy looked around the cabin and smiled and nodded at Vito.



Ten minutes later, the airplane landed. Vito was a little disap-pointed, for they had not flown over Philadelphia. The wind was blowing the wrong way or something, and all he could see out the window was Delaware and the oil refineries around Chester.

When they finally taxied up to the terminal building, Vito looked out the window and saw something that caught his attention. There was an Airport Unit Jeep and a limousine and what looked like an unmarked detective's car sitting down there, with the baggage carts and the other airport equipment.

What the hell is that all about?

"Ladies and gentlemen," the stewardess said over the public ad-dress system, "the captain has not yet turned off the FASTEN SEAT BELTS sign. Please remain in your seats until he does."

When the stewardess finally got the door open, a stocky, red-faced man wearing the uniform of a

lieutenant of the Philadelphia Police Department stepped into the cabin and looked around. Vito knew who he was, Lieutenant Paul Ardell of the Airport Unit.

Ardell looked around the first-class cabin, did a double take when he saw Vito, and then looked down at the Main Line type in the second row. He said something to him—Vito couldn't hear what—and the Main Line type got up, backed up a little in the aisle to let the blonde with the nice ass out, and then they both followed Ardell out the door.

A moment later Vito saw the two of them walking toward the limousine. The door opened and a gray-haired guy got out and put his arms around the blonde and hugged her. Then she got into the limousine and the gray-haired guy shook the Main Line type's hand and then gave him a little hug.

The Main Line type then walked out of Vito's sight, under the airplane. Vito guessed, correctly, that he was going to intercept their luggage before it got from the airplane to the baggage con-veyor, but he didn't get to see this. TheFASTEN SEAT BELTS sign went off, and the stewardess gave her little speech about how happy American Airlines was that they had chosen American, and hoped they would do so again in the future, and people started getting off.

Joe Marchessi, and the new guy, the little Spic, was working the baggage claim room when Vito got there. Until somebody who transferred into the Airport Unit got to know his way around, they paired him with somebody with experience.

The Airport Unit was different. In other areas you could move a cop from one district to another, and just about put him right to work. But things were different at the Airport; it was a whole new ballgame. You had to learn what to look for, and what you looked for at the Airport was not what you looked for in an ordinary dis-trict.

Airport Unit cops were something special. For one thing, they were sworn in as officers both in Philadelphia and Tinnicum Town-ship, which is in Delaware County. Some parts of the runways and their approaches are in Tinnicum Township, and they need the au-thority to operate there too.

The mob, over the years, had found the Tinnicum Marshes a good place to dump bodies. But aside from that, there was not much violent crime at the Airport.

Most of what you had to deal with was people stealing luggage, and they were most often professional thieves, not some kid who saw something he decided he could get away with stealing and stole it. Or keeping thieves, professional and amateur, from helping themselves to the air freight in "Cargo City."

Then there was smuggling, but that was handled by the feds, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and the Customs Service, and sometimes the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, and they usually made the arrest, and all the Airport Unit had to do was arrange for the prisoners to be transported.

All things considered, working the job in the Airport Unit was a pretty good job. Most of the time you got to stay inside the termi-nal, instead of either freezing your balls or getting a heat stroke outside.

Vito didn't think much of Marchessi: He had been on the job ten, twelve years, never even thought about taking the examination for corporal or detective and bettering himself, just wanted to put in his eight hours a day doing as little as possible, inside where it was warm, until he was old enough to retire and get a job as a rent-a-cop or something.

And Officer Marchessi did not, in Vito's opinion, treat him with the respect to which he was entitled as a corporal.

Vito walked up to them. "Whaddaya say, Marchessi?"

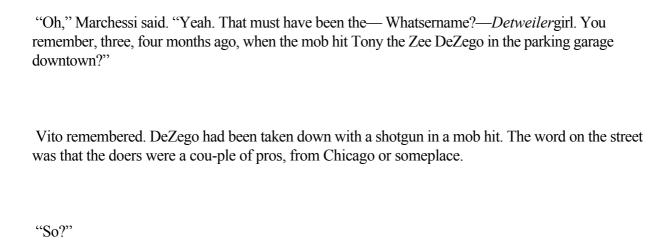
"How's it going, Lanza?"

It should have been "Corporal," but Vito let it ride.

"You're Martinez, right?"

"That's right, Corporal."





"She got wounded or something when that happened. She's been in a hospital out west. They didn't want the press getting at her."

"Who's they?"

"Chief Lowenstein himself was down here a couple of hours ago," Marchessi said.

Vito knew who Chief Lowenstein was. Of all the chief inspec-tors, it was six one way and half a dozen the other if Lowenstein or Chief Inspector Dennis V. Coughlin had the most clout. It was unusual that Lowenstein would personally concern himself with see-ing that some young woman was not bothered with the press. "How come the special treatment?"

Marchessi said, more than a little sarcastically, "I guess if your father runs and maybe owns a big piece of Nesfoods, you get a lit-tle special treatment."

The bell rang, signaling that the luggage conveyor was about to start moving. Vito nodded at Marchessi and Martinez and walked to the conveyor and waited until his luggage appeared. He grabbed it, then went back into the terminal and walked through it to the Airport Unit office. He walked past without going in, and went to the parking area reserved for police officers either working the Air-port Unit or visiting it, where he had left his car.

His car, a five-year-old Buick coupe, gave him a hard time start-ing. He had about given up on it when it finally gasped into life.

"Piece of shit!" he said aloud, and then had a pleasant thought: When he was finished work tomorrow, he would get rid of the sonofabitch. What he would like to have was a four-door Cadillac. He could probably make a good deal on one a year, eighteen months old. That would mean only twelve, fifteen thousand miles. A Caddy is just starting to get broken in with a lousy fifteen thou-sand miles on the clock, and you save a bunch of money.

Just because you did all right at the tables, Vito Lanza thought, is no reason to throw money away on a new car. Most people can't tell the fucking difference between a new one and one a year, eighteen months old, anyway.

Corporal Vito Lanza lived with his widowed mother, Magdalena, a tiny, intense, silver-haired woman of sixty-six in the house in which he had grown up. She managed to remind him at least once a day that the row house in the 400 block of Ritner Street in South Philadelphia was in her name, and that he was living there, rent free, only out of the goodness of her heart.

When he finally found a place to park the goddamned Buick and walked up to the house, Magdalena Lanza was sitting on a folding aluminum and plastic webbing lawn chair on the sidewalk, in the company of Mrs. D'Angelo (two houses down toward South Broad Street) and Mrs. Marino (the house next door, toward the Delaware River). She had an aluminum colander in her lap, into which she was breaking green beans from a paper bag on the sidewalk beside her.

Vito nodded at Mrs. D'Angelo and Mrs. Marino and kissed his mother and said, "Hi, Ma" and handed her a two-pound box of Ital-ian chocolates he had bought for her in the gift shop at the Flamingo in Vegas.

She nodded her head, but that was all the thanks he got.

"The toilet's running again," Mrs. Lanza said. "And there's rust in the hot water. You either got to fix it, or give me the money to call the plumber."

"I'll look at it," Vito said, and went into the house.

To the right was the living room, a long, dark room full of heavy furniture. A lithograph of Jesus Christ with his arms held out in front of him hung on the wall. Immediately in front of him was the narrow stairway to the second floor, and the equally narrow pas-sageway that led to the kitchen in the rear of the house. Off the kitchen was the small dark dining room furnished with a table, six chairs, and a china cabinet.

He went up the stairs and a few steps down the corridor to his room. It was furnished with a single bed, a dresser, a small desk, and a floor lamp. There were pictures on the wall, showing Vito when he made his first communion at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, his graduation class at Mount Carmel Parochial School, Vito in his graduation gown and tasseled hat at Bishop John Newmann High School, and Vito in police uniform and his father the day he graduated from the Philadelphia Police Academy. There was also an eighteen-inch-long plaster representation of Jesus Christ on his crucifix.

Vito tossed his bags on the bed and went down the corridor to the bathroom. He voided his bladder, flushed the toilet, and waited to see if the toilet was indeed running.

It was, and he took the top off the water box and looked at the mechanism.

He didn't know what the fuck was wrong with it. He jiggled the works, and it stopped running. Then he ran the hot water in the sink, letting it fill the bowl. When he had, he couldn't even see the fucking drain in the bottom.

Sonofabitch!

The simplest thing to do would be to give his mother the money and tell her to call the plumber. But if he did that, there was certain to be some crack about his father, May He Rest In Peace, never having once in all the years they were married calling a plumber.

After work tomorrow, Vito decided, I'll go by Sears and get one of those goddamned repair kits. And see what they want to replace the fucking hot water heater.

FIVE

"Mayor Carlucci's residence," Violetta Forchetti said, clearly but with a distinct Neapolitan accent when she picked up the tele-phone.

Violetta was thirty-five but looked older. She was slight of build, and somewhat sharp-faced. She had come to the United States from Naples seventeen years before to marry Salvatore Forchetti, who was twenty-five and had himself immigrated four years previously.

There had just been time for them to get married, and for Violetta to become with child when, crossing 9th and Mifflin Streets in South Philadelphia, they were both struck by a hit-and-run driver. Salvatore died instantly, and Violetta, who lost the child, had spent four months in St. Agnes's Hospital.

The then commander of the 6th District of the Philadelphia Po-lice Department, Captain Jerry Carlucci, had taken the incident personally. He was himself of Neapolitan heritage, had known Sal, who had found work as a butcher, and been a guest at their wed-ding.

He had suggested to his wife that it might be a nice thing for her to go to St. Agnes's Hospital, see what the poor woman needed, and tell her she had his word that he would find the hit-and-run driver and see that he got what was coming to him.

Angeline Carlucci, who looked something like Violetta Forchetti, returned from the hospital and told him things were even worse than they looked. Violetta's parents were dead. The relatives who had arranged for her to come to America and marry Salvatore didn't want her back in Naples. She was penniless, a widow in a strange country.

When Violetta got out of the hospital, she moved in temporarily with Captain and Mrs. Carlucci, Jerry's idea being that when he caught the sonofabitch who had run them down, he would get enough money out of the bastard's insurance company to take care of Violetta, to make her look like a desirable wife to some other hard-working young man.

They never found the sonofabitch who had been driving the car. So when Jerry and Angeline, right after he'd made inspector, moved out of their house on South Rosewood Street in South Philly to the new house (actually it was thirty years old) on Crefield Street, Violetta went with them. She was good with the kids, the kids loved her, and Angeline needed a little help around the house.

A number of young, hard-working, respectable men were intro-duced to Violetta, but she just wasn't interested in any of them. She had found her place in life, working for the Carluccis, almost a member of the family.

When, as police commissioner, Jerry bought the big house in Chestnut Hill, and did it over, they turned three rooms in the attic into an apartment for Violetta, and she just about took over running the place, the things that Angeline no longer had the time to do her-self.

It was said, and it was probably true, that Violetta would kill for the Carlucci family. It was true that Violetta did a better job of working the mayor's phone than any secretary he'd ever had in the Roundhouse or City Hall. When she handed him the phone, he knew that it was somebody he should talk to, not some nut or ding-a-ling.

"Matt Lowenstein, Violetta," the caller said. "How are you?"

"Just a minute, Chief," Violetta said. Chief Inspector Lowenstein was one of the very few people who got to talk to the mayor whenever he called, even in the middle of the night, when she had to put her robe on and go downstairs and wake him up.

The Honorable Jerry Carlucci, who was fifty-one years old and had an almost massive body and dark brown hair and eyes, was wearing an apron with CHIEF COOK painted on it when Violetta went into the kitchen of the Chestnut Hill mansion. He was in the act of examining with great interest one of two chicken halves he had been marinating for the past two hours, and which, when he had concluded they had been soaked enough, he planned to broil on a charcoal stove for himself and Angeline.

"Excellence, it is Chief Lowenstein," Violetta said.

Violetta had firm Italianate ideas about the social structure of the world. Jerry had never been able to get her to call him "Mister." It had at first been "Captain," which was obviously more prestigious than

"Mister," then "Inspector" as he had worked his way up the hierarchy from staff inspector through inspector to chief inspector, and then "Excellence" from the time he'd been made a deputy commissioner.
He joked with Angeline that Violetta had run out of titles with "Excellence." There were only two more prestigious: "Your Maj-esty" and "Your Holiness," plus maybe "Your Grace," none of which, obviously, fit.
"Grazie," he said and went to the wall-mounted telephone by the door.
"How's my favorite Hebrew?" the mayor said.
He and Matt Lowenstein went way back. And he was fully aware that behind his back, Matt Lowenstein referred to him as "The Dago."
"The package from Las Vegas, Mr. Mayor, arrived safely at the airport, and two minutes ago passed through the gates in Chestnut Hill."
"No press?"
"Ardell—Paul Ardell, the Airport lieutenant?—"
"I know who he is."
"He said he didn't see any press. We probably attracted more at-tention taking her off the plane that way than if we'd just let Payne walk her through the terminal."
"Yeah, maybe. But this way, Matt, we did Detweiler a favor. And if Payne had walked her into the airport and there had been a dozen assholes from the TV and the newspapers"



Jerry Carlucci was not saying unkind things behind Commis-sioner Czernick's back. He regularly got that sort of abuse in per-son. Matt Lowenstein had long ago decided that Carlucci not only really did not like Czernick, but held him in a great deal of con-tempt.

But Lowenstein had also long ago figured out that Czernick would probably be around as commissioner as long as Carlucci was the mayor. His loyalty to Carlucci was unquestioned, almost certainly because he very much liked being the police commis-sioner, and was very much aware that he served at Carlucci's plea-sure.

very much liked being the police commis-sioner, and was very much aware that he served at Carlucc plea-sure.
"Half past twelve at the Union League," Lowenstein said. "I'll look forward to it."
Carlucci laughed.
"Don't bullshit a bullshitter, Matt," he said, and then added, "I just had an idea about Payne too."
"Excuse me?"
"I'm still thinking about it. I'll tell you, tomorrow. You call— Whatsisname?—At the airport?"
"Paul Ardell?"
"Yeah, right. And tell him I said thanks for a job well done."
"Yes, sir."
"Good night, Matt. Thank you."
"Good night, Mr. Mayor."

Marion Claude Wheatley made pork chops, green beans, apple sauce, and mashed potatoes for his supper. He liked to cook, was good at it, and when he made his own supper not only was it almost certainly going to be better than what he could get at one of the neighborhood restaurants, but it spared him both having to eat alone in public and from anything unpleasant that might happen on the way home from the restaurant.

Marion lived in the house in which he had grown up, in the 5000 block of Beaumont Street, just a few blocks off Baltimore Avenue and not far from the 49th Street Station. There was no point in pre-tending that the neighborhood was not deteriorating, but that didn't mean his house was deteriorating. He took a justifiable pride in knowing that he was just as conscientious about taking care of the house as his father had been.

If something needed painting, it got painted. If one of the faucets started dripping, he went to the workshop in the basement and got the proper tools and parts and fixed it.

About the only difference in the house between now and when Mom and Dad had been alive was the burglar bars and the burglar alarm system. Marion had had to have a contractor install the burglar bars, which were actually rather attractive, he thought, wrought iron. The burglar alarm system he had installed himself.

Marion had been taught about electrical circuits in the Army. He could almost certainly have avoided service by staying in college, but that would have been dishonorable. His father had served in World War II as a major with the 28th Division. He would have been shamed if his son had avoided service when his country called upon him.

He had taken Basic Training at Fort Dix, and then gone to Fort Riley for Officer Candidate School, and been commissioned into the Ordnance Corps. He had been trained as an ammunition supply officer, and then they had asked him if he would be interested in volunteering to become an Explosive Ordnance Disposal officer before he went to Vietnam. Marion hadn't even known what that meant when they asked him. They told him that EOD officers com-manded small detachments of specialists who were charged with disposing of enemy and our own ordnance, which he understood to mean artillery and mortar shells, primarily, which had been fired but which for some reason hadn't exploded when they landed.

Sometimes shells and rockets could be disarmed, which meant that their detonating mechanisms were rendered inoperative, but sometimes that wasn't possible, and the explosive ordnance had to be "blown in place."

That meant that Explosive Ordnance Disposal people had to be trained in explosives, even though, as an officer, he wouldn't be expected to do the work himself, but instead would supervise the enlisted specialists.

That training had included quite a bit about electrical circuits, about which Marion had previously known absolutely nothing.

But what he had learned in the Army was more than enough for him to easily install the burglar alarm. Actually, it was plural. Alarms. There was one system that detected intrusion of the house on the first floor. If the alarm system was active, and any window, or outside door, on the first floor was opened, that set off one warn-ing buzzer and a light on the control panel Marion had set up in what had been Mom and Dad's bedroom, but was now his.

The second system did the same thing for windows on the sec-ond floor and the two dormer windows in the attic. The third sys-tem protected the powder magazine only. The powder magazine was in the basement. It had originally been a larder where Mom had stored tomatoes mostly, but beans too, and chow-chow and things like that. Marion liked cooking, but he wasn't about to start canning things the way Mom had. It wasn't worth it.

The first time he had put something in the powder magazine, it was still a larder. That was when he had come from Vietnam on emergency leave when Mom had gotten so sick. At the time, he had wondered why it was so important that he knew he had to bring twenty-seven pounds of *Czechoslovakia plastique* and two dozen detonators home with him. Now, of course, he knew. It was all part of God's plan.

If God hadn't wanted him to bring the *plastique* home, then when the MPs at Tan Son Nhut had randomly inspected outbound transient luggage, they would have selected his to inspect, and taken it away from him.

Marion hadn't then yet learned that when something odd or out of the ordinary happens, that he didn't have to worry about it, be-cause it was invariably God's plan, and sooner or later, he would come to understand what the Lord had had in mind.

When he'd come home, Mom was already in University Hospi-tal, but there was a colored lady taking care of the house, and he didn't want her hurting herself in any way, so he had put the plastique and the detonators in the larder and put a padlock on the door.

God had put off taking Mom into Heaven until they had had a chance to say good-bye, but not much more than that. He had been home seventy-two hours when the Lord called her home. And then he'd had those embarrassing weeping sessions whenever he thought of Mom or Dad or all the kids (he thought of them as kids, although they weren't much younger than he was) who'd fouled up, or been unlucky and been disintegrated, and they hadn't sent him back to Vietnam, but instead to Fort Eustis, Virginia, as an in-structor in demolitions to young officers in the Engineer Basic Officer School.

They used mostly Composition C-4 at Eustis, which wasn't as good as the Czechoslovakian*plastique* the Viet Cong used, and sometimes just ordinary dynamite, and when he was setting up the demonstrations, he often slipped a little Composition C-4, or a stick of dynamite, or a length of primer cord, in his field jacket pocket and then brought it to Philadelphia and put it in the larder when he came home on weekends.

God, of course, had been making him do that, even though at the time he hadn't understood it.

One of the first things he did when he was released from active duty was to turn the larder into a proper powder magazine. This meant not only reinforcing the door with steel bars and installing some really good locks, but also installing a small exhaust fan for ventilation that turned on automatically for five minutes every hour, and, after a good deal of experimentation and consulting a humidity gauge, one 100-watt and one 40-watt bulb that burned all the time and kept the humidity down below twenty percent.

After Marion had his supper, he put the leftover green beans in the refrigerator, and the leftover mashed potatoes and the pork chop bones in the garbage, and then washed his dishes.

He then went to watch the CBS Evening News, to see if there would be anything on it about the Vice President coming to Phila-delphia. There was not, but it had been in the newspapers, and therefore it was true.

He turned the television off, and then went down the stairs to the cellar. He took the keys to the powder magazine from their hiding place, on top of the second from the left rafter, and unlocked the door.

Everything seemed to be in good shape. The humidity gauge said there was twelve percent humidity and that it was fifty-nine degrees Fahrenheit in the magazines. That was well within the rec-ommended parameters for humidity and temperature. He carefully locked the door again, put the keys back in their hiding place, and went back upstairs and turned the television back on.

Maybe he would be lucky, and there would be a decent program for him to watch. Everything these days seemed to be what they called T&A. For Teats and Ass. He thought that was a funny phrase. He knew the T&A offended God, but he thought that God would not be offended because he thought T&A was funny. He had learned words like that in the Army, and he wouldn't have been in the Army if God hadn't wanted him to be.

Vito Lanza went back to his room and emptied his pockets, toss-ing everything on the bed. Everything included the wad of bills he had left over after he'd had the Flamingo cashier give him a check for most of the money he'd won. There was almost five hundred dollars, two hundreds, two fifties, and a bunch of twenties and tens, plus some singles.

It sure looked good.

He unpacked his luggage, dividing the clothing into two piles, the underwear and socks and shirts his mother would wash, and the good shirts and trousers and jackets that would have to go to the dry cleaners.

The money looked good. He collected it all together and made a little wad of it, with the hundreds outside, and stuck them in his pocket.

The one goddamned thing I don't want to do is stick around here and have Ma give me that crap about not understanding why I have to go somewhere to relax.

He made a bundle of the clothing that had to go to the dry clean-ers, and then picked up one of the jackets on the bed and put that on. He went to the upper right-hand drawer of the dresser and took out his Colt snubnose, and his badge and photo ID. From the drawer underneath, he took out a clip holster and six .38 Special cartridges. He loaded the Colt, put it in the holster, and then clipped the holster to his

belt.
"You just got home," his mother said when he went out of the house, "where are you going?"
"To the dry cleaners, and then I got some stuff to do."
He decided to walk. He had found a place to park the god-damned Buick, and if he took it now, sure as Christ made little apples, there would be no parking place for blocks when he came back.
Vito dropped the clothes off at the Martinizer place on South Broad Street and then headed for Terry's Bar & Grill. Then he changed his mind. He wasn't in the mood for Terry's. It was a neighborhood joint, and Vito was still in a Flamingo Hotel & Ca-sino mood.
He stepped off the curb and looked down South Broad in the di-rection of the navy yard until he could flag a cab. He got in and told the driver to take him to the Warwick Hotel. There was usually some gash in the nightclub in the Warwick, provided you had the money—and he did—to spring for expensive drinks.
The cab dropped him off at the Warwick right outside the bar. The hotel bar is on the right side of the building, off the lobby. The nightclub is a large area on the left side of the building, past the desk and the drugstore. Vito decided he would check out the hotel bar, maybe there would be something interesting in there, and then go to the nightclub.
He found a seat at the bar, ordered a Johnnie Walker on the rocks, and laid one of the fifty-dollar bills on the bar to pay for it.

Francesco Guttermo, who was seated at a small table near the door to the street in the Warwick Bar,

leaned forward in his chair, then motioned for Ricco Baltazari to move his head closer, so that others

would not hear what he had to say.

"The guy what just come in, at the end of the bar, he's got a gun," Mr. Guttermo, who was known as "Frankie the Gut," said. The appellation had been his since high school, when even then he had been portly with a large stomach.

Mr. Baltazari, who was listed in the records of the City of Phila-delphia as the owner of Ristorante Alfredo, one of Center City's best Italian restaurants (northern Italian cuisine, no spaghetti with marinara sauce or crap like that), was expensively and rather taste-fully dressed. He nodded his head to signify that he had understood what Frankie the Gut had said, and then relaxed back into his chair, taking the opportunity to let his hand graze across the knee of the young woman beside him.

She was a rather spectacularly bosomed blonde, whose name was Antoinette, but who preferred to be called "Tony." She slapped his hand, but didn't seem to be offended.

After a moment Mr. Baltazari turned his head just far enough to be able to look at the man with the gun, his backside and, in the bar's mirror, his face.

Then he leaned forward again toward Mr. Guttermo, who moved to meet him.

"He's probably a cop," Mr. Baltazari said.

"He paid for the drink with a fifty from a wad," Mr. Guttermo said.

"Maybe he hit his number," Mr. Baltazari said with a smile. "Maybe that's your fifty he's blowing."

It was generally believed by, among others, the Intelligence Unit and the Chief Inspector's Vice Squad of the Philadelphia Po-lice Department that Mr. Guttermo, who had no other visible means of support, was engaged in the operation of a Numbers Book.

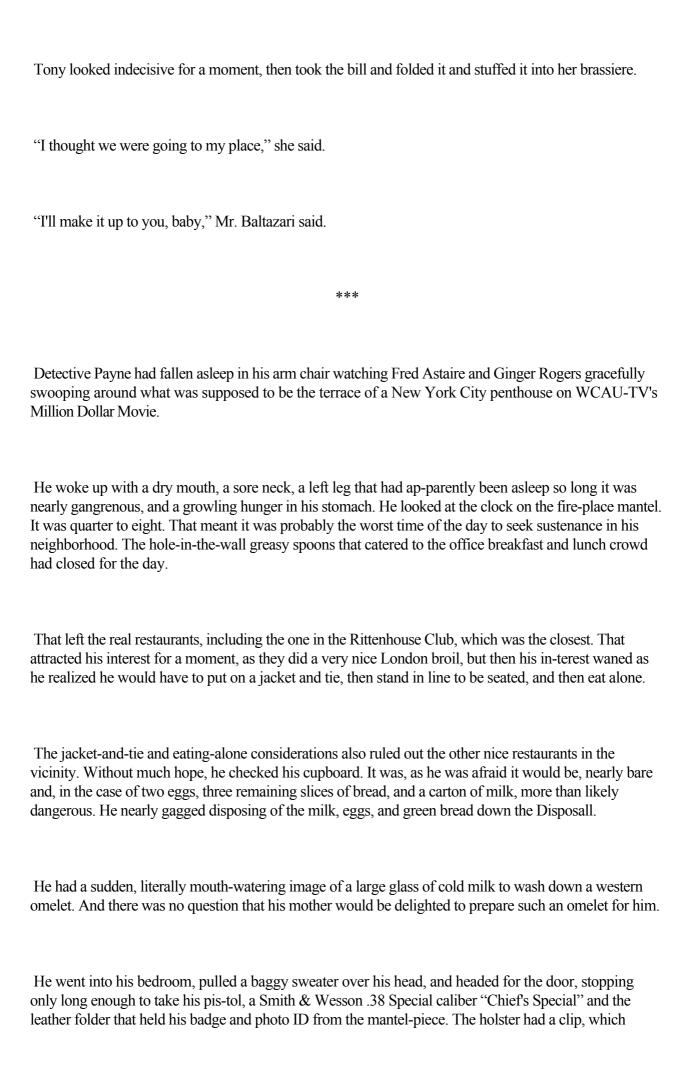
"You don't think he's interested in us?" Frankie the Gut asked.





"Do it, Tony," Mr. Baltazari said. *** Tony was gone almost half an hour. "Let's get out of here," she said, "I told him I had to go to the la-dies'." "What did you find out?" Mr. Baltazari asked. "Can't we leave? What if he comes looking for me?" "What did you find out?" "He's a cop. He's a corporal. He just made a killing in Vegas." "Did he say where he worked?" "At the airport." "Did he say how much of a killing?" "Enough to buy a Caddy. He said he's going out and buy a Cadillac tomorrow."





allowed him to carry the weapon inside his waistband. If he remembered not to take his sweater off, his mother wouldn't even see the pistol.

He went down the narrow stairway to the third floor of the build-ing, then rode the elevator to the basement, and after a moment's hesitation made the mature decision to drive the Bug to Wallingford. It would have been much nicer to drive the Porsche but the Bug had been sitting for two days, and unless it was driven, the battery would likely be dead in the morning when he had to drive it to work.

As he drove out Baltimore Avenue, which he always thought of as The Chester Pike, he made another mature decision. He drove past an Acme Supermarket, noticed idly that the parking lot was nearly empty, and then did a quick U-turn and went back.

He could make a quick stop, no more than five minutes, pick up a half gallon of milk, a dozen eggs, a loaf of bread, and a package of Taylor Ham, maybe even some orange juice, and be prepared to make his own breakfast in the morning. He would be, as he had learned in the Boy Scouts to be, prepared.

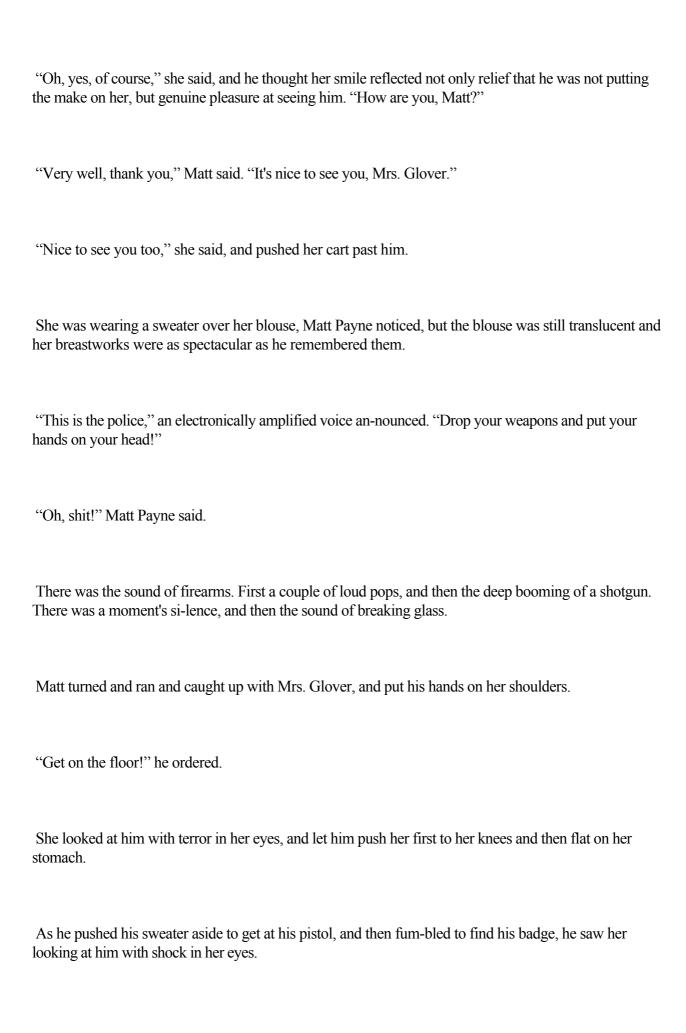
The store was, as he had cleverly deduced from the near-empty parking lot, nearly deserted. There were probably no more than twenty people in the place.

He was halfway down the far-side aisle, bread and Taylor Ham already in the shopping cart, moving toward the eggs-and-milk section, when he ran into Mrs. Glover.

"Hi!" he said cheerfully.

It was obvious from the hesitant smile on her face that Mrs. Glover was having trouble placing him. That was certainly under-standable. While Mrs. Glover, who presided over the Special Col-lections desk at the U of P library had attracted the rapt attention of just about every heterosexual male student because of her habitual costume of white translucent blouse and skirt, it did not logically follow that she would remember any particular one of her hundreds of admirers.

"Matt Payne. Pre-Constitutional Law," he said. He had had oc-casion to partake of Mrs. Glover's professional services frequently when he was writing a term paper on what had happened, and who had been responsible for it, when the fledgling united colonies had been adapting British common law to American use.



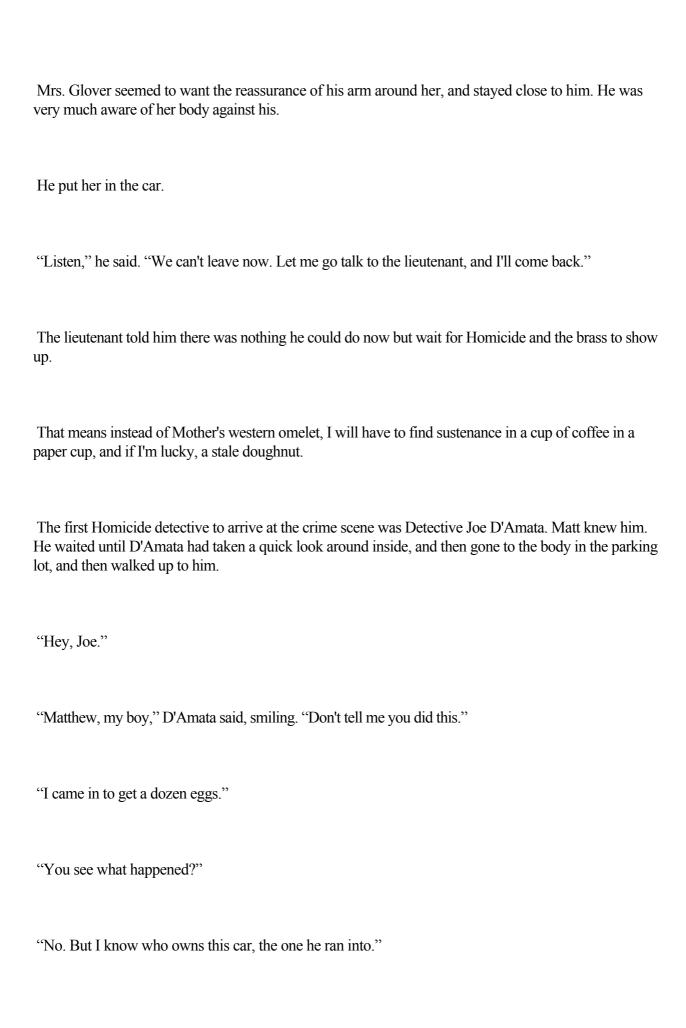


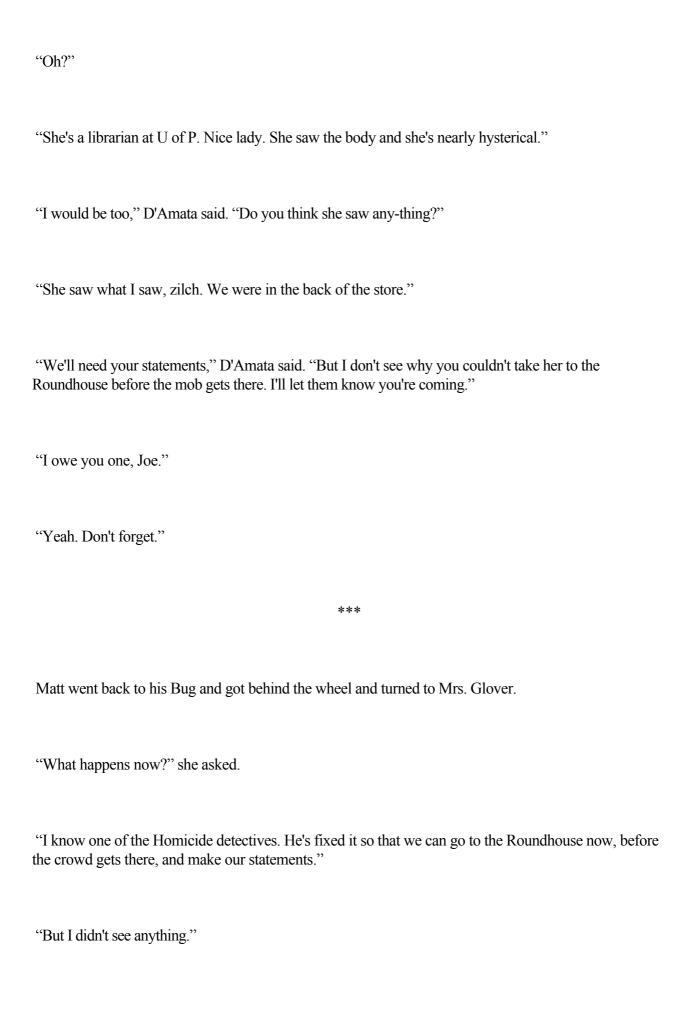
There were flashing lights, and the sound of dying sirens, and Matt looked through the shattered plate-glass window and saw the first of a line of police vehicles pull up to the door.
The lieutenant made a vague gesture toward the last checkout counter. Matt saw a pair of feet extending into the aisle, and a pud-dle of blood.
"One there and another outside, in his car," the lieutenant said. "They had their chance to drop their guns and surrender, but they probably thought it would be like the movies. Jesus Christ!"
There was more contempt for the critters he had dropped than compassion, Matt thought.
That's the way it is. Not like the movies, either, where the cops are paralyzed with regret for having had to drop somebody. The bad dreams I have had about my shootings have been about those assholes getting me, not the other way around.

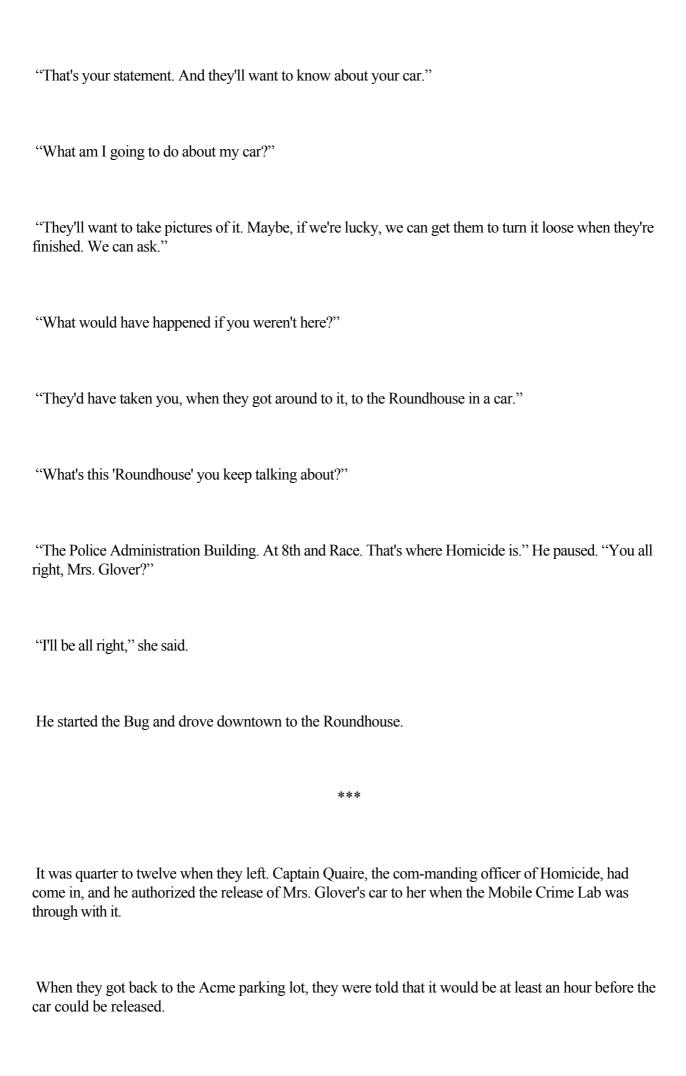
Matt looked through the hole where the plate-glass window had been. Three uniforms were in the act of pulling a man from his car. The car-crashing noise he had heard had apparently come when the doer, trying to flee, had crashed into one of the cars parked in the lot.
Matt had twice gone through the interviews conducted by the Homicide shooting team of officers involved in a fatal shooting. He blurted what popped into his mind.
"You'll spend the next six hours in Homicide."
The lieutenant's eyebrows rose.

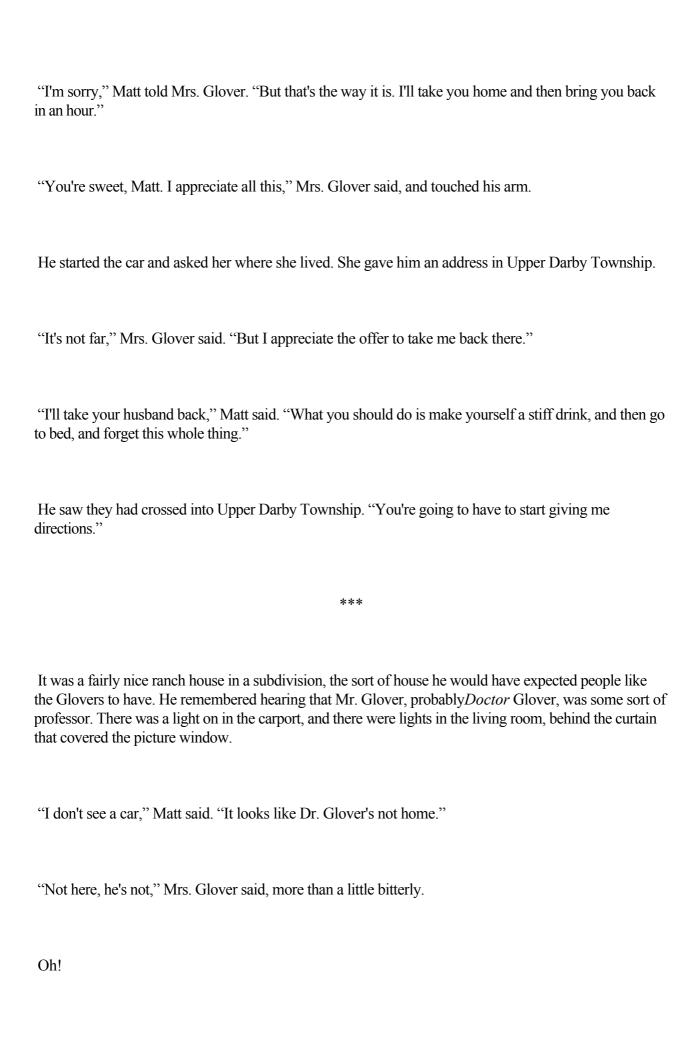


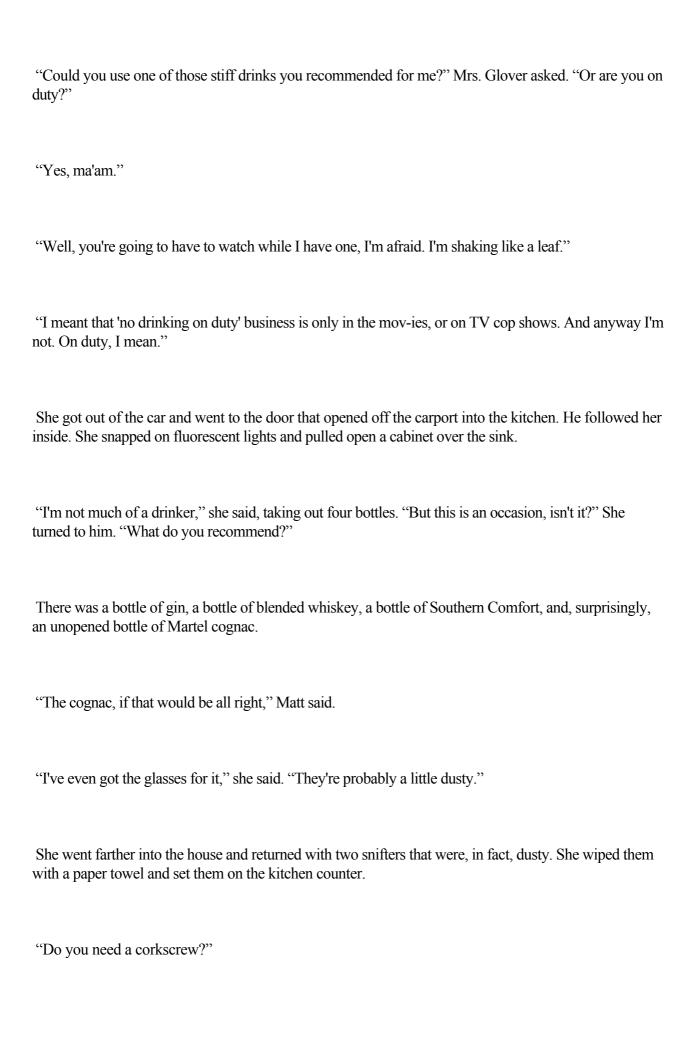
There was confusion in her eyes.
"We can go. Otherwise, you'll be taken to the Roundhouse and be there for hours."
"Are you a policeman or something?" she asked incredulously.
"I'm a detective," he said. "You all right? Can you walk?"
"I'm all right," she said. "What do we do about the groceries?"
"Leave them," he said, and took Mrs. Glover's arm and led her out the front of the store.
"Oh, my God!" Mrs. Glover said. "That's my car!"
And then she was clinging to him, whimpering. She had looked at the ground beside her car, where the second robber Stakeout had taken down was on his back in the middle of a spreading pool of blood. He had taken a load, Matt decided, maybe two loads, of double aught buckshot.
Well, that blows any chance we had to get away from here. Shit!
SIX
"My car's over there," Matt said, and started to lead Mrs. Glover toward it.

















"I'm now going to do something else I rarely do," Mrs. Glover said. "I'm going to smoke a cigarette."
"I'm sorry, I don't have any."
"I've got some somewhere," she said, and went farther into the house again. She immediately returned. "I'm sorry. Why are we in the kitchen? Come on in the living room."

An hour later, they drove back to the Acme Supermarket. Her car was gone, and so had just about everybody else. There was a uniformed cop by the shattered plate-glass window.
Matt showed him his badge.
"Where's the car, the victim's car the doer ran into?"
The uniformed cop shrugged. "I guess they took it to an im-pound area. Maybe at the district."
Matt returned to the Bug and told Mrs. Glover that the authority they had to reclaim her car was useless. It was somewhat in limbo, and there was nothing that could be done until the morning.
"What do I do now?" Mrs. Glover asked. "Can you take me home again?"
"Of course."

She wanted an explanation of where in "limbo" her car actually was, so it seemed perfectly natural that he follow her into the house again and have another cognac.
"I was thinking," Mrs. Glover said an hour later, dipping her in-dex finger into her cognac snifter to stir the ginger ale into the co-gnac, "I mean it's just an idea. But if you stayed here, there's a guest room, you could drive me down to the Roundhouse in the morning."
She is not making a pass at me. She is at least thirty years old, maybe thirty-five, and
"And the truth of the matter seems to be that we've both had more of this cognac than is good for us," she added.
"Well, if it wouldn't inconvenience you."
"Don't be silly," she said. "I'll just get sheets and make up the spare bed."

"I'm sorry I don't have any pajamas to offer you," Mrs. Glover said at the door to the spare bedroom.
"I don't wear them anyway. I'll be all right."
"If you need anything, just ask," she said, and gave him her hand. "And thank you for everything."
"I didn't do anything," he said.
She smiled at him and pulled the door closed.

He looked around the room, and then went and sat on the bed and took his clothing off. He rummaged in the bedside table and came up with a year-old copy of <i>Scientific American</i> . He propped the pillows up and flipped through it.
He could hear the sound of a shower running, and had an inter-esting mental image of Mrs. Glover at her ablutions.
"Shit," he said aloud, turned the light off, and rearranged the pil-low.
He had a profound thought: No good deed goes unpunished.
The sound of the shower stopped after a couple of minutes. He had an interesting mental image of Mrs. Glover toweling her bosom.
A moment later he heard the bedroom door open.
"Matt, are you asleep?"
"No."
He sensed rather than heard her approach the bed. When she sat on it, he could smell soap and perfume.
Maybe perfumed soap ?
She found his face with her hand.

"I've been separated from my husband for eleven months," Mrs. Glover said. "I haven't been near a man in all that time. Not until now."
He reached up and touched her hand. She caught his hand, locked fingers with him, and then moved his hand to the opening of her robe, directed it inside, and then let go.
His fingers found her breast and her nipple, which was erect. She put her hand to the back of his head and pulled his face to her breast.
When he tried to pull her down onto the bed, she resisted, then stood up.
"Not here," Mrs. Glover said throatily. "In my bed."

At quarter to seven the next morning, Detective Matt Payne drove into the garage beneath the Delaware Valley Cancer Society Building, and turned to look at Mrs. Glover, whose Christian name, he had learned two hours before, was Evelyn.
"What is this?" she asked.
"This is where I live. Where I have to change clothes."
"The signs says this is the Cancer Society."
"There's an attic apartment," he said.
"Oh."

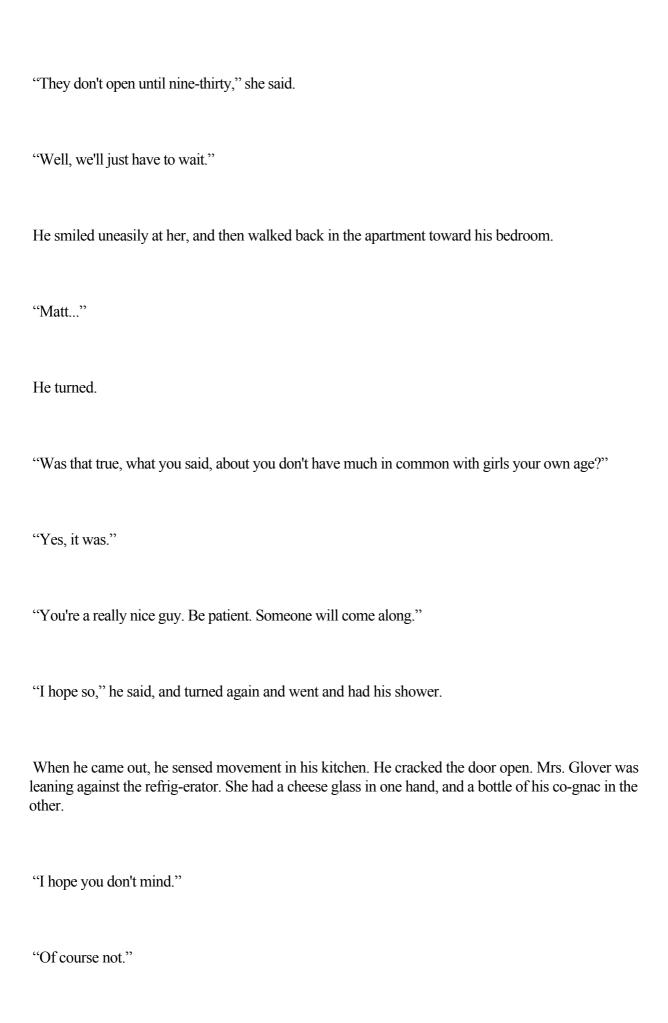


"Whatever you say," Matt said, and got out of the Bug and went to the elevator.

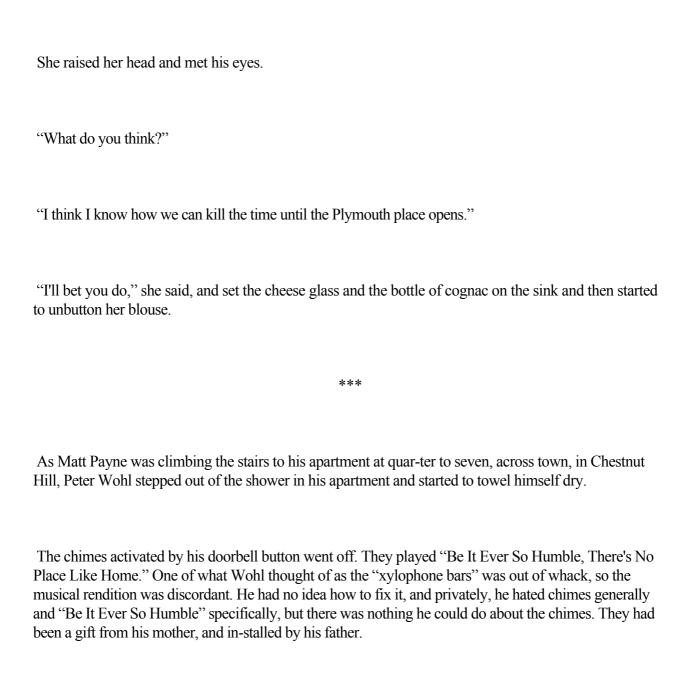
When he reached the top step of the narrow stairway leading into his apartment, he saw the red light blinking on his telephone an-swering machine. He pulled his sweater over his head, tossed it onto the couch, went to the answering machine, and pushed the PLAY MESSAGES switch
"Matt, I know you're there, pick up the damned telephone."
That was Amelia Payne, M.D. He wondered what the hell she wanted, and then realized she probably wanted a report on Penny Detweiler's trip home.
Then Brewster Cortland Payne II's voice: "Matt, Amy insisted I try to get you to call her. She's positive you're there and just not picking up. She wants to talk to you about Penny. Will you call her, please? Whenever you get home?"
The next voice was Charley McFadden's: "Matt, Charley. Give me a call as soon as you can. I gotta talk to you about something. Oh. How was Las Vegas?"
Something's wrong. I wonder what? Well, it'll have to wait.
"Matt, this is Penny. I just wanted to say 'thank you' for coming out there to get me. I forgot to thank you at the airport. When you have a minute, call me, and I'll buy you an ice-cream cone or lunch or something. Ciao."
Oh, Christ, I don't want to get sucked into that!

"Matt, this is Joe D'Amata. They took your lady friend's car to the Plymouth place in Upper Darby. I









He said a word that he would not have liked to have his mother hear, wrapped the towel around his middle, and left the bathroom. He went through his bedroom, and then through his living room, the most prominent furnishings of which were a white leather couch, a plate-glass coffee table, a massive, Victorian mahogany service bar, and a very large oil painting of a Rubenesque naked lady resting on her side, one arm cocked coyly behind her head.

The ultrachic white leather couch and plate-glass coffee table were the sole remnants of a romantic involvement Peter Wohl had once had with an interior decorator, now a young suburban matron married to a lawyer. The bar and the painting of the naked lady he had acquired at an auction of the furnishings of a Center City men's club that had gone belly up.

He unlatched the door and pulled it open. A very neat, very wholesome-looking young man in a blue suit stood on the landing.

"Good morning, Inspector," the young man said. His name was Paul T. (for Thomas) O'Mara, and he was a police officer of the Philadelphia Police Department. Specifically, he was Wohl's new administrative assistant.

Telling him,Peter Wohl thought,that when I say between seven and seven-fifteen, I don't mean quarter to seven, would be like kicking a Labrador puppy who has just retrieved his first tennis ball.

"Good morning, Paul," Wohl said. "Come on in. There's coffee in the kitchen."

'Thank you, sir."

Officer O'Mara was a recent addition to Peter Wohl's staff. Like Peter Wohl, he was from a police family. His father was a captain, who commanded the 17th District. His brother was a sergeant in Civil Affairs. His grandfather, like Peter Wohl's father and grand-father, had retired from the Philadelphia Police Department.

More important, his father was a friend of both Chief Inspector Dennis V. Coughlin and Chief Inspector (Retired) Augustus Wohl. When Officer O'Mara, who had five years on the job in the Traffic Division, had failed, for the second time, to pass the examination for corporal, both Chief Coughlin and Chief Wohl had had a pri-vate word with Inspector Wohl.

They had pointed out to him that just because someone has a lit-tle trouble with promotion examinations doesn't mean he's not a good cop, with potential. It just means that he has trouble passing examinations.

Not like you, Peter, the inference had been. You're not really all that smart, you're just good at taking examinations.

One or the other or both of them had suggested that what Officer O'Mara needed was a little broader experience than he was getting in the Traffic Division, such as he might get if it could be arranged to have





There was no parking space in the parking lot behind the Police Administration Building reserved for the commanding officer, Special Operations, as there were for the chief inspectors of Patrol Bureau (North), Patrol Bureau (South), Command Inspections Bu-reau, Administration, Internal Affairs, Detective Bureau, and even the Community Relations Bureau.

Neither could Paul O'Mara park Peter Wohl's official nearly new Ford sedan in spots reserved for CHIEF INSPECTORS AND INSPECTORS ONLY, because Wohl was only a staff inspector, one rank be-low inspector. The senior brass of the Police Department were jeal-ous of the prerogatives of their ranks and titles and would have been offended to see a lowly staff inspector taking privileges that were not rightly his.

Wohl suspected that if a poll were taken, anonymously, of the deputy commissioners, chief inspectors, and inspectors, the con-sensus would be that his appointment as commanding officer, Spe-cial Operations Division, reporting directly to the deputy commissioner, Operations, had been a major mistake, acting to the detriment of overall departmental efficiency, not to mention what harm it had done to the morale of officers senior to Staff Inspector Wohl, who had naturally felt themselves to be in line for the job.

If, however, he also suspected, asked to identify themselves be-fore replying to the same question, to a man they would say that it was a splendid idea, and that there was no better man in the Department for the job.

They all knew that the Hon. Frank Carlucci, mayor of the City of Philadelphia, had suggested to Police Commissioner Taddeus Czernick that Wohl be given the job. And they all knew that Mayor Carlucci sincerely—and not without reason—believed himself to know more about what was good for the Police Department than anybody else in Philadelphia.

A "suggestion" from Mayor Carlucci to Commissioner Czernick regarding what he should do in the exercise of his office was the equivalent of an announcement on faith and morals issued by the pope, ex cathedra. It was not open for discussion, much less debate.

Peter Wohl had not wanted the job. He had been the youngest, ever, of the fourteen staff inspectors of the Staff Investigations Unit, and had liked very much what he was doing. The penal sys-tem of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania was now housing more than thirty former judges, city commissioners, and other high-level bureaucrats and political office holders whom Peter Wohl had caught with their

hands either in the public treasury or outstretched to accept contributions from the citizenry in exchange for special treatment.

He had even thought about passing up the opportunity to take the examination for inspector. There had been little question in his mind that he could pass the examination and be promoted, but he suspected that if he did, with only a couple of years as a staff in-spector behind him, with the promotion would come an assignment to duties he would rather not have, for example, as commanding officer of the Traffic Division, or the Civil Affairs Division, or even the Juvenile Division.

Department politics would, he had believed, keep him from get-ting an assignment as an inspector he would really like, which would have included commanding one of the nine Police Divisions (under which were all the police districts) or one of the two Detec-tive Field Divisions (under which were the seven Detective Divi-sions) or the Tactical Division, under which were Highway Patrol, the Airport, Stakeout, Ordnance Disposal, the police boats in the Marine Unit, the dogs of the Canine Unit, and a unit whose func-tion he did not fully understand called Special Operations.

And then Mayor Carlucci had a little chat with Commissioner Czernick. There was a chance for the Philadelphia Police Department to get its hands on some federal money, from the Justice Department. Some Washington bureaucrat had decided that the way to fight crime was to overwhelm the criminal element by sheer numbers. Under the acronym ACT, for Anti-Crime Team, federal money would allow local police departments to dispatch to heavy crime areas large numbers of policemen.

Philadelphia already was trying the same tactic, more or less, with the Highway Patrol, an elite, specially uniformed, two-men-in-a-car unit who normally practiced fighting crime by going to heavy crime areas. But they were, of course, paying for it them-selves.

There was a way, Mayor Carlucci suggested, to enlist the finan-cial support of the federal government in the never-ending war against crime. The Philadelphia Police Department would form an ACT unit. It would be placed in the already existing Special Oper-ations Unit. And since Highway Patrol was already doing the same sort of thing, so would Highway Patrol be placed in the Special Operations Division. And Special Operations, the mayor sug-gested, would be taken out from under the control of the Special Investigations Bureau, made a division, and placed under the direct command of the police commissioner himself.

And the mayor suggested that they needed somebody who was really bright to head up the new division, and what did the commis-sioner think of Peter Wohl?

The police commissioner knew that as Mayor Carlucci had worked his way up through the ranks of the Police Department, his rabbi had been Chief Inspector Augustus Wohl, retired. And he know that Peter Wohl had just done a hell of a fine job putting Superior Court Judge Moses Findermann into the long-term custody of the state penal system. But most important, he understood that when His Honor the Mayor gave a hint like that, it well behooved him to act on it, and he did.

Paul O'Mara, on his second trip through the parking lot, finally found a place, against the rear fence, to park the Ford. He and Staff Inspector Wohl got out of the car and walked to what had been de-signed as the rear door, but was now the only functioning door, of the Police Administration Building.

A corporal sitting behind a thick plastic window recognized In-spector Wohl and activated the solenoid that unlocked the door to the main lobby. Officer O'Mara pushed it open and held it for Staff Inspector Wohl, an action that made Wohl feel just a bit uncomfort-able. Officer Payne had not hovered over him. He was willing to admit he missed Officer Payne.

They rode the curved elevator to the third (actually the fourth) floor of the Roundhouse and walked down the corridor to where a uniformed police officer sat at a counter guarding access to what amounted to the executive suite. Officer O'Mara announced, somewhat triumphantly, their business: "Inspector Wohl to see the commissioner."

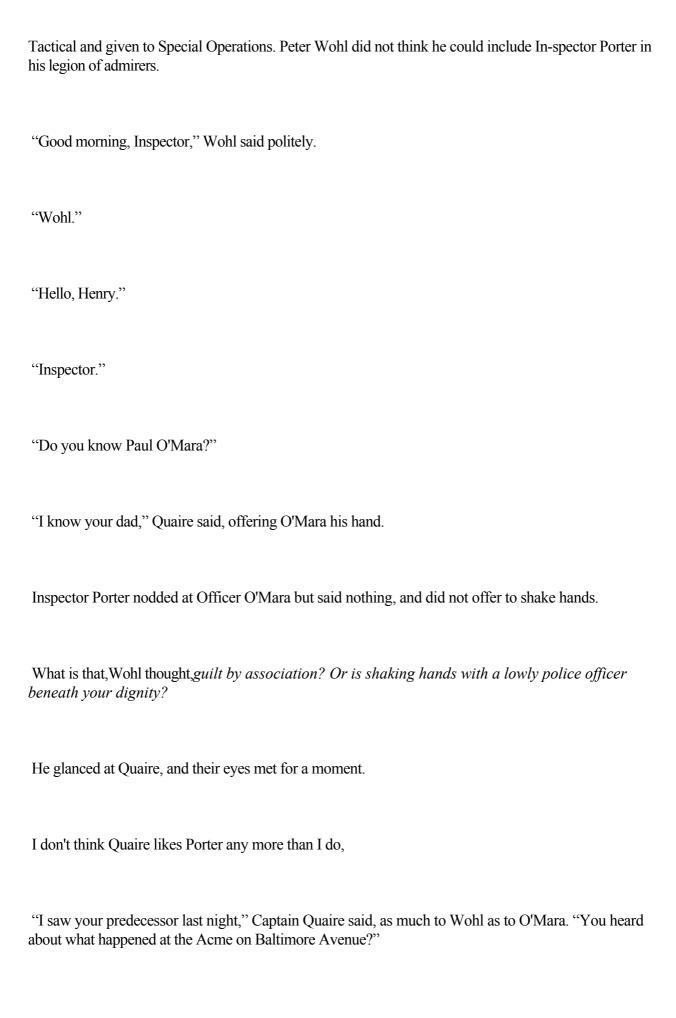
The commissioner, Peter Wohl was not surprised to learn, was tied up but would be with him shortly.

The door to the commissioner's conference room was open, and Wohl saw Captain Henry C. Quaire, the head of the Homicide Di-vision, whom he liked, leaning on the conference table, sipping a cup of coffee.

He walked in, and was immediately sorry he had, for Captain Quaire was not alone in the room. Inspector J. Howard Porter, commanding officer of the Tactical Division, was with him.

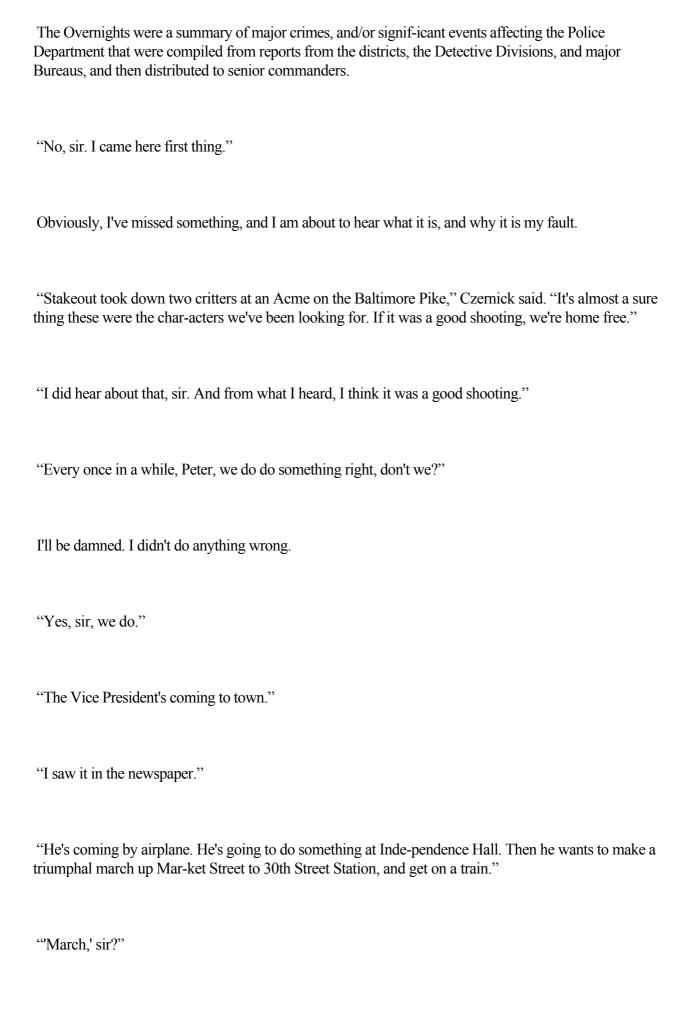
Inspector Porter had, when word of the federal money and the upgrading of Special Operations had spread through the Depart-ment, naturally considered himself a, perhaps the, prime candidate for the command of Special Operations. He not only had the appro-priate rank, but his Tactical Division included Highway Patrol.

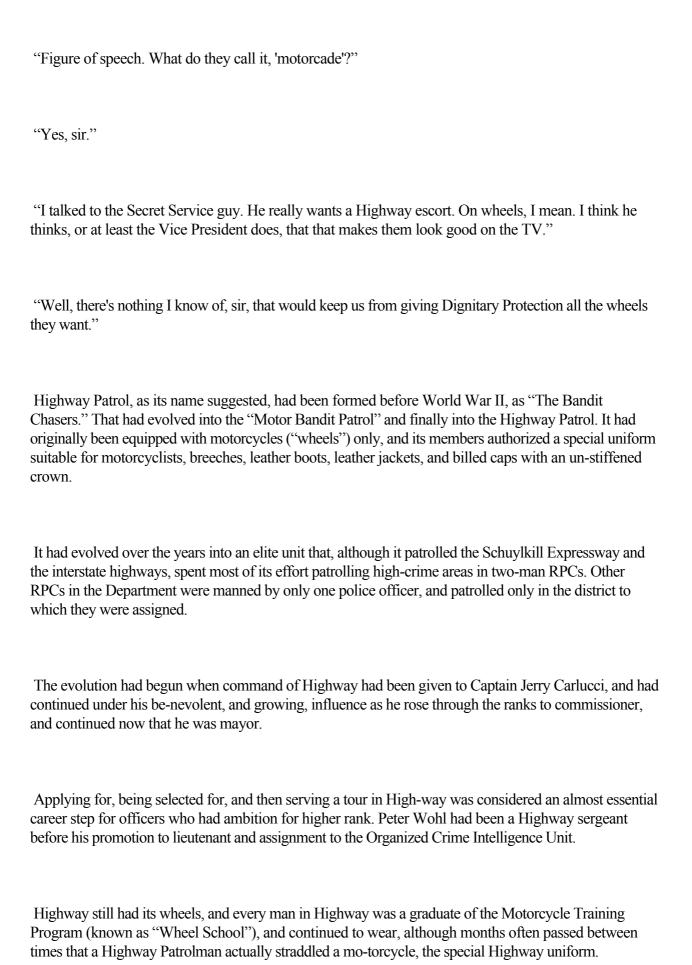
He had not been given the Special Operations Division, and Highway Patrol had been taken away from



"I didn't hear Payne shot them," Wohl said without thinking about it.
Quaire laughed. "Not this time, Peter. He was just a spectator."
"I'm glad to hear that."
"That's why we're here," Quaire said. "The commissioner wants to be absolutely sure the shooting was justified."
"Was there a question?"
"Hell no. Both of the doers fired first."
The commissioner's secretary appeared in the conference room door.
"The commissioner will see you now, Inspector," she said, and then realized there were two men answering to that title in the room, and added, "Wohl."
"Thank you," Peter Wohl said.
If I needed one more nail in my coffin, that was it. Porter knows I just walked in here. And I get to enter the throne room first.
SEVEN







Dignitary Protection was ordinarily an inactive function; a ser-geant or a lieutenant in the Intelligence Division of the Detective Bureau performed the function and answered that phone number in addition to his other duties.

When a dignitary showed up who needed protection, a more se-nior officer, sometimes, depending on the dignitary, even a chief inspector, took over and coordinated and commanded whatever po-lice units and personnel were considered necessary.

"What I've been thinking, Peter," Commissioner Czernick said, "is that Dignitary Protection should really be under you. I mean, really, it's a special function, a special operation, am I right? And you have Special Operations."

Carlucci strikes again,Peter Wohl thought. Czernick might even have come by himself to the conclusion that Dignitary Protection should come under Special Operations, but he would have kept that conclusion to himself. He would not have done anything about it himself, or even suggested it to the mayor, because the mayor might not like the idea, or come to the conclusion that Czernick was getting a little too big for his britches.

"Yes, I'm sure you're right," Wohl said. "Dignitary Protection is a special function, a special operation."

"And there's something else," Czernick went on. "I don't think it would be a bad idea at all to show the feds where all that ACT money is going."

"Yes, sir."

"What I thought I'd do, Peter...Do you know Sergeant Henkels?"

"No, sir. I don't think so."

"He's the man in Chief Lowenstein's office who handles Digni-tary Protection. I thought I'd ask Lowenstein to get the paperwork going and transfer him and his paperwork out to the Schoolhouse."

When the Special Operations Division had been formed from the Special Operations Unit, there had been no thought given to providing a place for it to exist. Since there was no other place to go, Peter Wohl had set up his first office in what had been the High-way Patrol captain's office in a building Highway shared with the 7th District at Bustleton Avenue and Bowler Street in Northeast Philadelphia.

There really had not been room in the building for both the Dis-trict and Highway, and the addition of the ever-growing Special Operations staff made things impossible. His complaints had fallen on deaf ears for a long time, but then, somewhat triumphantly, he had been told that the City was willing to transfer a building at Frankford and Castor Avenues from the Board of Education to the Police Department, and Special Operations could have it for their very own.

There was a slight problem. The reason the Board of Education was being so generous was that the Board of Health had deter-mined that the Frankford Grammar School (builtA.D. 1892) posed a health threat to its faculty and student population, and had or-dered it abandoned. There were, of course, no funds available in the Police Department budget for repairs or rehabilitation.

But since a building had been provided for Special Operations, Staff Inspector Wohl was soon led to understand, it would be con-sidered impolite for him to complain that he was no better off than he had been. It was also pointed out that the health standards that applied to students and teachers did not apply to policemen.

And then Staff Inspector Wohl's administrative assistant, Offi-cer M. M. Payne, who apparently had nothing more pressing to do at the time, read the fine print in the documents that outlined how the ACT funds could be spent. Up to \$250,000 of the federal gov-ernment's money could be expended for emergency repairs to, but not replacement of, equipment and facilities. He brought this to Wohl's attention, and Wohl, although he was not of the Roman Catholic persuasion, decided that it was time to adopt a Jesuit atti-tude to his problem: The end justifies the means.

Replacingbroken window and was obviously proscribed, and could not be done. But emergency repairs to windows (which inci-dentally might involve replacing a couple of panes here and there) were permissible. Similarly, replacing shingles on the roof was proscribed, but repairing the roof was permissible. Repairing the walls, floor, and plumbing system as a necessary emergency measure similarly posed no insurmountable legal or moral problems vis-à-vis the terms of the federal grant.

But the building's heating system posed a major problem. The existing coal-fired furnaces, after seventy-odd years of service, were beyond repair. In what he seriously regarded as the most dishonest act of his life, Peter Wohl chose not to notice that the *repairs* to the "heating system" consisted of

"removing malfunctioning components" (the coal furnaces) and "installing replacement com-ponents" (gas-fired devices that provided both heat and air-conditioning).

He had also circumvented the City's bureaucracy in the matter of awarding the various contracts. On one hand, his experience as a staff inspector had left him convinced that kickbacks were standard procedure when the City awarded contracts. The price quoted for services to be rendered to the City included the amount of the kick-back. On the other hand, he knew that the law required every contract over \$10,000 to be awarded on the basis of the lowest bid. He was, in fact, consciously breaking the law.

He had come to understand, further, that it wasn't a question of if he would be caught, but when. He didn't think there would be an attempt to indict him, but there had been a very good chance that he would either be fired, or asked to resign, or, at a minimum, relieved of his new command when the Department of Public Property fi-nally found out what he had done.

That hadn't happened. The mayor had visited the Schoolhouse and liked what he found. And from a source Peter Wohl had in the Department of Public Property, Peter learned that the mayor had shortly thereafter visited the Department of Public Property and made it clear to the commissioner that he didn't want to hear any complaints, to him, or to the newspapers, about how the old Frankford Grammar School building had been repaired.

There were several reasons, Wohl had concluded, why the mayor could have chosen to do that. For one thing, it would have been politically embarrassing for him had there been a fuss in the newspapers. He had appointed Wohl to command Special Opera-tions, and look what happened!

Another possibility was that it was repayment of a debt of honor.

Peter didn't know all the details, or even many of them, but he had heard enough veiled references to be sure that when Jerry Carlucci had been an up-and-coming lieutenant and captain and inspector, Chief Inspector Augustus Wohl had gone out on the limb a number of times to save Carlucci's ass.

Another obvious possibility was that since Carlucci had saved his ass, he was now deeply in Carlucci's debt.

The last possibility was the nicest to consider, that the mayor un-derstood that while Peter was bending,

even breaking, the law he was not doing it for himself, but for the betterment of the Depart-ment. Peter didn't like to accept this possibility; it let him off the hook too easily.
The road to hell, or more precisely to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's penal system, was paved, his experience had taught him, if not entirely with good intentions, then with good intentions and the rationalization you aren't doing something really crooked, but rather something that other people do all the time and get away with.
"Is that all there is, Commissioner, one sergeant?"
"He just holds down the desk until there's a dignitary to pro-tect," Czernick said. "You didn't know?"
"No, sir. I didn't."
"You don't have any objections to this, Peter, do you?"
"No, sir. If you think this makes sense, I'll give it my best shot."
"If you run into problems, Peter, you know my door is always open."
"Yes, sir. I know that, and I appreciate it, Commissioner."
The commissioner stood up and offered his hand.
"Always good to see you, Peter," he said. "Ask my girl to send Inspector Porter and Captain Quaire in, will you?"

"Yes, sir."



"Harry, this is Detective Payne," Evelyn said. "He's been help-ing me. We just came from Darby Plymouth."
"How do you do?" Professor Glover said, and then blurted what was on his mind: "That's quite a police car."
"It's my car," Matt said. "I'm off duty."
"Oh," Professor Glover said.
"Well, if there's nothing else I can do for you, Mrs. Glover"
"You've already done more for me than I had any right to ex-pect," Evelyn said, and offered him her hand. "I don't know how to thank you."
"Don't mention it," Matt said. "Sorry you had the trouble. Nice to meet you, Professor."
"Yes," Professor Glover said.
Jesus Christ, he knows!
Matt got back in the Porsche, and backed out of the driveway. He glanced at the house and saw Professor Glover following his wife into the house.

Officer Paul O'Mara dropped Staff Inspector Wohl at a door over which was carved in stone, GIRLS'

ENTRANCE, at the former Frankford Grammar School, and then drove around to the cracked cement

now covering what at one time had been the lawn in front of the building and parked the Ford.

Captain Michael Sabara, a swarthy, acne-scarred, stocky man in his forties, who was wearing a white civilian shirt and yellow V-neck sweater, and Captain David Pekach, a slight, fair-skinned man of thirty-six, who was wearing the special Highway Patrol uniform, were both waiting for Wohl when he walked into his (for-merly the principal's) office.

Captain Mike Sabara was Wohl's deputy. He had been the senior lieutenant in Highway, and awaiting promotion to captain when Captain Dutch Moffitt had been killed. He had naturally expected to step into Moffitt's shoes. Dave Pekach, who had been in Narcot-ics, had just been promoted to captain, and transferred to Special Operations.

Enraging many of the people in Highway, including, Wohl was sure, Mike Sabara, he had named Sabara his deputy and given Highway to Pekach. But that had been almost a year ago, and it had worked out well. It had probably taken Sabara, Wohl thought, no more than a week to realize that the alternative to his being named Wohl's deputy was a transfer elsewhere in the Department, and probably another month to believe what Wohl had told him when he took over Special Operations, that he would be of greater use-fulness to the Department as his deputy than he would have been commanding Highway.

Wohl understood the Highway mystique. He still had in his closet his Highway sergeant's leather jacket and soft-crowned billed cap, unable to bring himself to sell, or even give them away, although there was absolutely no way he would ever wear either again. But it had been time for Sabara to take off his Highway breeches, and for Pekach, who had worn a pigtail in his plain-clothes Narcotics assignment, to get back in uniform.

"Good morning, Inspector," they said, almost in chorus.

Wohl smiled and motioned for them to follow him into his of-fice.

"I hope you brought your notebooks," he said. "I have just come from the Fountain of All Knowledge."

"I don't like the sound of that," Sabara said.

Pekach closed the office door behind him.







"I don't think there will be time to do that before the Vice Pres-ident comes to town," Wohl said.
"I saw that in the papers," Malone said. "We're going to have that? There's not a hell of a lot of time"
"We'll have to manage somehow."
"Who are they going to move into command?" Malone asked. "Did the commissioner say?"
Wohl shook his head, no. He was more than a little embarrassed that he hadn't considered that.
"One of the chiefs probably," Mike Sabara said. "It's the Vice President."
"They're not going to move anybody in," Peter Wohl said, softly but firmly. "If this is a Special Operations responsibility, we'll be responsible."
"You'd be putting your neck on the line, Peter," Mike Sabara said. "Let them send somebody in, somebody who's familiar with this sort of operation."
"Let them send someone in here with the authority to tell our people what to do?" Wohl replied. "No way, Mike. We'll do it. Dis-cussion closed."

Corporal Vito Lanza had not been the star pupil in Bishop John Newmann High School's Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced Typ-ing courses, but he had tried hard enough not to get kicked out of the class. Being dropped from Typing would have meant assign-ment as a library monitor (putting books back on shelves), or as a laboratory monitor (washing all that shit out of test tubes and Erlenmeyer flasks), neither of which had great appeal to him.

Almost despite himself, he had become a fairly competent typ-ist, a skill he thought he would never use in real life after gradua-tion, and certainly not as a cop, chasing criminals down the street on his Highway Patrol Harley-Davidson motorcycle.

There was a two-and-a-half-year period after graduation from Bishop Newmann High, until he turned twenty-one and could ap-ply for the cops, during which Vito had had a number of jobs. He worked in three different service stations, worked in a taxi garage, and got a job cleaning Eastern airliners between flights at the air-port. He hated all of them, and prayed after he took the Civil Service Examination for the cops that he would not be found wanting.

