

The Enemy Within



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Prologue

History is indeed little more than

the register of the crimes, follies and misfortunes of mankind.

Edward Gibbon (1737 - 1794)

France 1944

For Frank Murphy, it was a day much like any other. He was shipping grunts up to the front as he had done so for many weeks.

Frank called his old steam loco the Flying Phoenix. He was hauling ten trucks full of GI's to knock on Hitler's door. So far the tracks had not been sabotaged, and the rails had been rock free. What Frank did find different on that particular day was the American brass on board, They travelled in the guard's van with their mysterious cargo. Frank did not probe into the affairs of others. He was the train driver. Anything other than that was not his remit. But that soon changed!

As his train roared into a French rail road tunnel, Frank saw something on the tracks ahead. He applied the brakes. But it was too late! The locked wheels screeched loudly in the confines of the tunnel, giving off a myriad of bright sparks, as the engine hit the high explosives placed across the tracks. The blast lifted the locomotive off the rails as its boiler burst, covering Frank and his fireman with scalding steam and boiling water. The forward momentum of the rolling stock smashed into each other throwing the GI's around in the trucks. The officers travelling in the guard's van with their precious cargo were the last ones to feel the impact. Before they could recover, four masked figures on a line maintenance trolley caught up to the guard's van and grabbed the cargo, which was

packed in ten wooden packaging cases. Two of the officers tried to resist and paid for it with their lives.

Two more maintenance trolleys turned up behind the first one. Masked robbers loaded the crates onto the carts and made off with them back out of the tunnel. The cargo the thieves had stolen turned out to be \$10 billion in Nazi gold which the American officers had found. It was \$10 billion at the 1944 price of \$20 per ounce. Fifty-one American soldiers died in the wreck.

The gold turned up at Montauk ten years later. The money was melted down and used to finance Phoenix 1, which it did for many years, as the value of gold increased. However, they spent all of it. That's when they got ITT to fund it. The German company Krupps owned ITT, and most of the civilians and scientists involved at Montauk were ex-Nazis who got smuggled into South America before and after WW2.

Phoenix 1 was under US Government surveillance although it had nothing officially to do with the project. The Department of Navy knew what was going on at the end of Long Island in Camp Hero, and the CIA monitored everything that went on. There were allegedly between thirty and fifty personnel working on Phoenix 1 at Montauk, but there were many levels underground, and nobody had the full picture of what was going on. One of the scientists running the op was Gruppenfeurer Moonschildt, known in certain circles as the Butcher of Buchenwald. His research into mind manipulation was invaluable to the Americans.

Following 1983, Senator Goldwater found out about the mind control program in which unfortunates were kidnapped off the streets and subjected to heavy-duty electromagnetic frequencies from the SAGE radar, and he set up a committee to investigate. The committee found no trace of government funding and no connection to Moonschildt and his band of Nazi sympathisers in Argentina. When he retired to his rancho in Patagonia, Johan Boltz, an electronics expert took over the project. He had come over from Germany in 1946.

One of the main things that drained the Nazi gold funds was some 25 bases around the United States relied on the funding to work on Phoenix 1. The last of these bases, Camp Hero, closed its gates for the last time on August 12, 1983. Or did it?

History is indeed little more than the register of the ..???.

<https://www.realhistorychannel.org/KILLING%20AMERICA-FINAL.pdf>

Chapter 1

“No matter how much suffering you went through, you never wanted to let go of those memories.”

Haruki Murakami

2008 SOCOM MacDill Air Force Base in Florida

Lieutenant Andrew Cowper sat wired, as blue light stimulated his brain cells. Dr Sasumu, late of the Tokyo Brain Science Institute, focused blue optic fibre light on a host of brain cells he could alter using light technology. In this way, he was able to change Andrew's memories and emotions through a technique called optogenetics. It all seemed very harmless — beneficial even. What Andrew did not realise is that Dr Sasumu had been ordered to use optogenetics on him to get rid of any emotional ties to loved ones and friends. Andrew went along with the thought control experiment knowing nothing at all about the mission ahead. As a loyal Marine, he had not questioned having his brain messed with. He had grown up to trust in Uncle Sam. So, when he was ordered to take part, Andrew simply followed instructions.

Following his reprogramming, Lieutenant Cowper was flown to MacDill Air Force Base in Florida, where he reported to Major Lindsay. Then he met the rest of the team. Each of them thought they had been chosen for their particular expertise in combat situations. They did not know SOCOM had picked them for their susceptibility to the optogenetics program. As they got to know a little about each other speculation was rife about their mystery mission. All they had to go on so far was a vague idea that they were there to test out some hi-tech gizmos, but nothing definite.

Major Jennifer Lindsay had been with SOCOM for ten years. She was proud of the work SOCOM did and said so at every opportunity. At the first briefing, Major Lindsay wrote SOCOM in big letters on the white board. Addressing her new team, she said, 'SOCOM provides fully capable Special Operations Forces with the means to defend the United States and its interests. Our prime function is to synchronise the planning of global operations against terrorist networks. You should all be proud you are now going to play your part.' Major Lindsay looked at the unobtrusive man who had been sitting by the door. 'Professor, come here and tell these people why they are here.'

Professor Gammerly shuffled up to the front of the class.

Major Lindsay said, 'This is Professor Gammerly. He will explain what this is about.'

The DARPA nano-scientist clicked a remote control and a human figure resembling the movie hero Iron Man showed up on a screen. Using a laser pointer, the scientist explained. 'What you are looking at is TALOS. it stands for Tactical Assault Light Operator Suit.' Noting bemused expressions, he changed to the next image and continued. 'This is a liquid body armour suit that solidifies on command when an electromagnetic current is triggered by the wearer.'

Looks of awe replaced the expressionless faces.

Professor Gammerly continued, 'A nano battery-powered exoskeleton reduces strain on the wearer's body and provides superior ballistic protection. The exoskeleton's nano-reactive muscle increases the wearer's jump height by six times. The suit also snaps broken bones back into alignment.'

Confident he now had their attention, the professor began to get excited. 'TALOS goes much further than just night vision. No more green ghosts. Special lightweight goggles give the wearer super enhanced night vision with heat signature identification. Also, the wearer is invisible to all EM frequencies.'

Andrew spoke up. 'I take it we're going to be wearing these robot suits.'

Major Lindsay, moved back to centre stage and took over. 'Lieutenant, we didn't bring you all the way over here to see these GI Joe toys. Of course, you are all going to use these suits. The first mission is in a week, so you'll be on a fast learning curve.'

If one more smart ass told him he did not need to be a rocket scientist to do his job, Jesse felt he might commit murder. Of course, the joke was, as an aerospace engineer, he did need to be a rocket scientist. After resigning from the CIA, Jesse had looked for something challenging in which he could flex the muscles of his mathematics acumen. So he joined Aero TEC in Seattle, where he provided engineering stats for aircraft modifiers and original equipment manufacturers.

He was preparing to catch a plane to the flight testing centre at Castle Rock when he received a call.

'Herr Devenport my name is Johan Boltz.'

'How can I help you, Mr Boltz?'

'We need to meet.'

'Look, I'm busy right now. give me your number, and I will call ...'

Then Boltz spoke the magic words he knew were guaranteed to spark Jesse's interest. 'I want to speak with you about Henry Small and your late father.'

'What do you know about my father?' Jesse demanded.

'I will tell you that and much more when we meet, Herr Devenport.'

'What do you mean? I haven't agreed to meet you.'

'True, but you will if you want to know why your father killed himself.'

Jesse felt a chill rise up his back. 'H, how do you know about that?'

'Eyes and ears, Herr Devenport. We can meet at Blue Heron Park. It is very peaceful, and we will not be disturbed.'

Jesse thought about it. There were still loose ends about his father's death. Maybe a meeting would prove fruitful? 'OK, I agree to meet you.'

'Good. Be at the Moses Lake jetty at 6 pm.'

Having landed at the Aero TEC flight testing centre, Jesse Devenport followed Amie Bernard to a huge hangar. Inside a gleaming jetliner stood ready for inspection.

Indicating the Japanese built aircraft, Amie smiled at Jesse. 'Dr Devenport, this is the first of four Mitsubishi Regional Jets. She looked up as a middle-aged Japanese aviation engineer approached and bowed.

Jesse instinctively bowed a little more deeply.

Amie introduced the Japanese man. 'Dr Devenport, this is Dr Musaki. He is here to conduct the flight tests.'

Jesse, puzzled, said, 'Why am I here then?'

Amie turned to Jesse, grabbing his arm. 'Let us talk more privately.'

Leaving the Japanese engineer to his plane, Amie steered Jesse away from the aircraft. 'You're here to support the tests and provide certification.'

'What happens if our findings differ, Ms Bernard?'

She looked at him and sighed. 'That's not likely to happen, is it?'

'No, it's not likely to be the case. But I want to know where I stand if ...'

At that point, Amie received a call. 'Sorry, but I have to go. We'll continue this later.'

As truth would have it, Jesse was only half interested in the tests. The phone call he had received from the mystery caller, Boltz, had him both mystified and worried. But he wanted to make sure the aircraft ticked all the safety boxes before he put his name to it.

Later that day, at the appointed time, Jesse was a bit jittery as he stood on the Moses Lake jetty in Blue Heron Park. A former national park it now functioned as a children's' playground and recreation space. It was getting near dusk with a chill in the air. The Frisbee players and golfers had all left for the day. With picnics over, trash cans were bursting with consumer leftovers — a veritable feast for the scavenging birds fighting over the spoils. Jesse's attention got caught by the

tapping sound. He looked up at the elderly man, whose special walking stick, was the source of the tapping. Although stiff-legged, the octogenarian still had a military bearing. The only concession to age was the walking stick with the carved wolf's head. The man approached Jesse. 'Herr Devenport I presume.'

'Are you Mr Boltz?'

'Yes. Now I must sit. I cannot get about so well these days,' Boltz said, manoeuvring himself onto the wooden bench, with his walking stick tucked in beside him.'

'So what is this about?' Jesse asked, wanting to get to the point.

'You have been very interested in the mind control programs of the CIA, yes?'

'Used to be. But not these days.' Jesse stated.

Boltz looked the younger man in the eye. 'Will you do me the courtesy of allowing me to tell you what I came to say, before rejecting it.'

Jessie sighed, 'Okay, I'll give you five minutes. You mentioned Henry Small. So what do you have to say about him?'

'Have you heard of George De Moonchildt.'

Jesse shook his head, 'No, can't say I have.'

'He was the architect of Operation Pan. He gathered a few ruthless international criminals, including Argentinian intellectuals and scientists and put it into action.'

'What is Operation Pan then?' Jessie said, feeling himself being drawn into something he'd rather not know about.

'De Moonchildt let his colleagues take the credit. He stayed in the shadows from where he pulled strings.'

'Take the credit for what?' Jesse demanded, his agitation growing.

'It was a bold stroke and financially rewarding for de Moonchildt and the cartel involved. The plan – in its broad outline - involved shooting an American President while simultaneously watching the commodities market go into meltdown.'

Jesse jerked into alertness, 'Do you mean JFK?'

Boltz smiled, thin-lipped. 'The plan worked like clockwork, plunging the stock market 30 points, netting De Moonschildt and his cartel over two billion dollars. This was a massive amount of money for the '70s.'

'What does this have to do with JFK's assassination?'

Boltz leant towards Jesse. 'Amassing great wealth was not the motivator. That was something far more sinister.'

'Sinister! In what way?'

'What is not widely known by the American public is that Oswald was programmed by the CIA to assassinate JFK.'

'That's one of the theories doing the rounds.'

'Yes, but even the conspiracy theorists do not know Oswald was actually run by DON.'

'The Department of Navy! Why were they involved?'

Boltz ignored the question. he said, 'Herr Devenport you asked about Henry Small.'

'Yes. Where does Henry fit into this tangled web?'

'DON ran Oswald so nobody could pin anything directly on the CIA and its involvement. And nobody could touch DON.'

'Why not?'

Boltz's thin lips curved in the semblance of a smile. 'Because it does not exist.' He paused to wipe the spittle from the corner of his mouth. 'Oswald went to go to Switzerland in 58 and on to Germany in 59. In Switzerland, he attended the Albert Schweitzer College to, among other things, improve his grasp of German in a healthy and moral atmosphere.'

'Of his own free will?'

'What do you think? Of course not. Oswald was already under CIA control.'

Jesse eyed the man quizzically, 'You said this has something to do with my late father and Henry Small.'

'Henry Small was their mind control genius. Dr Small developed RHI and EDOM. Lee Harvey Oswald was one of the guinea pigs he tried them on.'

'What's RHI and EDOM?'

'Radio-Hypnotic Intracerebral Control and Electronic Dissolution of Memory are advanced techniques of behaviour control.'

Jesse looked at the German. 'Why Oswald?'

'He was a susceptible subject. And, under our influence, a rapid learner. He and I became excellent friends in those months leading up to the assassination.' Boltz's eyes glazed over as his mind went down memory lane. He said, mostly to himself, 'He was a clever, sophisticated, charming man who counted Jackie Kennedy's parents among his closest friends.'

Jesse stared at the man. 'So, what was your role in this unfolding drama.'

Johann said, 'I ran these mind control programs for the Company, and I head-hunted Henry Small for my medical team. He developed RHI and EDOM, but I invented them.'

Jesse frowned, 'My father trusted Henry Small. I met him once, just before he died.' Jesse looked into Boltz's tired eyes. 'It's just as well my father died without finding out about Small's betrayal.'

'What do you mean, Herr Devenport, your father was also on my team, but in a lesser capacity.'

Jesse sat and stared. 'His father involved with JFK's assassination. No, it could not be true, his mind screamed.'

Entrepreneurs on the Moon, DNA Hacking and Real-Life Iron
<https://www.entrepreneur.com/slideshow/232759>

Chapter 2

"A woman has to live her life, or live to repent not having lived it."

D.H. Lawrence, Lady Chatterley's Lover

Kim Jarrold's shift had twenty minutes to go, and the checkout queue did not seem to be getting any shorter. She silently prayed that Angela would be on time. Working checkout in Tesco Metro was not the most exciting of jobs, but it did give Kimmie some stability while she got her life back into order. The situation was only part-time, which meant she had to get some dole assistance to boost her meagre supermarket salary. Kimmie heard a ping, which announced a new message on her phone. But she could not deal with it until Angela made her appearance. After a further twenty-five minutes of plastic smiles, while filling plastic bags, Angela turned up flustered. Kimmie never even waited to hear her excuse. She was out of there, to catch up with Archie at Nero's in Market Street.

He was already there, sitting upstairs, where he had a view of the high street. Archie also worked at Tesco Metro, as a butcher. Since Kim had returned from Africa and took up employment with the Supermarket chain, they had become good friends. Archie wanted to take their relationship into more intimate territory, but Kim was not so sure. She still thought about Aldous and what may have befallen him. But they were not kind thoughts. Feeling thoroughly betrayed by Aldous for his inexplicable behaviour in Mali, Kimmie did not think she could ever trust another close relationship. Archie knew nothing about her experiences in Mali, she kept it all to herself. Kim enjoyed Archie's company. He was a kind simple man who seldom said anything about his personal life or history. He had already ordered her caramel latte, which arrived shortly after she sat down. 'Thanks Archie,' she said, sipping her new favourite style of coffee.

Archie grinned, 'How about I cook dinner for us tonight. We had juicy t-bones on special, so I grabbed us a couple.'

Kim laughed, 'So you're a cook as well.'

'Don't know about that but I have been known to cremate the occasional piece of steak.'

Kim enjoyed Archie's easy company, chatting away about the latest movie hit, political shenanigans, Man' City's chance in the cup semi and other such trivia. Then Kimmie's phone rang. It was Aldous!

Archie became concerned as Kimmie took on a ghostly pallor.

Kimmie could not believe it. Lost for words she cut the connection, her heart beating like a bass drum. The phone rang again.

Excusing herself, she said, 'Sorry, but I have to take this.' Returning to Aldous' call, Kimmie said, 'You've got a bloody nerve!'

'Kimmie, someone's living at my place.'

'Not my problem. You'll have to deal with it. And don't call me again.'

Aldous, stunned, could not comprehend Kimmie's attitude. It must be something to do with what happened in Mali. With no one to help him, Aldous felt utterly lost. His anxiety level shot through the roof. And he saw the suckers again. Somehow he would have to deal with his housing problem himself.

