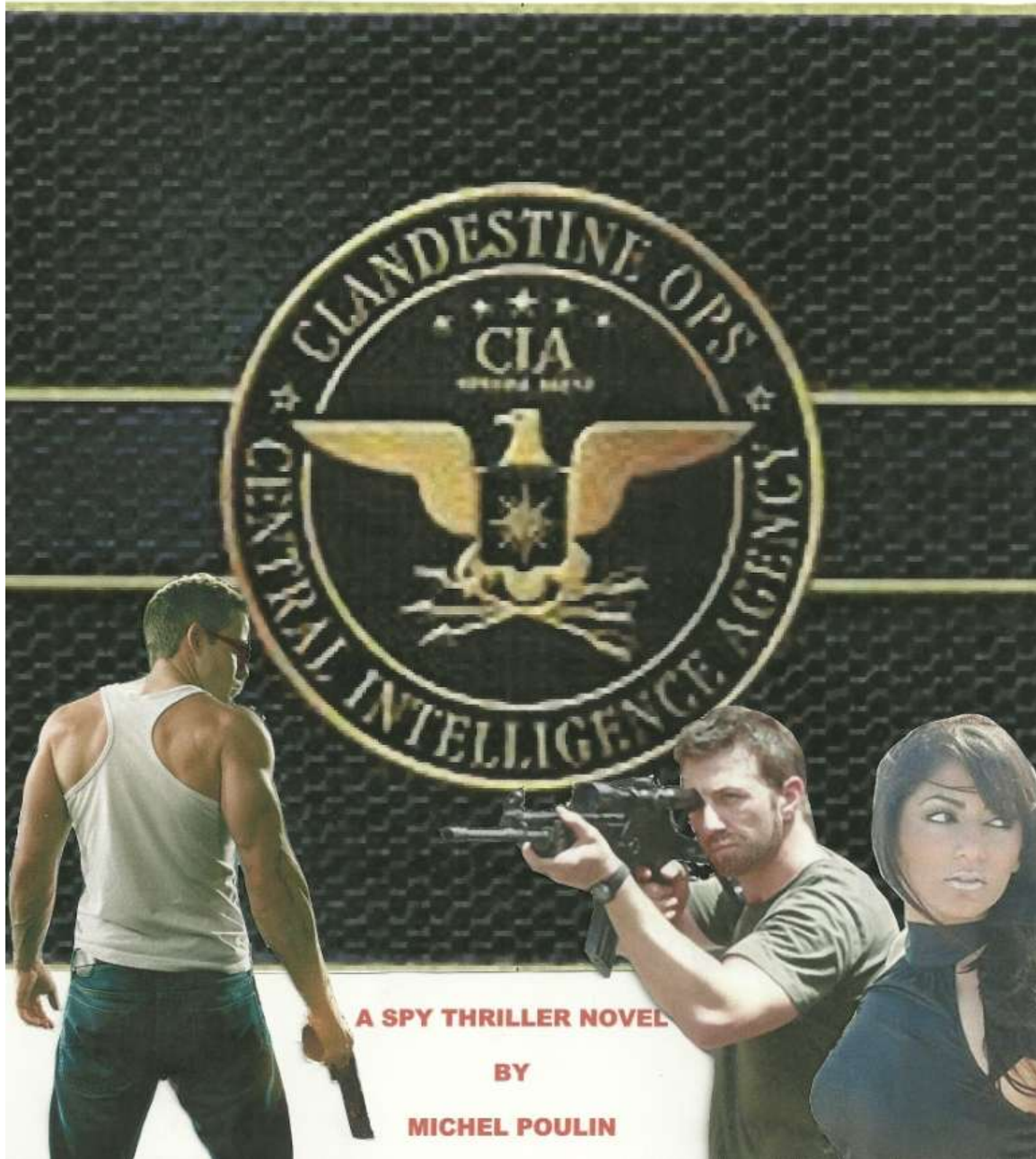


FRIENDS AND FOES



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A Spy thriller novel

By Michel Poulin

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WARNING TO POTENTIAL READERS

THIS FICTION NOVEL CONTAINS GRAPHIC DESCRIPTIONS OF VIOLENCE AND SEX, AS WELL AS COARSE LANGUAGE AND CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECTS THAT ARE UNSUITABLE FOR CHILDREN. THIS IS A WORK OF FICTION AND WORDS OR DEEDS ATTRIBUTED IN IT TO PERSONS WHO EXIST ARE STRICTLY FICTICIOUS.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank two of my close friends, Yves Dorval and Jason Terlecki, who developed the characters of Dean Price and Erik Johnson for a role-playing game we played together. I would also like to thank profusely another friend, Tyler Donoghue, who graciously offered his time to proofread my draft novel for me.