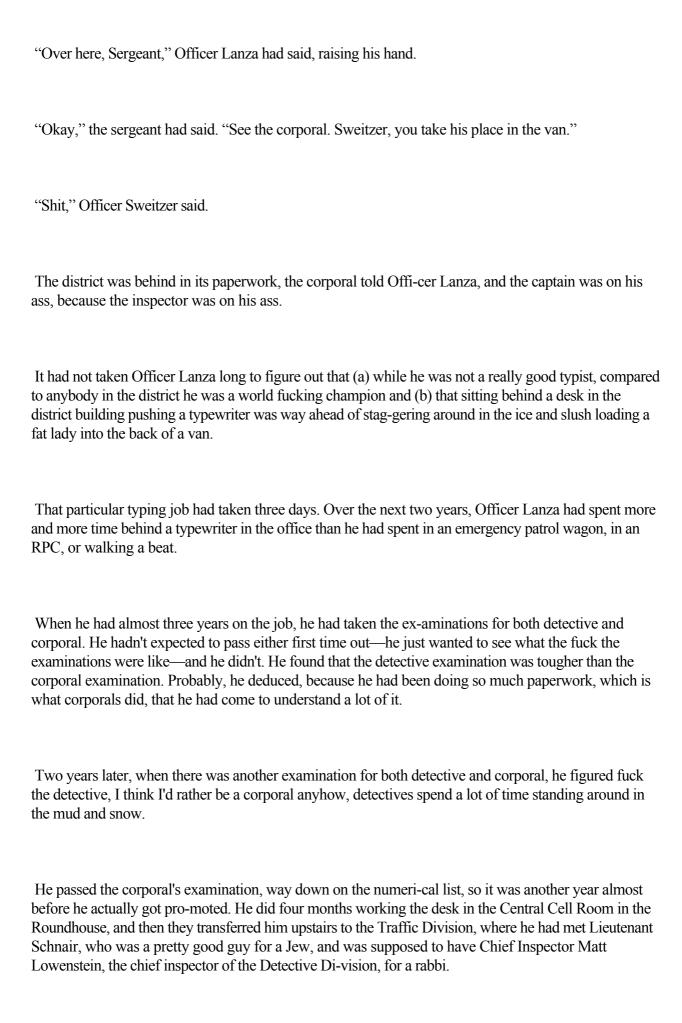
Officer Lanza had quickly learned that being a cop was not what he thought it would be. Right out of the Academy, he had been as-signed to the 18th District at 55th and Pine Streets. He spent eight months riding around the district in a battered Ford van, with an-other rookie police officer. Hauling prisoners (a great many of whom were drunks, not even guys who'd done a stickup) from where they had been arrested to the holding cells in the District Station was not exactly what he'd had in mind when he had be-come a law enforcement officer. Neither was hauling sick people from their houses to a hospital.

(Philadelphia Police, unlike the police of other major American cities, respond to every call for help. The citizens of Philadelphia have learned over the years that what one does when Junior falls off the porch and cracks his head open, or Grandma falls on an icy sidewalk, or Mama scalds herself with boiling water on the stove, is to call the cops.)

And Vito learned that while it was certainly possible that he could become a Highway Patrolman and race around the streets on a Harley, or in one of the antennae-festooned special Highway Ra-dio Patrol Cars, fighting crime, that would have to be some time in the future. After he had four, five, sixgood years on the job, he could apply for Highway. It was police folklore—which is not al-ways accurate—that unless you had done something spectacular, like personally catch a bank robber, or unless you knew somebody in Highway, or had a rabbi, some white shirt who liked you, your chances of getting in Highway were about as good as they were to win the Irish Sweepstakes.

But one night, after he had been pushing the van for eight months, the sergeant at roll call had asked, "Does anybody know how to type good?"

Vito had always thought that typing was something girls did, and was reluctant to publicly confess that he could do that sort of thing, but maybe it would get him out of the fucking van for the night.



Obviously, pushing a typewriter for the Traffic Division in the Roundhouse was a lot better than standing in the snow and blowing your whistle at tractor trailers at some accident scene for the Traf-fic Division, and Vito tried hard to please Lieutenant Schnair.

When Schnair got promoted to captain, and they gave him the Airport Unit (which, so far as Vito was concerned, proved Chief Lowenstein was his rabbi), he arranged for Corporal Lanza to be transferred to Airport too, after one of the corporals there got him-self killed driving home from the shore.

It was a good job. All he had to do was keep on top of the paperwork, and everybody left him alone. The lieutenants and the sergeants and the other corporals knew how good he got along with Captain Schnair. If he came in a little late, or left a little early, no one said anything to him.

It never entered Corporal Vito Lanza's mind to ask permission to leave his desk in the Airport Unit office at 11:15. He simply*told* the lieutenant on duty, Lieutenant Ardell, that he was going to lunch.

He would get back when he got back. He was going to have a real lunch, not a sandwich or a hot dog, which meant getting out of the airport, where they charged crazy fucking prices. Just because he had a bundle of Las Vegas money was no excuse to pay five dol-lars for something worth two-fifty.

The Buick surprised him by starting right off. Now that he was going to dump the sonofabitch, it had decided to turn reliable. It was like when you went to the dentist, your teeth stopped hurting.

Thinking of dumping the Buick reminded him that he was sup-posed to meet Antoinette after work and go see her uncle, who had a car lot. He'd told her, of course, that he'd had a little luck in Vegas and was going to look around for a Caddy, and she told him her uncle had a car lot with a lot of Caddys on it.

He hadn't been sure then whether she had been trying to be nice to him, or just steering her uncle some business. After she'd taken him to her apartment, he decided that she really did like him, and maybe this thing with her uncle would turn out all right.

It also made him feel like a fool for slipping that bimbo in Vegas two hundred dollars. He didn't really have to pay for it, and now he couldn't understand why he had. Except, of course, that he was on a high from what had happened at the tables.

Antoinette had told him her uncle's car lot was one of those in the "Auto Mall" at 67th Street and Essington Avenue. Just past the ballpark on South Broad, he decided that it wouldn't hurt to just drive past the uncle's car lot, it wasn't far, to see what he had. If he was some sleaze-ball with a dozen cars or so, that would mean that Antoinette was trying to push some business his way, and when he saw her after work, he would tell her he had made other arrange-ments. Tell her nice. The last thing in the world he wanted to do was piss her off. She was really much better in the sack than the bimbo in Vegas he'd given the two hundred dollars to.

Fierello's Fine Cars, on Essington Avenue, was no sleaze opera-tion. Vito thought there must be a hundred, maybe a hundred fifty cars on the lot, which was paved and had lights and everything and even a little office building that was a real building, not just a trailer. And there were at least twenty Caddys, and they all looked like nearly new.

He drove past it twice, and then started back to the airport. He didn't get the real lunch he started out to get—he stopped at Ore-gon Steaks at Oregon Avenue and Juniper Street and had a sausage and peppers sandwich and a beer—but he was in a good mood and it didn't bother him. Not only was he probably going to drive home tonight in a new Caddy, but on the way, the odds were that he might spend some time in Antoinette's apartment.

He was still on a roll, no question about it.

Marion Claude Wheatley, the Hon. Jerry Carlucci, and Detective M. M. Payne all had lunch at the Union League Club on South Broad Street, but not together.

Mr. Wheatley was the guest of Mr. D. Logan Hammersmith, Jr., who was a vice president and senior trust officer of the First Penn-sylvania Bank & Trust Company and who, like Mr. Wheatley, held an MBA from the University of Pennsylvania.

Mr. Hammersmith did not really know what to think of Mr. Wheatley beyond the obvious, which was that he was one hell of an analyst; not only was his knowledge of the petrochemical indus-try encyclopedic, but he had demonstrated over the years a remark-able ability to predict upturns and downturns. Acting on Mr. Wheatley's recommendations, Mr. Hammersmith had been able to make a lot of money for the trusts under his control, and he was perfectly willing to admit that this success had been

a factor, in-deed a major factor, in his recent promotion to senior trust officer, which carried with it the titular promotion to vice president.

(While he was willing to concede that it was true that First Phil-adelphia dispensed titular promotions instead of salary increases, it was, nevertheless, rather nice to have the bronze name plate read-ing D. LOGAN HAMMERSMITH, JR. VICE PRESIDENT sitting on his desk.)

Logan Hammersmith was not the only one around First Phila-delphia who had noticed that M. C. Wheatley had never married. But there never had been any talk that he was perhaps light on his feet. For one thing, the contents of his personnel file, although they were supposed to be confidential, were well known. One is not prone to jump to the conclusion that someone who has served, with great distinction, was twice wounded and three times decorated, as an Army officer in Vietnam is a fag simply because he has not marched to the marriage altar.

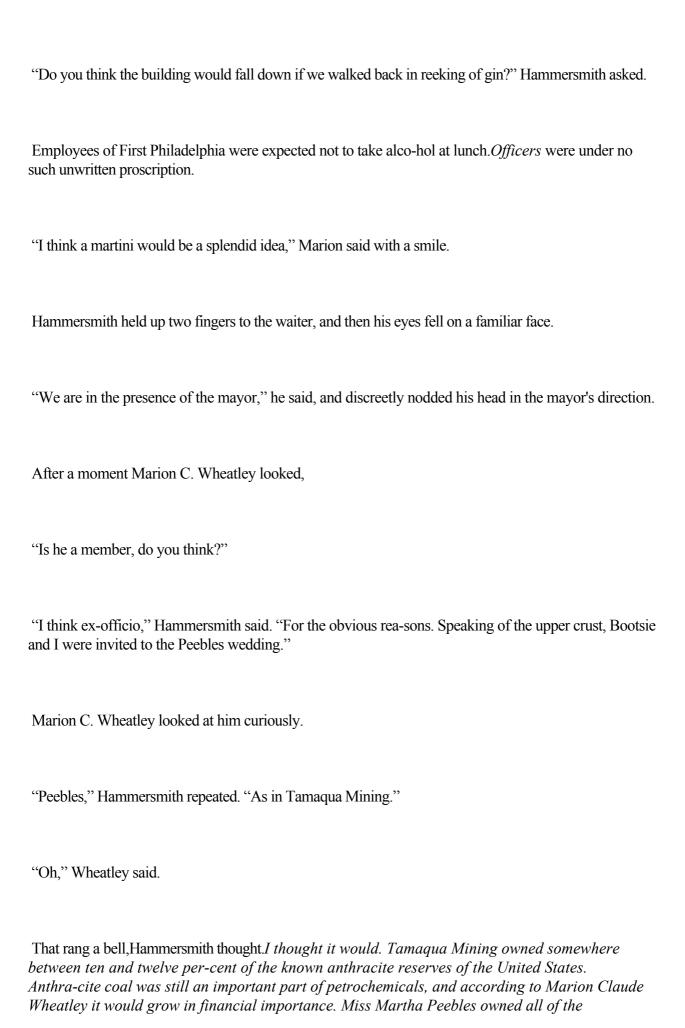
And he didn't have effeminate mannerisms, either. He drank his whiskey straight and sometimes smoked cigars. Hammersmith's final, best guess was that Wheatley was either very shy, and incapable of pursuing women, or, more likely, asexual.

And, of course, for all that anybody really knew, Marion Claude Wheatley might be carrying on, discreetly, with a married woman, or for that matter with a belly dancer in Atlantic City. He had a country place, a farm, or what had years before been a farm, ac-quired by inheritance, in that area of New Jersey known as the Pine Barrens. He spent many of his weekends there, and presumably his summer vacations.

Hammersmith, over the years, had had Marion C. Wheatley out to the house in Bryn Mawr a number of times for dinner. His be-havior had been impeccable. He'd brought the right sort of wine as a gift, and he didn't get plastered, or try to grope some shapely knee under the table. But he was not a brilliant, or even mediocre, conversationalist. He was, as Bootsie (Mrs. D. Logan, Jr.) Hammersmith had put it, a crashing bore.

It had been, Hammersmith thought, as he handed the menu back and told the waiter he'd have the Boston scrod, well over a year since Wheatley had been out to the house. He would have to do something about that.

"I think the same for me, please," Marion C. Wheatley said.



outstanding shares of Tamaqua Mining, and Wheatley would know that.
After a moment Marion Claude Wheatley asked, "Is that in a trust?"
"No. She manages it herself. With Mawson, Payne, Stockton, McAdoo & Lester's assistance of course."
"You know her, then?" Wheatley asked.
Hammersmith was pleased they had found something to talk about. Making conversation with Wheatley was often difficult. Or impossible.
"No. I know the brother. Alexander Peebles, Jr."
Wheatley's face showed that he didn't understand.
"When the old man died, he, in the classic phrase, cut the boy off without a dime. There is an unpleasant story that the son, how should I phrase this delicately?"
"He's a fairy," Marion Claude Wheatley said. "Now that you mention it, I've heard that."
I don't think he would have used that word if he was queer him-self.
"Not from me," Hammersmith said. "Anyway, he left every-thing to the daughter. There was a nasty law suit but he was up against Mawson, Payne, Stockton, McAdoo & Lester, and he lost. Then the sister set up a trust fund for him. With us. Specifically with me. We couldn't have Alexander Peebles, Jr., sleeping in the subway."
"And he invited you?"

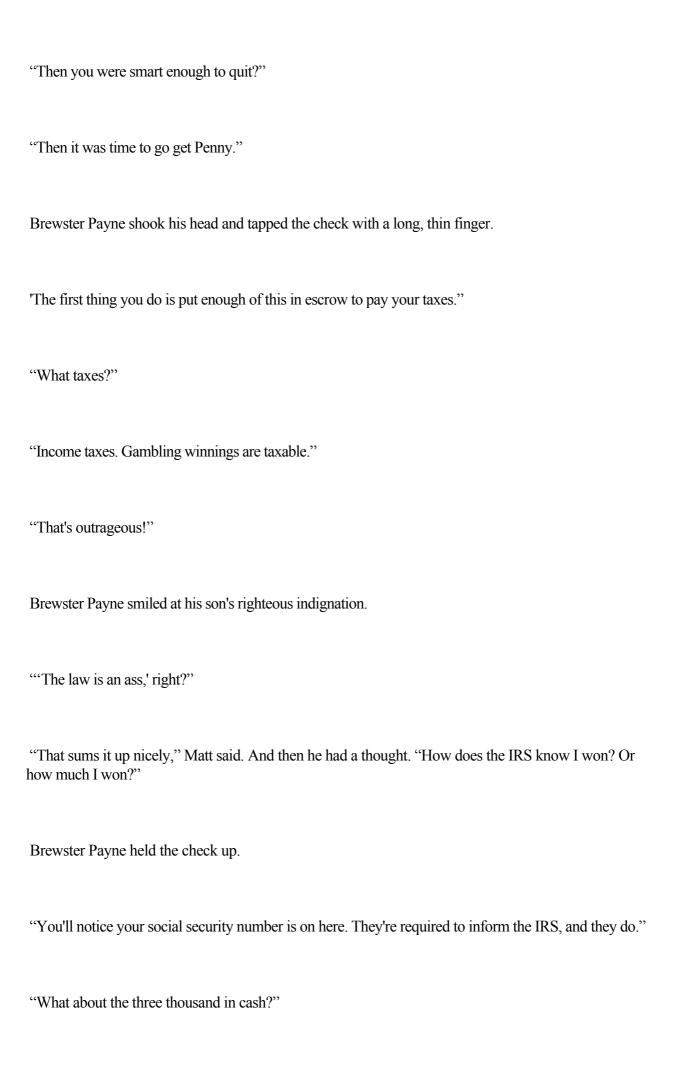


"You don't have a motorcycle and a large pistol. The lady prob-ably wouldn't have been interested in you."
"I could have gone out and bought them," Marion Claude Wheatley said. "In a good cause."
He smiled at Hammersmith and Hammersmith smiled back. He was pleased that he had decided to take Wheatley to lunch. There was no longer a gnawing suspicion that Wheatley was queer. It could have been awkward at First Philadelphia if that had come out. Everyone knew that he relied heavily on Wheatley's advice, and there would have been talk if something embarrassing had developed.
EIGHT
Detective Matthew M. Payne was the guest of Brewster C. Payne for lunch at the Union League. On the way into Philadelphia from Upper Darby, while pumping gas into the Porsche, he had seen a pay telephone and remembered that his father had left a message on the answering machine to which he had not responded. He'd called him, and been invited to lunch.
He had hung up the phone thinking that virtue was its own re-ward. He had nobly been the dutiful son, and only in the middle of the conversation realized that his father would have the solution to what he should do with his Las Vegas winnings.
Brewster Payne arrived first and was asked by the headwaiter how many would be in his party.
"Just my son, Charley."
"Then you wouldn't mind sitting at a small table?"

"Not at all."	
One of the prerogatives of being a member of the Board of Gov-ernors was being able to walk into the dining room anytime before twelve-thirty without a reservation and finding a good four-place table with RESERVED sign on it was available to you.	
Brewster Payne had just been served, without having to ask for it, a Famous Grouse with an equal amount of water and just a little ice, when he saw his son stop at the entrance and look around for him.	
He thought, as he very often did, it is incredible that that well-dressed, very nice young man is a policeman with a gun concealed somewhere on his person. A gun, even more incredibly, with which he has killed two people.	
Matt spotted him and smiled and walked across the room. Brew-ster Payne got to his feet and extend his hand. At the last mo-ment, he moved his hand to his son's shoulders and gave him a brief hug.	led
"I didn't know how long I would have to wait, so I ordered a drink."	
"I am ninety seconds late, just for the record."	
A waiter appeared.	
"I'll have a Tuborg, please," Matt ordered.	
"Your sister is annoyed with you."	
"Anything else new?"	

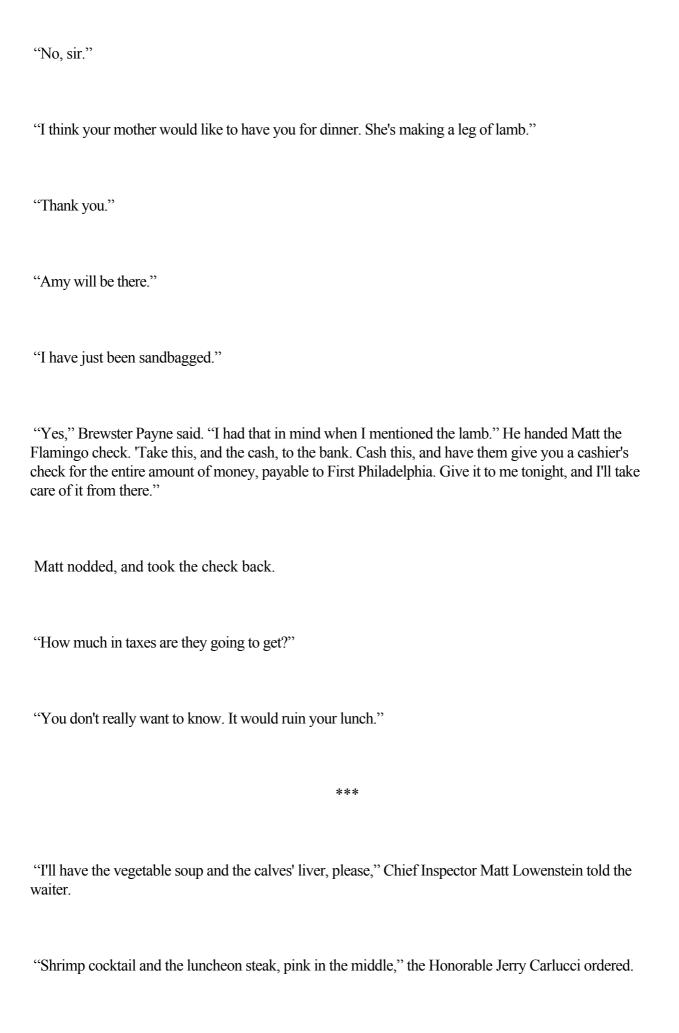




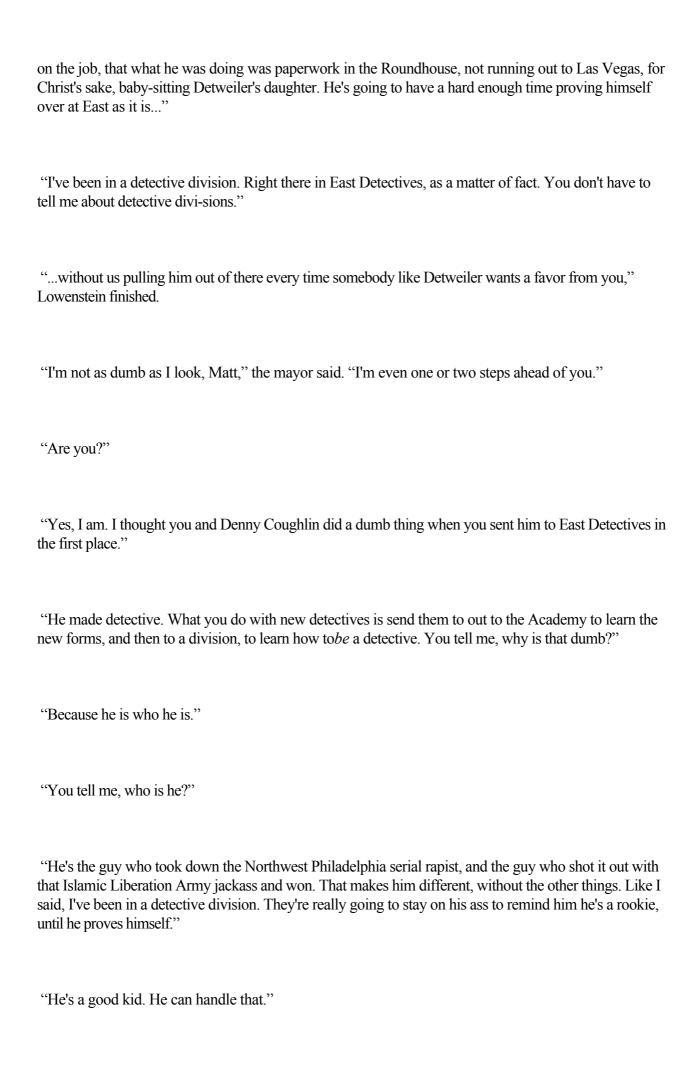


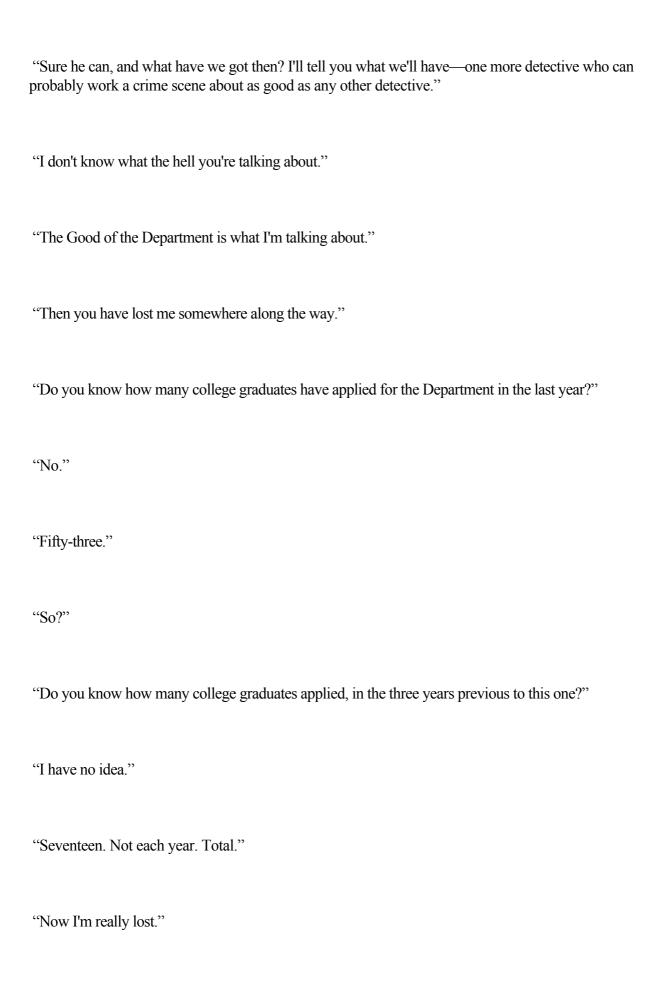


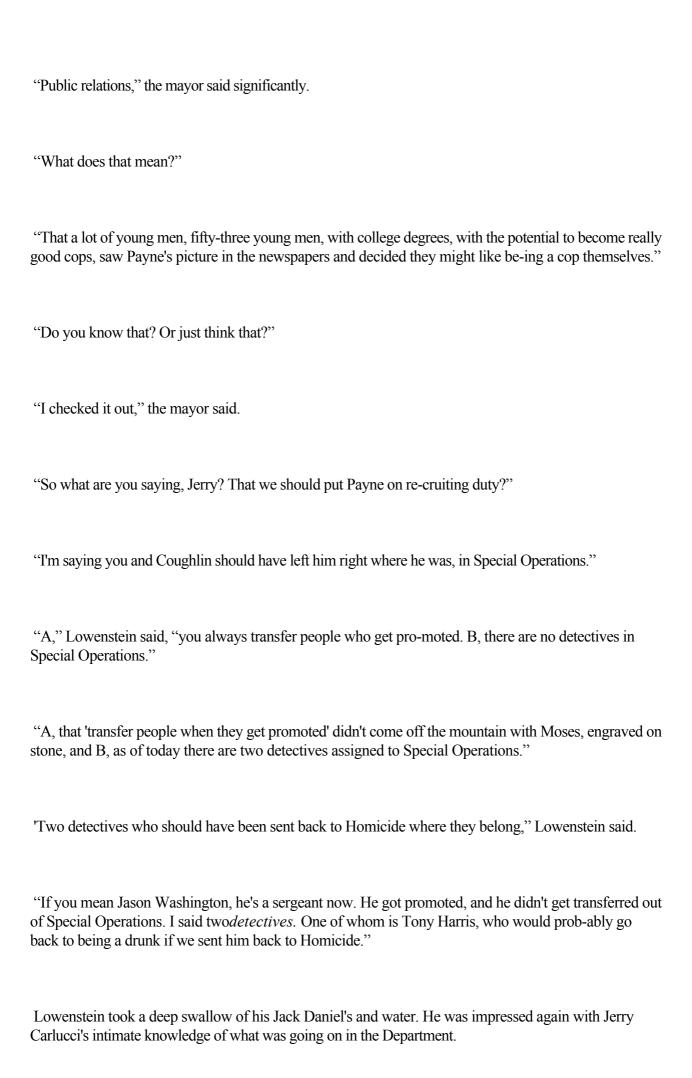




When the waiter had gone, the mayor said, "You should have had the shrimp and steak. I'm buying."
"Most of the time when you say you're buying I wind up with the check. Besides, I like the way they do liver in here."
"I had a call from H. Richard Detweiler this morning," the mayor said.
"And?"
"And he said he wanted me to know he was very grateful for our letting the Payne kid go out there and bring his daughter home, and if there was ever anything he could for me I should not hesitate to let him know."
"You should hold off calling that marker in until you're running for governor or the Senate. Or the White House."
"All I want to do is be mayor of Philadelphia."
"Isn't that what you said when they appointed you police com-missioner? That all you wanted to be was commissioner?"
"What is this, Beat Up On Jerry Carlucci Day?"
"You want a straight answer to that?"
"No, lie to me."
"I sent word to Payne to meet me in my office at half past one. I'm going to tell him, when he goes back







Detectives Jason Washington and Tony Harris, in Lowenstein's judgment the two best Homicide detectives, had been "temporar-ily" assigned to the then newly formed Special Operations Divi-sion when Mayor Carlucci had taken away the Northwest serial rapist job from Northwest Detectives and given it to Peter Wohl.

Other special jobs had come up, and they had never gone back to Homicide, which had been a continuing source of annoyance to Matt Lowenstein. The only good thing about it was that Tony Har-ris seemed to have gotten his bottle problem under control working for Wohl. Until just now, Matt Lowenstein had believed that Har-ris's boozing was known to only a few people, not including the mayor.

"You said 'two detectives," Lowenstein said, finally. "The other one's name is Payne, right?"

"You're a clever fellow. Maybe you should be a detective or something," Jerry Carlucci said.

Lowenstein did not reply.

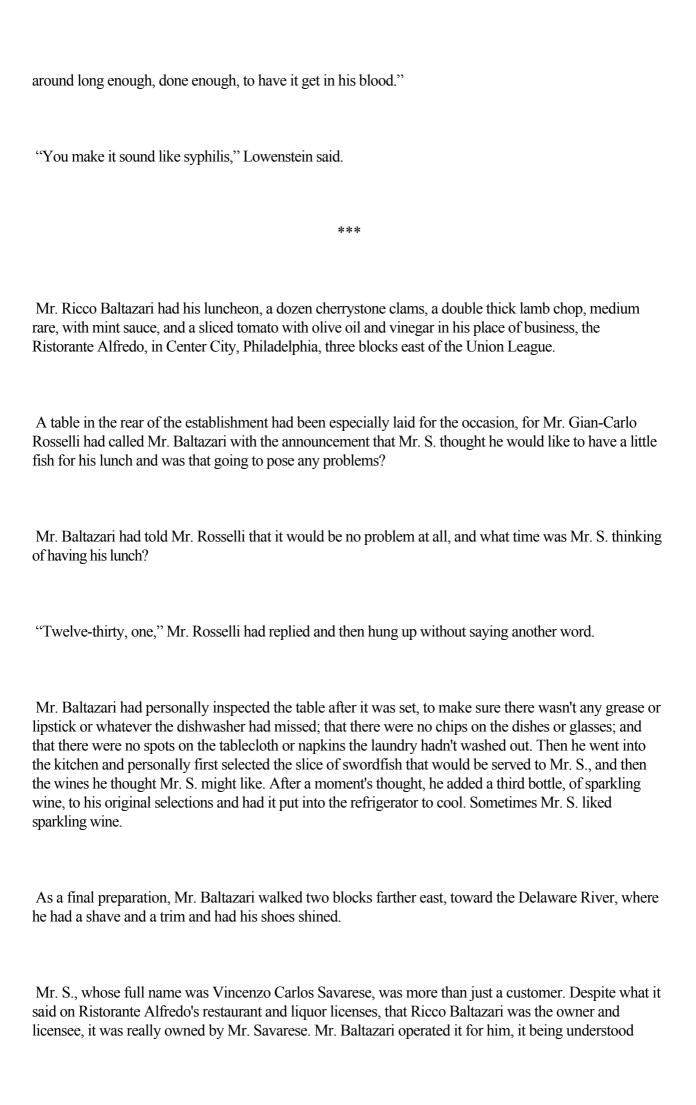
"He can learn as much watching Washington and Harris as he could have learned in East Detectives, and probably quicker," Carlucci said. "And he'll be available, without a lot of bullshit and resentment, the next time the Department needs to do somebody who can do the Department a lot of good a favor."

"Oh, shit," Matt Lowenstein said.

"You don't like it?" the mayor said. There was just a hint of coldness in his voice.

"What I don't like is that you're right," Lowenstein said. "It wasn't fair to either East Detectives or Payne to send him there. I don't know if he'll stay on the job or not, but if he does, it wouldn't be at East Detectives."

"I thought about that too," Carlucci said. "Whether he would stay. I decided he would. He's been



between them that no matter what it said on the books about salary and profits, that Mr. S. was to be paid, in cash, once a month, fifty percent of gross receipts less the cost of food, liquor, rent, salaries, and laun-dry.

Out of his fifty percent, Mr. Baltazari was expected to pay all other expenses. Anything left over after that was his.

There was no written agreement. They were men of honor, and it was understood between them that if it ever came to Mr. S.'s atten-tion that Mr. Baltazari had been fucking with the books, taking cash out of the register, or in any other way, no matter how, depriv-ing Mr. S. of his full return on his investment, Mr. Baltazari could expect to find himself floating facedown in the Delaware River, or stuffed into the trunk of his Cadillac with twenty-dollar bills in-serted into his nostrils and other cranial cavities.

Mr. Savarese, a slightly built, silver-haired, superbly tailored and shod man in his early sixties, arrived at Ristorante Alfredo at five minutes to one. He took great pride in his personal appearance, believing that a businessman, such as himself, should look the part.

He had, ten years before, arranged the immigration from Rome of a journeyman gentlemen's tailor and set him up in business in a downtown office building. At Mr. S.'s recommendation, a number of his business associates had begun to patronize the tailor, and he had found financial security and a good life in the new world. It was understood between the tailor and Mr. Savarese that the tailor would not offer to cut a suit for anyone else from a bolt of cloth from which he had cut a suit for Mr. Savarese.

Shoes were something else. Mr. Savarese was a good enough businessman to understand there was not a sufficient market in Philadelphia to support a custom bootmaker, no matter how skilled, so he had his shoes made in Palermo on a last carved there for him on a visit he had made years before attending the funeral of a great-aunt.

Mr. Savarese did not own an automobile, and rarely drove him-self, although he took pains to make sure his driver's license did not lapse. The Lincoln sedan in which he arrived at Ristorante Alfredo was owned by Classic Livery, which supplied limousines to the funeral trade, and which was owned, in much the same sort of arrangement as that which Mr. Savarese had with Mr. Baltazari vis-à-vis Ristorante Alfredo, by Mr. Paulo Cassandro. Mr. Cassandro, as now, habitually assigned his brother, Pietro, to drive the automobile he made available for Mr. Savarese's use.

Mr. Savarese, as now, was habitually accompanied by Mr. Gian-Carlo Rosselli, a tall, heavyset gentleman in his middle thirties.

When the Lincoln pulled to the curb before the marquee of Ristorante Alfredo, Mr. Rosselli, who was riding in the front seat, got out of the car and walked around the front to the sidewalk. He glanced up and down the street, and then nodded at Mr. Cassandro. Mr. Cassandro then got from behind the wheel and opened the rear door for Mr. Savarese.

By the time Mr. Savarese reached the door of the restaurant, Mr. Rosselli had pulled the door open for him. He stepped inside, where Mr. Baltazari was waiting for him. They shook hands. Mr. Baltazari was always very careful when shaking hands with Mr. Savarese, for his hands were very large and strong, and Mr. Savarese's rather deli-cate. Mr. Savarese played the violin and the violoncello, primarily for his own pleasure, but sometimes for friends, say at a wedding or an anniversary celebration. It was considered a great honor to have him play at such gatherings.

Mr. Baltazari led Mr. Savarese and Mr. Rosselli to the table, where the maitre d'hotel was standing behind the chair in which Mr. Savarese would sit, and a waiter (not the wine steward; that sonofabitch having this day, of all goddamned days, with Mr. S. coming in, called in sick) stood before two wine coolers on legs.

Mr. Savarese sat down, and the headwaiter pushed his chair in for him. He looked up at Mr. Rosselli, who was obviously waiting for direction, and made a little gesture with his hand, signaling that Mr. Rosselli should sit down.

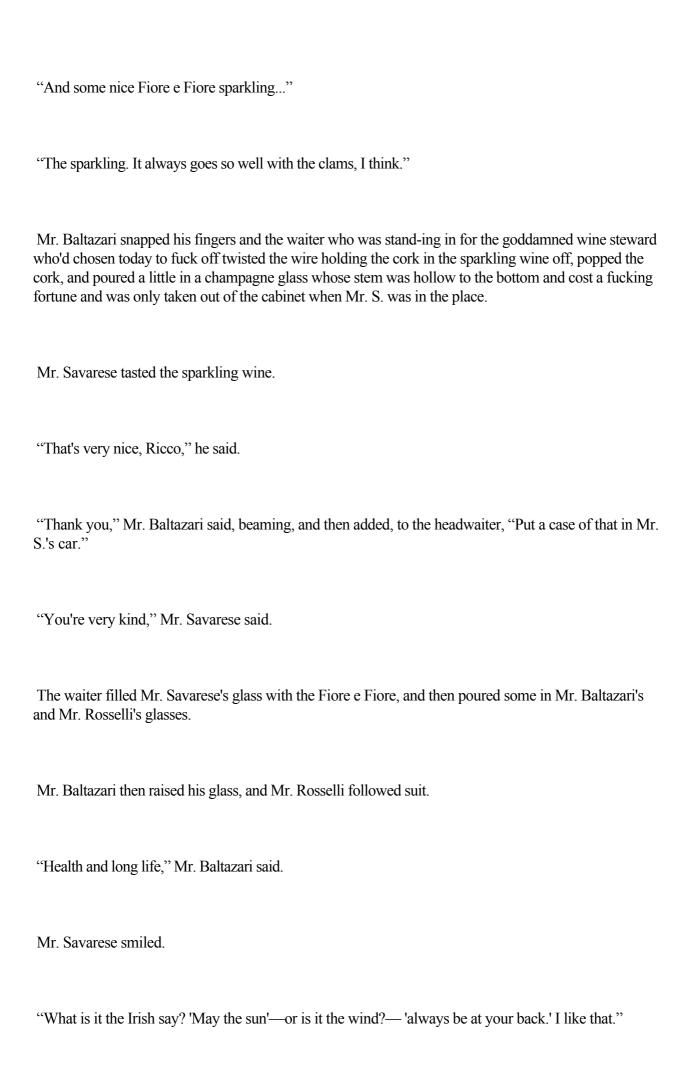
"What are you going to feed me, Ricco?" Mr. Savarese asked with a smile.

"I thought some cherrystones," Mr. Baltazari said. "And there is some very nice swordfish?"

"I leave myself in your hands."

"I have a nice white wine..."

"Anything you think..."



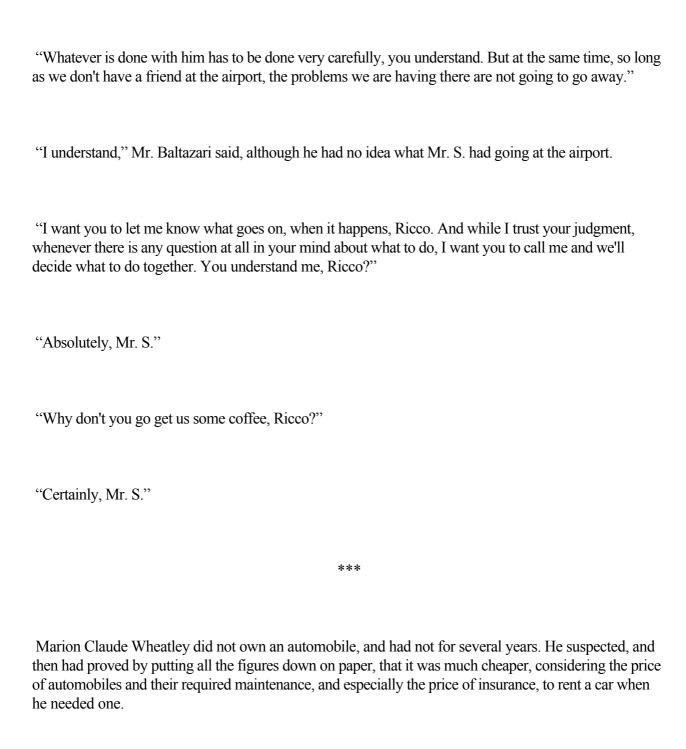






"Is this police officer married?" Mr. Savarese asked.
"I don'tknow, Mr. S. He told Antoinette he's a bachelor."
"It would be better, if he was married," Mr. Savarese said.
"I'll find out for sure and let you know, Mr. S. Anyway, I figured if this wasn't such a hot idea, no harm. So I called Joe, and told him"
"What you should have done, Ricco," Mr. Savarese said, "was call me and let me talk to Joe."
"I wasn't sure if you would have time to talk with me today, Mr. S."
"Joe called me," Mr. Savarese said, "and asked exactly what was going on. I didn't know, and that was very embarrassing. So I told him I would talk to you and get back to him."
"If I stepped out of line, Mr. S., I'm really sorry. But like I said, I figured no harm"
Mr. Savarese interrupted Mr. Baltazari by holding up the hand with the fork in it.
"Gian-Carlo," he said. "Get on the phone to Joe. Tell him there was a slight misunderstanding. Tell him I have absolute faith in Ricco's judgment."
Mr. Rosselli laid down his knife and fork and pushed himself away from the table.
"There's a pay station in the candy store on the corner," Mr. Savarese said.





And the inconveniences—particularly that of getting groceries from the supermarket checkout counter to the house—were over-whelmed by the elimination of annoyances not owning an automobile provided.

Paying his automobile insurance had especially annoyed him. There were, he was quite sure, actuarial reasons for the insurance company's classifications of people they insured. They were, after all, a business, not a charitable organization. Statistically, it could be proved that an unmarried male between twenty-one and thirty-five living in Philadelphia could be expected to cost the insurance company far more in settling claims than a thirty-six-year-old who was married and lived, say, in New Hope or Paoli. But there was an exception to every rule, and they should have acknowledged that.

He had never had a traffic violation in his life, had never been in-volved in an accident, and did not use his automobile to commute to work. He drove it back and forth to the supermarket and every month to New Jersey to check on the farm. Sometimes, on rare oc-casions, such as when Hammersmith, or someone like him, felt ob-liged to have him to dinner, he drove it at night out to Bryn Mawr, or someplace.

But most of the time the car had sat in the garage, letting its bat-tery discharge.

He had tried to make this point to his insurance broker, who had not only been unsympathetic to his reasoning but had practically laughed at him.

He had solved both problems by selling the car and changing in-surance brokers. Marion believed that when you know something is right, you do it.

And he had learned that while renting a car wasn't as cheap as the rental companies advertising would have one believe, it was possible, by carefully reading the advertisements and taking advantage of discounts of one kind or another, to rent a car at per-fectly reasonable figures.

When he returned to his office from having lunch with Hammer-smith at the Union League, he spent the next forty-five minutes calling around and arranging a car for the weekend. The best price was offered, this time, by Hertz. If he picked up the car at the air-port, not downtown, after six-thirty on Friday, and returned it not later than eleven-thirty on Saturday, they would charge him for only one twenty-four-hour day, providing he did not add more than two hundred miles to the odometer. They would also provide him a "standard" size car, for the price of a "compact."

It averaged between 178.8 and 192.4 miles, round trip (he didn't really understand why there should be a difference, unless the odometers themselves were inaccurate) from the airport to the farm, so he would be within the 200-mile limitation. And since he was getting a standard-sized car, that meant he could conceal the equipment he was taking to the farm in the trunk.

Marion Claude Wheatley knew enough about explosives to know that the greater distance one can put between detonators and explosives the better. He didn't think the Lord would cause an acci-dent now, but it was better to be safe than sorry. Marion knew that the Lord would probably not be at all forgiving, if through his own carelessness he had an accident, and hurt—or disintegrated—himself while having a

test run of the demolition program for the Vice President at the farm.

The only risky part would be getting from the house to the air-port in the taxicab to pick up the car. He would have to have the detonators, half a dozen of them, in his suit jacket breast pocket. They were getting pretty old now, and with age came instability. There were half a dozen ways in which they could be inadvertently set off. He would carry the Composition C-4 in his attaché case, as usual. The cabdriver might look askance if he asked to put the attaché case in the trunk, with the suitcases, particularly if it was a small taxi, and there would not be a lot of room.

The risk was that something would set off one of the detonators. If that happened, it was a certainty that the other five detonators would also detonate. The technical phrase was "sympathetic detonation." If one detonator went off, and then, microseconds later, the other five, it was a possibility, even a likelihood, that the Com-position C-4 would detonate sympathetically.

It was a risk that would have to be taken. The more he thoughtabout it, the less worried he became. If something happened in the taxicab, the Lord, who knew everything, would understand that he had been doing the best he knew how. And if he permitted Marion to be disintegrated, who would be available to disintegrate the Vice President?

NINE

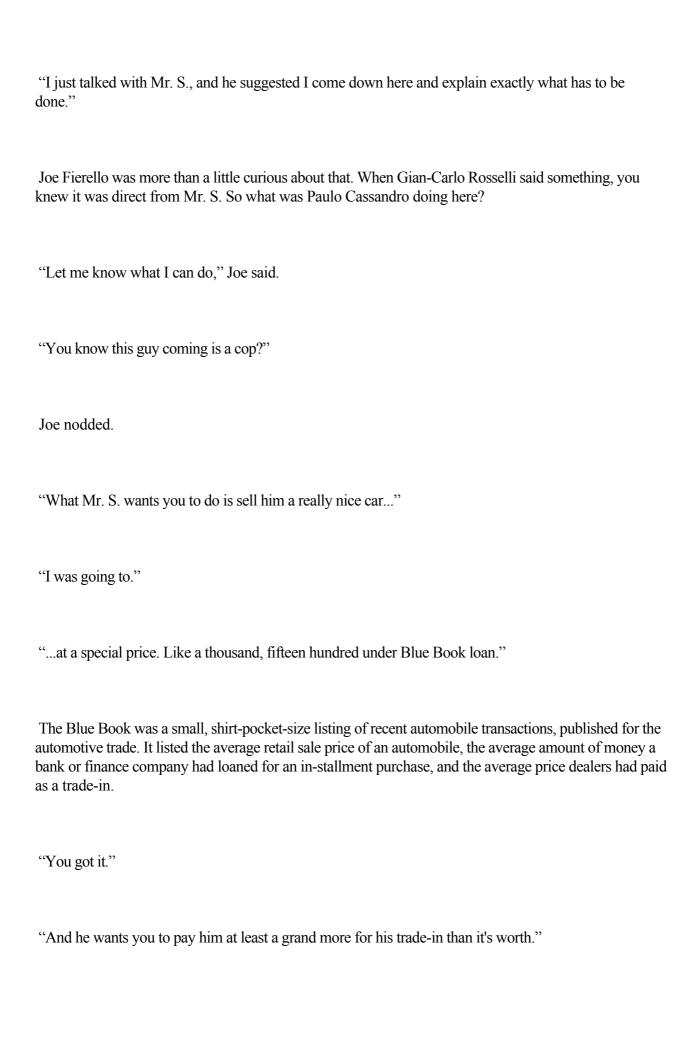
Joe Fierello did not like Paulo Cassandro. The sonofabitch had al-ways been arrogant, long before he'd made his bones and become a made man, and now he was fucking insufferable. Joe didn't really understand why they had made the sonofabitch a made man.

But that didn't matter. What was was, and you don't let a made man know that you think he's really an ignorant asshole.

"Paulo!" Joe called happily when, around half past two, Paulo got out of the back seat of his Jaguar sedan and walked up to the of-fice. "How are you, pal? What can I do for you?"

"A mutual friend wanted to make sure that nothing goes wrong when your niece comes in later."

"Nothing will, Paulo. I talked with Gian-Carlo not more than a hour ago."





"It's what they call a comp," Paulo explained. "This place is owned by a friend of Mr. S.'s. Let's say, for example, they buy a case of soap to wash the dishes. Or two cases, something worth a couple of hundred bucks, Instead of paying them cash, the lodge people give them one of these. <i>Retail</i> , it's worth more than the two hundred. <i>Cost-wise</i> maybe a hundred. So the guy who came up with the soap gets more than the soap is worth, and the lodge peo-ple get the soap for less than the guy wanted. <i>Capisce</i> ?"
"I seen a comp coupon before, Paulo," Joe said. "What I was asking was, is this cop gonna be a tennis player? Or a golf player?"
"He gets to take the girl to a hotel," Paulo said. "He don't give a fuck about golf." ,
Joe still looked confused, and Paulo took pity on him.
"There's a story going around, I personally don't know if it's true or not, that in some of these lodge places in the Poconos you can gamble in the back room."
Joe now nodded his understanding.
"You tell this guy you shoot a little craps at this place from time to time, and they sent you the comp coupon, and you can't use it, so he can have it."
"Right."
"Don't fuck this up, Joe. Mr. S. is personally interested in this."
"You tell Mr. S. not to worry."
"He's not worrying. I'm not worrying. You should be the one that's worrying."

Antoinette Marie Wolinski Schermer had moved back in with her parents when Eddie, that sonofabitch, had moved out on her and Brian, which was all she could do, suspecting correctly that getting child support out of Eddie was going to be like pulling teeth.

That hadn't worked out. Her mother, especially, and her father were Catholic and didn't believe in divorce no matter what a sonofabitch you were married to, no matter if he slapped you around whenever he had two beers in him. What they expected her to do was go to work, save her money, and wait around the house for the time when she could straighten things out with Eddie.

No going out, in other words.

She had met Ricco Baltazari in the Reading Terminal Market on Market Street. She had gone there for lunch, and so had he. She de-cided later, when she found out that he owned Ristorante Alfredo, which was before she found out that he was connected with the Mob, that he had probably got bored with the fancy food in his res-taurant and wanted a hot Italian sausage with onions and peppers, which was what she was having when she saw him looking at her.

She had noticed him too, saw that he was a really good-looking guy, that he was dressed real nice, and that when he paid for his sausage and pepper and onions, he had a wad of fifties and hun-dreds as thick as his thumb.

It probably had something to do, too, with what people said about opposites attracting. She was blonde (she only had to touch it up to keep it light, not dye it, the way most blondes had to) and fair-skinned, and he was sort of dark olive-skinned with really black hair.

The first time she noticed him, she wondered what it would be like doing it with him, never suspecting that she would find out that same night.

The first night, he picked her up outside work in his Cadillac and they went first to a real nice restaurant in Jersey, outside Cherry Hill, where everybody seemed to know him, and the manager or whatever sent

a bottle of champagne to the table. Ricco told her right out that he was married, but didn't get along with his old lady, but couldn't divorce her because his mother was old and a Catho-lic, and you know how Catholics feel about divorce.

After dinner, they went to a motel, not one of the el cheapos that lined Admiral Wilson Boulevard, but to the Cherry Hill Inn, which was real nice, and had in the bathroom the first whatchamacallit that Antoinette had ever seen. She had to ask Ricco what it was for.

The truth of the matter was that when he was driving her back to her parents' house she thought that she had blown it, that she had been too easy to pick up, that she had gone to the motel with him on the First Date, and that once there, she had been a little too en-thusiastic. She hadn't been with anybody in months, and the two whiskey sours and then the champagne and then the two Amaretto liqueurs afterward had put her more than a little into the bag.

Antoinette figured, in other words, that Ricco had got what he wanted (probably more than he expected) and that was the last she would ever see of him. She could have played it smarter, she sup-posed, but the vice versa was also true. She had got what she wanted too, a nice dinner, a nice ride in a Caddy, and then what happened in the motel, which she had needed and wanted from the moment she first saw him trying to look down her blouse.

But then a week later, when she walked out of the building after work, there he was at the curb, looking real nice, and smiling at her, and holding the door of his Caddy open for her.

He told her that he would have called her sooner, but his wife was being a bitch, and he couldn't arrange it. She told him that she understood, she had been married to someone like that herself, a real bastard.

He told her he would like to show her his restaurant, but that she understood why he couldn't do that, with his wife and all, and she told him she understood. The second night, they had gone to the bar in the Warwick Hotel, and then across the street to a bar that had a pi-ano player, and then back across the street to the Warwick, to a nice hotel suite he said a business associate kept all the time so he could use it when he was in town.

When she went home that night, her father and mother were waiting up for her like she was sixteen or seventeen, instead of a woman who was twenty-three and had a kid, and said she looked like a whore and smelled like a drunk and they weren't going to put up with that. And who was the Guinea in the Cadillac, some gang-ster?

The next time she saw Ricco, three days later, she told him what had happened, and that if they were going to do anything, they would have to do it early, so she wouldn't get hell when she got home.

He asked her why she still lived at home, and she told him about Eddie and Brian, and how Eddie, that sonofabitch, wasn't paying child support. He told her maybe something could be worked out; he would look into it.

The first thing that happened was that Eddie, out of the god-damned blue, sent a Western Union money order for four hundred bucks, which wasn't all he owed, of course, but was four hundred Antoinette didn't expect to get.

And then she heard from her mother that she had heard from Ed-die's mother that Eddie had gotten mugged going home from work, that two white guys had done a real job on him, knocked out a cou-ple of teeth, and broken his glasses and a couple of ribs, and taken all his money.

Antoinette wasn't stupid. She knew that the last thing Eddie would have done if he had got mugged and they took all his money would suddenly decide to send child support. And three days after the Western Union money order came, there was one from the Post Office, what he owed for two weeks child support, plus twenty dol-lars on account.

The only way Eddie would suddenly decide to start doing what was right was because somebody had convinced him that he better do right, and Antoinette suspected that Ricco was that somebody.

Ricco wouldn't admit it, of course, but what he said was that bastards who won't support their own children deserve whatever happens to them, like losing a couple of teeth.

The second thing that happened was that Ricco said he knew where she could get a nice apartment, a couple of blocks from the Warwick, the only problem being she couldn't have a kid in there. Antoinette told him it didn't matter whether she could have Brian or not, on what the phone company was paying her, she couldn't afford it. He said he would be happy to help out with the whole thing.

Her mother and father threw a fit when she said she was moving out, and her father said he knew it had something to do with that Guinea gangster with the shiny Cadillac, and her mother said she was making

the mistake of her life, because Eddie was straighten-ing himself out, like for example paying the child support for one thing. But she moved out anyway, and came to believe that her mother and father were really glad she had, because that way, ex-cept when she saw him on weekends, they had Brian all to them-selves.

The apartment was nice, and Ricco not only picked up the rent, but was always slipping her a fifty or a hundred and telling her to buy herself something. She knew that she was kidding herself whenever she thought about maybe getting him to marry her. He was going to stay married to his Guinea princess for ever.

The only thing that had ever really bothered her was the first time he told her that he had a friend from Chicago that was coming to town and he wanted her to be very nice to him, and she knew what very nice meant. That made her feel like a hooker, but she had just moved into the apartment, and couldn't just move back home again, so she did it. It wasn't as bad as she thought, the guy was nicer than she thought he would be, and to tell the truth, he was pretty good between the sheets, and when he went back to Chi-cago, Ricco handed her four fifties and told her to buy herself a cheese-steak or something.

And it didn't happen often, maybe two, three, four times a year. It wasn't as if he was telling her to go stand on a sidewalk some-place and wink at strange men, just be very nice to people who were important to Ricco. That didn't seem to be, considering, all that much for him to ask of her.

This Vito Lanza the cop was something else. This was the first time something like this had happened. But if Ricco wanted her to do it, it was important. And what the hell, the truth was Vito was kind of cute, and not too bad in the bedroom department, either. It wasn't as if he made her want to throw up, like that.

Ricco told her he wanted her to be very nice to Vito the cop until he told her different. He said the cop was in a position to be useful to some business associates of his, and part of that meant getting him to figure that he owed her something.

It was pretty clear to Antoinette that it had something to with his being a cop at the airport. They wanted him to be looking the other way when something happened, something like that. It wasn't as if they were *after* Vito, anything like that. If they were after him, the same thing that had happened to Eddie would already have hap-pened to him.

Vito was waiting for her outside the apartment in his Buick when she got home from work. He acted like he wanted to go up to the apartment with her, and then go see her Uncle Joe, but she told him that her

uncle expected them now, before he had to go home, and they could come back to the apartment later.

Take care of business first. Antoinette had learned that from Ricco. Ricco was always saying that.

Marion reached the farm about quarter to nine. There had been no cars on the highway when he turned off onto the dirt county road, and he encountered no cars on the dirt road as he drove to the farm.

There are approximately 1,200,000 acres in that portion of southern New Jersey known as the Pine Barrens. Statistically speaking, the built-up portions of southern New Jersey represent a very small fraction of the total land area. The term "Pine Barrens," Marion had learned, had been applied to the area from the earliest days of colonization. "Barrens" meant the area was barren, except for stunted pine trees.

There were some exceptions of course. Some people had ac-quired title to land within the Barrens with the intention of farming it. Some had succeeded, including, for a time, some of Marion's maternal ancestors. It was a mystery to Marion how they had man-aged to eke a living out of their double section (1,280 acres, more or less, as the deed described it) but there was no question that they had, from the early 1800s for almost a century.

The house, as closely as he had been able to determine, had been built circa 1810, and the farm had been in use until just before World War I. He had no idea why it had not been sold, but it hadn't, and it had come to him via inheritance.

For a long time, he had thought that the reason he had not sold it was because no one wanted it. The house was 6.3 miles from the nearest paved road. There was a well, but the water was foul-tasting, and while Marion did not pretend to understand things like this, he suspected it was somehow contaminated. The taxes were negligible, and he had simply kept the farm.

Now he knew, of course, that it hadn't been his decision at all, but the Lord's. The Lord had had plans for the farm all along.

The fences, except for vestiges here and there, had long ago dis-appeared, as had the wooden portions of the farmhouse, and the barns and other outlying structures. What was left was a three-room building, partly constructed from field stone and partly from crude brick.

Marion's father had replaced the windows in the building, and installed a tin roof when Marion was a little boy. Marion now un-derstood that his father had had some half-baked idea of making the farmhouse into some sort of vacation cabin, but that idea had sort of petered out. Marion's mother had not liked driving into the Pine Barrens to spend the weekend cooking on a camping stove and using an outside privy. There was absolutely nothing to do at the farm but sit around and talk and look out at stunted pine trees.

She had, he now understood, tried. She had planted various kinds of flowers and bushes, most of which had died, but some of which, roses and some bushes the names of which he had never known, had survived and even flourished. You couldn't see the farmhouse, behind the vegetation, until you were within a hundred yards.

There were unpaved roads running along the south and north property lines, maintained as little as possible by the county, who showed up once a year with road scrapers. There were two roads, more properly described as paths, leading from the unpaved roads. One of them led to the farmhouse, and the other, nothing more than earth beaten into two tracks, simply crossed between the two un-paved county roads.

When Marion reached the house, he parked the car behind the house, and then, using a flashlight to light his way, walked around to the front, unlocked the padlock, removed it from the hasp, and let himself in.

He flashed the light around the room. There were no signs of in-truders. Standing the flashlight on its end, he took a Coleman lan-tern from a shelf, filled the tank from a gallon can of Coleman Fluid, pumped it up and got it going. Then he extinguished the flashlight, and carried the Coleman lantern and the can of Coleman Fluid into the bedroom, where he repeated the fueling and lighting procedure for a second Coleman lantern.

He then returned to the front room, where he refueled a Coleman stove with Coleman liquid. Unless properly handled, the Coleman lanterns and stoves were dangerous. Marion could not understand why people were blind to that. The newspapers were always full of stories of people who were burned when they tried to refuel lan-terns and stoves while they were still hot.

He then went out to the rental car and brought the six detonators into the house. He carefully placed

them in a drawer of the dresser in the bedroom, lying them on a bed of work shirts and underwear, for a cushion under them, and then carefully placed more work shirts and underwear on top of them. Marion knew that there was no such thing as being too careful with detonators.

Then he returned to the car again, took his suitcase out of it, and carefully locked it. In the interests of safety, it was better to leave the Composition C-4 right where it was, in the car.

He went into the bedroom, and changed out of his suit and dress shirt into what he thought of as his farm clothes, a flannel shirt, denim overalls, and ankle-high work shoes.

Then he made another trip out to the car, unlocked it, took out the groceries he'd bought just outside of Camden, locked the car again, and carried the groceries into the house.

He pumped up the Coleman stove, got it going, and cooked his supper, a hamburger steak with onions, instant mashed potatoes, lima beans, and coffee. For dessert he had ice cream. It was cold, but no longer frozen, but that couldn't be helped. It was just too much of a nuisance to carry ice to the farm.

After he finished eating, he washed the dishes and the pots and pans and put the garbage into one of the grocery bags. He would take it to the garbage dump in the morning.

If, he thought, making a wry little joke with himself, if there was still any place to dump garbage in his garbage dump.

The problem with the farm, Marion often thought, was exactly opposite from the problem he had with the house in Philadelphia. In the city, people were always trying—and often succeeding—in taking away things that belonged to him. At the farm, people were always giving him things he hadn't asked for and didn't want. Such as worn-out automobile tires, refrigerators, mattresses, and bed springs.

He didn't like it, of course. No civilized person could be anything but annoyed with the transformation of one's private property into a public dump. But he understood why it had happened, and why the police couldn't do much about it.

While the land was mostly flat, there were two depressions, each more than two acres in size, both of

them touching the road that cut across the property from one county road to the other. The garbage dumpers simply backed their trucks up to the edge of the depres-sions and unloaded their worn-out mattresses, rusty bed springs, old tires, and broken refrigerators.

Marion had from time to time complained to the authorities about the unauthorized dumping, but to no avail. They told him that if he, or they, caught someone dumping, they would of course deal with the matter. But since there was no one living in the area, police patrols seldom visited it, their presence being required else-where.

His only solution, they told him, was to both fence and post the property. Fencing 1,280 acres was of course for financial reasons out of the question. And when he had put upPRIVATE PROPERTY — TRESPASSERS WILL BE PROSECUTEDsigns where the paths began at the county roads, the only response had been that the garbage dump-ers, or someone else, had used them for target practice. It had been a waste of money.

Four months before, on one of his monthly weekends at the farm, he had taken the canvas tarpaulin off the old Fordson tractor his father had bought years before, jump-started it with jumper ca-bles from his rented Chevrolet, and driven it around the farm on what he thought of as his quarterly inspection of the property.

This time there had been something new in the larger of the two garbage dumps. Lockers. They appeared to have been in a fire. There were approximately fifty of them, each about three feet square. They were painted green, and they were constructed in units of three.

Curiosity had overcome his disgust and annoyance, and he'd gotten off the Fordson, leaving it running, and gone down in the depression and opened them. It was only then, when he found keys in most of them, that he recognized them for what they were. They were the lockers one found in railroad stations, where travelers stored their suitcases. You put a quarter in the slot, which allowed you to withdraw the key. When you returned to the locker for your belongings and put the key back in the lock, the door could be opened, but the mechanism now seized the key and would hold it until another quarter was deposited.

Marion had happened to have two quarters in his pocket, and tested two of the lockers. They were operable.

He had then regretted having thrown the fifty cents away, and climbed out of the depression and got back on the Fordson and drove back to the farmhouse. He had made his supper, and then got on his

knees and prayed for the souls of those of his men whom the Lord had chosen to take unto Him in 'Nam.

He would have thought that he would have given no further thought to the lockers than he had to the refrigerators and worn-out tires or the other garbage, but they stayed in his mind. Where had they come from? He thought he would have heard if there had been a fire in a railroad station. Why, since some of them had hardly been damaged, had they been discarded?

He had thought of the lockers not only during that weekend on the farm, but often afterward. There had been no answers until he had read in *The Philadelphia Inquirer* that the Vice President was going to arrive in Philadelphia and depart from Philadelphia by train, at the 30th Street Station.

Then, of course, it had all become quite clear. The reason the lockers had been dumped on the farm was because the Lord wanted him to have the lockers to use when he disintegrated the Vice President.

The moment this had popped into his mind, Marion knew that it was true. There was no need to get on his knees and beg the Lord for a sign. The Lord had already given him a sign, back in 'Nam. Marion had personally gone to the locker room of the Hotel de Indochine to investigate the explosion that had taken the lives of twenty-six American civilian technicians. The Vietcong had set off explosives, almost certainly Composition C-4, in half a dozen lockers. He thought that each charge had probably been a half pound of C-4, around which chain had been wrapped. Each charge had functioned like an oversize fragmentation hand grenade. The American civilians had literally been disintegrated.

The lockers in the Hotel de Indochine were not identical to the ones that had been dumped in the depression—they had been eighteen inches by five feet, not three feet square. But that was a detail that didn't seem to matter.

There were rows of lockers like the ones that had been dumped all over 30th Street Station. All he was going to have to do was in-stall a device in one locker in each of the rows. And then be in a position to see the Vice President, so that he could detonate the explosive device that would disintegrate him.

It was possible, even probable, Marion knew, that people who had not offended the Lord would also be disintegrated. But there were two ways to look at that. It couldn't be helped, for one thing, and certainly the Lord would somehow compensate in Heaven those whose premature deaths had been made necessary in order to carry out His will.

Marion had realized that it was becoming more and more clear why the Lord had chosen him as His instrument to carry out His will. There were not that many people around with his level of ex-pertise in making lethal devices from readily available material. And there were not very many people around with access to a test-ing area. You can't cause an explosion in very many places without causing a good deal of curiosity. The farm, in the middle of the Pine Barrens, was one of the very few places where an explosion would not be heard.

After Marion had put the garbage from the meal into the paper bag from the grocery store, he turned off the Coleman lantern in the kitchen and went into the bedroom.

He made the bed, laid out fresh underwear and socks for the morning, took off his clothes, and then turned off the other Coleman lantern. He dropped to his knees by the side of the bed, and prayed the Lord's grace on himself as he began to carry out His will, and then for the souls of the boys who the Lord had taken into Heaven from Vietnam, and then he got in bed and was almost in-stantly asleep.

Marion woke at first light. He changed into the linen he had laid out the night before, and then made his breakfast. Bacon, two fried eggs, fried "toast," coffee, and a small can of tomato juice. After he ate he washed the dishes and pots and pans, and added the refuse to the garbage from supper.

He then began to lay out on the table everything he would need to make the devices. There were two large rolls of duct tape, ap-proximately thirty feet of one-inch link chain, the shortwave receivers from Radio Shack, and an assortment of tools, including a large bolt cutter. Then he went out to the car and brought in the Composition C-4.

The basic device would be two quarter-pound blocks of Compo-sition C-4, which looked not unlike sticks of butter, except of course they were gray in color, and had a hole to accommodate the detonator. He didn't have as many detonators as he would have liked to have had, so for the testing, he would use one detonator per device. The devices he would install in the lockers in 30th Street Station would have two detonators per device. Redundancy was the term. The chances of two detonators failing to function were in-finitesimal.

First he taped a dozen blocks of Composition C-4 together, two blocks to a unit. Then he wound chain around one of the double blocks, as tightly as he could, twisting the links so that they sort of doubled up on each other. Then, holding the last link carefully in his hand, he unwound the chain. He took the bolt cutter and cut the link he had held in his hand.

Then he measured off five more lengths of chain, using the first length as a template. He then wound the chain around the six dou-ble blocks of Composition C-4, and then wound that with the duct tape.

That was all that he felt he should do, in the interests of safety, in the house. The rest he would do on site.

He put the partially constructed devices into a canvas satchel, and carried that outside to where the Fordson sat under its tarpau-lin. He removed the tarpaulin, and checked to see that there was sufficient fuel in the tank. Then from a small, two-wheel trailer at-tached to the rear of the tractor, he took a set of jumper cables.

He then started the rental car, drove it to the tractor, opened the hood, and connected the jumper cables. The tractor started almost immediately, which Marion interpreted as a good omen. He set the throttle at fast idle.

He then put the satchel with the partially constructed devices in the utility trailer, and then, in four trips into the house, took the gar-bage, the shortwave equipment from Radio Shack, and most of the tools from the table and loaded it into the trailer. Finally he went into the bedroom and took the detonators from the dresser. He wrapped each very carefully in two socks, one outside the other, and then put the padded detonators in a tin Saltines box.

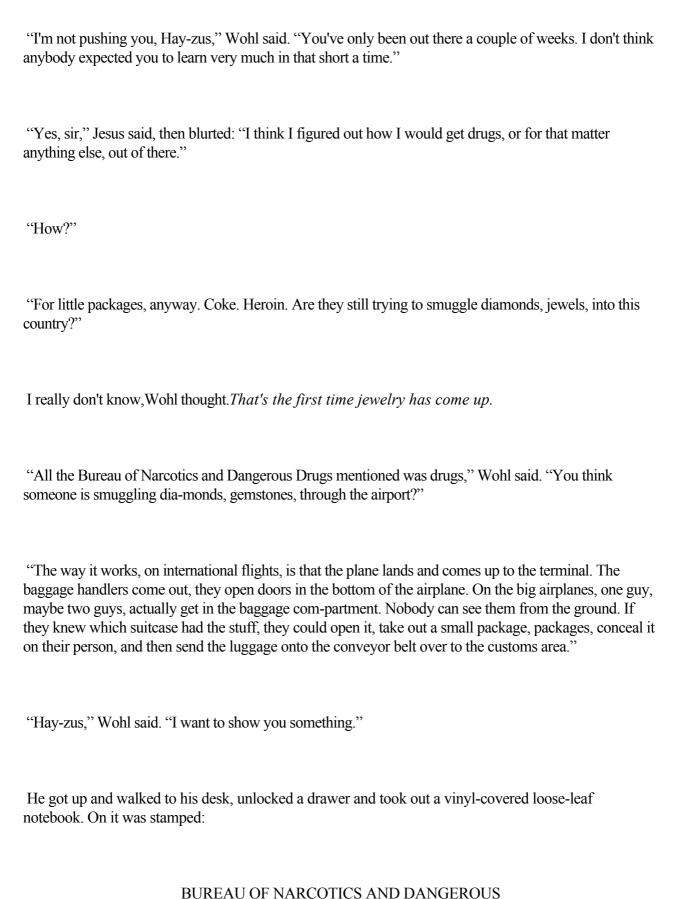
He took two pillows from the bed, and carried them and the Saltines tin box with the detonators to the trailer, where he carefully laid the Saltines box on one pillow, covered it with the second pil-low, and then put the bricks on the upper pillow to keep it in place.

Then he disconnected the jumper cables from the tractor, got on it, and drove off between the stunted pines. He drove very care-fully, so there would be no great risk of somehow, despite all his precautions, setting off one of the detonators.

When he reached the garbage dump, he decided that the first or-der of business was making sure the shortwave transmitter and the receivers worked. He had tested them in Philadelphia, but electronic equipment didn't like to be bounced around and it was better to be sure.

He dug out the Saltines box from between the pillows, and car-ried it carefully two hundred yards into the pines as a safety pre-caution. Then he returned to the garbage dump and carefully rigged the test setup.
When he pressed the key on the transmitter, the capacitors that he had installed in the receiver where the speaker had been began to accumulate electrical energy and then discharged. The 15-watt 110-volt refrigerator bulb Marion had installed where the detonator would ultimately be glowed brightly for a moment. There would be more than enough juice to fire the detonator.
He disconnected everything, in the interest of safety, walked back into the pines, and took one detonator from the Saltine box. He went back to the garbage dump and carefully slipped the detonator into one of the double blocks of Composition C-4. He taped this, except for the leads, into place with duct tape.
Then he carried this down into the garbage dump, to one of the lockers, and propped the door open with his shoulder as he inserted the device, then hooked the receiver up to the exposed leads.
He then closed the locker door, put a quarter in the slot, re-moved the key, and climbed up out of the garbage dump. He got back on the tractor and drove what he estimated to be two hundred yards away, and then stopped. Carrying the transmitter with him, he walked fifty feet from the tractor and then turned on the Radio Shack transmitter.
He depressed the key. Nothing happened.
Kaboom!
Marion smiled.

Staff Inspector Peter Wohl, wearing a faded green polo shirt and somewhat frayed khaki trousers, both liberally stained with oil spots and various colors of paint was in the process of filling a stainless-steel thermos bottle with coffee when his door buzzer went off.
He went quickly to it and pulled it open. A slight, olive-skinned twenty-four-year-old was standing there, dressed in a somewhat flashy suit and obviously fresh from the barber.
"Hello, Hay-zus," Wohl said. "Come on in."
"Good morning, sir," Martinez said.
"You pulled your car in the garage?"
"Yes, sir."
"I just made coffee. Will you have some?"
"Thank you, please."
Wohl gestured for Martinez to have a seat on the couch under the oil painting of the naked Rubenesque lady, took two mugs from a kitchen cabinet, carried them to the coffee table, fetched the ther-mos, and sat down beside Martinez on the couch.
"So how are things at the airport?" Wohl asked with a smile.
The question had been intended to put Martinez at ease. It had, Wohl saw, almost the opposite reaction. Martinez was almost visi-bly uncomfortable.



OREMO OF THREOTICS TIND DITTOER

Investigator's Manual

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Martinez looked at the cover, then opened the manual and flipped through it, and then looked at Wohl for an explanation.
"They sent that over, they thought it would be helpful."
Martinez nodded.
"I took a look at it," Wohl said. "They refer to what you just de-scribed as a common means of smuggling."
"I guess it is," Martinez said. "I didn't exactly feel like Sherlock Holmes."
"Maybe not Sherlock Holmes," Wohl said. "But maybe Dick Tracy. It didn't take you long to figure that out."
That was intended, too, to put Martinez at ease. This time, Wohl saw in Martinez's face, it worked.
"When you leave, take this with you. I don't think I have to tell you not to let anybody see it."
"Yeah," Martinez said. "Thank you."
"Okay. So tell me what you've figured out about how someone, a baggage handler, or anyone else, would get a small package out of the airport."

"Well, there's all sorts of people keeping an eye on the baggage handlers. The airline has their security









"I'll be there in half an hour. Thank you," Detective Payne said, and hung up.

"You would be very welcome. As a matter of fact, I was think-ing of calling you. I am about to polish

the Jaguar and I hate to do that alone. A weak mind and a strong back is just what I need."

It is possible, Wohl thought, that Matt is coming over here simply as a friend. The reason he sounds so insecure is that he's not sure of the tribal rites. Can a lowly detective and an exalted staff inspector be friends? The answer is sure, but he doesn't know that. And the truth of the matter is, I was glad to hear his voice and I miss him around the office.

But clever detective that I am, I don't think that a social visit is all he has in mind. His tone of voice and the "thank you" is not consistent with that.

Is he in trouble? Nothing serious, or I would have heard about it. And if he was in a jam, wouldn't he go first to Denny Coughlin?

There is a distinct possibility, now that I think about it, that De-tective Payne has, now that he's been leading the exciting, roman-tic life of a real-life detective in the famous East Detective Division for two months, decided that law enforcement is not how he really wants to spend the rest of his life. Unless things have changed a hell of a lot, he has spent his time on recovered stolen vehicles, with maybe a few good burglary of autos thrown in for good mea-sure.

If he did decide to quit, he would feel some sort of an obligation to tell me. That would be consistent with his polite asking if he could come over, and then saying "thank you."

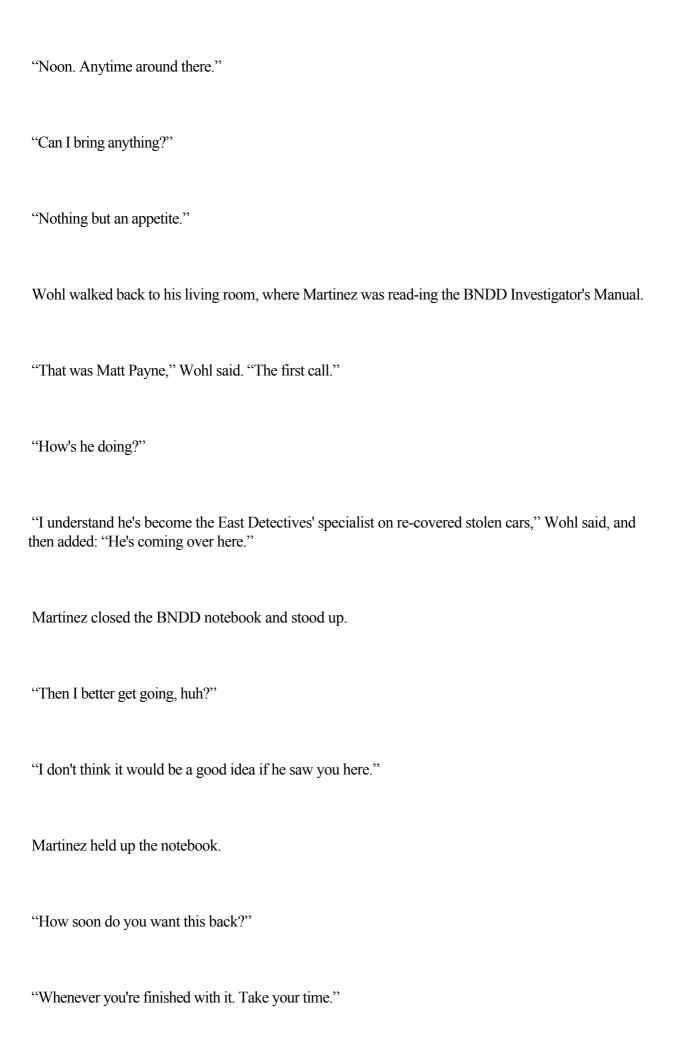
So what will I do? Tell him to hang in there, things will get bet-ter? Or jump on the wise elders bandwagon with his father and Denny Coughlin, and tell him to go to law school?

The telephone rang again.

"A Highway car ran the light at Broad and Olney, broadsided a station wagon full of nuns, and knocked it into a bus carrying the Philadelphia Rabbinical Council," his caller announced without any opening salutation.

Wohl chuckled. "Good morning, Captain Pekach," he said. "You better be kidding."





Martinez nodded.
"You're doing a good job, Hay-zus," Wohl said. "I think it's just a question of hanging in there with your eyes open."
"Yes, sir."
"Anytime you want to talk, Hay-zus, about anything at all, you have my personal number."
"Yes, sir."
Martinez stood up, looked at Wohl for a moment, long enough for Wohl to suspect that he was about to say something else, but then, as if he had changed his mind, nodded at Wohl.
"Good morning, sir."
Wohl walked to the door with him and touched his shoulder in a gesture of friendliness as Martinez opened it and stepped outside.

Wohl had just about finished carefully washing his Jaguar when Detective Payne drove onto the cobblestone driveway in his silver Porsche. It showed signs of just having gone through a car wash. The way Payne was dressed, Wohl thought, he looked like he was about to pose for an advertisement in <i>Esquire</i> —for either Porsche automobiles, twenty-five-year-old Ambassador Scotch, or Hart, Schaffner & Marx clothing.

Payne handed Wohl a paper bag.







happened without Chief Lowenstein knowing about it, ordering it. Your response should be the classic 'mine not to reason why, mine but to do what I'm told."

"I'm not worried about East Detectives. What I'm wondering about is how you feel about me coming back to Special Opera-tions."

Shit! That's disappointing. I didn't think he'd ask to get trans-ferred back. I thought he was smart enough to know that would be a lousy idea, and I didn't think he would impose on our friendship for a favor. Helping him out of a jam is one thing, doing something for him that would be blatant special treatment is something entirely different. But, on the other hand, the only thing he's known since he's joined the Department is special treatment.

"Matt," Wohl said carefully. "I think your coming back to Spe-cial Operations would be, at the very least, ill-advised. And let me clear the air between us. I'm a little disappointed that you can't see that, and even more disappointed that you would ask."

Wohl saw on Matt's face that what he had said had stung. He hated that. But he had said what had to be said.

Matt bent over the front of the Porsche and applied wax to an-other two square feet. Then he straightened and looked at Wohl again.

"Well, I suspected that I might not be welcomed like the prodi-gal returning to the fold, but just to clear the air between us, Inspec-tor, I didn't ask to come back. You or anybody else. I was told to report to Chief Lowenstein's office at half past one yesterday, and when I got there, a sergeant told me to clean out my locker in East and report to Special Operations Monday morning."