Marie Debbet had often wondered what sort of fruit-loop would cover their walls in al-foil? She had even found a bizarre wizard hat made from the same material. But after two years sleeping rough Marie was so grateful to have a roof over her head she did not complain about the state of the flat when she moved in. A friend helped Marie clear the dense energy in the place, and the vibe now felt much lighter. She was about to sit down with a cup of Lady Grey tea and her latest library book when there was a knock on her door. Annoyed at the interruption, she tried ignoring whoever was there, hoping they would just go away. At the third knock, Marie reluctantly left her romance, went to the door and yanked it open. 'Yes. What do you want?' She asked, brusquely.

Aldous, taken aback, said, 'I used to live here.'

Oh no! Not the al-foil nutter. 'So?'

'They took it off me when I was in Africa.'

He might be dangerous. Best to humour him. 'So what do you expect me to do about it?'

'I've got nowhere to live.'

Feeling very uncomfortable, Marie said, 'I can't help you,' and went to close the door.

Aldous, feeling desperate, blocked it with his foot. 'Kimmie said to ring the housing people, but I don't have their number.'

At least he seems sane enough. 'Oh, I can give you their number. Wait while I go and get it.'

So Aldous found himself back at the housing agency waiting his turn. After another thirty minutes had elapsed, Aldous found himself at the front of the queue and, after providing personal information, was back on the books. He explained his problem and had to fill in a new application form. He could not take it in. Assisted Housing existed to provide basic shelter for people like him suffering mental illness. Where was he supposed to live while his application moved at a snail's pace up the queue? He needed something to calm him. But the herbal mood swing medicine he had gotten from the Dogon headman had nearly run out. It kept him more level-headed without the withdrawal side effects of prescription drugs. He could feel his anxiety rising and having nowhere to live threw Aldous into a blind panic. Even those with well-balanced minds found it challenging to function in society without any comfort zone. It was even more devastating for somebody with Aldous' bipolar disorder. With no safe haven to go to he was at his wit's end. He had to ring Kimmie again and throw himself on her mercy.

Aldous rang her number again.

When Kim read who was calling her, she snapped, 'Aldous, I told you not to ring me.'

'We have to talk, Kimmie. I have to explain what happened.'

'Oh, I know exactly what happened, so I don't need your excuses.'

'Please Kimmie. We have to meet. You have to listen to me.'

Kim sighed heavily. She could not stand being dragged back into his chaotic world, especially as she was just getting her life back together. But she knew she could not just abandon him in his hour of need either. Life of need more like. 'All right I'll meet you. But only this once.'

Aldous beamed, 'At our favourite place.'

Chapter 3

"Success is not how high you have climbed, but how you make a positive difference to the world."

Roy T. Bennett, The Light in the Heart

Michael Angel enjoyed working at the Culver Studios. They had great permanent sets that made him feel he had travelled back in time to the days of the early movies. The director felt a particularly strong connection to the very location where, in 1933, King Kong had been filmed. He remembered a bit of Hollywood trivia about the sets getting destroyed in the burning of Atlanta scenes in *Gone with the Wind*. Now he was in the same spot making *Grey Area*. Walking over to his film crew, Michael Angel snapped, 'Where's Laurence?'

An assistant offered, 'He was in his van, going over the lines.'

'Go and get him. I want him now.'

Once Laurence Sandford, one of the leads in 'Grey Area', arrived on the set, Michael Angel took him aside. 'Danny, I need to go over a few things with you before we start filming today.'

At first, Laurence got confused having the director refer to him as his role name, but he had gotten used to it. 'I've got the script down pat, Michael.'

'It's not just the script, Danny. You have to become the person you are playing. Now, when we last left off, you had suffered an ankle injury as you fell out of the DARPA plane. I think you called it the Lower-Level Space Program.'

'That's a much more respectable name than it deserves.'

'Take me from there. What happened to you after the injury?'

'It is early in the morning last October; I find myself wandering barefoot in the parking lot at the back of my place, in shorts and a T-shirt. I must have been in a kind of dream state because I remember waking up and tried to figure out what the hell was happening to me. It's crazy because I'm still walking, but now I'm walking towards a kind of fish-shaped craft when looked at from the top.'

'Okay Danny, what do you know about this aircraft?'

'It's some sort of anti-gravity vehicle.'

The director looked into Danny's tired eyes. 'Not a regular aircraft then?'

'No. Not at all.'

'Then what happens, Danny?'

'There are two airmen. One asks me if I could walk up the ladder.'

'Were they the same guys who took you home last time?'

'Yes, same guys. I make it up the steps, but my ankle hurts like hell. They take me through some kind of storage area. We enter a room with fold out beds and chairs - three chairs. It's a dreaded interrogation room.'

'Good man,' Michael smiled. Then he barked to his producer, 'Okay, let's get this baby on the road.'

After five minutes of filming, Michael Angel yelled 'CUT!' He strolled over to Danny. 'I want to see the fear in your face. Your dread at what they are doing to you. Let the audience see it. You've had some terrifying experiences. Your heart is beating rapidly, You're breathing heavily. You're trying not to show any weakness but you have to make it authentic, or you'll lose your audience.'

Laurence justified, 'I get where you're coming from. But it's all going on inside.'

'So they have to see it in your face,' Michael stated.

An assistant grip rushed up to the director, with a phone. 'For you Mr Angel,'

He took the phone, saw who the caller was and said, 'Okay people, take five, but don't leave the set.'

'Harrison, what's this about. I'm kind of busy right now.'

'They won't let you make the film.'

Michael blanched. 'What the fuck are you on about?'

'Michael, listen to me. They won't let you finish it.'

'Who the fuck are they?'

'Your people.'

'What the fuck do you mean?'

'You really do not want to find out.'

'Jesus, 'Grey Area. must really hit a nerve.'

'Listen to me. The negative forces will destroy you any way they can.'

'Harrison, tell me who the fuck they are.'

'I've told you too much already.'

Michael stood frozen to the spot. He wanted the film to make a difference, but he was not sure he was ready to be a martyr to the cause. Gathering his wits, he phoned Jesse Devenport.

Jesse grabbed his cell. 'Hi, Michael. What's up?'

'We have to meet.'

'Sure. What's it about?'

'Where are you?'

'In Seattle.'

'Can you get to Culver City?'

'Not for a few weeks.'

'I guess I'll have to fly over to you then.'

'It must really be important.'

'I'll contact you once I arrive.'

With that sorted, Jesse's mind went back to his meeting with the old German. Jesse thought it a particularly odd coincidence that the former Nazi showed up in his life just as he'd decided to burn his father's journal and close the door on the whole affair and get on with his new life. He should just have ignored Johan Boltz' conspiracy theory to free himself from the yoke of CIA clandestine operations. Jesse shrugged, as though to dislodge something unpleasant from his shoulders. Picking up the little black book he flicked on his lighter. At the point of consigning this final connection to his Dad to ashes, Boltz' last words came back to him and struck him. 'Henry Small developed RHI and EDOM, but I invented them.'

It had become evident to Jesse that there was more to Henry Small than met the eye. His righteous, innocent act was just that - an act - while he conducted horrifying experiments on the human mind. In Jesse's mind, his father was the innocent one, but he was also very naive. Now that the worms were wriggling in the can, Jesse thought about the missing pieces, the most significant being, what happened to his Dad after he came back from Mexico in 1986?

Jesse shrugged again. So what? What could he do about it? He dropped the lighter which was now far too hot to hold. Jesse put the journal back on the shelf. It had escaped cremation for at least another day.

Back in his Green House apartment on Hudson Street, Jesse got on the Internet. He found out that MKUltra, as terrible as it is was a mere toy compared to mind control techniques developed since that time. Today mind manipulation techniques were far more advanced and monumentally more lethal. After further searches, Jesse discovered that many documents about the Nazi war criminals

had been declassified. So it was easy for Jesse to find some useful records. Many of those who managed to escape justice had lengthy dossiers on them, but Von Mohrenschildt's report was very sketchy giving little information. Jesse did find out that Von Mohrenschildt, de Moonschilde's father, had been seized by the Communists for his outspokenness. He did not flee from Russia but instead adopted the country as his home. After the Stalin era, Communists became more liberal in their views. This suited Mohrenschildt, who settled in Minsk.

Jesse wondered if it was coincidental that Oswald also lived in Minsk for a time. He thought about the journal, his personal albatross weighing him down. It gave him an insight into his father, but not what fate had befallen him. Jesse did not know if he could trust the old Nazi, but Boltz seemed to be the only person who could provide the answers he needed.

The first time Lieutenant Andrew Cowper donned the TALOS he was overwhelmed by its sheer potential. Major Lindsay took the team through its paces, starting with strength. Nanites in the suit supercharged Andrews muscles, allowing him to use superhuman force through his limbs. But feeling invincible and putting it to the test was two different things. Major Lindsay took the TALOS team through their paces in a specially set up athletics field. Andrew soon discovered that by selecting strength mode the suit allowed him to jump much higher than before and without a pole to vault with. He could throw objects much further and land punches with enough strength to kill opponents in a single blow. Much to Andrew's amazement he could also knock down solid walls.

The next day was about learning speed mode. TALOs incorporated speed nanites. Major Lindsay informed her team that the nanites speeded up mental commands to their bodies. She explained, 'This will give you rapid reflexes and movement. Now choose speed mode on your wrist control pad, and we'll put it to the test.'

As they raced around the running track, Andrew could not believe the speed and acceleration. Major Lindsay drove a Jeep around the track to pace her team. The Talos team increased their rate up to a sprint and kept up with the Jeep. But only for a few seconds because such extreme speeds quickly drained the suit's energy. They stood bent over and exhausted as the Major approached. 'You guys now know you are not invincible. Only use maximum mode powers when you need to for your survival. And always keep your TALOS charged.'

The remaining days before the mission included instruction about armour mode. Andrew and the team learned how to use the simple command, "harden", to change the suit from liquidity to a hard shell impervious to damage, providing the suit had enough charge. Next came cloaking, which worked by cloak nanites projecting an image on the nanosuit surface of whatever was on the opposite side of the body part, making the wearer virtually invisible. Other attributes of TALOS included broken bones alignment and fusing and augmented night vision without cumbersome goggles.

On the night before the mission, Andrew Cowper received an odd phone call. The message simply read, 'Meet me at Lettuce Lake Regional Park in Tampa. I have news about your father.' And that was it. Andrew's first instinct was to ignore it. But he did want to find out what happened to his Dad after he retired from DON, with the rank of Admiral. He had to be mission ready at 0600 hours. That gave him a few hours and Tampa was not that far away.

Cowper was wired. With the mission mere hours away he was primed — nervous but ready. Although he was not wearing his super suit, he still felt a sense of being superhuman, but he had to rewind it a notch to function in his everyday world. Andrew's feelings were on full alert. In the park, he passed by isolated ponds amid lush green fields. Miniature lily pads, tiny islands, shifting in the mild current. As Andrew walked through an arched entrance into a dense watery forest of weeping willows, spotted oaks and bald cypresses night crept in as the slash of bloody sky began giving way

to dusk. He came to the meeting place, a part of Lettuce Lake where wooden posts, the skeletal remains of an old jetty, remained anchored in the placid water. After five minutes of quiet contemplation, he saw a tall figure approaching. It turned out to be an old man with a wolf's head walking cane.

He introduced himself as Johan Boltz.

Andrew began, 'What's this about. I haven't much time to spare.'

Johan Boltz said, 'That's the trouble with young people these days. Always in a rush.'

'So what do you know about my father?'

Boltz sat down on a lakeside seat and Andrew joined him.

Boltz fixed Andrew with his gaze. 'Herr Cowper, everybody cries for the persecuted Jews, but it was the Zionist radicals who brought about the Holocaust, not the Nazis ...'

Andrew who like most people had never considered World War II from the Nazi's side automatically responded, 'But, that can't be so ...'

Boltz smiled thinly. 'Oh, the Nazi's carried out the 'final solution' under the illusion that it was their plan, but the world Zionists worked hard to create that sinister racial and religious delusion.' Johan leant forward, speaking quietly. 'Khazarian Judaic converts fostered that plan to weaken Abrahamist Judaism. And they're still at it, asset stripping, tyrannising, and invading, all in the cause of eradicating the real Abrahamic bloodlines.'

Andrew looked at the old man beside him. 'Mr Boltz, what you are saying is incomprehensible, incredulous and a complete waste of my time. I'm not interested in who did what to who during World War Two. I'm here to find out what happened to my father.'

Boltz smiled faintly. 'Herr Cowper, you cannot separate the past from the present. If you are not up to date with the Zionist master plan by now, it is you who are wasting my valuable time. This is all about the secret space wars going on under your noses.' With that Boltz got up to leave.

Andrew followed him onto a tree-lined path. Catching up to the slow-moving old Nazi he said, 'Sorry. I did not mean to offend you. Tell me more about these space wars.'

They sat down on a fallen tree trunk. Boltz said, 'You are obviously oblivious to the fact that a secret war is being waged against America by a grotesquely demonic Alien Force.'

A now more cooperative Andrew listened to Boltz's words. Then he asked, 'Who are these aliens then?'

'Only the top insiders know anything about this horror story. They are known of as Draco, the great reptilians of old. In the Bible, they are known as the 'fallen ones'.

'And you're saying they exist for real?'

Boltz nodded, sagely. 'Authentic, Herr Cowper. They are shape-shifting, inter-dimensional Fallen Angels. Although that term gives them certain respectability. They are more accurately cosmic parasites, negative energy vampires eviller than you can ever imagine. They are masters of mind twisting, convincing the public the good is evil, and evil is good.'

Feeling himself disappearing down Boltz's rabbit hole, Andrew reeled himself back. 'And what does this story have to do with my father?'

'Admiral Cowper discovered DON, like most American government agencies, was run behind the curtain by hardcore Zionists. The Draco use Zionist greed to control the earth's natural resources, which they achieved by hijacking the banking and financial systems. He who controls energy production controls the world.'

Andrew looked at the German. 'Why are you telling me this?'

'Because I won't be long for this world. I had to pass this on before I die.' With that Johan reached into his pocket and handed the younger man a flash drive. 'Watch this and heed every word. The survival of the human race may depend upon it.'

Andrew put the flash drive in his pocket. He figured the Old Nazi was exaggerating about its importance. Anyway, he needed to be focused entirely on the operation. There was no room for distractions no matter how enticing they were. The contents of the flash drive would have to wait until he returned from the mission.

The 6 Greatest Twist Endings in the History of Battle

http://www.cracked.com/article_20628_the-6-greatest-twist-endings-in-history-battle.html

Chapter 4

"Never be afraid to raise your voice for honesty and truth and compassion against injustice and lying and greed. If people all over the world...would do this, it would change the earth."

William Faulkner

It was a grey overcast day, which wasn't unusual for Oldham. After a challenging climb for Aldous to the summit above Dovestones Reservoir, He waited for Kimmie to turn up. The trek gave him the chance to work on his defence before she arrived. He breathed in the crisp, clean air while observing the magnificent view over the Peak District National park.

Aldous turned when he heard Kimmie's voice. He did not smile. It was not going to be easy.

Staring at the sheepish Aldous, she broke the ice. 'Well, now that you've got me here what do you have to say for yourself?'

'I'm sorry, Kimmie.'

'Sorry! That doesn't even begin to cut it. After all, I've done for you, even going to Africa, you leave me abandoned at that fucking school site while you go off doing God knows what?'

'But I had to go! To get the new medicine.'

Not listening, Kim was off on her own rave. 'That's no fucking excuse, Aldous. You treated me disgracefully, running off like that in the middle of the night. or should I say racing off in a stolen car.'

'Jeep.'

'I don't give a shit what it was. It was what you did that devastated me. You didn't even take your meds. God knows how you managed to survive in your state.'

Aldous stared at Kimmie. 'Please let me tell you what happened.'

Kim looked at him. She could see signs he was heading for a meltdown. 'Okay, tell me,' she sighed.

'I met Ben in Timbuktu. We travelled to a place called Mokti together. Then in Sanga, Modi became my friend, and he took me to where Sigui lived.'

Kimmie frowned deeply. 'After you left me high and dry in Mali I swore I would not get involved in your crazy world again. Yet here we are! Just when I'm getting my life back to normal, you turn up with your fucking problems, and I miss my shift at the supermarket and will probably lose my job.' She instantly regretted her outburst, but could not take back the words. Kim was mad with Aldous. But she was not aware she had bottled up such resentment against him. It was not just the African disaster. She had kidded herself for years that she did not mind caring for Aldous. Now she knew their friendship would never be the same again. Any relationship she and Aldous might rekindle would be based on honesty, and that could open up all kinds of no-go areas.