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CHAPTER 1 – ASSETS

17:28 (Washington Time)

Sunday, May 24, 2015

Apartment 336, residential building

North Utah Street, Ballston

Virginia, U.S.A.

Cynthia Wilson smiled widely to the handsome man who opened the apartment door on which she had just knocked: Dean Price was a fit, muscular man standing six foot tall, with brown hair cut very short, brown eyes and a square, resolute jaw. In short, what a woman could call a real man. Cynthia knew that he was 31 years old and that he was some sort of federal employee but, having met him only on brief occasions as they crossed path while going in or out of their apartment building, she actually knew little about him. The one thing she knew was that Dean Price was to her taste and she was hoping to learn more about him this evening. Dean smiled in return to the young and pretty university graduate and political secretary.

“Come in, Cynthia! Make yourself at home.”

Cynthia obliged him at once, walking inside a lounge furnished with comfortable but relatively inexpensive furniture. Dean, like her, was probably part of what would be called the middle class in the Washington, D.C. area. Cynthia's nose caught at once an appetizing smell coming from the kitchen of the apartment.

“Hmm, this smells good! What are you preparing for supper, Dean?”

“A Cajun seafood three course meal. I however kept the spicing to a moderate level: I wouldn't want to put a nice girl like you on fire, right?”

The 24 year-old blonde grinned at his choice of words.

“And what tells you that I am not already on fire, Dean?”

Dean's smile widened and he stepped closer to her, but still didn't touch her.

“Well, we could discuss about that later, Cynthia. Would you like to drink something? I have a bottle of nice chilled rosé wine.”

“The rosé wine will do just fine, Dean.”

“Then, make yourself comfortable on the sofa while I prepare our drinks.”

Sitting in the black leather sofa of the lounge, Cynthia looked around at the decoration of the room as Dean disappeared in his kitchen. There were actually few decorations in the lounge, with an old flintlock pistol hooked on a wall being the most prominent object in sight. There were also a few small framed pictures, one showing a graying couple and another showing a smiling Dean Price crouching besides an obviously dead bear and holding a big revolver. Cynthia pointed the last picture to Dean when he returned with two cups of wine in his hands.

"You are a hunter, Dean?"

"Yup!" Said proudly her host while handing her a cup before sitting down besides her on the sofa. "I bagged that big sucker in Alaska last Fall. One shot right through the heart as it stood on its rear legs to try to scare me away."

"It must take quite a powerful gun to kill a beast like that, no?"

"Effectively! I used my new Smith & Wesson Model 500 revolver, chambered for the .500 Smith & Wesson Magnum caliber. When you have a big Grizzly this close to you, you better make sure to kill it quickly if you don't want to be shred to pieces."

Cynthia shivered at the thought of finding herself facing such a beast.

"I must say that I would probably run away in panic if faced with a big bear like that."

"Then, you would end up dead." Said Dean in a more sober tone. "Running away from an attacking bear is about the worst thing you could do and bears can run faster than most men...or women. You either stand your ground while hiding your fear, or you climb up a tree solid enough that the bear can't break it down."

Cynthia then looked into Dean's eyes, herself sobering down.

"Were you scared then, Dean?"

"Yes, a bit. A man who pretends to never be scared is either a liar or an idiot. That bear actually took me by surprise and came out from behind a big rock as I was pitching my tent for the night."

His answer made Cynthia smile, while she patted his chest with her left hand.

"Many men I know would have pretended not to be scared. I like men who give honest answers."

Dean smiled in turn and raised his cup of wine.

"Then, let's drink to honest people."

They knocked their glasses together and took a sip before Cynthia snuggled closer to Dean.

"Tell me more about you, Dean. I don't even know yet what kind of work you do."

"Oh, there isn't much to it, really." Lied Dean. "I am a security consultant for the State Department. I travel around the World and inspect and review the security plans of our various consulates and embassies."

"So, that is why I see you so infrequently around this building. It sounds like an interesting job. Is it dangerous?"

"Sometimes, but my visits to our most threatened facilities are normally made in periods when things are relatively quiet. I do however see my share of crummy hotels and kamikaze taxis: the State Department can be quite stingy with its lower level employees."

That made Cynthia giggle.

"I work as a junior political secretary for a senator, so I know what you mean about low level employees' pay and benefits. Were you a soldier or a police officer before becoming a security consultant?"

"I spent eight years in the Army and served in Iraq and Afghanistan." Answered Dean, neglecting to say that he actually had been part of the Green Berets, the special forces branch of the U.S. Army. Dean took a sip of his wine, then looked at his watch.