"Goddammit!" Wohl exploded.

"I could resign, I suppose. Suicide seems a bit more than the sit-uation calls for," Matt said.

"You can knock off the 'Inspector' crap. I apologize for thinking what I was thinking. I should have known better."

"Yeah, you should have known better," Matt said. It was not the sort of thing a very junior detective should say, and it wasn't ex-pressed in the tone of voice a junior detective should use to a staff inspector who was also his division commander. But Wohl was not offended.

For one thing, I deserve it. For another, in a strange perverted way, that was a remark by one friend to another.

"I wouldn't have said what I said, obviously, if I had known you were coming back," Wohl said. "This is the first I've heard of it."

"It was on the teletype," Matt said, and reached into the Porsche and handed Wohl a sheet of teletype paper. "Charley McFadden took that home from Northwest Detectives."

GENERAL:1365 04/23/74 17:20FROM COMMISSIONER

RECEIPT NO. 107

PAGE 1 OF 1

THE FOLLOWING TRANSFERS WILL BE EFFECTIVE 1201 AM MON 04/23/74

NAME (RANK) PAYROLL FROM TO

ROBERT J. FODE (LT) 108988 9THDIST PLANS & ANALYSIS

MATTHEW M. PAYNE (DET) 126786 EAST DET. SPECIAL OPS

TADDEUS CZERNICK

POLICE COMMISSIONER

"I wonder," Wohl said, and there was sarcasm and anger in his voice, "why no one thought I would be interested in this?"
"Maybe what you need is a good administrative assistant, to keep something like this from happening again," Matt said.
"No," Wohl said. "I've got an administrative assistant. Until I fig-ure out what to do with you, you can work for Jason Washington."
Before the words were out of his mouth, Wohl had modified that quick decision. Matt would possibly wind up working for Jason somewhere down the line, he decided, but where he would go to work immediately was for Jack Malone.
Malone could use some help, certainly, in his new role in Digni-tary Protection. And if Matt were working with him, he would not only learn something that would broaden his general education, but also just might keep Malone from doing something stupid. Malone was a good cop, but working with the feds was always risky.
Wohl decided this was not the time to tell Matt he had changed his mind. Instead, he changed the subject.
"We're invited to a party," he said.
"Oh?"
"Steak, you know, barbecue, at Martha Peebles's. Dave Pekach called up right after you did, invited me and, when I said you were coming over, said to bring you too."

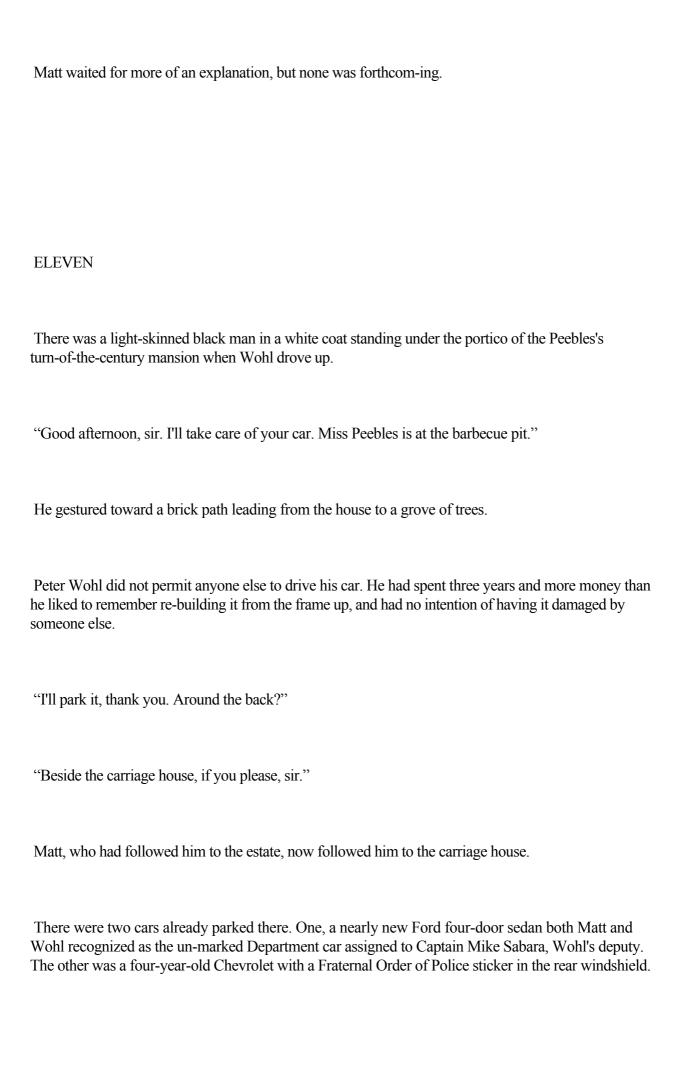
"Fine," Matt said. "Maybehe'll glad to have me back."
"It is not nice to mock your superiors. Detective Payne. Make a note of that. Carve it in your forehead with a dull knife, for example."
Payne laughed, and Wohl smiled back at him.
I am glad he's back.
He remembered an insight he'd had about Matt Payne several months before, when Matt was still in Special Operations and had found himself in trouble not of his own making, and Wohl had jumped in with both feet in his defense before asking why. The rea-son, he had finally concluded, was that he thought of Matt as his younger brother.
"How is the Detweiler girl?" Wohl asked.
"She looks all right," Matt said.
"People do lick their drug problems, Matt."
"And I'll bet if you looked hard enough, you could find a pig who really can whistle."
"Is that a general feeling, or is there something specific?"
Matt looked at him and shrugged helplessly.
"She told me she was in love with Tony the Zee," Matt said.



"You think he was responsible for sending me back to Special Operations?"
Wohl put the galvanized steel bucket, the car polish, and the rags into the garage, came out again, closed the door, and motioned for Matt to follow him into his apartment before replying.
"Who else? Not only does it smell like one of his friendly sug-gestions for general improvement of departmental operations, but who else would dare challenge the collective wisdom of Lowenstein and Coughlin—and my dad, by the way—that the best place for you to learn how to be a detective was to send you to East Detectives?"
He turned on the stairs and looked back at Payne.
"I'd say five thousand dollars," Matt said. "I understand the price goes up if the guy to be hit is known to go around armed."
Mayor Carlucci was known to never feel completely dressed un-less he had a Smith & Wesson Chief's Special .38 caliber snubnose on his hip.
"Maybe we could take up a collection," Wohl said. "Put a pickle jar in every district."
He pushed open the door to his apartment and went inside.
"I need a shower," he said. "If you haven't already drunk it all, help yourself to a beer, and then call the tour lieutenant and tell him I'll be at Pekach's <i>Martha Peebles's</i> ."
"Yes, sir," Matt said.
He sat down on the white leather couch and pulled the telephone to him. There were lipstick-stained cigarette butts in the ashtray.

"You forgot to conceal the evidence," he called. "How did you do with whoever likes Purple Passion lipstick?"
"And clean the ashtrays," Wohl called back. "And not that it's any of your business, but she told me she was not that kind of girl. She was deeply annoyed that I thought she would do that sort of thing on the fifth date."
Matt chuckled and dialed, from memory, the number of the lieu-tenant on duty at Special Operations.
"Special Operations, Lieutenant Wisser."
Must be somebody new. I don't know that name.
"Lieutenant, Inspector Wohl asked me to call in that until further notice, he'll be at the Peebles's residence in Chestnut Hill. The number's on the list under the glass on his desk."
"Who is this?"
"My name is Payne, sir. Detective Payne."
"I've been trying to reach the inspector. Is he with you?"
Matt could hear the sound of the shower.
"No, sir. But I can get a message to him in a couple of minutes."
'Tell him that Chief Wohl has been trying to get him. That he's to call. He said it was important."





They each noticed the other looking at it, and then shrugged al-most simultaneously, indicating that neither recognized it.

They walked across the cobblestones past the carriage house (now a four-car garage) to the brick walk and toward the barbecue pit. They were almost out of sight of the house when they heard another car arrive.

It was a Buick Roadmaster Estate Wagon, and at the moment Matt decided that it looked vaguely familiar, there was proof. The Buick wagon stopped at the portico of the mansion and Miss Penelope Detweiler got out.

"Shit," Matt said.

"Someone you know, I gather?" Wohl said.

"Before we send the hit man to the mayor's house, do you sup-pose he'd have time to do a job on Pekach's girlfriend?"

"Really?" Wohl sounded surprised.

They reached the barbecue pit. It was a circular area perhaps fifty feet across, with brick benches, now covered with flowered cushions, at the perimeter. There were several cast-iron tables and matching chairs, each topped with a large umbrella. Each table had been set with place mats and a full set of silver and glassware.

A bar had been set up, and another black man in a white jacket stood behind that. A third black man, older and wearing a gray jacket, whom Matt recognized as Evans, Martha Peebles's butler, was, assisted by Captain Pekach, adjusting the rack over a large bed of charcoal in the grill itself, a brick structure in the center of the circle.





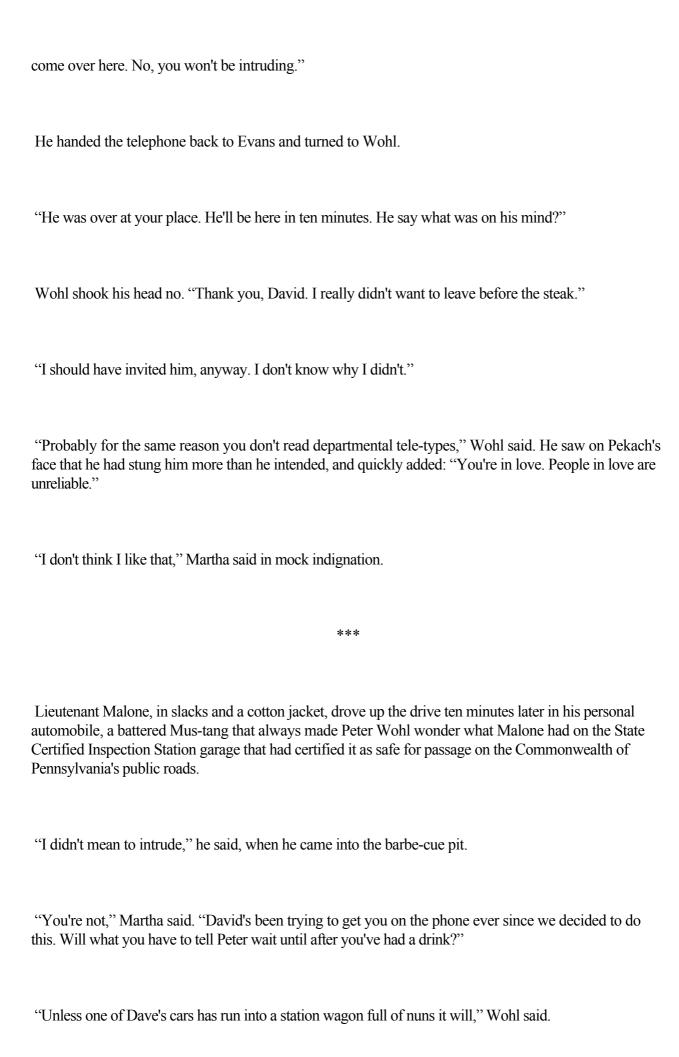












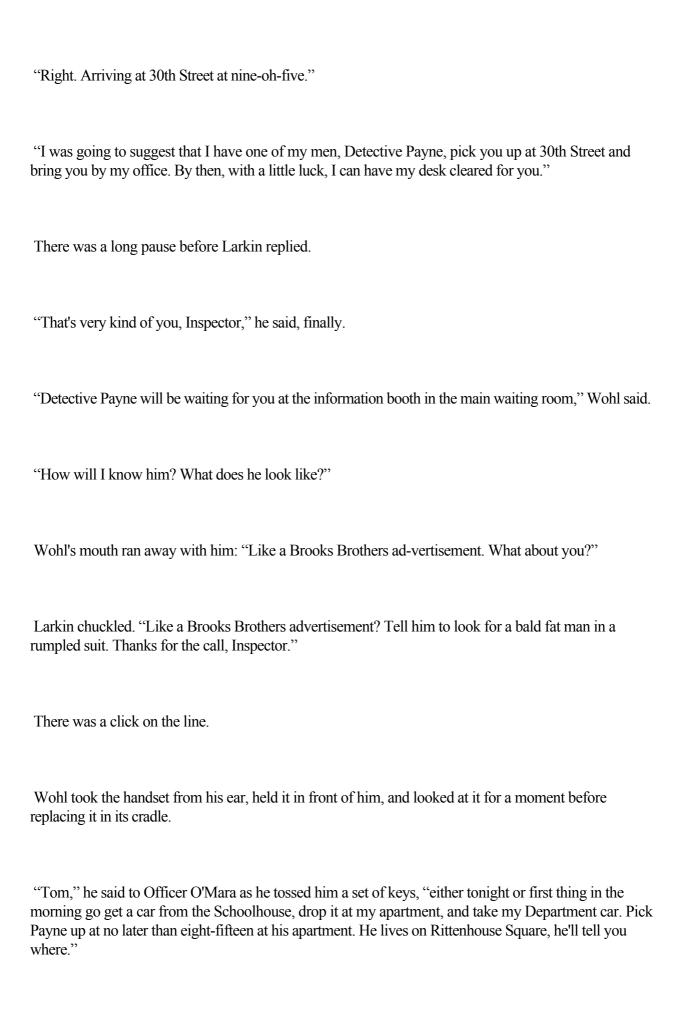


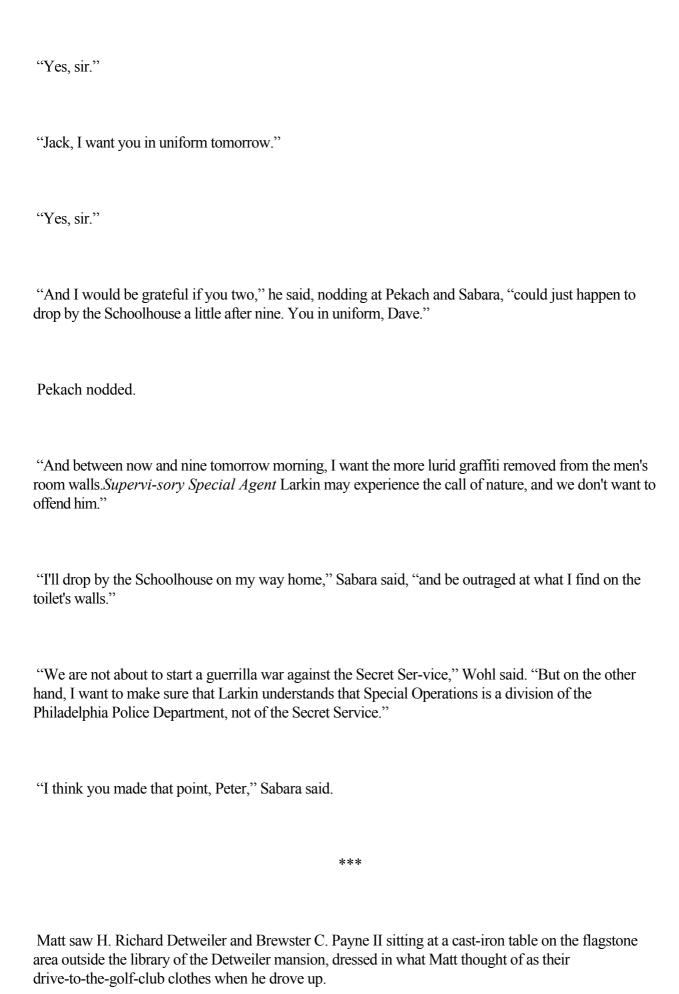






"What can I do for you, Inspector?"
"That's what I intended to ask you. You called one of my people, Lieutenant Malone, an hour or so ago."
"Oh, yeah. I asked him to come by our Philadelphia office in the morning. Is there a problem with that?"
"I'm afraid there is. I'm not free at that time."
"Is there sort of an inference in that I should have called you, not this lieutenant?"
"That would have been nice. Dignitary Protection is under Spe-cial Operations."
"I thought it was run out of the commissioner's office."
"Not anymore."
"Oh, shit," Larkin said. "Okay, Inspector. You tell me. How do I make this right?"
"Are you open to suggestion?"
"Wide open."
"I was going to suggestI understand you're coming by train?"







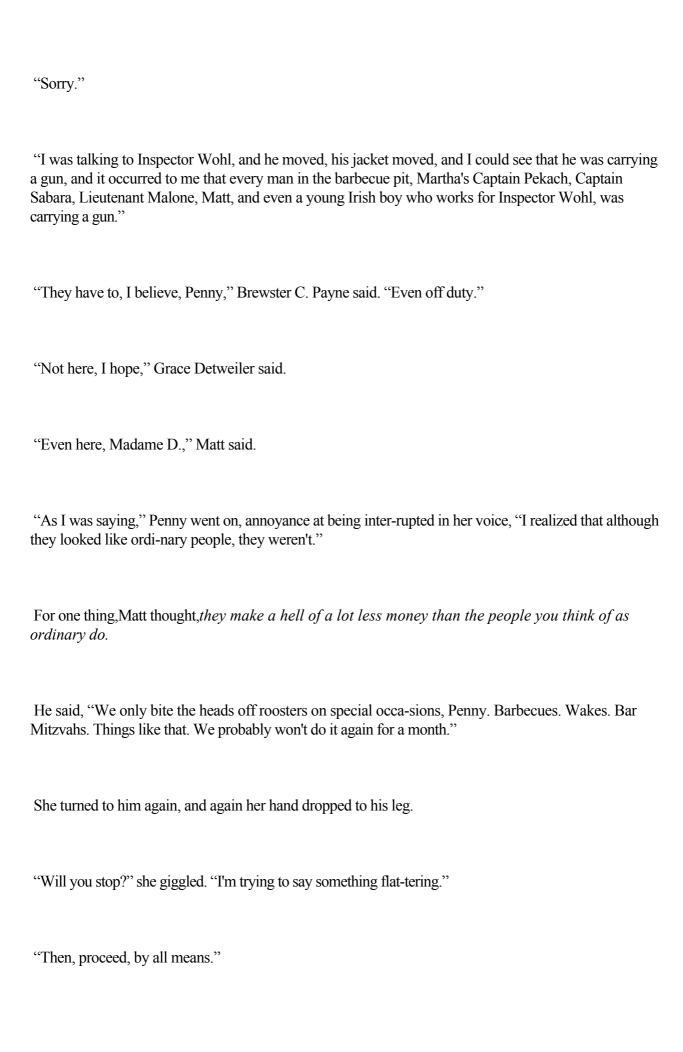




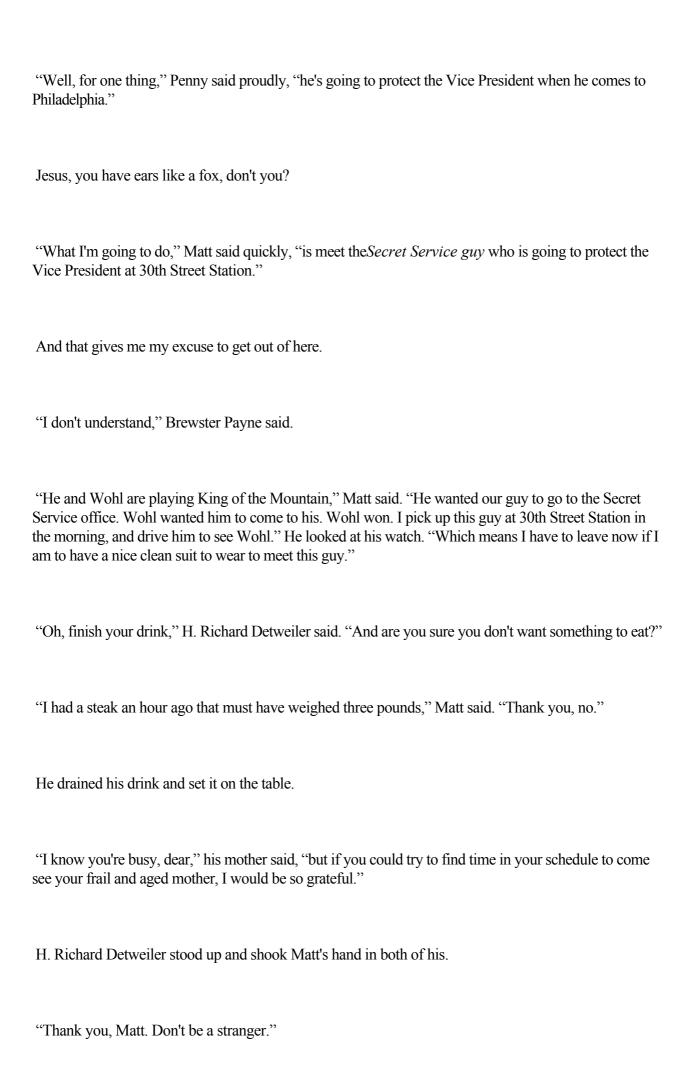








"I realized that they were all—what was it you said about Mr. Peebles, Daddy?—'One hell of a man.' They're all special men. I can understand why Martha fell in love with Captain Pekach. He's one hell of a man."
I am wholly convinced that your hand on my leg, Precious Penny, is absolutely innocent; you have always been one of those kiss-kiss, touch-touch airheads. Nevertheless, I wish you would take it off. You are about to give me a hard-on.
Matt stood up and went to the table and splashed more Scotch into his glass. He did not return to the cast-iron love seat.
"You may very well be right, dear," Matt's mother said.
"Thank you," Penny said. She looked over at Matt. "You do work for Inspector Wohl, don't you, Matt?"
He nodded.
"Then what did you mean, Uncle Brew, when you said 'ex-boss'?"
"I've been transferred back to Special Operations, Dad," Matt said.
"When did that happen?"
"Yesterday."
"What are you going to do over there, as a detective?"





TWELVE

Peter Wohl was only mildly surprised when he turned onto Rock-well Avenue and saw a gleaming black Cadillac limousine parked before the comfortable house in which he had grown up. He didn't have to look at the license plate to identify it as the official vehicle provided by the City of Philadelphia to transport its mayor; the trunk was festooned with shortwave antennae, and the driver, now leaning on the front fender conversing with two other similarly dressed, neat-appearing young men, was obviously a police officer. There were two other cars, almost identical to Wohl's, parked just beyond the Cadillac.

He didn't recognize the drivers, but there was little doubt in his mind that the cars were those assigned to Chief Inspectors Matt Lowenstein and Dennis V. Coughlin.

I am about to get one of three things, good news, bad news, or a Dutch Uncle speech. I don't know of anything I've done, or anyone else in Special Operations has done, that should have me on the carpet, but that simply means I don't know about it, not that there is nothing. And the reverse is true. I can't think of a thing I've done that would cause the mayor to show up to tell me what a good job I've been doing.

He pulled the Jaguar to the curb behind the limousine and got out.

The two drivers who had been leaning on the Cadillac pushed themselves erect.

"Good evening, Inspector."

"I guess the party can start now," Wohl said, smiling, "I'm here."

"They been in there the better part of an hour, Inspector," one of the drivers said.

That was immediately evident when his mother opened the door to his ring. There was hearty laughter from the living room, and when he walked in there, the faces of all four men were unnaturally, if slightly, flushed.

There were liquor and soft drink bottles and an insulated ice bucket on the coffee table, and the dining-room table was covered with cold cuts and bowls of potato salad.
"Well, here he is," Chief Inspector Augustus Wohl, retired, said. "As always, ten minutes late and a dollar short."
"Mr. Mayor," Wohl said, and then, nodding his head at Lowenstein and Coughlin in turn, said "Chief."
"Always the fashion plate, aren't you, Peter?" the mayor said as he shook Wohl's hand. "Even when you were a little boy."
"I've been out hobnobbing with the hoi polloi, Mr. Mayor."
"Which hoi polloi would that be?" the mayor asked, chuckling.
"Captain Pekach's fiancée."
"Oh, yes, Miss Peebles."
"And Miss Penelope Detweiler was there too," Wohl said.
"Is Pekach doing a little matchmaking?" the mayor said, and then went on without waiting for a reply. "You could do worse, Pe-ter. It's about time you found a nice girl and settled down."
"Miss Peebles is doing the matchmaking, but her target, I think, is Detective Payne. The Detweiler girl is a little young for me."
"He was there too?"

"He was at my place when Dave Pekach called. He said to bring him along. He came to tell me he had been reassigned to Special Operations."
"Oh, yeah. That was one of the things I was going to mention to you. I heard the commissioner was thinking of sending him back over there."
Do you really expect me to believe that was Czernick 's idea, and you knew nothing about it?
And "one of the things" you were going to mention to me? What else, Mr. Mayor?
Wohl's father handed him a drink.
"Thank you," Peter said, and took a sip.
"Jerry was just telling me that Neil Jasper's going to retire," Chief Wohl said.
It took a moment for Wohl to identify Neil Jasper as an inspector working somewhere in the Roundhouse bureaucracy.
Christ, is he going to tell me "the commissioner is thinking" of making me Jasper's replacement?
"A lot of people, Peter, including the commissioner," the mayor said, looking directly at him, "think Special Operations is getting too big to be commanded by a staff inspector."
"I'm sorry the Commissioner feels that way," Wohl said.





as a staff inspector investigator. If they had known I'd be given command of Special Operations after eighteen months, they would have found some reason to keep me off the list, or at least put me near, or at, the bot-tom.

"If you can find time in your busy schedule, Peter," the mayor said. "Why don't you drop by the commissioner's office next Tuesday at say nine-thirty? Wear a nice suit. They'll probably want to take your picture. Yours and Hornstein's. But keep this under your hat until then."

I have just been promoted. By mayoral edict, screw the estab-lished procedure.

A massive arm went around his shoulders, and then Peter felt his father's stubbly cheek against his as he was wrapped in an affectionate embrace.

"You better have another drink, Peter," the mayor said. "You look as shocked as if you'd just been goosed by a nun."

The telephone was ringing when Matt climbed the narrow stair-way to his apartment. He walked quickly to it, but at the last mo-ment decided not to pick it up. On the fifth ring, there was a click, and then his voice, giving the *I'm Not Home* message. There was a beep, and then a click. His caller had elected not to leave a mes-sage.

The red You Have Messages light was blinking. He pushed the PLAY button. There were four buzz and click sounds, which meant that four other people had called, gotten his I'm Not Home mes-sage, and hung up.

Evelyn,he thought. *It has to be her.*

Why are you so sure it's her? Because the gentle sex, contrary to popular opinion, does not have an exclusive monopoly on intuition, and also because everybody, anybody, else would have left a message.

If you call her back, there is a very good chance that you can wind up between, or on top of, the sheets with her. Why doesn't that fill you with joyous anticipation?
The answer came with a sudden, very clear mental image of Pro-fessor Harry Glover outside the house in Upper Darby, specifically of the look in his eyes that said, "I know you have been fooling around with my wife."
Jesus Christ, could it be him? "Stay away from my wife, you bas-tard!"
Conclusions: You did the right thing, Matthew, my boy, because God takes care of fools and drunks, and you qualify on both counts, in not picking up the telephone. You neither want to discuss with Professor Glover your relationship with his wife, or diddle the lady.
And why not? Because he knows? Or because Precious Penny has made it quite clear that she would be willing, indeed pleased, to roll around on the sheets with you?
Oh, shit!
He turned on the television, sat down in his armchair, flicked through the channels, got up, and went to the refrigerator for a beer.
The telephone rang again.
He walked to the chair-side table, looked down at the telephone, and picked it up on the third ring.
"Payne."
"This is your friendly neighborhood FBI agent," a familiar voice said. "We have a report of a sexual deviate living at that address. Would you care to comment?"

"The word is 'athlete,' not 'deviate.' Guilty. What are you up to, Jack?"

Jack Matthews, a tall, muscular, fair-skinned man in his late twenties, was a special agent of the FBI. When Matt had been wounded by a member of the so-called Islamic Liberation Army, Jack had shown up to express the FBI's sympathy, and, Matt was sure, to find out what the Philadelphia Police knew about the Is-lamic Liberation Army and might not be telling the FBI. In addi-tion, Lari Matsi, a nurse in the hospital who had raised Matt's temperature at least four degrees simply by handing him an aspirin, had suddenly found Matt invisible after a thirty-second look at the pride of the Justice Department.

Despite this, however, Matt liked Jack Matthews. He watched what he said about police activity when they were together, but they shared a sense of humor, and he had become convinced that there was a certain honest affection on Jack's part for him and Charley McFadden, whose fiancée and Lari Matsi were pals.

"I'm sitting at the FOP bar with a morose Irish detective," Jack said. "Who is threatening to sing, I'll take you home again, Kathleen.' McFadden wants you to come over here and sing har-mony."

"You sound like you've been there for a while."

"Only since it opened," Jack said. "The girls are working."

"Did you call before, Jack?"

"No. Why?"

"No reason. Yeah, give me twenty minutes."

"Bring some of that Las Vegas money with you," Jack said, and hung up.

Matt went into his bedroom and changed into khakis and a sweatshirt. As he was reclaiming his pistol from the mantelpiece, the telephone rang again. He looked at it for a moment, and then went down the stairs.

Jack Matthews and Charley McFadden, a very large, pleasant-faced young man, were sitting at a table near the door of the bar in the basement of the Fraternal Order of Police Building on Spring Garden Street, just off North Broad Street, when Matt walked in.

There was a third man at the table, Jesus Martinez, in a suit Matt thought was predictably flashy, and whom he was surprised to see, although when he thought about it, he wondered why.

Charley McFadden and Jesus Martinez had been partners, work-ing as undercover Narcs. When their anonymity had been de-stroyed when they ran to earth the junkie who had shot Captain Dutch Moffitt, they had been transferred to Special Operations. Charley and Martinez had been friends and, more important, part-ners, since before Matt had come on the job.

"How are you, Hay-zus?" Matt said, offering his hand and smil-ing at Officer Jesus Martinez of the Airport Unit.

"Whaddaya say, Payne?" Jesus replied.

Both our smiles are forced, Matt thought. He doesn't like me, for no good reason that I can think of, and I am not especially fond of him. We are on our good behavior because Charley likes both of us, and we both like Charley.

Matthews and McFadden were dressed much like Matt. Charley was wearing a zippered nylon jacket and blue jeans, and Matthews was wearing blue jeans and a sweatshirt with the legendPROPERTY OF THE SING-SING ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT. A loose-fitting upper gar-ment of some sort is required to conceal revolvers.

They both had their feet up on chairs, and were watching the dancers on the floor, at least a half dozen







"And so what's new with you, Detective Payne?" Matthews asked. "Aside from you going back to Special Operations, I mean?"
"That upset Hay-zus too," Charley interrupted. "When he heard that you're going back out there. Sort of rubbing it in his face. With him flunking the exam."
"Loyalty, thy name is McFadden," Matt said.
"Something wrong with that?"
"Not a thing, pal. I admire it," Matt said, and then turned to Mat-thews. "How about the FBI? Arrested anybody interesting lately?"
"No, but I'm hot on the trail of a big-time gambler. Was he pull-ing my leg, or did you really win six thousand bucks out there?"
"Sixty-seven hundred, he tells you, in the interests of accuracy."
"And what if you had lost?"
"I was going to quit when I lost a hundred," Matt said. "But I didn't lose it."
"You went out there to bring the Detweiler girl home?"
"Right."



"Well, for example, when the Secret Service big shot arrives at 30th Street Station from Washington tomorrow morning, I will be a member of the official welcoming party."
"You get to carry his bags? Boy, you are moving up in the FBI, aren't you?"
Why am I unwilling to tell him, "Whoopee, what a coincidence, me too!"
"Screw you, Matt," Matthews said, chuckling. "Look, if you can find out who's going to run this for the Police Department, it would be helpful to me. Okay?"
"Yeah, sure, Jack. I'll ask around."

At quarter to seven the next morning, half an hour early, Officer Tom O'Mara pulled Staff Inspector Peter Wohl's unmarked car to the curb in front of the Delaware Valley Cancer Society Building.
And then he didn't know what to do. It was an office building, and it was Sunday, and it was closed. Detective Payne had told him he lived on the top floor. That was a little strange to begin with. Who lived in an office building?
He got out of the car and walked to the plate-glass door and looked in. There was a deserted lobby, with a polishing machine next to a receptionist's desk, and nothing else. O'Mara walked to the edge of the sidewalk and looked up. He couldn't see anything. But then when he glanced back at the building, he saw a doorbell, mounted on the bricks next to the door where you could hardly see it.

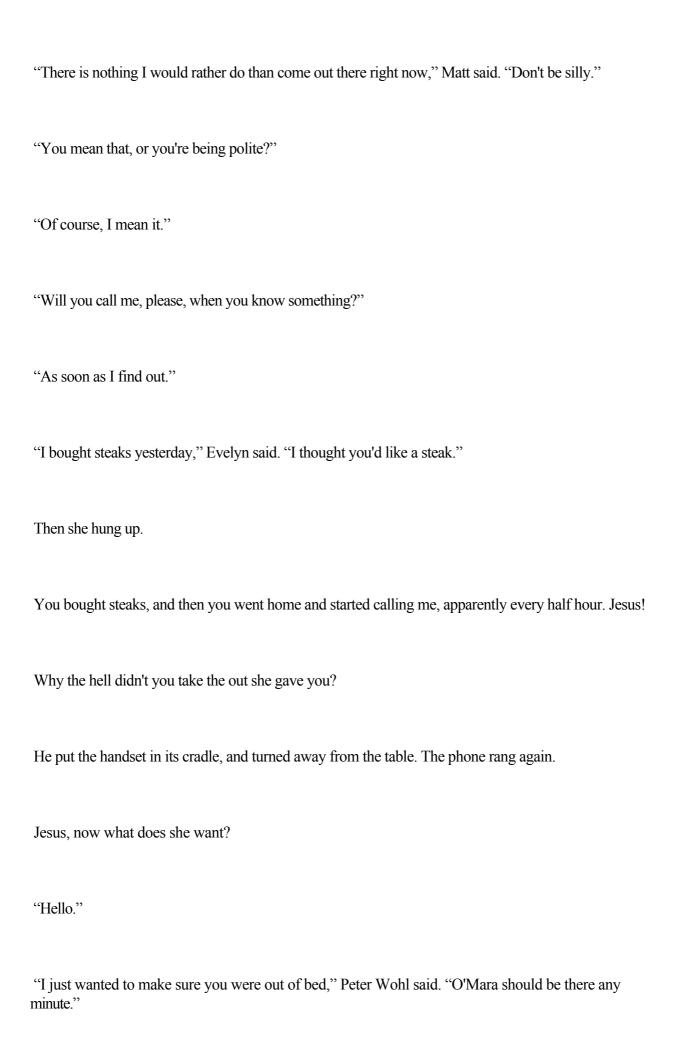
He went to it and pushed it. He couldn't hear anything ringing. He decided the only thing he could do was just wait. He went to the car and leaned on the fender.

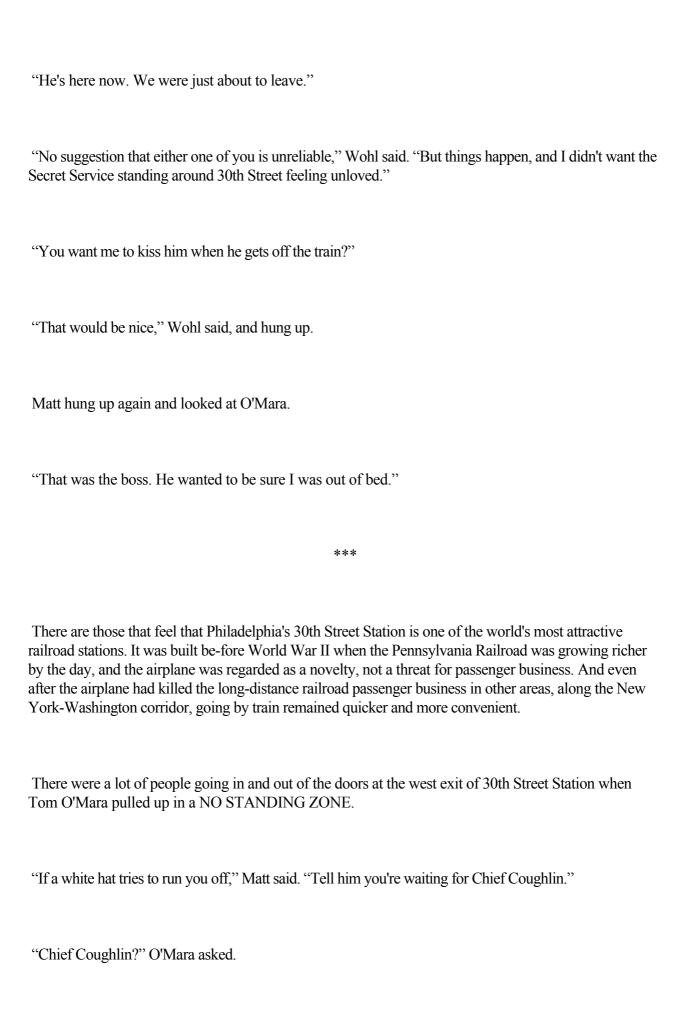




	D'Mara pushed his coat aside to reveal his standard-issue Smith & Wesson Military and Police evolver, which had a six-inch barrel and was time and a half as large as the snubnose.
	In order to carry anything but the issue revolver, it was necessary to go through a test—"the ualification"—at the range at the Po-lice Academy.
cc	'The Range guys make a big deal of it," Payne said. "It helps if you know one of them."
cc	I got a cousin works out there," O'Mara said.
· · ·	Then talk to him," Payne said as he shrugged into his jacket. "Where are you parked?"
cc	'Out in front."
cc	'I should have told you to come around the back, there's a ga-rage in the basement. Sorry."
cc	'No problem."
cc	'How'd you get in?"
cc	I rang the doorbell. A rent-a-cop let me in."
cc	The guy who usually works the building on Sundays is a retired cop," Matt said.
	'He told me."







"No. This guy's in the Secret Service, not a movie star."

Matt was standing beside the information booth in the center of the main waiting room at 9:05, his eyes fixed on the wide stairway that led down to the tracks below.
At 9:06, a crowd of people began to come up the stairway. After a moment, he had trouble seeing through them, and started to walk to the head of the stairs, but changed his mind. He had been told to be at the information booth.
At 9:08, a voice behind him said, "Excuse me, sir, but is that a Brooks Brothers suit?"
Matt turned and saw a man whose hair was thin, but who could not be called bald, who was heavyset, but could not be called fat, and whose suit appeared comfortable, but was not rumpled. He was surrounded by half a dozen neatly dressed men, one of whom was Special Agent Matthews of the FBI, and all of whom seemed baffled by the behavior of the man they had come to 30th Street Station to meet.
"Actually, it's from Tripler. Have I the privilege of addressing Mr. H. Charles Larkin?"
"Yes, you do," Larkin said, smiling conspiratorially at him.
"Welcome to Philadelphia, Mr. Larkin."
"Thank you very much. It's nice to be here."
Larkin turned to the men with him.



O'Mara walked quickly around the front of the car and got be-hind the wheel and drove off.
"Mr. Larkin, this is Officer O'Mara. Tom, this is Supervisory Special Agent Larkin of the Secret Service."
"Good morning," Larkin said, and then turned on the seat to face Matt. "I understand you're pretty close to Denny Coughlin."
The announcement surprised Matt.
"Yes, sir, I am."
"First chance you get, give him a call. I think he'll tell you I'm not the arrogant prick your boss apparently thinks I am. Not that Wohl has a reputation for being a shrinking violet himself."
"May I ask how you know Chief Coughlin, sir?"
"Ten, twelve, Christ, it must be fifteen years ago, there was a guy making funny money on Frankford Avenue. Wedding an-nouncements in the daytime, funny money at night. First-class engraver. We had a hell of a time catching him. Denny was then working Major Crimes. Good arrest. We got indictments for twelve people, and ten convictions. He's a hell of a good cop."
"Yes, sir, he is."
"So am I," Larkin said. "Am I going to have to have Denny Coughlin tell Wohl that, or do you think we can make friends by ourselves?"
"Sir, I think that you and Inspector Wohl will have no trouble be-coming friends. Sir, can I ask how you knew I know Chief Coughlin?"

"Our office here keeps files. One of them is on you. You're a very interesting young man, Payne."
Matt would have loved to have an amplification of that, but he suspected that none would be offered, and none was.
"Does Chief Coughlin know you're in town, sir?"
"No. I thought I would put that off until I met your Inspector Wohl," Larkin said, and then turned to O'Mara: "Are you speed-ing, son?"
O'Mara dropped his eyes quickly to the speedometer, before re-plying righteously, "No, sir."
"There's a Highway car following us," Larkin said. "If you're not speeding, what do you think he wants?"
Mat laughed. "He's there in case we get a flat or something," he said.
Larkin looked at him and smiled. "That's what the file said," he said. "Wohl is very careful, very thorough. And very bright."
"You have pretty good files, Mr. Larkin," Matt said.
"Yeah, we do," Larkin said.

It took Vito Lanza several seconds to realize where he was when he woke up, several seconds more to reconstruct what had hap-pened the night before, a few seconds more to realize that he was alone in the revolving circular bed, and a final second or two to grasp that the revolving bed was still revolving.

It didn'tspin around, or anything like that, you really had to work at deciding it was really moving, but it did move, the proof of which was that he was now looking out the window, and the last he remembered, he had been facing toward the bathroom, waiting for Tony to come out.

The bed was also supposed to vibrate, but the switch for that was either busted, or they didn't know how to work it. They were both pretty blasted when they tried that.

He'd had too much to drink, way too much to drink, there was no question about that. He'd had a little trouble getting it up, that much to drink, and that hardly ever happened. And much too much to be doing any serious gambling, and he'd done that too.

It had started on the way up. Tony had said she hadn't had anything for breakfast but toast and coffee and was getting a little hun-gry, so they stopped at a place just the Poconos side of Easton on US 611 for an early lunch. And he'd fed her a couple of drinks, and had a couple himself thinking it would probably put her in the mood for what he had in mind when they got to the Oaks and Pines Resort Lodge.

He had half expected the coupon Tony's Uncle Joe had given them for the Oaks and Pines Resort Lodge to be a gimmick; that when they got there, there either wouldn't be a room for them, or there would be "service charges" or some bullshit like that that would add up to mean it wasn't going to be free at all.

But it hadn't been that way. They didn't get a free*room*, they got a free*suite*, on the top floor, a bedroom with the revolving bed and a mirror on the ceiling; a living room, or whatever it was called, complete to a bar and great big color TV, and a bathroom with a bathtub big enough for the both of them at once made out of tiles and shaped like a heart, and with water jets or whatever they were called you could turn on and make the water swirl around you.

And when they got to the room, there was a bottle of champagne in an ice bucket sitting on the bar, so they'd drunk that, and then tried out the bathtub, and that had really put Tony in the mood for what he

had in mind.		
And that was before they'd found out that the bed revolved.		
After, they had gone down to the cocktail lounge, where the Oaks and Pines Resort Lodge had an old broad—not too bad-looking, nice teats, mostly showing—playing the piano, and they'd had a couple of drinks there.		
That was when the assistant manager had come up to him and handed him a card.		
"Just show this to the man at the door, Mr. Lanza," he said, nod-ding his head toward the rear of the cocktail lounge where there had been a door with no sign on it or anything, and a guy in a waiter suit standing by it. "He'll take care of you. Good luck."		
They didn't go back there until after dinner. Whoever ran the place sent another bottle of champagne to the table, compliments of the house, and the dinner of course went with the coupon. Vito had clams and roast beef. Tony had a shrimp cocktail and a filet mignon with some kind of sauce on it. She gave him a little taste, and the steak was all right, but if he'd had a choice he would rather have had A-l Sauce.		
And then they had a couple of Benedictines and brandies, and danced a little, and he had tried to get her to go back to the room, but she said it was early, and it was going to be a long night, and he didn't push it.		
Then he'd asked her if it would be all right if he went into the back room, and Tony said, sure, go ahead, she had to go to the room, and she would come down when she was done.		
It wasn't Vegas behind the door. No slots, for one thing. And no roulette. But there was blackjack, two tables for that, and there was three tables where people were playing poker, with the house taking their cut out of each pot, and of course craps. Two tables. Pretty well crowded.		
By the time Tony came down from the room, he had made maybe two hundred, maybe a little more, making five- and ten-dollar bets against the shooter. When she showed up, he didn't want to look like an amateur making five-dollar bets, so he started betting twenty-five, sometimes fifty, the same way, against		

When he decided it was time to quit, he had close to five thou-sand, over and above the thousand he had started with and was pre-pared to lose.

the shooter.

"You're going to quit, on a roll?" Tony had asked him, and he told her that was when smart people quit, when they were on a roll, and what he needed right now was a little nap.

So they'd had a little nap, and a couple of drinks, and that was when they fooled around with the switch Tony had found on the carpet when she'd fallen off the bed, and then they'd gotten dressed again and went back downstairs and to the room in the back.

And this time the dice had turned against him. He was sure it was that, not that he was blasted or anything. Sometimes, you just have lousy luck, and with him betting C-notes, and sometimes double C-notes, letting the bet ride, it hadn't taken long to go through the five big ones he'd won, plus the thousand he had brought with him.

That was when the pit boss told him that if he wanted, they would take his marker, that Mr. Fierello had vouched for him, said his markers were good.

So what the hell, he'd figured that as bad as his luck had been, it had to change, it was a question of probability, so he'd asked how much of a marker he could sign, and the guy said as much as he wanted, and he hadn't wanted to look like a piker in front of Tony, so he signed a marker for six big ones, what he was out, and they gave him the money, in hundreds.

When he lost that, he knew it was time to quit, so he quit. If he had really been blasted, he would have signed another marker, be-cause his credit was good, and that would have been stupid. The way to look at it was that he had dropped seven big ones. That was a lot of money, sure, but he'd come home from Vegas with twenty-two big ones. So he was still ahead. He was still on a roll.

He had the Caddy, and about ten thousand in cash, and, of course, Tony. If that wasn't being on a roll, what was?

Vito focused his eyes on the mirror over the bed, and then pulled the sheet modestly over his groin.
Then he got out of bed and walked to the bathroom.
Tony was in the tub, and it was full of bubbles, a bubble bath. It was the first bubble bath Vito had ever seen, except of course in the movies.
"Jees, honey," Tony said, "I didn't wake you, did I? I tried to be quiet."
"Don't worry about it."
"How about this?" Tony said, splashing the bubbles, moving them just enough so that he could see her teats. "I found a bottle of bubble stuff on the dresser. You just pour it in, and turn on them squirter things, and—bubbles!"
"There still room in there for me?"
"Oh, I don't know. Maybe there is, maybe there isn't."
Vito walked to the edge of the tub, dropped his shorts, and got in with Tony.
"You know what I would like to do later?" Tony asked.
"I know what I'd like to do later. Or for that matter, right now."
"Behave yourself! What I would like to do is get one of them golf things"

"What golf things?"
"The buggies, or whatever."
"You mean a golf cart," he said.
"Yeah. Could we get one and just take a ride in it?"
He thought that over.
"Why the hell not?" he said, finally.
"You know what else I would like?"
"What?"
"Champagne."
"Christ, before breakfast?"
"Well, I figured champagne and bubble baths go together. You can eat breakfast anytime. How many times does a person get a chance to do something like this?"
"You want champagne," Vito said, and hoisted himself out of the tub, "you get champagne."

Marion Claude Wheatley had slept soundly and for almost twelve hours. That was, he decided, because no matter what else one could say about the Pine Barrens, it was quiet out here. No blaring horns, or sirens, no screeching tires, and one was not re-quired to listen to other people's radios or televisions.

But on reflection, he thought as he got out of bed and started to fold the bedding to take back to Philadelphia with him, it was prob-ably more than that. He had noticed, ever since he had understood what the Lord wanted him to do, and especially when he was actu-ally involved in something to carry out the Lord's will, that he was peaceful. It probably wasn't the "Peace That Passeth All Under-standing," to which the prayer book of the Protestant Episcopal Church referred so frequently, and which the Lord had promised he would experience in Heaven, but it was a peace of mind that he had never before experienced in his life.

It seemed perfectly logical that if one was experiencing such an extraordinary peace, one would be able to sleep like a log.

Before he made his breakfast, he put the bedding into a suitcase, turned the mattress, and then carried the suitcase out and put it in the trunk of the rental car.

He fired up the Coleman stove and made his breakfast. Bacon and eggs, sunny side up, basted with the bacon fat, the way Mother used to make them for him when he was a kid, served on top of a slice of toast. Mother had thought dipping toast into an egg yolk was rather vulgar; placing the egg on a slice of toast, so that when the yolk was cut, it ran onto the toast accomplished the same purpose and was more refined.

He didn't have toast, of course. There was no toaster. And if there had been, there was no electricity to power a toaster. He thought again of the pluses and minuses of getting a gasoline-powered generator and bringing it out here to the farm. There was a new generation of small, truly portable generators. He had spent the better part of an hour taking a close look at the ones Sears Roe-buck now had.

The one he liked best advertised that it produced 110-volt alternat-ing current at five amperes, and burned one-half gallon of unleaded gasoline per hour. The recommended load was up to 1,500 watts. That was more than enough to power a toaster. It was enough to power a small television. And it would pose no problem, if he had such a generator, to install some simple wiring and have electric lighting over the sink, next to his chair, and in the bedroom.

That would mean, he had thought at first, that he could do away with the Coleman lanterns, which would be nice. But then he real-ized that 1.5 KW was not adequate to power more than one electric hotplate, which meant that the procurement of a generator would not mean that he could dispense with the Coleman stove.

And then he realized that he didn't really want to come out here and watch television, so there was no point in getting a generator to provide power for that purpose.

And then, of course, there were the obvious downsides to having a generator. For one thing, it would make noise. He didn't think that he would really be willing to put up with the sound of a lawn-mower engine running at two-thirds power hour after hour. And it would, of course, require fuel. He would have to bring at least five gallons of unleaded gasoline every time he came to the farm. Carrying gasoline in cans was very dangerous.

It would be much better, he concluded again, not to get a gener-ator. Besides, if he went ahead and got one, there was a very good chance that he wouldn't get to use it very much. Once he had disintegrated the Vice President, all sorts of law enforcement people would begin to look for him. He thought there was very little chance that they would not sooner or later find him.

If indeed, in carrying out the Lord's will at Pennsylvania Station, he didn't end his mortal life.

When he finished breakfast, he pumped the pump and filled the sink in the kitchen with foul-tasting water, added liquid Palmolive dish soap, and washed the plates and flatware and pots and pans he had soiled since his arrival. He put everything in its proper place in the cabinets, and then made up the garbage package.

Until he had finally realized how to solve the problem—like most solutions, once reached, he was surprised at how long it had taken him to figure it out—he had ridden the tractor to the depres-sion carrying the paper bags full of garbage in his arm. It was dif-ficult to drive the tractor with one hand, and sometimes, despite trying to be very careful, he had hit a bump and lost the damn bag anyway, but that was all he could see to do. If he put the garbage in the trailer, by the time he got to the depression, the vibration caused the garbage to come out of the paper sack and spread out all over the trailer. Or even bounce out of the trailer.

The solution was simplicity itself. He made up a garbage pack-age, or packages, by placing one paper sack inside another, and when it was full, sealing it with duct tape. He had then been able to place the sealed bag in the trailer, and then drive, with both hands free, the tractor to the depression.

Ordinarily, when Marion took care of the garbage, he simply drove to the edge of the depression and stood on the edge and threw the garbage packages down the slope.

Today, however, he decided that it would be a good idea if he took another look at the lockers. He had examined them yesterday, of course, but that had been right after he'd set off the devices, and there had been a good deal of smoke and even several small smol-dering fires. By now, everything would have cooled down, and if any of the fires were still smoldering, he could be sure they were extinguished.

Throughout the Pine Barrens were areas that smoldering fires had left blackened and ugly. And one could not completely dismiss the possibility that a smoldering fire could reach the farmhouse, although that was unlikely.

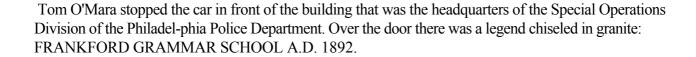
There was still the smell of smoke in the depression, but he could not find any smoke, and it was probably that the converse of "where there's smoke there's fire" was true. No smoke, so to speak, no fire.

He was pleased when he examined the lockers. The devices had functioned perfectly, and with evidence of greater explosive power than he would have thought. The doors of the lockers in which the devices had been detonated had, except for one that hung on a hinge, been blown off. The chain that had been wrapped around the Compo-sition C-4 had functioned as he had hoped it would. The lockers in which the devices had been placed were shredded, as were the adja-cent lockers. He found only a couple of dozen chain links, and he found none where more than two links remained attached.

Marion climbed back up the slope of the depression, drove the tractor back to the farmhouse, replaced the tarpaulin over the trac-tor, and then went into the house. He took a careful look around to make sure that he hadn't forgotten anything, and then left, carefully locking the padlock on the door.

He got in the rental car and started the engine. He looked at his watch. Things couldn't be better. He would get home in plenty of time to do the laundry, go to the grocery store, and then get the rental car back to the airport in time to qualify for the special week-end rate. And then he could get back home in time to watch Mas-terpiece Theater on the public television station.

That was the television program he really hated to miss.



Before O'Mara could apply the parking brake and open his door, Supervisory Special Agent H. Charles Larkin said, "This must be the place," and got out of the car.

Matt hurried after him, and managed to beat Larkin to the door and pull it open for him.

"Right this way, Mr. Larkin," he said.

He led him down the corridor to the private door of what had been the principal's office, knocked, and then pushed the door open.

"Mr. Larkin is here, Inspector."

"Fine. Would you ask him to wait just a minute, please, Detec-tive Payne?"

"Yes, sir," Matt said, and turned to Larkin. "The inspector will be with you in just a minute, sir."

"How good of him," Larkin said, expressionless.

Matt knew from checking his watch that Wohl kept Larkin wait-ing for two minutes, but it seemed like much longer before Wohl pulled his door open.







"Don't. The Secret Service is a nasty bureaucracy too. I under-stand how that works."
"When you're aware of your ignorance, you tend to gather your wagons in a circle," Wohl said.
"Well, I'm not the Indians," Larkin said. "And now that we both know that, could you bring yourself to call me Charley?"
"My dad might decide I was being disrespectful," Wohl said.
"Peter, if you keep calling me 'Mr. Larkin,' your dad will think we still have a communications problem."
"Matt," Wohl said. "Go get Captains Sabara and Pekach. I want them to meet Charley here."
"Yes, sir. Lieutenant Malone?"
"Him too," Wohl said.
As Matt started down the corridor to Sabara's office, where he suspected they would all be, he heard Larkin say, "Nice-looking kid."
"I think he'll make a pretty good cop."
That's very nice. But it's sort of a left-handed compliment. It sug-gests I will probably be a pretty good cop sometime in the future. So what does that make me now?

Wohl made the introductions, and they all shook hands.

"There is a new game plan," Wohl said. "There is something I didn't know until a few minutes ago about Mr. Larkin. He and my dad are old pals, and that changes his status from one of them to one of us. And I've already told him that we don't know zilch about what's expected of us. So we're all here to learn. The basic rule is what he asks for, he gets. Mr. Larkin?"

"The first thing you have to understand," Larkin said seriously, "is that the Secret Service never makes a mistake. Our people here in Philadelphia told me that the man in charge of this operation was Inspector Wall. Peter has promised to have his birth certificate al-tered so that our record will not be tarnished."

He got the chuckles he expected.

"The way this usually works," Larkin went on, "is that our spe-cial agent in charge here will come up with the protection plan. I'll get a copy of it, to see if he missed anything, then we present it to you guys and ask for your cooperation. Then, a day or so before the actual visit, either me, or one of my guys, will come to town and check everything again, and check in with your people."

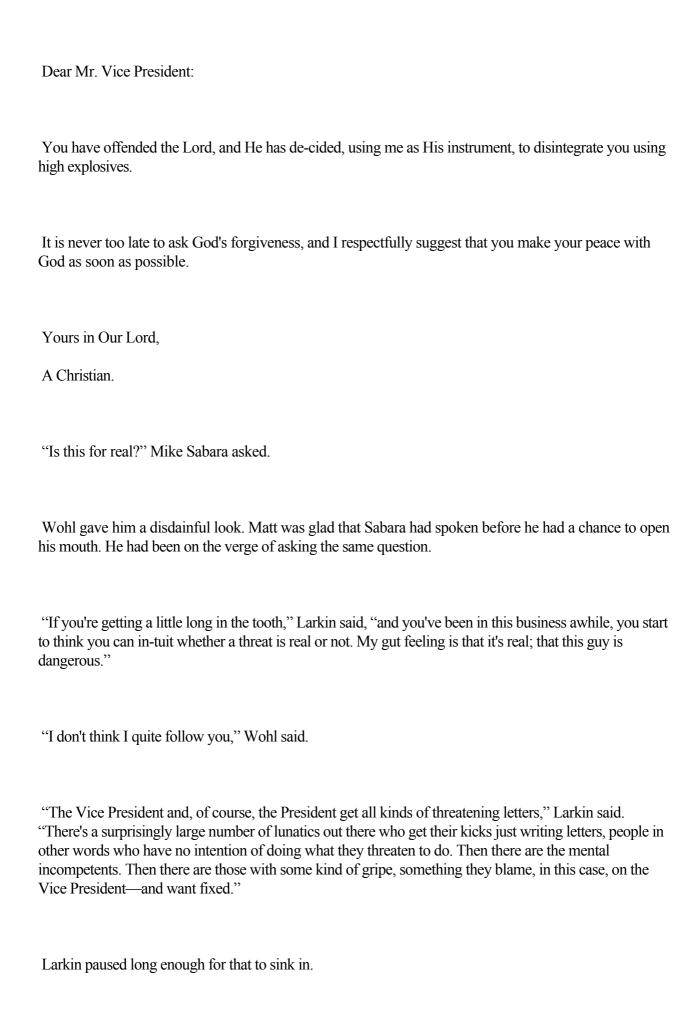
He paused, and looked in turn at everyone in the room—including Matt, which Matt found flattering.

"This time," he went on, "there's what I'm afraid may be a po-tential problem. Which is why I'm here, and so early."

He picked his briefcase up from the floor, laid it on his lap, opened it, and took out a plastic envelope.

"This is the original," he said, handing it to Wohl. "I had some Xeroxes made."

He passed the Xeroxes around to the others. They showed an en-velope addressed to the Vice President of the United States, and the letter that envelope had held.

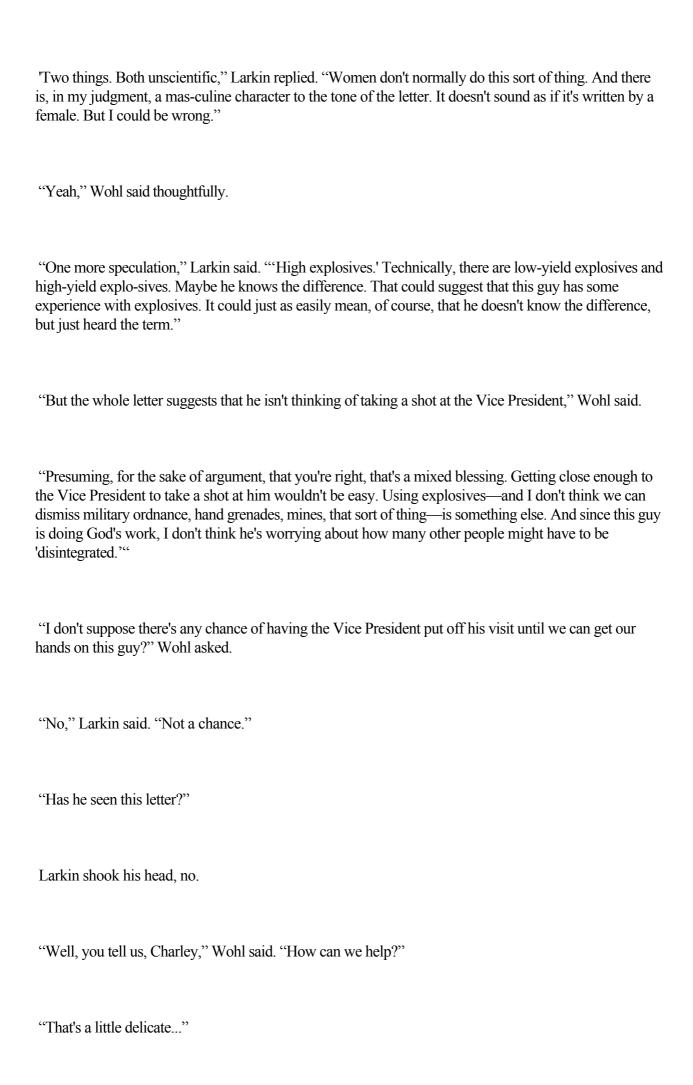




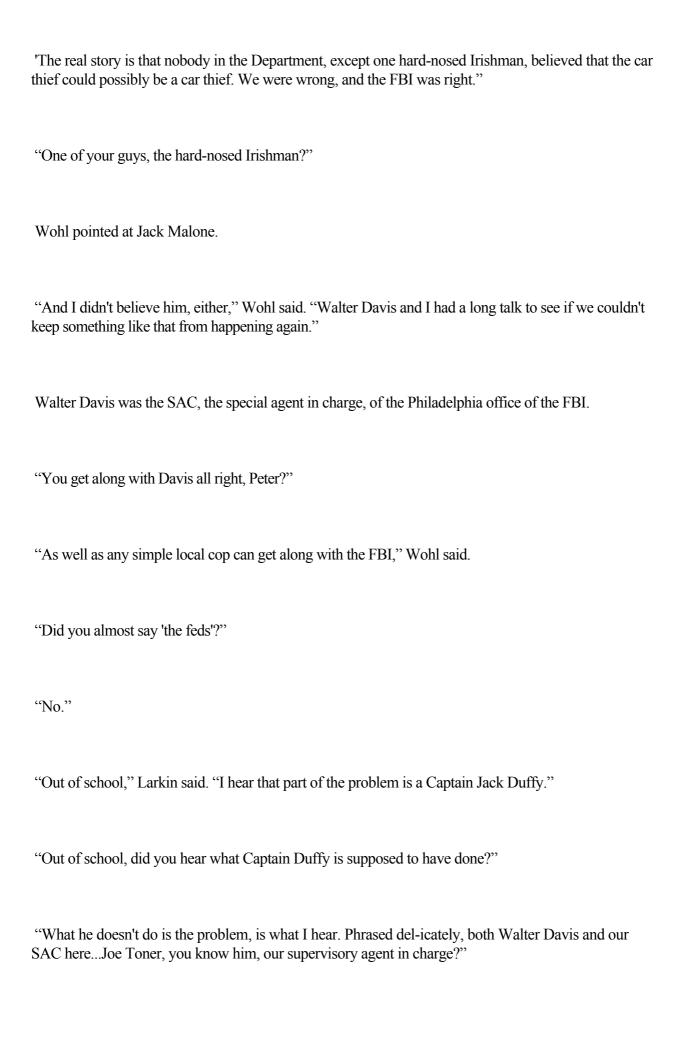




"Yes, sir."	
FOURTE	EEN
"For one t	e some other things I think we can safely say about this guy," Larkin said after Matt had gone hing, he's intelli-gent, and he's well educated. The two don't always go together. You'll notice creetly capitalizes all references to the deity. 'His instrument,' for example, has a capital 'H.'"
Sabara gr	runted.
One of the means propager, and buy in Wo Actually to down. An was going	re are no typos on either the letter or the envelope, which were typed on an IBM typewriter. ose with the ball. So he both knows how to type and has access to an IBM type-writer. Which bably in an office. Which would mean that he would also have access to a blank sheet of a prob-ably an envelope. He used instead a sheet of typing paper from one of those pads you colworth's or McCrory's. There are traces of an animal-based adhesive on the top edge. The bottom, which just means that after he ripped the sheet free, he put it in the typewriter upsid he used an envelope from the Post Office. Which probably means that he knows some-both to take a good close look at both the letter and the envelope and didn't want us to be able to by tracing the paper or envelope."
"Then wh	ny write the letter in the first place? Take that risk?" Sabara asked.
	he believes that he is a Christian, and is worried about the Vice President's soul," Larkin sairings us back to someone who thinks he's doing the Lord's work being a very dangerous indeed."
"We keer	o saying 'he,'" Wohl said, but it was a question.



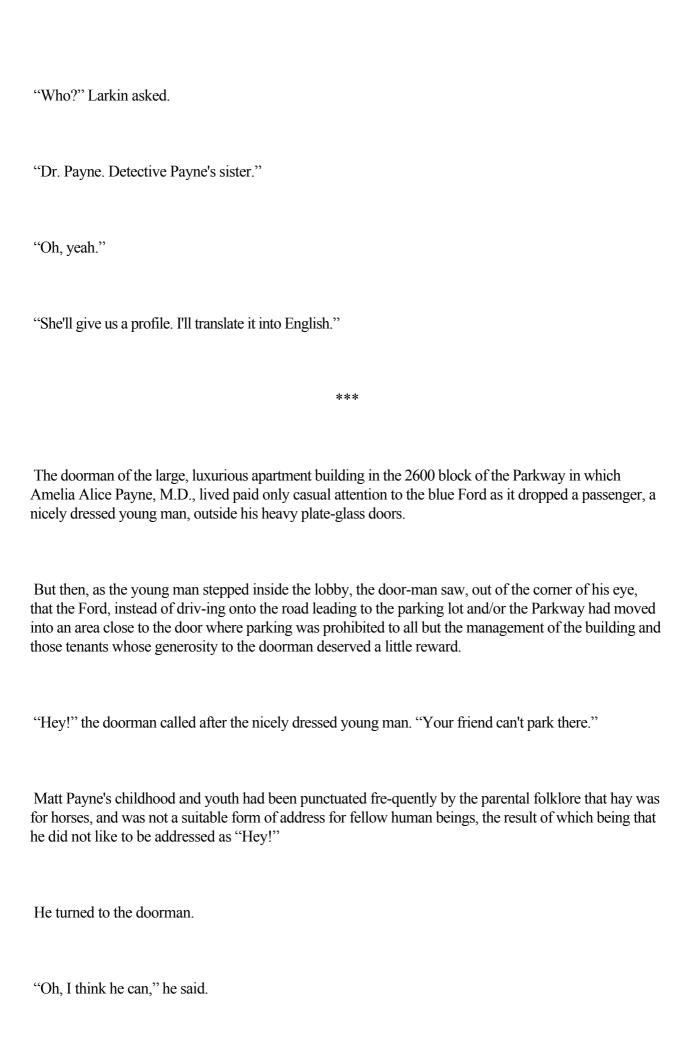














Two young women and two young guys seemed to add up. Mr. Whatsisname in 10D didn't look like he even liked women. The doorman decided he would just have to wait and see who got off the elevator, later. And then he decided that the young guy was probably pulling his chain. The cop might be a cop, but he was off duty, and the two of them were just going to see their girlfriends. Just to be sure, he went out and looked at the blue Ford. It looked like a regular car, except that there was at least one extra radio an-tenna, and when he looked close, he saw a microphone lying on the seat, its cord disappearing into the glove compartment, and when he looked even closer, he could see a speaker mounted under the dashboard. So it was a cop car. So what it probably really was that the ser-geant was on duty, and it was Sunday morning, and nothing was going on, so he picked up his buddy and they came to see the girls. And parked wherever the hell they wanted to! Goddamned cops! *** Amy Payne, a slight, just this side of pretty, brown-haired twenty-seven-year-old, peered through the peephole in her door, and then, somewhat reluctantly, opened it just wide enough to look out. "You are really the last person I expected to see here this morn-ing, Matt," she said. There was absolutely no suggestion that she intended to open the door.

"You've heard of the telephone? People get on the telephone and say, 'Would it be convenient for me to drop by?"

"I've got to talk to you, Amy," Matt said.













wanted to blow up the Vice President, he had another series of thoughts, which ranged from humbling to humiliating:
Wohl didn't send Pekach 's driver with me so that I could ask him questions. He sent me with Jerry O'Dowd because I could get O'Dowd in to see Amy. My sole role in this was to get him into her presence. She might have, probably would have, told anyone else to call her office and arrange an appointment.
Pekach didn't pick this guy to be his driver for auld lang syne, but rather because Jerry O'Dowd is a very bright guy, an experi-enced detective, and now a sergeant. Both Pekach, when he volun-teered O'Dowd to "drive me," and Wohl, when he accepted the offer, knew damned well O'Dowd would take over this little inter-view sooner or later, probably sooner, and in any event the instant Rookie Detective Payne started to fuck it up.
Penny handed him a cup of coffee.
"Black, right?"
"Right. Thank you."
"Sergeant?"
"Black is fine with me."
And that's why O'Dowd was at 30th Street Station when I picked Larkin up. Pekach was not about to tell Wohl that he thought he was making a mistake sending me on an important errand, but he felt obliged to protect his boss by sending O'Dowd there in case I fucked that up.
Matt had a clear mental image of him patronizing O'Dowd out-side the station: "How are you, Jerry? What's up?"

Did your reputation precede you, Detective Payne? Did Captain Pekach say a soft word in Sergeant O'Dowd's ear before he sent him to the station, or did he think that was unnecessary, it would only be a matter of a minute or two before O'Dowd would be able to conclude for himself that Matthew M. Payne was a first-class, supercilious horse's ass?
"Sergeant, excuse me," Matt Payne said. "I think I'd better call Chief Coughlin, and then check in with Inspector Wohl."
Sergeant O'Dowd looked at Detective Payne with something in his eyes that hadn't been there before.
"Yeah, Matt, please. Go ahead. Tell the inspector that what we're getting from Dr. Payne is very valuable."

Pekach answered Wohl's private number.
"Captain Pekach."
"Payne, sir. I was told to check in."
"The inspector took Mr. Larkin down to Intelligence," Pekach said. "How's things going?"
"Chief Coughlin will meet us for lunch. And Sergeant O'Dowd said to say that what we're getting from my sister is valuable."
"The reservations are for twelve noon. The inspector wants O'Dowd there. Tell him it would be nice if he could get into civil-ian clothing by then."

"Yes, sir. I have the feeling we're about finished here. There should be time."

In the elevator, Matt said, "Sergeant, Captain Pekach said that you're to go to Bookbinder's, and that if there's time, he'd like you to get out of uniform."
"The inspector probably wants to hear two versions of what we got from your sister," O'Dowd thought out loud, and looked at his watch. "There will be time. I live in Ashton Acres, right by the en-trance to Northeast Airport."
The elevator door whooshed open, and they walked to the main door, past the doorman, who made no effort to rush to the door and open it for them.
"See you again," O'Dowd said cheerfully to the doorman, who snorted and pretended to find something on his little desk to be ab-solutely fascinating.
"I wonder what's wrong with him? Tight shoes?" O'Dowd asked as they were walking to the car.
"Beats me," Matt said. His brilliant repartee earlier with the doorman now seemed nowhere near as witty as it had.
When they were on the Parkway, headed east, O'Dowd said, "Give them a call, tell them where we're going."
Matt picked up the microphone, and then started to open the glove compartment to make sure he was on the right frequency.
"We're on the Lhand" O'Dowd said reading his mind "And this is the hoss's car"



"Thank you." .
"So what do you think your sister meant when she said we should keep in mind that this guy is asexual?"
"Beats the shit out of me, Jerry."
O'Dowd laughed. "Better," he said. "Better."
FIFTEEN
Bookbinder's Restaurant provided a private dining room for the luncheon party, and senior members of the landmark restaurant's hierarchy stopped by twice to shake hands and make sure every-thing was satisfactory.
But,Matt thought,that's as far as manifestations of respect for the upper echelons of the Police Department are going to go. They might grab the tab if Coughlin or Lowenstein came in here alone. But they are not going to pick up the tab for a party as large as this one. For one thing, it would be too much money, and for another, it would set an unfortunate precedent: Hey, let's get the guys to-gether and go down to Bookbinder's for a free lobster!
Sowhat does that mean? That we go Dutch treat, which would make the most sense, or is Peter Wohl going to get stuck with the tab?
Fortunately, that is not my problem. So why am I worrying about it?

He concentrated on his steamed clams, boiled lobster, and on making his two beers last through everything.

It would be inappropriate for Matthew M. Payne, the junior po-lice officer present, to get sloshed during lunch with his betters.

Secondjunior police officer, he corrected himself: *I am no longer low man on the Special Operations totem pole. Officer Tom O'Mara is.*

O'Mara, Matt thought, somewhat surprised, does not seem at all uncomfortable in the presence of all the white shirts, and heavy-hitter while shirts, at that. You'd think he would be; for the ordi-nary cop, chief inspectors are sort of a mix between the cardinal of the Spanish Inquisition and God himself.

But, when you think twice, Tom O 'Mara is not an ordinary po-lice officer in the sense that Charley McFadden was—and for that matter, detective or not, still is—an ordinary cop. He belongs to the club. His father is a captain. The reputation is hereditary: Until proven otherwise, the son of a good cop is a good cop.

Some of that, now that I think about it, also applies to me. In a sense, I am a hereditary member of the club. Because of Denny Coughlin, and/or because both my biological father and my Uncle Dutch got killed on duty.

The correct term is "fraternity," an association of brothers, from the Latin word meaning brother, as in Delta Phi Omicronat the University of Pennsylvania, where, despite your noble, two years service as Treasurer, you didn't have a fucking clue what the word "fraternity" really meant.

"You look deep in thought, Matty," Chief Coughlin said, break-ing abruptly into his mental meandering. "You all right?"

"I don't think I should have had the second dozen steamed clams," Matt replied. "But aside from that, I'm fine."





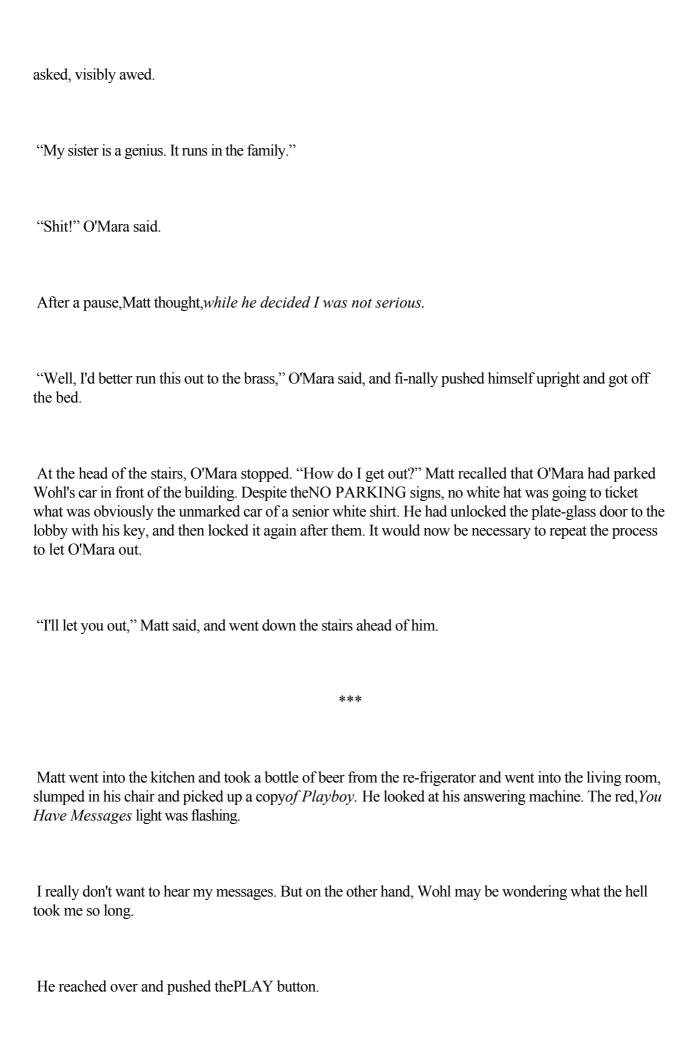
The only place there was room in Matt's apartment for a desk was in his bedroom, and even there he had to look long and hard for a desk small enough to fit. He'd finally found an unpainted "student's desk" in Sears Roebuck that fit, but wasn't quite sturdy enough for the standard IBM electric typewriter he had inherited from his father's office. Every time the carriage slammed back and forth for a new line, the desk shifted with a painful squeak.

Tom O'Mara made himself comfortable on Matt's bed, first by sitting on it, and then, when he became bored with that, by lying down on it and watching television with the sound turned off, so as not to disturb Matt's mental labor.

It took him the better part of an hour to translate first Amy's really incredibly bad handwriting, and then to reorganize what she had written, and then finally to incorporate what Wohl and Larkin had brought up in their meeting. Finally, he was satisfied that he had come up with what Wohl and Larkin wanted. He typed one more copy, pulled it from the typewriter, and handed it to O'Mara.

,	This individual is <u>almost certainly</u> :
	Mentally unbalanced, believing that he has a special relationship with God. He may believe that God speaks to him directly.
	IMPORTANTLY:He would not make a public an-nouncement of this relationship.
	Highly intelligent.
	Well educated, most likely a college graduate, but almost certainly has some college education.
	Well spoken, possessed of a good vocabulary.
	An expert typist, with access to a current model IBM typewriter (one with a "type ball").
	This individual isprobably: A male Caucasian. Twenty-five to forty years old.
	Asexual (that is, he's unmarried, and has no wife, or homo- or hetero-sexual partner or sex life).
	"A loner" (that is, has very few, or no friends). Living alone.
	Neat and orderly, possibly to an excessive de-gree, and dresses conservatively.
	Of ordinary, or slightly less than ordinary, physical appearance. A chess player, not a foot-ball player.

	lf-assured, possibly to an excessive degree. (That is, tends to become annoyed, even angry, with yone who disagrees with him.)
	n Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Methodist, (less likely, a Roman Catholic) but not an active mem-ber of church group.
W	orks in an office. A nondrinker.
Eit	ther a nonsmoker or a chain cigarette smoker.
Th	is individual is <u>possibly</u> :
Ar	n engineer, either civil or electronic, or an ac-countant, or someone who works with figures.
	veteran, possibly discharged for medical (in-cluding psychological) reasons. Possibly a former junior icer.
he l	omeone who has come to the attention of the authorities as the result of a complainthe has made when has felt he has been wronged. (For example, complaining about neighbor's loud party, or loud radio, mage to his lawn, et cetera, by neighborhood children.)
	s O'Mara read it, Matt glanced up at the silent TV mounted on a hospital-room shelf over the door. Mara had been watching an old cops-and-robbers movie.
Ιw	wonder how he can tell the good guys from the bad guys? They all look like 1930s-era gangsters.
"Y	Your sister was able to come up with all this just from that nutty note that screwball wrote?" O'Mara









He put his hand under her sweater and moved it up to the fas-tener on her brassiere.