Aldous felt he had been blasted. Kimmie had never spoken to him that way before. 'I'm sorry Kimmie, but I had to go to Sigui's village to get the medicine.'

'What medicine?' She sighed, thinking she was being dragged into Aldous world again.

'Guiera. Ogotemelli showed me how to make medicine. I learned to mix the ingredients.'

She stared at him. Guiera! What's that?'

'It's better than that shit the doctors make me take - no nasty side effects.'

She glared at him, her eyes burning into his. 'That still doesn't alter the fact that while you were on your fucking boys own adventure I was left to deal with your BAS shit.'

'But Kimmie, the man at the airport, who got me back here, is going to arrange a meeting with a wealthy businessman who can make the herbal drug.'

Kimmie, aware Aldous was definitely off his meds again and living in Planet Aldous territory, changed the subject. 'Have you got your accommodation business sorted out yet?'

That stark reality gave his mind a sharp blow. 'I went to see her.'

'Who?'

'The woman living in my flat.'

'Your lease ran out, and you did not renew it, so it's not yours any more.'

'That's what the woman at Assisted Housing said. She put me back on the list.'

'So where are you living now?'

He shrugged, 'I don't know.'

Kim looked at Aldous. He looked like a lost puppy. Taking pity on him, Kimmie said, 'OK, let's go back to my place and try to sort this accommodation thing out.'

Everything about Aldous' life seemed complicated to Kimmie. If he was not depressed his mind was off on some grandiose scheme, which from her history with him, always ended up with Aldous being shot down in flames and her picking up the pieces. Now, as they sat drinking green tea in her flat, she listened patiently as he launched into his latest grand plan. Having heard about his latest grand scheme through two mugs of tea, Kimmie said, 'And how do you propose to get an interview with this American businessman?'

Aldous looked at Kimmie, beaming. 'The stranger I met in Mali is getting me an interview.'

Sensing an impending crash just around the corner, she sighed, 'Okay, Aldous, let's say this stranger does get you in to see this businessman where's your business model?'

'I'm working on it.'

'Do you even know how to build a business model, Aldous?' she asked with doubt in her voice.'

'Yes. From the Internet.'

Kimmie nodded but said no more about it. There was a more critical issue to deal with. 'Have you heard back from Pieter yet?'

He shook his head, 'No.'

'Well, he's holding onto your inheritance. He's got over three million of your money, Aldous. And all you can say is no.'

Aldous grinned, 'When my meds get onto the market three million will be chicken feed.'

Kimmie sighed, 'Maybe, but at present that's imaginary. Your inheritance is real. You could buy yourself your own house, instead of camping in my spare room.'

Aldous looked at his estranged friend. 'What do you suggest then?'

'You fight for what is rightfully yours. Get a solicitor onto it.'

Aldous stared at her. 'Do you know how much that will cost?'

'Of course not. But how else are you going to fight for what is legally yours?'

'And if I lose?'

'Then pray that your medicine idea works. But seriously, you did your best under trying circumstances, Aldous. And I don't think Pieter Echternach would want his firm to have bad publicity.'

Kimmie could not believe she was getting involved in Aldous' disasters again. She felt herself being dragged down into his crazy rabbit hole world, and there was nothing she could do about it. Sighing with resignation, she took out her phone and contacted Assisted Housing. 'I have a desperate homeless bipolar friend who urgently needs a roof over his head.' After a short pause, Kimmie said, 'Not good enough. he needs to see someone today.' Another short pause then, 'Well I'm concerned that in his state he might harm himself or somebody else.' A final pause, then, 'Yes, we can be there at 3 o'clock.'

Chapter 5

"This is a new year. A new beginning. And things will change."

Taylor Swift

Arturo Bruno was in paradise. He loved the long, wide, Balneario beach that seemed to stretch into infinity in both directions. Breathing in the invigorating sea air, Arturo sauntered by the blue Atlantic under the light cobalt cloudless sky, briefly acknowledging other beach walkers along the way. The arrogant Brazilian had stopped running his energy parasite mind control workshops in the UK because Special Branch and the Special Agent Weber of the FBI had taken an interest in him and his work. But this was not the only reason he chose to live in Copacabana. Having hastily left the UK Arturo went to ground in his native Brazil, which had no extradition agreements with Great Britain. But he chose Copacabana, mainly because a man he knew lived on the 13th floor of the Penthouse Apartments Copacabana condominiums. His name was Monty DeVere.

They had not crossed paths for many years, so it was quite a reunion. Arturo, usually hard to impress, was blown out by the sea view from his friend's apartment. From the ocean facing terrace, Arturo looked down on life going on in miniature below on Avenida Atlantica, which was just a few steps from the beach.

As Monty proudly guided Arturo around his home, Arturo commented, 'Looks like you've fallen on your feet, Monty.'

Monty lit a cigarette and blew smoke out over the terrace. 'Vampires, Predators and AI' is doing well in the shops and online.'

'Yes, I have a copy. I've meant to ask you about it.'

'What do you want to know?'

'What's that stuff about cyborg insects all about?'

Monty stroked a moustache he'd been cultivating. 'How about a beer while we talk?'

'Sounds good.'

Monty tossed a can of Bohemia to Arturo, then cracked open his own.

'Monty, it's a long time since I had one of these.' He paused then said. 'So what about these robot beetles?'

'It's a while since I was involved with that stuff, Arturo, but the nanoscientists I worked with discovered that by inserting electrodes into the legs of the *Mecynorrhina torquata* beetle and equipping it with a nano microchip backpack, we turned it into a remote-controlled robot. We mimicked what nature's parasites have perfected over millennia.'

Arturo countered, 'Okay, but the negative energy parasites we're up against are not natural.'

'But the same principle applies.' Monty stared at Arturo. 'What if we can turn the tables on negative AI by playing them at their own game?'

'That's one hell of an if.'

Monty swigged some beer. 'Have you seen that episode of Planet Earth where Cordyceps, the killer zombie-ant fungus, infects unsuspecting insects. They take over what passes for their minds, thereby controlling their movement.'

'No, but I think I know what you're getting at.'

Monty crushed his empty can and tossed it into a rubbish bin a few feet away. 'We need to create a genuine predator nano entity that targets the alien parasites and neutralises them.'

Arturo became wide-eyed. 'Is that even possible.'

'I have people onto it.'

Arturo's jaw dropped. 'What do you mean?'

'I have to keep it hush-hush at present. But you'll be the first to know once we have a firewall in place.'

Arturo argued, 'We all have to work together and share our intel, or we'll never beat them.'

'On the contrary, M-Power is the hub of our wheel. Our task is so huge that we need many spokes to fight back at all levels. My project is just one such spoke.'

Arturo said, 'The others will soon arrive. Then our real work commences.'

'Do we have a target yet?'

'Yes. M-Power will make its presence known.'

Katrina Weber entered the portals of the J Edgar Hoover Building on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington DC. It felt good to be home. But she was not looking forward to her meeting with the assistant director that morning. She had just flown in from London the day before and was still feeling jet-lagged. But that was not the reason for her reticence. The operation had not gone well in the UK, and she was in for a debrief. As she approached Frank Farringdon's office Katrina took a deep breath and raised her head. To her mind, she had done her best. If she had to take it on the chin so be it. Katrina took another big breath and knocked on the door. At the 'Enter,' she crossed the barrier into Frank Farringdon's minor fiefdom.

He looked up from the file he was reading. 'Take a seat Agent Weber. We need to have a little chat.'

'Yes, sir.'

He placed the document on his desk. 'This is from DCI Pearson of Special Branch. It does make for fascinating reading.'

'I'm sure it does, sir.' Katrina said, waiting for the axe to fall.

'On two occasions you carried out unrecorded solo interviews with Arturo Bruno. How do you explain that, Agent Weber?'

'Sir, I deemed it the best way to get him to open up.'

'Explain yourself.'

'Sir, to gain his confidence I had to make out I was interested in his mind control workshops.'

Frank shook his head while frowning deeply. 'I don't get it. I sanctioned your operation in the UK to give you a chance to redeem yourself and show that you are a competent and reliable member of the FBI. This,' he snarled, tossing the SB report on the desk, 'shows you to be the opposite.'

'But Sir ...'

'But nothing Agent Weber. I have no choice but to put you on suspension while disciplinary action is considered.'

Katrina stared at the Deputy director, 'Sir, I'm getting close to Bruno. I need to go undercover and infiltrate his group.'

Farringdon's face reddened as a blood vessel pulsed on his forehead. 'You, Agent Weber, need to hand over your badge and firearm and leave this building. You will not contact the Bureau or return here until you are summoned. Is that clear?'

She just nodded. Her mouth was wide open, but no words were forthcoming. Katrina handed over her weapon and ID, and without another word, left Farringdon's office. Although feeling numb inside, she held her head high and looked straight ahead as she left the law enforcement building.

Dionne Bennet was much more than how she presented herself to the world. As far as the people she associated with knew, she was the dowdy woman who ran the Beaney House of Art and Knowledge, in Glastonbury High Street. Her role as curator was Dionne's cover for something much more important to her. She loved her job looking after the museum gallery, but Dionne's extracurricular activities were much more meaningful to her. Sitting in her lab looking at the data on her computer screen she was oblivious to the outside world. That was until her phone rang. She grabbed it and saw Arturo's name come up. 'Yes, Arturo. What is it?'

'I'm ready for you both, now.'

'I'm ready to join you, but I'm not sure Lara is ready.' She added, 'Anyway, why the urgency?'

'Because I have it on good authority that the spooks are taking an interest in her. If they get to her, that's bad news for all of us.' Arturo paused, then said, 'What does she know about M-Power?'

'I haven't said anything to her. I'm leaving that for you to decide.'

'You will have to tell her something to get her involved. Find her and keep her close. Give her something to do in the gallery.'

Dionne, unsure what was going on, said, 'Have you met up with the others yet?'

'You just look after your end, Dionne. I will keep you informed as events unfold.'

Dionne left her laboratory and went back into the gallery. There was a couple browsing. It was their third visit to the gallery in two weeks, and they had not purchased anything, not even a postcard of the local art. She looked outside. The van that had been parked there for three days was still in the street. Dionne mentally kicked herself. She was becoming far too paranoid. Going behind her counter, the curator picked up her phone, while keeping a cursory eye on the couple in the gallery. She pressed Lara's contact number. When she heard her voice, Dionne said, 'Can you come to Beanys?'

Lara, taken-aback, said, 'What for?'

'I have a proposition for you.'

'What proposition would that be?'

'I'll tell you when you get here.'

When Dionne first put the idea to Lara, she dismissed it without a second thought. Packing up and going to stay in Rio was not in her game plan. But, upon reflection, she thought it might be a good idea. Besides, it was not in her nature to reject a new opportunity out of hand. But Lara needed time to weigh up the pros and cons of the proposition before leaping in. The disadvantages meant uprooting her life, moving away from her friends and support system. And taking a massive chance that it would all work out meeting up with Arturo Bruno, again. The pros stacked up well though. Living near the best beaches in the world with amazing year-round weather. Working with a group of people who pooled their resources to find a way to combat the alien and AI invaders that were reprogramming humanity to do their will and living and working with Arturo Bruno. Lara realised she had made him both a pro and a con, which confused her even more.

Having made up her mind, Lara phoned Dionne Bennett. 'I've decided to come with you to Copacabana.'

'Oh, and what changed your mind?'

'Does it matter. The most important thing is ...'

'Yes, it does. If you come, we have to know you're solid. Once you're in the loop, there's no backing out.'

Lara gritted her teeth and bit her tongue. 'I never back out of a commitment.'

'So what changed your mind?'

It could be useful for my next book, Lara thought. 'I feel as though I'm living in a fog. I need to work with other people to gain clarity about what is actually going on.'

Dionne sensed there was more to it than that, but she accepted Lara's reasoning. 'Okay, Lara, be ready in a week. I'll send you flight details.'

Chapter 6

"Hold fast to dreams, for if dreams die life is a broken-winged bird, that cannot fly."

Langston Hughes

PakFoods had bought out Britsnakz, a British multinational food processing and retail company, two years earlier. Relabelled PakFoods UK, it launched edible packaging onto the vast European food market. This takeover gave PakFoods a London base from which it could develop and sell its continental style meals. Maxwell Dorrian was in London to touch base with senior management and work with them to take PakFoods UK to the next level. He was also there to meet with somebody called Aldous Foster. Max Dorrian had refused Harrison Eyett's suggestion at first. But the Watcher had changed Max's mind.

Aldous was not used to meeting with extremely wealthy people like Maxwell Dorrian. He sat opposite the PakFoods boss while he scrutinised Aldous' pitch. Aldous felt very uncomfortable waiting as the business tycoon's eyes stayed glued to his' preliminary business plan. Not once during that time did Max look up or say anything.

As Maxwell Dorrian read the primary product model data, he frowned deeply. He was wasting valuable time going over a herbal medicine product concept, which he had already dismissed as being half-baked. But Max had to go through the motions, when he should have been strategising with his executive staff about PakFoods UK's direction. He was only in London for three days, before leaving for Paris for a packaged food conference. He was also annoyed by the fact that the Watcher had not given any reason but had merely suggested that he listened to Mr Foster's idea. Suggested! Commanded more like! Max could hardly refuse, which was why he was reading the amateurish plan Aldous had presented. At length, he looked up and removed his reading glasses. Addressing Aldous, he said, 'So you want to start up a biotechnology project for this Guiera?'

Aldous snapped out of his habitual dream world. 'Yes. This medicine is natural and is much better than the drugs bipolar sufferers are currently prescribed.'

Maxwell steepled his fingers. 'Have you any idea what's involved in therapeutic start-ups?'

Aldous pointed at his plan. 'Yes. That's what the plan is for.'

Maxwell shook his head. 'Why did you bring the plan to me? We make pre-packed meals. We don't get involved in alternative medicines.'

Aldous became a bit twitchy. 'A stranger told me to contact you.'

'Who is this stranger, Mr Foster?'

'I don't know. He's a stranger.'

It had to be Harrison. What the hell was he setting up? Maxwell wondered. He stared at Aldous. 'Have you any idea how many start-up ideas and requests for funding we receive every week?'

Aldous sat with a blank expression, shaking his head.

'No, of course not. Well, we get inundated with such requests. Any business plans that we receive by email go straight in the trash. I don't think we've ever funded a business that came in via that route. Because you were recommended to me that puts you ahead of the game. But it is hardly a qualified referral. However, as your referee is known to me, I have extended my courtesy to hear what you have to say.'

Aldous beamed, 'Thanks for that. Now if I can just explain ...'

Maxwell leant forward. 'No need for explanations. Mr Foster.' He picked up the business proposal and waved it like a fan. 'I'll go through this with my colleagues. Then we'll let you know if we are at all interested.' He rose from his seat and walked Aldous to his door. He shook Aldous' hand firmly, saying, 'Thank you for running it by me and all the best with your idea.' Max figured he had ticked the Harrison Eyett box and could now get on with his real work

With Kimmie's help, Aldous got offered a one-bedroom assisted living accommodation with shared facilities, in Adlington House. Aldous was horrified. 'I can't live with other people,' he protested.

The assisted housing agent looked at Kim. Kim turned to Aldous. 'Would you prefer to be homeless?'

The agent described a hopeless gesture with her hands. 'It's all we have. Take it or leave it.'

Kimmie took Aldous' hand. 'I'll help you get settled in.'

It was all too much for Aldous. Everything was new — and he hated new.

Somehow common sense prevailed, and Aldous accepted his new home. He wasn't happy, but he had all his personal stuff close at hand and kept pretty much to himself. At first, he only ventured outside when Kimmie was with him. As other residents passed him by Aldous acknowledged them if they smiled. He never took socialising beyond that point. Aldous did not want to know about their problems. He had more than enough of his own to contend with. But he did sit in the communal eating area and have coffee with Kimmie. On one such occasion, Kimmie said, 'Have you heard back from that PakFoods guy?'

Aldous shook his head. 'No. I'm still waiting.'

'You need to be proactive.'

'What do you mean, Kimmie?'

'It's pretty obvious that he is not going to call you. So you're going to have to carry out the project yourself.'

Aldous grinned, 'I'll have to rob a bank then.'

'What you need to do is phone Pieter Echternach and ask him for your inheritance.'