Marion Claude Wheatley turned the rental car back in to the Hertz people at the airport in plenty of time to qualify for the spe-cial rate, but there was, according to the mental defective on duty, 212 miles on the odometer, twelve more than was permitted under the rental agreement. The turn-in booth functionary insisted that Marion would have to pay for the extra miles at twenty-five cents a mile. He was stone deaf to Marion's argument that he'd made the trip fifty times before, and it had never exceeded 130 miles.

It wasn't the three dollars, it was the principle of the matter. Ob-viously, the odometer in the car was in error, and that was Hertz's fault, not his. Finally, a supervisor was summoned from the airport. He was only minimally brighter than the mental defective at the turn-in booth, but after Marion threatened to turn the entire matter over not only to Hertz management, but also to the Better Business Bureau and the police, he finally backed down, and Marion was able to get in a taxi and go home.

When he got to the house, Marion carefully checked everything, paying particular attention to the powder magazine, to make sure there had been no intruders during his absence.

Then he unpacked the suitcases, and took his soiled linen, bed-clothes, and his overalls to the basement, and ran them through the washer, using the ALL COLD and LOW WATER settings. He watched the machine as it went through the various cycles, using the time to make up a list of things he would need in the future.

First of all, he would need batteries, and he made a note to be sure to check the expiration date to be sure that he would be buying the freshest batteries possible for both the detonation mechanism and for the radio transmitter.

He would need more chain, as well. He was very pleased to learn how well the chain had functioned. He would need six lengths of chain, five for the five devices, and one as a reserve. Each length had to be between twenty and twenty-two inches in length.

He would need two 50-yard rolls of duct tape, and two 25-yard rolls of a good quality electrical tape, tape that would have both high electrical and adhesive qualities. He wouldn't need anywhere near even twenty-five yards of electrical tape, but one tended to misplace small rolls of tape, and he would have a spare if that hap-pened. One tended to lose the larger rolls of duct tape less often, but it wouldn't hurt to be careful.

And he would need five pieces of luggage in which to place the devices. As he had driven back from the Pine Barrens, Marion had decided that what had been "AWOL bags" in the Army would be the thing to get. They were of canvas construction, nine or ten inches wide, probably eighteen inches or two feet long, and closed with a zipper.

It would be necessary to get them with brass, or steel, zippers, not plastic or aluminum. By attaching a wire between a steel or brass zipper and the antennae of the devices, it would be possible to increase the sensitivity of the radio receivers' antennae.

He would also need an attaché case in which to carry the short-wave transmitter. He had seen some for sale in one of the trashy stores along Market Street, east of City Hall. They were supposed to be genuine leather, but Marion doubted that, considering the price they were asking. It didn't matter, really, but there was no sense in buying a genuine leather attaché case when one that looked like leather would accomplish the same purpose.

Marion made two more notes, one to remind himself not to buy the AWOL bags all in one place, which might raise questions, and the other to make sure they all were of different colors and, if possible, of slightly different design.

He was finished making up the list a good five minutes before the washing machine completed the last cycle, and he was tempted to just leave the sheets and everything in the machine, and come back later and hang them up to dry, but then decided that the best way to go, doing anything, was to finish one task completely be-fore going on to another.

He waited patiently until the washing machine finally clunked to a final stop, and then removed everything and hung it on a cord stretched across the basement. Things took longer, it seemed like forever, to dry in the basement, but on the other hand, no one had ever stolen anything from the cord in the basement the way things were stolen from the cord in the backyard.

When he came out of the basement, he changed into a suit and tie, and then walked to the 30th Street Station. He wanted to make sure that his memory wouldn't play tricks on him about the general layout of

the station, and what was located where. He had been coming to the 30th Street Station since he had been a child, and therefore should know it like the back of his hand. But the opera-tive word there was "should," and it simply made sense to have an-other careful look, in case changes had been made or there was some other potential problem.

He spent thirty minutes inside the station, including ten minutes he spent at the fast-food counter off the main waiting room, sitting at a dirty little table from which he could look around.

The Vice President would certainly want to march right down the center of the main waiting room, after he rode up the escalator from the train platform.

Unfortunately, there were no rows of lockers on the platform it-self, which would have simplified matters a great deal. If there had been lockers, all he would have had to do was wait until the Vice President walked past where he could have concealed one of the devices, and then detonate it.

He consoled himself by thinking that if there had been lockers there, the Secret Service, who were not fools, would almost cer-tainly make sure they didn't contain anything they shouldn't

Once the Vice President and his entourage reached the main waiting room level of the station, there were three possible routes to where he would enter his official car. There were east, west, and south entrances.

The logical place would be the east exit, but that did not mean he would use it. There were a number of factors that would be consid-ered by those in charge of the Vice President's movements, and there was just no telling, with any degree of certainty, which one would be used.

All three routes would have to be covered. The east and west routes, conveniently, had rows of lockers. If he placed in each of two lockers on both the east and west routes one device, the lethal zone of the devices would be entirely effective. The south route did not have a row of lockers.

Marion thought that it was entirely likely the Lord was sending him a message via the lockers in the Pine Barrens. In other words, why the symbolism of the lockers if they were not in some way connected with the disintegration of the Vice President?

It was unlikely, following that line of thought, that the Vice Pres-ident would take the south, locker-less route.

But on the other hand, it was also possible that he was wrong. It was also clear that the Lord expected him to be as thorough as hu-manly possible. That meant, obviously, that he was going to have to cover the south route, even if the Vice President would probably not use it.

There was, of course, a solution. There was always a solution when doing the Lord's work. One simply had to give it some thought. Often some prayerful thought.

There was a large metal refuse container against the wall in the passage between the main waiting room and the doors of the south exit. All he would have to do is put the fifth device in the refuse container. For all he knew—and there was no way to*know* without conducting a test—the metal refuse container would produce every bit as much shrapnel as one of the lockers.

The only problem, which Marion decided could be solved as he left 30th Street Station, was to make sure the metal refuse container would accept one of the AWOL bags through its opening.

Marion bought one of the last copies of the Sunday edition of *The Philadelphia Inquirer* on sale at the newsstand. He sat down on one of the benches in the main waiting room and flipped through it for three or four minutes. Then he left the station by the south route, stopping at the metal refuse container to place the newspaper in it.

He kept the first section. First he opened it and laid it on the opening horizontally, and then tore the paper to mark how wide the opening was. Then he held the paper vertically, and tore it again, this time marking how tall the opening was.

Then he folded the newspaper, tucked it under his arm, and walked out of the station and home.

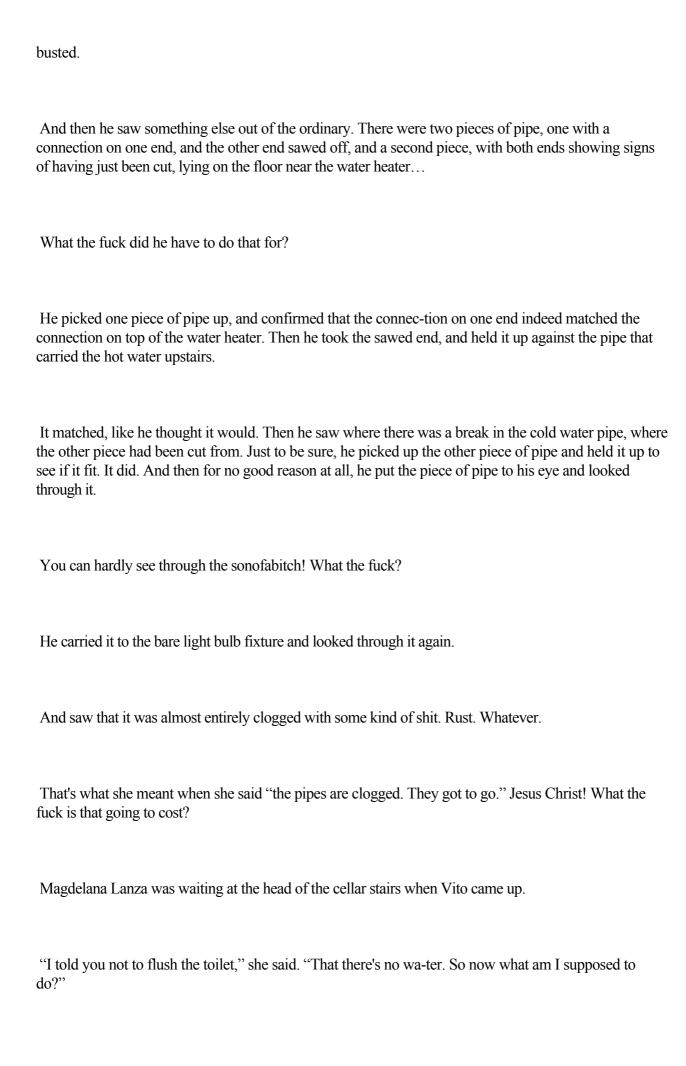
He had thirty minutes to spare before Masterpiece Theater came on the television.



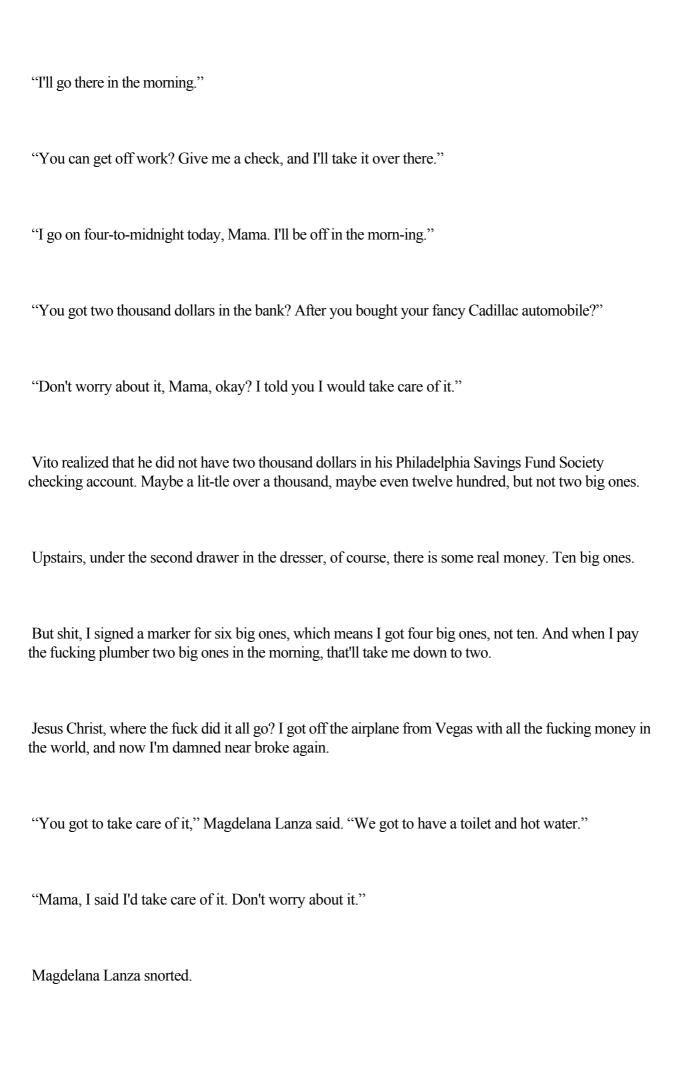
No water, my ass. What can go wrong with pipes? What I'm go-ing to find when I go in the basement is that this sonofabitch has turned the valve off.
Vito went in the house and went to his room and took off the good clothes he had worn to take Tony to the Poconos and put on a pair of khaki trousers and an old pair of shoes.
I got to take a leak. What did you expect? The minute she tells you the toilet won't flush, you have to piss so bad your back teeth are floating.
He went into the bathroom and looked at the toilet. There was water in the bowl.
Nothing wrong with this toilet. What the hell was she talking about?
He voided his bladder, and pulled the chain. Water emptied from the reservoir into the toilet bowl. It flushed. But there was no rush of clean water. The toilet sort of burped, and when he looked down there was hardly any water in the bowl at all, and none was coming in.
Vito dropped to his knees and looked behind the bowl at the valve on the thin copper pipe that fed water to the reservoir, and then put his hand on it.
There was a momentary feeling of triumph.
The fucking thing's turned off! That sonofabitching plumber! Wait 'til I get my hands on you, pal!
He turned the valve, opening it fully. No water entered the reser-voir. He waited a moment, thinking maybe it would take a second or two to come on, like it took a while for the water to come hot when you turned it on.
Nothing! Shit!

Three hours ago, I was in a bathroom with a carpet on the floor and a toilet you couldn't even hear flushing or filling, and now look where I am! Wait a minute! He wouldn't shut it off here, he 'd shut it off in the basement, where nobody would see. I didn't turn that valve on, I turned it off! He cranked the valve as far it would go in the opposite direction, and then went down the stairs to the first floor two at a time, and then more carefully down the stairs to the basement, because Mama kept brooms and mops and buckets and stuff like that on the cellar stairs. His foot slipped on the basement floor, and he only barely kept from falling down. When he finally found the chain hanging from the light switch and got the bare bulb turned on, he saw that the floor was slick wet. Here and there, there were little puddles. And it smelled rotten too, not as bad as a backed-up toilet, but bad. He found the place at the rear of the basement where the water pipes came in through the wall from the water meter out back. And again there was a feeling of triumph. There's the fucking valve, and it's off! It didn't have a handle, like the valve on the toilet upstairs, just a piece of iron sticking up that you needed a wrench, or a pair of pli-ers, to turn. He turned and started for the front of the basement, where there was sort of a workbench, and where he knew he could find a wrench. It was then that he saw the water heater had been disconnected, and moved from the concrete blocks on which it normally rested. Both the water and gas pipes connected to it had been disconnected. He took a good close look.

Well, shit, if I was the fucking plumber, I would disconnect the water heater. How the hell would an old lady know whether or not it was really busted? A plumber tells an old lady it's busted, she thinks it's









than here.
SIXTEEN
Officer Jesus Martinez drove into the parking lot of the Airport Po-lice Station in his five-year-old Oldsmobile 98 about two minutes before Corporal Vito Lanza pulled in at the wheel of his not-quite-a-year-old Cadillac Fleetwood.
Martinez would not have seen Lanza arrive had he not noticed that his power antenna hadn't completely retracted. Jesus took great pride in his car, and things like that bothered him. He unlocked the car and got back in and turned the ignition on and ran the antenna up and down by turning the radio on and off.
It retracted completely the last couple of times, which made him think, to his relief, that there was nothing wrong with the antenna, that it was probably just a little dirty. As soon as he got home, he would get some alcohol and wet a rag with it, and wipe the antenna clean, and then lubricate it with some silicone lubricant.
He was in the process of relocking the Olds's door when Corpo-ral Lanza pulled in beside him.
That's a new Cadillac. Where the fuck does he get the money for a new Cadillac?
"Whaddaya say, Corporal?"
"Hey! How they hanging, Gomez?"
"It's Martinez, Corporal."



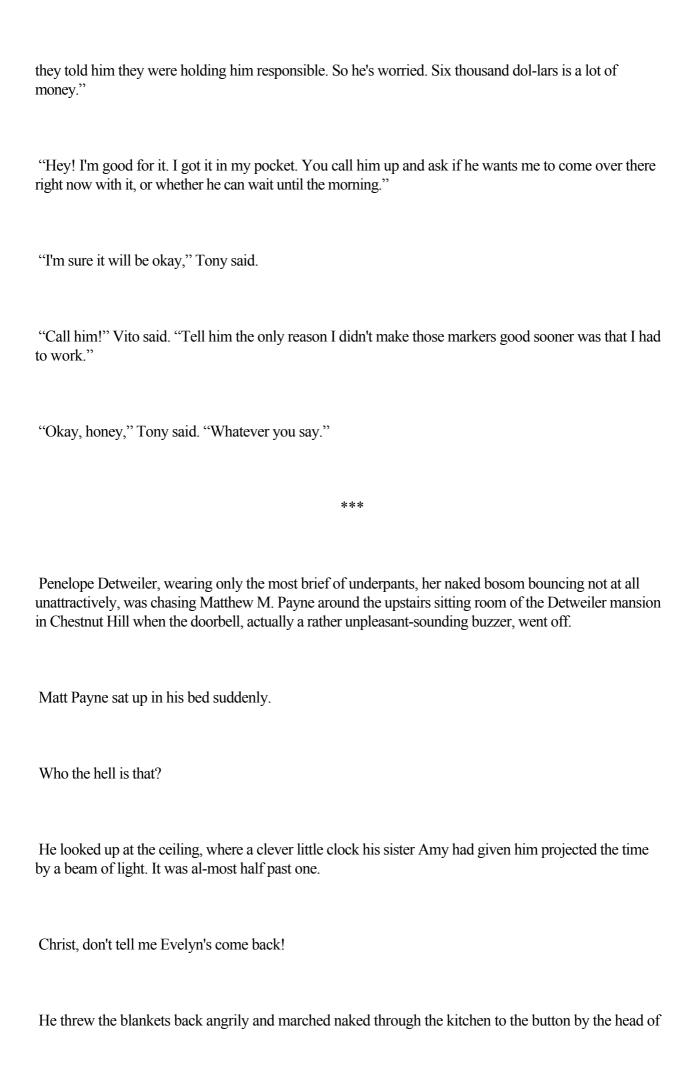
"I haven't been out here long enough to really know. So far it's great. I was in Highway."
How the fuck did a little Spic like you get into Highway? You don't look big enough to straddle a motorcycle.
"Yeah, I heard. So why did you leave Highway?"
"They made it plain to me that maybe I would be happier some-place else. Which was all right with me. I wasn't too happy in Highway."
They didn't want you in Highway as little as you are. Those fuckers all think they're John Wayne. And John Wayne, you're not, Gom— <i>Martinez</i>
"Well, walking around an air-conditioned building telling tour-ists "where they can find the pisser sure beats riding a motorcycle in the rain."
"You said it. Corporal."
"The next time they announce a corporal's exam, you ought to have a shot at it."
"Yeah, well, I'm not too good at taking examinations."
"Some people are, and some people aren't. Don't worry about it."

It wasn't until a few minutes after midnight, when he put the key in the Caddy's door, that Vito, with a sinking feeling in his stom-ach, realized that he had done something really fucking stupid. He pulled the door open and slid across the seat, and then, curs-ing, lifted the fold-down armrest out of the way and put his finger on the glove compartment button. Shit, it's locked. I don't remember locking the sonofabitch. He found the key and unlocked the glove compartment, and ex-haled audibly with relief. The Flamingo Hotel & Casino envelope was still there, right where he'd shoved it when he got in the car. He took it out and glanced into it. There was enough light from the tiny glove compartment bulb to see the comforting thick wad of fifties and hundreds. He closed the envelope and stuck it in his pocket. Not that much of it is still mine anymore. I know goddamned well 1 didn't lock that compartment. Maybe, thisisa Caddy, after all, it locks automatically. He closed the glove compartment door, slid back across the seat behind the wheel, put the ignition key in, and started the engine. Starts right fucking off! There really is nothing like a Caddy.

He backed out of the parking slot, noticed that the old Olds the Spic kid drove was still there. Well, at least he knew what he was doing in the Airport Unit. The little fucker was too dumb to pass the detective's exam, and too little to be a real Highway Patrolman, so they eased him out. They tossed him Airport Unit as a bone. He wondered if the little Spic was smart enough to know how lucky he was to be in Airport; they could just as easily have sent him to one of the districts, or somewhere else really shitty.

Vito decided he would be nice to the kid. Make sure he knows what a good deal he had fallen into. He

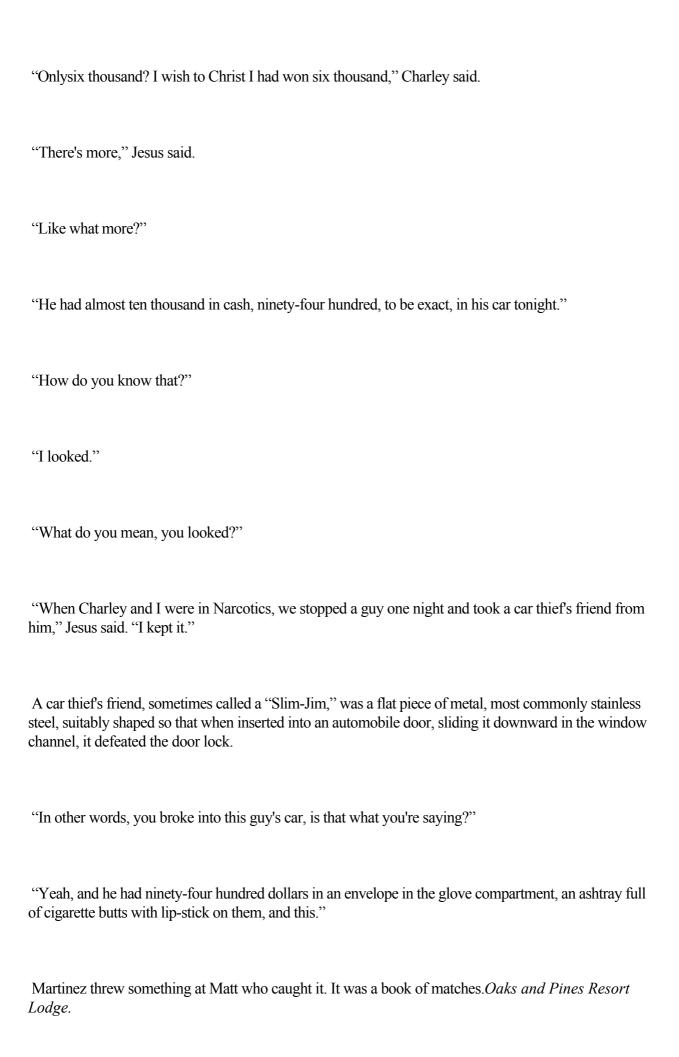




the stairs that operated the door lock solenoid and pushed it.
The door opened and Detective Charley McFadden started up the stairs. On his heels was Officer Jesus Martinez, in uniform.
"You took your fucking time answering the doorbell," Detective McFadden said, by way of apology for disturbing Matt's sleep.
"I'll try to do better the next time."
"I thought maybe you had a broad up here," McFadden said as he reached the head of the stairs.
Not anymore. She finally went home, after reluctantly conclud-ing that the only way she was going to be able to make it stand up again was to put it in a splint.
That being the case, where did that erotic dream about Precious Penny come from?
"If there was, you'd still be down there leaning on the doorbell," Matt said. "What do you say, Hay-zus?"
Martinez did not reply.
"You got a beer or something?" McFadden asked. "And why don't you put a bathrobe on or something?"
"Are we going to have a party?"
"No. This is business. We got to talk."







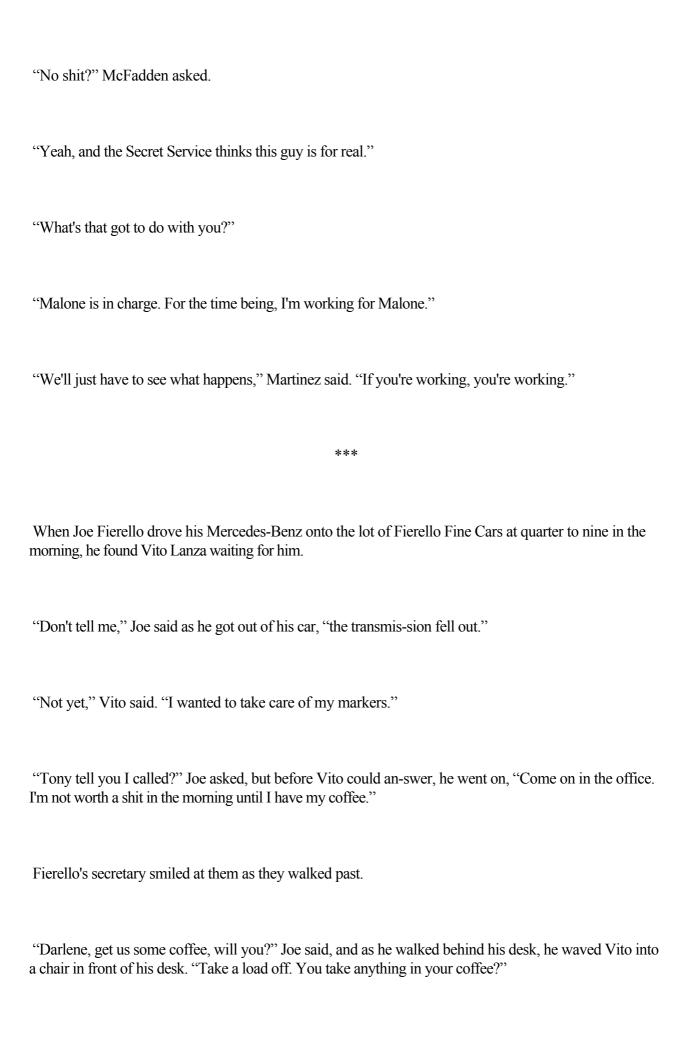


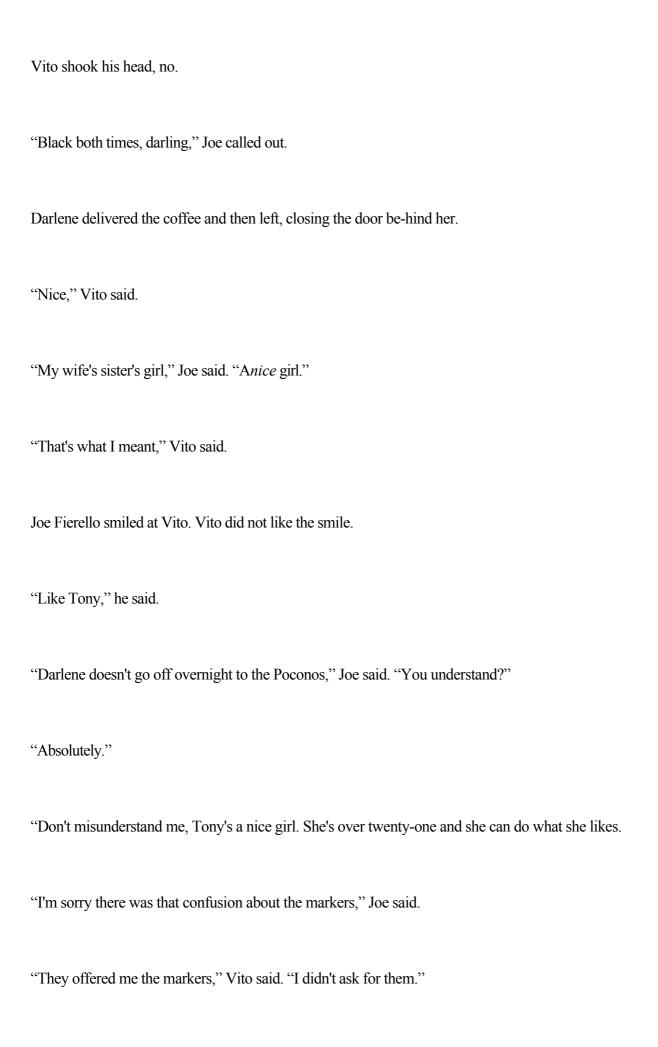
"Youknow this?"
"Everybody knows it, Matt," Charley said. "The feds, Customs Service, and the Bureau of Drugs and Dangerous Narcotics"
"Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs," Jesus interrupted to correct him.
"Whatever the fuck they are, they're all over the place."
"They haven't caught this guy, then, have they?" Matt re-sponded.
"Iwant to catch this fucker," Jesus said.
You're not a detective, Martinez-You're a simple police officer who took the detective's exam and flunked it.
You are an arrogant, self-satisfied shit, aren't you, Matthew Payne? Martinez is not only not a rookie, he's spent a lot of time dealing with drug people when he was in Narcotics. He knows what he's talking about.
"What do you want from me, Hay-zus?"
"I told him he ought to go to Wohl," Charley said. "He says he doesn't want to."
"Why not?" Matt asked, meeting Martinez's eyes.
"I don't work for Wohl anymore, for one thing. And even if I did, how the hell could I go to Wohl and tell him the reason I know this fucker runs around with almost ten thousand in his glove compartment is because I looked?"

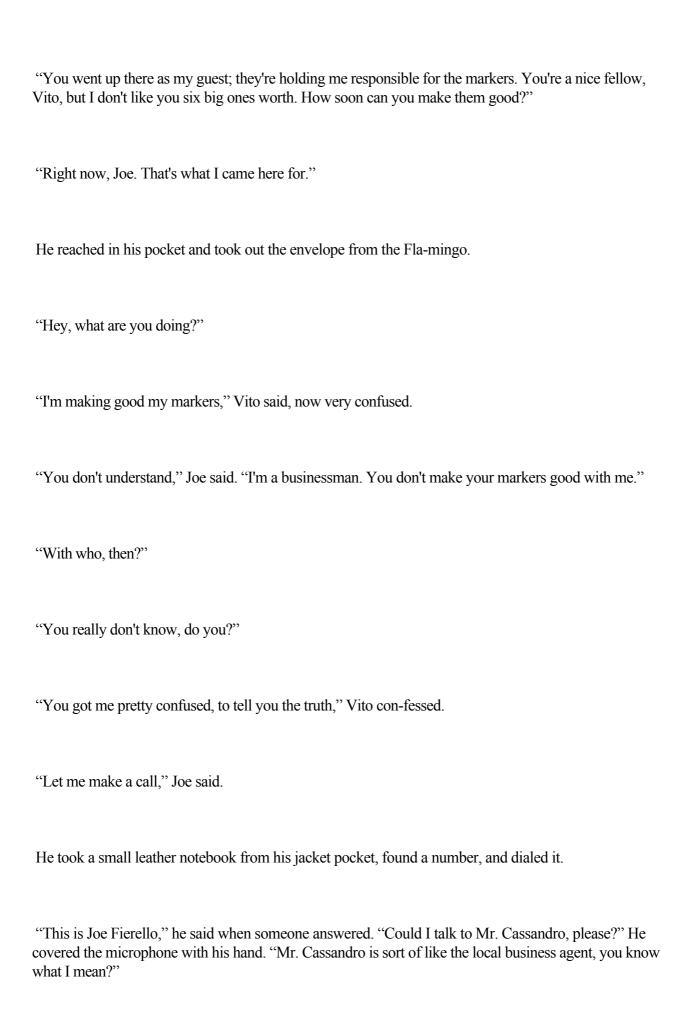
"Broke into his car' are the words you're looking for," Matt said.
"I told Hay-zus Wohl, or at least Pekach, would listen to him. And he could tell them the car was unlocked."
"That's splitting a hair," Matt thought out loud. "That wouldn't wash with either Wohl or Pekach. And I suppose you know that if you'd found ten thousand dollars' worth of cocaine in his glove compartment, it would be inadmissible evidence."
"Hey, I was a Narc when you were Mr. Joe College Payne," Je-sus said. "I know what's admissible and what isn't."
"Hay-zus, you don't have a thing on this guy," Matt said.
"He wants to follow him, and get something on him," Charley said.
"You mean, he wantsus to surveil this guy, right?"
"I told you he'd tell us to go fuck ourselves," Martinez said.
"He can't do it himself, this Dago knows him."
"We're wasting our time. Let's get out of here," Martinez said.
"Hay-zus is usually right, when he smells something," McFadden went on.

"Come on, let's get out of here," Martinez repeated.
"What do you expect to find, Martinez, if we start to follow this guy around?" Matt asked.
"Association with known criminals," Martinez said. "That would give me enough to go to Wohl or Internal Affairs."
He keeps bringing up Wohl. Why? He doesn't work for Wohl anymore. But I do. That's what this is all about. He figures I could go to Wohl.
"For the sake of argument, Hay-zus," Matt said. "Let's suppose we follow this guy, and either he spots us before we catch him with some Mob type, or that you're wrong. He'd really be pissed. And we would have some explaining to do."
"In other words, no, right?"
"I didn't say that," Matt said. "I said what if."
"Then I would take my lumps."
"Weall would take our lumps," Matt said.
"This guy is dirty," Martinez said. "We're cops."
Matt exhaled audibly.
"What have you got in mind?"

"You don't look like a cop," Martinez said. "You drive a Porsche. You could get into this place in the Poconos."
"How would we know when he was going to be there? And if we did, what am I supposed to do, tell Wohl I want the day off to take a ride to the Poconos?"
"I don't think he'd be going up there in the daytime," Martinez said. "Except over the weekend. He's got Friday-Saturday off. With a little bit of luck, he'd go up there then."
"And what if he just came across this book of matches some-place? Picked it up in a bar or something? You don'tknow that he's ever even been in this place." Matt picked up the matchbook. "Oaks and Pines Resort Lodge."
"Then I'll think of something else," Martinez said.
"Okay, Hay-zus," Matt said. "Let me know what you want me to do, and when you want me to do it."
"See, Hay-zus," McFadden said. "I told you."
"But don't let your Latin-American temper get out of joint if I can't jump when you call. I may be doing a lot of overtime."
"Overtime, you?" McFadden asked.
That was an honest question, Matt decided, not a challenge.
"Special Operations has been given Dignitary Protection. The Vice President's coming to Philly. There's a looney tune out there that wants to blow him up."

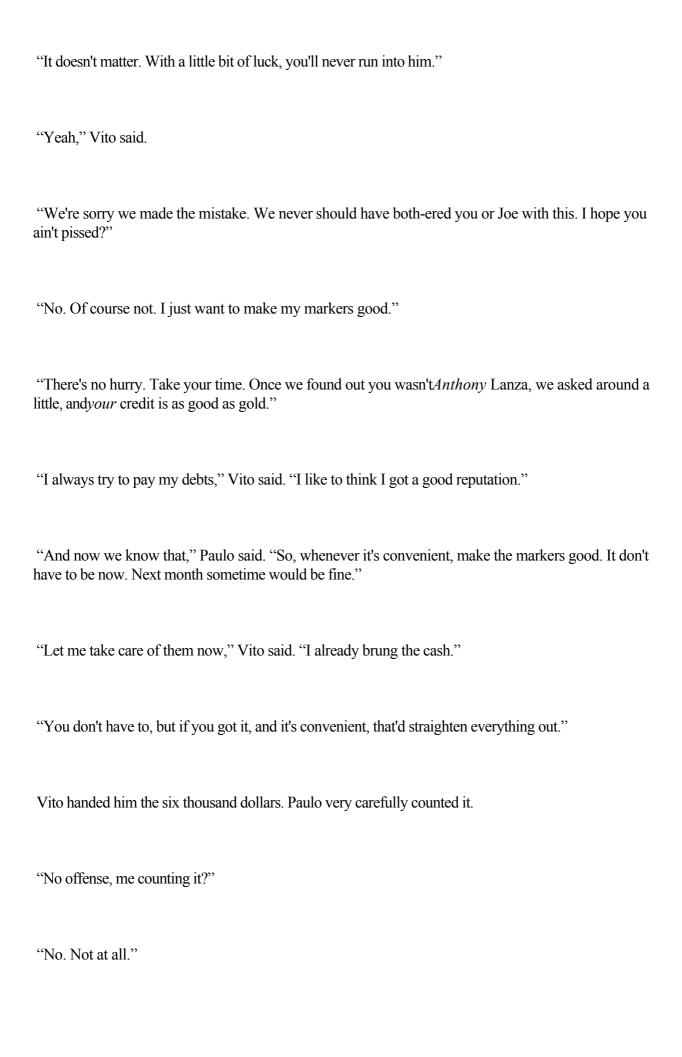






Vito nodded.
Business agent, my ass; this Cassandro guy is with the mob.
"Paulo? Joe Fierello. You know those financial documents you were a little concerned about? Well, don't worry. They're good. Mr. Lanza is right here with me now, and he's anxious to take care of them."
He started nodding, and again covered the microphone with his hand. "He says he's sorry, I don't know what the fuck he means."
He removed his hand from the microphone.
"I'm sure Mr. Lanza would be perfectly willing to come wher-ever you tell him, Paulo," Fierello said, and there was a reply, and then he went on: "Whatever you say, Paulo. He'll be here."
He hung up the telephone and looked at Vito.
"He's coming right over. He said there was some kind of a mix-up, and he wants to make it right. It'll take him five, ten min-utes. You got to be someplace else?"
Vito shook his head. "I really don't understand this," he said.
"Neither do I," Joe Fierello said. "So we'll have our cup of cof-fee, and in five, ten minutes, we'll both know."







"I'm glad we could straighten this out," Paulo said, and wrapped his arm around Vito's shoulder.

Vito felt pretty good until he got to the goddamned plumber's. The sonofabitch was waiting for him, and overnight, he'd gone back on his word. Now he wanted twenty-five hundred before he would fix a fucking thing at the house. That left him with nine hun-dred. The plumber said it would probably run another thousand, maybe fifteen hundred, for the labor and incidentals.

There isn't a plumber in the fucking world who ever brought a job in for less than the estimate, and even if this sonofabitch did, that would leave me, if he wants fifteen hundred, six hundred short.

I've got eleven, twelve hundred in the PSFS account, and I can always borrow against the Caddy.

Jesus, I hate to put a loan against the Caddy.

Why the fuck didn't I take Cassandro's offer to take my time mak-ing the markers good? I really didn't have to pay them off that quick. My credit is good.

The absence of inhabitants in most of the Pine Barrens does not obviate the need for police patrols. The physical principle that na-ture abhors a vacuum has a tangential application to an unoccupied area. People tend to dump things that they would rather not be con-nected to in areas where they believe they are unlikely to be found in the near future.

Enterprising youth, for example, who wish to earn a little pocket money by stealing someone's automobile, and removing therefrom parts that have resale value, drive the cars into the Pine Barrens and strip them there.

And, in the winter, more than one passionate back seat dalliance in an auto with a leaking exhaust

system has ended in tragedy by carbon monoxide poisoning.

And the Pine Barrens is a good place to shoot someone and dis-pose of the body. The chances that a shot will be heard are remote, and a shallow grave even desultorily concealed stands a very good chance of never being discovered.

There had been an incident of this nature just about a year be-fore, which Deputy Sheriff Daniel J. Springs was thinking about as he drove, touching sixty, on a routine patrol in his three-year-old Ford, down one of the dirt roads that crosses the Barrens.

Dan Springs, a heavyset, somewhat jowly man who was fifty and had been with the Sheriff's Department more than twenty years, tried to cover all the roads in his area at least once every three days. Nine times out of ten, he saw nothing but the scrubby pines and the dirt road, and his mind tended to wander.

One of Springs's fellow deputies, making a routine patrol not far from here, had come across a nearly new Jaguar sedan abandoned by the side of the road, the keys still in the ignition, battery hot, with half a tank full of gas.

That meant somebody had dumped the car there, and driven away in a second car. They'd put the Pennsylvania plate on the FBI's NCIC (National Crime Information Center) computer and got a hit.

The cops in Philadelphia were looking for the car. It was owned by a rich guy, a white guy, who had been found carved up in his apartment. The cops were looking for the car, and for the white guy's black boyfriend.

Springs had been called in on the job then, to help with working the crime scene, and to keep civilians from getting in the way. Springs never ceased to be amazed how civilians came out of the woodwork, even in the Pine Barrens, when something happened.

Everybody came in on that job. The State Police, and even the FBI. There was a possibility of a kidnapping, which was a federal offense, even if state lines didn't get crossed, and here it was pretty evident, with a Philadelphia car abandoned in New Jersey, that state lines had been crossed.

Plus, of course, the Philadelphia Homicide detectives working the job. Springs remembered one of them, an enormous black guy dressed like a banker. Springs remembered him because he was the only one of the hotshots who did not go along with the thinking that because the car had been found here, that if therewas a body, it had been dumped/buried anywhere but here, and the chances of finding it were zilch.

The black Philadelphia Homicide detective had said he was pretty sure (a) that there was a body and (b) they were going to find it right around where they had found the Jaguar.

And they had. Not a hundred yards from the Jaguar they had found a shallow grave with a black guy in it.

Springs had spoken to the big Homicide detective:

"How come you were so sure we'd find a body, and find it here?"

"I'm Detective Jason Washington," the black guy had said, in-troducing himself, offering a hand that could conceal a baseball. "How do you do, Deputy Springs? We're grateful for your cooper-ation."

"Why did you know the body would be here?" Springs had pur-sued as he shook hands. "Call me Dan."

"I didn't know it would be here," Washington had explained. "But I thought it would be."

"Why?"

"Well, I started with the idea that the doers were not very smart. They would never have stolen the Jaguar, an easy-to-spot vehicle, for example, if they were smart. And I'm reasonably sure they were drunk. And people who get drunk doing something wrong invariably sober up, and then get worried about what they've done. That would apply whether they shot this fellow back in Philadel-phia, en route here, or here. They would therefore be anxious to get rid of the car, and the body, as quickly as possible. I would not have been surprised if we had found the body in, or beside, the car. And they are both lazy, and by now hung over. I thought it unlikely that they would drag a two-hundred-odd-pound corpse very

Just like Sherlock Holmes, Springs had thought. He had*deduced* what probably had happened. Smart guy, as smart as Springs had ever met.

They'd caught the guys, two colored guys, who had shot the one in the Barrens, a couple of days later, in Atlantic City. They had been using the dead white guy's credit cards, which proved Detective Washington's theory that they were not very smart.

They'd copped a plea, and been sentenced to twenty years to life, which meant they would be out in seven, eight years, but Springs now recalled hearing somewhere that they had been indicted for kidnapping, and were to be tried in federal court for that. The white boy's father had political clout, he owned a newspaper, newspapers, and he wanted to make sure that the guys who chopped up his son didn't get out in seven or eight years.

Deputy Springs was thinking of the enormous black Homicide detective who dressed like a banker and talked like a college pro-fessor, wondering if he was still around Philadelphia, when sud-denly the steering wheel was torn out of his hands, and the Ford skidded out of control off the dirt road and into a scraggly pine tree before he could do anything about it.

He hit the four-inch-thick pine tree squarely. He was thrown for-ward onto the steering wheel, and felt the air being knocked out of him. The Ford bent the pine tree, and then rode up the trunk for a couple feet, and then the tree trunk snapped, and the car settled on the stump.

"Jesus, Mary, and Joseph!" Deputy Springs exclaimed. For a moment, he could see the branches of the pine tree, and then, ac-companied by the smell of the water/antifreeze mixture turning to steam, the windshield clouded over.

There was a screeching from the engine compartment as the blades of the fan dug into the radiator.

Springs switched off the ignition, unfastened his seat belt, and pushed his door open. He got out and walked several feet away from the car and stood there for a moment, taking tentative deep breaths to see if he'd broken a rib or something, and bending his knees to see if they were all right.

Then he walked around the front of the car and examined the bumper. They're not bumpers, they're goddamned decoration is all they are. Look at the way that "bumper" is bent! He walked to the right side of the car and saw what had happened. He'd blown a tire. The wheel was off the ground, and still spin-ning, and he could see the steel and nylon, or polyethylene or what-ever they were, cords just hanging out of the tire. That sonofabitch really blew. It must have been defective from the factory. Christ, it could have blown when I was chasing some speeder on the highway, and I would have been up shit creek. He walked back to the driver's side and got behind the wheel and turned the ignition key on. The radio lights went on. He called in, reporting that he'd had an accident, and approxi-mately where, and that he'd need a wrecker. They said they'd send someone as quick as they could, and asked if he was hurt. He told them no, he was all right, he had been lucky. He also told them he was going off the air, that he didn't want to have the ignition and the radios on, he might have got a gas line. They told him to take it easy, they were going to send a State Trooper who was only ten, fifteen miles away, and that the wrecker should be there in thirty, thirty-five minutes. He turned the ignition off and got out of the car again. He took another look at the shredded tire, and then walked twenty yards away and sat down against another pine tree.

He then offered a little prayer of thanks for not getting hurt or killed, and settled down to wait for the

Trooper and the wrecker.
SEVENTEEN
Detective Matthew M. Payne parked his Bug in the Special Opera-tions parking lot at five minutes to eight Monday morning. At pre-cisely eight, he pushed open a door—on the frosted glass door of which had been etched, before he was born, "Principal's Office."
There was a very natty sergeant, face unfamiliar, sitting inside the door, a stocky man who looked as if he was holding the war against middle-aged fat to a draw.
"May I help you, sir?" the sergeant asked politely.
"Sergeant, I'm Detective Payne, I'm reporting in."
"Oh, yes," the sergeant said, and stood up and offered his hand. "I'm Sergeant Rawlins, Dick Rawlins, the administrative ser-geant."
"How do you do?"
"I just had a quick look at your records," Rawlins said. "Haven't had the time for more than a quick look. But I did pick up that you were third on the detective's exam, and that speaks well of you."
"Thank you."



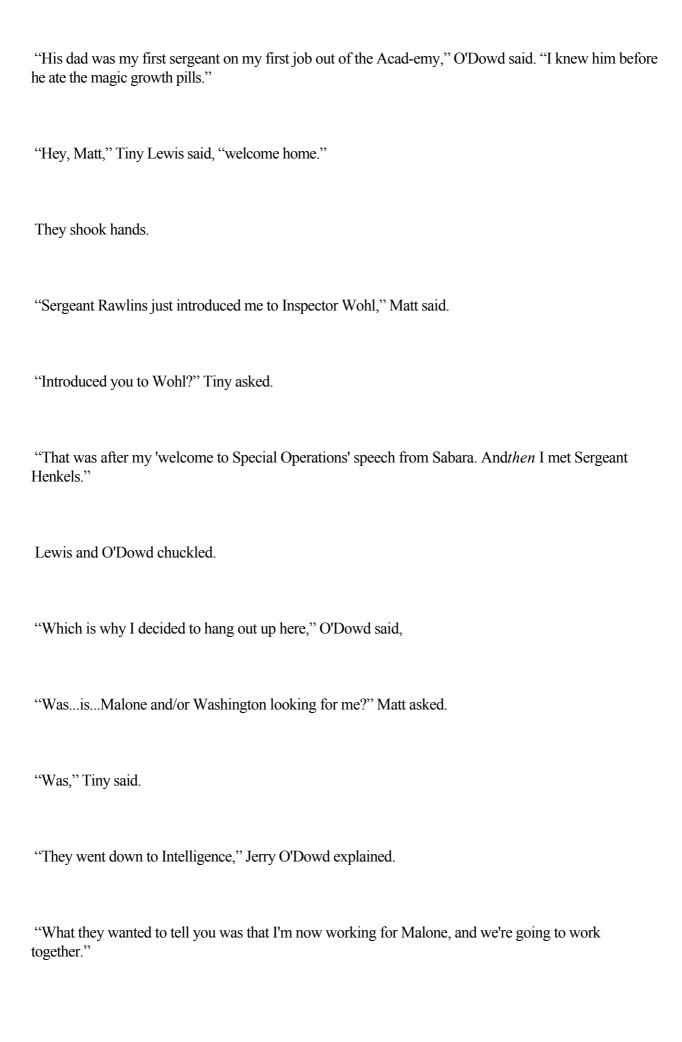




"That would be in Plans and Training," Rawlins replied, after consulting an organizational chart. "I'll make a note of that."

"What can I do for you?" Sergeant Maxwell Henkels demanded, making it more of a challenge than a question, as Detective Mat-thew M. Payne walked through a door on the second floor of the building, above which hung a sign, <i>Plans and Training Section</i> .
Henkels was just this side of fat, a flabby man who could have been anywhere from forty to fifty, florid-faced, with what Matt thought of as booze tracks on his nose.
"I'm looking for Lieutenant Malone, Sergeant."
"What for, and who are you?"
Why, I'm the visiting inspector for the Courtesy in Police Work Program, Sergeant. And you have just won the booby prize.
"My name is Payne, Sergeant. Detective Payne."
"The lieutenant and Sergeant Washington were waiting for you," Henkels said. "When you didn't show up, they went to Intel-ligence. He wants you to meet him there."
"I just transferred in this morning"
"Yeah, I heard."
"and the administrative sergeant said I had to report to Cap-tain Sabara before I came here."







"Yeah, that surprised me," Matt said.

He went to the coffee machine, picked up the water reservoir and went down the corridor to the door withBOYS lettered on it, and filled it.

Matt Payne, mostly privately, was very much aware of his inad-equate capabilities to be a detective. It was a long list of character-istics he didn't have, including experience, but headed by impatience. He had learned, even before Jason Washington had made the point aloud, that a good detective absolutely has to have nearly infinite patience.

The special line telephone did not ring, after either the Highway patrols had come off their sevenP.M. to threeA.M. tour, or the district patrols had come off their midnight-to-eight tours. Neither did Malone nor Washington call.

His new assignment as one of the inner circle of Special Opera-tions people looking for the lunatic who wanted to disintegrate the Vice President was turning out to be just as thrilling as his assignment as recovered stolen car specialist in East Detectives had been.

His mind began to wander.

His relationship with Evelyn came quickly to mind, with all its potential for disaster, long and near term, and specifically what he was going to do about her tonight, when he got off work, and she would be waiting by her phone for him to call, and if he didn't call, circling Rittenhouse Square until she decided to come up to the apartment and console him in his loneliness and sexual deprivation.

And he thought of Jesus and his dirty corporal at the airport. Going into the guy's car was a monumental act of stupidity. If someone had seen him, the excreta would really have hit the rap-idly revolving blades of the electromechanical cooling device.

But maybe that was the way a good cop worked, fighting fire with fire. A dirty cop had to be stopped, even if you bent the law, taking a big chance, in the process.

There would be rewards, of course, if he was right. Maybe that was Jesus' motivation. Failing the detective exam had certainly been humiliating for him.

If this guyisdirty, is, if nothing else, associating with known criminals, and Hay-zus caught him at it, it would be, to coin a phrase, a feather in his cap. It wouldn't get him a detective's badge, of course, he's going to have to pass the exam to get promoted, but it might get him a better job, maybe in plainclothes someplace, than looking for baggage thieves at the airport.

Except that Hay-zus wantsmeto catch this guy associating with known criminals at the —what the hell is it?—

He fished through his pockets until he came up with the match-book from the Oaks and Pines Lodge.

—Oaks and Pines Lodge, Gourmet Cuisine, Championship Golf, Tennis, Heated Pool, Riding, 340 Wooded Acres Only 12.5 miles North of Stroudsburg on Penna. Highway 402. . . .

Plus, of course, if Hay-zus is to be believed—and he's probably right—fun and games for high rollers in the back room.

What am I supposed to do, just walk into this place and ask where the roulette tables are, and does there happen to be a dirty cop on the premises? I am again functioning from a bottomless pit of ignorance, but I suspect that you have to know someone to get into the back room. I doubt, even considering Hay-zus' opinion that I don't look like a cop, that the management is simply going to let a single guy who wanders into the place into the back room.

I may not look like a cop, but I damned well could be an FBI agent, or an IRS agent, or some other kind of fed. Who handles gambling for the feds?

I could not get in there alone. I would have to be with either a bunch of guys, out for a good time—that

wouldn't work, if there were a bunch of guys, they would expect at least one of them to be able to furnish a reference . . .

Or a girl. A guy out with a date, who had heard you could play a little roulette in the back room. A guy driving a Porsche, and with a nice-looking girl would probably work.

What girl? Evelyn? Evelyn would love to take a ride to the Poconos for dinner, to be followed by several hours of mattress bouncing in a lodge in the oaks and pines.

But (a) Evelyn doesn't look young enough to be my girl and (b) I don't want to take Evelyn anywhere.

Who then? Precious Penny, maybe? Jesus H. Christ, what a lu-natic idea!

But on the other hand, Penny is a bonafide airhead. There's no way she could be suspected of being an undercover FBI agent. With Penny, you see what you get, an over privileged, expensively dressed inhabitant of Chestnut Hill, the kind of young woman, were I the operator of an illegal gaming house for high rollers, I would be anxious to acquire as a client.

But what if they spotted her as Penelope Detweiler, aka the ex-girlfriend of the late Tony the Zee?

That would either fuck things up completely, or the opposite. They would know she was a wild little rich girl who would be look-ing for something exciting, like gambling, to do.

You don't know, Matthew, how well acquainted she is among the Mob. On the other hand, you don't know which Mob controls Oaks and Pines Lodge, either. It could be a family out of New York, or Wilkes-Barre.

Very probably, now that I think of it, she probably isnotwell ac-quainted with the Mob. Tony the Zee would neither want to share her with his associates, or to run the risk of one of his associates telling Mrs. DeZego about Tony's blond girlfriend. Say what you like about the Mob, they are staunch defenders of the family.

Next question: Do you really want to involve Penny in something like this?

Involve her in what? All you would be doing would be taking her out to dinner in the Poconos. It would certainly be ill-advised to in-form her you were checking out a dirty cop, so she wouldn't know what was going on, beyond being taken out to dinner, by the loyal family friend. And all you would be doing would be checking out the Oaks and Pines. Unless everything fell in place, you might not even inquire about gambling. Just take a look around and give them a face to remember—the guy with the Porsche who was in here a couple of days with the blonde—if you should go and ask about making a few small wagers.

And if you were in the Poconos with Penny, the odds are that by, say, midnight, Evelyn would finally become discouraged and stop calling and/or circling Rittenhouse Square.

Why not? What is there to lose?

Martin's Ford and Modern Chevrolet, both of Glassboro, N.J., shared the pleasure of the Sheriff's Department's business. By an amazing coincidence, going back at least fifteen years, when the sheriff announced for competitive bid his need for six suitably equipped for police service automobiles—which he did every year, replacing his eighteen vehicles on a three-year basis—Martin's Ford would submit the lowest bid one year, and Modern Chevrolet the next.

Maintenance of all county light automotive vehicles, including as-needed wrecker service, was similarly awarded, on a competi-tive bid basis, annually. And by another amazing coincidence, Modern Chevrolet seemed to submit the lowest bid one year, and Martin's Ford the next.

On a purely unofficial basis, both dealerships seemed to feel that it was a manifestation of efficiency in business to "subcontract" re-pairs to the brand agency. In other words, if, as was the case when Deputy Springs wrecked his Ford patrol car, Modern Chevrolet had that year's county maintenance contract, Modern would "sub-contract" the Ford's repairs to Martin's. The next year, if a county-owned Chevrolet needed repair, and Martin's had the contract, Martin's would "subcontract" the repairs to Modern.

And so it came to pass when Modern Chevrolet's wrecker went out in the Pine Barrens to haul Deputy

Springs's wrecked Ford off, it never entered the driver's mind to bring the car to Modern Chevrolet; he hauled it directly into the maintenance bay at Mar-tin's Ford and lowered it onto the grease-stained concrete.
Greg Tomer, Martin's Ford's chief mechanic and service ad-viser, walked up and shook the hand of Tommy Fallon, the Modern Chevrolet's chief mechanic and wrecker driver. On the first Tues-day of each month, at seven-thirtyP.M., they were respectively the senior vice commander and adjutant quartermaster of Casey Daniel Post 2139, Veterans of Foreign Wars.
"What the hell did he hit, Tommy?"
"He blew a tire. Going through the Barrens. Went right off the road. Hit a tree square in the middle. It broke. Had a hell of a time getting the sonofabitch off the tree. Fucked up the pan, I'm sure."
"Springs all right?"
"Yeah. I guess he was wearing his seat belt."
Greg Tomer dropped to his knees and peered under the car.
"Just missed the drive shaft," he said. "But, yeah, he fucked up the pan. I don't think it can be straightened."
"Radiator's gone too. And the fan."
"Maybe the insurance adjuster will says it's totaled. I sure don't want to try to fix it." He got off his knees and leaned in the driver's window. "Sixty-seven thousand on the clock. And no telling whether that's the second time around or the third."
"Well, he was lucky he wasn't hurt, is all I can say."





"Who can tell."

When Tomer went into the Patrol Division of the Sheriff's De-partment, they told him that Deputy Springs had slammed his chest into the steering wheel harder than he thought, that they'd x-rayed him at the hospital, nothing was broke, but the sheriff told him to take a couple of days off.

Tomer left the piece of steel, with the sawlike edge and the piece of chain wedged into it, and then walked back across the street to Martin's Ford and went back to work.

There were no telephone calls at all for Sergeant O'Dowd or De-tective Payne all morning, until just before lunch, when Lieutenant Malone telephoned to say that he and Detective Washington were going to see Mr. Larkin at the Secret Service office, and that they should wait for their phone to ring; maybe something would hap-pen when the eight-to-four tour came off duty.

Detective Payne and Officer Lewis took luncheon at Roy Rogers' Western Hamburger emporium. When they returned to the office, Sergeant O'Dowd went for his lunch. As soon as he was out the door, Detective Payne called Miss Penelope Detweiler at her residence and asked if she would like to go up to the Poconos for dinner.

Miss Detweiler accepted immediately, and with such obvious delight that it made Detective Payne a bit uneasy. He next called the residence of Mrs. Evelyn Glover and left a message on her answering machine that he had to work, and that if he got off at a rea-sonable hour, say before nine, he would call.

When he put the telephone back in its cradle, he felt Tiny Lewis's eyes on him, and looked at him.

"The last of the great swordsmen at work, huh?"

"Would you believe me, Officer Lewis, if I gave you my word as a gentleman that carnal activity with either lady is the one thing I don't want?"



car. It hadn't been moved, since...uh...you brought it out here."

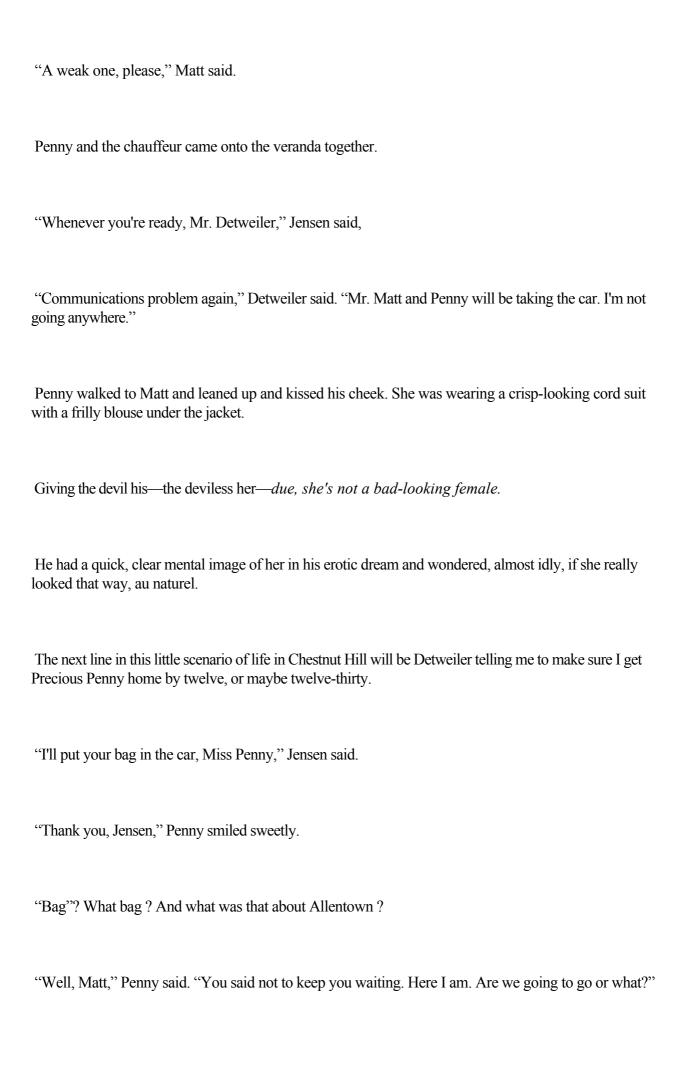
The Philadelphia Police Department (specifically then Officer M. M. Payne and then Detective Jason Washington) had returned the victim's automobile, a 1973 Mercedes-Benz 380 SL roadster, to her residence after it had been processed by the forensics experts of the Mobile Crime Lab at the scene of the crime. The scene of the crime had been a Center City parking lot where the victim had been wounded by a shotgun during a homicide in which Mr. Anthony J. DeZego had been fatally shot by unknown person or persons.

Jesus, that's a great idea! I really didn't want to roll up to the Oaks and Pines in the Bug. "It really should be driven," Mr. Detweiler said. "Why don't you take it? It's a long way to Allentown." "Allentown"? What the hell does he mean, "Allentown"? And now that I think about it, it's a lousy idea. I don't want Precious Penny reminded of Tony the Zee lying on the concrete with his stomach blown out his back. "Is that a good idea?" Matt said. "Bad memories?" "I thought of that," H. Richard Detweiler said, somewhat impa-tiently. He touched Matt's shoulder. "Replace bad memories with a good one, right?" He waited until Matt nodded, then pushed him toward the door. "Come on in and have a drink, one drink, and I'll have Jensen get the car while we're having it."

Detweiler led Matt onto the veranda outside the small sitting room where, predictably, Grace Detweiler was also waiting.

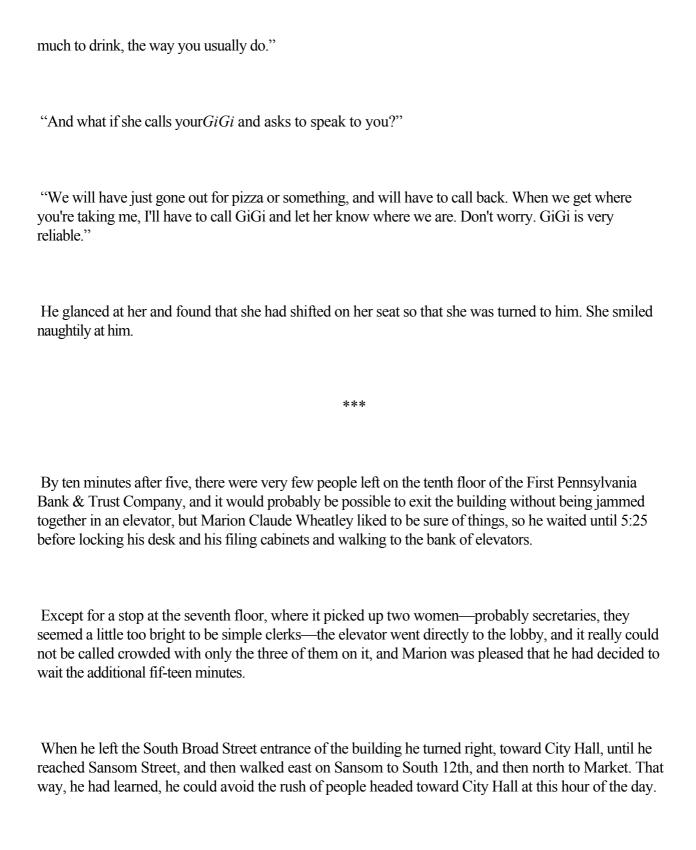
Jensen was the Detweilers' chauffeur.











On Market Street, he turned east, toward the Delaware, and then changed his plans when he saw the Reading Terminal. He had planned to do some of the necessary shopping, take the things home, and then do something about supper. But now it seemed to make more sense to have a little something to eat at one of the con-cessionaire stands in the Reading Terminal Market before shopping. That would obviate having to worry about supper when he got home. He would, so to speak, be killing two birds with one stone.

Marion believed that the efficient use of one's time was a key to success.

He sat at a counter and had a very nice hot roast beef sandwich with french fried potatoes and a sliced tomato, finishing up with a cup of decaffeinated coffee.

Then he went back out onto Market Street, crossed it again, and after looking in the window of the Super Drugstore on the corner of 11th Street and seeing exactly what he wanted, he went in and bought an AWOL bag. It was on sale, for \$3.95, and it had a metal zipper, which was important.

The reason it was on sale, he decided, was because it had a pic-ture of a fish jumping out of the waves on it, with the legend, Sou-venir of Asbury Park, N.J. Whoever had first ordered the bags had

apparently overestimated the demand for them, and had to put the excess up for sale, probably at a loss.

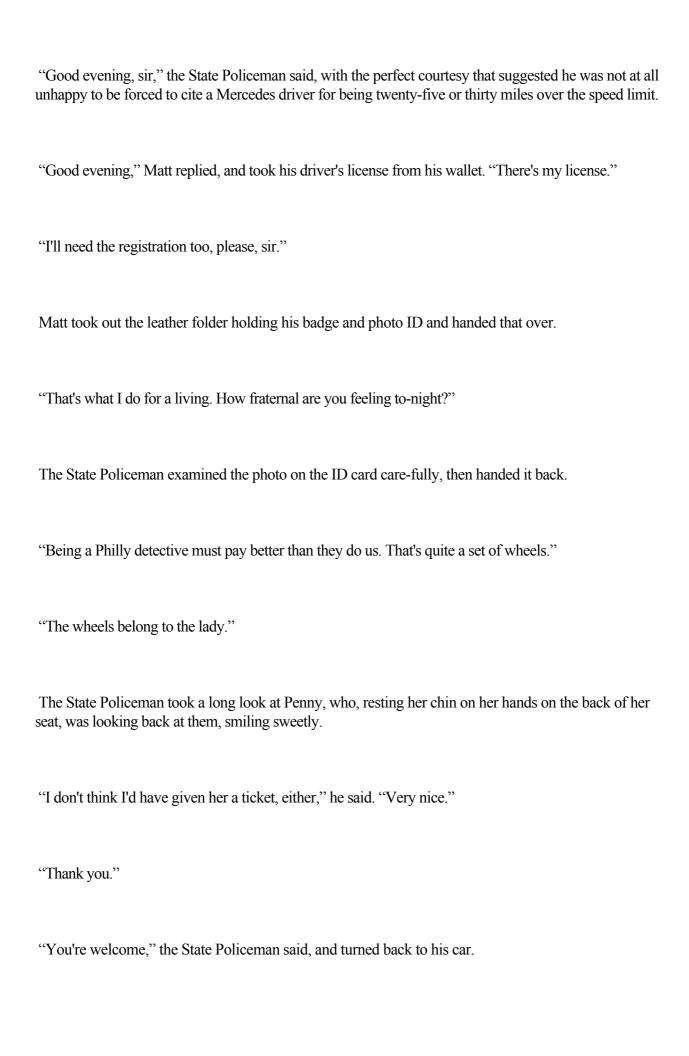
Overestimating demand, Marion thought, was a common fault with many small businesses. The petroleum business did not have, simplistically, that problem. They didn't have to produce their raw material, pump oil from the ground, until they were almost certain of a market. And even if that market collapsed, it was rarely that oil had to be put up for immediate sale. It could be stored relatively in-expensively until a demand, inevitably, arose.

He insisted on getting a paper bag for the AWOL bag—he was not the sort of person who wished to be seen walking through Cen-ter City, Philadelphia, with a reddish-orange bag labeled *Souvenir of Asbury Park*, N.J. —and then continued walking east on Market Street.

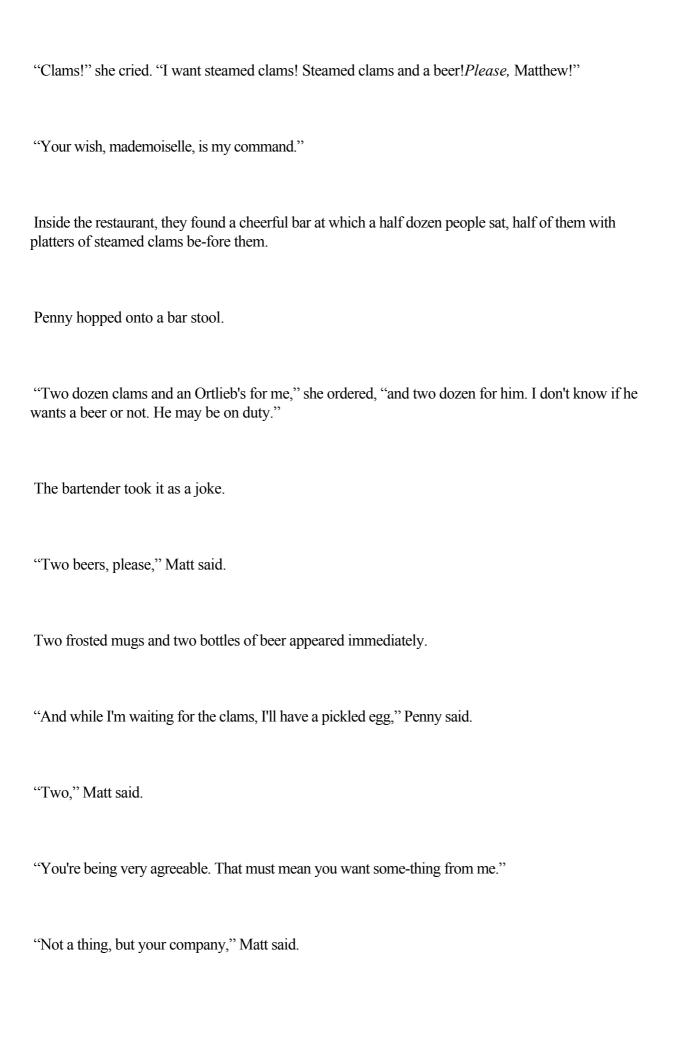
A very short distance away, just where he had remembered see-ing them, which pleased him, there was a tacky little store with a window full of "leather" attaché cases, on SPECIAL SALE.

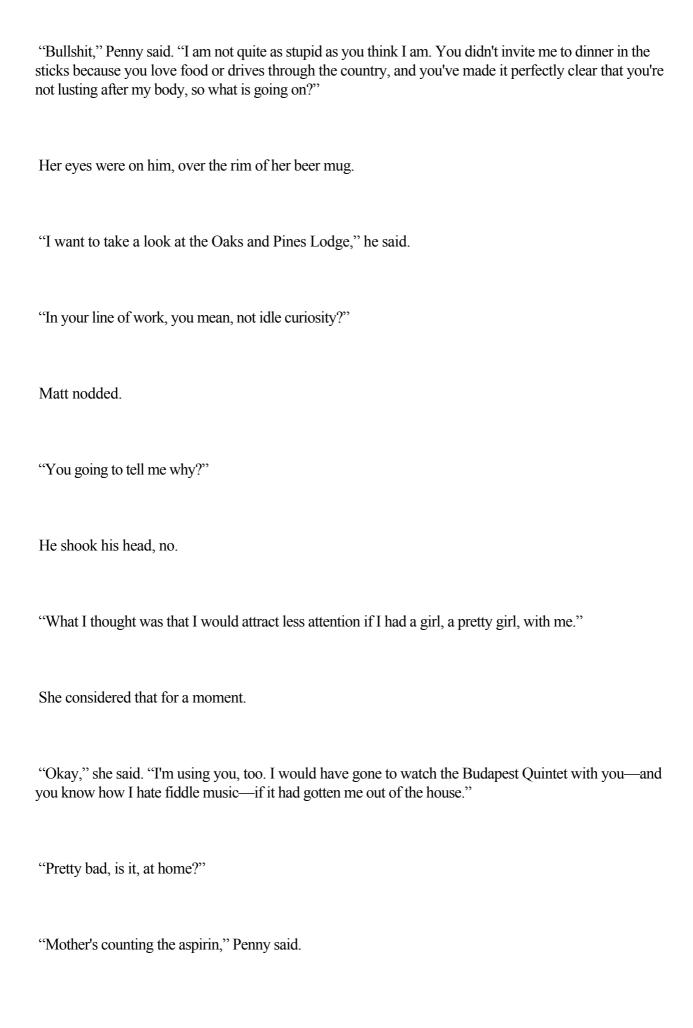
Special Sale, my left foot, Marion thought. It was a special sale only because money would change hands. He went in the store, and spent fifteen minutes choosing an attaché case that (a) looked reasonably like genuine leather, (b) was deep and wide enough to hold the shortwave transmitter, (c) had its handles fastened to the case securely. The last thing he could afford was to have a handle pull loose, so that he would drop the shortwave transmitter onto the marble floors of 30th Street Station.

He did not insist on a paper bag for the attaché case. He thought he would submit that to a little test. He would stop in on the way home, in one of the cocktail lounges along Chestnut Street that catered to people in the financial industry. He would put the "leather" attaché case out where people who customarily carried genuine leather attaché cases could see it, and see if anyone looked at it strangely.
He had solved the problem of supper, had one AWOL bag and the attaché case, and there was time, so why not?
EIGHTEEN
North of Doylestown, on US Route 611, approaching Kintnersville, Matt became aware of a faint siren. When he glanced in the rearview mirror, he saw that it was mounted in a State Police car, and that the gumball machine on the roof was flashing brightly.
"Shit," he said.
Penny turned in her seat and giggled.
There was no place to pull safely to the side of the road where they were, so Matt put a hand over his head in a gesture of surren-der, slowed, and drove another mile or so until he found a place to stop.
"Mother will not be at all surprised that we wound up in jail," Penny said cheerfully. "She expects it of you."
Matt got out of the car, making an effort to keep both hands in view, and then went back to the State Police car. A very large State Policeman, about thirty-five, got out, and straightened his Smoky-the-Bear hat.











"I find you appealing," Matt blurted. "I just think it would be a lousy idea."

Before she had a chance to reply, he got off his bar stool and went to the pay phone he had seen in the entrance.

When he returned, having learned that he was in luck, the Oaks and Pines Lodge, having had a last-minute cancellation, would be able to accommodate Mr. and Mrs. Payne in the Birch Suite, the clams had been served, and Penny was playing airhead with the bartender, who was clearly taken with her.

Charley Larkin, jacket off, tie pulled down, was sitting behind the very nice mahogany desk and SAC Joseph J. Toner was sitting on the couch with Wohl.

Mr. H. Charles Larkin, Wohl thought, has taken over the office of the supervisory agent in charge of the Secret Service's Philadel-phia office.

Is it a question of priorities or rank? Certainly, keeping the Vice President from being disintegrated has a higher Secret Service pri-ority than catching somebody who prints his own money or other negotiable instruments, and it would follow that the guy in charge of that job would be the one giving the orders. But it might be rank too. Larkin has been in the Secret Service a long time. He probably outranks Toner too. What difference does it make?

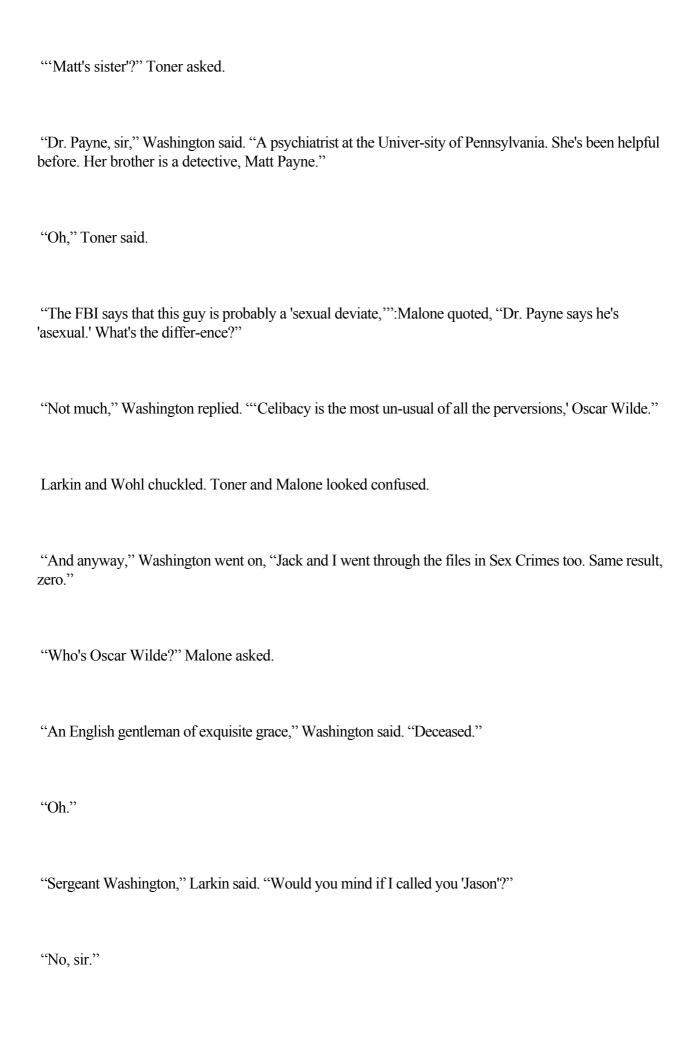
One of the telephones on Toner's desk rang. Larkin looked to see which one it was, and then picked it up.

"Larkin," he said, and then a moment later, "Ask them to come in, please."

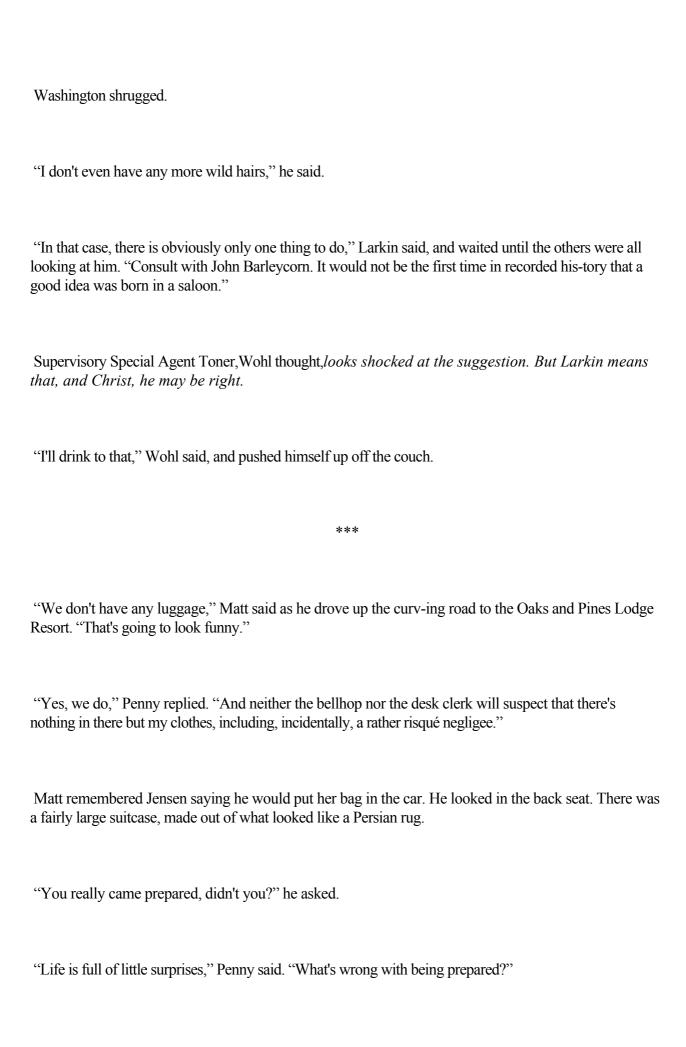
Lieutenant Jack Malone, in plainclothes, and Sergeant Jason Washington, in a superbly tailored, faintly plaided gray suit, came into the office.

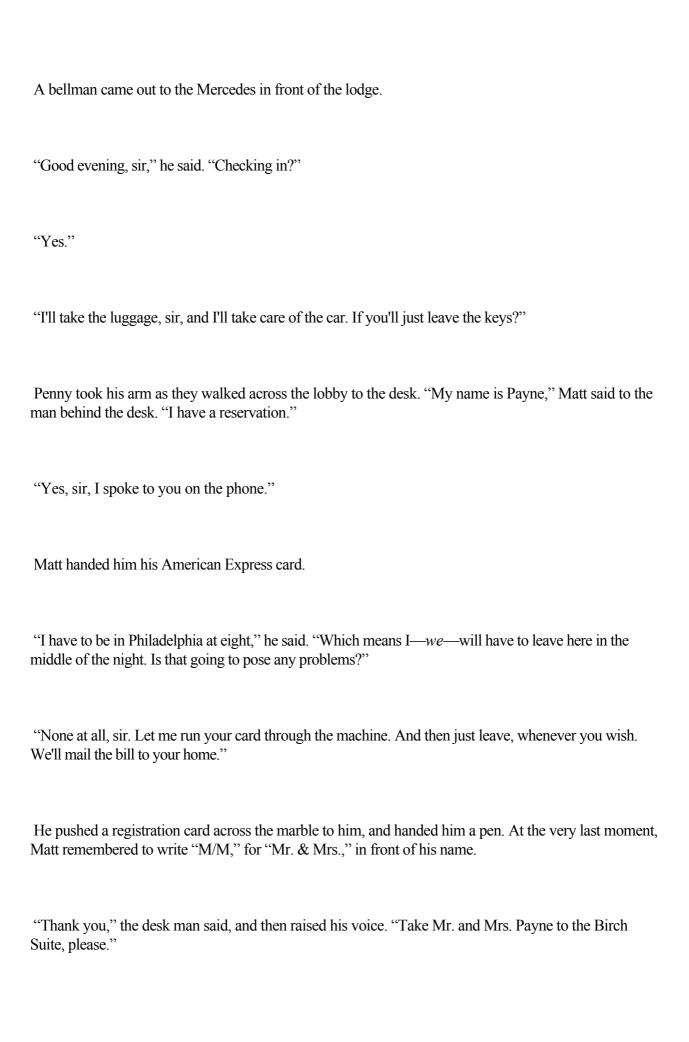
"Charley, you know Jack," Wohl said. "The slight, delicate gen-tleman in the raggedy clothes is Sergeant Jason Washington. Jason, Charley Larkin. Watch out for him, he and my father and Chief Coughlin are old pals."
Larkin walked around the desk to shake Washington's hand.
"You know the line, 'your reputation precedes you'?" he asked. "I'm glad you're working with us on this, Sergeant. Do you know Joe Toner?"
"Only by reputation, sir," Washington said. He turned to Toner, who, obviously as an afterthought, stood up and put out his hand.
"How are you, Sergeant?"
"Pretty frustrated, right now, as a matter of fact, Mr. Toner," Washington said.
"I'm Joe Toner, Lieutenant," Toner said, and gave his hand to Malone.
"You mean you didn't come here to report we have our mad bomber in a padded cell, and we can all go home?" Wohl asked.
"Boss, we laid an egg," Washington replied. "We've been through everything in every file cabinet in Philadelphia, and we didn't turn up a looney tune who comes within a mile of that pro-file."
"And we just checked the Schoolhouse. There has been no, zero, zilch, response from anybody to the profiles we passed around the districts."
"Who's holding the phone down?" Wohl asked.













If you're referring to the double bed, I've seen it.
He walked to the bedroom door. Penny pointed at a bottle of champagne in a cooler, placed conveniently close to the bed.
"For what they're charging for this, a hundred and a half a night, they can afford to throw in a bottle of champagne," Matt said.
"How ever do you afford all this high living on a policeman's pay, Matthew?"
"Don't start being a bitch, Penny."
"Sorry," she said, sounding as if she meant it. "I'm curious. Have you got some kind of an expense account?"
"Not for this, no," Matt replied. "What were your parents doing here?"
"Daddy likes to gamble here."
Why does that surprise me? It shouldn't. He apparently is no stranger in Las Vegas. But why the hell is he gambling? With all his money, what's the point? He really can't care if he wins or loses.
"You didn't say anything, before, when I told you we were com-ing here."
"I didn't want to spoil your little surprise. You said we were coming here, you will recall, before you made it clear that what-ever you had in mind, it was not rolling around between the sheets with me."
"I want to get a look inside the gambling place."



And Penny was right. The food was first class. Penny said she remembered the Chateaubriand for two was really good, and he in-dulged her, and it was much better than he expected it to be, a perfectly roasted filet, surrounded by what looked like one each of every known variety of vegetable. They had a bottle of California Cabernet Sauvignon with that, and somehow it was suddenly all gone.

"If you'd like, we could have another," Penny said as he mocked shaking the last couple of drops into his glass. "And have cheese afterward, and listen to the music. I don't think the gambling gets going until later."

The cheese was good, something the waiter recommended, something he'd never had before, sort of a combination of Camembert and Roquefort. They are one serving, spreading it on crackers and then taking a swallow of the wine before chewing, and then had another.

Penny said she would like a liqueur to finish the meal, and he passed, saying he'd already had too much drink, and instead drank a cup of very black, very strong coffee.

When he'd finished that, Penny inclined her head toward the rear of the room.

"It's over there, if you want to give it a try," she said.

Matt looked and saw a closed double door, draped with red cur-tain and guarded by a large man in a dinner jacket.

As they walked to it, Penny leaned up and whispered in his ear: "You did remember to bring money?"

"Absolutely," he said, although he wasn't really sure.

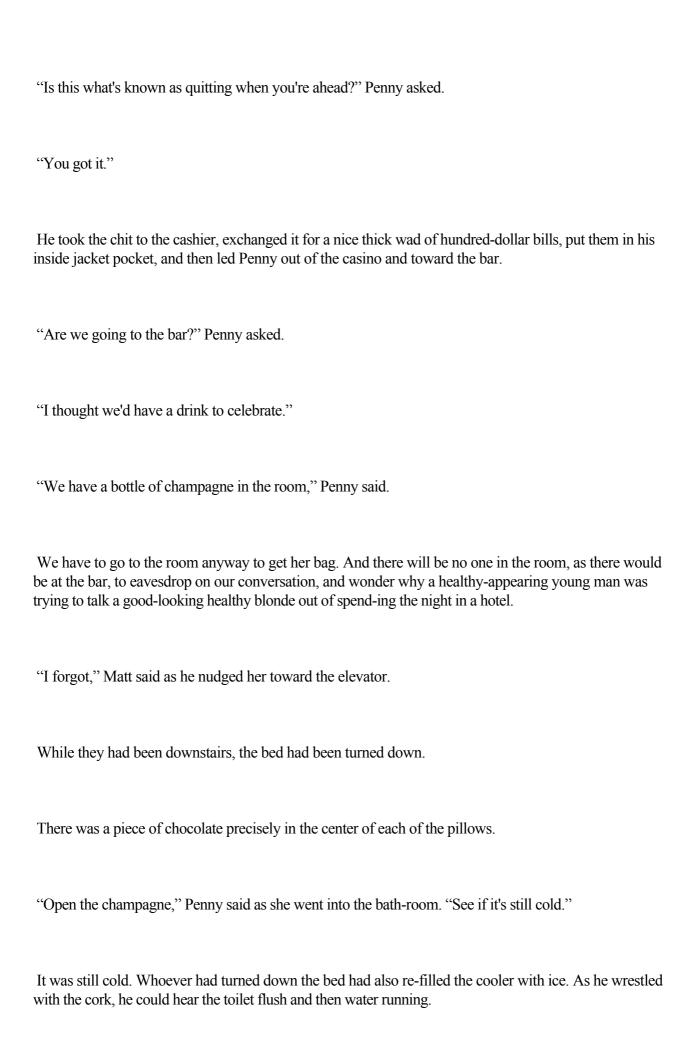
The man in the dinner jacket blocked their way.

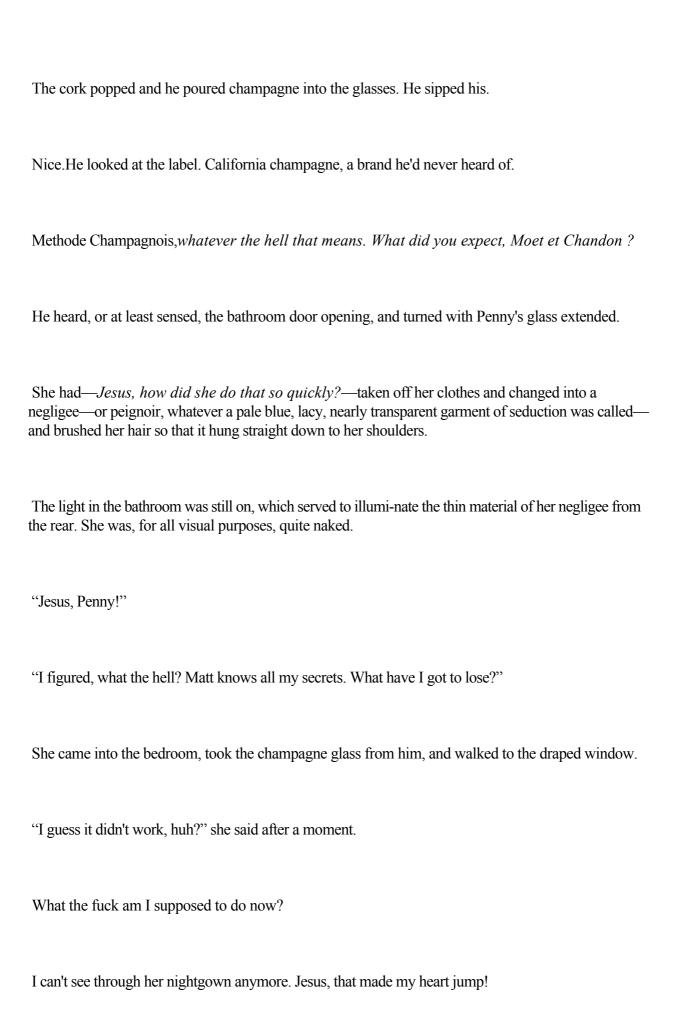


"N	Irs. Payne,"Penny corrected him, smiling sweetly at Matt.
Th tabl	ere were very few people in the room, although croupiers stood waiting for customers behind every e.
doe	you call the guys who run the craps games and the blackjack "croupiers" too? Matt wondered. Or es that term apply only to roulette? If not, what doyou call the guy who runs the craps table? e crapier?
"R	oulette all right with you, Penny?"
"It'	s fine with me," she replied. "But I'm surprised, I thought you would be a craps shooter."
Ma	att took out his wallet. He had one hundred-dollar bill and four fifties and some smaller bills.
	e hundred must be left over from the Flamingo in Las Vegas. I never take hundreds from the bank. I can never get anyone to change one.
Не	put the hundred-dollar bill on the green baize beside the rou-lette wheel.
"N	ickels," he said.
Th	e croupier slid a small stack of chips to him.
	placed two of them on the board, both on One to Twelve. The croupier spun the wheel, enty-three came up, and he picked up Matt's chips.

Matt made the same bet again.
"There's a marvelous story," Penny said. "A fellow brought a girl here, or to a place like this, and gave her chips, and she said, 'I don't know what to bet,' so he said, 'Bet your age,' so she put fifty dollars on twenty-three. Twenty-nine came up. The girl said, 'Oh, shit!"
The croupier laughed softly. Matt didn't understand. Penny saw this: "The moral of the story, Matthew darling, is 'Truth pays off."
He laughed.
Thirty-three came up, and the croupier picked up Matt's chips again.
"You're not too good at this, are you, darling?"
"Just getting warmed up," Matt said. He put five chips on 00.
Sixteen came up.
"Have you ever considered getting an honest job?" Penny asked.
Not only isn't this much fun, but I've seen about all of this place that there is to see. It's about as wicked as a bingo game in the basement of McFadden's parish church.
Hay-zus is off base on this one. There's nobody in this room who looks like a mobster; my fellow gamblers look like they all belong to the Kiwanis. And/or the Bible Study Group.
I will buy Penny a drink, and try to show her the wisdom of driv-ing back to Philadelphia now, rather







He saw her raise and drain her champagne glass, and then she turned.
"Go and wait in the other room," she said, her voice flat and bit-ter. "I'll get dressed, and we can go."
She walked toward him.
"Go on, Matt. Get out of here."
Tears were running down her cheeks.
He put his hand to her face.
"Don't," she said. "Don't pity me, you sonofabitch!"
"It would be stupid, Penny."
"Lifeis stupid, you jackass. It's a bitch, and then you die."
He chuckled.
She raised her eyes to his.
And then her hand came up and touched his cheek.

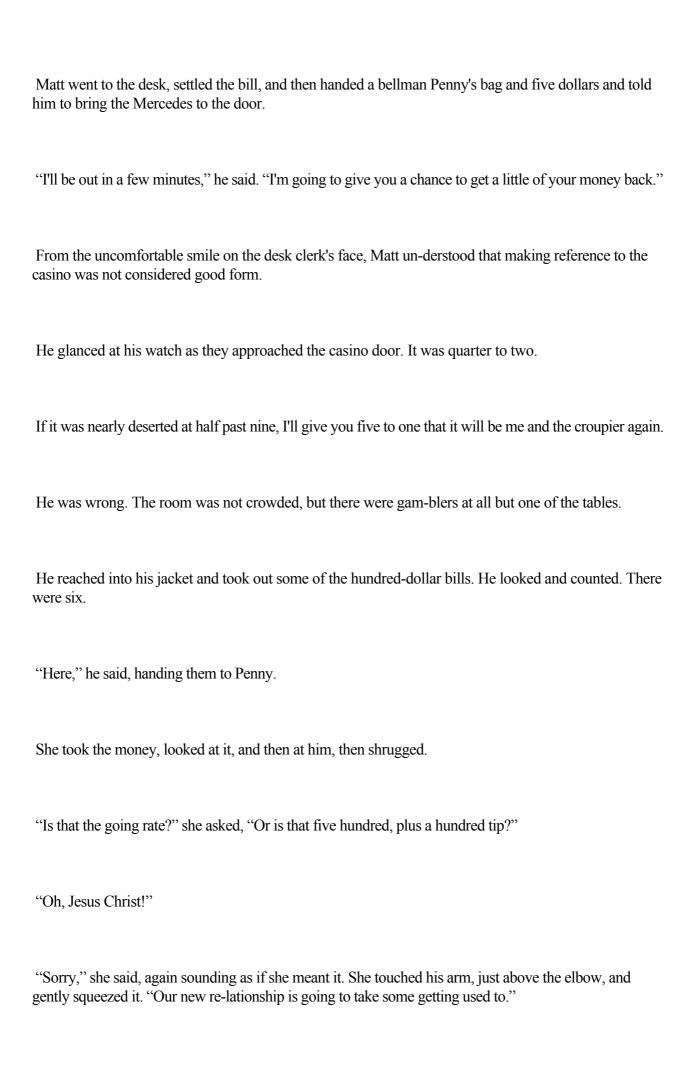
"What are you thinking, Matt?"
"You don't want to know what I'm thinking."
I am thinking that I could cheerfully spend the rest of my life like this, with my arm around you, my fingers on your backbone, your face on my chest, your absolutely magnificent breasts pressing on me, the smell of your hair in my nostrils. Feeling the way I do. Je-sus, what made it so good? The champagne?
"Yes, I do."
"Great set of boobs on this broad."
"Fuck you!"
"We've already done that."
"And no, comment about that? You usually have an opinion about everything."
Matt kissed the top of her head.
She raised her head.
"Is that in lieu of a comment?"

He kissed her. It was exquisitely tender. She shifted her body against his, so that her mouth was in his





She rolled over on her back, and pulled him onto her.
"Look in my eyes!" she ordered. He did. He felt her guiding him into her body.
"Oh, God, Matt!" she called softly.
NINETEEN
Penny started to go through the door of the Birch Suite into the cor-ridor, but then stopped and looked around.
"If I had my druthers," she said, "we would just stay here for a while longer. Like forever."
"We've already had that discussion. What we're going to do is take one more look around Las Vegas East, and then we go back to Philadelphia."
"You still haven't told me what we're—whatyou're —looking for."
"I really don't know. I think this is a bum lead, but I want to be sure before I go back and say so."
"That doesn't make much sense," she said as she walked past him and out into the corridor.



That, madam, qualifies as the understatement of the millennium.
She turned from him and walked directly to the blackjack table. He followed her and got there in time to watch her hand the money to the dealer.
"Quarters," she said.
This is not the first time she's done this.
He looked around the room, and then at the others at the black-jack table.
There are some people in here now who look like gamblers, as opposed to the Bible Study Group who was in here earlier. But where is it written that a gambler has to wear a two-tone coat and a pastel shirt open to his navel, like that clown at the end of the ta-ble? Or, for that matter, where is it written that a Mafioso cannot buy his clothes at Brooks Brothers and look like he went to Princeton?
He watched Penny gamble. She grew intense, to the point of pursing her lips. He had watched her apply lipstick in the room, af-ter she had put on her underwear, before she had put her dress back on. It had been a curious mixture of innocence and eroticism. She had seen him watching her in the mirror and pursed her lips in a kiss.
She quickly lost most of her chips, and then as quickly began to increase the size of the two stacks before her, subconsciously mak-ing the stacks even as the game progressed.
She's good at this. Better than I am. I always lose my shirt play-ing blackjack.
She bumped her rear end against him, and when he looked down, she nodded her head toward her chips.



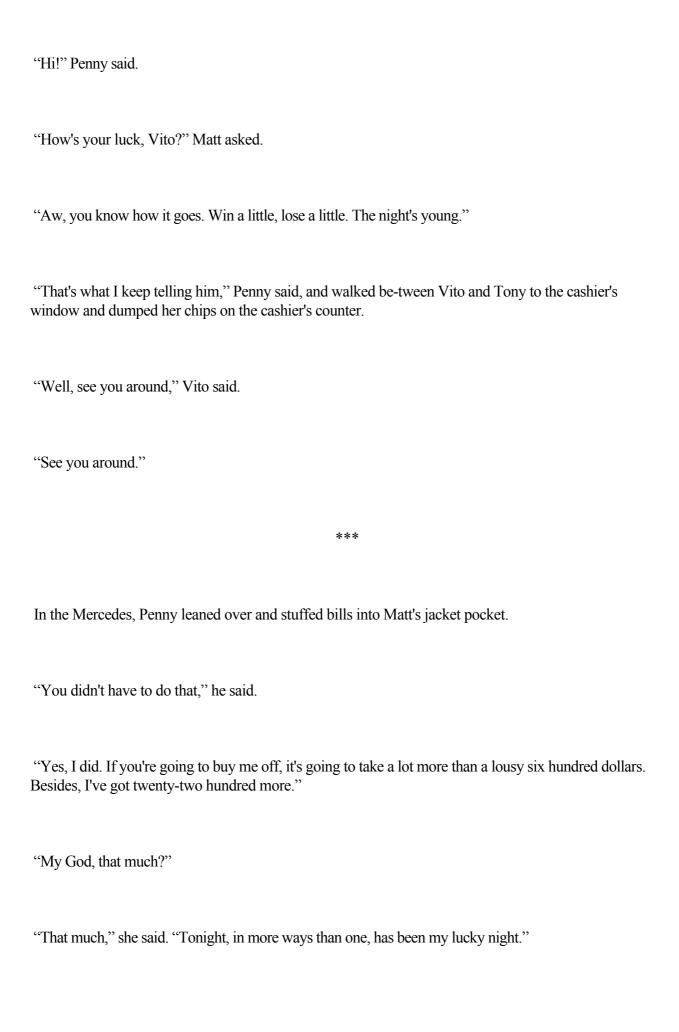


His eyes dropped to the chips in front of his new friend. He was playing quarters too, but he wasn't having the luck Penny was. He was down to six chips, and he lost those in the next two hands.
He turned from the table and walked toward the cashier's win-dow. A woman, a peroxide blonde with spectacular breastworks, trailed after him.
How come you didn't notice that before? You always react to bosoms such as those as if they were electromagnets. Matthew, my boy, you are sated, that is why. Or maybe because you have changed your criteria for magnificent breasts. After tonight, you will always define magnificent breasts as rather small, pink-tipped, and astonishingly firm.
"Time's up," Matt said to Penny. "Daddy has to go into the of-fice early tomorrow."
"Okay," Penny said, without argument. She slid two quarter chips across the table to the dealer, and then scooped up the rest. There were so many she could barely hold them.
"He would have cashed those in for you."
"I wanted to carry them," Penny said. "To savor my triumph."
The Mafioso Used Car Salesman was leaning over the cashier's marble counter.
He's signing a—what do you call it?—an IOU? He needs more chips. He's been losing.
That bulge under his arm is a gun. In a shoulder holster. He is a Mafioso. Only Mafiosos and cops carry guns.

Christ, he's acop! That's what's wrong with him!

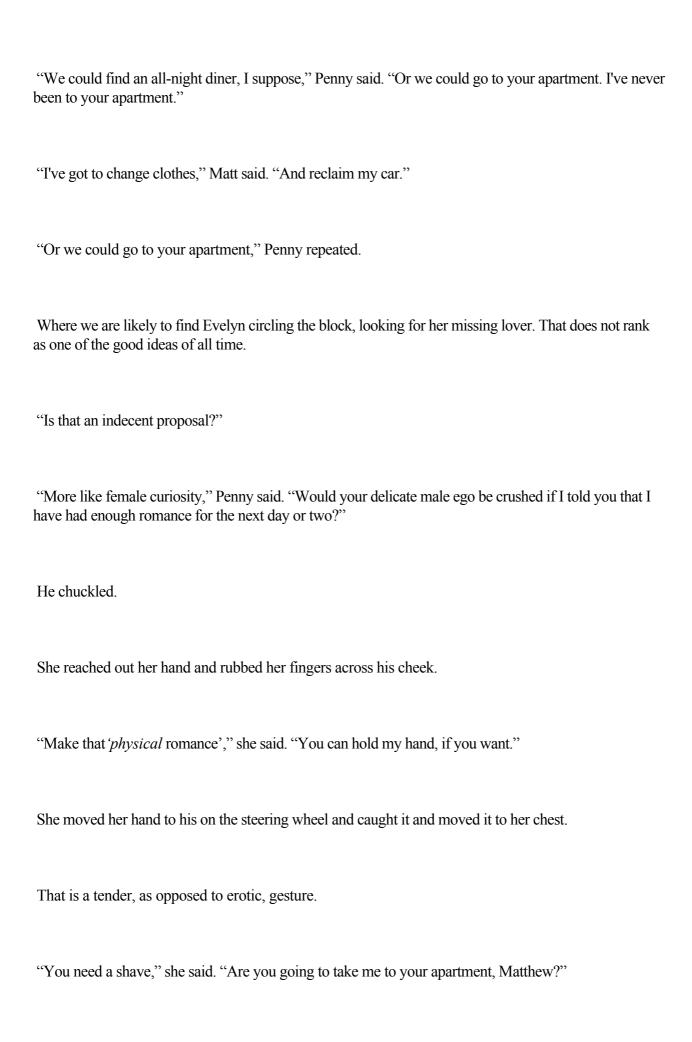


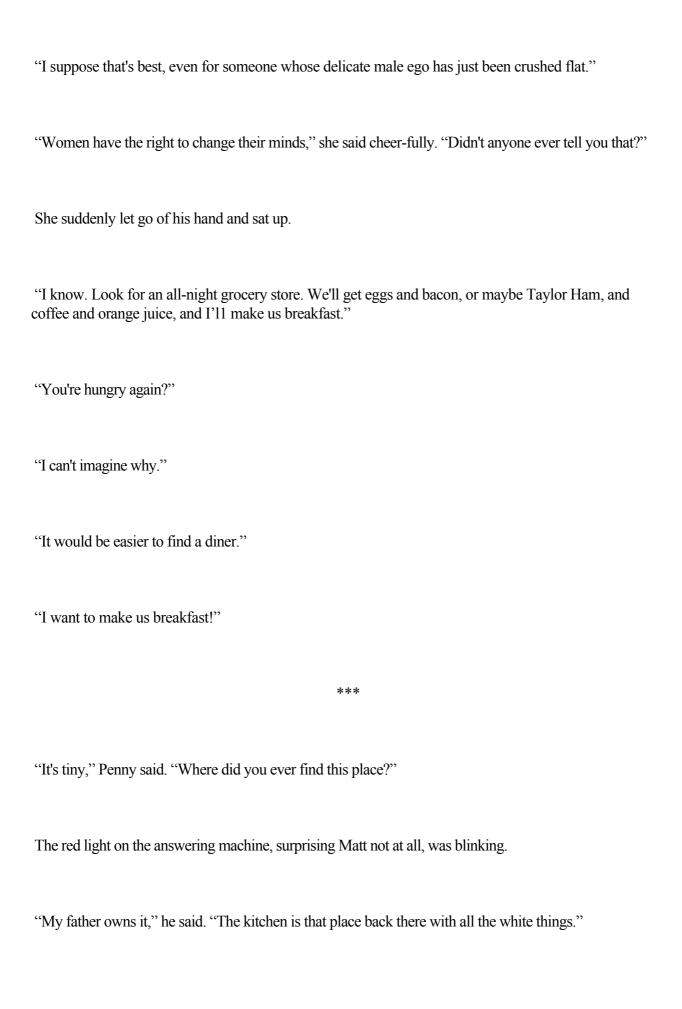




"I think we had better proceed very, very slowly," Matt said.
"I thought you would say something like that once you'd had your wicked way with me," Penny said. "That was him, wasn't it? Who you were looking for all the time?"
He looked at her in surprise, then nodded.
"You going to tell me about it?"
"No."
"Well, I'm glad I was able to be helpful," she said. She caught his hand, and moved it to her mouth, and kissed it.

The large, illuminated clock mounted on the Strawbridge & Clothier Department Store in Jenkintown showed quarter to five when Matt looked up at it from Penny's Mercedes.
That meant he would be at her place at five, or a few minutes af-ter. He looked over at her, expecting to find her still curled up asleep.
She was not asleep. She was awake and had apparently been reading his mind again.
"I think we could make this little deception of ours more credi-ble if I arrived home at, say, seven," she said. "We having left GiGi's at, say, five. What time do you have to be at work?"
"Eight."





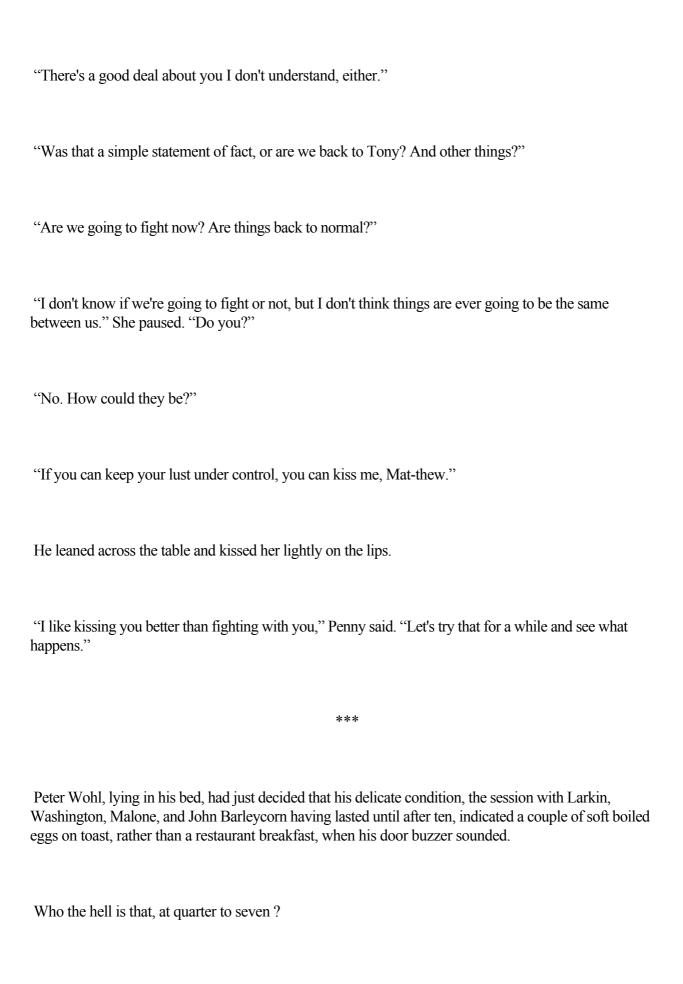


He went into the living room and put his pistol on the mantel-piece, and then sat down in his armchair. He looked at the dead an-swering machine.
And then he reached for the telephone, lifted it up, and consulted a typewritten list of telephone numbers.
Officer Jesus Martinez answered, sleepily, on the third ring.
"Martinez."
"This guy you're interested in: dark-skinned, maybe thirty, thirty-five, five-nine or"
"Payne?" Jesus asked incredulously.
"five-nine or ten. Maybe one-seventy. Wears his shirts un-buttoned to the navel?"
"What the hell?"
"You said his name is Lanzo, Lanza, something like that?"
"Lanza, Vito Lanza. What about him?"
"At two o'clock this morning, he was signing a two-thousand-dollar IOU in the back room at the Oaks and Pines Lodge," Matt said.
There was a long silence.

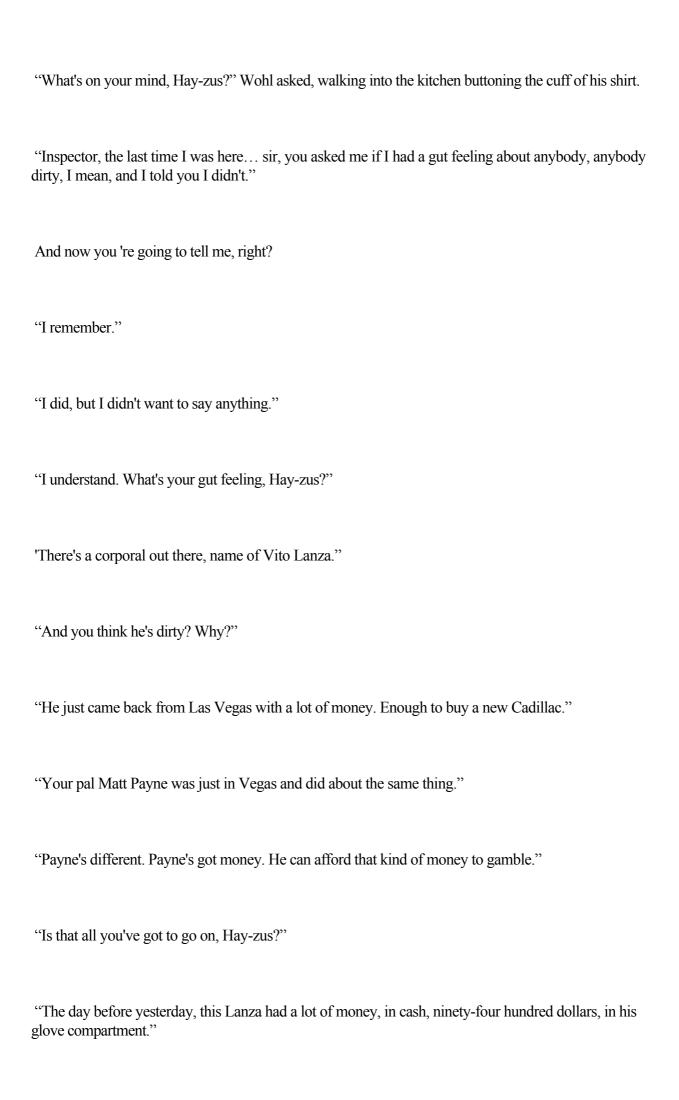


"Just keep it under your hat, Payne, okay?"
"Okay. Are you forgetting something, Hay-zus?"
"What?"
"Try, 'Thank you very much, Detective Payne."
"Thanks, Payne," Jesus said. "I'll get back to you."
He hung up.
Matt said, "You're welcome, Hay-zus," and put the phone back in its cradle. He pushed himself out of the chair and went into the kitchen.
Penny was at the stove, and there was the peculiar smell of fry-ing Taylor Ham.
"One egg or two? Over light or sunny side up?"
"Two. Up. Have I got time for a shower?"
"A quick one."





He got out of bed, put on a bathrobe, and walked barefoot to the door.
"Hello, Hay-zus," he said. "How are you? Come on in."
What the hell do you want? That you couldn't have said on the telephone?
"I brought this back," Martinez said, thrusting the loose-leaf notebook with BUREAU OF NARCOTICS AND DANGEROUS DRUGS Investigator's Manual FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY stamped on its cover at Wohl.
At seven o 'clock in the goddamned morning?
"Thank you," Wohl said.
"And I wanted to talk to you," Martinez said a little uncomfort-ably. "I thought it would be better if I came. Instead of calling, I mean."
"Absolutely. Do you know how to make coffee?"
"Yes, sir."
"You make the coffee, then, while I catch a quick shower," Wohl said, and pointed toward his kitchen.
"Yes, sir."







"Lanza made Payne?"
"Not as a cop. He recognized him from Las Vegas, or something like that. But Payne said he was sure Lanza did not make him as a cop."
I don't need this. A bonafide lunatic is trying to disintegrate the Vice President of the United States, and we have no idea who he is or where he is, and I don't need to be distracted by a possibly dirty cop at the airport, or another proof that Matt Payne has a danger-ous tendency to charge off doing something stupid.
"What we have here is a lucky gambler. The only law we know he's broken is to gamble in the Poconos. We wouldn't have a police department if every cop who gambles got fired."
"This guy is dirty, Inspector. I know it," Martinez said.
On the other hand we have here a guy who gambles big time in Las Vegas, had almost ten thousand dollars in cash in his glove compartment yesterday, and yet was signing a marker for two thousand in a joint in the Poconos. Which means, unless he used the ten thousand to pay off his mortgage or something, that he lost it, and signed a marker for more. The money bothers me. Cops do not have that kind of money. Honest <i>cops don't</i> .
And Martinez is not Matt Payne. He had two years undercover in Narcotics, and was damned good at it. He's had the time to de-velop the intuition. And he's not going off half-cocked, either, strictly on intuition. The last time he was here, he wouldn't give me this guy's name.
Wohl got up from the table and went into his bedroom. He took a small notebook from his bedside table, looked up a number, and dialed it.
"Chief Marchessi, this is Peter Wohl. Sorry to disturb you at home, sir. I think our man has come up with something. Have you got time in your schedule this morning to talk to us, sir?"
There was a pause.

"Thank you, Chief. We'll be there."
He hung up and went back in the kitchen.
"At half past eight, Hay-zus, we're going to see Chief Inspector Marchessi at Internal Affairs. You know where it is?"
"Yes, sir. At Third and Race."
"Be there."
"Yes, sir."
When Martinez had gone, Wohl went to the phone on the coffee table in his living room and dialed another number, this one from memory.
There was no answer on Detective Payne's line, and his answer-ing machine did not kick in, although Wohl let it ring a long time.
Finally, he hung up and looked at his watch.
Christ, 1 won't get any breakfast at all!

At ten minutes past seven, Matt Payne very nearly drove Miss Penelope Detweiler's Mercedes into the wrought-iron gate of the Detweiler estate in Chestnut Hill.



The right half of the double gates creaked majestically open.
"I'll tell you something else that gate does," Matt said as he drove through it. "It permits your parents to know when your boy-friends bring you home."
"Don't be silly," she said.
H. Richard Detweiler, in a quilted silk dressing gown, came out of the front door as Matt drove up, holding a cup of coffee.
"He doesn't do that too well, does he?" Penny said.
"Do what?"
"Manage to look like he just happened to be there?"
Matt drove right past Detweiler, waving cheerfully at him, and around to the garage. His Volkswagen was parked to one side.
"You lie to your father," Matt said. "I'm getting out of here."
"You're underestimating him. I'll bet there's no keys in your Bug."
There were not.
It was necessary to walk back to the house, where Penny gave an entirely credible, but wholly false,

report of GiGi's party, and why they had decided to stay over and come back first thing in the morning.
Matt was at first amused. Then it occurred to him that if Penny could lie that easily to her father, she could lie as easily to someone else, say M. Payne, Esq., and it no longer seemed amusing.
And then he realized that H. Richard Detweiler didn't believe a word Penny had told him.
He has no idea where we really were, but he knows damned well we werenotat GiGi's. So why isn't he mad? Aren't fathers sup-posed to be furious when young men screw their daughters?
As a general rule of thumb, yes. But not when the young gentle-man is an old, dear, and more importantly, responsible friend of the family, and the young lady in question has previously been involved in things that make a night between the sheets seem quite in-nocent, indeed.
"I really have to go."
"I'll have Jensen bring your car around," Detweiler said.
"Just get me the keys, please, I can get it myself."
"Thank you for a lovely evening, Matt," Penny said. "Ask me again, soon."
When she was sure her father's back was turned, she winked lewdly at him.

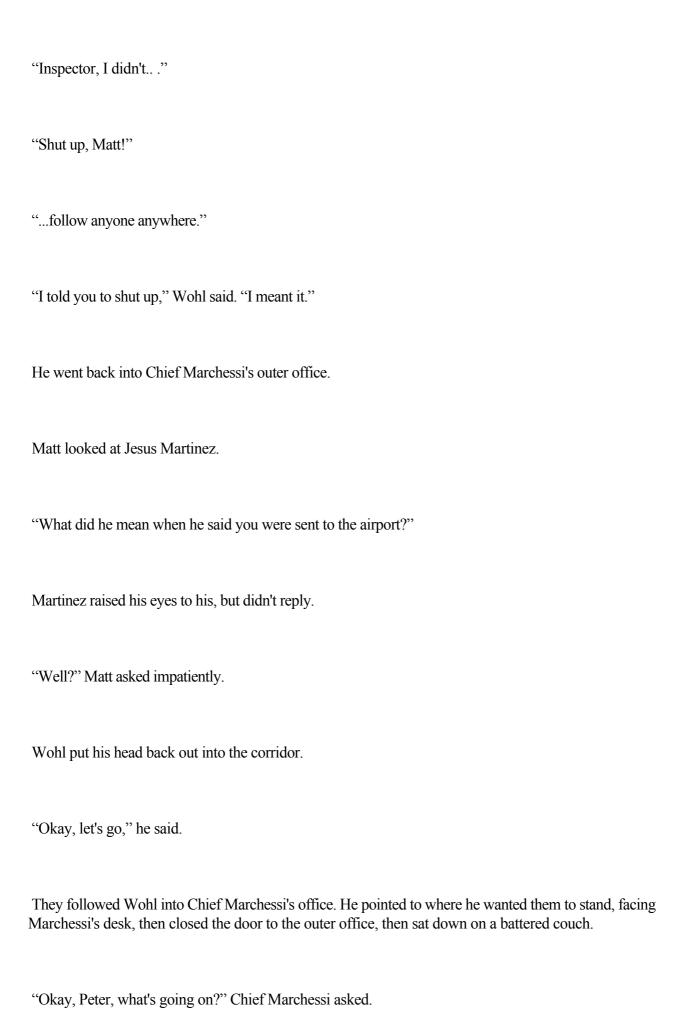
At two minutes before eight, Matt Payne pushed open the door to the Special Investigations Section. Two sergeants were waiting for him.



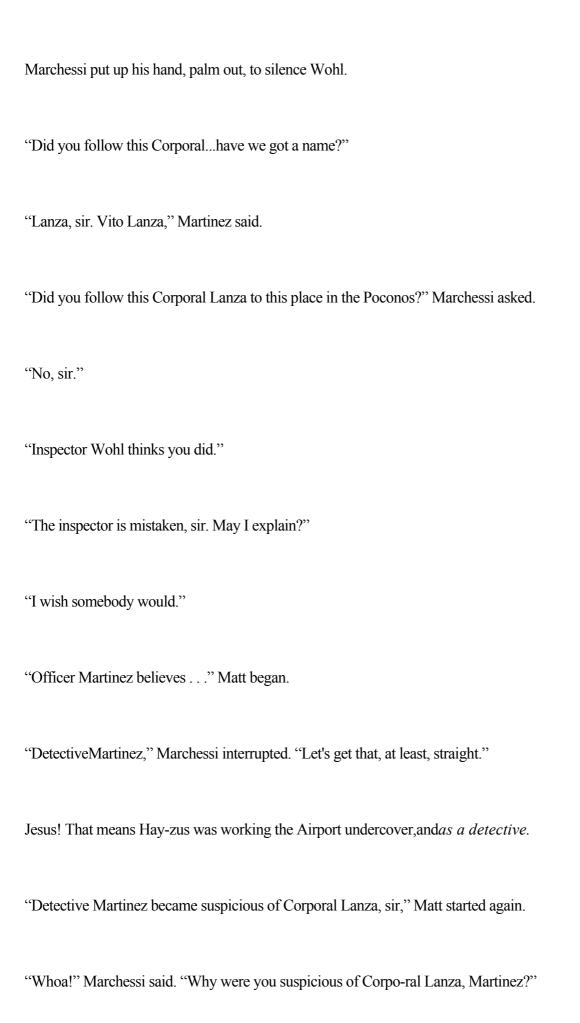
Henkels left the office.
"You'd better get moving, Payne," O'Dowd said. "With the early morning traffic, you're going to have to push it."
"Do you know what this is all about?"
"No. But right now, you're not one of his favorite people. He made that pretty clear."
Matt tried to figure that out, but came up with nothing.
"I guess nothing happened overnight? About the lunatic?"
"Not a thing."
"Well, Sergeant," Matt said. "You know where I'll be."
Jerry O'Dowd nodded.
TWENTY

At twenty-nine minutes after eight, Matt entered the outer office of Chief Inspector Mario Marchessi, of





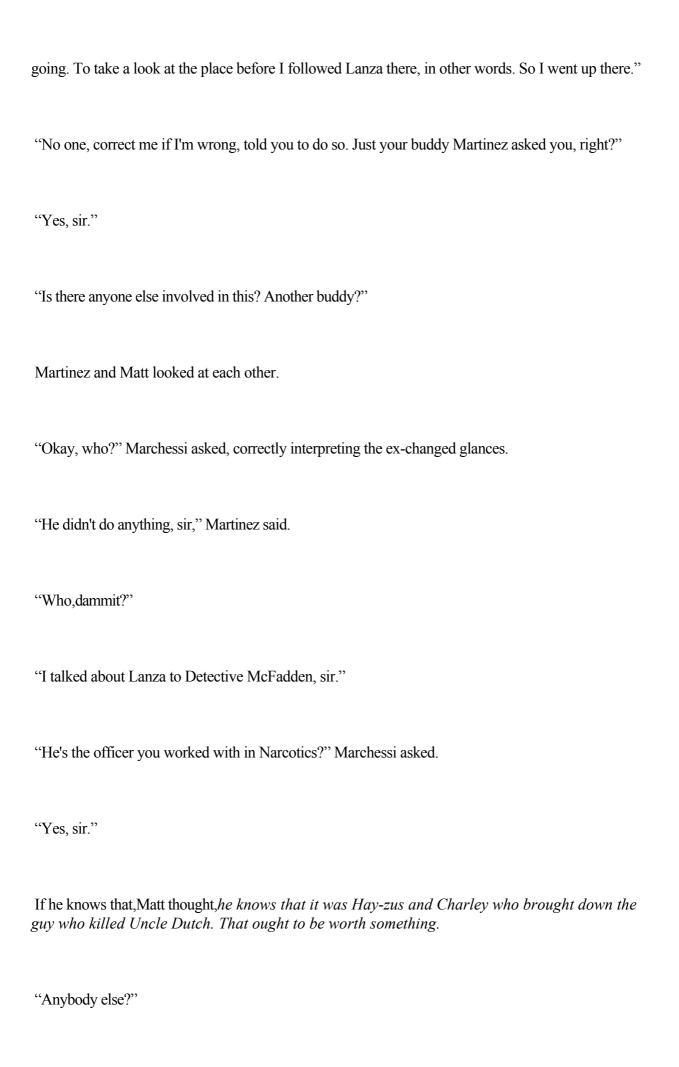


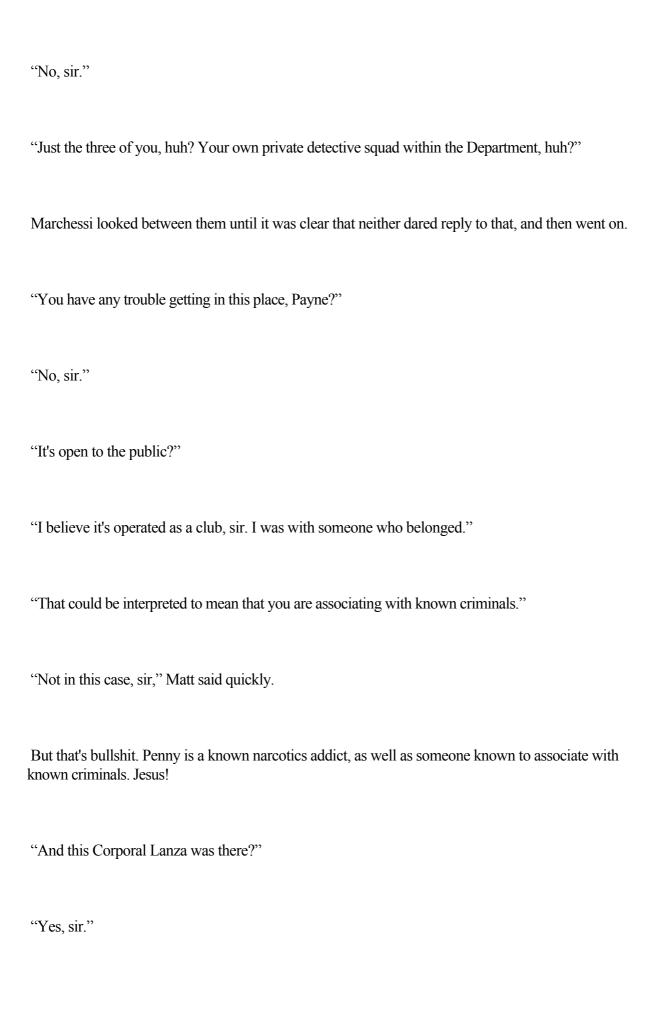






















"You call it, Peter, you know him better than I do."	
"We'd be betting that Lanza has accepted the story that Martinez is out there because detective's examination," Wohl thought aloud. "And I would have to impress on Mart absolutely all, that he's to do is watch him on the jobScrew the feds. I don't like the feds catch one of our cops dirty. Let's go with Martinez."	tinez that all,
"I have no idea," Olsen said, "who or what either of you are talking about."	
"I think we should bring Martinez back in here," Marchessi said. "I don't think we not to tell him to keep his nose out of this."	eed Payne. Except
"I'll handle Payne," Wohl said. "I don't think you need me, ei-ther, do you, Chief?"	
"No. And you're on the mad bomber too, aren't you? How're you doing?"	
"We don't have a clue who he is," Wohl said, getting off the couch. "Thank you very You've been very under-standing."	much, Chief.
"I have some experience, Peter, with bright young men who sometimes get carried a a while, they even catch the bad guys. You might keep that in mind."	way. Every once in
"Just between you, me, and the Swede here, I'm not nearly as angry with those two a I am," Wohl said.	as I hope they think
"You could have fooled me," Marchessi said. "Send in Martinez, will you, Peter?"	
"I guess I'll be seeing you, Peter?" Olsen said, extending his hand.	

"More than you'll want to, Ollie," Wohl said.

At 9:24, Mr. Pietro Cassandro pulled up before Ristorante Alfredo's entrance at the wheel of a Lincoln that had been deliv-ered to Classic Livery only the day before. On the way from his home, Mr. Vincenzo Savarese had been concerned that there was something wrong with the car. It smelled of something burning.

Mr. Cassandro had assured Mr. S. that there was no cause for concern, that he had personally checked the car out himself, that it was absolutely okay, and that what Mr. S. was smelling was the preservatives and paint and stuff that comes with a new car, and burns off after a few miles. Like stickers and oil, for example, on the muffler.

Mr. S. had seemed only partially satisfied with Pietro's explana-tion, and Pietro had decided that maybe he'd made a mistake in picking up Mr. S. in the car before he'd put some miles on it. He would never do so again. The next time Mr. S. was sent a new car, it would have, say, two hundred miles on it, and wouldn't smell of burning anything.

Mr. Gian-Carlo Rosselli got out of the passenger seat and walked quickly to the door. Ristorante Alfredo didn't open until half-past eleven, and Pietro hoped that Ricco Baltazari had enough brains to have somebody waiting to open the door when Rosselli knocked on it. Mr. S. did not like to be kept waiting in a car when he wanted to go someplace, especially when the people knew he was coming.

Mr. Cassandro's concerns were put to rest when the door was opened by Ricco Baltazari himself before Rosselli reached it. Rosselli turned and looked up and down the street, and then nod-ded to Pietro, who got quickly out from behind the wheel and opened the door for Mr. S.

Mr. S. didn't say "thank you" the way he usually did, or even nod his head, but just walked quickly across the sidewalk and into the restaurant. Pietro was almost sure that was because he had busi-ness on his mind, and not because he was pissed that the car smelled, but he wasn't positive.

He wondered, as he got back behind the wheel, if he raced the engine, would that speed up the

burn-the-crap-off process, so that the car wouldn't smell when Mr. S. came out.

He decided against doing so. What was likely to happen was that, sitting still, the smoke would just get more in the car than it would if he just let things take their natural way.

But then he decided that he could take a couple of laps around the block and burn it off that way. Mr. S. probably wasn't going to come out in the next couple of minutes, and if Rosselli looked out and saw the car wasn't there, he would think the cop on the beat had made him move the car.

Sometimes, the cops would leave you alone, let you sit at the curb, if there was somebody behind the wheel, but other times, they would be a pain in the ass and tell you to move on.

Pietro put the Lincoln in gear and drove off. At the first red light, he raced the engine. A cop gave him a strange look. Fuck him!

"Good morning, Mr. S.," Ricco Baltazari said as he carefully shook Mr. S.'s hand. "I got some nice fresh coffee, and I sent out for a little pastry."

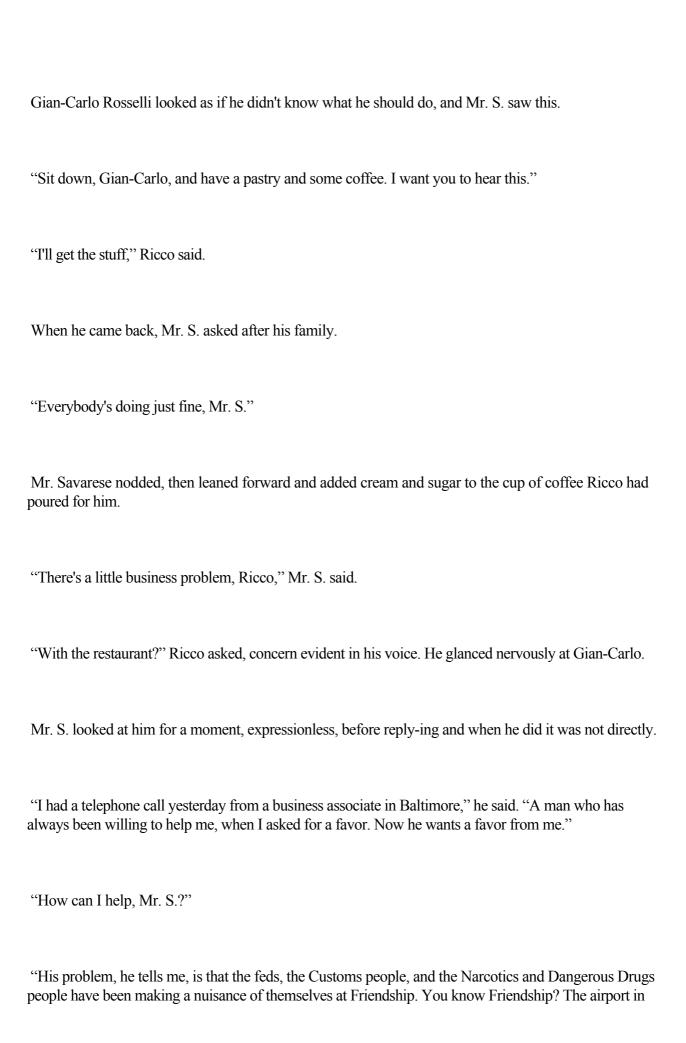
"Just the coffee, thank you, Ricco," Mr. S. said, and then changed his mind. "What kind of pastry?"

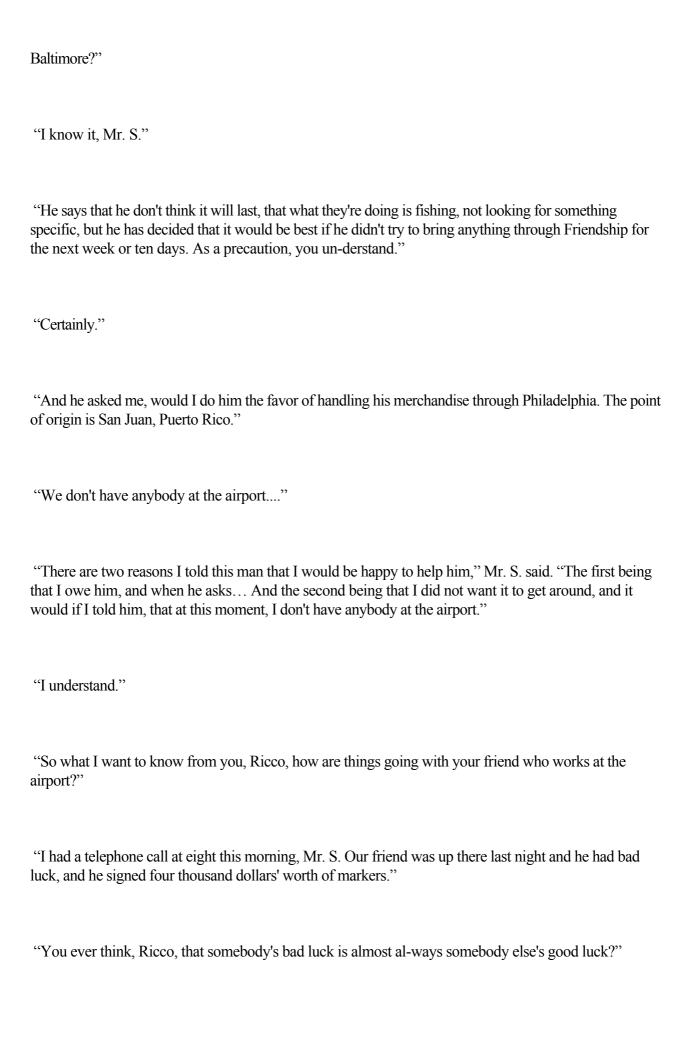
"I sent out to the French place. I got croissants, and éclairs, and..."

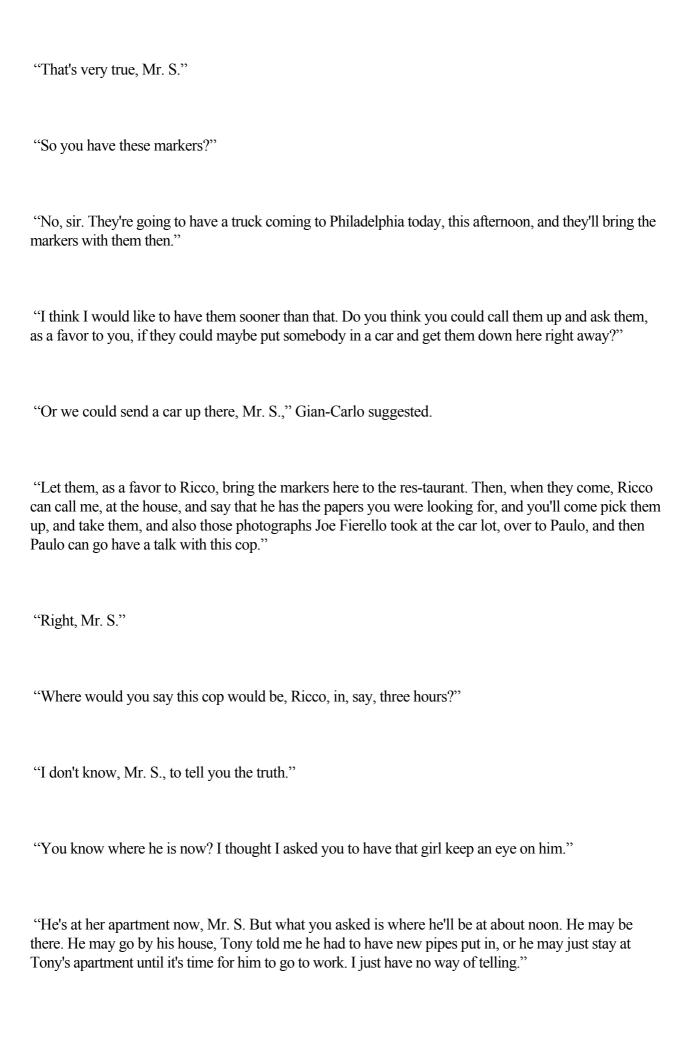
"Maybe an éclair. Thank you very much," Mr. S. said.

"Would you like to go to the office? Or maybe a table?"

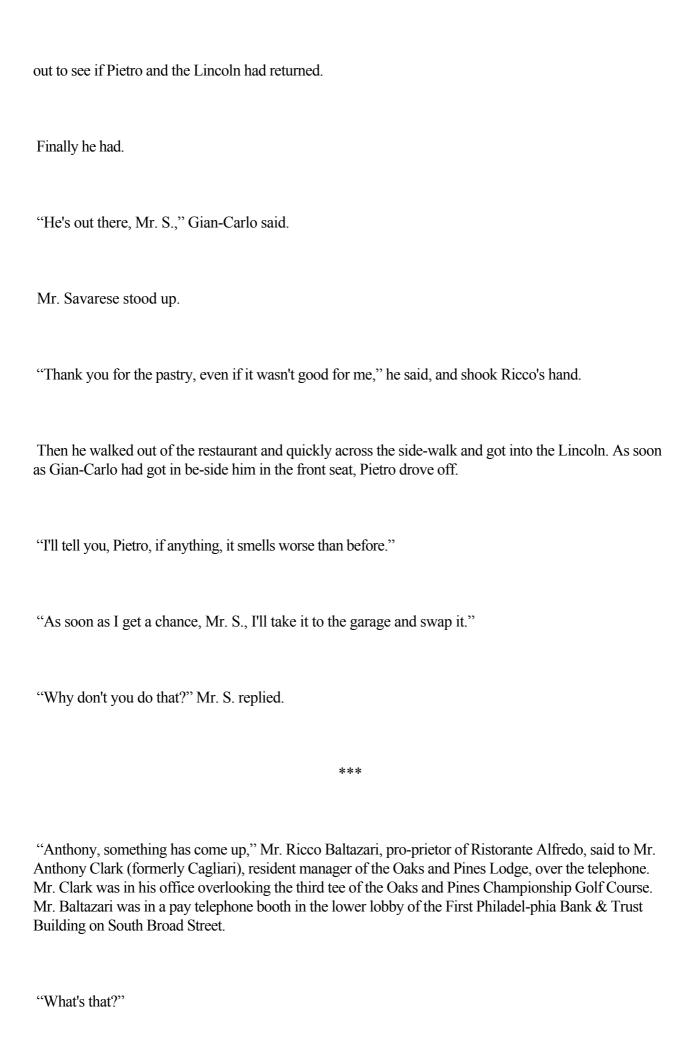
"This will do nicely," Mr. S. said and sat down at a table along the wall.





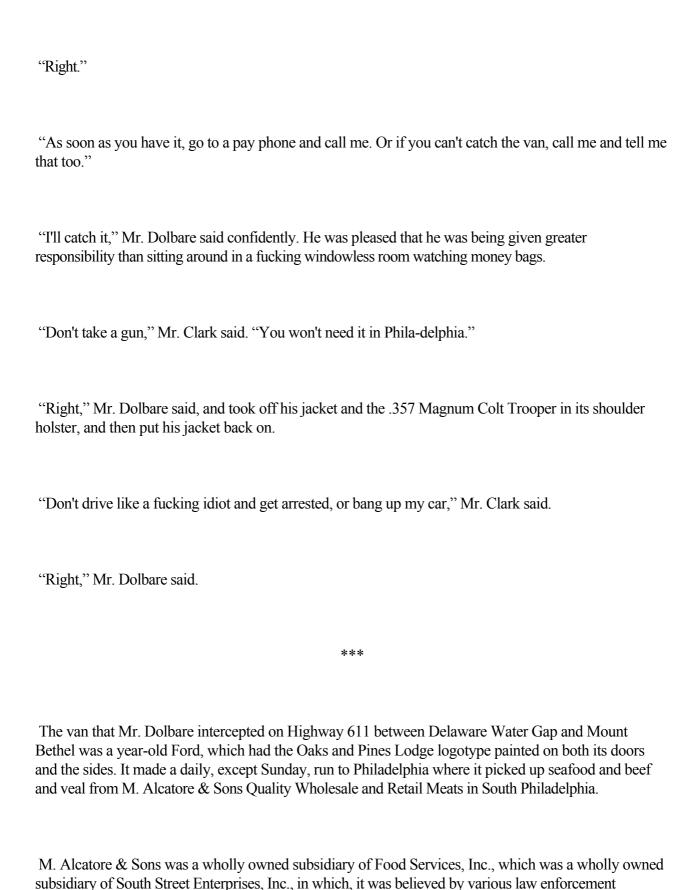












agencies, Mr. Vincenzo Savarese held a substantial interest.

It was also believed by various law enforcement agencies that through some very creative accounting the interlocked corpora-tions were both depriving the federal, state, and city governments of all sorts of taxes, and at the same time laundering through them profits from a rather long list of illegal enterprises.

So far, no law enforcement agency, city, state, or federal, had come up with anything any of the respective governmental attor-neys believed would be worth taking to court.

Tommy Dolbare gave the van driver Mr. Clark's note, and the van driver gave him a sealed blank envelope.

Tommy got back in Mr. Clark's Cadillac Sedan de Ville, and continued down Highway 611 to Easton, where he had to take a piss, and stopped at a gas station. He decided, on his way back to the car, that Mr. Clark would probably like to hear that he had inter-cepted the van, so he went into a telephone booth and called Oaks and Pines Lodge.

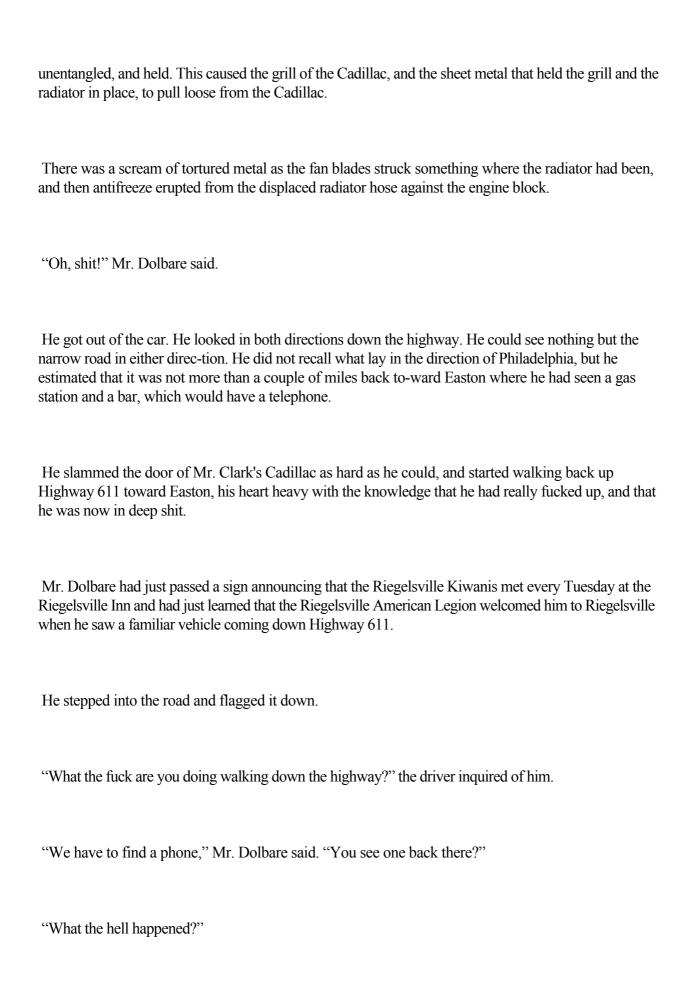
Then he got back in the Sedan de Ville and continued down US Highway 611 toward Philadelphia. It is one of the oldest highways in the nation, and from Easton south for twenty miles or so paral-lels the Delaware Canal.

Shortly after Mr. Dolbare passed the turn off to Durham, a tiny village of historical significance because it was at Durham that Benjamin Franklin established the first stop of his new postal ser-vice, and from the canal at Durham that George Washington took the Durham Boats on which he floated across the Delaware to at-tack the British in Princeton, Mr. Dolbare took his eyes from the road a moment to locate the cigarette lighter.

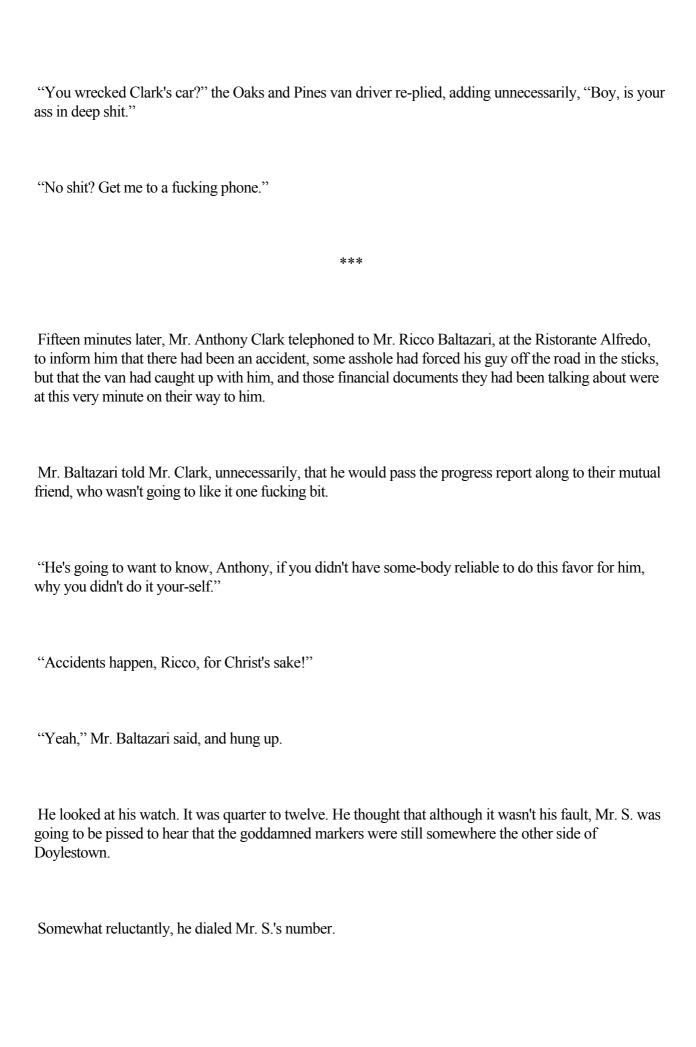
When he looked out the windshield again, there was a dog on the road. Mr. Dolbare, although he did not have one himself, liked dogs, and did not wish to run over one. He applied his brakes as hard as he could, and simultaneously attempted to steer around the dog.

The Cadillac went out of control and skidded into the post-and-cable fence that separates Highway 611 from the Delaware Canal.

The fence functioned as designed. The Cadillac did not go into the Delaware Canal. The cables held it from doing so. Only the front wheels left the road. Mr. Dolbare was able to back onto the road, but when he did so, one of the cables, which had become en-tangled with the grill of the car, did not become



"Some asshole forced me off the road; I had an accident."



TWENTY-ONE

Chief Marchessi had ordered surveillance of Corporal Vito Lanza "starting right now." Captain S	Swede
Olsen had done his best to comply with his orders, but Internal Affairs does not have a room full	of
investigators just sitting around with nothing else to do until summoned to duty, so it was twenty n	ninutes
after eleven before a nondescript four-year-old Pontiac turned down the 400 block of Ritner Street	eet in
South Philadelphia.	

"There it is," Officer Howard Hansen said, pointing to Corporal Lanza's residence. "With the plumber's truck in front."

"Where the hell am I going to park?" Sergeant Bill Sanders re-sponded. "Jesus, South Philly is unbelievable."

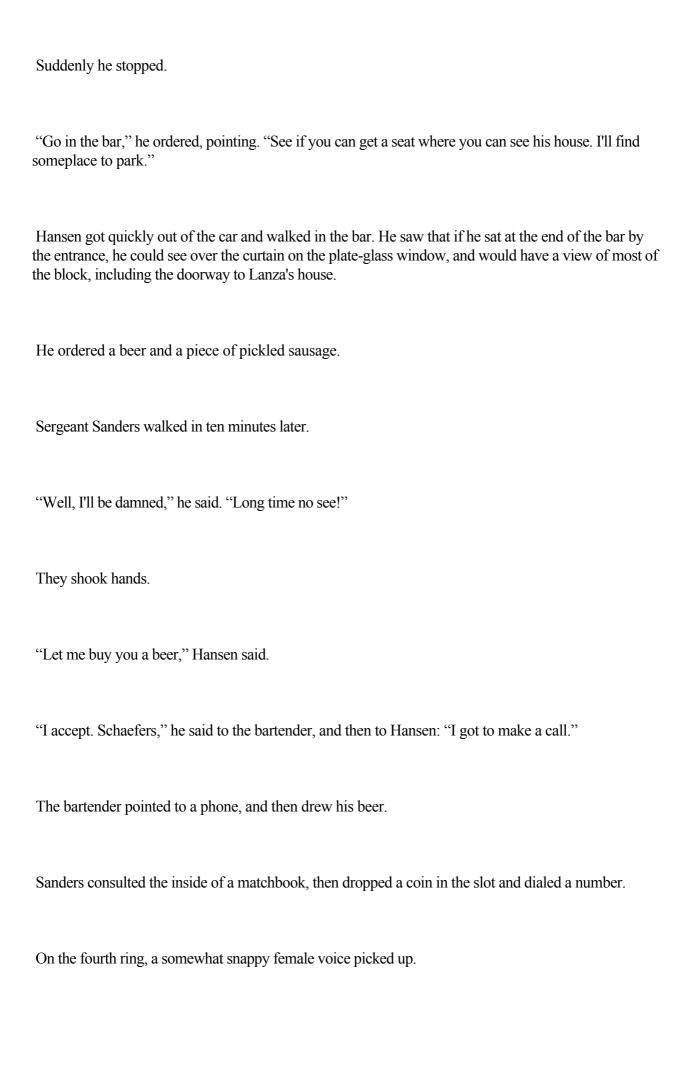
Officer Hansen and Sergeant Sanders were in civilian clothing. Hansen, who had been handling complaints from the public about police misbehavior, was wearing a suit and tie, and Sanders, who had been investigating a no-harm-done discharge of firearms in-volving two police officers and a married lady who had promised absolute fidelity to both of them, was wearing a cotton jacket and a plaid, tieless shirt.

"Go around the block, maybe something'll open up," Hansen said.

"I don't see a new Cadillac, either."

"If you had a new Cadillac, would you want to park it around here?"

"We don't even know if he's here," Sanders said as he drove slowly and carefully down Ritner Street, where cars were parked, half on the sidewalk, along both sides.





"Anything but the soap opera. I have enough trouble with my own love life; I don't have to watch somebody else's trouble."

The bartender started flipping through the channels.

At five minutes to twelve, Marion Claude Wheatley left his of-fice in the First Pennsylvania Bank & Trust Company, rode down in the elevator, and walked north on South Broad Street to the City Hall, and then east on Market Street toward the Delaware River.

He returned to the Super Drugstore on the corner of 1lth Street where he had previously purchased the *Souvenir of Asbury Park*, *N.J.* AWOL bag, and bought two more of them, another *Souvenir of Asbury Park*, *N.J.* and one with the same fish jumping out of the waves, but marked *Souvenir of Panama City Beach*, *Fla.* He thought it would be interesting to know just how many different places were stamped on AWOL bags the Super Drugstore had in the back room.

And then he thought that Super Drugstore was really a misno-mer. There was a place where one presumably could have a pre-scription filled, way in the back of the place, and there were rows of patent medicines, but he would have guessed that at least eighty percent of the available space in the Super Drugstore was given over to nonpharmaceutical items.

It was more of a Woolworth's Five and Dime, he thought, than a Super Drugstore. They really should not be allowed to call it a drugstore; it was deceptive, if not downright dishonest.

He had almost reached the entrance when he saw a display of flashlight batteries, under a flamboyant *SALE!* sign. He knew all that meant, of course, was that the items were available for sale, not on sale at a reduced price. But he headed for the display any-way, and saw that he was wrong.

The Eveready Battery Corporation, as opposed to the Super Drugstore itself, was having a promotional sale. He could tell that, because there were point-of-purchase promotional materials from Eveready, reading "As Advertised On TV!"

The philosophy behind the promotion, rather clever, he thought, was Are you sureyour batteries are fresh? Be Sure With Eveready! "

This was tied in, Marion noticed, with a pricing policy that re-duced the individual price of batteries in a sliding scale tied to how many total batteries one bought.

This triggered another thought. Certainly, there would be noth-ing suspicious if he acted as if he were someone taken in by Eveready's advertising and bought all the batteries he was going to need.

And then he had a sudden, entirely pleasing insight. There was more to his having come across this display than mere happen-stance. The Lord had arranged for him to pass by this display. He had, of course, planned to *Be Sure* his batteries were fresh. But he had planned to buy four batteries here, and four batteries there, not all twenty-four at once.

The Lord had made it possible for him to buy everything he needed to *Be Sure With Eveready* at one place, and in such a man-ner that no one would wonder what he was doing with all those batteries.

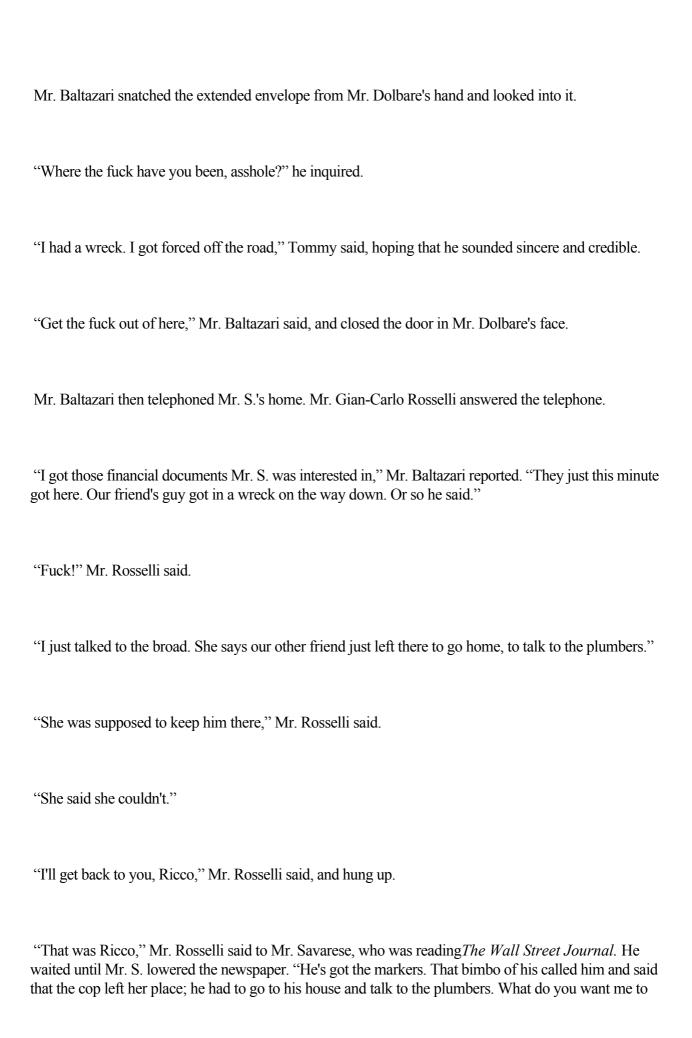
He paid for the batteries, and then put them in the Souvenir of Asbury Park, N. J. AWOL bag, and then folded that and put it in the Souvenir of Panama City Beach, Fla. AWOL bag, and then asked the girl at the cashier's counter for a bag to put everything in.

He didn't want to walk back to the office, much less into the of-fice, carrying a bag with *Souvenir of Panama City Beach*, *Fla.* painted on it.

When he got back to the office, he got out the telephone book, and a map of Philadelphia, and carefully marked on the map the lo-cation of all hardware stores that could reasonably be expected to sell chain, which were located within a reasonable walking dis-tance of the house.

He would, he decided, hurry home after work, leave the lunch-time purchases just inside the door, and see how much chain he could acquire before he really got hungry, and the headaches would come back, and he would have to eat.





Mr. Savarese, after a moment, asked, "Did he say why it took so long to get the markers?"
"He said something about Anthony Cagliari's guy"
"Clark," Mr. Savarese interrupted. "If Anthony wants to call himself Clark, we should respect that."
"Anthony's guy getting in a wreck on the way down from the Poconos."
"This was important. I told Ricco to tell Anthony it was important. Either Ricco didn't do that, or he didn't make it clear to An-thony. Otherwise Anthony would have brought those markers himself."
"You're right."
"Maybe you had better say something to Ricco," Mr. Savarese said. "When things are important, they're important."
"I'll do that, Mr. S. Right now, if you want."
"What I want you to do right now is go get the markers from Ricco. Take the photographs and give them to Paulo. You know where this cop lives?"
"Yes."
"I don't know what this business with the plumbers is," Mr. Savarese said. "If possible, without attracting attention, you and Paulo try to have a talk with the cop. But I don't want a fuss in the neighborhood, you understand?"

do?"

"I understand, Mr. S."
"You tell Paulo I said that. You tell him I said it would have been better if you could have talked to the cop in the girl's apartment. But sometimes things happen. Anthony's driver had a wreck; the cop's toilet is stopped up. It's not the end of the world. If you can't talk to him at his house, it might even be better if Paulo and you talked to him at this woman's apartment. Use your best judgment, Gian-Carlo. Just make sure that we get what we're after."
"I'll do my best, Mr. S."
Mr. Savarese nodded and raised The Wall Street Journal from his lap and resumed reading it.