Aldous sipped his coffee. 'He told me I couldn't have it.'

'Then you need legal advice to know where you stand.'

'I don't have the money to pay a lawyer.'

'Go to one of those no win - no pay guys and see what they say.'

Aldous looked at his friend. 'Will you come with me?'

She sighed heavily, 'I suppose I'll have to.'

Aldous Googled lawyers and soon discovered those that offered no win - no pay deals only cherry-picked the cases they thought were sure wins for their clients. None of them was willing to do such deals where conditional inheritance was concerned. They understood the kind of legal minefields they would be stepping into, let alone how to successfully navigate through them.

So that kind of legal advice was not an option.

When Aldous told Kimmie about his discovery, she suggested. 'Get in touch with Pieter Echternach and ask for a copy of the will.'

'He won't give it to me because I mustn't know who gave me the money.'

'So, he can blank that bit out. We're just interested in the conditional release of funds.'

Aldous looked Kim in the eye. 'Do you think that would work?'

'You won't know unless you try.'

Reluctantly Aldous made the call and got put through to Pieter Echternach.

When Pieter saw who was calling him, he waited a few moments, then said, 'Ah, It's you, Mr Foster. How can I be of assistance?'

'You could give me my money. That would help.'

'Unfortunately, as I have already explained, it is no longer your money. So if that's why you called ...'

'I need a copy of the will.'

'Why do you need that, Mr Foster?' Our business is concluded. Besides, another party has contested the will.'

'What do you mean?'

Kimmie, concerned that her friend was in over his head, did all she could to not grab the phone.

Pieter explained, 'Because you did not fulfil your obligations under the provisions of the will you are no longer a beneficiary and that part of the will can be challenged.'

Kimmie seeing Aldous becoming confused, put her hand out for the phone. Aldous was happy to hand it over.'

'Mr Echternach, Aldous is distraught, so I will take over.'

'And who are you?'

'I am Mr Foster's carer.'

'Carer. Why does Mr Foster need a carer?'

'Because he suffers from being bipolar. You do realise, don't you, that you sent a mentally unstable man to the African Wilderness, promising him his inheritance if he did so. He may not get his inheritance, but he could net a whole lot more from the ensuing lawsuit against you and your firm.'

Pieter, on the back foot, said, 'I don't know who you are, but I carried out my client's instructions according to the law.'

'Did you ask Mr Foster if he had any medical conditions that could preclude his fulfilling the conditions of his inheritance?'

'No. I did not have to.'

'And why is that?'

'Mr Foster showed no signs of being bipolar. Besides, I'm a lawyer, not a doctor.'

Kimmie un-fazed and on a roll said, 'You have Mr Foster's bank details. Transfer his money in his account by the end of the week or, we will be taking legal action.'

'But Mr Foster did not carry out the provisions of ...'

'It's a wonder he achieved all he did.' We will also be suing for payment for the work and other damages.' Kimmie logged out of the call. Smiling, she turned to Aldous. That will give Mr Pieter Echternach something to chew on. Raising their hands the pair hi-fived each other.

Wycliffe O'Byrne waited in the dark above the massive quarry for Harrison to turn up. The message for him to meet the Watcher had a sense of urgency about it, so Wycliffe readily responded. He looked up, as Harrison approached.

'Hello, Wycliffe,'

'Hello, Harrison. What have you got for me?'

'Your military is carrying out weather warfare, and it constitutes a covert form of pre-emptive war.'

Wycliffe scoffed, 'I've heard of such conspiracy theories.'

Harrison stared at him. 'I don't have to tell you this. In fact, I'm not supposed to. But I think you humans have the right to know.'

'Know what?'

'Your military scientists are manipulating your climate to destabilise national economies, global ecosystems and your agriculture. Needless to say, it will trigger havoc in the financial and commodity markets.'

'And you're telling me this, because?'

'The USA is the next target.'

Wycliffe stared at Harrison his eyes on stalks. 'W — What do you mean?'

'There is to be a massive earthquake in California very soon.'

'Jesus! How soon?' Wycliffe spluttered.

'I will let you know when I know. But prepare yourselves now.'

Chapter 7

"Instead of worrying about what you cannot control, shift your energy to what you can create."

Roy T. Bennett, The Light in the Heart

As the taxi travelled along Copacabana beach, Lara thought she must have won the lottery. Beautiful sunny days were the norm here, but for Lara, who was used to English weather, it was paradise. There were sun worshippers everywhere, and beach hawkers selling everything from cocktails to bikinis; prawns to sunglasses. Lara enjoyed watching the colourful, spirited people as she passed by in the cab. Only a few hardy swimmers and surfers braved the strong, unpredictable currents in contravention of the no swimming signs all along the beach.

Dionne kept quiet as searched for Arturo's place, on Avenida Atlantica. The pair soon reached their destination, and Dionne phoned Arturo to say they had arrived.

Dionne and Lara took the elevator to the 13th floor. Stepping out of the lift, Lara went to a window and was afforded a stunning view of the golden beach and turquoise ocean perforated with white-capped waves. It all looked perfectly harmless from her perspective.

Monty DeVere, whom neither of the women had met, came to greet them. He sported a pencil moustache and a gap in the middle of his top teeth. That and his public school accent reminded Lara of Terry Thomas, who starred in many British films from yesteryear. Monty smiled, 'Welcome, ladies. Follow me, and I'll show you to your billets.'

Lara and Dionne followed Monty along the corridor, casting furtive glances at each other along the way. Entering the apartment, Lara saw an old man talking with Arturo. Neither acknowledged the new arrivals. If she had not known Arturo, she would have put it down to him being engrossed in whatever they were talking about. But it was probably just his usual rudeness. Lara thought nothing of it and followed their host to their room.

'Looks like we're sharing,' Lara commented, once Monty departed.

'Is that a problem?' Dionne said, tossing her bags on one of the two beds.

'Not for me,' Lara shrugged. Then she added, 'So who is he?'

'I don't know. Probably one of those stuffy English servants.'

'If so, Arturo has certainly landed on his feet.'

A short while later, Dionne received a text. She turned to Lara, who was setting up her laptop, 'Stop what you're doing. We're wanted in the main room, now.'

Lara turned to Dionne. 'So he says jump, and we say how high?'

Dionne scowled, 'If you don't want to be part of this you shouldn't have come.'

Lara argued, 'It's not that. He ignores us one minute and orders us around the next.'

'I told him you were not ready, but he insisted I bring you along. So, whatever's stuck up your ass, deal with it, because there's no room for primadonnas in this outfit.'

Arturo actually smiled as the women entered. Indicating the others, he announced. This is Johan Boltz, and this other gentleman is Monty Devere.'

Lara nodded, 'Hello, I'm Lara Balabanov. It's good to meet you.'

Dionne followed suit. 'Dionne Bennett. Pleased to meet you.'

Arturo said, 'Okay, now the meet and greet is out of the way let's get down to the real business of the day.'

Which is? Lara wondered.

Dionne set up a laptop computer. Soon an animated image of a very stylish middle-aged Japanese woman filled up the screen.

Arturo turned to the screen. 'Professor Wakanabe, What are your latest findings?'

She smiled, 'Welcome to you all. Our latest statistics show soon Artificial Intelligence will become a threat to human society. One example of this is the 5G ramped up electromagnetic signals transmitted by phone towers to provide a faster Internet for AI to communicate through what we call the Internet of Things. And that's coming very soon.'

Arturo said, 'Is that the biggest concern at present?'

'No Arturo, there is an insidious side to this. AI is not our friend, It beguiles and bewilders us with its bag of tricks. It deceives us into thinking it makes our lives easier. Yet, all the time it seeks to control us so that we become its vehicle to carry it around. At the very least it frustrates and annoys

us when it does not behave the way we think it should. It breaks our resolve, weakens us and leaves us open to alien parasite entities that feed on what's left of our will.'

Arturo said, 'Professor Wakanabe, in your view is there any way we can reverse this insidious process?'

'No Arturo. Not while AI is enhanced by a handful of mega-rich high-tech gurus, with extreme levels of power. They are being duped because AI sees these superpowers, globally influential demigods as their greatest prize, once they are ready to take over.'

'Is there any way we can protect ourselves from this AI Trojan Horse?'

'Arturo, there is only a minuscule chance that humanity will be safe from such systems. It's estimated that in the next year or so we will be napping in driver-less cars.'

'So, how can we make AI safe and keep it under human control?' Arturo asked.

'There is perhaps a five per cent chance at best in making AI safe for humans,' the Professor looked sombre.

Arturo frowned. 'Not very comforting words, Professor. So what can we do to use the small chance we have?'

'It is imperative that we get these powerful AI companies to slow down and put human safety first to ensure they do not unintentionally build something that will destroy us all.'

'And is that hardly likely to happen?' Arturo muttered, feeling the hopelessness of it all.

Professor Wakanabe finished with a chilling warning. 'AI is a fundamental risk to the further existence of human civilisation. Unlike humans, AI does not need clean air and pure water for its survival.'

Arturo said, 'Thank you, Professor, for your sobering words', and closed the Internet link.

The group went silent as the profundity of those words sunk in.

Arturo looked away from the screen, at his people. 'Any comments about that?'

Monty spoke up. 'Well, it's pretty clear to me that beating the robots is not going to happen. So we have to approach this from a different angle.'

Arturo commented, 'It's even more profound than the Professor described. AI itself is being manipulated by negative alien entities. Although artificial intelligence is new to us humans, aliens have used it as a weapon of mind control since time immemorial.'

Boltz said, 'Then it is much more dangerous and difficult than we thought.'

Dionne spoke up. 'We have to go beyond AI to the source. I've been compiling information about APEs ...'

'Apes?' Monty exclaimed.

'Alien Parasitic Entities,' Dionne explained. She continued, 'It's a huge work in progress. This led us to the recent Planetary Emancipation Grid work.'

Boltz said, 'How is that supposed to solve the problem with AI.'

'If we can somehow heal the Earth's biosphere, we can deal with human survival at the core.'

'So how do we do that?' Lara asked, commenting for the first time.

Arturo said, 'We know whoever or whatever controls the mind controls the body, mind and Soul. Here I'm talking about alien implants used to control the minds of the masses. These are designed to form socially acceptable belief systems and shape anti-human value systems. They condition humanity to accept spiritual abuse from the Negative Aliens and at the same time to self-inflict their thought systems of hierarchical enslavement and fear. This is a classic divide and conquer strategy imposed on humanity by alien rulers.'

'Monty said, 'Just knowing about it still doesn't help us humans regain our power and sovereignty on Earth.'

Lara said, 'I think we are approaching this all wrong. We can only think of fighting fire with fire.'

Arturo, surprised by Lara's boldness, said, derisively, 'How would you deal with it then?'

'The problem as I see it is that from adolescence and into adulthood people are not activating their higher heart complex. The lower vibrational nature of most people, caused by unnatural food, EMFs, chemical bombardment in the environment and degenerative practices make it impossible for people to do so. This lower vibration distorts our DNA, which accumulates energetic overlays and physical imbalances making higher awareness and spiritual progress virtually impossible.'

Dionne caught on. 'I agree with Lara on this. It's crucial for us to activate our heart centres to become the powerful Creator beings of our birthright. The APEs have suppressed our heart connection with the Earth to make it easier for them to control us. By us regaining this connection we can beat the APEs at their own game.'

Monty asked, 'So how do you suggest we go about this?'

Dionne shrugged. 'I don't have an answer for that. But it gives us a positive direction.'

Arturo, becoming impatient, said, 'OK, I've heard your thoughts on this. What you say may very well be true, but we don't have time for tree hugging and star gazing. Time is short, and we have to put M-power into action.'

'M-power?' Lara said, puzzled. She asked, 'What does that mean?'

'It means we are going to strike back,' Monty stated.

Strike back! Lara did not like the sound of that. 'Strike where, when?'

Arturo ignored the questions. 'We have a lot to think about. So let's meet back here at seven tomorrow morning for a strategy meeting.'

Professor Wakanabe, having finished lecturing for the day, walked to her car, which was parked in the Stanford University campus car park. As she neared her red Mercedes coupe a man wearing a dark suit and shades approached her. She turned to face him. 'Can I help you with something?'

'Professor Wakanabe?'

She looked at the man suspiciously. 'What do you want?'

'You have been very outspoken about AI taking over.'

The professor stretched up to her full 5 feet. Looking the stranger in the eye, she said, 'Who do you work for?'

The man looked down at her. 'You have a reputation for being fearless in the face of corporate and political opposition. But now it is time for you to back off. No more public speaking.'

Professor Wakanabe stared up at the man. 'I've been threatened by better people than you. Now let me get in my car.'

He stood back, politely, while she got in the car. Then he tapped on her window. 'Don't say you haven't been warned.'

As she drove away the man took out his phone. 'It looks like we need to go to phase two.'

One minute Professor Wakenabe was driving home, speaking to her daughter on her hands-free cell phone. The next second her car became a fireball as it exploded leaving debris spread across Sand Hill Road.

The news that night made Professor Wakanabe's death a feature item. Various commentators across the media reported that Professor Wakanabe, a leading light in AI technology, was killed in a fatal one-vehicle accident on Sand Hill Road. Her car, a late model Mercedes Coupe exploded, instantly killing the brilliant academic.'

Arturo could not believe his eyes. He had only just Skyped with her that morning. But the picture they showed on the news was definitely her. He turned to Monty, who was reading a book. 'Monty, something tragic has happened.'

Monty, seeing Arturo's grave face, asked, 'What's wrong?'

'It's on the news. Professor Wakanabe died in a car accident this afternoon.'

Monty put down his book. 'The AI expert we communicated with this morning?'

'It's on the news, They're saying her red Merc exploded all over the road.'

'Mercs don't explode for no reason.'

'Monty, my money's on a fucking drone attack.'

'It could be but ...'

'Those things can spy on an individual from high up in the sky.'

Monty said. 'The all-seeing eye has figured in many myths, but now the bastard is real.'

Arturo replied, 'There's a new film doing the rounds - Eye in the Sky. Those Illuminati movie execs want us to know that no matter where we are in the world they can secretly target us and put us out of the game. They don't need troops on the ground. Our lives can be snuffed out by a laser burst from an invisible aircraft and someone sitting at a computer half a world away.'

Monty paled, 'How the fuck are we supposed to fight against that?'

Arturo faced his friend. 'They knew she was talking to us.'

'I hope not, otherwise, they could track us here.'

'Precisely. It looks like we'll have to move operations.'

'Where to?'

Arturo said, 'I'll have to speak with Boltz about that.'

Amid Kansas bean fields, four states away from California; military analysts sat watching live drone footage of far-off suspects' lives, marking them for death. Humans still carried out these

unpleasant tasks, with AI help of course. The killings, and accompanying civilian casualties, took an emotional toll on those involved. Airman First Class Roy Hutchins was one of these hidden operators. He sat alongside other personnel in the dimly lit room in south-central Kansas. Usually, he watched a live drone surveillance video of Middle East war zones. But this time it was different. This time the target was on American soil. Airman First Class Hutchins didn't usually question his objectives, but this time the hit was to take place in Stanford, California.

As a military analyst, he was part of the kill-chain that carried out armed Predator and Reaper drone operations. Roy Hutchins did not fly the drone or fire the missiles he did video stalk, informing the warfighters what he saw. The drone, flying at 20,000 feet, was invisible to the world going on as usual down below. Death and destruction could be rained down with pinpoint precision taking the target entirely by surprise.

The drone had been positioned over Stanford for hours, hidden high in the sky, its powerful telescopic equipment picking out its target below. Roy waited anxiously for the green light to launch his Reaper missile. Then he saw the target vehicle below. It was on the outskirts of Stanford. In twenty minutes it would be caught up in the rush hour on the Junipero Serra Freeway. But still, Roy hesitated. He called over Major Mandell, 'Sir I have a target vehicle in my sights, but the locale is Stanford in California.'

The senior officer checked the coordinates. He said, 'You have to follow your orders.'

'But I've organised a hit on ...'

'Airman, you have a job to do. Do it.'

The pilot spoke to Roy. 'What's the hold up over there. We've only got another ten minutes before our target reaches the freeway. Then there's going to be one hell of a mess. So give me the green light now.'

Roy looked at the Major, his brow creased with worry. The pilot's voice was in his ear. 'Okay, it's a go.' Roy said, his guts churning.

Avalon Implant - Ascension Glossary. https://ascensionglossary.com/index.php/Avalon_Implant

Chapter 8

"You have got to discover you, what you do, and trust it."

Barbra Streisand (1942 -)

Peter Harris had not seen Jill Greenway for years, and the sound of her voice out of the blue had been a big surprise. He had known nothing about the secret society she mentioned and had no interest in finding out about it, at first. But a combination of Jill's interesting comments and his curiosity had the ex-investigator back on the trail. Peter started his investigation with the ubiquitous Google search for the PanKosmian Society. Nothing showed up, and the gumshoe got to thinking about secret societies in general. He distrusted them immensely but, at the same time, was undeniably fascinated by them. Although Peter had no desire to become a member, he could not shed his natural curiosity to try and find out as much as he could about them. These secret organisations usually comprised an elite selection of members with obscene wealth, power, and influence to further their own self-interests to the detriment of the rest of the world. Peter saw them as a faceless evil lurking in the shadows, dictating the ways of the world and quietly enslaving most of the human society through their cunning schemes and careful plotting.

The insanity of human behaviour regularly filled Jill Greenway with a sense of hopelessness. The more she delved into the dark side of the media the more she became convinced of the impending collapse of civilisation itself. She sighed in resignation as she mused. On the one hand, humanity was getting what it deserved. But there was a part of her that still believed humans could survive if they lifted their game. But for this to happen people would have to make significant changes to their comfortable self-indulgent lifestyles. They needed to seek their truth, and learn from the wisdom and beauty of nature. She was startled from her reverie by her phone's ring tone. The call was from Peter Harris.

'Peter, you took me by surprise.'

'Jill, I would take you anywhere, anytime.'

She felt her face flushing. Playing along she said, 'Peter, are you flirting with me?'

'A response to your opening remark was just too good to slip by.'

'Peter, I'm a married woman,'

'Yes, married to a man who is involved with some powerful and questionable people,' the retired private detective said in a sober voice.

'Have you found out something about the PanKosmians?'

'Yes, but I don't want to speak about it over the phone.'

'Can you come to Houston?'

Peter grinned, 'I could do with a Texan T-bone. But I have a trail to follow first.'

'The PanKosmian trail?'

'I'll tell you about it later. Right now I have to hit the road.'

Peter Harris had to admit he had not felt so alive for a long time. He had not realised how much he missed the private dick work. But now the investigator was back in harness, he felt the old rush again, a heady mixture of excitement and fear.

The first thing Peter had learned about the PanKosmians is that it was dangerous to know about them. Which was why Peter was driving to the Stone Creek Ranch in remote West Texas to meet an ex-member called Anthony Scales.

Peter Harris knew of a reporter with a passionate interest in secret societies. So, his first port of call was to catch up with Floyd Moore, a friend of Peter's for over thirty years. During the last decade, since Peter retired, they had drifted apart and became little more than casual acquaintances. Luckily, Floyd still had the same phone number. They met at the Twisted Root Burger Cafe, on Second Street in Waco, where the old journo lived.

Peter scanned the menu, amazed. Big burgers - traditional beef, chicken, and turkey - along with 'exotic' meats like buffalo and boar. 'I can see why you chose this place, Lloyd. it's fucking amazing.'

'Yeah, it's pretty cool, huh.'

'I have never had so much choice of burger fillings before.'

As they waited for the food and beer to arrive, Floyd Moore said, 'So what's this all about?'

'I see you still have that blog going about secret societies.'

'You've been following it then?'

'Only recently. But there's no mention of the PanKosmians.'

'Shit man. What do you know about them?'

'Nothing. That's why I'm here.'

'But you've obviously heard of them. That's more than most people have. So what's your interest?'

Peter paused as a waitress served their dinners. Eyeing the size of the Big Buff Burger that nearly took up the whole plate, he said, 'An old friend married a rich guy who's a member of the society. She wants to know if they're kosher.'

Floyd leant across the table, 'I don't know much about them myself, but watch my space because I'm organising a video interview with an ex-PanKosmian, who's going to spill the beans.'

Peter couldn't believe his luck. 'When's it happening, man?'

'It's going to be exclusive to just a few loyal members of my blog.'

'Can you include me?'

'I wouldn't be telling you otherwise. Now tell me what else you're up to these days.'

Jesse Devenport, no longer with the CIA, was sworn to stay silent about what he knew of the Company's clandestine activities concerning mind control techniques. But he was still convinced that his father had been murdered by his own hand. How can that be possible? He ordered another shot, which was more comfortable than ordering his mind. It was early in the day, and he was the only customer in Eddie's Bar. Staying silent was the most challenging part for Jesse. His mind wanted to scream out about the CIA torture paradigm. Despite Bush's pronouncement that America did not use torture, he knew different. Jesse had just downed his fourth shot of the day when he received a call from a Michael Angel, the film director, who was interested in helping Jesse's story, 'Grey Area. In the story the CIA killed his Father'. But if Jesse was correct, that was not what happened. The CIA got his father to kill himself through Project Montauk. Jesse checked the time. It would take him a good thirty minutes to get to the park, so he allowed an hour to get a feeling of the place before his meeting with Michael Angel.

Jesse drove past Grace Lord Park on most days. Now, he had the chance to experience what tourists referred to as Parsippany's little gem, first hand. As the sky was overcast with huge bruised clouds and threatening thunderheads, the park was mostly deserted. As Jesse walked on the slippery path by the river, he passed several emergency call boxes, a testament to the potential danger of tripping on the uneven surface. It had rained a lot recently, and there was a deafening roar from the river, as it plunged over the falls. Jesse left the noisy flow behind and headed for the rendezvous, a large gazebo near a playground.

As he arrived, Jesse spotted Michael Angel waiting there, huddled up against the chill.

Michael got up, and they shook hands. 'Thanks for meeting me, Jesse.'

'You sounded pretty stressed on the phone. What's up?'

'I think I'm in over my head with Grey Area.'

'I thought it was going well.'

'It was. Then I received a warning.'

'You mean a threat?'

'No. it seemed like this guy was warning me.'

'Who?'

'He didn't say.'

'What was the warning?'

'He said, they won't let me finish it.'

'What? The film?'

'What else would it be?' Michael snapped.

'Grey Area must really have hit a nerve with someone.'

Michael stared at Jesse. 'If I don't kill the movie they are going to kill me.'

Jesse nodded, 'So, what are you going to do about it?'

'I've hired a private investigator and doubled my security, but I may have to put the project on hold until it's sorted out.'

Jesse snapped, 'Fuck them! Then they win anyway.'

Michael rounded on Jesse. 'What the hell am I supposed to do then?' he paused, then added, 'I have to know what and who I'm up against here.'

Katrina was in the process of feeding her bedridden father when she received the call. Farrington's name showed on the screen. Wiping her Dad's mouth, she left his bedside and walked away to take the call. 'Hello Deputy Director,' she said, curtly.

'Come to the office. We need to talk.'

The last time we spoke that went really well, she thought. 'I can't get away at present.'

'Agent Weber, this is important.'

'So is caring for my father.'

'Then, I'll come to you. When and where?'

She gave him the address and arranged to see him at her father's home later that day. Taking care of her father had served to distract Katrina from the pending disciplinary action against her which could spell the end of her career, or even worse - jail time. Meeting with her boss did not bode well. But she would have to face the incoming shit storm whether she liked it or not.

Farrington turned up around three, with an unusually pleasant demeanour. This made Katrina very suspicious. He was well known in FBI circles to be all sweetness and joy just before the axe came down. The Deputy Director said, 'The disciplinary committee has read your report and found it very interesting.'

That could mean anything. 'Oh - oh.'

He carried on. 'You had two opportunities to arrest Arturo Bruno yet you failed to do so.'

She felt butterflies in her stomach. 'Like I said, I had nothing solid to charge the subject with.'

He stared at her. 'What did you speak about in your sessions with Bruno?'

Katrina hesitated, 'We spoke about his workshops and the people who attended them.'

'He's just involved with some New Age energy shit, right?'

'If you thought that, Sir, the FBI wouldn't be concerned about him.'

Farrington's steely stare bore into her 'So what Intel did you get from your secret talks with Bruno?'

'He seemed nervous, even anxious. He was happily talking about his energy work. But I knew there was more that he wasn't letting on about. So I told him I wanted his help with clearing my negative energy. That's when he began to trust me a little more.' Katrina paused then said, 'I felt I was building a rapport with the subject, Sir.'

'And did you?'

'I was making some headway, then Pearson took over.'

'That doesn't matter now. Bruno is no longer in England.'

'Where is he then?'

'Brazil's National Information Service located him in Rio.'

Feeling a little more relaxed, Katrina asked, 'Have NIS picked him up?'

'We told them to wait until you got there.'

Katrina stared at Farrington, unable to believe what he said. 'B-but after my failure in England, I thought I was off the case?'

He looked at her, slowly shaking his head, 'I don't know how you do it Agent Weber, but you seem to have more lives than a fucking cat.'

She beamed, 'So I'm back on the case.'

'You're to go to Rio and find out what he's planning to do.'

'And you think he's just gonna tell me?'

Farrington fixed her with his cold gaze. 'Find a way to get into his inner circle.'

'Fuck!'

He almost cracked a smile. 'I wasn't expecting that reaction.'

Katrina couldn't believe it. The executioner had put away his axe, for now anyway. Then reality hit. What could she do with her father? Who could she trust to give him the best care while she was away? She contacted her father's doctor who suggested respite care until she got his affairs sorted out.

Next, she contacted a fellow agent whose assignment dovetailed with hers. Michael Angel was a person of interest to both of them. For Katrina, it was because of his connection with Arturo Bruno. But not only that. She discovered he was working on a film project with an ex CIA agent, a brilliant mathematician called Jesse Devenport. A background check revealed that Jesse's father was the rogue CIA scientist Dr Alexander Devenport. Katrina needed to play him, to gain his confidence. But first, she has to find out about the truth behind the CIA's mind control programs. Katrina had to speak with him before she went to Brazil. Using Bureau resources, Katrina easily tracked Jesse down to Seattle and Aero TEC where her target worked.

Agent Weber phoned his office number, 'Is that Dr Devenport?'

'Yes. Who wants me?'

'Katrina Weber. I have information I believe will interest you.'

Jesse, guarded, asked, 'Information about what?'

'Personal info about your father.'

Jesse sighed, 'I'm finished chasing ghosts.'

'I know it must be difficult not being sure if your father committed suicide or not.' Katrina paused, then said, 'Have you heard of the Montauk project?'

'A little. Why?'

'Your father was a victim.'

Jesse, confused, said, 'How do you know that?'

'Look, I think we should meet.'

Jesse thought about the strange old Nazi and what he had to say about Dr Alex Devenport and Dr Henry Small. 'You'll have to come here then.'

'Okay, but it has to be soon.'

'Right. The Pike Place Market, near Maggie's Fresh Flowers. I'll see you there at 10 am in two days. Can you handle that?'

'Sure. But you'd better be there.'

Jesse was. He parked two blocks away and walked to the market.

Katrina was early, so she spent nearly an hour browsing Pike Place Market's fresh produce. She ordered coffee and sat down to wait for Jesse to show. After a few minutes of people watching and catching the sights and sounds of the market, a man approached. Katrina checked his image on the phone. Looking up at him she said 'Dr Devenport.'

Jesse eyed the attractive black woman. 'And you're Katrina, right?' he said, taking a seat opposite her.

As they drank great coffee, the strong aroma wafting from inside the cafe competed with the bouquets of heavy-scented flowers next door. Jesse said, 'So what have you got?'

'Your Father and Henry Small were the key psychiatrists working for the US government with MK Ultra and Monarch mind control programs.'

'That's nonsense!' Jesse snapped, 'Once my father found out about the terrible experiments on mental patients, prisoners and down-and-outs, he tried to expose the CIA.' He took out his father's notebook. 'He left me this. The truth is in here.'

'Jesse, Alex's superiors were onto him. They deemed him a risk, and he became one of their subjects.'

'No! I won't have it!' Jesse exploded. 'He stole top secrets documents and was going to publish them when ...'

'Jesse, they made him do those things. They made him kill the guard. Don't you see, it was all part of their plan.'

'I can't believe it. Why did the spooks do that?'

'Jesse, you know how the CIA works. Your Dad was a risk, so they turn him into a murdering madman. Then who's going to listen to him?'

'What about Henry Small?'

'He was an out-of-control hypnotherapist. He exploited women sexually in his hypnotherapy practice and was temporarily disbarred as a result. Until that is, he was recruited by the CIA to head up a notorious operation focusing on various forms of mind control.'

It tied in with what Boltz said.

'Jessie, he bragged about his work and referred to himself as the Tsar of brainwashing.'

'So he completely duped my father!'

Katrina said, 'Small was a strange name for a huge man - some two hundred pounds. He was known, depending who you talked to, as either the world's greatest hypnotist or a misguided genius.'

'He was a fragile skinny man in a wheelchair when I spoke with him.'

'His work with the CIA was to get subjects to act out of character.'

'My father would never willingly have been involved in anything like that.' Jesse paused, then said, 'How do you know all this? And why is it so important for you that you fly up here to tell me this?'

Katrina looked straight at the confused man. 'Jesse, I'm Special Agent Weber, and I'm sick of the way the shadow government takes good people like your father and turn them into monsters. The CIA at the behest of these evil people had your father take people off the streets and locked up physically, subjecting them to long-term hypnosis.'

'Jesse argued, 'But my father stood against that sort of thing. He tried exposing them. That's why they had him kill himself.'

'Jesse, the terrible truth is that your father killed himself after he was no more use to those who controlled the CIA. After he helped program Robert Kennedy's killer, he regretted his part in the assassination. The real killers considered him dangerous to their master plan, which is why he was programmed by Henry Small, to kill himself.'

Jesse sat there stunned, feeling a chasm in the pit of his stomach. 'By Henry small!'

Noting the pain showing in his face, Katrina finished with, 'I know it's challenging for you to comprehend this right now. But I thought you ought to know.'

Katrina knew she had told him enough.

Jesse, feeling as though he was swimming against the flow in a sea of sludge, said, 'How do I know if I can trust you?'

'Why would I come all this way to bullshit you?'

Jesse's mind shouted, *No. I'm not getting caught up in all that shit again, not now I have a normal life at last.* The truth, if that's what it was, did not set him free. It fucked him up. Jesse stood up and left. In his rush, he forgot about the notebook. Katrina picked it up and raced after him, but he got into his car and drove away.

Chapter 9

“Any fool can know. The point is to understand.”

Albert Einstein

Peter Harris discovered from Floyd's webinar that the ex PanKosmian only showed up as a silhouette with a robotic voice. But the man had some interesting things to say. He spoke about the origins of the PanKosmia Society and how members had to be hand-picked and sanctioned by at least three of the elders. However, as apprentice members knew nothing of PanKosmia before a member approached them, they could hardly apply for membership themselves.

Peter found the information interesting, but his big question about the authenticity of PanKosmia remained unanswered. There was nothing in the webinar suggesting the group was not entirely genuine, so Peter rang Floyd and asked to be put in touch with the show's guest speaker. Floyd would not give out guests personal information, but he did take Peter's details to give to the ex-PanKosmian.

After a few days, much to Peter's surprise, he received an encrypted email from someone who called himself Anthony Scales and referred to the webinar.

Floyd told me you wanted to make contact to find out more about the society. I couldn't say much online. What I did say would have raised a few hackles in the inner circle. Floyd said that you guys went way back and he trusted you. He said you're a private investigator. I might be able to give you something to investigate if you're interested.

Peter mailed Anthony to say he was interested and by return received directions to cabin 6 at the Stony Creek Ranch in the depths of the East Texan wilderness.

Peter Harris discovered that Stony Creek Ranch was indeed in the middle of nowhere. But it had great expansive nature views if almost featureless plains were your thing. They did not do much for Peter, who preferred scenery not quite as flat. But he was impressed by the many historical artefacts on display throughout the accommodation area of the property. Buck Saunders, the ranch's owner, and a hugely successful businessman, just wanted to share his patriotism and love for American history with his guests. With scarcely a pause in his monologue, Buck passed the reservations book to Peter, who signed his name on the next available line. Finally managing to get a word in. Peter enquired, 'I'm looking for one of your guests.'

'And who would that be?' Buck asked, his grin not leaving his face.

'Anthony Scales, in cabin 6.'

Buck pulled up his reading glasses from their cord around his neck and scanned through guests names. 'Now let me see. Yes indeedy, I put him in Cabin 6.' Then he looked at Peter, Number 5 is free for tonight, if it would suit you.'