"Ricco," Mr. Rosselli said to Mr. Baltazari when he answered the telephone. "What I want you to be doing is standing on the sidewalk in ten minutes with those things in your hand, so I don't have to waste my time coming in there and getting them, you un-derstand?"
"Right," Mr. Baltazari said. "I'll be waiting for you."

"There's a new Cadillac parking," Sergeant Bill Sanders said to Officer Howard Hansen. "Is that our guy?"
Hansen consulted a notebook, stuck into which was a photo-graph of Corporal Vito Lanza.
"Yeah, that's him."

"If I was dirty, and lived in this neighborhood," Sergeant San-ders said, "I think I would take what that Cadillac cost and move out of this neighborhood."
"But then you wouldn't be able to impress the neighbors with your new Caddy," Hansen said. "Why be dirty if you can't impress your neighbors?"
"Did you hear what this guy is supposed to have done? I mean, anything besides he may be taking stuff out of the airport?"
"Olsen said that Peter Wohl was in the chief's office first thing this morning. He had the kid—he just made detective, by the way—that got himself shot by the Islamic Liberation-Army, Payne, and some little Puerto Rican with him. I worked with Wohl on the job where he put Judge Findermann away. He does not go off half-cocked."
"The little Puerto Rican was a cop?"
"I think he was the guy, one of the guys, who got the junkie who shot Captain Dutch Moffitt."
Sanders nodded.
"You think to bring the camera from the car?"
Hansen nodded, and patted his breast pocket.
"Just in case we lose this guy when he leaves, I think you'd bet-ter take his picture."
Hansen nodded again.

"There's nota plumber," Mr. Paulo Cassandro said, looking out the back window of his Jaguar as it moved slowly down the 400 block of Ritner Street, "there's a whole fucking army of them."

"These houses is old; the pipes wear out," Mr. Rosselli replied absently.

On the way here, Mr. Cassandro had given some thought to how he was going to handle the situation if the place was full of plumb-ers, or Lanza's mother, or whatever. He had what, after some re-flection, seemed to be a pretty good idea.

Starting with the bill of sale for the Cadillac, all the paperwork involved in dealing with the cop had been Xeroxed. It was the busi-nesslike thing to do, in case something should get lost, or fucked up, or whatever. Including the bill for the comped room at the Oaks and Pines, and the markers, both the ones he'd paid, and the ones he'd just signed.

The thing they had to do now was make the cop nervous. He thought he had figured out just how to do that.

I will just go in the cop's house, and hand him the markers from last night. And tell him I want to talk to him, and why don't you let me buy you a drink when you get off work, say in the bar in the Warwick. He probably won't come, he wants to bang the broad, but he will wonder all fucking day what getting handed the markers is all about, and what I want to talk about. And if he don't show up at the Warwick by say one o'clock, I know where to find the fucker. Rosselli and I will go to the broad's apartment.

"Let me out of the car, Jimmy," Mr. Cassandro said to his driver, "and then drive around the block until I come out."

"You don't want me to come with you?" Mr. Rosselli asked.

"I want you to drive around the block with Jimmy until I come out."

"You will never believe who I just got a picture of getting out of a Jaguar and walking toward Lanza's house," Officer Howard Hansen said softly as he returned to the bar where Sergeant Bill Sanders was watching a quiz program on the television.
"Who?"
"Paulo Cassandro."
"You sure?" Sergeant Sanders asked.
Hansen nodded.
"And, unless I'm mistaken, the guy driving the Jaguar was Jimmy Gnesci, 'Jimmy the Knees,' and—what the hell is his name?— <i>Gian-Carlo</i> Rosselli was in the back seat with Cassandro."
"You get his picture, their pictures too?"
Hansen nodded.
"This is getting interesting," Sanders said.
"I told you, I've been on the job with Wohl. He don't go off half-cocked."

The fucking plumbers had just told Vito Lanza that it would be at least three days until there was cold water to flush the toilets, and probably a day more until there was hot water and he could take a bath and shave, when he heard somebody call, "Yo, Vito! You in here?" upstairs at the front door.
He went up the stairs and there was Paulo Cassandro standing there, just inside the open door. He was smiling.
"What the hell have you got going here, Vito? You really need all these plumbers?"
"Well, hello. How are you?"
Paulo Cassandro was the last person Vito expected to see inside his house, and for a moment there was concern that Paulo was there about the markers he had signed at the Oaks and Pines.
He shook Cassandro's hand.
"You wouldn't believe what they're charging me," Vito said.
"I would believe. There's only two kinds of plumbers, good expensive plumbers and bad expensive plumbers. I've been through this."
"So what can I do for you, Mr. Cassandro?"
"You can call me 'Paulo' for one thing," Cassandro said. "I just happened to be in the neighborhood, I was down by Veteran's Sta-dium, and I had these, and I thought, what the hell, I'll see if Vito's home and give them to him."
He handed Vito the markers, four thousand dollars' worth of markers, that he had signed early that morning at Oaks and Pines.

"To tell you the tr	ruth, Paulo, until I can get to the bank, I can't cover these."
I don't have anyw been really bad!	here near enough money in the bank to cover those markers. My fucking luck has
	ney? I know you're good for them. Take care of them at your convenience. But I had I, what the hell, why carry them around and maybe lose them. You know what I
"Absolutely."	
"And we know wh	here you live, right?"
"Yeah."	
	round, Vito," Paulo said, and started to leave, and then, as if it was a thought that had to him, turned back to Vito. "What time do you get off?"
"Eleven," Vito sai	d.
What the hell doe	s he want to know that for?
	rught," Paulo said. "Hey, Vito. We're all going to be at the bar at the Warwick a little my don't you come by, and we'll have a shooter or two?"
	but when I get off work, I'm kind of beat. And I went up to the Poconos last night. I g to tuck it in tonight. Let me have a rain check."

"Absolutely. I understand. But if you change your mind, the Warwick Bar. On the house. We like to take care of our good cus-tomers."

Paulo punched Vito in a friendly manner on the arm, smiled warmly at him, and walked out of his house.

He stood on the curb for almost five minutes until his Jaguar came around the block and pulled to the curb.

The relationship between the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, To-bacco and Firearms and local law enforcement agencies has rarely been a glowing example of intergovernmental cooperation.

This is not a new development, but goes back to the earliest days of the Republic when Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamil-ton convinced the Congress to pass a tax on distilled spirits. Some of the very first federal revenue officers were tarred and feathered when they tried to collect the tax, more than once as local sheriffs and constables stood by looking in the opposite direction.

In July, 1794, five hundred armed men attacked the home of General John Neville, the regional tax collector for Pennsylvania, and burned it to the ground. Since local law enforcement officers seemed more than reluctant to arrest the arsonists, President George Washington was forced to mobilize the militia in Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania to put the Whiskey Rebellion down.

During Prohibition, the New Jersey Pine Barrens served both as a convenient place to conceal illegally imported intoxicants from the federal government, prior to shipment to Philadelphia and New York, and as a place to manufacture distilled spirits far from prying eyes. And again, local law enforcement officers did not enforce the liquor laws with what the federal government considered appropri-ate enthusiasm. Part of this was probably because most cops and deputy sheriffs both liked a little nip themselves and thought Prohi-bition was insane, and part was because, it has been alleged, the makers of illegally distilled intoxicants were prone to make gener-ous gifts, either in cash or in kind, to the law enforcement commu-nity as a token of their respect and admiration.

Even with the repeal of Prohibition the problem did not go away. High quality, locally distilled corn

whiskey, or grain neu-tral spirits, it was learned, could be liberally mixed with fully taxed bourbon, blended whiskey, gin, and vodka and most people in Atlantic City bars and saloons could not tell the difference. Ex-cept the bartenders and tavern keepers, who could get a gallon or more of untaxed spirits for the price of a quart of the same with a federal tax stamp affixed to the neck of the bottle.

And the illegal distillers still had enough of a profit to be able to comfortably maintain their now traditional generosity toward the local law enforcement community.

While the local law enforcement community did not actively as-sist the moonshine makers in their illegal enterprise, neither did they drop their other law enforcement obligations to rush to the assistance of what had become the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms in their relentless pursuit of illegal stills.

It boiled down to a definition of crime. If they learned that someone was smuggling firearms to Latin America, the locals would be as cooperative as could be desired. And since the illegal movement of cigarettes from North Carolina, where they were made and hardly taxed at all, to Atlantic City, where they were heavily taxed by both the state and city, cut into New Jersey's tax revenues, the locals were again as cooperative as could be expected in helping to stamp out this sort of crime.

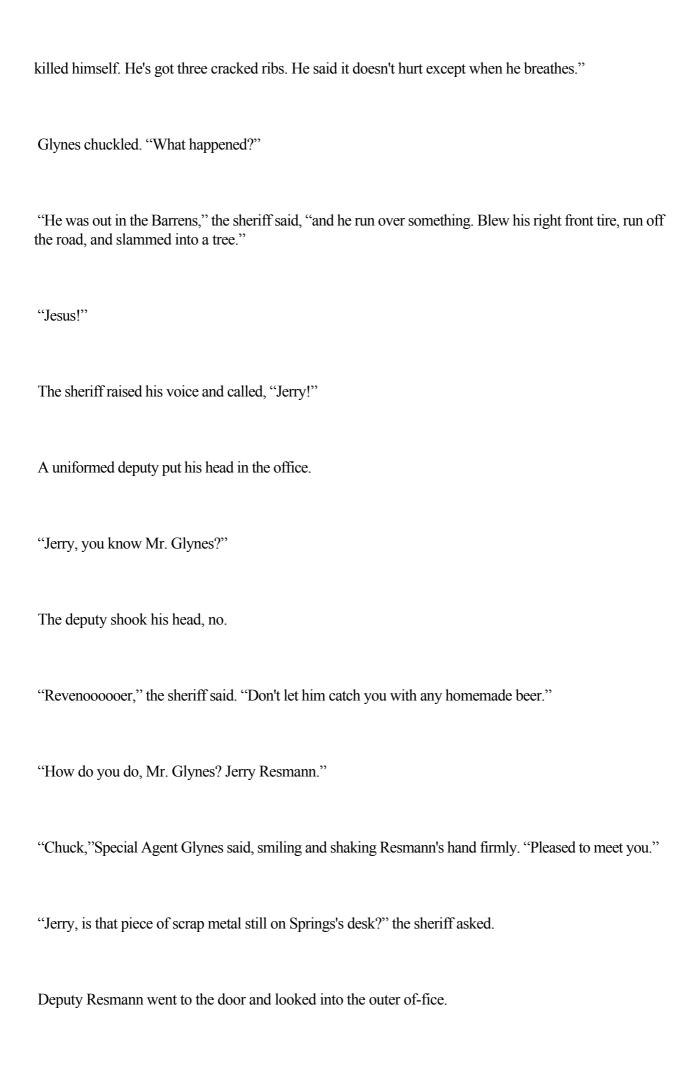
And if they happened to walk into a still in the Pine Barrens, the operator, if he could be found, would of course be hauled before the bar of justice. It was simply that other aspects of law enforcement normally precluded a vigorous prosecution of illegal dis-tilling.

Additionally, there was—there is—a certain resentment in the lo-cal law enforcement community toward neatly dressed young men who had joined ATF right out of college, at a starting salary that al-most invariably greatly exceeded that of, for example, a deputy sher-iff who had been on the job ten years.

Whatever else may be said about them, ATF agents are not stu-pid. They know that they need the support of the local law enforce-ment community more than it needs theirs. They are taught to be grateful for that support, and made aware that it would be very foolish indeed to make impolitic allegations, much less investiga-tions.

When Special Agent C. V. Glynes, of the Atlantic City office of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, making a routine call, just to keep in touch, walked into the Sheriff's Department in the basement of the county courthouse, he knew very well that if he was going to leave with any information he had not previously had, it would be volunteered by either the sheriff himself, or one of his deputies, and not the result of any investigative genius he might demonstrate.

He waved a friendly greeting at the sheriff, behind his glass-walled office, and then bought a Coca-Cola from the machine against the wall.
He studied the bulletin board, which was more devoted to lawn mowers, mixed collie and Labrador puppies, washing machines and other household products for sale, than to criminal matters un-til the sheriff, having decided he had made the fed wait long enough, waved him into his office.
"Good morning, Sheriff," Special Agent Glynes said.
"How are you, Glynes? I like your suit."
"There was a going-out-of-business sale, Machman's, on the Boardwalk? Fifty percent off. I got two of them for a hundred and twenty bucks each."
The sheriff leaned forward and felt the material.
"That's the real stuff. None of that plastic shit."
"Yeah. And I got some shirts too, one hundred percent cotton Arrow. Fifty percent off."
"Anything special on your mind?"
Glynes shook his head, no.
"Just passing through. I thought I'd stop in and ask about Dan Springs. How is he?"
"He must have really hit his steering wheel. If he hadn't been wearing his seat belt, he'd probably have





"There's burned areas too," the sheriff said. "I read one time that in a hurricane, the wind gets blowing so hard, so fast, that it'll stick pieces of straw three inches deep into a telephone pole."
Glynes took the piece of steel back and lifted it to his nose, and then, carefully, touched the edge of the burned area with his finger-tip, and then looked at his fingertip. There was a black smudge. When he touched his finger to it, it smeared.
"The explosion happened recently," he said, handing the steel to the sheriff. "You can smell it, and the burned area is still moist."
The sheriff sniffed. "I'll be damned. I wonder what it is?"
"I'd like to know. I'd like to run it by our laboratory. You think I could have this for a while?"
"Would we get it back?"
"Sure."
"I know Dan would want that for a souvenir."
"I can have it back here before he comes back to work."
"What do you think it is?"
"You tell me. Have there been any industrial explosions, any-thing like that around here?"
The sheriff considered that for a moment, and then shook his head, no.

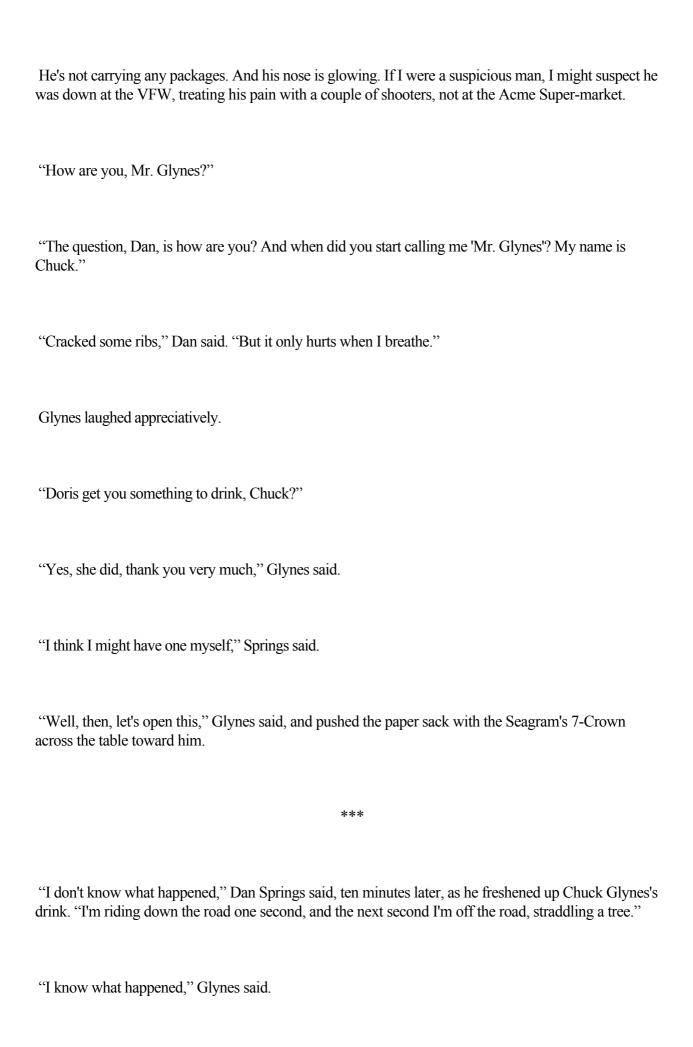
"Take it along with you, Chuck, if you want. But I really want it back."
"I understand."

Special Agent Glynes was halfway to Atlantic City when he pulled to the side of the road.
I don't need the goddamned laboratory to tell me that piece of metal has been involved in the detonation of high explosives. What I want to know is where it came from.
It could be nothing. But on the other hand, if somebody is blowing things up around here with high explosives, I damned sure want to know who and why.
He made a U-turn, stopped at the first bar he encountered, bought a get-well bottle of Seagram's 7-Crown for Deputy Springs, and asked for the telephone book.
He found a listing for <i>Springs</i> , <i>Daniel J.</i> , which was both un-usual and pleased him. Most law enforcement officers, including Special Agent Glynes, did not like to have their telephone numbers in the book. It was an invitation to every wife/mother/girlfriend and male relative/acquaintance of those whom one had met, <i>pro-fessionally</i> , so to speak, to call up, usually at twoA.M., the sonofabitch who put Poor Harry in jail.
He carefully wrote down Springs's number and address, but he did not telephone to inquire whether it would be convenient for him to call. It was likely that either Dan Springs or his wife would, politely, tell him that it would be inconvenient, and he was now de-termined to see him. If he showed up at the front door with a smile and a bottle of whiskey, it was unlikely that he would be turned away.

Glynes had been on the job nearly fifteen years. When he saw advertisements in the newspapers of colleges offering credit for practical experience, he often thought of applying. He had enough practical

experience to be awarded a Ph.D., summa cum laude, in Practical Psychology. He found Springs's house without difficulty. There was no car in the carport, which was disappointing. He thought about that a mo-ment, then decided the thing to do was leave the whiskey bottle, with a calling card, "Dan, Hope you 're feeling better. Chuck." That just might put Springs in a charitable frame of mind when he came back in the morning. But he heard the sound of the television when he walked up to the door, and pushed the doorbell. Chimes sounded inside, and a few moments later a plump, comfortable-looking gray-haired woman wearing an apron opened the door. "Mrs. Springs, I'm Chuck Glynes. I work sometimes with Dan, and I just heard what happened." "Oh," she seemed uncomfortable. Why is she uncomfortable? Ah ha. Dear Old Dan isn't as inca-pacitated as he would have the sheriff believe. "I'm not with the Sheriff's Department, Mrs. Springs. I work for the federal government in Atlantic City. I brought something in case Dan needed something stronger than an aspirin." "Dan went to the store for a minute," Mrs. Springs said. "My ar-thritis's been acting up, and I didn't think I should be driving." "Well, maybe I can offer some of this to you." "Come in," she said, making up her mind. "He shouldn't be long."

Deputy Springs walked into his kitchen twenty minutes later.





"Sure," Springs said. "But not tonight. By the time we got there, it would be dark."
"Would you feel up to going out there tomorrow?"
"I'm on sick leave." ,
"Well, hell, the sheriff wouldn't have to know."
"Yeah," Springs said, after a moment's thought. "I could take you out there tomorrow, I guess."
"I'd appreciate it, Dan. We like to know who's blowing what up."
"Yeah, and so would I."

Mrs. Springs insisted that Chuck stay for supper. He said he would stay only if she let him buy them dinner.
At dinner, when he said he would have to head back to Atlantic City, Mrs. Springs said there was no reason at all for him to drive all that way just to have to come back in the morning, they had a spare bedroom just going to waste. He said he wouldn't want to put her out, and she said he shouldn't be silly.



"If I were dirty and had bought a Cadillac with dirty money, I wouldn't drive it to work."
"Maybe you're smarter than Lanza."
"And maybe he inherited the money and isn't dirty, and if some-body asks him, he can say 'I got it from my mother's estate,' or something."
"And what about those Guinea gangsters we saw at his house? What were they doing, selling Girl Scout cookies?"
"If I was dirty, I think I'd be smart enough to tell the Mob to stay away from my house. And the Mob, I think, is smart enough to fig-ure that out themselves."
Sergeant Sanders grunted, but did not reply.
After a moment, Hansen said, "Well, what do you think?"
"I think I'm going to call Swede Olsen and tell him that after Lanza bought Girl Scout cookies from Paulo Cassandro, Jimmy the Knees, and Gian-Carlo Rosselli, he went to work, and does he want us to keep sitting on him or what."
He opened the door of the Pontiac and went looking for a tele-phone.

Officer Paul O'Mara stuck his head in Peter Wohl's office.

"Inspector," he said, "there's a Captain Olsen on 312. You want to talk to him?"
"Paul, for your general fund of useful knowledge," Wohl replied as he reached for his telephone, "unless the commissioner is in my office, or the building's on fire, I always want to talk to Captain Olsen."
He punched the button for 312.
"How are you, Swede? What's up?"
"Inspector, I put Bill Sanders and Howard Hansen on Lanza. You know them?"
"Hansen, I do. Good cop. Smart. What about them?"
"Sanders is a sergeant. Good man. He just called from the air-port. Lanza just went to work. They picked him up at his house. Before he went to work, Paulo Cassandro paid him a visit at his house."
"Vincenzo Savarese's Paulo Cassandro?" Wohl asked, and then, before Olsen could reply, went on, "We're sure about that?"
"Sanders said he went in, was inside maybe five minutes, and while he was, Gian-Carlo Rosselli and Jimmy the Knees Gnesci rode around the block in Rosselli's Jaguar."
"I suppose it's too much to hope, Swede, that we have photo-graphs?"
"We have undeveloped film," Olsen said. "But Hansen's pretty good with a camera."
"I know. How soon can we have prints?"

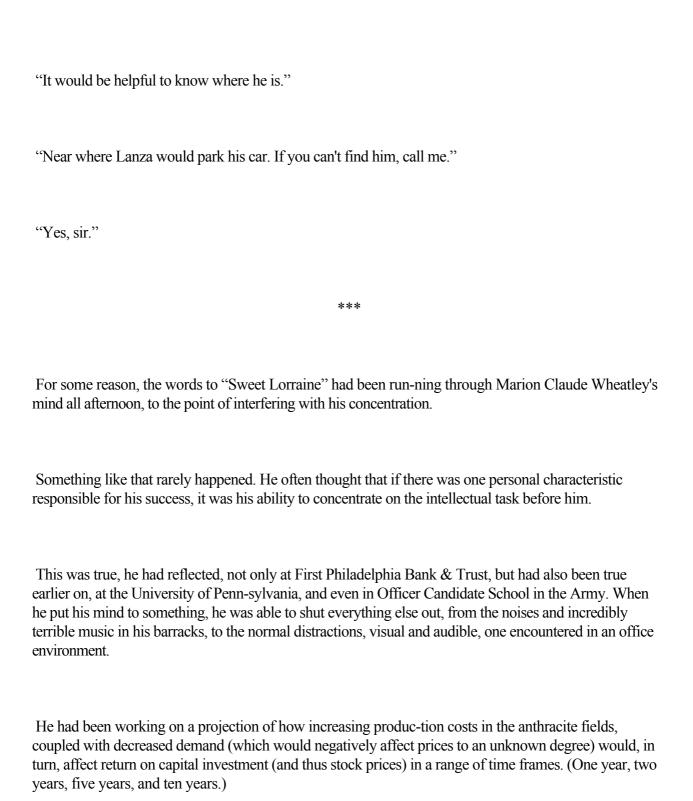


unmarked car," he ordered, and then walked out without further explanation.
He walked quickly down the corridor to the door of the Special Investigations Section and pushed it open. Detective Tony Harris was there, and so were Sergeant Jerry O'Dowd, Officer Tiny Lewis, and Detective Matthew M. Payne. Only Lewis was in uni-form.
'Tony," Wohl began without preliminaries, "do you know a cop named Vito Lanza, now a corporal at the airport?"
"Yeah, I know him. He's sort of an asshole."
"Damn! Jerry?"
"No," O'Dowd said, after a moment to think it over. "I don't think so."
"What's going on around here?" Wohl asked.
"We're waiting for the phone to ring," Matt Payne said.
"I'm beginning to suspect the mad bomber is not going to call," Tony Harris said.
"Spare me the sarcasm, please," Wohl snapped.
"Sorry," Harris said, sounding more or less contrite.
"I need somebody to surveil Lanza from right now until about eight," Wohl said. "O'Dowd, I think you're elected."









It was the sort of thing he was not only very good at, but really enjoyed doing, because of the variable factors involved. Normally, working on something like this, nothing short of an earthquake or a nuclear attack could distract him.

But "Sweet Lorraine" kept coming into his mind. For that mat-ter, into his voice. He several times caught

himself humming the melody.

He had no particular feelings regarding the melody. He neither actively disliked it, nor regarded it as a classic popular musical work.

That left, of course, the possibility that the Lord was sending him a message. He considered that possibility several times, and could make no sense of it.

He thought he had it once; it might be the name of someone close to the Vice President, but that wasn't it. He called the Free Public Library and a research librarian told him the Vice President's wife's name was Sally. And she couldn't help him when he asked if she happened to know if there was someone on the Vice President's staff named Lorraine, maybe his secretary.

She had the secretary's name, Patricia, and she said, as far as she could tell, everyone else on the Vice President's staff was a male.

That left only one possibility, presuming that it was not simply an aberration, that the Lord was alerting him to something that would happen later, something that, when he saw it, would answer the mystery.

Once he had come to that analysis, he had been able to return to *A Projection of Anthracite Production Economic Considerations* without having his concentration disrupted. He made good prog-ress, and was very nearly finished when the sounds of people get-ting ready to go home broke into his concentration again.

Marion was so close to being finished with the *One-Year Time Frame* that he considered staying and finishing it, but finally de-cided against that. He knew himself well enough to know that if he finished the *One-Year* he would be tempted to just keep going.

The priority, of course, was to get the things on the list not yet acquired. The list was just about complete. All he needed now was the chain and two more AWOL bags. He would get the chain today, and the remaining two AWOL bags tomorrow. It would not be wise to return to the Super Drugstore at all, and certainly not so soon.

First the chain and then the AWOL bags. Perhaps, when he went shopping for the chain, he would see another store that had AWOL bags on sale. Perhaps even bags that met the metal zipper and other criteria, but which at least would not have *Souvenir of Someplace* painted on them, and with a little bit of luck would be of a different design.

Marion waited, of course, until the office herd had thundered out and ridden the cattle cars down to the lobby before putting the *A Projection of Anthracite Production Economic Considerations* material back into its folders and then into his desk file.

When he came out onto Broad Street, he had an interesting thought. Instead of looking for a hardware store in the streets down toward the river, he would get on a bus and ride up North Broad Street.

He vaguely remembered seeing a decent-looking hardware store in a row of shops on the west side of North Broad Street, five or six blocks north of the North Philadelphia Station of the Pennsylvania Railroad.

He started to walk up South Broad Street toward City Hall. As he approached it, he decided he would let the Lord decide, by His timing of the traffic lights that controlled the counterclockwise movement of vehicular traffic around City Hall, whether He wanted him to go to North Broad Street by walking through the City Hall passageways, or if He preferred that Marion turn right at Market Street and walk the long way around, on the sidewalk past John Wanamaker's, et cetera.

The Lord apparently wanted him to get to North Broad Street quickly, for just as he approached Market Street, the vehicular light turned to red, the pedestrian light turned to green, and without breaking stride he was able to cross the street and enter the arch-way of City Hall.

The same thing happened as he emerged from the north arch-way. The vehicular light turned to red and the pedestrian to green just as he reached the street, and he was again able to keep walking without stopping at all.

And then as he reached the bus stop at the next corner, a bus was just swallowing the last of the line of people who had been waiting for it. Marion climbed aboard without having to break pace.

He thought for a moment that the Lord had wanted him to board this particular bus, but then decided that wasn't true. There was only one empty seat, and that was on the right side of the bus. If the Lord had

wanted him to get on this bus, He would have saved him a seat on the left side, from which he could look for the hardware store he remembered seeing somewhere past the North Philadel-phia Station.

Perhaps, Marion thought, by the time we get to the North Philadel-phia Station, someone now sitting on the left side will have gotten off the bus and I can move over.

Sometime later, Marion wasn't sure how much later, because he had been thinking that he had forgotten to factor into *A Projection of Anthracite Production Economic Considerations* the cost of new federal government mine safety regulations, he became aware that the bus was not moving.

He looked out the window. They were stopped at Ridge Avenue. The bus was now filled with mutterings. His fellow passengers were growing angry that the bus wasn't moving. Marion raised himself in his seat and tried to look out the windshield. There was a long line of cars in front of the bus, but he could see nothing that explained why they weren't moving.

Marion glanced out the side window again, and saw that they were stopped in front of the hotel that belonged to that rather amus-ing, viewed in one light, and rather pathetic, viewed in another, religious sect founded by a Philadelphia black man who called himself Father Divine.

Father Divine had convinced an amazing number of colored people, and even some white people, that he had been anointed by the Lord to bring them out of their misery, spiritual and temporal, primarily by turning over all of their assets to him.

His wife, Marion recalled, had been a white woman, and she had lived rather well as the mate of Father Divine. They were supposed to own property and businesses all over Philadelphia. And New York too. And Washington, D.C.

He wondered if Mrs. Father Divine was still living well, now that Father Divine had been called to Heaven.

I wonder what Father Divine said to Saint Peter?

There really had been a lot of money. The hotel, before they bought it, with cash, closed the bar, and

renamed it, after Mrs. Di-vine, of course, the Divine Lorraine Hotel, had been a rather de-cent hotel.
The DivineLorraine <i>Hotel!</i>
The bus began to move.
Marion broke out in a sweat.

When the bus stopped in front of the old Reading Railroad Ter-minal at Lehigh Avenue, not far at all from the Pennsylvania Rail-road's North Philadelphia Station, the four people sitting in the two seats to the left of Marion all got up at once and exited the bus.
Marion quickly moved across the aisle. The sweating had stopped, but it left him feeling clammy and uncomfortable.
There is no question that the Lord wants me to do something in connection with, the Divine Lorraine Hotel. But what?

Three blocks past the North Philadelphia Station, Marion saw the hardware store he thought he remembered. And it was even larger, and thus more likely to carry what he needed to complete the list, than he had remembered.
He got off the bus at the next stop, crossed North Broad Street, and walked back toward the hardware store.

He passed a Super Discount Store, the windows of which were emblazoned with huge signs reading SALE!

And in one of the windows, under aSALE! sign with an arrow pointing downward there was a stack of AWOL bags. These were not only of better quality than the three he had bought on Market Street, but of different design. Their straps went completely around the bag. They had metal zippers, and they did not have *Souvenir of Asbury Park*, *NJ*., and a fish leaping out of the surf gaudily painted on their sides.

Marion went into the Super Discount Store and bought two of the AWOL bags, one in a rather nice shade of dark blue, the other in sort of a rusty brown. He put the blue one inside the brown one, and thought that he would have plenty of space left over for the chain.

The clerk in the hardware store told Marion that they stocked a wide variety of chains, and if Marion would tell him what he wanted the chain for, six lengths each twenty-two inches long, they could make sure he was getting the right thing.

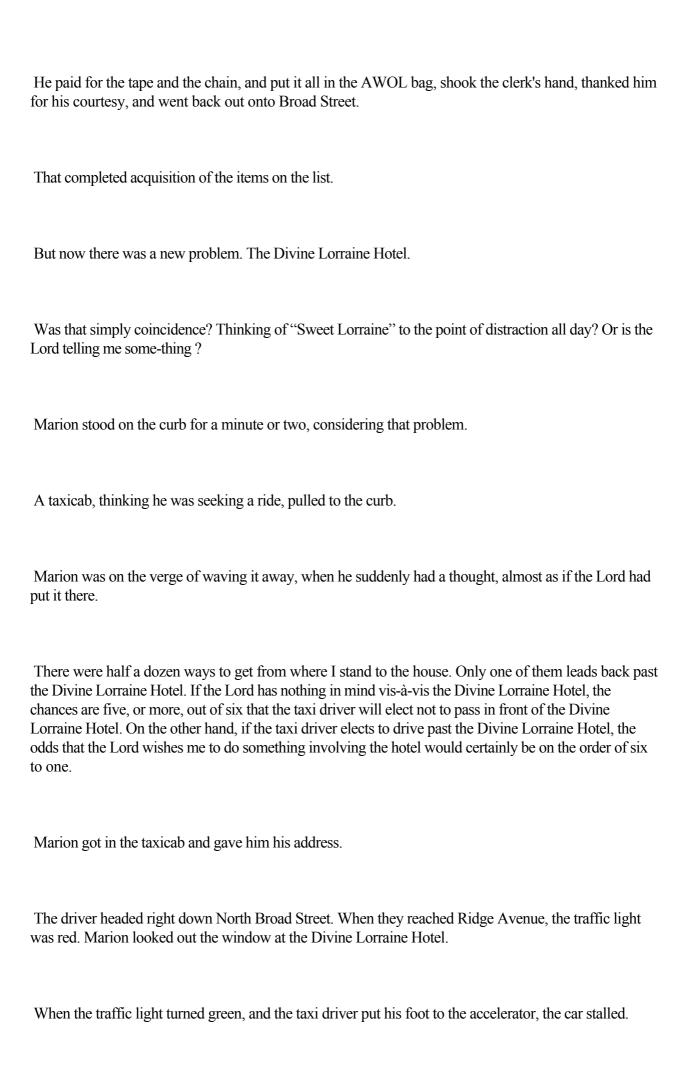
Marion was fairly certain that the man was more garrulous than suspicious, but he could not, of course, tell him what he really wanted the chain for. He had considered this sort of question com-ing up, of course, and was ready for him. He told the clerk that he had to lock six steel casement windows, and that he would also need six padlocks.

The clerk told him that not only did the store stock a wide array of padlocks, but that he thought it would be possible to furnish six locks all of which would operate with the same key.

Marion told him that would be unnecessary but nice.

The clerk was similarly garrulous when Marion informed him that he would need both duct and electrical tape. Marion was aston-ished at the wide selection available, and made his choice by selecting the most expensive tapes he was shown. That would, he believed, make the clerk happy.

Marion was not annoyed with the clerk. Quite to the contrary. In this day and age it was a pleasant surprise to find a clerk who seemed genuinely interested in pleasing the customer.



Marion broke out in another sweat.
He looked at the Divine Lorraine Hotel again. A very large col-ored lady with some kind of white napkin or something wrapped around her head and neck smiled at him.
Marion smiled back.
A taxi pulled up in front of the hotel, and a man got out and car-ried suitcases toward the door.
It is a hotel still, I forgot that. A hotel that caters, apparently, to those who believe in Father Divine, whom they believe is either God, or close to Him. It would follow, therefore, that a Christian of that persuasion would stay at the Divine Lorraine Hotel.
Any Christian! That's what it is, of course. How could I have been so stupid? The Lord wants me to go there. But why? It is not mine to question the Lord, but it would help me to carry out His will if I knew what He wanted of me.
The answer came: Ihave probably made an error somewhere, and the Secret Service is looking for me. Or will be looking for me at the house after I carry out the Lord's will and disintegrate the Vice President.
No one would think of looking for Marion Claude Wheatley in the Divine Lorraine Hotel.
Thank you, Lord! Forgive me for taking so long to understand what it was You wanted of me.
The taxi driver got the motor running again.
Marion leaned back against the cushions. He felt euphoric.

L	am in	the	Lord's	hands	I walk	through	the valle	v of death	but I fee	l no evil	for	Thou art with m	ıе
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Matt's Volkswagen started with difficulty, and he made the im-mediate decision to swap cars at his apartment as his first order of business. The one thing he did not need was to have the Bug die on him when he was running errands for Peter Wohl.

The Bug performed flawlessly on the way from the Schoolhouse to the basement garage of his apartment and he wondered if swapping cars was now such a good idea. Silver Porsche 911s attracted attention; battered Bugs did not.

He walked out of the basement garage, waving at the rent-a-cop on duty, went to the convenience store around the corner and bought five rolls of 36-exposure ASA 200 Kodak black and white film, and went back to the garage.

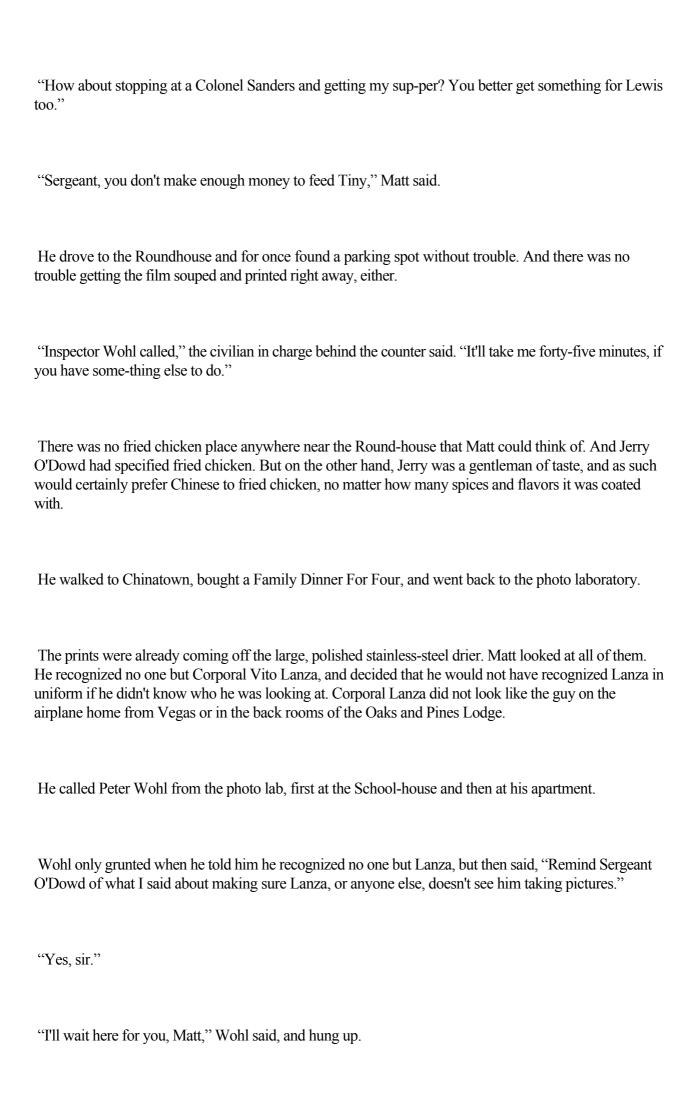
The Porsche was conspicuous, but on the other hand, people didn't think of cops when they saw one. And the Bug might just have been teasing me when it ran so well on the way down here.

He drove out to the airport, and found Sergeant Jerry O'Dowd with less trouble than he thought he would have. O'Dowd gave him a roll of film, then told him to wait a second, and removed the film from the camera and gave him that too.

"I haven't taken any pictures," O'Dowd said. "But I forgot to ask Hansen if he had."

"I'll be back as soon as I can."

O'Dowd handed him several bills.



Matt delivered three sets of photographs to Captain Olsen in In-ternal Affairs, and then drove back to the airport. Tiny Lewis had joined O'Dowd while he had been gone, and had had the foresight to bring supper—barbecued ribs—for the both of them with him.
Tiny was not at all reluctant to add a little Chinese to his supper menu, however, and accepted half of the food Matt had brought with him.
It will not be wasted, Matt decided, as he headed for Peter Wohl's apartment in Chestnut Hill. Wohl likes Chinese. What I should have done was get some of Tiny's ribs.
Peter Wohl, a crisp white shirt and shaving cream behind his ears indicating he was dressed to go out, was not only not at all in-terested in the Chinese, but didn't even invite Matt in, much less in for a beer. He just took the envelope of photographs from Matt, muttered "thank you," and started to close the door.
"Is there anything else you need me for, sir?"
Wohl looked at him.
"I think you have made quite enough of a contribution to the De-partment in the last twenty-four hours for one detective, Payne. Why don't you go home? And stay there?"
He closed the door.
Matt, as well as he knew Wohl, was not sure whether Wohl was pulling his chain, or whether Wohl was still sore about his having gone to the Oaks and Pines Lodge.
Matt got back in the Porsche and drove back to Center City. He was almost at Rittenhouse Square before he thought of Evelyn.

She probably ran the answering machine out of tape,he thought as he drove into the underground garage. What the hellam I going to do about her?

The red light on the answering machine was blinking, and when he played the tape, there had been thirteen callers who had elected not to leave their names, plus two calls from, of all people, Amelia Payne, M.D., who sounded, he thought, as if she had just sat on a nail, and demanded that he call her the moment he got in.
"Screw you, Sister Mine," Matt said aloud. "I am not in the mood for you."
He carefully arranged the Chinese goldfish buckets on his coffee table, got a cold beer from the refrigerator, and sat down to his sup-per.
The Chinese was cold.
He carried everything to the kitchen and warmed it in the micro-wave, carried it back to the coffee table, and sat down again.
The doorbell sounded.
Evelyn, Jesus Christ! Well, if she's at the door, she knows I'm here. I might as well face the music.
He went to the head of the stairs and pushed the button that acti-vated the solenoid.
His visitor came through the door.

She looked up at him and called: "You miserable sonofabitch, how could you?"
It was not Evelyn, it was Amelia Payne, M.D.
"That would depend on which of my many mortal sins you have in mind. Come on in, Amy. Soup's on, and it's always a joy to see you."
"I have been angry with you before," Amy said as she reached the top stair. "And disgusted, but this really is despicable."
He was concerned.
Amy is really angry, and that means she thinks I have done something really despicable. But I haven't.
"Are you going to tell me what you're talking about?"
The telephone rang. Without thinking, he picked it up.
"Hello?"
"Hello, Matt," Evelyn said.
"I can't talk to you right now. Let me call you back."
"But you won't, will you?" Evelyn said, her voice loaded with hurt, and then she hung up.

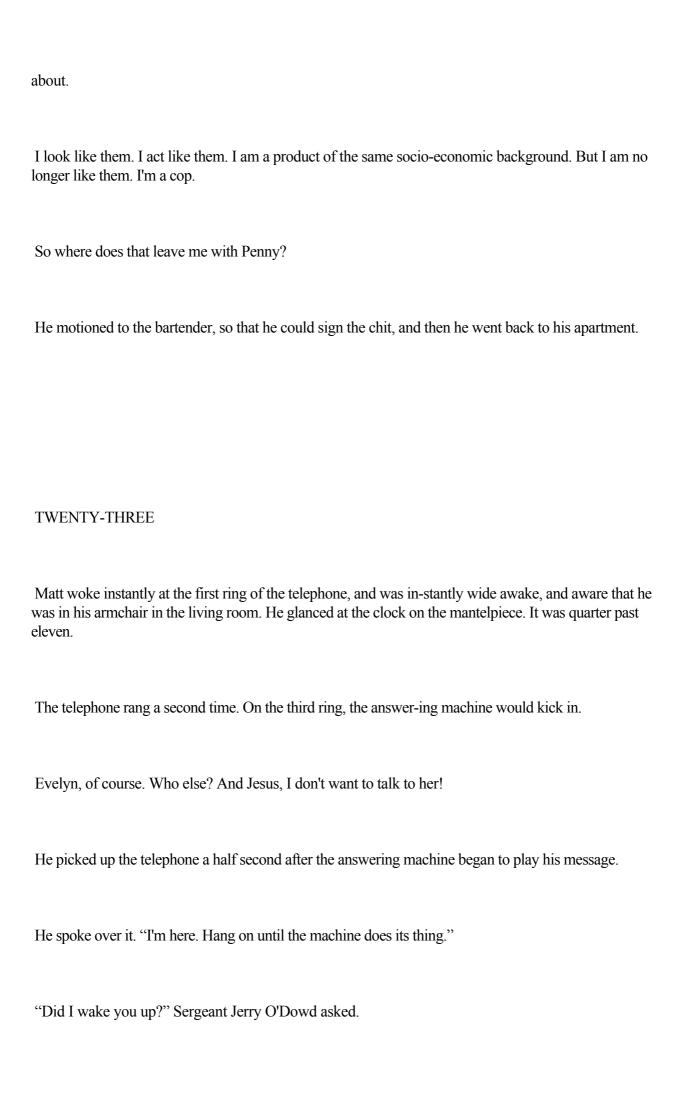
"Jesus!" Matt said. He looked at Amy. "How about an egg roll?"
"What I'm talking about, Matt," Amy said, back in control of her temper, "is you going to bed with Penny."
Jesus Christ! How did she hear about that? The answer to that, obviously, is that Penny told her. Patients tell their psychiatristseverything.
"What in the world were you thinking?" Amy demanded.
She has shifted into her Counselor of Mankind tone of voice.
"I don't know," he said, his mouth running away with him. "What do you think about when you hop in bed with some guy?"
Amy slapped him. His vision blurred, his ears rang, and his eyes watered.
He looked at her for a moment as his eyes came back into focus.
"I should not have done that," Amy announced. But it was as if she was talking to herself.
"You're goddamned right you shouldn't have," he replied an-grily. "You slap a cop, you're likely to get slapped right back."
"Is that what it was, Matt?" Amy asked. "Just Detective Payne hopping into bed with the nearest available female?"
"It happened, Amy," Matt said.

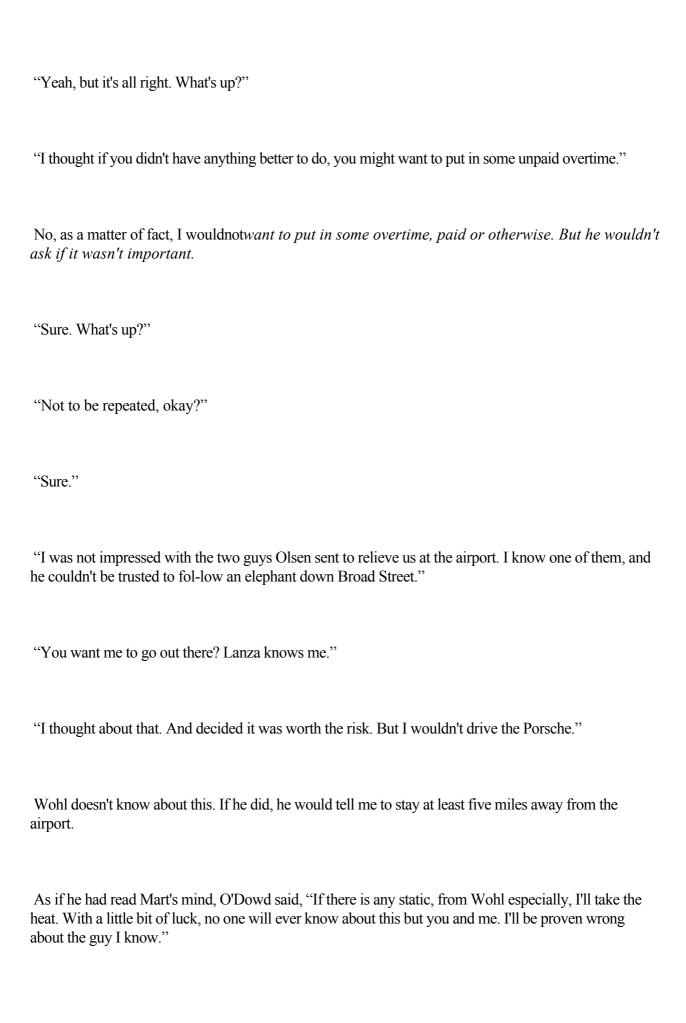












"You'll have to explain that."
"If I'm wrong, and I hope I will be, the guys on Lanza will be able to follow him. If they can follow him, wherever he's going, fine, we'll hang it up. But if they lose him, which wouldn't be sur-prising, at midnight in that area, I want to be on him. Then I'll get on the radio and tell the other guys where he is."
"You want me to go with you?"
"No. I want both of us to follow him. That would have three people following him. I don't think all three of us would lose him. But if they did, and I did, and you didn't"
"Okay. Where do I meet you?"
"There's an all-night diner on South Broad right across from the stadium. You know it?"
"Uh-huh."
"Twenty minutes?"
"I'll be there."
"Thanks, Matt. I've got one of those feelings about tonight."
"Twenty minutes," Matt repeated. "You still have Tony Harris's car?"
"Yeah," O'Dowd said, and hung up.

At ten minutes after eleven, Corporal Vito Lanza came out of the Airport Unit, went to the parking lot, unlocked his Cadillac, and entered the sparse stream of traffic leaving the airport in the direction of Philadelphia.

So did a four-year-old Pontiac, with two men in it; a new Ford sedan with one man in it; and a twelve-year-old Volkswagen driven by Detective M. M. Payne, who brought up the tail of the line.

Corporal Lanza took Penrose Avenue, sometimes known as Bridge Avenue, which carried him across the Schuylkill River to the stop light at the intersection of Pattison Avenue. Until this point, he had been driving in the left lane, and so had the Pontiac and the Ford. At the last moment, Corporal Lanza jerked the Cadillac into the right lane, and as the light turned red, he turned right onto Pattison Avenue.

The line of traffic closed up, and left the Pontiac and the Ford with no choice but to wait for the light to turn green again, with the hope that Corporal Lanza intended to get on South Broad Street, and that they could intercept him by following Penrose as it turns into Moyamensing Avenue, which angles to the right, and inter-sects South Broad Street at Oregon Avenue just north of Marconi Plaza.

Detective Payne, in the twelve-year-old Volkswagen, had not been able to get in line behind the Pontiac and the Ford in the left lane, and consequently was already in the right lane when Corporal Lanza abruptly moved into it.

He saw that the Pontiac and the Ford were trapped in the left lane, and thought, as the drivers of the Pontiac and the Ford did, that they could probably catch up with Lanza at South Broad and Oregon. But in the meantime, there was only one possible course of action for him to take, and he took it.

He drove the Bug onto the sidewalk, down the sidewalk to Pattison Avenue, and then down Pattison past the U.S. Naval Hos-pital and Franklin Delano Roosevelt Park to South Broad Street.

As he approached South Broad, as he saw Lanza's Cadillac turn left onto South Broad Street, the traffic light turned orange and then red. Matt ran it, which caused the horns of several automo-biles to sound angrily. But he did not lose Lanza, even though Lanza was driving like hell.

Policemen tend to do that, Matt thought wryly, remembering his encounter with the State Trooper on the way to the Oaks and Pines Lodge, secure in the knowledge they are unlikely to get a ticket from a brother officer.

The traffic lights at first Oregon Avenue and then Snyder Ave-nue were green, permitting the Lanza Cadillac and the Payne Volkswagen to sail through without stopping. They were stopped at Passyunk Avenue and South Broad Street, however, which gave Detective Payne the opportunity to search in vain in his rearview mirror for either a Ford or a Pontiac.

Corporal Lanza turned left at the intersection of South Broad and Spruce Streets, and then wove his way around to the Penn-Services Parking garage, which he entered.

Detective Payne was familiar with the Penn-Services Parking garage, which was around the corner from the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel and not far from his apartment and the Union League Club. It was in the Penn-Services Parking garage that Mr. Anthony "Tony the Zee" DeZego had met his untimely end at the hand of assassin or assassins unknown. Where Matt found Miss Penelope Detweiler lying in a pool of her own blood.

Matt drove around the block until he saw Corporal Lanza come out of the building. Lanza did not look at the Volkswagen as it passed him.

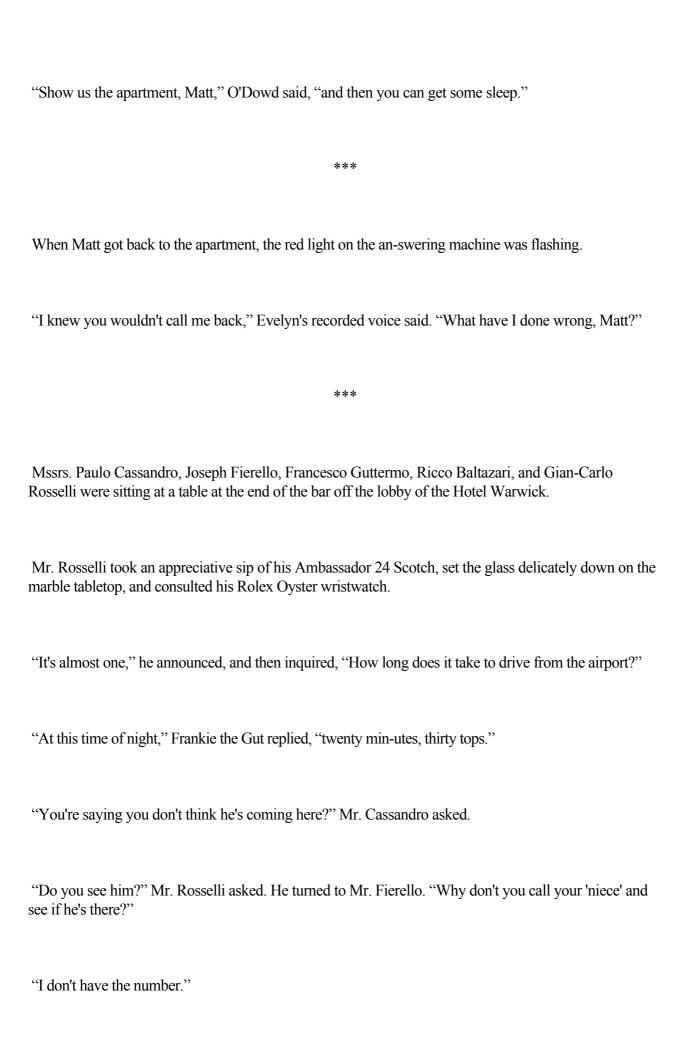
Matt parked the Volkswagen illegally in an alley and ran down the alley and saw Lanza crossing a street. He followed him as dis-creetly as he could, very much afraid that Lanza would sense his presence and turn around.

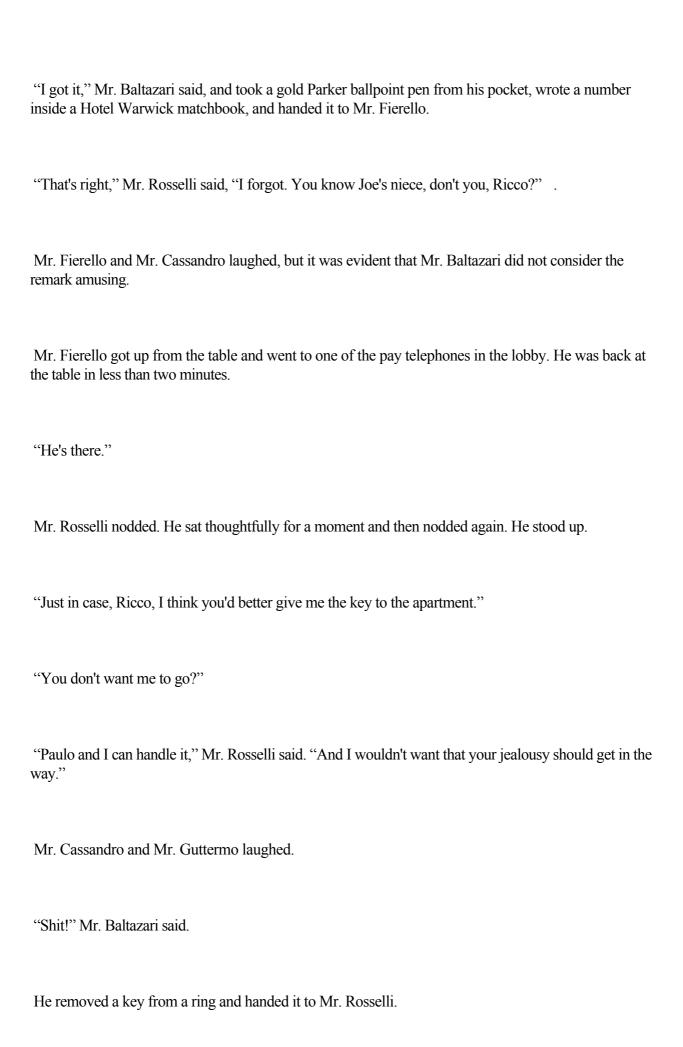
But he didn't. He walked purposefully down a street and entered an apartment building. Matt looked around for a pay telephone but couldn't see one.

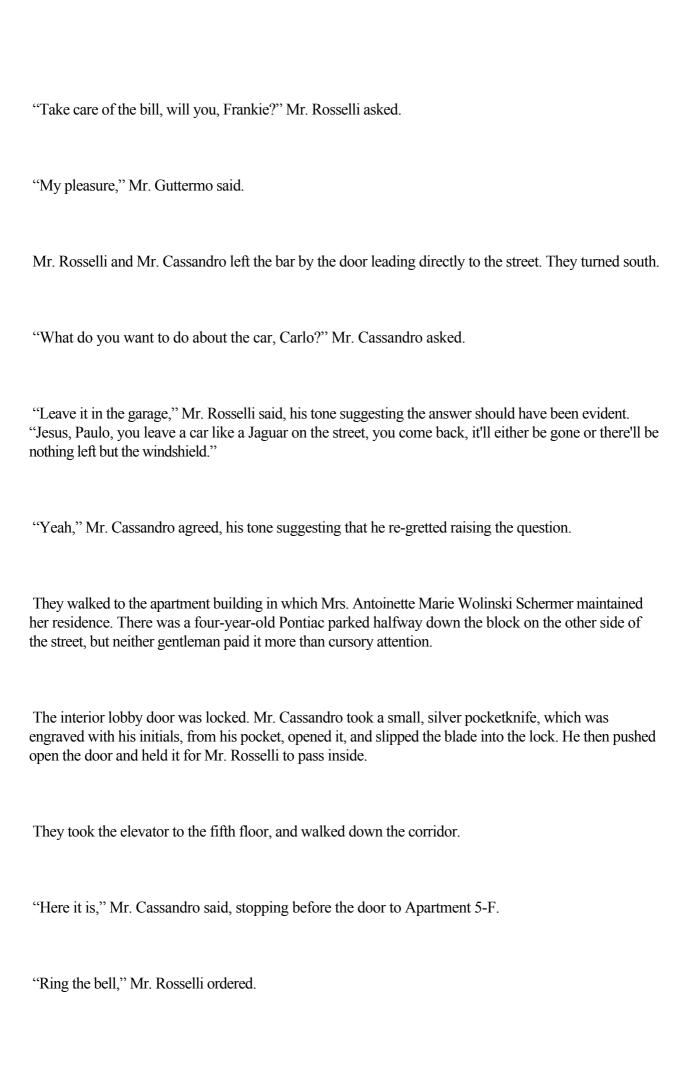
He backtracked to the next block and found a tavern. He went inside, went to the phone booth, and searched his pockets futilely for coins. The bartender was visibly reluctant to make change for someone who didn't even buy a lousy beer, but finally came through.

Matt called Police Radio and asked the dispatcher to pass to Wil-liam Five (Harris's radio call sign) his location.









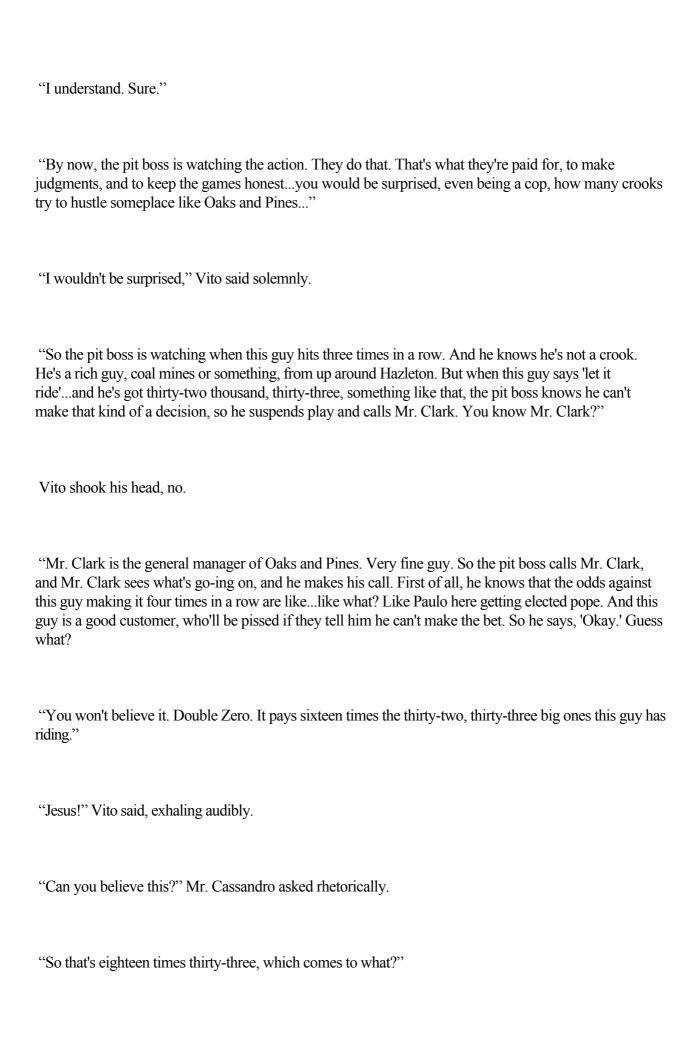
Sixty seconds later, Mrs. Antoinette Marie Wolinski Schermer, wearing a bathrobe, opened the door.
"Hi, ya, Tony," Mr. Rosselli said. "Sorry to disturb you. But we have to talk to Vito. Is he here?"
Mrs. Schermer looked distinctly uncomfortable. She stepped back from the door, and waited for them to come into the apart-ment, then closed the door after them.
"Yo, Vito! It's Gian-Carlo Rosselli. You there?"
"He's in the bedroom," Tony Schermer said. "Give him a minute."
"Take your time, Vito," Mr. Rosselli called cheerfully. "Put your pants on."
Mr. Cassandro chuckled.
"Can I offer you something?" Tony asked.
"You got a little Scotch and water, I wouldn't say no. Paulo?"
"Yeah, me too."
Tony went into the kitchen.
Corporal Lanza came out of the bedroom, which opened onto the living room, barefoot, wearing a T-shirt and his uniform trousers.

"Hey	"," he greeted his callers somewhat uncomfortably. "What's up?"
	ll, when you didn't show up at the Warwick, we figured, what the hell, we'll go see him. I hope we interrupt anything?"
	a. The reason I didn't come over there—I wanted to—was I didn't have any decent clothes to ge into at the airport, and I can't be seen drinking in uniform. They'd have my ass."
"I un	derstand," Mr. Rosselli said. "Anyway, a cop would make the customers nervous."
"Yea	h."
Tony	came into the room carrying two glasses.
"Can	I fix you one, honey?" Tony asked.
"Wh	y not?" Vito replied.
	e were several minutes of somewhat awkward silence while Tony went into the kitchen and made a drink.
aroun	ney, there's no reason for you to lose your beauty sleep," Mr. Rosselli said. "We're just going to sit d and have a couple of shooters. Why don't you go to bed? When we need another, Vito'll make it, Vito?"
"Rig	nt," Vito said.
"Oka	y, then," Tony said. "If you're sure you don't mind, Vito."

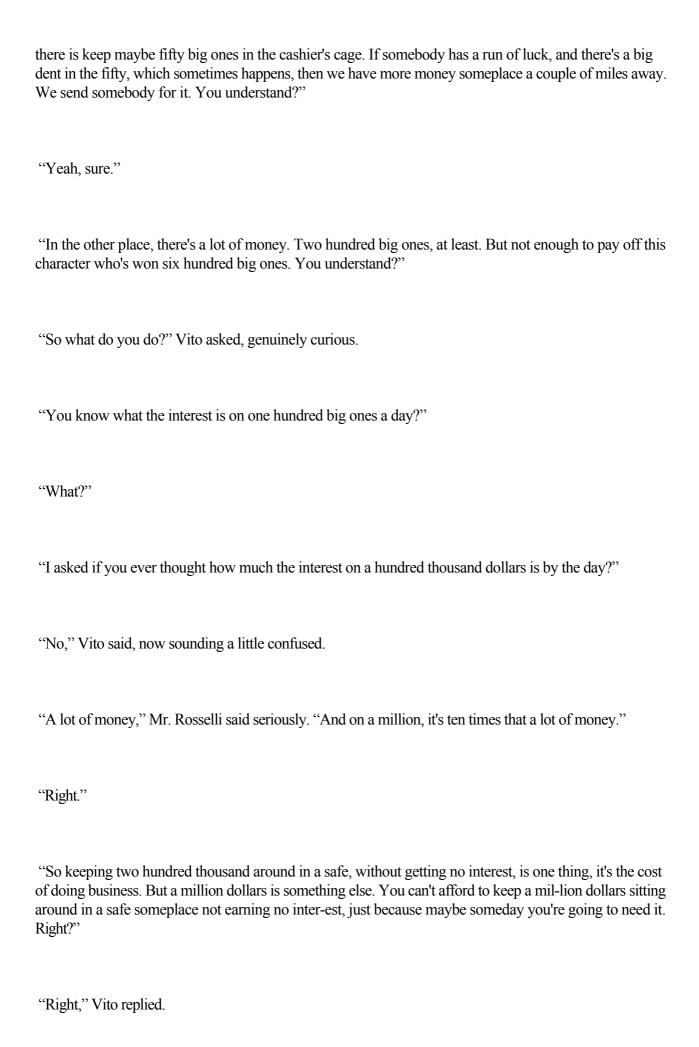














"No. I don't mind. I'm down about twelve big ones."
"What the hell, it happens, but twelve thousand is a lot of money, isn't it? And what are your markers?"
"I think it's four thousand," Vito said, hoping that it looked as if it was unimportant to him, and that he had to think a moment be-fore he could come up with the figure.
"Yeah, right. Four thousand," Mr. Rosselli said. "Pity it's not a hell of a lot more. We could call them, and pay off the million two we owe the guy at the Oaks and Pines."
"Million two?" Vito asked. "I thought you said he won six hun-dred big ones."
Mr. Rosselli looked as if he were surprised for a moment, and then said, "No. It's a million two."
"You said the general manager cut him off," Vito said.
"Mr. Clark. What I said, I guess I stopped before I was finished, was that Mr. Clarkwas going to cut him off, but when he started collecting his chips, he figured he didn't have to. And then the guy changed his mind"
"He bet six hundred big ones?"
"No. Just the bet. Just the thirty-two thousand whatever it was. He took the nearly six hundred thousand off the table, and then said, 'One more time, just to see what happens' and bet the thirty-two thousand."
"Don't tell me he won?"
"He won. Which meant another nearly six hundred thousand we owed him. Altogether, it comes to a million two."



"I heard something about that," Vito said. "Fuck the IRS."
"You said it. So what happens is that if you have to have, say, a couple of million dollars where you can get your hands on it right away, instead of a safe, where it don't earn no interest, you put it in an offshore bank, where it does. Understand?"
"Yeah," Vito said appreciatively.
"So Mr. Clark makes the telephone calls, and says he needs a million two right away to pay a winner, and it's set up. It's really no big deal, it happens all the time, not a million two, but five, six hun-dred big ones. Once a month, sometimes once a week. It goes the other way too, of course. Some high roller drops a bundle, and we put money <i>in</i> the offshore banks."
"Yeah, sure," Vito replied.
"But this time, we run into a little trouble," Mr. Rosselli said.
"No million two in the bank?" Vito asked with a smile.
"That's not the problem. The problem is moving the money. A million two is twelve thousand hundred-dollar bills. That's a <i>lot</i> of green paper. You can't get that much money in an envelope, and drop it in a mailbox."
Vito tried to form a mental image of twelve thousand one-hundred-dollar bills. He couldn't remember whether there were fifty or one hundred bills in one of those packages of money with the paper band around them. But either way, it was a hell of a lot of paper stacks of one-hundred-dollar bills.
"So what we have is people who carry the money for us," Mr. Rosselli said. "I guess, you're a cop, you know all about this?"

"No," Vito said honestly. "I figured it had to be something like that, but this is the first time I really heard how it works."
"It's a problem, finding the right people for that job," Mr. Rosselli said. "First of all, you don't hand a million dollars to just anybody. And then, with IRS and Customs watching—they're not stupid, they know how this is done—you can't use the same guy all the time, you understand?"
"I can see how that would work," Vito said.
"Anyway, the way it usually works, we take the money out of the bank, offshore, and give it to one of our guys, and he goes to Puerto Rico, and gets on the plane to Philly, and somebody meets him and takes the bag."
"Yeah," Vito said.
"The problem we have is that we think that IRS is watching the only guy we have available," Mr. Rosselli said.
"Oh," Vito said.
"So the way those IRS bastards work it is they make an anony-mous telephone call, anonymous my ass, to either Customs or the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, and tell them some-body, they give a description of our guy, is smuggling drugs. So when he's picking up his bag at the carousel, they search his bag. The Narcotics guys don't have to have the same, what do you call it, probable cause, that other cops do. You know what I mean."
"Probable cause," Vito said. "You need it to get a search warrant."
"Well, they don't need that. They can just search your bags, 'looking for drugs.' They don't find no drugs, of course, but they do find all that money."

"And then what happens? You lose the money?"
"No. Nothing like that. It's just a big pain in the ass, is all. They take it, of course. And then you have to go to court and swear you won it gambling in Barbados or someplace. And you have to pay a fine for not declaring you have more than ten thousand in cash on you, and then you have to pay income tax on the money. Gambling income is income, as I guess you know."
"Yeah, right. The bastards."
"But there's no big deal, like if they caught somebody smuggling drugs or something illegal. The worst that can happen is that they keep the money as long as they can, and you have to pay the fine."
Mr. Rosselli took a sip of his drink.
"Vito, you got anything against making a quick ten big ones?" Mr. Rosselli asked.
Vito looked at him, but did not reply.
"The four you owe us on the markers, and six in cash. It'd pay for your plumbing problem."
"I don't understand," Vito said softly, after a moment.
"Now, we don't know for a fact that this is going to happen," Mr. Rosselli said. "But let's just say that the IRS does know our guy who will have the million two in his suitcase. And let's just say they do make their anonymous fucking telephone call to Customs or the Narcotics cops, giving them his description and flight number. Now, we don'tknow that's going to happen, but we're businessmen, and we have to plan for things like that."
"Yeah," Vito said softly.



Vito Lanza looked first at Mr. Rosselli and then at his hands, and then back at Mr. Rosselli.
"How would I know which bag?" he asked, finally.

"Jesus, Carlo," Mr. Cassandro said to Mr. Rosselli as they left the apartment building. "I got to hand it to you. You played him like a fucking violin!"
"That did go pretty well, didn't it?" Mr. Rosselli replied. "And he wants in. That's a lot better than having to show him the photo-graphs and the Xeroxes and all that shit."
"Yeah," Mr. Cassandro agreed.
"It's always better," Mr. Rosselli observed philosophically, "to talk people into doing something. If it's their idea, they don't change their minds."
Neither Mr. Rosselli nor Mr. Cassandro noticed that the four-year-old Pontiac was still parked halfway down the block on the other side of the street.
TWENTY-FOUR
Special Agent C. V. Glynes woke at sevena.m., which, considering how far they had lowered the level in the bottle of Seagram's 7-Crown before they went to bed, was surprising.

He went down the corridor to the bathroom and made as much noise as possible voiding his bladder, flushing twice, and dropping the toilet seat back into the horizontal position as loudly as he could manage.

He heard the creak of bed springs and other sounds of activity in the Springs's bedroom, and went back to his room to finish dress-ing and to wait for the Springs's announcement that breakfast was ready.

Logic told him that he was not likely to find anything at all, much less anything of interest to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms when he got Deputy Dan Springs out into the Pine Barrens. And that meant that this whole business would have been a waste of time, and moreover would cause some minor difficulty with H. Howard Samm, Jr., the special agent in charge of the At-lantic City office of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms

"Sam Junior," as he was known by his not-too-admiring staff, liked to have what he called "his team" present each morning for an eight-thirty conference, aka "the pep talk," and Glynes knew he wasn't going to make that.

On the other hand, finding a chunk of three-eighth-inch steel with a link of chain imbedded in it by the force of high explosives was not an everyday occurrence, and Glynes had a hunch he was onto something. Sometimes his hunches worked, and sometimes they didn't—more often than not they didn't—but they had over the years worked often enough so that he knew that he shouldn't ignore them.

Sam Junior's pontifical pronouncements vis-à-vis scientific crime detection to the contrary, Glynes believed what really did the bad guys in was almost always sweat, experience, luck, and fol-lowing hunches, in just about that order.

In other words, Glynes felt, he just might find something of pro-fessional interest to ATF out in the Pine Barrens. He was either right or wrong, but in either case, the sooner he got out in the Pine Barrens the better.

Overnight, Marion Claude Wheatley had given a good deal of thought to the Lord having directed him to the Divine Lorraine Ho-tel.

There had to be a reason, of course. The Lord was not whimsi-cal. One possibility was that the Lord knew that once the Vice President had been disintegrated the Secret Service and the FBI would learn that Marion had been responsible, and come looking for him. If he was not in his office, or at the house, but rather in the Divine Lorraine Hotel, obviously they would not be able to find him.

If that scenario were true, the Lord would certainly furnish him additional information and assistance once the disintegration had been accomplished.

But after more reflection, Marion came to believe that the Lord was concerned that the Secret Service was already, somehow—they were not stupid, quite the contrary—aware of Marion's existence and intentions. And that they would somehow keep him from carrying out the disintegration.

Before or after the disintegration, the last place, obviously, ex-cept perhaps the cells in the Police Administration Building, that the authorities would think to look for Marion Claude Wheatley would be in the Divine Lorraine Hotel.

At eightA.M. Marion got out the telephone book, and laid it on his desk. He took a paper clip from the desk drawer, and straight-ened one end. He held the clip in his left hand, then closed his eyes and opened the telephone book with his right hand. He stabbed it with the paper clip and then opened his eyes. The paper clip indi-catedEDMONDS, RICHARD 8201HENRY AVENUE, 438-1299.

Marion thought about that for a moment, and then, being careful not to disturb the position of the paper clip, took a notebook and a ballpoint from the desk and began to write:

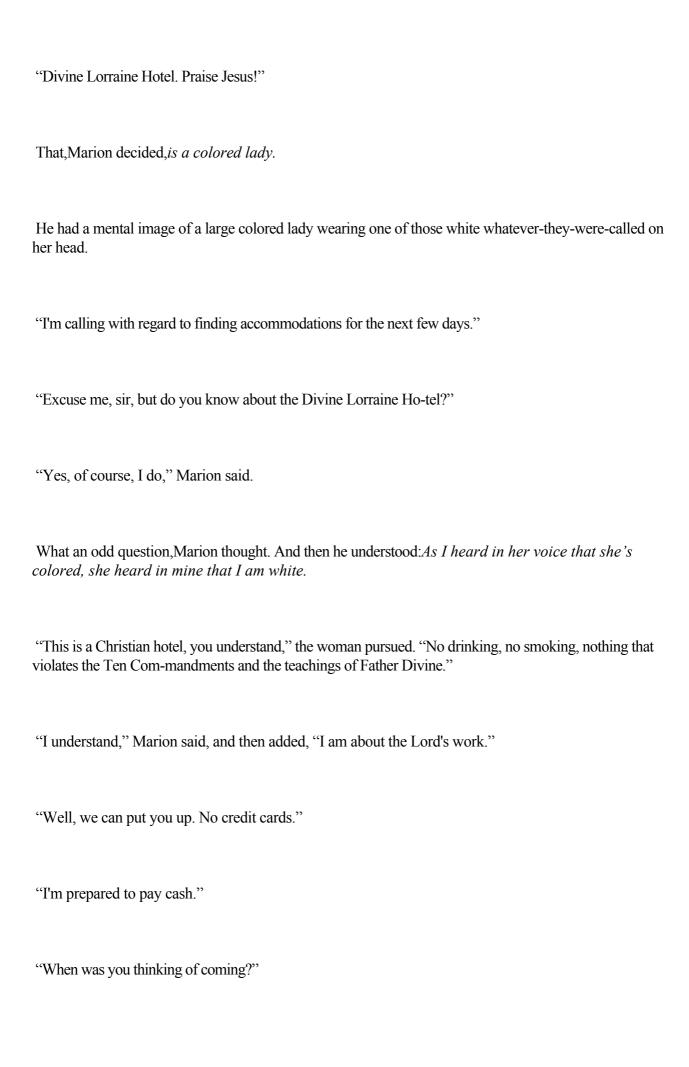
Richard H. Edmonds

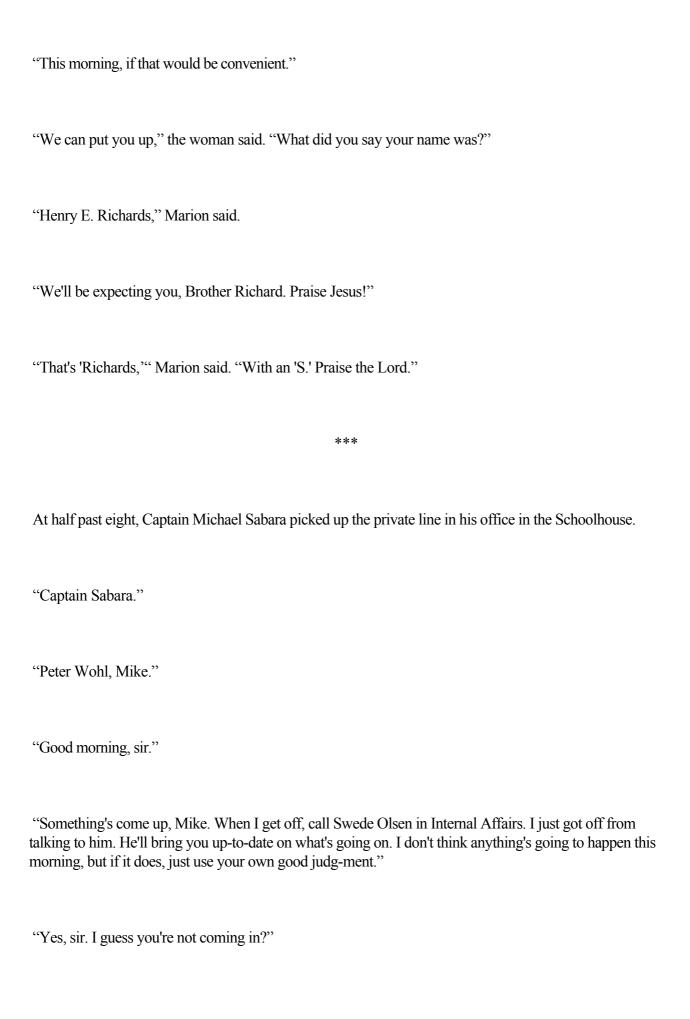
Henry R. Edmonds

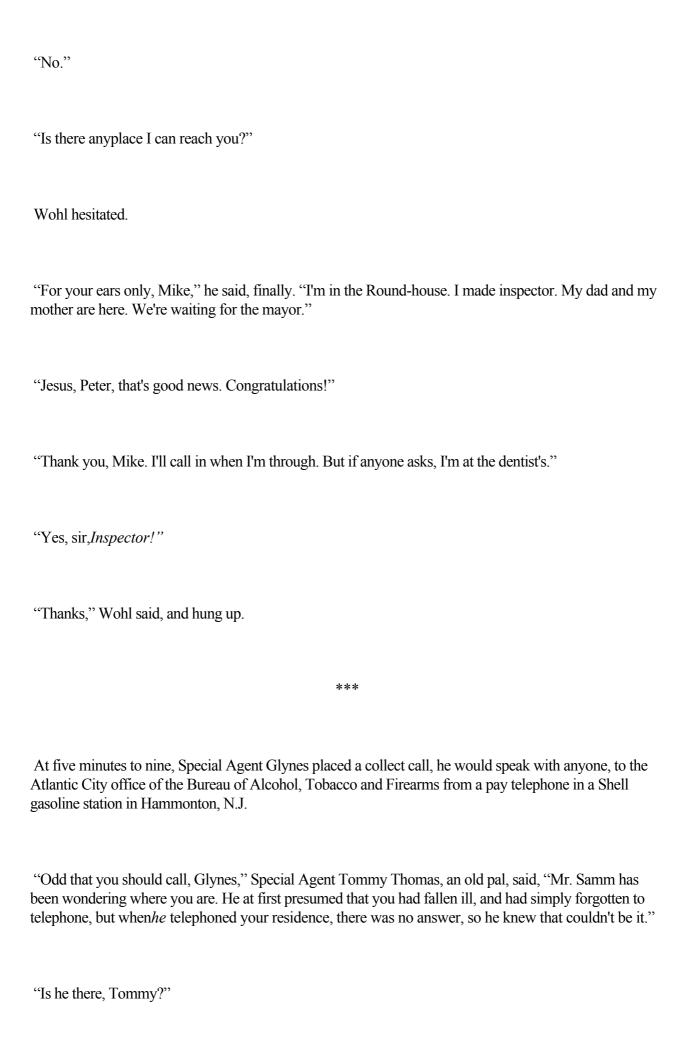
Edmund R. Henry

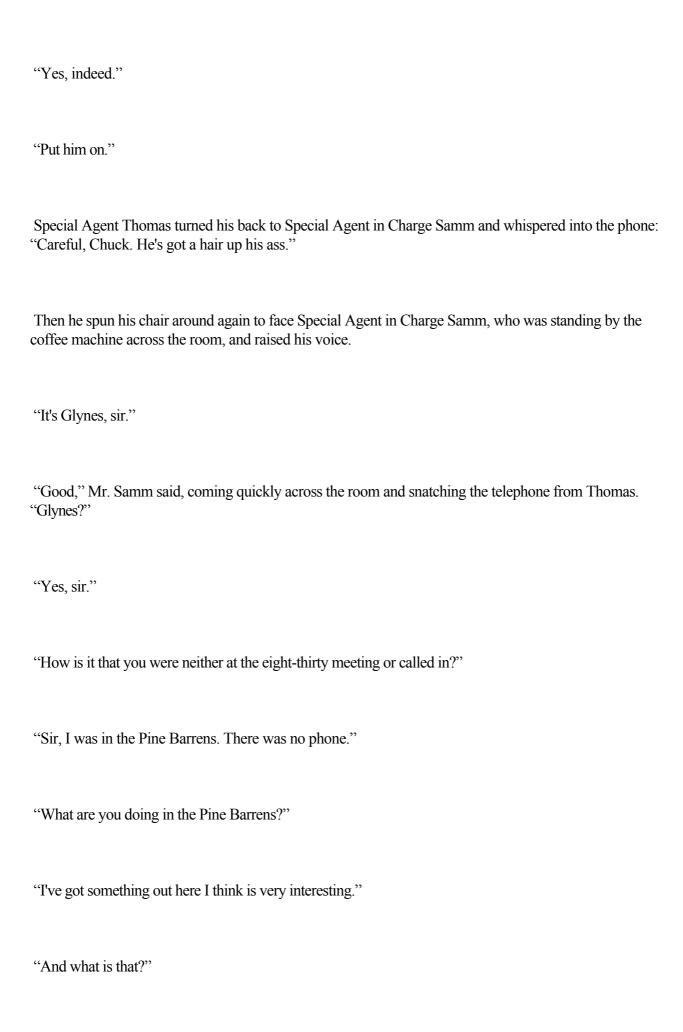
Henry E. Richards

Then he looked elsewhere in the telephone book until he found the number, and then telephoned to the Divine Lorraine Hotel.

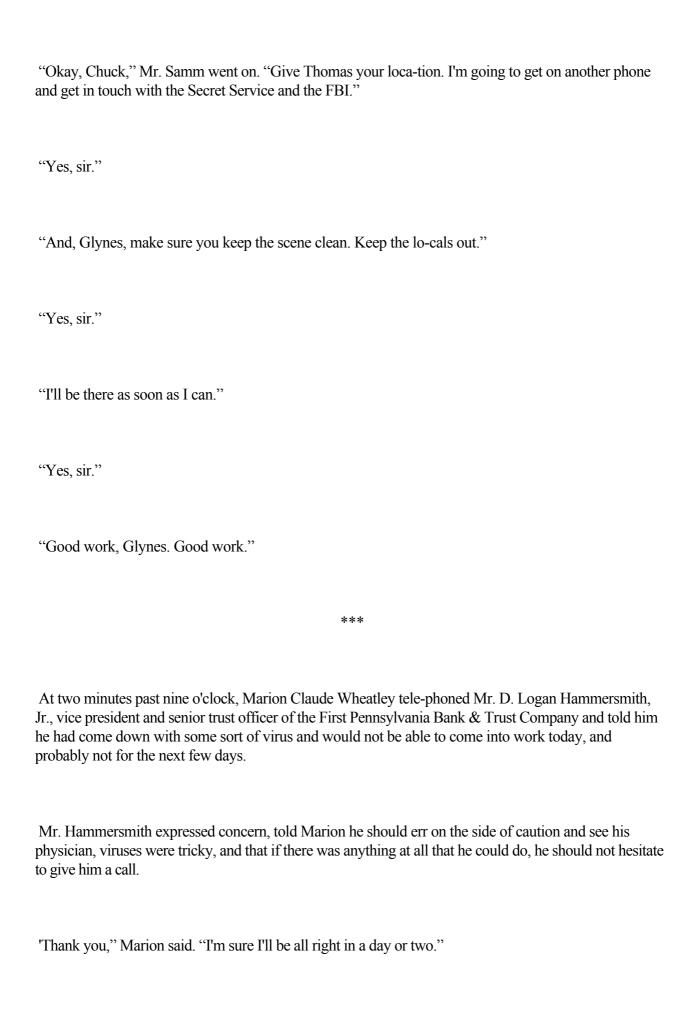








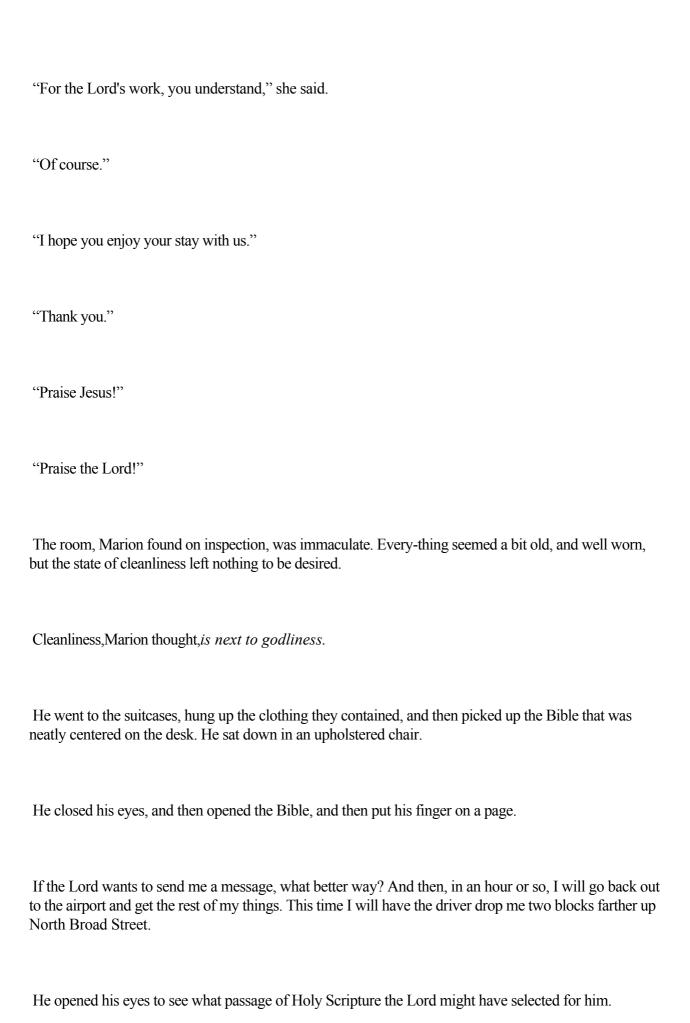


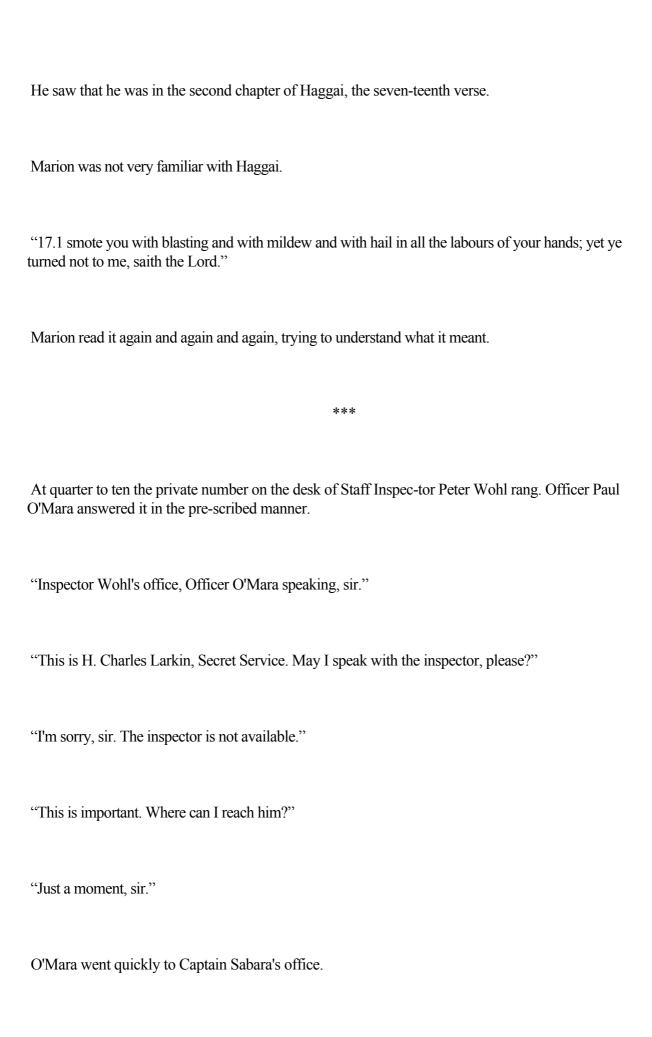


"No sense taking a chance, Marion. Go see your doctor," Mr. Hammersmith said, added "Good-bye," and hung up.
Marion called for a taxi, and while he was waiting for it to come, he took all his luggage from where he had stacked it by the front door and carried it out of the house and down the stairs and stacked it on the second step up from the sidewalk.
When the taxi came, he helped the driver load everything into the trunk and, when it would hold no more, into the back seat. Fi-nally, he returned to the steps and picked up the two attaché cases, one of which held the detonators and the other the shortwave trans-mitter (batteries disconnected, of course, there was no such thing as being too careful around detonators) and took them with him into the rear seat.
"The airport," he ordered. "Eastern Airlines. No hurry. I have plenty of time."
At the airport, he secured the services of a skycap, and told him he needed to put his luggage in a locker. The skycap rolled his cart to a row of lockers. Marion needed two to store what he was going to temporarily leave at the airport. He kept out the attaché case with the detonators, and two suitcases, one of which held what he thought would be enough clothing for a week, and the other half of the devices.
He paid off the skycap, tipping him two dollars, and then carried the two suitcases and the attaché case to a coffee shop where he had a cup of black coffee and two jelly-filled doughnuts. While he ate, he flipped through a copy of the <i>Washington Post</i> that a previous customer had left on the banquette cushion.
He then got up and carried his luggage down to the taxi station, waited in line for a cab, and when it was finally his turn, he told the driver to take him to the Divine Lorraine Hotel.
The driver turned and looked at him in disbelief.
"The Divine Lorraine Hotel?"
Marion smiled.

"I'm going to North Broad and Ridge," he explained. "Some drivers don't know where that is. <i>Everybody</i> knows where the Di-vine Lorraine Hotel is."
"You had me going there for a minute," the driver said. "You didn't look like one of Father Divine's people."
I'll have to remember that, Marion thought. Someone such as myself, who does not fit in with the Divine Lorraine Hotel, would naturally attract curiosity and attention by taking a taxi there.
But no harm done, and a lesson learned.
When they reached Ridge Avenue, Marion told the driver to turn right. A block down Ridge, he told the driver to let him out at the corner.
He walked down Ridge Avenue until the taxi was out of sight, then crossed the street and walked back to North Broad Street and into the Divine Lorraine Hotel.
There was a colored lady wearing sort of a robe and a white cloth, or whatever, behind the desk.
"My name is Richards, Henry E. Richards," Marion said. "I have a reservation."
"Yes, sir, we've been expecting you," the colored lady said. She was not, to judge from her voice, the same one he had spoken with on the telephone.
She gave him a registration card to sign, and he filled it out, and she said she could either give him a single room with a single bed, or a single room with a double bed, or a small suite with a double bed in the bedroom and a sitting room.







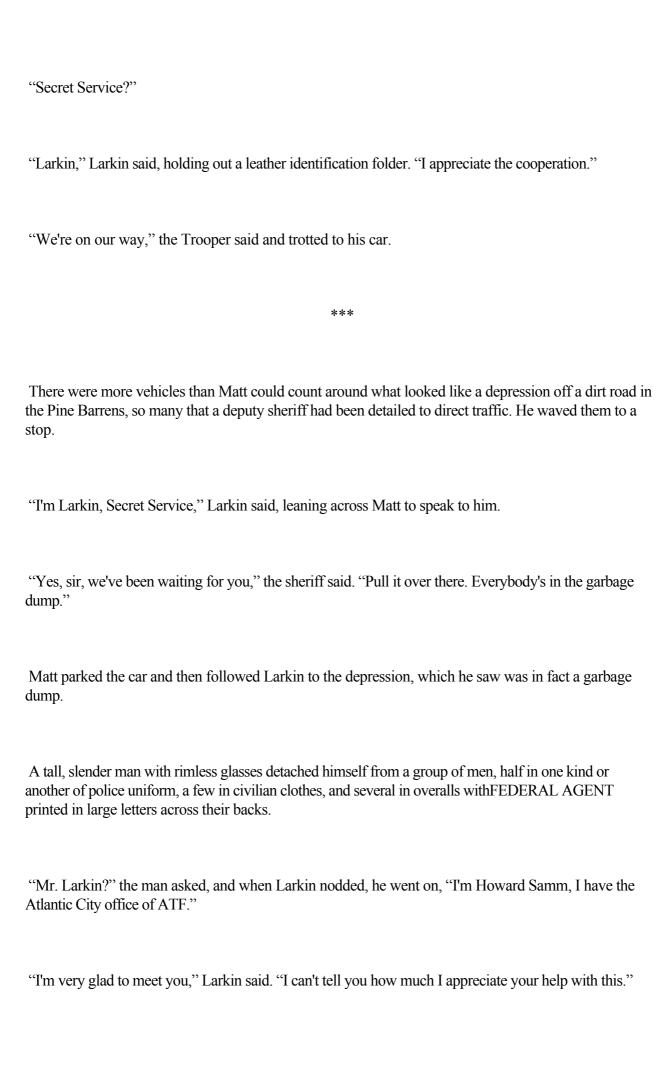


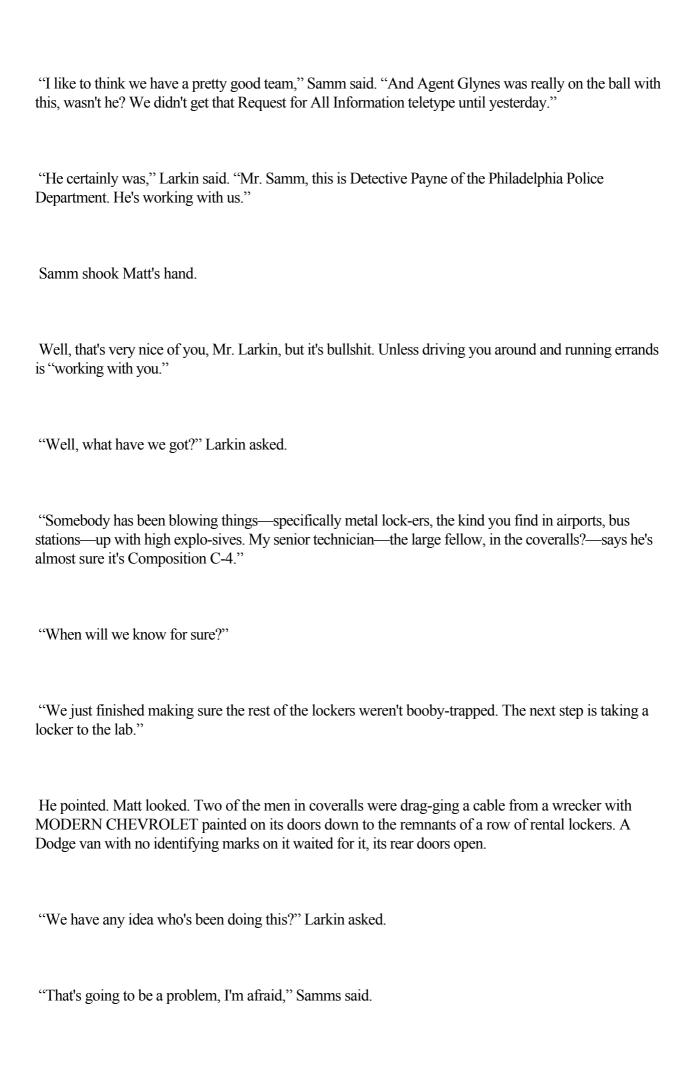


Detective Payne realized that he had no idea where in the Federal Courts Building he was to meet Supervisory Special Agent H. Charles Larkin. For that mat-ter, he didn't know where in the building the Secret Service main-tained its offices, and he suspected that he would not be allowed to drive a car into the building's basement garage without the proper stickers on its windshield.

Fuck it,he decided. I'll park right in front of the place, and worry about fixing the ticket later.

His concerns were not justified. When he pulled to the curb, Larkin was standing there waiting for him. He pulled open the pas-senger side door and got in.
"Good morning, Detective Payne," he said cheerfully. "And how are you this bright and sunny morning?"
Matt opened his mouth to reply, but before a word came out, Larkin went on: "Has this thing got a whistle?"
He means "siren," Detective Payne mentally translated.
He looked down at the row of switches mounted below the dash. He saw Larkin's finger flip one up and the siren began to howl.
"A Jersey State Trooper is waiting for us on the Jersey side of the Ben Franklin Bridge," Larkin said.
Matt looked into his rearview mirror and pulled into the stream of traffic.
No one got out of his way, despite the wailing siren, and, Matt presumed, flashing lights concealed behind the grill.
Larkin read his mind:
"If you think this is bad, try doing it in New York City. They get out of the way of a whistle only when it's mounted on a thirty-ton fire truck."
There was a New Jersey State Trooper car waiting in a toll booth lane on the Jersey side of the bridge, the lights on its bubble gum machine flashing. As Matt pulled up behind it, a State Trooper, his brimmed cap so low on his nose that Matt wondered how he could see, came up.





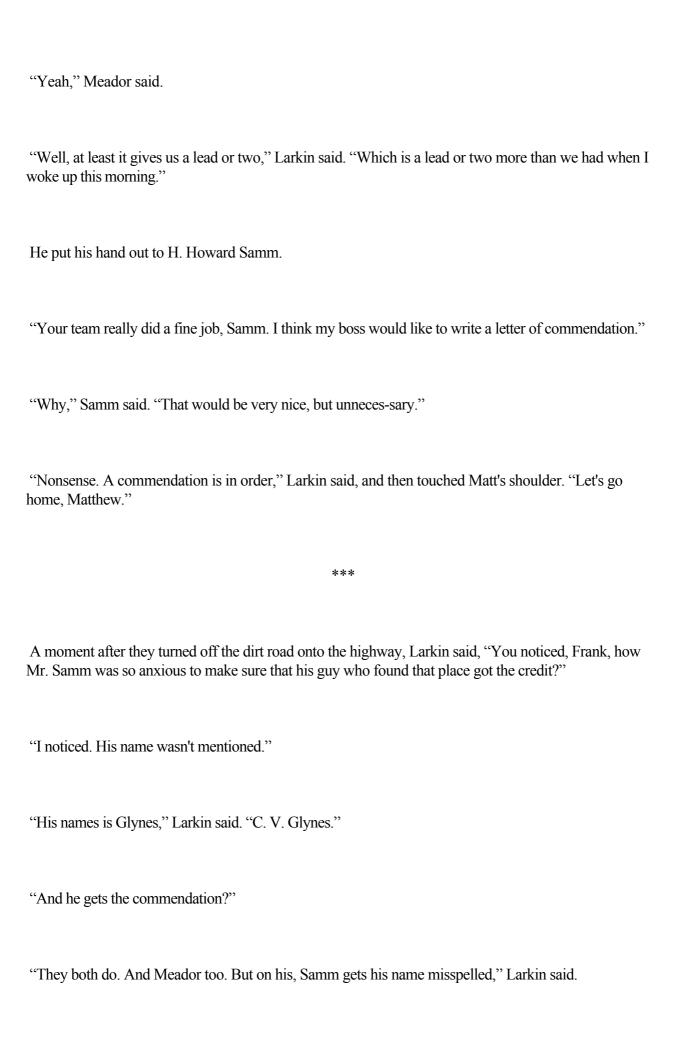
"Not even a wild hair?" Larkin asked. "Who owns this prop-erty? Has anybody talked to him?"	
"We don't know who owns the property. One of the deputies found a cabin a quarter of a mile over there. But there's no signs of life in it."	
"A deserted cabin?"	
"Well, of course, we haven't been able to go inside. So I really don't know."	
"You haven't gone inside?"	
"We don't have a search warrant."	
"We'll go inside," Larkin said. "I'll take the responsibility."	
Samm, visibly, did not like that.	
"Christ," Larkin said. "Don't you think we have reasonable cause, even if there wasn't a threat to the Vice President?"	
"You're right, of course," Samm said. He raised his voice. "Meador!"	
The large man in the coveralls with FEDERAL AGENT on the back looked at him. Samm waved him over.	
"This is Mr. Larkin of the Secret Service," he said. "He wants to have a look inside that house. Will yo check it for booby traps, please?"	ou











Young laughed, and Larkin joined in.
"I don't know why we're laughing," Young said. "Now we <i>know</i> we have a lunatic on our hands who knows what he's doing with high explosives, and presumably has more in his kitchen closet."
TWENTY-FIVE
Inspector Peter F. Wohl, of the Philadelphia Police Department, who had, ten minutes before, been Staff Inspector Wohl, came out of Commissioner Czernick's office in the company of Chief Inspector (retired) and Mrs. Augustus Wohl.
They are happy about this, Peter Wohl thought, but they are in the minority. Czernick, despite the warm smile and the hearty handshake, didn't like it at all. And a lot of other people aren't go-ing to like it either, when they hear about it.
Part of this, he felt, was because before he had become a staff in-spector, he had been the youngest captain in the Department. And there was the matter of the anomaly in the rank structure of the Philadelphia Police Department: Captains are immediately subor-dinate to staff inspectors, who are immediately subordinate to In-spectors. The insignia of the ranks parallels that of the Army and Marine Corps. Captains wear two gold bars, "railroad tracks"; staff inspectors wear gold oak leaves, corresponding to military majors; and inspectors wear, like military lieutenant colonels, silver oak leaves.
There were only sixteen staff inspectors in the Department, all of them (with the sole exception of Wohl, Peter F.) assigned to the Staff Inspection Office of the Internal Affairs Division. There they handled

Being a staff inspector is considered both prestigious and a good, interesting job. Many staff inspectors consider it the apex of their police careers.

"sensitive" investigations, which translated to mean they were a group of really first-rate investigators who went after crim-inals who were also high governmental officials, elected, appointed, or civil service.

Consequently, the promotion path from captain to inspector for most officers usually skips staff inspector. A lieutenant is promoted to captain, and spends the next five or six or even ten years com-manding a District, or in a special unit, and/or working somewhere in administration until finally he ranks high enough on an inspec-tor's examination—given every two years—to be promoted off it.

Peter Wohl, who everyone was willing to admit was one of the better staff inspectors, had been transferred out of Internal Affairs to command of the newly formed Special Operations Division. Of-ficially, this was a decision of Police Commissioner Taddeus Czernick. Anyone who had been on the job more than six months suspected, correctly, that Wohl's transfer had been made at the "suggestion" of Mayor Jerry Carlucci, whose suggestions carried about as much weight with Czernick as a Papal pronouncement, ex cathedra.

Anyone who had been on the job six months also was aware that Wohl had friends in high places. Chief Inspector Augustus Wohl, retired, it was generally conceded, had been Mayor Carlucci's rabbi as the mayor had climbed through the ranks of the Depart-ment. And Peter Wohl was close to Chief Inspectors Lowenstein and Coughlin. It was far easier, and much more satisfying for per-sonal egos, to conclude that Wohl's rapid rise in rank was due to his closeness to the mayor than to give the mayor the benefit of the doubt, and to believe Carlucci had given Wohl Special Operations, and had the expired Inspector's List reopened, because he really believed Wohl was the best man in the Department for the job, and that he deserved the promotion.

When the Wohls came out of the Commissioner's office door into one of the curving corridors of the Roundhouse, and started walking toward the elevators, Captain Richard Olsen of Internal Affairs walked up to them.

"Yes, sir."

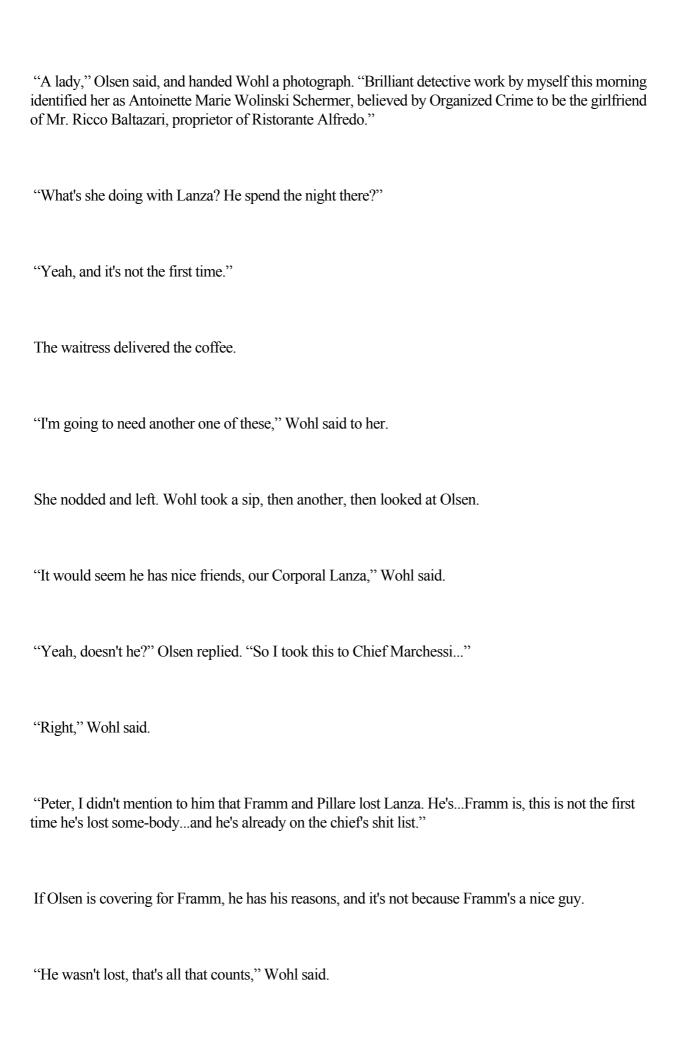
"I guess you know my dad? What about my mother?"

"Chief," Olsen said. "Good to see you again. How do you do, Mrs. Wohl?"



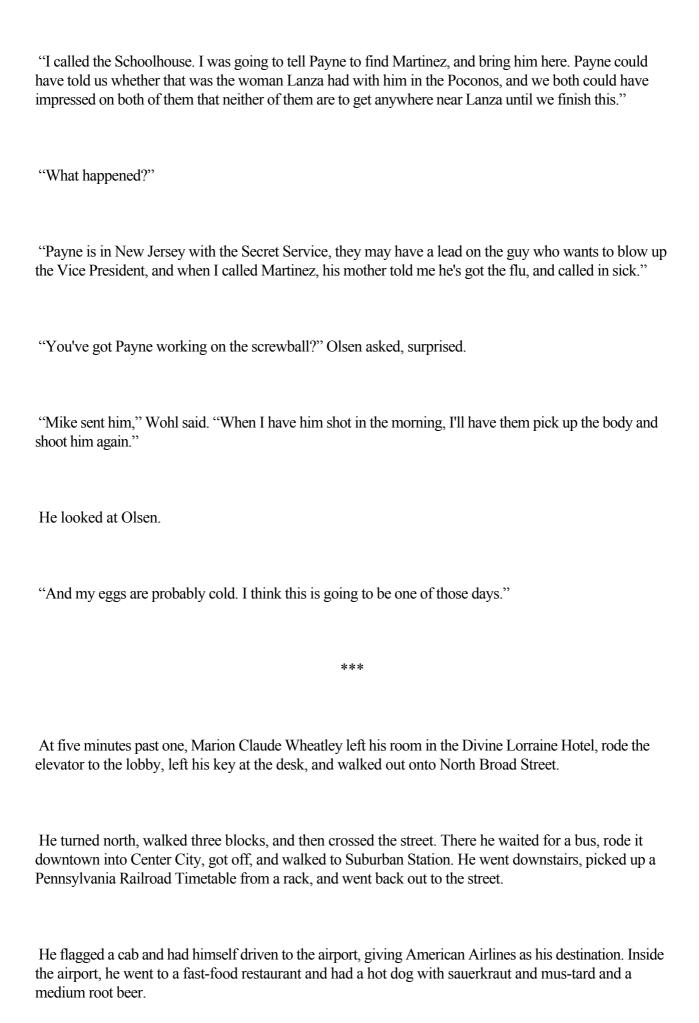








"Good," Wohl said. "Very good."
"And then the chief told me to find you and bring you in on this and see if it's all right with you, or if you had anything, a sugges-tion, or what."
Wohl didn't reply for a moment, then he said, "There's only two loose ends that I can think of. This woman, Schermer, you said?"
Olsen nodded.
"I'd like to know if she was the woman Payne saw with Lanza in the Poconos. And then there's Martinez. I don't want him to go off half-cocked and screw anything up."
"The chief said maybe I should mention Martinez to you."
The waitress appeared with their ham and eggs.
Wohl looked at his plate, and then stood up.
"I think I know how to kill two birds with one stone," he said, and walked to a pay telephone.
Five minutes later he was back.
"That didn't work," he said.
"What didn't work?"



When he was finished, he went to the locker where he had left his things earlier, picked them up, and went to the taxi stand.
He gave the driver an address on Ridge Avenue, and when he got there, carried his luggage into a small office building until he was sure the cab had driven away.
Then he went back to the Divine Lorraine Hotel, sorted every-thing out on the bed, repacked everything, and put it in the closet. The closet had a key, which he thought was fortuitous, and he re-moved it and put it in his pocket.
Then he sat down at the desk and looked at the Bible again, and re-read the passage the Lord had directed him to. He could by now practically recite Haggai 2:17 by heart, but he was no closer to un-derstanding what "17. I smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail in all the labours of your hands; yet ye turned not to me, saith the Lord" meant than he had been when the Lord had first directed his attention to it.
Marion decided the only thing to do was pray.
He knelt by the bed, and with the Bible before him, he prayed for understanding.

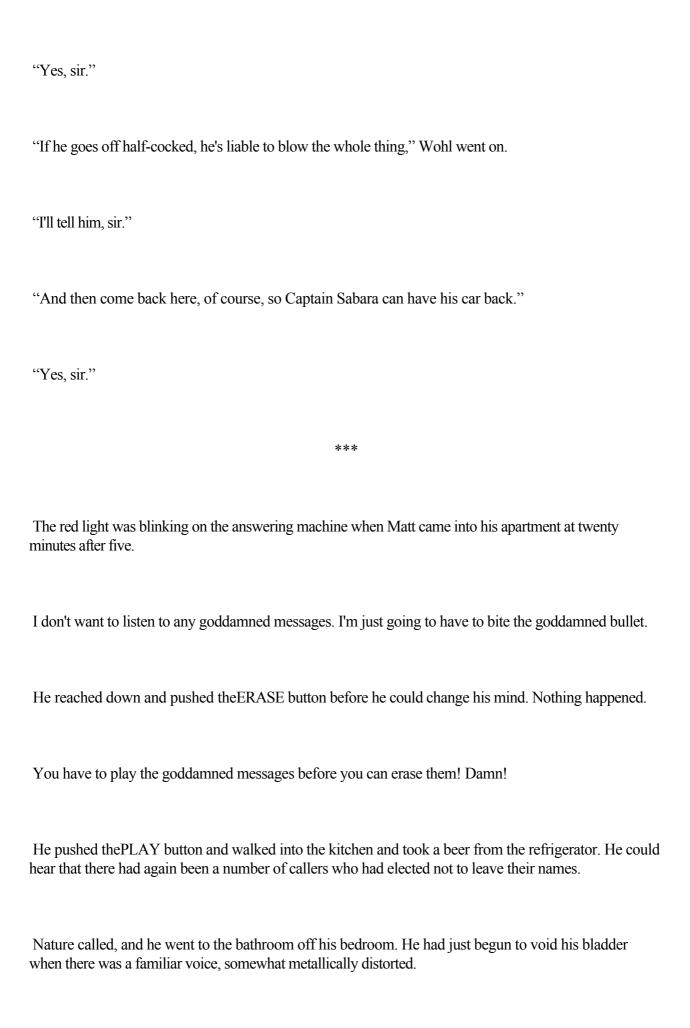
When Inspector Wohl walked into his office, a few minutes after two, it was immediately apparent to Captain Mike Sabara that he had a hair up his ass about something, and Sabara wondered if he had done the wrong thing in sending Matt Payne off with the man from the Secret Service.
"Do you have any word from Payne, Mike?" Wohl asked.
"No, sir."

"When he gets back, let me know," Wohl said, and went into his office and closed the door.
Twenty minutes later, Officer O'Mara put his head in Wohl's door and said that Mr. Larkin was here, and could the inspector see him?
"Ask him to come in," Wohl said, "and if Payne is out there, don't let him get away."
"Yes, sir," Officer O'Mara replied crisply, and then promptly misinterpreted his instructions. Detective Payne, at Officer O'Mara's bidding, followed Supervisory Special Agent Larkin into Inspector Wohl's office.
"Well, Peter," Larkin asked as they shook hands, "how did the promotion ceremony go?"
Does everybody in Philadelphia know I've been promoted? And what the hell is Matt doing in here?
"I did all right until the Commissioner kissed me."
He stopped.
I'll show Payne the photograph and then throw him out.
"Yes, sir?"
"Excuse me, Charley. This won't take a minute," Wohl said, and handed Matt the photograph. "You ever see this woman before?"
Matt looked at it.





"There's a Superior Court judge named Findermann in the slam," Wohl said. "Since I put him there, I have not been too pop-ular with the bench."
"The only people worse than doctors and Congressmen when it comes to protecting their own are judges," Larkin said, and then went on: "If we get a name and an address, and a search warrant, we'll need some explosives people, maybe even a booby-trap ex-pert."
"I thought of that," Wohl said. "We call it 'Ordnance Disposal.' It's in the Special Patrol Bureau. When I called over there, they told me, 'You tell us where, and we'll be there in ten minutes."
"Good. I appreciate your cooperation, Peter."
"You keep saying that."
"I keep saying it because I mean it. We couldn't handle this by ourselves."
"I have the simple solution to this problem," Wohl said. "Tell the Vice President to stay the hell home."
"No way," Larkin chuckled. "What I think I should do now is go back to the office and see if I can lean on the Defense Department to come up with some names. Can Matt take me?"
"Sure. On your way back, go see Hay-zus Martinez. Tell him" He stopped, and then went on. "Hell, when all else fails, tell the truth. Tell Hay-zus that other people are watching Lanza. If he goes back to work, he is to stay away from Lanza. If he sees him doing something, he is to telephone either Captain Olsen or me. He's not to do anything about it."
"If he goes back to work?" Matt asked.
"His mother said he has the flu. Make sure he understands the message, Matt."



Penny! Jesus, I can't understand a word she's saying! I wonder what the hell she wanted?

By the time he had zipped up his fly and returned to the answer-ing machine, all the recorded messages, including the hang-ups, had played.

Do I want to pushREWIND SO that I can hear what Precious Penny wants? No, I do notwant to hear what Precious Penny wants.

He pushed the ERASE button, and this time it worked.

Banishing forever into the infinite mystery of rearranged micro-scopic metallic particles whatever Penny wanted to tell me. Why did I do that?

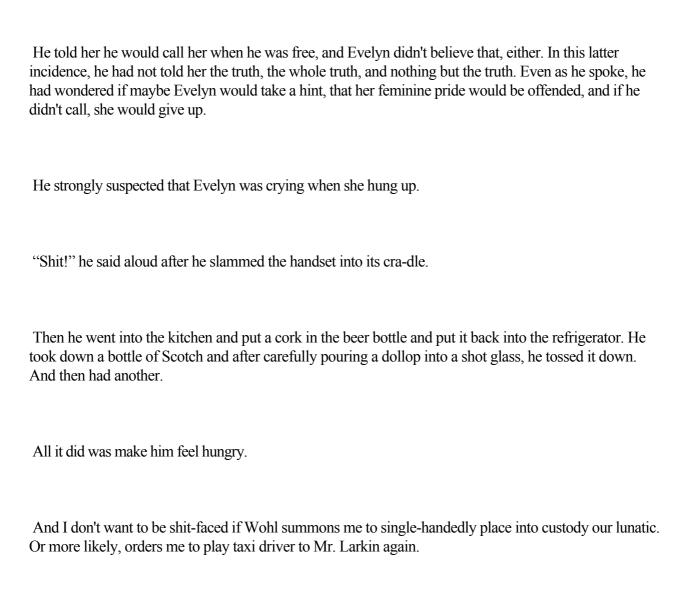
He went into the kitchen, picked up the beer bottle, returned to the telephone, and dialed Evelyn's number.

It was a brief, but enormously painful conversation, punctuated by long, painful silences.

He told Evelyn the truth. He could not see her tonight because he was on orders to keep himself available. That was the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Peter Wohl had even told him to take an unmarked car home with him in case he would need a car with radios and a siren.

Evelyn, her voice made it quite plain, did not believe a word he was saying. Nor did Evelyn believe him when he said he really didn't know about tomorrow, but that he thought the same thing would be true then. That was also the unvarnished truth. Until they found the lunatic who wanted to disintegrate the Vice President, everyone would be either working or keeping themselves available around the clock for a summons.

But he couldn't tell Evelyn that, of course. Not just on general principles, but because Wohl had made it an order. They didn't want the lunatic knowing they were looking for him, which he would if it got into the newspapers or on television.



What I will do is grab a shower, change clothes, call in and say I'm going to supper, and then go either to the Rittenhouse Club or the Ribs Place and have my supper, not washing anything down with wine or anything else.

He was vaguely aware, as he showered, of a noise that could very possibly be the sound of his doorbell, but he wasn't sure, and he wasn't concerned. It could not be Evelyn. There was no way she could have made it into Center City from Upper Darby that quickly. And if Wohl or anybody else at Special Operations wanted him, they would have phoned. It could be Charley McFadden, or Jack Matthews, but in that happenstance, fuck 'em, let 'em wait.

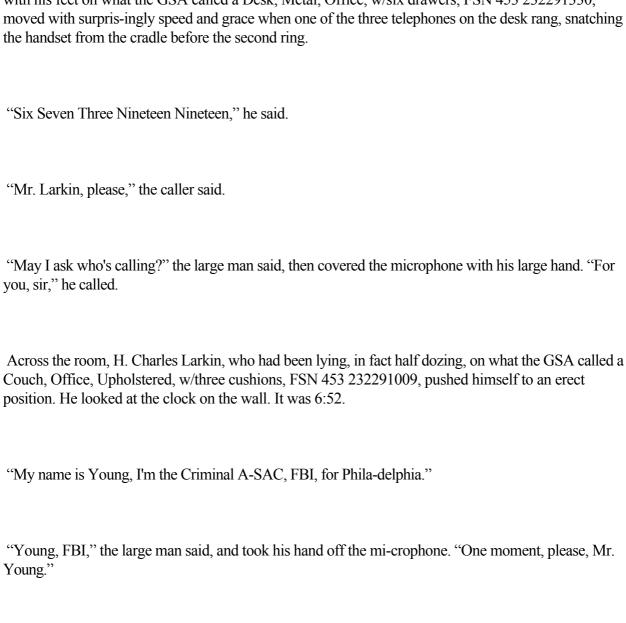
When he turned the shower off, there was no longer a question whether the doorbell was being run. Whoever was pushing it was playing "Shave and a Haircut, Two Bits" on it.







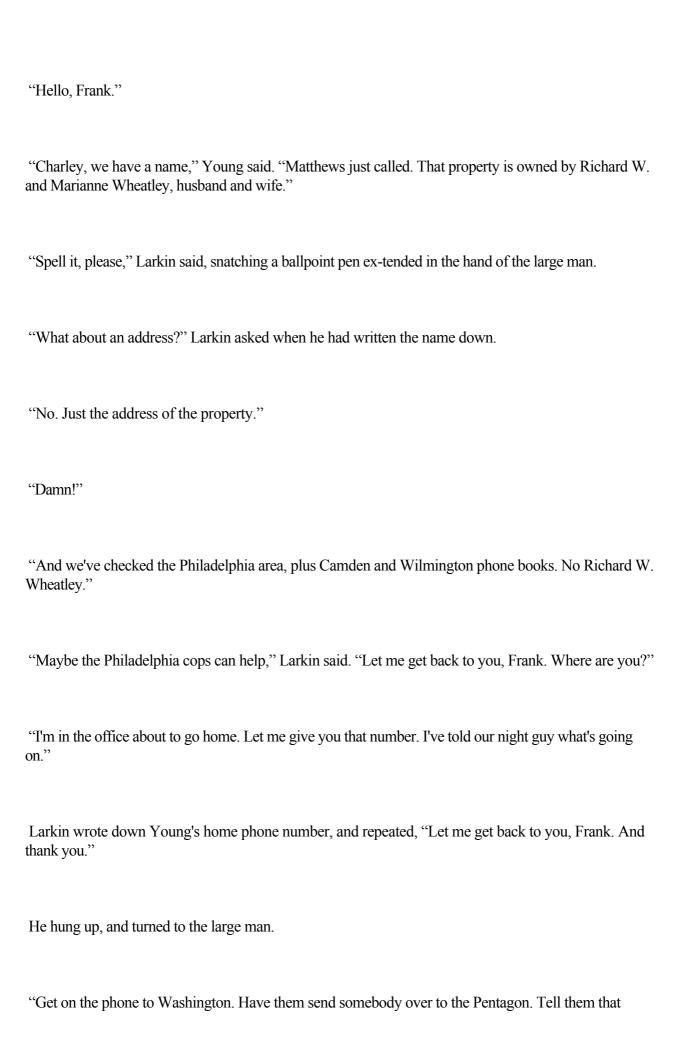
A very large man of about thirty-five who had been sitting with what the General Services Administration
called a Chair, Metal, Executive, w/arms FSN 453 232234900 tilted as far back as it would go, and
with his feet on what the GSA called a Desk, Metal, Office, w/six drawers, FSN 453 232291330,
moved with surpris-ingly speed and grace when one of the three telephones on the desk rang, snatching
the handset from the cradle before the second ring.



Larkin walked to the desk, grunting, his hand on the small of his back.

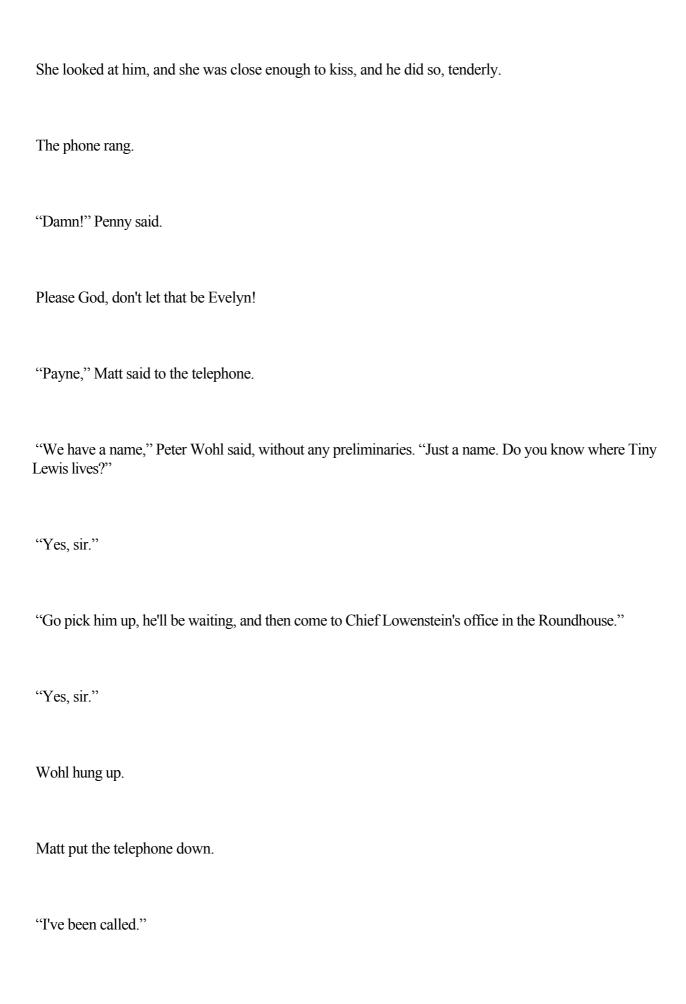
I'm getting old,he thought. Too old for that goddamned couch.

He took the phone from the large man.













"Damn!" she said aloud. "What do I do about that?"	
She went to the solenoid button and pushed it and looked down the stairwell.	
A woman came in, and looked up at her in surprise.	
"Who are you?" Evelyn asked.	
"To judge by the look on your face, I'm the other woman," Penny said. "Come on up, and we about the lying sonofabitch."	ll talk
TWENTY-SIX	
The commissioner's conference room in the Police Administration Building was jammed with p Every seat at the long table was filled, chairs had been dragged in from other offices, and people standing up and leaning against the wall. There were far too many people to fit in Lowenstein's which was why they were in the commissioner's conference room.	le were
"You run this, Peter," Chief Inspector Matt Lowenstein declared from his chair at the head of to commissioner's conference table. "Denny Coughlin and I are here only to see how we can help Charley, and Frank."	
Chief Inspector Dennis V. Coughlin, Supervisory Special Agent H. Charles Larkin of the Secretice, and Assistant Special Agent in Charge (Criminal Affairs) Frank F. Young of the FBI vested around him.	

And if I fuck up, right, you're off the hook? "Wohl was running the show."

Peter Wohl immediately regretted the thought: While that might apply to some, most, maybe, of the other chief inspectors, it was not fair to apply it to either Lowenstein or Coughlin.

Worse, almost certainly Lowenstein had taken the seat at the head of the table to establish his own authority, and then delegat-ing it to me. Lowenstein is one of the good guys. And I know that.

"Yes, sir. Thank you," Wohl said. He looked around the table. With the exception of Captain Jack Duffy, the special assistant to the commissioner for inter-agency liaison, only Captain Dave Pekach and Lieutenant Harry Wisser of Highway Patrol were in uniform.

"Indulge me for a minute, please," Wohl began. "I really don't know who knows what, so let me recap it. An ATF agent from At-lantic City, in response to a 'furnish any information' teletype from the Secret Service, came up with evidence of high-explosive de-struction of a bunch of rental lockers. We're still waiting for the lab report, but the ATF explosives expert says he's pretty sure the ex-plosive used was Composition C-4, and the detonators were also military. He also said that whoever rigged the charges knows what he's doing.

"Mr. Larkin went down there. There is a house, a cabin, on the property. Mr. Larkin feels that the unusual neatness, cleanliness, of the cabin fits in with the psychological profile the psychiatrists have given us of this guy.

"The FBI has come up with the names of the people who own the property. Richard W. and Marianne Wheatley. No address. I don't know how many Wheatleys there are in Philadelphia..."

"Ninety-six, Inspector," Detective Payne interrupted. Wohl looked at him coldly. He saw that he had a telephone book open on the table before him.

"None of them," Matt went on, "either Richard W. or Marianne. Not even an R. W."

"I was about to say a hell of a lot of them," Wohl said, adding with not quite gentle sarcasm, "Thank you, Payne. If I may con-tinue?"





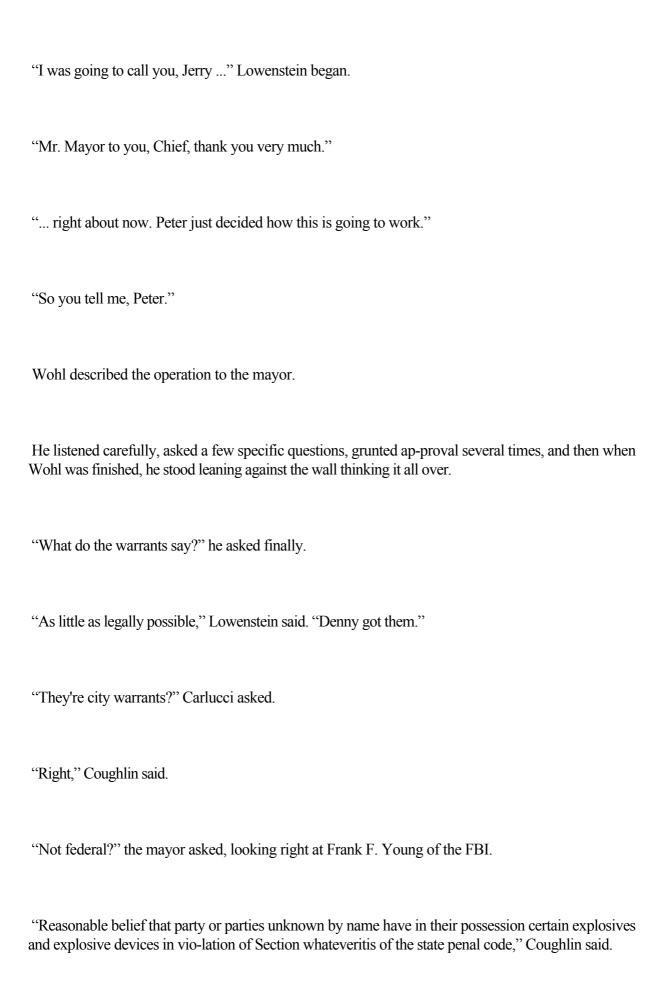
"We've got warrants," Chief Coughlin said. "We just take the door, is that what you're saying?"
"It'd take us up to an hour to set it up," Wohl said. "Ordnance Disposal would be involved. And the district, of course another field Detective Division. By then, I hope, he would relax. And tak-ing the doors would be, I think, the way to do it."
Coughlin grunted his agreement.
"And in the meantime, sit on him?" Lowenstein said.
"Different detectives," Wohl said, "in case he leaves."
"And what if nobody's home?" Mike Sabara asked.
"Then we sit on that address," Wohl said. "An unmarked Spe-cial Operations car, until we run out of them, and then, if nothing else, a district RPC." He looked at Lowenstein and Coughlin, and then around the table. "I'm open to suggestion."
"I suggest," Lowenstein said, breaking the silence, "that Detec-tive Payne slide that phone book down the table to me, and some-body get me a pen, and we'll find out where these ninety-six Wheatleys all live."
The telephone book, still open, was passed down the table to Chief Lowenstein. Sergeant Tom Mahon Chief Coughlin's driver, leaned over him and handed Chief Lowenstein two ballpoint pens.
As if they had rehearsed what they were doing, Chief Lowenstein read aloud a listing from the telephon directory, the whole thing, name, address, and telephone number, then said, "North Central" or "West" or another name of one of the seven De-tective Divisions.

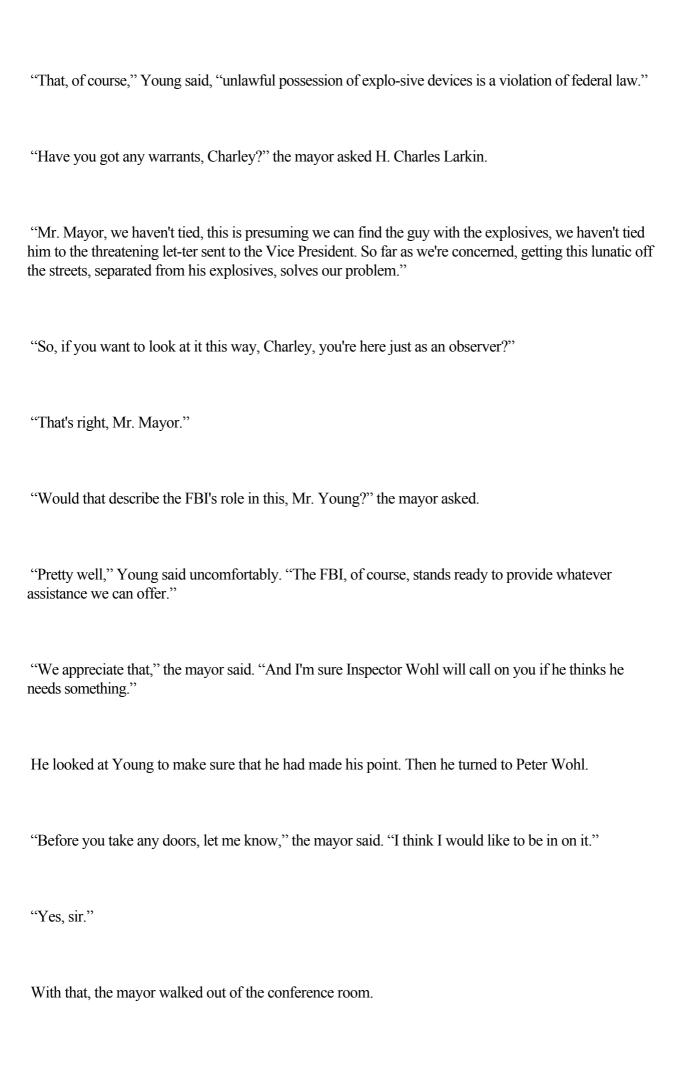
Most of the time, Coughlin would either grunt his acceptance of the location, or repeat it in agreement,





"What's all this going to cost in overtime?" he asked, by way of greeting. "I suppose it's too much to expect that anybody would think of telling me, or for that matter the commissioner, what the hell is going on?"





I wonder, Peter Wohl thought, if the mayor just happened to hear about this meeting via somebody on the night shift here, or whether Lowenstein or Coughlin called him up, and told him what was go-ing on, sure that he would be anxious to keep the arrest, if there was one, from being taken over by the FBI or the Secret Service. Now that I think about it, Charley Larkin didn't seem very surprised when the mayor honored us with his presence.

The food in the dining room of the Lorraine Hotel was simple, but quite tasty, and, Marion thought, very reasonably priced. There was no coffee or tea. Apparently, Marion reasoned, Father Divine had interpreted Holy Scriptures to mean that coffee was somehow sinful. He wondered how Father Divine had felt about what had been reported by Saint Timothy vis-à-vis Jesus Christ's attitude toward fermented grapes. There was no wine list, either, in the Di-vine Lorraine Dining Room.

It was not going to be a problem, Marion thought. He habitually took a little walk after dinner to settle his stomach. He would take one now, and was certain to come across someplace where he could get a cup of coffee.

On his way through the lobby to North Broad Street, he saw that the bulletin board in the lobby announced, "Sacred Harp Singing, Main Ball Room, 7:30. All Welcome!"

He wondered what in the world that meant.

When he returned from his walk, which included two cups of coffee and a very nice piece of lemon meringue pie at a Bigger Burger, the lobby was full of pleasant voices, singing, a cappella, "We Will Gather at the River."

He followed the sound of the voices, passing and noticing for the first time an oil portrait of a white middle-aged woman, wearing the whateveritwas these people wore on their heads. He wondered if that was Mrs. Father Divine, and then if she was called "Mother Divine."

He found the source Of voices. It was in the main ballroom. A neatly dressed black man put out his hand, said, "Welcome, brother. Make yourself at home. Praise the Lord."

"Praise the Lord," Marion replied, and went into the ballroom and took a mimeographed program, which included the words to the hymns and spirituals on the program, from a folding chair.

He was a little uncomfortable at first but the music was lovely, and the sincerity and enthusiasm of the singers rather touching, and after a few minutes, he was quite caught up in the whole thing.

He had always liked "Rock of Ages," and other what he thought of as traditional hymns, and he had never before had the opportu-nity to not only hear Negro spirituals, but to join in with the sing-ers.

Afterward, when he went to his room, he wondered if perhaps somehow the last two hours, which certainly could be interpreted as worship, would now give him an insight into Haggai 2:17.

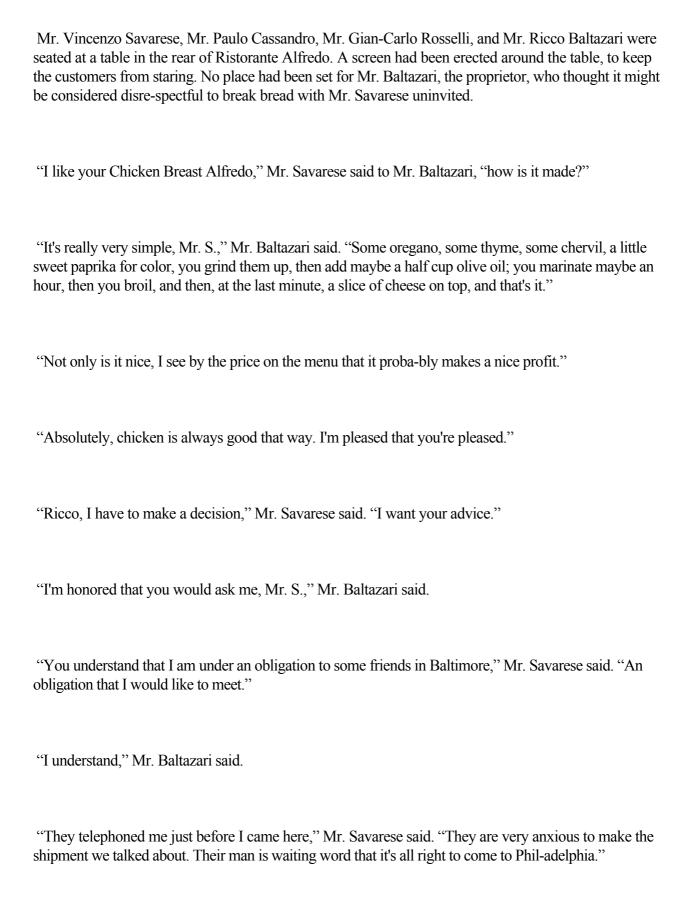
He read it again, standing up at the desk where he had left the Bi-ble open to it: "17.1 smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail in all the labours of your hands; yet ye turned not to me, saith the Lord."

He thought perhaps he had an insight. Viewed from one perspec-tive, it was possible, even likely, that it was what the Lord might be saying to the Vice President, rather than directed to him.

That made a certain sense vis-à-vis "blasting," but while one might be smitten with "blasting" and "hail," being smitten with mildew made no sense. Mildew was what grew in the grouting around the tiles of a bathroom.

He undressed and took a shower, and then took the Bible to bed with him. But even after praying for insight, Haggai 2:17 made no sense to him at all.

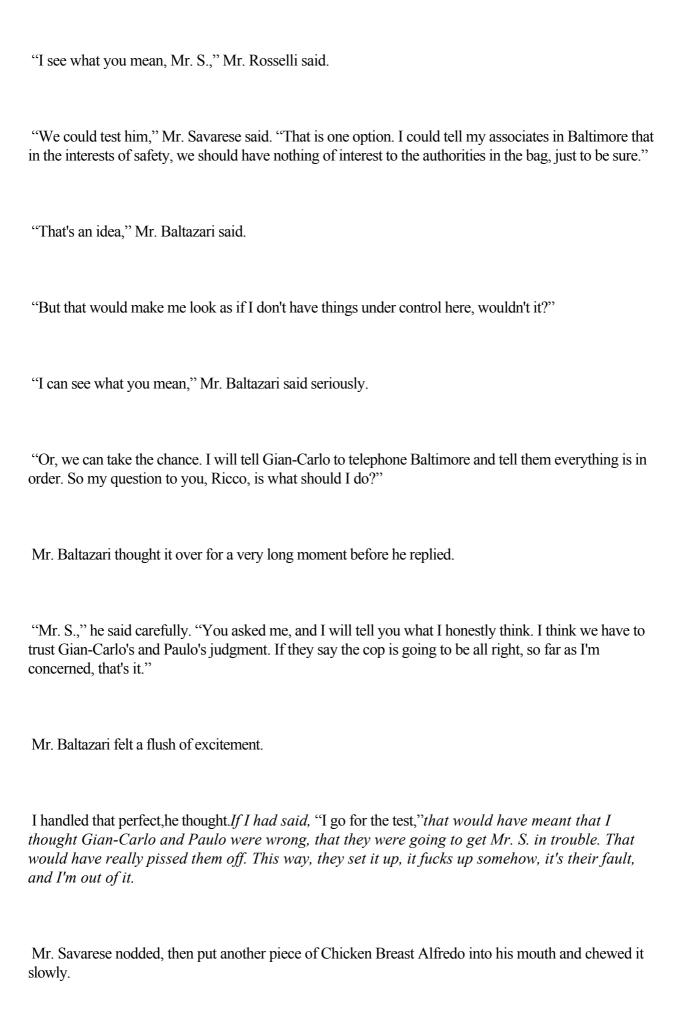
Marion Claude Wheatley dropped off to sleep, propped up against the headboard, with the Holy Bible open on his lap.



Mr. Baltazari nodded his understanding.

"Gian-Carlo and Paulo tell me that they think everything is ar-ranged with our new friend at the airport," Mr. Savarese said. "And on one hand, I trust their judgment. But on the other hand, I am a cautious man. I am always concerned when things seem to be go-ing too easily. You understand?"
"Yes, Mr. Savarese, I understand."
"There are two things that concern me here," Mr. Savarese said. "One may be as important as the other. We think we have this po-liceman's cooperation. <i>Think</i> . It would be very embarrassing for me if he changed his mind at the last minute. And costly. If the shipment was lost, I would, as a man of honor, have to make good the loss. You understand?"
"I understand, Mr. S."
"The second thing that concerns me is the possibility that if he is not what Paulo tells me he believes he is, that, in other words, if he went either to the Narcotics Division or to the Federal Narcotics people You understand?"
"Mr. S.," Mr. Rosselli said very carefully, "that word never even came up. Narcotics."
"Mr. S.," Mr. Cassandro added, "he thinks the shipment is money."
"So you have told me," Mr. Savarese said. "My question is, would he be tempted by that much money? We certainly could not complain to the authorities that we had lost a large sum of money, could we?"
"He's not that smart Mr. S." Mr. Rosselli said

"Yes. He is not smart. That worries me. He is a fool, a fool with-out money. Fools without money do foolish, desperate things."



"I thank you for your honest opinion," he said, finally. "So this is what we're going to do. I'm going to have Gian-Carlo call the people in Baltimore and tell them to go ahead." "There's not going to be a problem with the cop, Mr. S.," Mr. Rosselli said. "He needs to get out from under them markers, and he needs the cash so bad, he's pissing his pants." "Give Ricco the information," Mr. Savarese said. Mr. Rosselli handed Mr. Baltazari a sheet of notepaper. On it was written, "Eastern 4302. 9:45." "That's from San Juan," Mr. Savarese explained. "Tomorrow night, it arrives. The shipment will be in a blue American Tourister plastic suitcase. On both sides of the suitcase will be two strips of adhesive tape with shine on it." Mr. Baltazari then asked the question foremost in his mind. He held up the piece of paper with "Eastern 4302" on it. "Mr. S., what am I supposed to do with this?" "I value your judgment, Ricco," Mr. Savarese said. "I want you to give that to the cop. Tell him about the tape with the shine on the blue American Tourister suitcase. Look at his eyes. Make up your mind, is he reliable or not? If it smells like bad fish, then we do the test. It'll be a little embarrassing for me to have to call Baltimore, but there'll be plenty of time if you see the cop when he gets off duty, and better a little embarrassment than taking a loss like that, or worse. You agree?" "Right, Mr. S.," Mr. Baltazari said. His stomach suddenly hurt.

"You go see him after midnight, at that woman's apartment, and then you call Gian-Carlo. If you make the judgment that every-thing will be all right, then that's it. If he sees something wrong, Gian-Carlo, then you call me at the house, understand?"

"Right, Mr. S.," Mr. Rosselli said.

"I feel better," Mr. Savarese said. "Now that we've talked this over. I think I might even have a little cognac. You got a nice co-gnac, Ricco?"

"Absolutely, Mr. S.," Mr. Baltazari said, and got up from the ta-ble.

In the kitchen, he put a teaspoon of baking soda in half a glass of water, dissolved it, and drank it down.

Then he went and got a fresh bottle of Remy Martin VSOP, which he knew Mr. Savarese preferred, and carried it back to the table.

At about the same time that his reliability was being discussed in Ristorante Alfredo, Corporal Vito Lanza told Officer Jerzy Masnik, his trainee, that he was going to take a break, get some coffee and a doughnut, get the hell out of the office for a few min-utes, he was getting a headache.

He made his way to the Eastern Airlines area of the airport, and used his passkey to open a door markedCLOSED TO THE PUBLIC —DONOT ENTER.

It opened on a flight of stairs, which took him down to the level of the ramp. He walked to the office from which the Eastern baggage handling operation was directed, and asked the man in charge if it would be all right if he borrowed one of the baggage train trac-tors for a couple of minutes.

"Help yourself," the Eastern supervisor told him.

Vito drove slowly among the airplanes parked at the lines of airways, watching as baggage handlers loaded luggage into, and off-loaded it from, the bellies of the airplanes. Twice, he stopped the tractor and

got off, for a closer examination. Once he actually went inside the fuselage of a Lockheed 10-11. No one questioned his presence. Cops are expected to be in strange places. The way to get a particular piece of luggage off a particular air-plane, Vito decided, was to stand by the conveyor belt and watch for it as it was off-loaded from the airplane, seeing on which of the carts of the baggage train it had been placed. Once he knew that, he would drive his tractor to the door where luggage was taken from the baggage carts and loaded on the con-veyor belt that would transport it, beneath the terminal, to the bag-gage carousel. Taking it from the airplane or the baggage carts at the airplane would look suspicious. But with the baggage handlers busy throw-ing bags on the conveyor belt under the terminal, no one would no-tice if he removed a bag from the other side of the cart. And if they did notice him, and someone actually asked him what he was doing, he would say that it was his mother's, or his sister's, and he was just saving her a trip to the baggage carousel. Nobody questioned what a cop did. And he was only going to do this once. If he did it all the time, somebody might say something about it. Vito told himself that there were laws and laws. Everybody broke some kind of law, except maybe the pope. And screwing the IRS was something everybody did. And that's all he was going to be doing, was keeping the IRS from making a pain in the ass of it-self. It wasn't like he was smuggling drugs or jewels. He wouldn't be able to do that. What he was doing, Vito convinced himself, was helping a friend, repaying a favor.

It wasn't anything worse than some chief inspector fixing a speeding ticket for his next-door neighbor.

The reason Gian-Carlo Rosselli, or really the people who own the Oaks and Pines, are willing to come up with ten big ones, the four I owe them on the markers, and six besides, is like them buying insurance. It's the cost of them doing business. It's not like they're bribing me or anything. They want all that money to arrive safely so they can pay that coal-mine guy—that lucky sonofabitch, he probably doesn't even need it—what he won.

It was just lucky. They knew me, and I needed the money. That fucking plumber is going to want his money, and with my luck lately, I just don't have it. So this way, everybody is happy. The plumbers, the people who own Oaks and Pines, and especially that fucker with the coal mines who hit his number four times in a row.

And my run of bad luck can't keep on for fucking ever!

Vito drove around the aircraft parking area a few minutes more, trying to figure the best way to get the suitcase, once he had taken it from the baggage cart, out to his car. That turned out to be simplicity itself.

There was a gate leading from the work area under the terminal to the outside. There was a rent-a-cop working it. No rent-a-cop was going to stop a real cop and ask him what he was doing.

I'll just drive one of these goddamned tractors out the gate, go to the parking lot, put the suitcase in the trunk of the Caddy, and drive back in and give them their tractor back.

He decided to try it. It worked like a jewel. He went out of the gate, drove to the parking lot, went in the trunk of the Caddy, got back on the tractor, and drove back through the gate. The rent-a-cop didn't look at him twice.

Why should he? I'm a police corporal. If I'm riding around on an Eastern Airlines tractor, so what? What business was that of a rent-a-cop?

Vito drove the tractor back to the Eastern office and told the guy he'd returned it.

"Anytime," the Eastern guy said. "Support your local sheriff, right?"

Starting at fifteen minutes to midnight, within minutes of each other, automobiles carrying Chief Inspectors Matt Lowenstein and Denny Coughlin, Supervisory Special Agent H. Charles Larkin of the Secret Service, and A-S AC (Criminal) Frank F. Young of the FBI arrived at the headquarters of the Special Operations Division.

The building, and especially the corridor outside Peter Wohl's—what had been the principal's—office, and the office itself were crowded with senior police officers. All the participants in the earlier meeting in the commissioner's office, except Mayor Carlucci, were present. In addition, the commanding officers of Central, North Central, and Northwest Detective Divisions; the commanding officers of Ordnance Disposal and Stakeout; and Captain Jack Duffy, the special assistant to the commissioner for inter-agency liaison, had either been summoned or had naturally migrated to the Schoolhouse as the center of the operation.

Three inspectors, who had been neither summoned nor invited, were also in Peter Wohl's office when Chief Lowenstein marched in. They were the commanding officers of the South and North De-tective Divisions and the Tactical Division. Their subordinates had made known to them the orders they had received from Chiefs Lowenstein and Coughlin, and they wanted to know what was go-ing on.

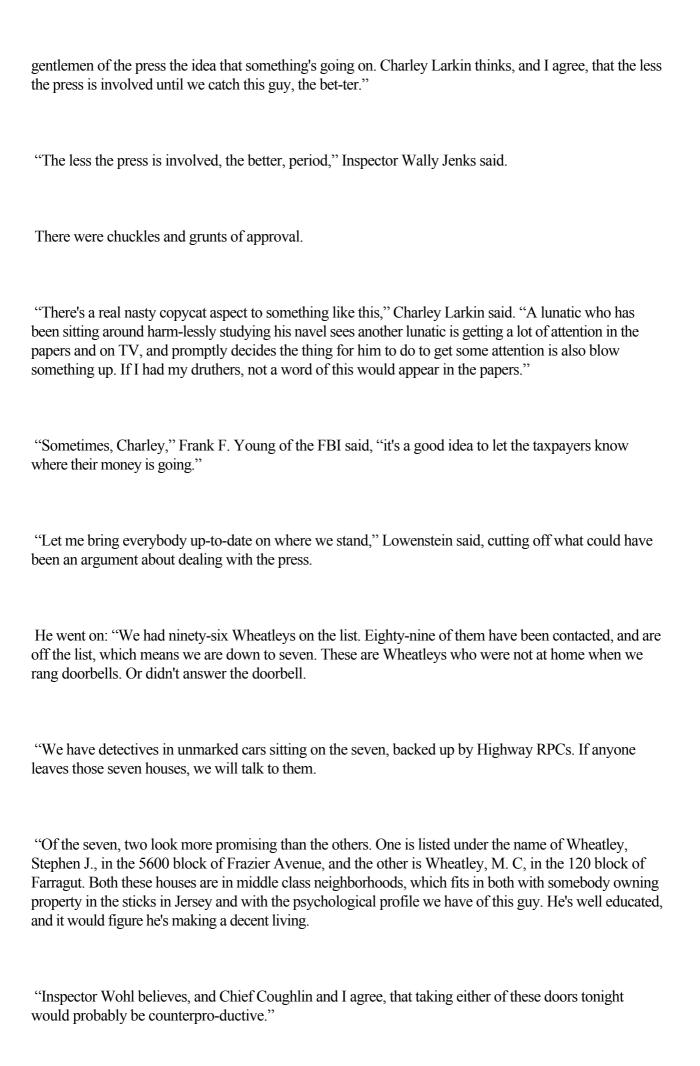
Lowenstein ordered everyone out of Wohl's office but Coughlin, Wohl, and the three inspectors and the federal agents.

"Peter and I decided to hold this here, rather than in the Round-house," Lowenstein began, "for a couple of reasons. First of all, it's on my way home ..."

He paused for the expected chuckle.

"Peter and I decided"? Wohl thought. *Inspector Peter Wohl is not only outranked by you, but, until very recently, by everybody else in this room. Despite his reputation within the Department as a real hard-ass, Lowenstein sometimes can be very gracious and kind.*

"...and for another, all these white shirts showing up at the Roundhouse at midnight might give the



"Can I ask why?" Inspector Jenks asked.
"Worst case scenario, Inspector," Wohl said. "He's in there. He's got explosives. He sets them off, and takes half the neighbor-hood with him."
"Next worse case scenario, Wally," Chief Coughlin said. "He's not in there. He's the editor of the <i>Catholic Messenger</i> . On his way to complain to the cardinal archbishop that while he and wife were having a retreat at Sacred Heart Monastery, the cops took his front and back doors and scared hell out of his cat, he stops by the Phil-adelphia <i>Ledger</i> to tell Arthur Nelson what Carlucci's Commandos have done to him."
That produced more outright laughter than chuckles.
"And Jerry Carlucci, Wally," Lowenstein added, "said he wants to be there if we take anybody's door."
"I agree with Inspector Wohl too," H. Charles Larkin said. "I don't think, if our man is in one of these houses, that he's liable to do anything tonight. Unless, of course, we panic him. Then all bets are off."
"So what Peter has come up with is this," Lowenstein went on. "At half past seven tomorrow morning, it gets light at six-fifty, we are going to send detectives to the houses adjacent to the houses in question and see what the neighbors know about Wheatley, Stephen J., and Wheatley, M. C. If it looks at all that there's a chance he's our guy, we evacuate the houses in the area, and then we take the door. Stakeout will take the door, backed up by High-way and Ordnance Disposal."
"And what if he's not our man?" Inspector Jenks asked.
"Then we take a look at the other five houses where nobody was home. There will be people still on them, of course."
And if we shoot blanks there too, Wohl thought, we're back to square one.



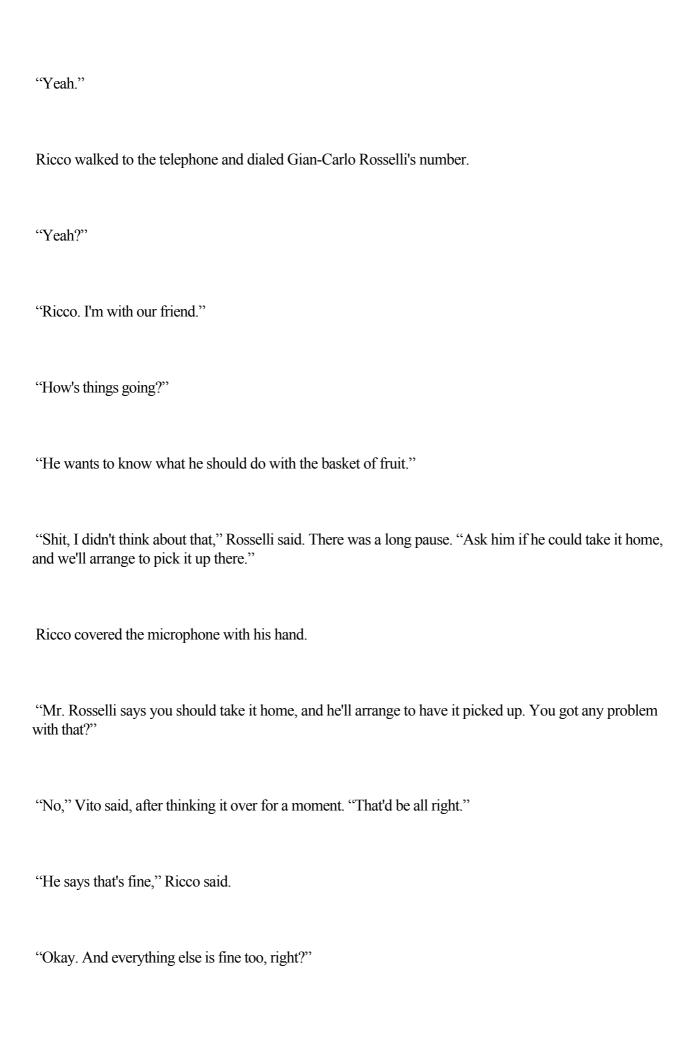
The meeting was over.
TWENTY-SEVEN
As Mr. Ricco Baltazari walked down the corridor to the door of Mrs. Antoinette Marie Wolinski Schermer's apartment, at quarter to one in the morning, he was aware that several things were bothering him.
There was the obvious, of course, that he was between the rock (Mr. Savarese) and the hard place (Mssrs. Gian-Carlo Rosselli and Paulo Cassandro) about this goddamned cop. If the cop either didn't look like he could handle what was required of him or, worse, that he was maybe setting them up, he would have to tell Mr. S. that he thought so, or risk winding up pushing up grass in the Tinnicum Swamps out by the airport, if something went wrong.
But if he did that, it was the same thing as saying that Gian-Carlo and Paulo were a couple of assholes who were going to get Mr. S. in trouble. They would be insulted, and they both had long memo-ries.
And that wasn't all. There was the business between the god-damned cop and Tony. He was having trouble remembering that all she was, was a dumb Polack who he liked to screw and nothing more. That had been possible as long as he hadn't actually seen what was going on.
But now he was going to be in her apartment, actually their apartment, where they'd had some really great times in the sack, and where she was now fucking the goddamned cop.
Well, shit, there's nothing I can do about it.