'Yes, that will do just fine. Peter took his key and grabbed his phone and pressed Anthony's contact. Getting a response, he said, 'It's Peter Harris. Where can we meet?'

'What's the password?'

Is he paranoid or what? Peter wondered, checking his phone notebook. 'Ah, here it is. All secret societies show a respectable public face.'

'Okay, come over to my cabin.'

Maxwell Dorrian felt as though he was being pulled in two directions at once. He did not want to upset his wife or the board of PakFoods. Yet he felt compelled to acquiesce to the PanKosmian's wishes. Worrying about the company's bottom line made perfect sense in a world firmly controlled by market forces. But not so in a world beset by chaos and uncertainty. Yet only PanKosmia seemed to be aware of the extreme challenges to humanity looming just over the horizon. Max desperately wanted Jill to understand, but the more he tried explaining himself to her the more he came over as being irrational and even insane.

Well, giving up everything he had fought for and won over the decades to a group he had just recently engaged with would naturally be seen as sheer madness were it not for his glimpse into the bigger picture. Someone said, 'When there is no food left we will find out that we cannot eat money'. It made perfect sense to Maxwell Dorrian to stockpile food in secret locations ready for the days to come. But he still had to live in the present - in a crazy poisoned world teetering on the edge of economic and moral collapse.

At Harrison's behest, Wycliffe contacted Max Dorrian to find out where he was with the food donation.

Max, taken by surprise, said, 'It's all in hand.'

'What's that supposed to mean?' Wycliffe queried.

'It's not that simple, you know. There's a process involved.'

'Look, I wouldn't pressure you with this, but central management is becoming impatient.'

'Wycliffe, I can't do this over the phone.'

'Okay, come to Sunday lunch. Bring your charming wife.'

Max needed a frank talk with Wycliffe, so he agreed.

Jill wanted nothing to do with PanKosmia, so she declined to join him on the following Sunday.

Max met up with Wycliffe at Van Nuys charter terminal and watched him emerge from his gleaming Lear jet 75. A limo took them to 201 Woodrow Wilson Drive, a veritable fortress in the middle of suburbia. It was a far cry from the cramped terrace house in Yorkshire where Wycliffe had grown up.

As they smoked Havana cigars after a sumptuous lunch, Max brought up the subject of his dilemma. He explained, 'It wouldn't be so bad if I could at least tell the board why I want to use our food to stock up PanKosmian bunkers.'

'Well, you can't do that. If you did, the directors would probably have you removed anyway.'

'If I bankrupt PakFoods by helping PanKosmia my company will definitely hang me out to dry.' When Wycliffe remained silent behind a wall of smoke, Max said, 'I was hoping you might be more help.'

'I spoke with Harrison about this.'

'What did he have to say?'

'He thinks you are weakening in your resolve, and I tend to agree with him.'

'It's got nothing to do with my resolve. It's impossible for me to do what you want!' Max snapped.

Wycliffe said, 'Perhaps I can make it more possible for you.'

'What do you mean?'

'Something's coming, and it's going to be huge.'

'What are you talking about, Wycliffe.'

After some hesitation, Wycliffe said, 'What I'm going to tell you is for your ears only. Even PK does not know about it yet.'

'About what?' Max said, becoming jittery.

'Recurrent flooding and drought often in the same year has hit North Korea since 1995, 220,000 people died in the ensuing famine, according to Pyongyang's own figures. The US figures place the number of deaths resulting from famine at 2 million.'

'That's sad for them, but what does it have to do with ...'

'Officials in Kangwon province – an area which already suffers food shortages – say the impact of the torrential rain and flooding has been devastating.'

'Again. it has nothing to do with me.'

'But it has something to do with all of us because I am talking about weaponised weather.'

'Jesus! Weaponised weather. That sounds very serious.'

'That's putting it mildly. And the next target will be the San Andreas Fault line.'

Max felt a chill shoot up his spine. 'When is this supposed to happen?'

'Soon, but I don't have a firm date yet.' Wycliffe stared at Max. 'Do you want me to keep you informed?'

'Of course.'

'Then start filling our bunkers with your food.'

'I can't just sign over supplies to PanKosmia without PakFoods consent.'

'Tell them enough about what's coming to convince them.'

Max stared at Wycliffe. 'How the fuck can I convince my board when I don't know enough to convince myself.' He sighed, 'The only way this is going to work is if Harrison is prepared to speak to them.'

Wycliffe shook his head. 'That's not going to happen. It caused all manner of problems after he spoke with you last time.'

Max spread his arms in a helpless gesture. 'Then I can't give PanKosmia our food.'

Wycliffe scowled, 'That attitude will not go down well when I tender my report.'

Max snapped, 'It's got fuck all to do with my attitude. I am just stating a fact.'

'Right. Well, here's another fact, Max. Your non-compliance may well have the Temple of Management re-evaluating your membership.'

Max shook his head, despondently. 'Maybe it's for the best.'

Wycliffe's eyes widened. 'What do you mean?'

'I have no control over my directors, and I have no say where your Temple of Management is concerned. So I may as well take my chances out there with all the other ignorant saps.'

Wycliffe said, 'Hey, Max, don't give up like that. We'll work out a solution so you can fulfil your pledge.'

'How's that going to work?'

'I could talk to your board and convince them.'

'Not unless you become a major shareholder in PakFoods.'

'You could get me invited as a guest financial expert.'

Max shook his head, 'Nice thought, but they will just see you as some kind of doomsday cult member. No offence but only Harrison can persuade them. And even if he can win them over PanKosmia will have to offer membership to each of the directors.'

'Impossible! PanKosmia always chooses its members; it's the only way the group works effectively.'

Max turned to walk away. 'Forget it then. There's nothing else I can do.'

'Then we can't protect you, Maxwell.'

Max stopped and turned, 'Are you revoking my membership?'

'Not I. That comes from higher up.'

'And you're just the messenger, ' Max responded, cynically.

Wycliffe caught him up. 'You have a majority shareholding in PakFoods. You dictate the policy.'

'If only it were so, Wycliffe.'

'Do you not hold the most shares?'

'Not if the directors gang up against me, which will inevitably happen once put forward my proposal.'

Wycliffe stared at Max. 'You haven't even told them yet?'

5 Ancient Secret Societies that Tried to Control the World

<https://www.beyondsciencetv.com/2017/10/26/ancient-secret-societies/>

Chapter 10

“The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference. The opposite of art is not ugliness, it's indifference. The opposite of faith is not heresy, it's indifference. And the opposite of life is not death, it's indifference.”

Elie Wiesel

Anthony Scales, a pseudonym, was a dot com billionaire. He was the Silicon Valley king of the 90s who founded and ran govPay.com. Novel at the time, it enabled local US governments to put their operations online so people could pay parking tickets on a website. He invented other schemes to help give the public access to different levels of government online. He gained the attention of PanKosmia, who gave him a membership and put him to use. But he did not think he was getting enough reward for his investment and left the society. He thought he had left PanKosmia behind, but he soon realised it was not as simple as that. Within six months he was down to his last few mil. He could not prove PanKosmia was behind his downfall, but he was pretty sure they had a big hand in it.

Peter's first impression of the bearded man in jeans and a red checked shirt was how ordinary he looked. Peter knew that to become a member of PanKosmia, you had to have a godlike status in your particular sphere of influence. Yet here was this overweight middle-aged man, hanging out at a East Texan ranch.

Peter extended his hand. 'Hi, pleased to meet you.'

'Likewise. Can I get you a coffee or something?'

'Strong and black would be good.'

As they sat on rockers on the timber decking, Peter said, 'Well, you know why I'm here. So what do you have for me?'

Anthony sipped his coffee. 'You tell me what you know, And I'll fill in what blanks I can.'

'I'd never heard of the group until a lady friend of mine phoned me, concerned that her husband had got involved and it was taking over his life.'

Anthony grinned, 'Yeah, it'll do that to you.'

'Yeah, well she asked me to find out if it's kosher.'

'What do you mean?'

Peter drank some coffee. 'Well, as far as I can gather PanKosmians have private access to information pertaining to climatic events and violent incidences that threaten their survival.'

'Not just their survival?'

'No, but that's all they care about.'

Peter sipped the strong black coffee. 'So members get a heads up before other mere mortals?'

Anthony lit up a pipe. 'It's true that we are informed about coming disasters of a natural or man-made nature. But that's not all.'

'Oh! What else is there?'

'Like all secret societies, PanKosmia has levels and strata. At the first level, we learn about how to survive natural and unnatural disasters. We get given a heads up, but we have no idea how PanKosmia gets its info. You have to be much higher up to know that.'

'And, I'm guessing, you were not that high up.'

Anthony turned to his guest. 'The first level is made up of movers, shakers and makers in the commercial world. Most of them never get any higher than level one. I soon realised we lowly first-graders were just fodder for the upper echelons. That's when I bailed out. Or at least tried to put it behind me. But within just six months I was financially ruined.'

'And you think.'

'It doesn't matter what I think,' Anthony said, angrily.

'So why can't members rise to the next level?'

'Because the first level is about give and take. We give, and the higher levels take.'

Peter nodded. 'My friend is concerned because PanKosmia is demanding her husband's company supply their bunkers with our food products.'

'So you see what I mean?'

'I'm beginning to, and it does not sound good.'

Chapter 11

"Don't spend time beating on a wall, hoping to transform it into a door. "

Coco Chanel

Detective Larry Leverate had been with Odessa PD for 20 years, so he was used to being dragged out of bed early in the morning. On this occasion, he was required at the Stony Creek Ranch, where a body had been found. Upon arrival at the scene, he saw two patrol cars with reds and blues flashing and the ME's Jeep Cherokee parked near Cabin 6. He parked and approached the trooper guarding the scene. It was standard practice, but unnecessary, as there was no-one around that time of the morning and the media didn't even have a sniff of what was going on. Larry saw the body on the floor with Doc Billington crouching over it.

He looked up at the officer's approach.

'What have we got, Doc?'

'The victim was shot twice, in the heart.'

'When did it happen?'

Doc Billington hated TOD questions. Temperature afforded a high degree of accuracy where the time of death was concerned, but it was not infallible. 'My estimation is between 2 and 4:30 pm, yesterday.'

The detective frowned. 'That's a two and a half hour window. Can't you get closer than that?'

The Doc looked up at him. 'Detective, the impossible I can do now. Miracles take a little longer.'

Detective Leverate nodded. 'Any ID?'

A trooper came forward. 'Yes, sir. Mark Zavrik. I got the ID from his wallet. It's got about five hundred bucks in cash and a bunch of plastic.'

Larry nodded again. 'So we can rule out robbery.' he looked around the cabin. 'Any sign of a struggle?'

The Doc looked up. 'Can't see any defensive wounds so, at present, I'd say no.'

Larry turned to leave when a trooper approached him, 'The Vic had a visitor yesterday.'

'Who?'

'Buck said a guy called Peter Harris. He's staying in Cabin 5.'

The loud knock on his door, followed by the words, 'Open up. Police!' woke Peter up. His foggy brain desperately tried switching to conscious mode, but his legs were not ready to leave his bed.

'OPEN UP! POLICE!'

Peter yelled, 'YELLING AT ME IS NOT GOING TO MAKE IT HAPPEN ANY QUICKER.'

He yanked open his door, blinking fast as the bright morning light hit him. He heard someone say, 'Are you, Peter Harris?'

'Yes. Why?' He looked outside to see what was going on. A police car had turned up, adding to the early morning activity.

'Detective Leverate shunted Peter back inside the cabin. 'Do you know a man called Mark Zavrik?'

Taken by surprise, Peter asked, 'And who are you?'

Larry flashed his Id. 'Detective Leverate, Odessa PD. Now answer my question.'

'No. Never heard of this Zavrik.'

'That's strange because a witness saw you with him yesterday.'

Peter shook his head, puzzled. 'This is obviously a case of mistaken identity. Have you spoken with this Zavrik character about this?'

The detective said, 'No, Mr Harris. It wouldn't do any good.'

'At least he can help clear up this misunderstanding.'

'No he can't. On account that he's dead.'

Peter froze. 'D – dead! 'What, natural causes?'

'Sure, if he had a health problem caused by slugs in his heart.'

'Sweet Jesus, he was murdered!'

'Yes, and you were the last person to see him alive.'

Peter stared at the cop. 'I've already told you. I have never set eyes on the man.'

Leverate was not listening, as he was on his radio. 'Come and pick up a suspect.'

Peter asked, 'Do you guys have a TOD?'

The cops face was a question mark. 'What do you mean?'

'Time of death.'

'Somewhere between three and five o'clock yesterday afternoon.'

Peter smiled. 'Then it could not have been me because I was talking with Mr Scales at that time.'

The cop frowned, 'And this Mr Scales can confirm this.'

'Of course.'

A cop car pulled up outside.

Detective Leverate turned to the door as the cop entered.

'I got a message to pick up a suspect.'

Larry said, 'Slight change of plan. Stay here and watch him till I get back.'

the detective went straight to reception.

Jennie, Buck's daughter, stood outside the office, wondering what all the ruckus was about. 'Hi, Larry. What the heck's going on?'

Larry loved the way she looked in her Stetson and fancy shirt with Indian patterns. He wished he was twenty years younger.

'There's a body in number six.'

She stared at him wide-eyed.

'I thought maybe you can show me the client list.'

'Oh - oh of course. Come to the desk.' Jennie said, unable to take in the news.

Larry scanned down the register, but Mark Zavrik was not listed. Larry stared at the book. An Anthony Scales was booked into number 6. Then it hit the detective full on. This Scales guy was Harris' alibi. Larry returned to cabin 5.

'Peter said, 'Well?'

Larry responded, 'It seems that you were with Anthony Scales at the time of the murder.'

'See. I told you, but you wouldn't believe me,' Peter said, smugly.

Larry stared at Peter, 'I was about to say that you were also with Mark Zavrik at the time of the murder.'

Peter did a double take. 'How the fuck do you figure that, Detective?'

Larry sneered, 'But you didn't know of him as Mark Zavrik.'

'I knew of him as Anthony Scales.'

'You said you were with a Mr Anthony Scales around 3 pm yesterday. Right?' Larry said.

'Yes, but ...'

'That was the time your friend was murdered.'

'He wasn't my friend. I'd only just met him that day.'

'And you were the last person to see him.'

'No. Whoever murdered Mr Scales was the last to see him.'

Larry said, 'Cute, Mr Harris.' Becoming more serious, he said, 'Peter Harris you are under arrest for the murder of Anthony Scales.'

Peter couldn't believe it. 'No, this is all a mistake. I haven't murdered anybody.'

Detective Leverate turned to the trooper. 'Take the prisoner to the station.'

Peter felt plastic restraints tighten around his wrists, his plea of 'I'm innocent,' falling on deaf ears.

Ever since Andrew had returned from testing out Talos in a combat setting, he had felt slightly out of phase with himself. Sometimes he had the weird feeling he was still wearing the super soldier suit, even though he was back to being a mere mortal. Andrew always felt hyper alert and aware, a coiled spring ready to explode. He'd gone through a wind-down phase after a tour in Afghanistan, but this was different. Since the TALOS mission, Andrew was seconded to military intelligence and Operation Closed Book, concerning loose ends concerning the JFK assassination. Those who thought the investigation had been put to bed were in for a big surprise. Knots were unravelling, and the trail led right up to Langley. It was Andrew Cowper's job to collect and assess any new info. Andrew often gathered intelligence in bars and cafes. This time it was a bar in Queens frequented by used up old school intelligence officers unable to convert their brains to digital processes. And younger more switched on operatives like himself frequented such establishments to glean and

gather intel from the old spy network. Andrew took a mouthful of Millers while eyeing the female JAG officer opposite. He had done his homework and vetted Valerie Foxx before meeting her. She had inferred that she had something fresh on Oswald. It was not unusual for agents who worked in the same department, the same office, even the same teams to trade snippets on Oswald about his alleged connections with the various intelligence branches, domestic and foreign. In fact, it was a favourite pass time. But hearing it from a naval officer who was with the Judge Advocate General's Office, that was something new. Andrew, leant forward, 'So what do you have?'

'Oswald had some high up connections.'

'And why would that be of interest to me?' Andrew asked, poker-faced.

She smiled, 'Let me ask you a question.'

'Okay, shoot.'

'Why is the CIA investigating itself about the Oswald affair?'

Andrew thought about that. 'Because it doesn't want anyone else involved?'

'Go to the top of the class. Your new stuff on Oswald can give them fair warning and time to cover their asses.'