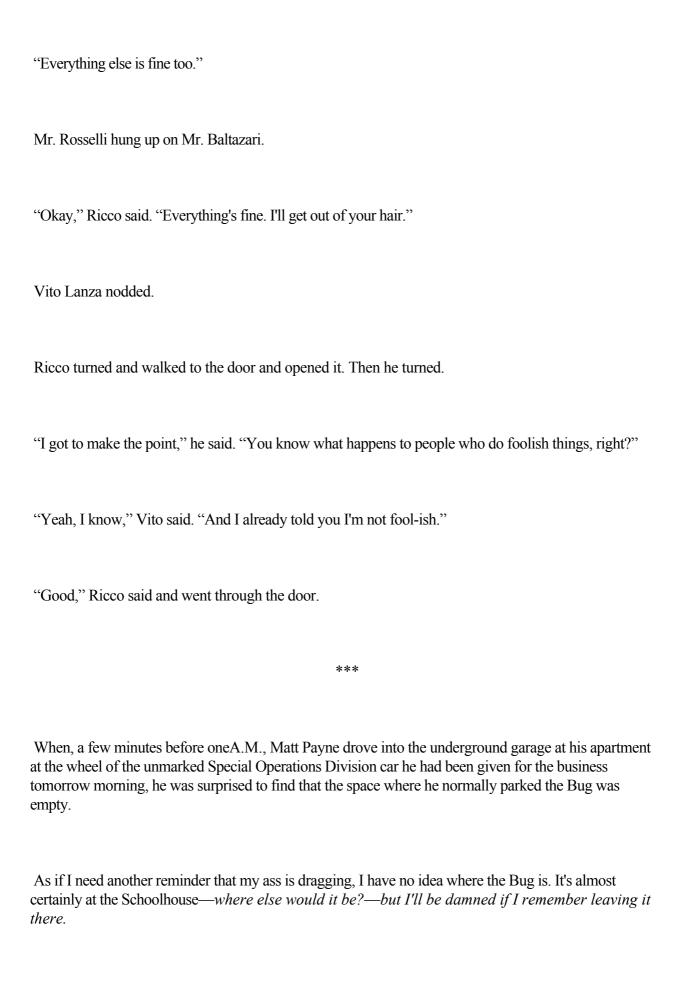












He parked the Ford, and rode the elevator to the third floor, and then walked up the stairs to his



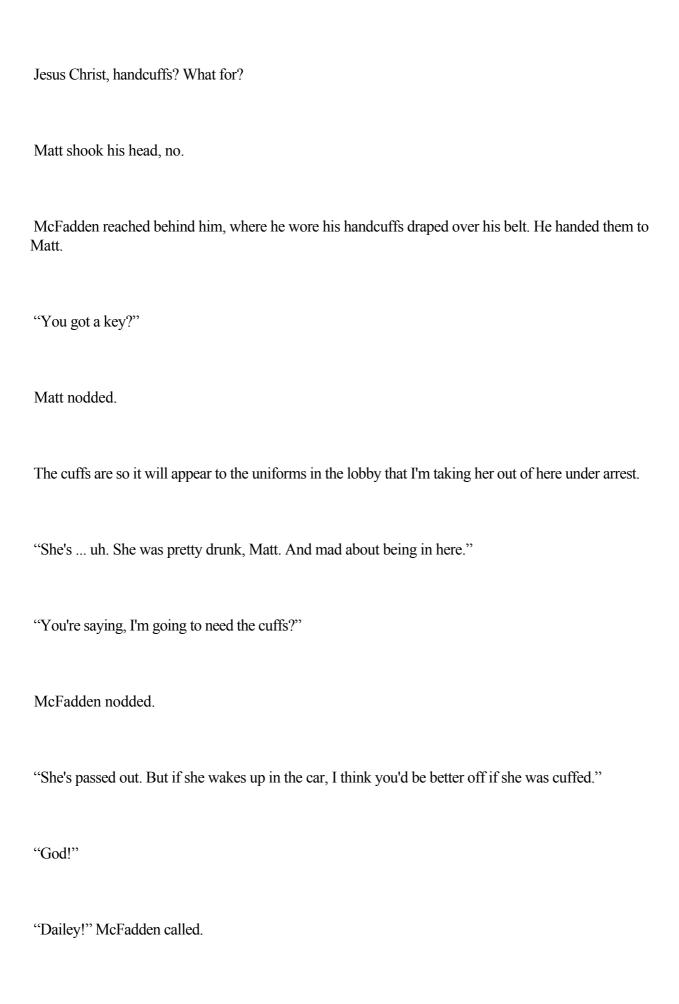
"Out where, and why?"
"I'm on the job. Northwest Detectives. Just get your ass out here, right now," McFadden said, and hung up.
What the hell is that all about?
But Charley's not pulling my chain. I can tell from his voice when he's doing that. Whatever this is, it is not a manifestation of Irish and/or police humor.
He had, in what he thought of as a Pavlovian reflex, laid his re-volver on the mantelpiece. He reclaimed it and went down the stairs and took the elevator to the basement.
The Porsche was where he remembered parking it, and he took the keys to it from his pocket and was about to put them in the door when he reconsidered.
Whatever Charley McFadden wants, it's personal, and I don't want to be about personal business when I run into one of Wohl's station wagons full of nuns. But on the other hand, it was made goddamned clear to me that Wohl wants to know where I am, sec-ond by second, and there's no radio in the Porsche. The minute I drive the Porsche out of here, Wohl will call, and when he gets the answering machine, will get on the radio. And I won't answer.
He got in the unmarked car and drove out of the garage. There wasn't much traffic, and he was lucky with the lights. The only one he caught was at North Broad Street and Ridge Avenue, which gave him a chance to look at the Divine Lorraine Hotel, and won-der what the hell went on in there.
Wouldn't the bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Philadelphia have a heart attack if there was suddenly a booming voice from heaven saying, "You're wrong, Bishop; my boy Father Divine has it right"?
He remembered he hadn't reported in. He switched to the J fre-quency and told Police Radio that William Fourteen was en route to Northwest Detectives.

He then wondered, as he continued up North Broad Street, whether what Charley was so upset about was the missing Bug.
Iknow goddamned well I left it at the apartment. Stolen? Out of the basement, past the rent-a-cop, who knows who it belongs to? And who the hell would steal the Bug when the Porsch was sitting right next to it? Who would steal the Bug ifnothingwas sitting right next to it?
That impeccable logical analysis of the situation collapsed im-mediately upon Detective Payne's entering the parking lot of Northwest Detectives, which shares quarters with the 35th District at Broad and Champlost Streets.
There was the Bug.
Jesus, what the hell is this all about?
He went in the building and took the stairs to the second floor two at a time.
"I'm Detective Payne of Special Operations," Matt said, smiling at the desk man just inside the squad room. "Charley"
"I know who you are," the desk man said with something less than overwhelming charm. He raised his voice: "McFadden!"
Charley appeared around the corner of a wall inside.
"What's with my car?" Matt asked.
McFadden, who looked very uncomfortable, didn't reply. He came to Matt, and motioned for him to

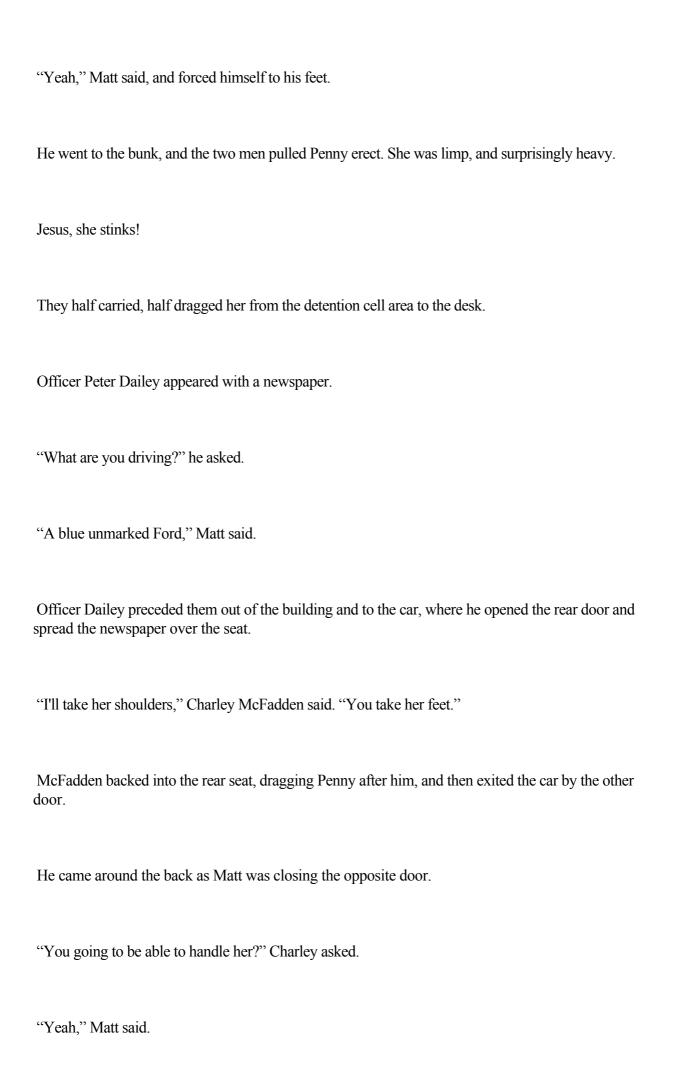








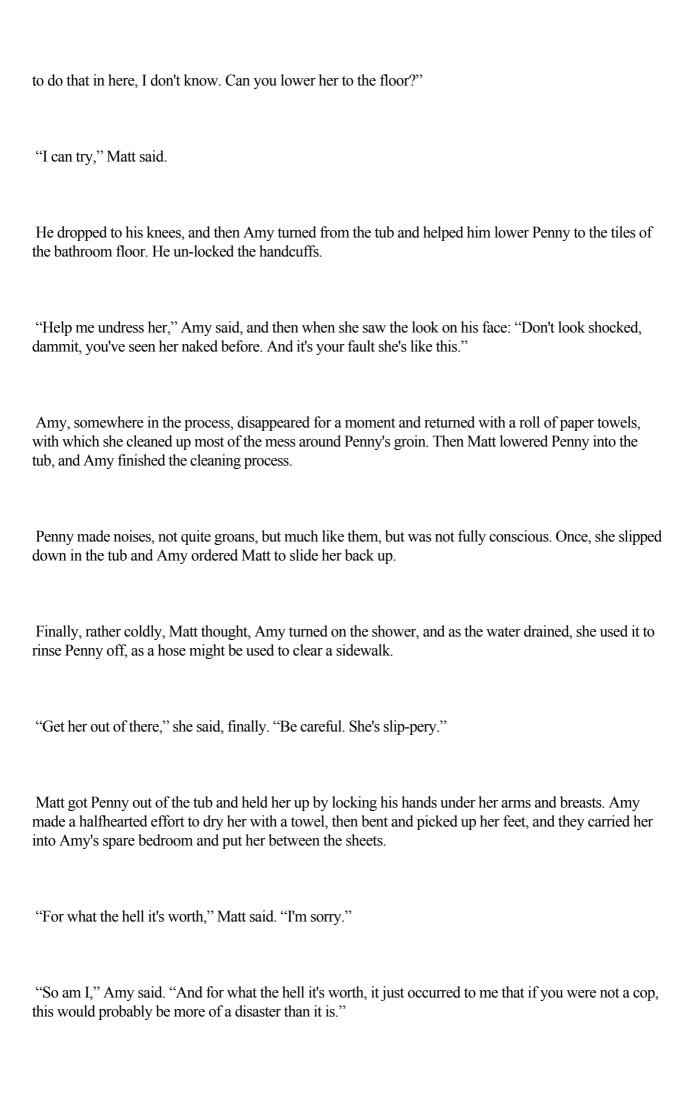
The turnkey, a tired-looking uniform who looked to be about fifty, came up to them.
"Pete Dailey, Matt Payne," McFadden made the introductions. The two men shook hands, but neither said a word.
"Open it up, please, Pete," McFadden said.
The turnkey unlocked the cell, slid the barred door open, and then walked away.
Penny Detweiler did not stir.
Charley went into the cell. Matt followed him. Charley looked at Matt, then put out his hand for the handcuffs. When Matt gave them to him, he pulled Penny's wrists behind her, and put the cuffs on her wrists.
The smell in the cell was foul. Matt wondered if he was going to further embarrass himself by being sick And then he realized that the smell was coming from Penny.
She had lost control of her bowels, and probably her bladder as well.
The proper word for that, Detective Payne thought, is "inconti-nent."
And then he was swept by nausea, and barely made it to the lid-less toilet in the corner of the cell in time.
After a moment, as he became aware that he was soaked in a clammy sweat, he heard Charley ask, "You okay, buddy?"

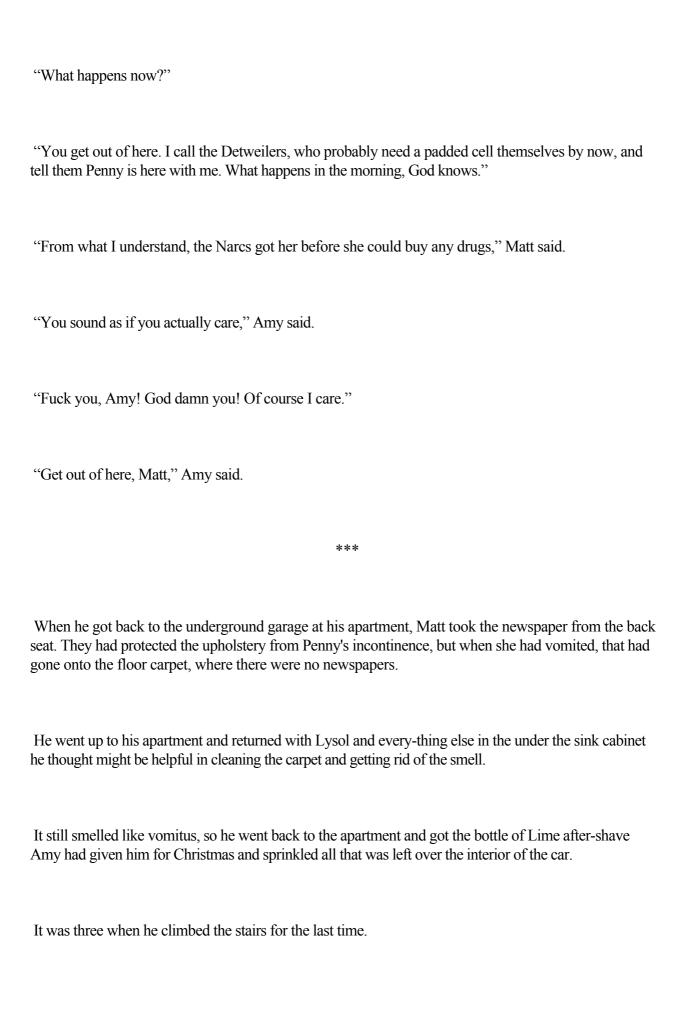


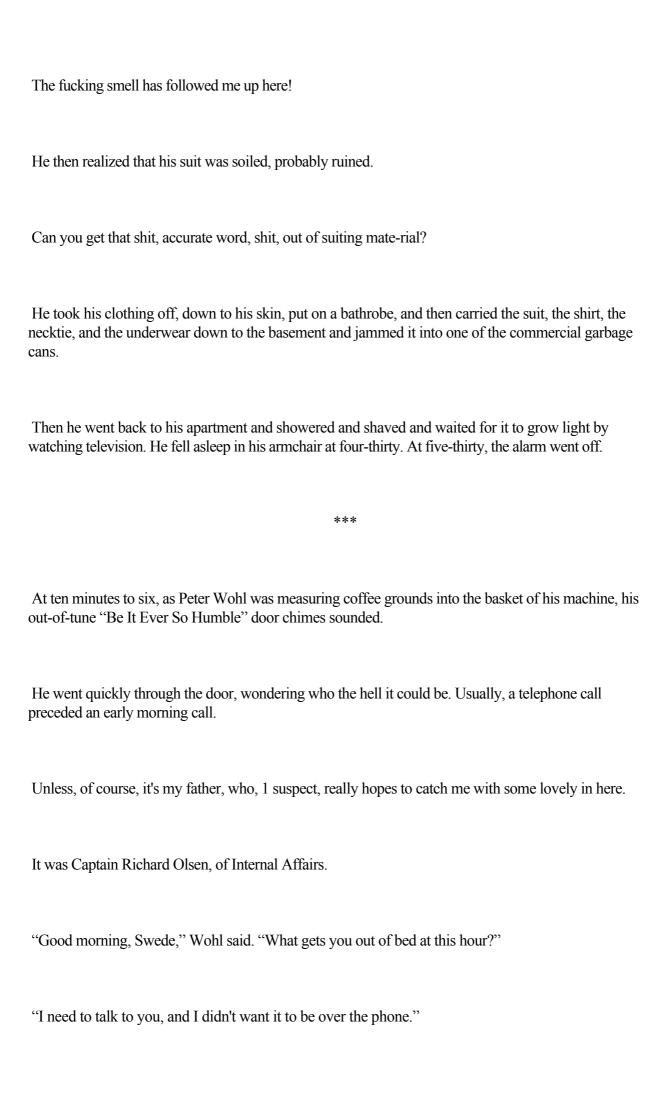


















"Oh, Jesus! Now I'm sorry I asked."
"He means well, Peter. I think he just watches too many cop shows on the TV. <i>They</i> don't have to get a warrant for a tap."
"We do. I hope you told him that."
"What do you think?"
"Not that we could use it, but what did he hear?"
"They tailed Lanza from the airport when he went off tour at midnight. He went to the Schermer woman's apartment. At quarter to one, he was visited by Mr. Ricco Baltazari"
"The Ristorante Alfredo Ricco Baltazari?"
"One and the same. He stayed about ten minutes. While he was there, a male, almost certainly Baltazari, called somebody, no name, but Organized Crime told me the number is the unlisted number of Mr. Gian-Carlo Rosselli."
"You didn't tell Organized Crime why you wanted to know, I hope?"
"No. Just asked if they had a name to go with the number."
Olsen took a notebook from his pocket, and opened it.
"Ricco told the no-name guy he was with quote, our friend, end quote, and that the friend, quote, wants to know what he should do with the basket of fruit, unquote."





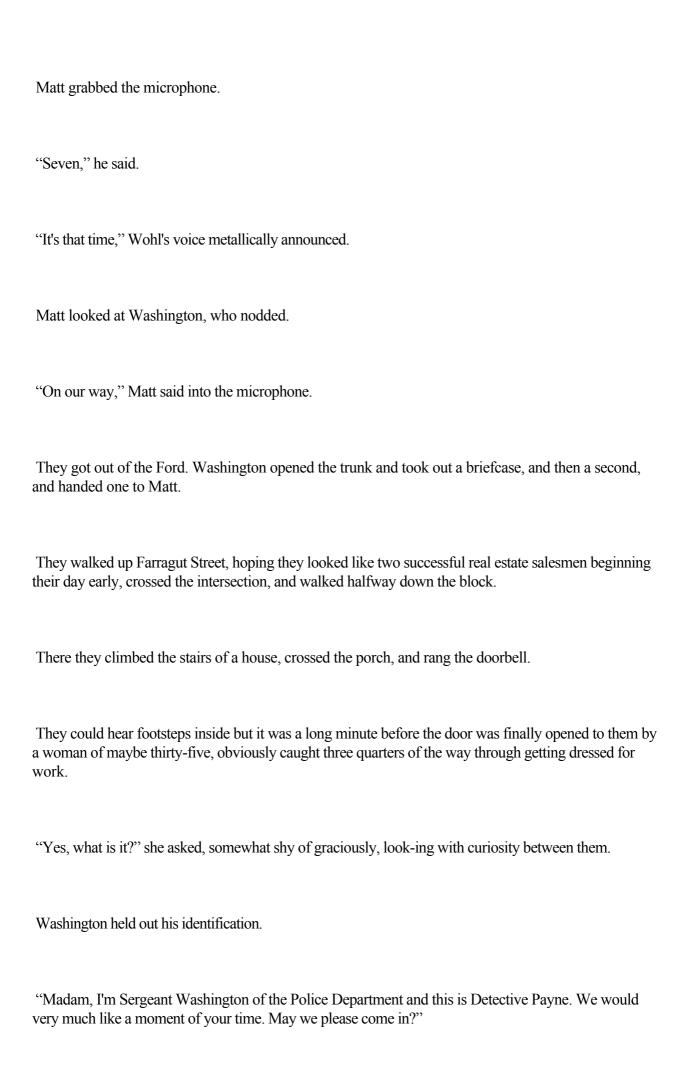


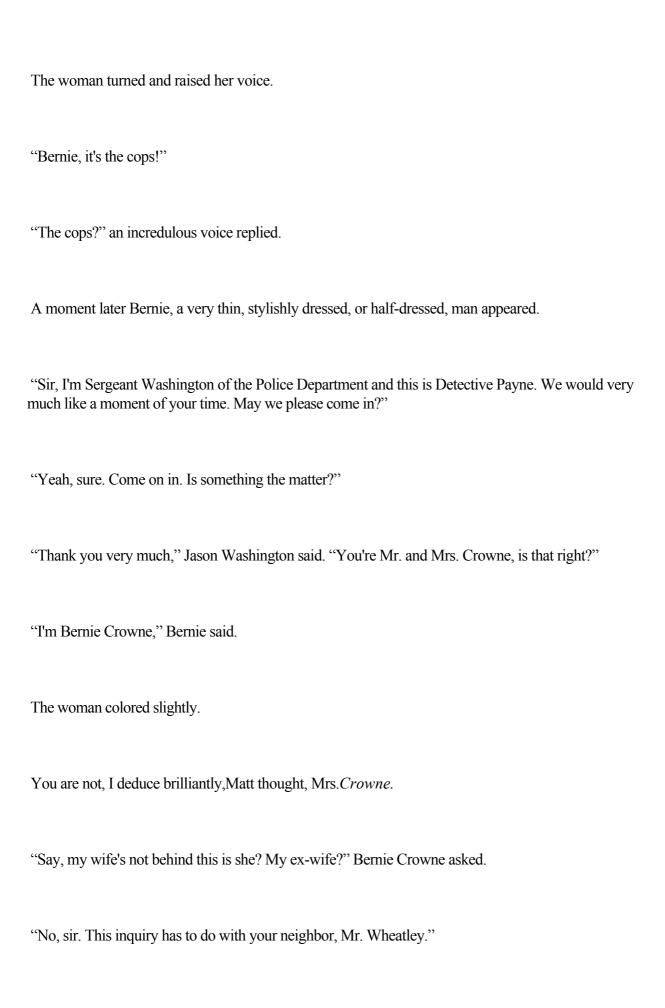
TWENTY-EIGHT



"A couple of undercover guys from Narcotics arrested Penny Detweiler last night, as she was cruising in the vicinity of Susquehanna and Bouvier."

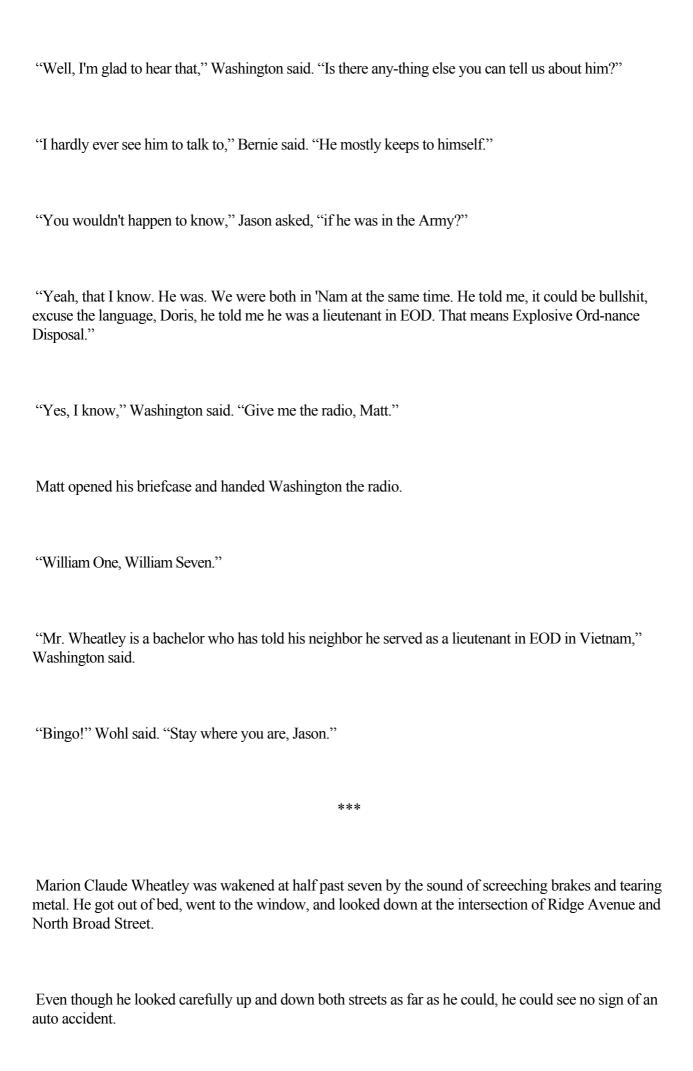
The joking tone was gone from Washington's voice when he re-plied, replaced with genuine concern.
"Damn! I'm sorry to hear that. I'd hoped that—what was that place they sent her? In Nevada?—would help her."
"The Lindens. Apparently the fix didn't take."
"What have they charged her with?"
"Nothing. They picked her up for drunk driving before she was able to make her connection. She gave them my name. They couldn't find me, but they knew that Charley McFadden and I are close, so they took her to Northwest Detectives, and he got them to turn her loose to me."
"Aside from trying to make a buy, there is no other reason I can think of that she would be in that area," Washington said.
"No, there's not. She was trying to make a buy. And according to McFadden, if the undercover guys hadn't taken her in, she'd probably have had her throat cut."
"If she was lucky," Washington said. "I'm sorry, Matt. That slipped out. But McFadden is right. Where is she now?"
"I took her to my sister. My sister the shrink."
"Iadmire your sister," Washington said. "That was the thing to do."
"William Seven," the radio went off. "William One."





"Marion?" Bernie asked. "What about him?"
"We've been trying to get in touch with Mr. Wheatley for sev-eral days now, Mr. Crowne, and we can't seem to catch him at home."
"What did he do? Rob a bank?"
"Oh, no. Nothing like that. Actually, we're not even sure we have the right Mr. Wheatley. There has been a fire in New Jersey, at a summer place, in what they call the Pine Barrens. The New Jersey State Police are trying to locate the owner. And they don't have a first name."
"Bullshit," Mr. Crowne said. "They don't send sergeants and de-tectives out to do that. My brother is a lieutenant in the 9th District, Sergeant. So you tell me what this is all about, or I'll call him, and he'll find out."
"Call him," Washington said flatly. "If he has any questions about what I'm doing here, tell him to call Chief Inspector Lowenstein."
Bernie looked at Washington for a moment.
"Okay. So go on. Marion's got a house in Jersey that burned down?"
"Do you have any idea where we could find Mr. Wheatley?"
"He works somewhere downtown. In a bank, I think."
"And Mrs. Wheatley?"





He turned from the window, took off his pajamas and carefully hung them on a hanger in the closet, then took a shower and shaved and got dressed.

He went down to the restaurant and had two poached eggs on toast, pineapple juice, and a glass of milk for breakfast. He ate slowly, for he had at least half an hour to kill; he hadn't planned to get up until eight, and had carefully set his travel alarm clock to do that. The wreck, or whatever it was, had upset his schedule.

But there really wasn't much that one can do to stretch out two poached eggs on toast, so when he checked his watch when he went back to his room, he saw that he was still running twenty min-utes ahead of schedule.

And, of course, into the schedule, he had built in extra time to take care of unforeseen contingencies. With that it mind, he was probably forty-five minutes ahead of what the real time schedule would turn out to be.

He decided he would do everything that had to be done but actu-ally leave the room, and then wait until the real time schedule had time to catch up with the projected schedule.

That didn't burn up much time, either. AWOL bag #1 (one of those with *Souvenir of Asbury Park, N.J.* on it) was already pre-pared, and it took just a moment to open it and make sure that the explosive device and the receiver were in place, and that the soiled linen in which it was wrapped was not likely to come free.

He sighed. All he could do now was keep looking at his watch until it was time to go.

And then he saw the Bible on the bed. He picked it up and car-ried it to the desk, and sat down.

"Dear God," he prayed aloud. "I pray that you will give me in-sight as I prepare to go about your business."

He read, "17. I smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail in all the labours of your hands; yet ye turned not to me, saith the Lord," and then he read it aloud.

Haggai 2:17 made no more sense to him now than it ever had.

He wondered if he had made some kind of mistake, if the Lord really intended for him to read Haggai 2:17, but decided that couldn't be. If the Lord didn't want him to read it, the Lord would not have attracted his attention to it.

It was obviously his failing, not the Lord's.

Supervisory Special Agent H. Charles Larkin of the Secret Ser-vice walked across the intersection of Kingsessing Avenue and Farragut and looked down the 1200 block.

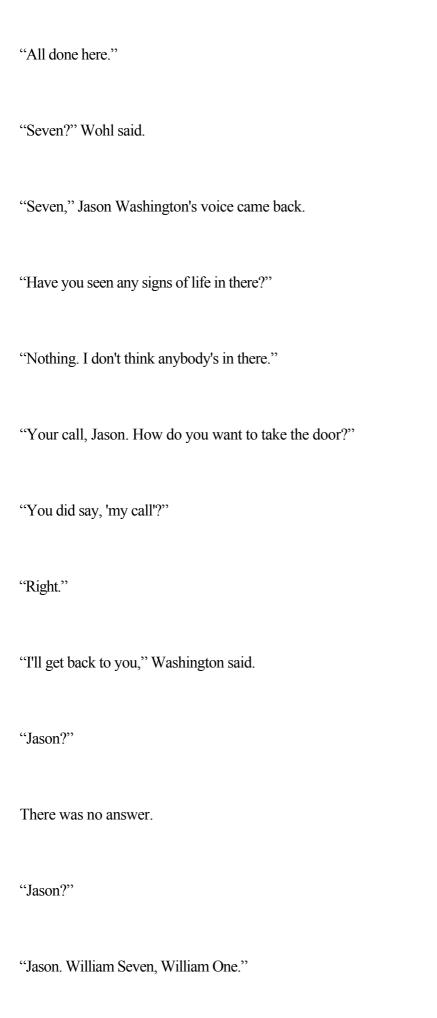
He was honestly impressed with the efficiency with which Peter Wohl's men were evacuating the residents of the houses surround-ing the residence of M. C. Wheatley. There was no panic, no excitement.

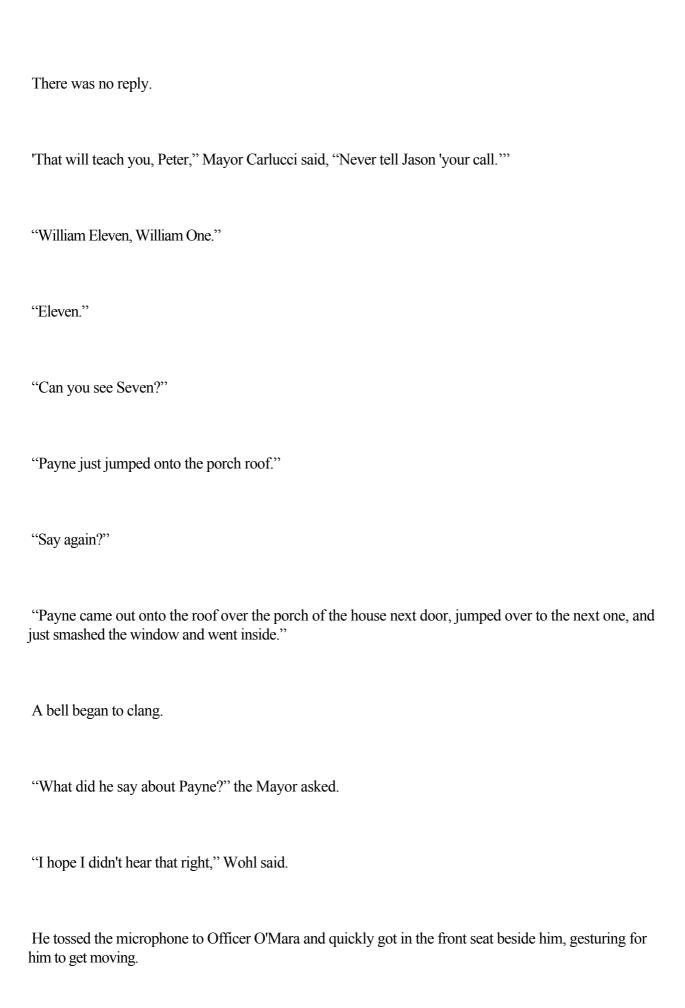
Obviously, Larkin decided, because the people being evacuated were being handled by cops who were both smiling and confident, and seemed to know exactly what they were doing. If the man in the blue suit, the figure of authority, looks as if he is about to become hysterical, that's contagious.

And since Wohl was really a nice guy, Charley Larkin decided it wouldn't hurt a thing to offer his genuine approval out loud, in the hearing of the Honorable Jerry Carlucci, mayor of the City of Brotherly Love, who had shown up five minutes after he had heard that Wohl intended to take M. C. Wheatley's door.

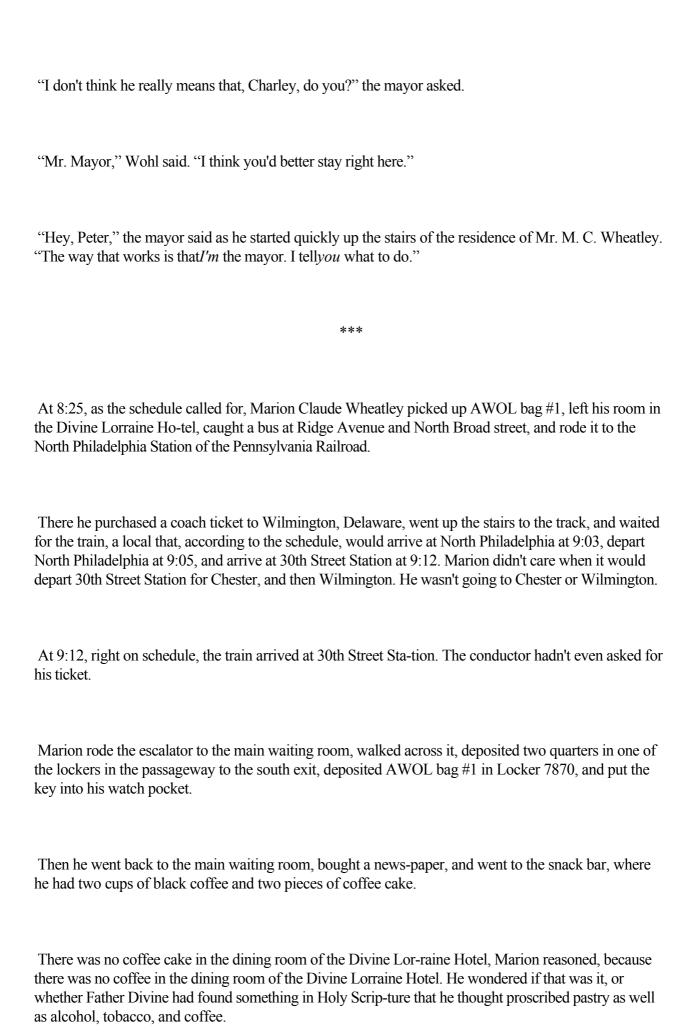
Larkin turned around, crossed Farragut Street again, and re-turned to where Carlucci and Wohl were standing by Wohl's car, just out of sight of the residence of M. C. Wheatley.

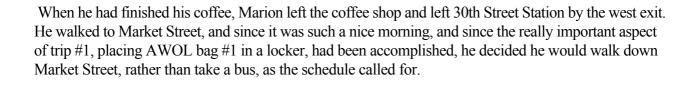
"I think they're about done," Larkin said. "I'm impressed with the way they're doing that, Peter," he said.
The mayor looked first at Larkin and then at Wohl.
"So am I," Wohl said. "Jack Malone set it up. He put them through a couple of dry runs in the dark at the Schoolhouse."
I suppose that proves, Larkin thought, that while you can't cheat an honest man, you can't get him to take somebody else's credit, ei-ther.
"Peter does a hell of a job with Special Operations, Charley," His Honor said. "I think we can now all say that it was an idea that worked. It. And Peter going in to command it."
"The Mayor said," Wohl replied, "'just before the 1200 block of Farragut Street disappeared in a mushroom cloud."
"You think he's got it wired, Peter?" Mayor Carlucci asked.
"I believe he's crazy," Wohl said. "Crazy people scare me."
"William One, William Eleven," the radio in Wohl's car went on. William Eleven was Lieutenant Jack Malone.
Officer Paul O'Mara, sitting behind the wheel, handed Wohl the microphone.
"William One," Wohl said.











The exercise, he thought, would do him good.

"Well, goddammit, then get it from Kansas City!" Supervisory Special Agent H. Charles Larkin said, nearly shouted, furiously. "I want a description, and preferably a photograph, of this sonofabitch here in an hour!"

He slammed the telephone into its cradle.

"I think Charley's mad about something," Chief Inspector Matt Lowenstein said drolly. "Doesn't he seem mad about something to you, Denny?"

"What was that all about, Charley?" Chief Inspector Coughlin asked, chuckling.

"The Army has the records of our guy—his name is Marion Claude, by the way, his first names—in the Depository in Kansas City," Larkin said. "So instead of calling Kansas City to get us a goddamn description and a picture, he calls me!"

"We have a man in Kansas City who does nothing but maintain liaison with the Army Records Depository," Mr. Frank F. Young of the FBI said. "Shall I give him a call, Charley?"

"So do we, Frank," Larkin said. "Don't take this the wrong way, but if we get your guy involved, that's liable to fuck things up even more than they are now."

"I think we can say," Young said, "that we're making progress."
"Yeah," Wohl said. "We now <i>know</i> that he has a lot of explo-sives, and from the way those burglar alarms were wired, even if he hadn't been in EOD, that he knows how to set them off. We don't know what he looks like, or where he is."
One of the telephones on the commissioner's conference table rang.
"Commissioner's conference room, Sergeant Washington," Ja-son said, grabbing it on the second ring. "Okay, let me have it!" He scribbled quickly on a pad of lined yellow paper, said "Thank you," and hung up.
The others at the table looked at him.
"Marion Claude Wheatley is employed as a petrochemicals mar-ket analyst at First Pennsylvania Bank & Trust, main office, on South Broad," Washington said. "A guy from Central Detectives just found out."
"Do they have a photograph of him?" Larkin asked.
"They're being difficult," Washington said. He looked at Peter Wohl. "You want me to go over there, Inspector?"
"You bet I do," Wohl said.
"Can I take Payne with me?"
"If you think you can keep him from playing Tarzan," Wohl said. "And jumping from roof to roof."





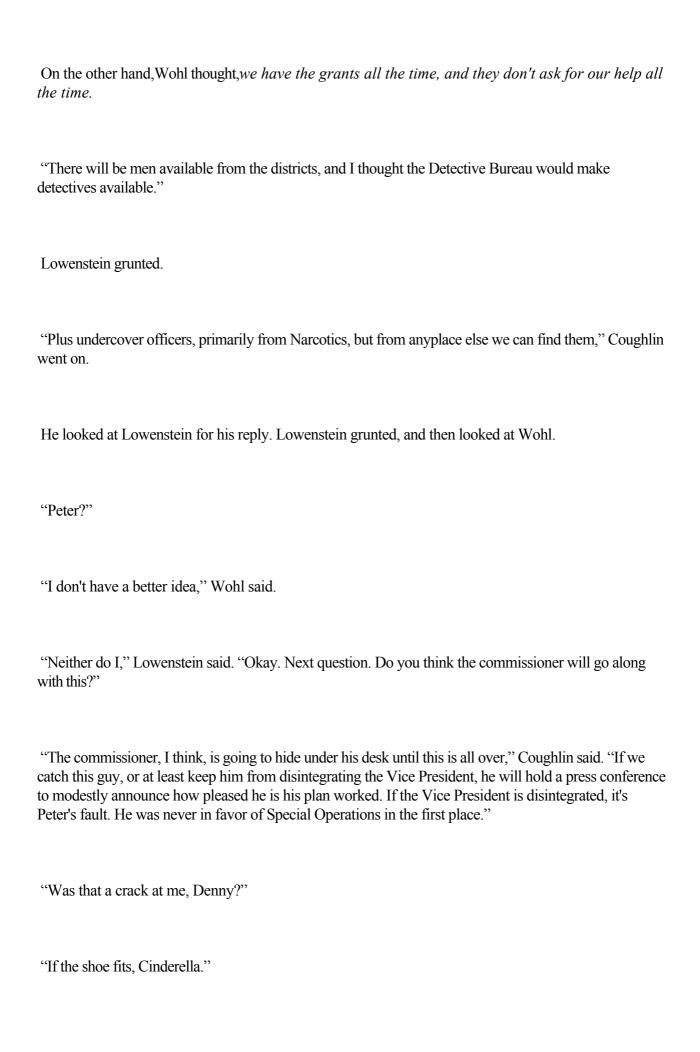




"I don't think he's thinking about Market Street anyway," Coughlin said. "He'd have only a second or two to set the bomb off. That's not much margin for error." He paused. "But I damned sure could be wrong. So we're going to have to have Market Street covered from the river to 30th Street Station."
"Which leaves Independence Square and 30th Street Station," Wohl said. "I don't think Independence Square. He knows that we're going to have people all over there, and that he will have a hard time getting close to the Vice President, close enough to hurt him with a bomb."
"That presumes Denny's right about him not wanting to commit suicide," Lowenstein said. "Maybe he likes the idea of being a martyr."
"I think we can let the Secret Service handle somebody rushing up to the Vice President," Coughlin said. "They're very good at that. I keep getting back to 30th Street Station."
"Okay. But tell me why?"
"Well, we can't close it off, for one thing. Trains are going to ar-rive and depart. They will be carrying people, and many, if not most, of those people will be carrying some kind of luggage, either a briefcase, if they're commuters, or suitcases. Are we going to stop everybody and search their luggage?"
"I don't suppose there's any chance, now that we know this guy is for real, that the Vice President can be talked out of this god-damned motorcade?" Lowenstein asked.
"None," Coughlin said. "I was there when Larkin called Wash-ington."
Lowenstein shrugged and struck a wooden match and relit his cigar.
"We're listening, Denny," he said.
"And there's a lot of places in 30th Street Station to hide a bomb, half a dozen bombs." Coughlin went







"Gentlemen," Mr. H. Logan Hammersmith of First Philadelphia Bank & Trust said, "while I	don't mean
to appear to be difficult, I'm simply unable to permit you access to our personnel records. The	ne question
of confidentiality"	

"Mr. Hammersmith," Jason Washington began softly. "I under-stand your position. But..."

"Fuck it, Jason," Mr. H. Charles Larkin interrupted. "I've had enough of this bastard's bullshit."

Mr. Hammersmith was obviously not used to being addressed in that tone of voice, or with such vulgarity and obscenity, which is precisely why Mr. Larkin had chosen that tone of voice and vocab-ulary.

"I want Marion Claude Wheatley's personnel records, all of them, on your desk in three minutes, or I'm going to take you out of here in handcuffs," Mr. Larkin continued.

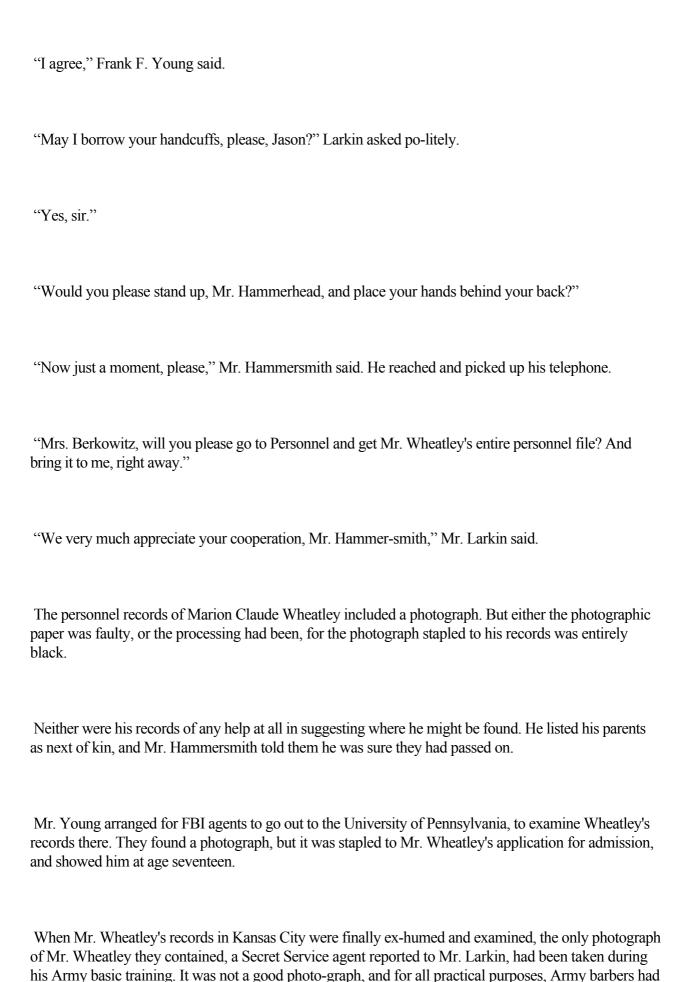
"You can't do that!" Mr. Hammersmith said, without very much conviction. "I haven't done anything."

"You're interfering with a federal investigation," Mr. Frank F. Young said.

"Now, we can get a search warrant for this," Larkin said. "It'll take us about an hour. But to preclude the possibility that Mr. Ham-merhead here . . ."

"Hammersmith," Hammersmith interjected.

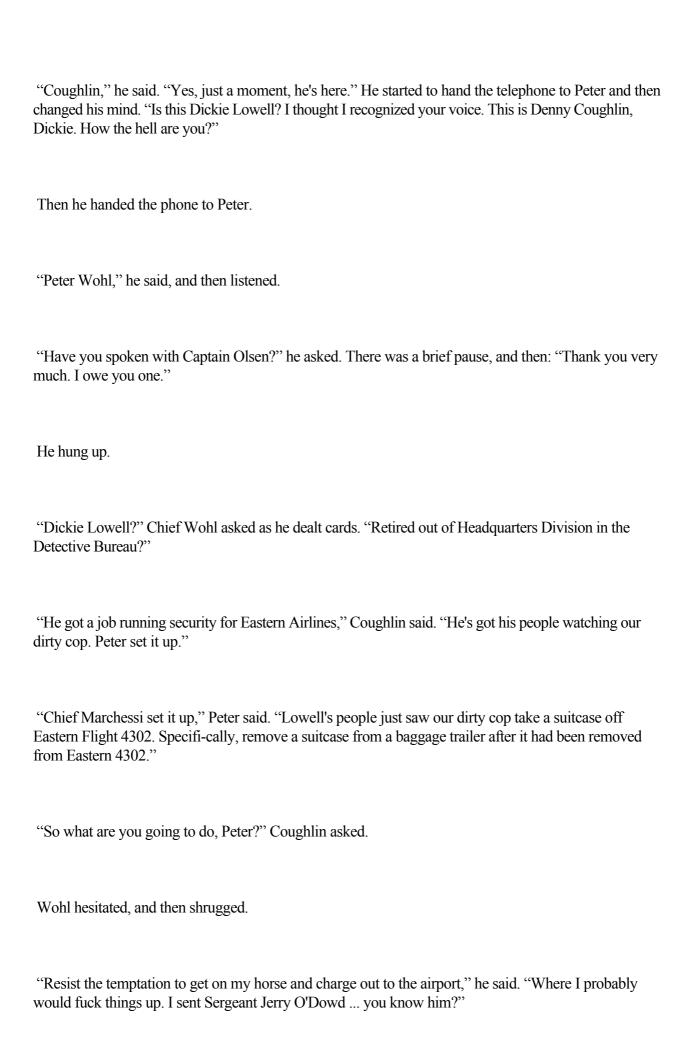
"...who, in my professional judgment, is acting very strangely, does not, in the meantime, conceal, destroy, or otherwise hinder our access to these records, I believe we should take him into custody."



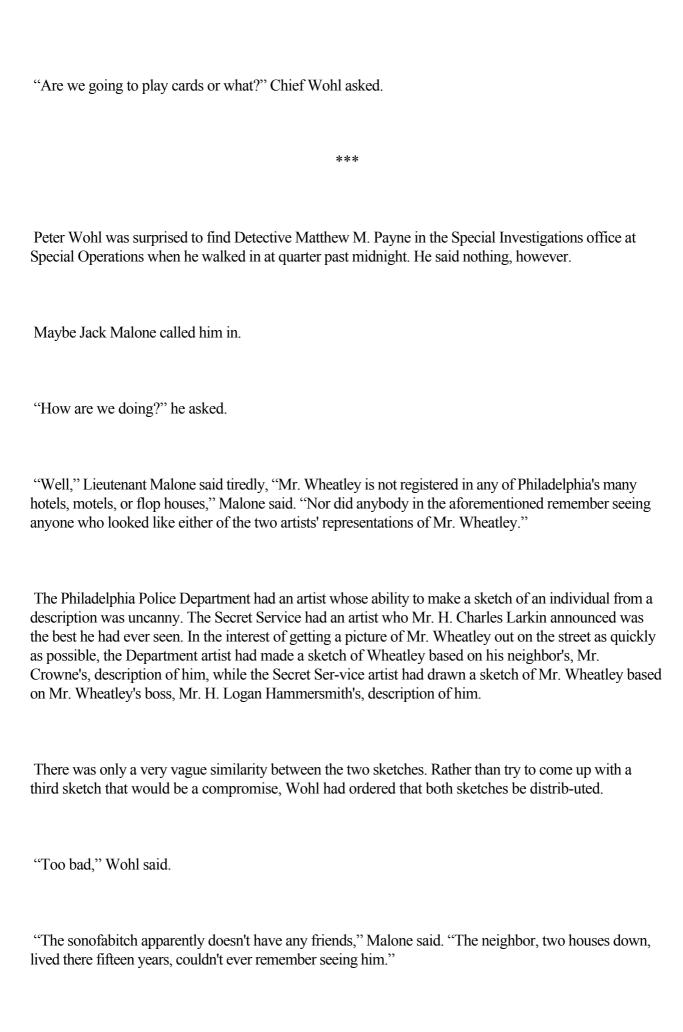
turned him bald.







His	father and Chief Coughlin shook their heads, no.
	works for Dave Pekach. Good man. He's going to follow our dirty cop when he comes off duty. lready have people watching his house and his girlfriend's apartment."
	metimes the smartest thing to do is keep your nose out of the tent," Coughlin said. "I think they call lelegation of author-ity."
	d I think what we have there is the pot calling the kettle black," Chief Wohl said. "Denny was an ector before he stopped turning off fire hydrants in the summer."
"Go	to hell, Augie!"
"Wh	nat's in the suitcase?" Larkin asked. "Drugs?"
"Wh	at else?" Coughlin said.
"I di	dn't know you handled drugs, Peter," Larkin said.
	rmally, I don't," Peter replied. "Drugs or dirty cops. Thank God. This was Commissioner Marshall's er to the feds want-ing to send their people out there masquerading as cops. He gave the job to
"Bed	cause you get along so well with we feds, right?" Larkin asked, chuckling.
"The	ere's an exception to every rule, Charley," Coughlin said. "Just be grateful it's you."











"Why didn't he take it with him? Isn't that woman involved?"
"I don't know how much she's involved, and I don't know why he left the suitcase at his house. These people are very careful."
Payne nodded.
"And now that Malone has gone home, and I don't have to be of-ficially outraged—as opposed to personally admiring—at your roof-jumping escapade, are you going to tell me what's bothering you?"
"Jesus, does it show?"
"Yeah, it shows."
Matt looked at him for a moment, and then at his drink for a longer moment, before finally saying, "Penny Detweiler is in the psycho ward at University Hospital."
"I'm sorry to hear that," Wohl said.
But not surprised. A junkie is a junkie.
"I put her there," Matt said.
"What do you mean, you put her there?"
"You really don't want to hear this."

You 're right. I really don't want to hear this.
"I'm not trying to pry, Matt. But, hell, sometimes if you talk things over, when you're finished, they don't seem to be as bad."

It was quarter to two when Inspector Wohl, not without misgiv-ings, installed Detective Payne behind the wheel of the unmarked Ford and sent him home with the admonition to try not to run any stoplights or into a station wagon full of nuns.
I believed what I told him, that if it hadn't been the other woman showing up at his apartment, that it would have been something else. That being turned loose from a drug addiction program doesnot mean the addiction is cured, just that, so far as they can tell, it's on hold.
But clearly, if the horny little bastard wasn't fucking every woman in town, it would not have happened. Taking the Detweiler girl to bed was idiotic. He has earned every ounce of the weight of shameful regret he's carrying.
But his wallowing in guilt isn't going to do anybody any good.
Sometimes, Peter Wohl, you are so smart, so Solomon-like, I want to throw up.

He started home to Chestnut Hill, then suddenly changed his mind, got on first Roosevelt Boulevard and then the Schuylkill Ex-pressway and headed for Ritner Street.

I don't want to go to bed. I don't want to delegate authority. I want to put that dirty cop and the Mafioso he's running around with away. And right now there's nobody who can tell me to butt out.

Wohl drove slowly down Ritner Street, saw where Sergeant O'Dowd was parked, and made a left at the next corner and parked the car.
O'Dowd had been alone when he had driven past, but as he walked up to the car now, he first saw another head, and then rec-ognized it as that of Detective Tony Harris, sitting beside O'Dowd.
Wohl opened the rear door and got in.
"I thought that was you driving by," O'Dowd said. "Something come up?"
"I got curious, is all," Wohl said. "I just happened to be in the neighborhood."
"There's somebody in the house," Tony Harris said. "I was out in back. You know how these houses are laid out, Inspector? With the bathroom at the back of the house?"
"Yeah, sure."
"First a dull light, which means a light on in one of the bed-rooms, shining into the hall. Then a bright light. Somebody's in the bathroom. I figure it's his mother, taking a piss. Then the bright light goes out, and then the dim light, and I figure she's back in bed."
"Okay. So what?"
"So nothing. So that's what's been going on here."

'There's more, Tony. What are you thinking?"
"I don't think Paulo Cassandro or Ricco Baltazari or any other Mafioso is going to come waltzing down Ritner Street tonight to pick up that suitcase. Those bastards aren't stupid. There's been half a dozen cars come by here, any one of who could have been taking a look, and if they were, they saw us."
"Oh, ye of little faith!" Wohl said.
Why did you say that? Jesus, that was dumb! Three drinks and your mouth gallops away with you!
"You're the boss. You say sit on the house, we'll sit on the house."
"Tell me what you think is going to happen, Tony," Wohl said.
"I'll tell you what Idon't think is going to happen," Harris said.
"Okay. Tell me what's not going to happen."
"I don't think we're going to catch anybody but this dirty cop. The Mob is going to come up with some pretty clever way to get their hands on that suitcase without us catching them at it."
"Okay. So what would you do if you were me?"
"Let's say we catch Lanza actually handling the suitcase to, say, Ricco Baltazari. We arrest them. They have the best lawyers around. They say we set them up. They ask all kinds of questions of how come we were watching Lanza in the first place. The guy has a spotless record, et cetera. And Lanza is not, I'll bet my ass on it, going to pass the suitcase to anybody. If they send somebody for it, or they tell Lanza to carry it someplace and give it to somebody, we arrest him, it will be some jerk we can't tie to Baltazari or



"Yeah," Harris said thoughtfully.	
"That saloon is closed," Wohl said, after looking out the rear window. "Where can I find a telephone around here?"	
"There's a pay station on Broad Street. If somebody hasn't ripped it off the wall."	

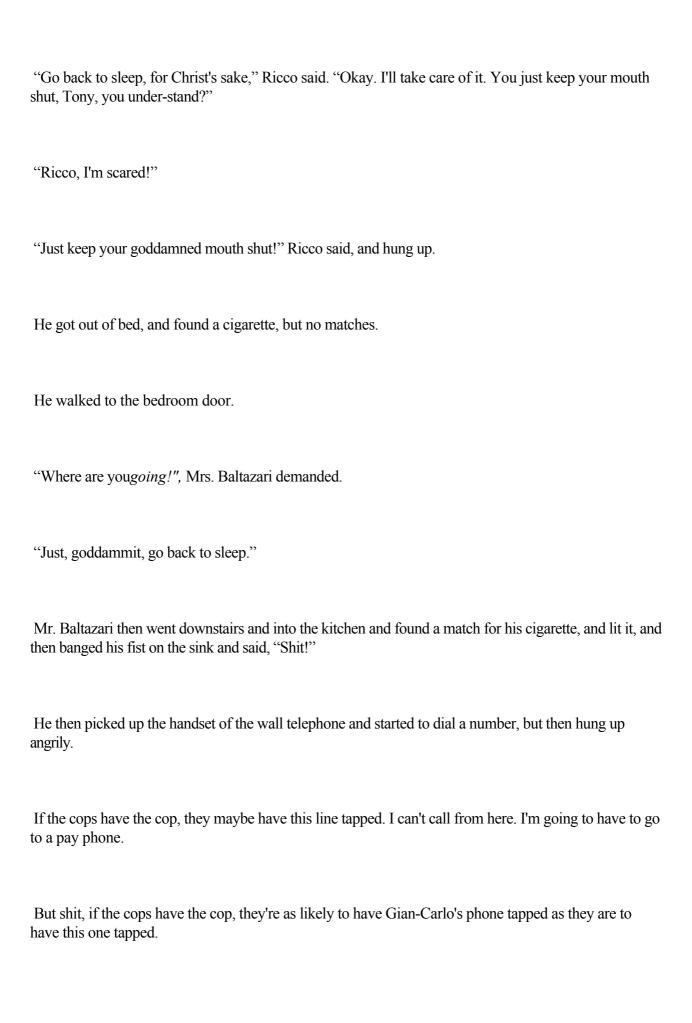
"Hello?"	
"You awake, Matt?"	
"Yes, sir. What's up?"	
"You know Martinez's home phone and where he lives?"	
"Yes, sir."	
"Call him up. Tell him to put his uniform on, then pick him up, and meet me at Moyamensing and Sou Broad."	th
"Right now?"	
"Right now."	

The door to the apartment of Mrs. Antoinette Marie Wolinski Schermer opened just a crack. It was evident that she had the chain in place.
"What is it?" Mrs. Schermer asked, her tone mingled annoyance and concern.
"It's the police, Mrs. Schermer," Captain Swede Olsen said. "We're here to talk to Corporal Lanza."
When there was no immediate response, Captain Olsen added, "We know he's here, Tony. Open the door."
The door closed. It remained closed for about a minute, but it seemed much longer than that. And then it opened.
Vito, wearing a sleeveless undershirt and trousers, his hair mussed, stood inside the door.
"Corporal Lanza," Olsen said, "I'm Captain Olsen of Internal Affairs. These are Detectives Martinez and Payne. I think you can guess why we're here."
Vito looked at Martinez and Payne. His surprise registered in his eyes, but then they grew cold and wary.
"What's going on?"
"We want you to get dressed and come with us, Corporal," Olsen said conversationally.
"What for?"



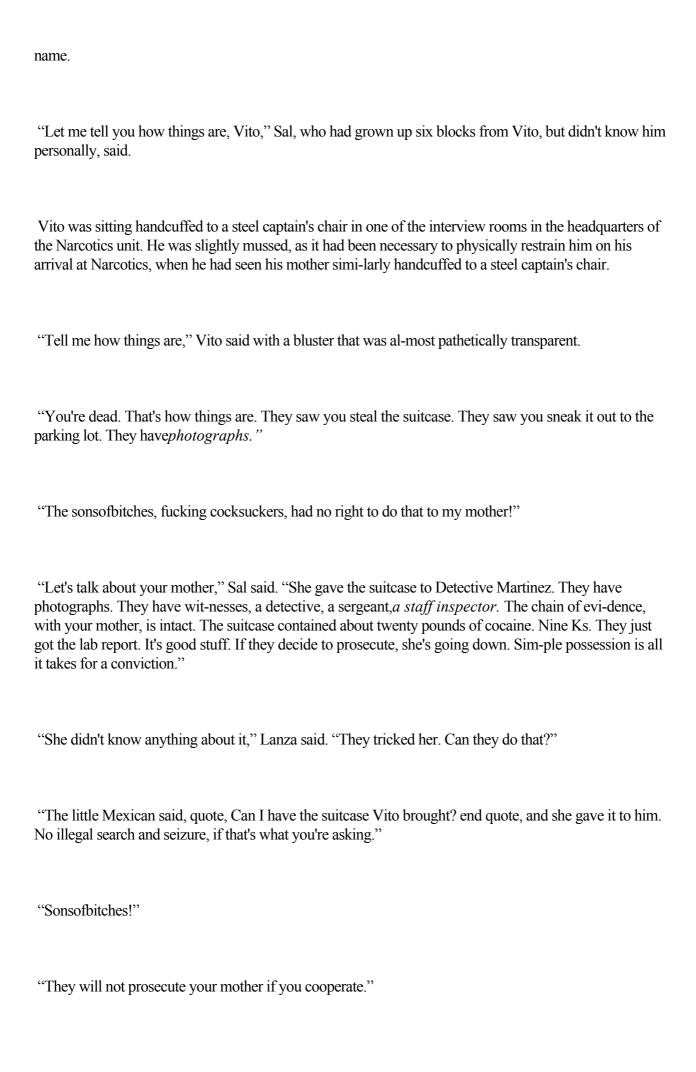


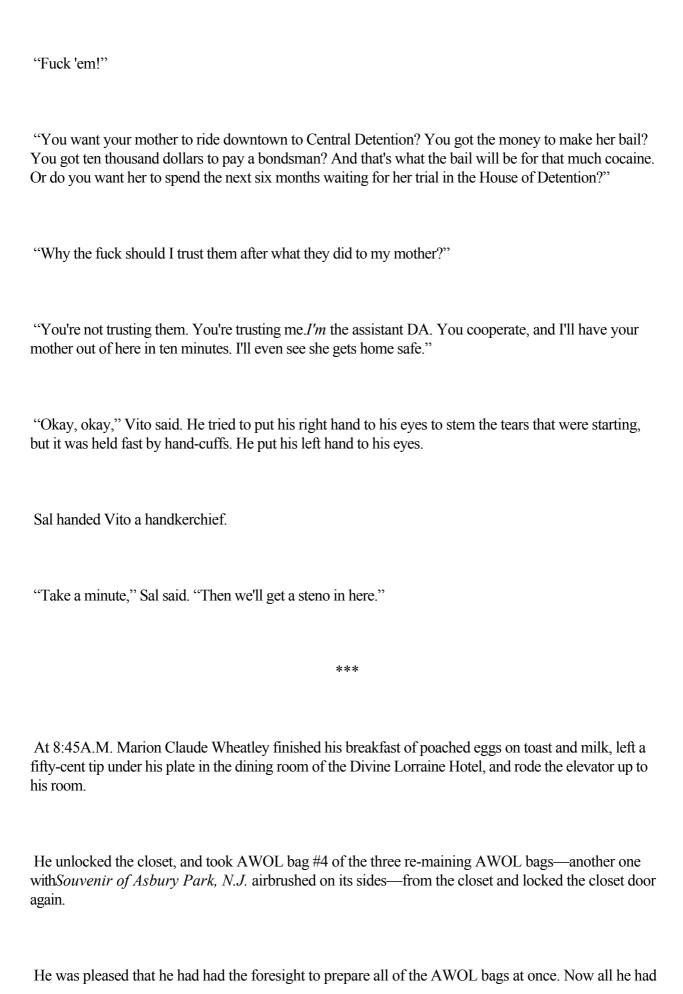




I'm going to have to go to Gian-Carlo's house and wake him up and tell him the cops have the cop. And that means they have the shipment for the people in Baltimore!
Jesus Christ! He's not going to like this worth a fuck! And Mr. Savarese!
It'snotmy fucking fault! I don't know what happened, but it's not my fucking fault!
But they 're not going to believe that!
Oh, Jesus Christ!

Salvatore J. Riccuito, Esq., a slightly built, olive-skinned thirty-two-year-old, was a recent addition to the district attorney's staff. Prior to his admission to the bar, he had spent eleven years as a po-lice officer, mostly in the 6th District, passing up opportunities to take examinations for promotion in order to find time to graduate from LaSalle College and then the Temple University School of Law, both at night.
Understandably, because he knew how cops thought and be-haved, if he was available, he was assigned cases involving the prosecution of police officers. When this case had come up, via a 3:15A.M. telephone call from Thomas J. "Tommy" Callis, the dis-trict attorney himself, Sal had pleaded unavailability. Callis has been unsympathetic.
"We'll rearrange your schedule. Get down to Narcotics and see Inspector Peter Wohl."
Sal knew there was no point in arguing. Wohl had been the in-vestigator in the case that resulted in Judge Findermann taking a long-term lease in the Pennsylvania Penal System. Callis had prosecuted himself. The publicity would probably help him get re-elected.
In a way, Sal thought as he drove to the Narcotics Unit, it was flattering. Wohl almost certainly had not asked for "an assistant DA." He had either asked for "a good assistant DA" or possibly even for him by





to do was take them from the closet as he began the delivery process.
He looked around the room, and, although he really didn't think it would do any good, walked to the Bible on the desk and read Haggai 2:17 again, seeking insight.
"I smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail in all the labours of your hands; yet ye turned not to me, saith the Lord," made no more sense now than it ever had.
Marion picked up AWOL bag #4 and left his room, carefully locking the door after him, and went down in the elevator to the lobby.
He left his key with the colored lady behind the desk. He had learned that her name was Sister Fortitude, and he used it now.
"It looks, praise the Lord, as if we're going to have another fine day, doesn't it, Sister Fortitude?"
"Yes, it does," Sister Fortitude said.
She doesn't seem very friendly, Marion thought. I wonder if that is because I'm not colored? Or am I just imagining it?
Marion walked out onto North Broad Street and crossed it, and walked up half a block to the little fast-food place he'd found where he could get a cup of coffee and a Danish pastry to begin the day, and went in.
Sister Fortitude walked from behind the desk and went and stood by the door beside the revolving door and watched as Marion took a seat at the counter and ordered his coffee.

I knew there was something about that man, she thought.

She watched until Marion had finished a second cup of coffee and left the restaurant and walked, north, out of sight.
Then she went to the elevator and went up to Marion's room and unlocked the door and went inside. She knew what the room should contain, in terms of hotel property, and a quick look showed nothing missing.
But Sister Fortitude, who had read several magazine articles about how professional hotel thieves operated, knew that did not mean that he hadn't stolen whatever he was stealing from another room.
There was nothing in the closet that the white man could steal but wire hangers, but Sister Fortitude decided to check it anyway. When she found that it was locked, her suspicions grew. She went into the adjacent room, took the key from that closet door, and car-ried it back to Marion's room. It didn't work.
Sister Fortitude had to get, and try, four different closet keys from four different rooms before one operated the lock in the white man's room.
Two minutes later, Sister Fortitude ran out onto North Broad Street, looking for a policeman.
You never could find one when you needed one,she thought.
And then she saw one, in the coffee shop where the white man had gone to get the coffee he couldn't get in the Divine Lorraine Hotel Restaurant.
She walked quickly across Broad Street.
"I want you to come with me," Sister Fortitude said to the po-liceman. "I got something to show you."

At ten minutes past nineA.M., Sergeant Jerry O'Dowd and De-tective Matt Payne were driving up North Broad Street in O'Dowd's unmarked car. They had finally been released at Internal Affairs, and although Matt thought he was about to fall asleep on his feet, he knew he had to go back to Northwest Detectives and get his Bug before all sorts of questions he didn't want to answer would be asked.
There was considerable police activity at the intersection of Broad and Ridge; Broad Street was blocked off, and a white cap was directing traffic in a detour.
When they finally got to the white cap, Jerry rolled the window down in idle curiosity to ask him what was going on.

And then he saw, at the same moment Matt Payne saw, the large blue and white Ordnance Disposal

Without exchanging a word, they both got out of the car and ran toward the Divine Lorraine Hotel.

van, with the Explosive Con-tainment trailer hitched to the rear of it.

"You can't just leave your car here!" the white cap called after them.

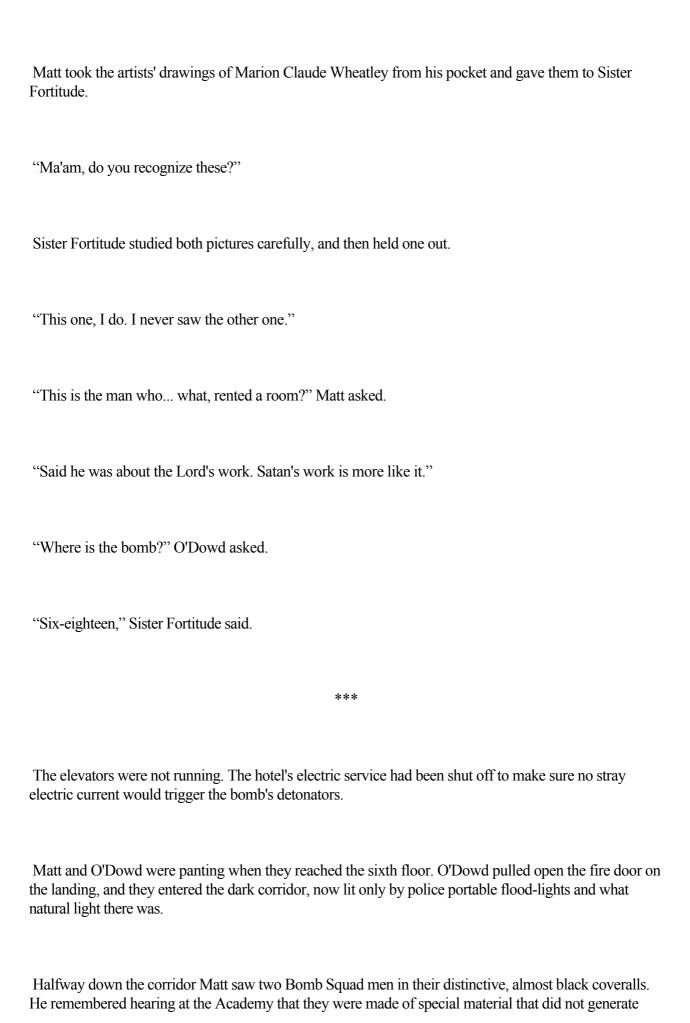
There was a uniformed lieutenant standing with a large black woman at the desk.

"What's going on here?" O'Dowd asked as he pinned his badge to his jacket.

"Watch your mouth, we don't tolerate that sort of talk in here," Sister Fortitude said.

"I'm Sergeant O'Dowd, sir, of Special Operations. We're work-ing on the bomb threat."

"And who the hell are you, Sergeant?"



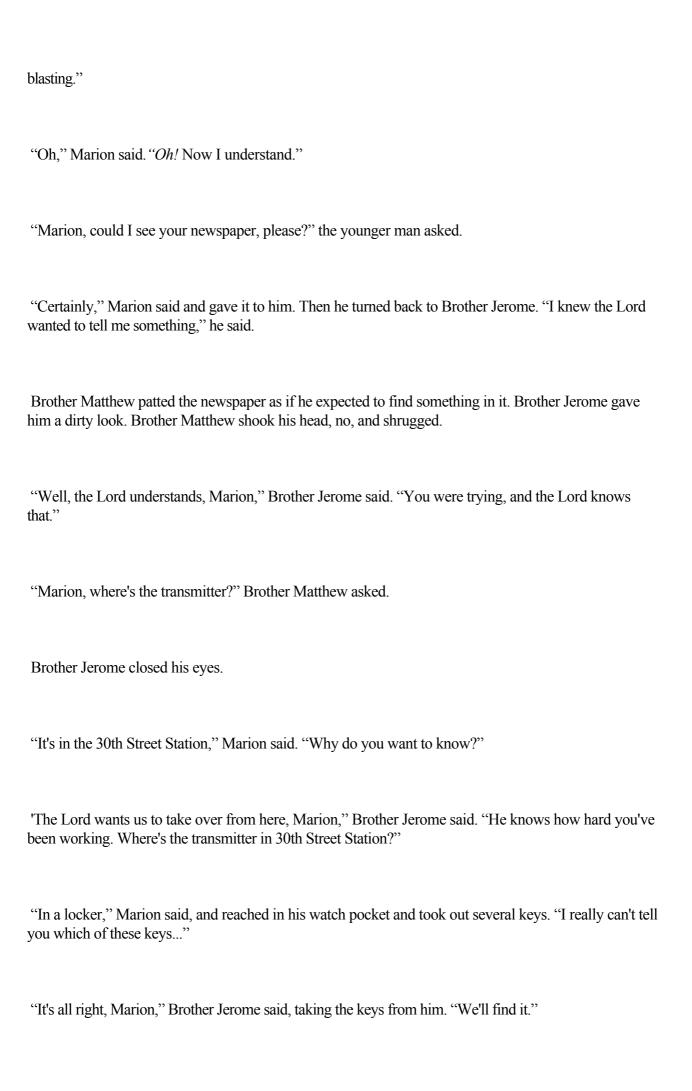


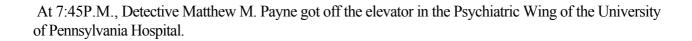
Raybold considered that for a moment.
"Yeah," he said, after a moment. "I don't see why we couldn't leave this stuff here for a while. It's safe. But that don't mean the district captain would go along. And it's his call."

"Sergeant, I don't know who you think you are," the district cap-tain said, "But nobody tells me to throw the book away. We got a crime scene here, and we're going to work it."
"Captain," Detective Payne said, "sir, I've got Chief Coughlin on the line. He'd like to talk to you."

At fifteen minutes to elevenA.M., Marion Claude Wheatley got off the bus and walked across Ridge Avenue and into the lobby of the Divine Lorraine Hotel.
He smiled at Sister Fortitude but she didn't smile back, just nod-ded.
I wonder if I have done, or said, something that has offended her?
Marion got on the elevator and rode to his floor. He had bought a newspaper in 30th Street Station, and he planned to read it as he tried to move his bowels. He was suffering from constipation, and had decided it was a combination of his usual bowel movement schedule being disrupted and the food in the Divine Lorraine Hotel Restaurant. He had decided he would take the next several meals elsewhere to see if that would clear his elimination tract.
There was a man sitting in the unholstered chair in the room. He smiled







One of the nurses at the Nursing Station, a formidable red-haired harridan, told him that Miss Detweiler was in 9023, but he couldn't see her because his name wasn't on the list, and anyway, her doctor was in there.

"Dr. Payne is expecting me," Matt said. "Ninety twenty-three, you said?"

Penny was sitting in a chrome, vinyl-upholstered chair by the window. She was wearing a hospital gown and, he could not help but notice, absolutely nothing else. Amelia Payne, M.D., was sit-ting on the bed.

"What are you doing here?" Dr. Payne snapped.

"I heard this is where the action is," Matt said.

"I don't think this is a good idea," Amy said. "I think you had better leave."

"Please, Amy!" Penny said.

"Take a walk, Amy," Matt said.

Dr. Payne considered that for a long moment, and then pushed herself off the bed and walked to the door, where she turned.

"Five minutes," she said, and left.
Matt walked over to Penny and handed her a grease-stained pa-per bag.
"Ribs," he said. "They're cold by now, but I'll bet they'll be bet-ter than what they serve in here."
"I don't suppose I could have eaten roses, but candy would have been nice," Penny said. "Matt, are you disgusted with me?"
"I was," he blurted. "Until just now. When I saw you."
"My parents blame you for the whole thing, you know," she said.
"I figured that would happen."
"Amy says it was my fault."
"Amy's right," Matt said. "If you had thrown something at me, even taken a shot at me, that would have been my fault. But what you did to yourself"
Penny suddenly pushed herself out of the chair. She threw the bag of ribs at the garbage can and missed She turned to the win-dow. Matt could see her backbone and the crack of her buttocks. He looked away, then headed for the door.
"Amy's right. I shouldn't have come here."
Penny turned. jy

"Matt!"
He looked at her.
"Matt, don't leave me!"
After a long moment, he said, his voice on the edge of breaking, "Penny, I don't know what to do with you!"
"Give me a chance," she said. "Giveus a chance!"
Then she walked, almost ran to him, stopped and looked up at him.
"Please, Matt," she said, and then his arms went around her.
I love her.
A junkie is a junkie.
Oh,shit!

District Attorney Thomas J. Callis, after a psychiatric examina-tion of Marion Claude Wheatley, petitioned the court for Mr. Wheatley's involuntary commitment to a psychiatric institution for the criminally insane. The petition was granted.

District Attorney Callis, after studying the available evidence, decided that it was insufficient to bring Mr. Paulo Cassandro, Mr. Ricco Baltazari, Mr. Gian-Carlo Rosselli, or any of the others mentioned in Mr. Vito Lanza's sworn statements to trial.

Mr. Vito Lanza, on a plea of guilty to charges of possession of controlled substances with the intention to distribute, was sen-tenced to two years imprisonment. At Mr. Callis's recommendation, no charges were brought against Mrs. Magdelana Lanza.

Inspector Peter Wohl retained command of the Special Operations Division of the Philadelphia Police Department.

Detective Matthew M. Payne was led to believe by Supervisory Special Agent H. Charles Larkin of the Secret Service that his ap-plication for appointment to the Secret Service would be favorably received. Detective Payne declined to make such an application.

Mr. Ricco Baltazari was found shot to death in a drainage ditch in the Tinnicum Swamps near Philadelphia International Airport. No arrests have been made to date in the case.

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