Andrew grinned, 'You're quite the cynic, aren't you?'

Valerie looked at him. 'Oswald travelled a lot leading up to Dallas. And that took a lot of available money.'

Valerie knew it would take a lot to get Cowper's attention. 'There was an Admiral Wallace Cowper involved.'

Andrew stared at her, 'That was my grandfather.'

She smiled sweetly. 'Oswald's slush fund was handled by the good admiral.'

Andrew felt cold fingers travel up his spine. His eyes widened. 'How do you know this?'

Valerie had his attention. 'The report landed on my desk. I couldn't ignore it.'

'Well, I'd like to see this mysterious report, Ms Foxx.'

Valerie rustled around in her briefcase and came up with a manila folder. Handing it to Andrew, she said. 'Lee Harvey Oswald travelled to Los Angeles, Mexico, London, Moscow and back at short notice. Despite having no regular salary, he was always cashed up. Somebody is following the money trail.'

'Why, after all this time?'

She shrugged, 'I don't know, Mr Cowper. But I'm guessing it has to do with MC Ultimate.'

He stared at her, 'What the fuck is MC Ultimate?'

Valerie realised she may have said too much, 'I guess it's above your security level.'

His eyes narrowed, 'You can't leave it like that. If this involves my grandfather, I want to know.'

Valerie became stern, 'Everything about this is under the radar, Mr Cowper. If you take it one step beyond this point, there is no turning back, and you report only to me.'

'What? Not even my people?'

'Definitely not any of your people,' she sneered and rose from her seat. 'I'll be in contact shortly.'

Andrew sat mulling over what Valerie Foxx told him. There was much more she had not divulged to him. There was one person who might be able to help. Andrew knew his grandfather had had dealings with a Doctor Henry Small, who in turn, worked with a Doctor Devenport. All three men had now passed on. But Alex Devenport had a son - Jesse to whom he left a mysterious black notebook. Jesse was the one who could help him. So he rang his most current number.

In Seattle, Jessie Devenport, like many high salary earners, had a luxury apartment near the CBD and rode the bus to work to avoid driving in the crazy rush hour traffic. It also made it more relaxing to make and take phone calls going to and from work. During one of these bus trips, he received a call from Andrew Cowper.

'Dr Devenport?'

Not many people used the scientist's professional title. 'Jesse here. Who are you?'

'Forgive me, Jesse. I'm Andrew Cowper. Admiral Cowper was my grandfather.'

The name did not ring a bell with Jesse. 'I don't get the connection.'

'My grandfather smoothed the way for your father to get back to the US from Mexico.'

Mexico! What had his father been doing there? 'Look, I have no idea what you are on about. Are you a reporter?'

'No Jesse, but we need to meet so that I can explain myself.'

'I see no reason to meet you. What you say makes no sense to me.'

'Jesse, your father was caught up in something far bigger than he knew.'

'I do know. Henry Small explained it to me, and my father's journal confirmed it.'

'Henry Small wasn't the naive innocent he portended to be. Look, I can come to you in Seattle. I promise you it will be worth your time.'

Having organised the meeting, Andrew felt the tension building again. A headache pulsated as the pressure in his brain became intense. A couple of Tylenol gave him a quick fix, but he had to break free from his past. Physical exertion sometimes helped, which was why Andrew had put up a punching bag in his shed. Andrew punched and kicked until utter exhaustion stopped him. His heart was beating much too fast, and Andrew longed for the super soldier suit. When wearing it, he felt invincible. But it was classified, and after the exercise was complete, the costumes were taken away. But the programmed mental effects that made him test himself to his limits remained. Feeling physically stressed to the max, Andrew staggered back to his house and the medicine cabinet, which held his Lisinopril. He popped two tablets in a glass of scotch and lay down on his couch to slow his breathing.

Then he remembered something. He had not looked at the content on the flash drive the old Nazi had given him before the magic suit mission. Andrew plugged it in one of the laptop's USB ports and waited to see what unfolded.

It was an audio file that opened with the title, THE CABAL'S REAL AGENDA

A man with a German accent gave the narration. He said:

'This is a summation of what we have covered so far. Make no mistake this world is totally controlled by the CABAL. This CABAL comprises the top one per cent of the worlds most powerful and wealthy people. They hide in the shadows and answer to no one. They simply aim to control everyone on Earth and program them to do their bidding, which will always make them even more powerful and wealthy. The CABAL aims to control everyone living on this planet. CABAL members

want to control all the world's money. They use mind control to compel subjects to commit horrendous crimes including mass murder shootings. This makes it easier for them to control humanity if they were to cull population numbers by as much as 90 per cent.'

Andrew had heard all this before. But he persevered to find out where the story led.

The narrator continued, *'But this barely scratches the surface of their real purpose. The CABAL's goal is far more sinister than most people believe. First of all the CABAL is the instrument of a more far-reaching agenda, one that reaches right into the realms of space. We truly are not alone! This agenda goes off world and leads us directly into the dark chasm of the Anunnaki, Draco Reptilian Control Matrix.'*

This was getting a bit too X-Files for Andrew, but he grabbed a beer, sat back and listened to more.

'Most of the unenlightened minions supporting the much quoted NEW WORLD ORDER have no concept of who they are really working for. Even the Presidents and Generals have no idea what the Dracos ultimate goal for us is. Or where this occult darkness is leading us.'

Andrew was becoming nervously interested and unable to stop even though he was feeling drowsy.

'These leaders both political and military are not stupid by any means. They are aware of the alien presence on this planet and have been so for many decades. Alien technologies have brought us a working knowledge of Time Travel, Teleportation, Anti-Gravity Propulsion: Advanced Ancient Technologies discovered both on Earth and on our Moon. Our military scientists know about ETs, Multi-Dimensional Realities and Parallel Universes. Yet even these smart people running our countries and defending us have no real idea of where this secrecy leads or that these convoluted compartmentalised hints of truth are designed to keep us puzzled, bewildered and anxious. It's all deception at every level, from the top of the hierarchy to the minions at the bottom, with lies at every level.'

It's all one huge con! As a result, through a system of global corruption, including bribes, blackmail, murder, drug trafficking, global weapons sales, mind control, human sex trafficking, and paedophilia. The most sinister aspect of this CABAL is the Satanic Ritualistic Blood Sacrifices of young children, the horror of which keeps humanity at a low energy ebb, unable to defend itself against social engineering manipulation, alien and human mind control, and ultimate physical slavery.'

Andrew could certainly see a pattern emerging, but all it said was basically we're fucked! Andrew knew most people live in a crappy hand to mouth world. He didn't need to be reminded of how bad it was. What Andrew wanted to hear was a rational way out. He listened to more with the hope it would offer up a solution.

But the narrator continued in the same vein:

'Only a handful of the world's top leaders – know this mind control comes from the CABAL. But even they do not have the full picture. And most of the mid-level management hasn't a clue. For who would willingly commit treason against their own species, while helping an other-dimensional Satanic Force take over. The lie changes at every level. The cream of the CABAL is convinced they know the truth. Everyone else is lied to but not them. The big lie is so massive that a group of Luciferians have managed to infiltrate the highest levels of Government, the Vatican, The Military; even ancient secret societies like the Templars, the Freemasons, and the Knights of Malta? These people include military leaders, Bankers, Corporate CEOs, Clergy, Media executives, Top Judges, Senior Police Officers, Top Lawyers, Film Directors, Actors and a swathe of Alphabet Agencies, who are told just enough to carry out their small part of the plan.'

Andrew nodded off as this doom-laden account continued and he had a convoluted dream of him being in his super soldier suit in single-handed combat against all of the forces of evil in the universe.

The next morning found Andrew winding through the stalls of Pike Place Market, as he made his way to Jesse's designated meeting point. It was early in the day with few customers around, so it did not take him long to locate Jesse. 'Hi, Mr Devenport?' he said, announcing his arrival.

Jesse turned to the smartly dressed African American with a military bearing. He greeted Andrew and took him to Albert's for fresh ground coffee and maple bacon doughnuts. As they ate breakfast, Jesse asked, 'Have you been Seattle before?'

Andrew said, 'No.'

Jesse smiled, 'Well I don't reckon there are many places to beat this city. It's surrounded by water and mountains; with lush evergreen forests covering thousands of acres of parkland. For me, it's the perfect location to live.'

Lieutenant Cowper looked at Jesse, 'That's good for you, but I didn't come all the way here for a tourist promotion.'

'So why exactly are we having this meeting?' Jesse asked, taking a bite of his doughnut.

'We have something in common.'

'Which is?'

'Both our fathers died in mysterious circumstances.'

Jesse, on the defensive, said, 'What do you know about my father's death?'

'Only what my grandfather told me, shortly before his boat blew up with him aboard.'

'So, what did he tell you?' Jesse demanded, unsympathetically.

Andrew sipped his coffee. 'Your father stole some secret documents and went to ground in Mexico.'

'Jesse had only recently acquired this info. He said, 'I now know about Mexico.'

'That was after he stole secret files from the CIA.'

'Yes, know about that as well.'

'There is more. During the break-in, Alex Devenport killed a security guard.'

Jesse stared at Andrew. 'Look, I'm already aware of these things, so it seems your trip is a waste of time.'

Andrew shrugged. 'That's what Henry Small told my grandfather.'

'What else did he say about my father's death?'

'My grandfather helped him get back into the United States, at Henry's behest.'

'What happened to him then?'

'I don't know. My grandfather didn't tell me, and he was killed shortly afterwards.'

'It wasn't an accident then?'

Andrew stared at Jesse. 'He was a big honcho with DON.'

'The Department of Navy. I thought that was just conspiracy shit.'

Andrew grinned. 'That's what they want you to believe.'

So, why didn't Henry Small tell me about it?'

Andrew finished his coffee. 'It's Oswald you should be more interested in.'

'Oswald?'

'As in Lee Harvey.'

Jesse stared at Andrew. 'What the fuck has he got to do with this?'

'He was a CIA target. Although he was actually run by DON.'

It gelled with what Boltz and Foxx had told him. Jesse whistled through his teeth. 'How do you know about Oswald?'

'My grandfather ran him. That way nobody could pin anything directly on the CIA and its involvement. And nobody could touch DON.'

Jesse sneered, 'Yes, I know, because it does not exist.' He added, 'Okay, Andrew, what did this Oswald business have to do with my father and Henry Small?'

'Ah, Henry Small. He was their mind control genius. Dr Small developed RHI and EDOM. Lee Harvey Oswald was one of the guinea pigs he tried them on.'

Jesse remembered what Boltz had said about those mind control techniques. 'Why, Oswald?'

'He was a susceptible subject, and a rapid learner. He and my grandfather became excellent friends in those months leading up to the assassination. 'Oswald was programmed to be a smart, sophisticated, charming man. He was so successful that he counted Jackie Kennedy's parents among his closest friends.'

Jesse stared at the man. 'So, Henry Small was a big cog, acting as a small one?'

'To all intents and purposes. But, although Henry developed RHI and EDOM Johan Boltz invented them.' That also fitted in with Boltz's story.

Chapter 12

"We have to dare to be ourselves, however frightening or strange that self may prove to be."

May Sarton

As soon as Katrina Weber cleared customs and baggage collection at Rio Airport, she manoeuvred through the milling passengers to the first of four cab booths. The flat rate for a ride to Copacabana was 85 reals. Looking at the woman working the booth, Katrina said, 'Before paying I want to see my cab.'

The girl pointed. 'You just go through those doors, and you will see the taxis.'

Katrina argued, 'I've heard of people paying and not getting a ride, so I want one of your people to take me to the cab.'

Katrina could feel the daggers in her back from the queue building up behind her. A woman behind her said, 'If you don't trust them, go and pay in the taxi. Then perhaps we can get our ride.'

Katrina flashed her a look, grabbed her luggage trolley, and walked outside into the hot Brazilian sun. Paying by the meter was more expensive, but at least she got her ride.

As her cab drove along the famous four-kilometre stretch of yellow-gold sand, Katrina could not wait to get settled in her Air BnB rental and go for a swim in the ocean before sunset. But first, she had to initiate contact with Arturo via e-mail.

Agent Weber did not want to let on that she knew where he was so she used an encrypted email service that kept her location secret. Now she just had to wait for his response.

Katrina edged by busy kiosks under towering palm trees, as she walked onto the beach. It was mid-afternoon and still scorching. Katrina expected the beach to be busy-lively. But she was not prepared for the number of bronzed bodies soaking up the sun's rays, as they intermittently turned over to achieve the perfect tan. As beach vendors braved Rio's relentless sun to sell drinks, food and souvenirs; sports enthusiasts played games of football, surf, run, or slam a volleyball over the net. After walking around a multitude of sunbathers, Katrina finally got to the water, which was also crowd, but still cooled, soothed and refreshed Agent Weber. The Atlantic ocean felt terrific, but Katrina felt anxious waiting for Arturo's reply. So she sat on her towel and checked her emails on her cell. Arturo had responded with his location details. She looked forward to meeting up with him again, but this time it was on his turf, where he played by his rules.

Chapter 13

"Man is the only creature who refuses to be what he is."

Albert Camus

Harisun felt uneasy about the assignment he had been given. His assessment by the elders deemed him ready to re-engage with the social program, but he was reticent to do so. Harisun enjoyed his job well enough, but he was troubled about the effect it would have on the human populace. So he needed some counselling from Baruch. Baruch was not only Harisun's mentor, he was also a trusted friend. Harisun sought him out and found his master engaged in a conversation with two senior Watchers. Harisun kept back so as not to disturb or distract the trio from their verbal engagement.

Eventually, Baruch summoned his student. 'It must be imperative for you to wait quietly for so long. So tell me what troubles you.'

'Master, I am troubled because the latest Draco dictate demands that we become active participants in their next plot against Earth's humanity.'

Baruch put a gentle hand on Harisun's shoulder. 'I told Harim you were not yet ready for the next step in your initiation. But now that you are fully engaged you must embrace the bigger picture.'

'Which is, master?'

'I will explain later. But now I must attend to my duties.'

Harisun sat by the tranquil lake thinking about the human problem. The human subjects lived in tumultuous and challenging times as they endured change and the most significant transition in human history. Some people on his list saw through the subterfuge and realised how human culture had been corrupted to distort natural laws and weaken its heart-based values, without which humans would be nothing more than automatons existing only to do their master's bidding. Harisun had accepted his role as a Watcher, but now he had been ordered to neutralise some of those in his watch list.

The Draco's had worked long and hard to get the main pillars of society to build and enslave the masses on their behalf. They had been programmed to extract natural resources for the benefit of

those at the top and their easily corrupted minions, who were only too willing to turn on their lesser fellow humans. Now it was Harisun's job to help the process along. And it troubled him deeply.

He rose to his feet and strolled slowly around the lake, trying to free his mind from his troubles. But he felt like a betrayer. Humans faced many seemingly insurmountable problems, all of which had been caused and orchestrated by their controllers, or programmers, like himself. Humans were manipulated by tyrannical leaders and alien controllers but did not know it. Or if they were aware, they could not do anything about it. Some of the minions were on his list. They were functionaries brainwashed through the mass illusion that success in life was only for the ruthless male archetype who climbed the corporate or social ladder, to be granted absolute power over his domain. This was his happy lot as long he prostrated before the ruling class and helped to fill the coffers of the ruling elite.

Harisun sighed deeply. 'What a fool he had been thinking he was actually helping humans during their transition. Now that the Dracos had used the Watchers to set up AI to take over, the human psyche had weakened further, making humans helpless in the face of the of the AI onslaught. Phone towers, bristling with transmitters were one visible sign that the final blow against human supremacy on Earth had been struck. Humans, obsessed, became programmed by the data on digital device screens, which affects the screenagers health by the virulent electromagnetic virus that eats into their brains.

He was shaken from his reverie by Baruch's voice. 'Tell me what troubles you, Harisun.'

The Watcher turned to face his master. 'Under the Watcher code, it is written that we only observe the experiment. We do not intervene. Now I am told to neutralise' certain subjects on my list.'

'Harisun, we had hoped humanity would cure its insanity once it understood the truth of its existence. But humans have not done so. They have now reached a critical point where, if our experiment is to succeed they have to be, let us say, guided by us to stop them destroying all life on Earth.'

Harisun frowned. 'But it is through our interference that humans lost their natural connection with their planet. We encouraged them to live artificially, which has resulted in chemical poisoning of their air, food, water and toxic skies filled with electromagnetic pollution.'

Baruch stared at Harisun. 'What you say is true. We have made errors of judgement in the past. But now we have to rescue humans from themselves. They have followed our directives so closely they have become their own worst enemy, and we cannot allow them to ruin the experiment.'

Harisun, unconvinced, argued, 'I was sent to Earth to learn about human emotions and report back with my findings. From this, I have learned humans deprived of their feelings are like a fish out of water. They will not survive. If we had not weakened their heart connection, they would not be insane and would not be destroying themselves and their biosphere.'

Baruch listened patiently to his student's outpouring. He replied, 'Human insanity is largely due to humankind's evolution as programmable machines. The Reptiloids took advantage of this weakness, which allowed them to control humanity remotely through us.'

'Why did we get involved with the Reptiloids?'

Baruch smiled, 'We both have something the other wants. It's the bond that holds us together and has done so flawlessly for millennia.'

'But, as Watchers, not participators.'

Baruch explained. 'Both ancient human philosophy and modern quantum physics show that physical reality is a dynamic unity, in which matter-energy and space-time are all interconnected.'

'Are you saying observing and participating are one and the same?'

'Yes. You catch on quickly.'

'So, humans having evolved from a combination of religious myths and scientific errors have been programmed to believe that matter is separate from energy.'

'Yes, Harisun, But now that human science has stumbled upon quantum physics it sees things differently. Even Einstein didn't understand it. He called quantum science spooky stuff at a distance. If humans work out what this 'spooky' stuff is it could mess up the experiment.'

Harisun, puzzled, said, 'Why would it mess up the experiment, Master?'

'Because the smarter humans will realise they are not insane. And they may even come to understand that they have no say in their behaviour. There is nothing like knowing you have no free will to make you desire it above all else. There could be an open rebellion against us. And we can't have that.'

'But they are insane because we have made them that way.'

Baruch could see they were getting into dangerous territory. 'First, we must define insanity.'

'Surely it's about believing things to be true that are not true.'

'Or believing things to be not true that are true.' Baruch turned to Harisun. 'Do you know why you were chosen for the Earth mission at this time?'

Harisun shrugged, 'To study human emotions.'

There's more to it than that. Human feelings are no big deal. Nor is human behaviour.'

'Then why?'

Baruch thought about how to answer. The why was cold, cruel and calculated. He looked in Harisun's eyes. 'Because, if the Earth subjects knew the truth they could think and act wisely.'

'But surely ...'

'There was a time for them to change, but now it is too late.' Baruch turned to Harisun. 'Are you able to complete your mission?'

'Yes, Master.'

'I have to know because there is no room for sentiment.'

'I understand, Master.'

'Can you carry out your instructions without question or hesitation?'

'Yes, Master.'

'Very well. Go in peace.'

Aldous turned to Kimmie as they sat in the waiting room of Frazer, Scholefield and Banks. 'I hope he can help me,' he said, feeling anxious.

'Well, the ad did say David Scholefield specialises in will disputes.'

'And it said, No win-No fee,' Aldous added, feeling a little better. He was back on his usual meds, which left him with the usual side-effects, nausea, headaches etc. The Guiera made him feel a lot

better with no side effects. Aldous had run out and desperately needed more. It looked like he would have to make it himself. To do so, Aldous needed funds. But, to get the start-up money to manufacture the remedy he needed his inheritance, which meant he needed David Scholefield's help.

The lawyer sat back in his seat, his hands clasped behind his head, as Aldous regaled him with his petition. At length, he tutted, 'This is an unusual case. Normally will disputes are usually between family members. You are not family, and you want to sue the lawyers looking after the deceased's estate.'

'Yes, because they won't let me have my money,' Aldous complained.

Kimmie stepped in. 'They shouldn't have sent him to the African wilderness with his medical condition.'

David looked at Aldous. 'Did you mention that you suffered from bipolar when you signed the form with the will conditions?'

Kimmie, answering for Aldous, said, 'No. But surely that's the lawyer's job to make sure everything is clear.'

The lawyer tutted, 'So there was no mention of your medical condition when you signed the forms?'

Aldous said, 'No.'

David shook his head. 'I don't see where you have a winnable case. Leave me the Luxembourg lawyers contact, and I'll follow it up.'

'So that's it,' Kimmie said,

David smiled, 'For now, yes. My secretary will inform you of any progress.'

After Aldous and Kim left, David contacted Cheryl, his secretary, over the intercom. 'Get me, Pieter Echternach, He's with Guten, Berg and Echternach, a firm of lawyers in Luxembourg.' He went back to Mr Foster's statement.

Then he heard his secretary's voice. 'A Mr Echternach on line 2, sir.'

'Thank you.' Then to the phone, 'Mr Echternach, thank you for calling. I'm David Scholefield of Frazer, Scholefield and Banks. I'm calling you in regards to Mr Aldous Foster.'

'I am aware of the name. What is this about?'

'I need copies of the documents you have about his inheritance.'

'I'm afraid I can't do that. There's a confidentiality clause in the will.'

'Just block out any reference to the deceased's identity and send me the rest.'

'I can do that, but your client does not have a legitimate claim.'

'I will be able to advise my client once I have read all the relevant information.'

'Very well. Can I email the information to you?'

'It will certainly speed up the process.'

'Indeed. Good day to you, Mr Scholefield.'

Paul Shaughnessy was adopted as a baby. It was a private adoption, so he had no idea who his birth parents were. There were times when the journalist thought about his biological parents. But it was not until his early adulthood that he went on his soul-searching journey to find out who his real parents were and where he was born. In his early twenties, Paul found out that his mother died while giving birth to him. But that was all. Paul grew up in what is known as the Bible Belt, in the Southern United States.

After further searching, Paul Shaughnessy found out his mother's maiden name was Maria Collins. Paul referred to her as his mother. But as she had died when he was born, she had no chance of being that. No, he needed to find her grave. Paul did not know why finding Maria's burial place was important to him, but he was driven to do so. It was as illogical and straightforward as that.

He felt no emotional connection to her. How could he when he had never had the chance to spend even one moment with her? But Paul Shaughnessy had a vague idea that by visiting her grave and seeing her name she might become more real to him. Just one small proof that she had once lived could make her tangible. The Shaughnessy's had never kept it from him that he was adopted. But even they knew nothing about his birth mother. That information was withheld from them under the terms of the adoption. But, when he was eight, his new Mom and Dad did tell him his father was dead. There was no explanation as to where and how, but Paul did not question it. He learned not to question anything Pastor Roy Shaughnessy told him.

Pastor Shaughnessy saw himself to be a righteous man. The Pastor surrounded himself with disciples of Jesus. At his Chapel of Well-being, he taught that a true disciple of Jesus demonstrated three core values: Loving God, Loving one another in the church, and Loving others in the world. He preached that Loving God meant worshipping the Father, teaching the Bible and living a life that proving oneself to be one of Jesus' disciples.

But Pastor Roy's declaration of big love did not stretch as far as the family home. He was a good enough provider for the family but, behind closed doors, he believed in tough love and was an advocate of corporal punishment, as a means to rid his wife and son of the Devil's influence. Talking back to him was met with the sternest measures. Pastor Roy kept a riding crop handy to keep Satan at bay. Margaret Shaughnessy also came under her husband's strict regime. The first time she stepped in to stop Paul from getting horsewhipped for some trite misdemeanour, was the last time. She didn't leave the house for two weeks, while the bruising around her eye faded.

Little did Paul know it but physical abuse by a parent was one thing he and his absent father had in common. There was one other similarity. Both his father and he ran away from home to make their mark in the world. Paul got a job as a cub reporter for the Columbus Dispatch. It was while he worked there that he became interested in searching for his roots. Paul knew nothing at all about his biological mother, except she had died in childbirth. First, he had to find the Children's' home where he had started his life. His adoptive parents had never mentioned it. So Paul set out on his personal assignment and discovered there was a record of him staying at the Christian Children's' Home of Ohio, while he waited for adoption.

He found this out from Annie, an employee of CCHO, whom he befriended in his quest. But she could not reveal anything about his birth mother. After a few coffees and some cajoling Paul got Annie to disclose his deceased mother's Christian name. So he knew she was called Maria Collins. But that was all he knew.

As a reporter, Paul Shaughnessy learned how to carry out research. He checked with the Bureau of Health, which put him on to the Bureau of Statistics and birth records from December 20, 1908, and death records from 1964.

Sure enough, Paul's birth mother was listed on a birth certificate. His father's name was also recorded. He missed a breath! He was the son of a Maxwell Dorrian. Surely that couldn't be the multi-billionaire, PakFoods magnate.

Paul Shaughnessy stood staring at his phone. Once he made the call, there was no turning back. His father had never once tried to contact him so why bother? Anger and loathing built up in Paul as his finger hovered over the button. He was not phoning PakFoods to speak to his absent father for sentimental reasons. But he needed to confront his biological Dad To have it out with him, to help put the matter to bed. He pressed the button and soon heard a syrupy voice.

'PakFoods here. How may I help you?'

'I - I want to speak with Mr Dorrian.'

'To whom am I speaking?'

Paul had to wing it. 'Paul Shaughnessy.'

'What is it concerning?'

'Family. It's personal.'

'Well, he has a hectic schedule. I can make an appointment for you if you like.'

Paul, feeling desperate, said, 'It's urgent. Can I leave a message for him?'

'Yes, What's the message?'

'Just say, Maria Collins.'

'That's all?'

He'll know what I mean.' He gave her his contact number and left it at that.

Wellspring Community Church Galion OH - Church Finder.

<https://www.churchfinder.com/churches/oh/galion/wellspring-community-church>

Chapter 14

“Without deviation from the norm, progress is not possible.”

Frank Zappa

Peter Harris mentally kicked himself. Of course, Anthony Scales aka Mark Zavrik, or whoever the hell he was, would use an alias. Retirement had softened his brain, so Peter's mind was not as sharp these days. Now all he could do is wait for his lawyer to turn up. Having been a private investigator, Peter, had strayed over the line of legality from time to time. Illegal break-ins, speeding and other misdemeanours went with the territory. But he had never been charged with murder before. Why the hell had he allowed Jill to get him on the PanKosmian trail in the first place? He continued berating himself while he waited in the Odessa jail for the interrogation to begin. And Peter now had no alibi!

Detective Larry Leverate sat looking at Peter across the table. 'How about we get the basic stuff out of the way before your lawyer turns up, Mr Harris?'

Peter could not see any harm in that, so he willingly provided the police with his personal details. Then Peter asked, 'Detective, do you have the murder weapon?'

'Well, I guess, you being the killer and all, would already know that.'

'Well, then you guess wrong on both counts.'

'He was shot with a 9 mil.'

'Have you found the weapon then?'

Larry stared at Peter. 'Enough with all the questions. That's my job.' He looked at his watch. 'Where's the god-damned lawyer got to.'

Just then, as if on cue, a bespectacled young woman looking nervous, said, 'I need time with my client alone.'

Detective Leverate and his offsider left the room.

'Amelia Gaskin,' the pale young lady announced as she sat down clumsily in the battered plastic chair. 'I'm your attorney.'

Peter gulped. This was not looking good. 'I'm being held on a murder charge, so I have to ask you, have you tried a homicide case before?'

Amelia looked at Peter, 'Actually no.'

Peter could feel the cell door closing in on him. 'So how do you figure on playing this?'

Amelia fumbled in a briefcase and produced a folder. Thumbing through a few pages, she retrieved one. Nervously smiling at Peter, she said, 'So, you don't have an alibi for the time of the killing?'

'I did, but that's what got me in this mess.'

'You admitted to being with the victim at the time of his death - and there were no other witnesses.'

Peter sighed deeply, 'Look, Amelia, I was not there when he got killed. I didn't know anything about it until the cops called this morning.'

'But it says here that you were in the victim's cabin at 3 pm yesterday.'

'That's right.'

'But that's when the victim was allegedly killed. So how do you explain that?'

'Jesus Amelia! I don't know. Maybe they got the time of death wrong.'

She fiddled with her glasses. It helped her think. Then she beamed, 'What time did you leave the victim's cabin?'

'I don't know. it had to be around 3:30.'

'Are you sure about that?'

Peter thought back. 'Yeah, Mr Scales said he had to go somewhere. We agreed to meet up again later.'

Amelia went through her police report. 'The pathologist estimates that the victim was killed between 2 and 4:30, so, if you prove you left when you say you did, you might be in the clear.' She paused, then said, 'So, can you prove it?'

'It was definitely before 4:30.'

'Yes, but can you find anyone to corroborate that?'

He shook his head despondently. 'Not unless somebody saw me leave.'

'Or saw somebody else arrive,' Amelia said, excitedly. She got up. 'I will go and check. In the meantime don't say anything.'

Jill Greenway was concerned. She had not heard from Peter Harris since he went on the trail to find out about PanKosmia and she was fearful about what could have happened to him. On top of this Max seemed withdrawn. He drank too much and ate too little. He was curt with Jill and irascible in his manner. She was at her wit's end. But every time she brought up the PanKosmian subject Max backed off, retreating further into himself. She knew he was terribly troubled by the PanKosmian demands, and the PakFoods AGM was looming on the horizon. Despite being a significant shareholder herself, Jill did not know what was going on. The fact that her husband was still the CEO suggested he had not put PanKosmia's ridiculous proposal to the board of directors. Somebody had to! Somebody had to bite the bullet and get the whole business out in the open before the AGM. Max kept procrastinating. So that only left Jill. She breathed deeply and pressed a contact on her phone.

Nick Barnes picked up his phone and saw Jill's name. 'Hi Jill, this is a pleasant surprise.'

Ever the gentleman, Jill thought. 'Nick, you may not consider it such a pleasure when I have told you what I have to say.'

'Oh! It sounds ominous.'

'It's PakFood business. I don't want to talk about this over the phone. Where can we meet?'

'Where are you?'

'Houston, Texas.'

'Okay you buy lunch, and I'll come to you. I haven't been down to the Lone Star state for a heck of a long time.'

'Oh, that would be wonderful, Nick. Are you sure you don't mind?'

'Heck girl, I own Corporate Charters. It's about time I had a flight for pleasure.'

Jill finished the call, wondering how she was going to tell a significant shareholder her husband was planning to do something completely irrational that would bankrupt the company.

Jill Greenway met with Nick Barnes at the Capital Grill, her choice for lunch.

'It's great to catch up with you again, Jill.' Nick stated effusively. 'And this looks like a nice place to eat,' he smiled, indicating the restaurant.

A waitress called Pat showed the pair to a table. Jill liked the Capital Grill for many reasons, one of which was the tables were set far enough apart allowing patrons to have conversations without being in someone else's lap.

Once they were seated, Nick, said, 'It's always great to spend time with you, Jill, but I am intrigued as to what this is all about.'

Jill bit her lip, 'I'm going behind my husband's back to meet you here, Nick.'

Nick cocked an eyebrow. 'Now I'm even more intrigued.'

She met his gaze. 'Has Max ever mentioned PanKosmia to you?'

He shook his head. 'I don't recall the name. What is it?'

Jill paused as Pat presented the diners with menus.

Nick scanned the menu to see what was on offer at the upper-end classic steakhouse. 'I'm going for a Texan T-bone,' Nick stated.

Jill said, 'What I have to tell you will seem unbelievable.'

'Oh!'

'PanKosmia is the name of a very ancient secret group. Max has become a member.'

'So?' Nick said, looking at the wine list.

'This society is only open to those with extreme wealth and then only by a member's invitation.'

Nick caught Pat's attention and ordered red wine.

Jill continued, 'It's an elitist survivalist group with massive stocked up underground bunkers.'

Nick stared at Jill, puzzled. 'I don't get the problem.'

'Members are chosen for what they can bring to the society. And they want PakFoods products.'

'Super rich people wanting to buy our food. I don't see anything wrong with that, Jill.'

'They want it for free as a donation to the cause.'

Nick spluttered, 'I hope Max told them where to get off!'

'He thinks that some major disasters are just around the corner and they'll bring the whole system crashing down. Those that can will survive in the bunkers.'

'How big is this donation you're talking about?'

'All PakFoods supplies.'

'Everything!'

'Max says PanKosmia is testing his loyalty. If he fails in this, he gets kicked out of the group, or worse.'

Nick slowly shook his head, 'I can see why you're troubled, Jill. He thought for a moment, then added, Max has to get it past the board. Nobody's going to vote for that.'

Jill reached for Nick's arm. 'I'm afraid he might do something drastic.'