"I believe that supper should be about ready to serve. If you will please move to the dining room."

Dean got up from the sofa with Cynthia and accompanied her to the adjacent dining room, gallantly pulling a chair for her and helping her sit before going to his pots and pans. He soon put a bowl of steaming soup on the table in front of Cynthia.

"Here you are, Miss Wilson: Cajun soup. Bon appétit!"

Much later, Cynthia sat back in her chair, both full and happy.

"My god! This must be the best supper I had in a long time. You should become a professional chef: you are easily good enough to become one."

Dean smiled proudly at the compliment.

"Cooking is one of my favorite hobbies. I must also confess that I used some of my mother's recipes from the bayous of Louisiana. She is a first class cook."

"I'd say, judging by your own cooking. Decidedly, you are becoming more and more interesting, Dean: a handsome man who is also a top cook and who has seen the World. What else do you have lined up for me this evening?"

Dean's eyes lit up as he grinned in anticipation.

"Well, I was going to propose to you a little massage session, starting with a foot massage."

"Hmm, sounds nice. Let's see how well you do with that foot massage."

"Then, let's move to the master bedroom: you will be more comfortable lying on the bed while I massage your feet."

"Alright: show me the way."

Fourteen minutes later, Cynthia let out a sigh of contentment as Dean finished massaging her feet.

"God! This was so relaxing! You are an expert at this."

"Would you like a complete body massage, then?" Asked Dean softly, making Cynthia smile and nod her head.

"If the rest is as nice as the foot massage, then how could I pass on such an offer?"

"Then, I suggest that you go inside the bathroom to undress and put a towel around you before I start."

That got him a malicious look from the voluptuous blonde.

"Why go inside the bathroom for that?"

She then got up from the bed and started undressing, watched by an appreciative Dean. She was soon fully naked and laid belly down on the large beach towel Dean had spread on top of the bed. Grabbing a bottle of massaging oil and pouring some oil on his hands, Dean rubbed his hands together while smiling down at Cynthia.

"Well, time to take care properly of this splendid body of yours, Cynthia."

06:00 (Washington Time)

Monday, May 25, 2015

Apartment 336

The buzz from the alarm clock woke both Dean and Cynthia, with Dean taking his right hand off Cynthia's right breast in order to rub his eyes. Cynthia turned around

on the bed and kissed him on the lips, while her left hand went wandering under the bed sheet.

"A handsome man who is a first class cook, knows how to give good massages and is also good in bed... I should visit you more often, Dean."

"You are welcome to see me any time, Cynthia...when I am in town. I could phone you later tonight, once I know if I have to travel again overseas or not."

"Good idea! I will give you my phone number before leaving. Sorry if I must rush a bit: the morning traffic in downtown Washington can be a real killer."

"Don't I know that! Let me offer you a quick breakfast before you go, though."

"I won't say no to that."

About 25 minutes later, Cynthia was leaving the apartment after giving a last kiss to Dean, heading for her own apartment down the hallway in order to change and prepare for work. On his part, Dean showered and shaved and put on one of his customary dark suits, complete with sunglasses. His favorite every-day sidearm, a Desert Eagle semi-automatic, eight-shot capacity pistol in .44 Magnum caliber, took place in a left side shoulder holster hidden under his custom cut vest, while a compact snub-nosed Smith & Wesson ME .44 Magnum caliber backup revolver went in a discreet belt holster on his right side. A razor-sharp commando knife in an ankle scabbard completed his usual armament. He was about to walk out when an idea came to his mind, making him smile. Going to his bedroom for a couple of minutes, he came back out with a small, hard polymer briefcase in his right hand. Dean then left his apartment, taking the stairs instead of the elevators to go down to the underground garage of his building, where his latest pride, a red 2015 Chevrolet Corvette Z06, was parked. It had mostly emptied his savings account but it had proved well worth it, demonstrating top road performance while having a more luxurious interior than one would expect from an American muscle car, and that for only about 80,000 dollars. For an expert driver and car enthusiast like Dean, it had been love at first sight. It didn't hurt either that his new car attracted many pretty girls to him, since women were another important item of interest in his life.

Driving out of his underground garage, Dean turned on North Utah Street, then on Washington Boulevard, intent on taking Highway 120 North. As usual, traffic was quite heavy on the 120 for a Monday morning, but most of it was thankfully heading

south. After rolling for less than seven miles, Dean turned west on Highway 123, heading towards Langley. Another four miles and he was turning his red Corvette on the access road leading to the complex of the Central Intelligence Agency's headquarters. He soon joined the lineup of employees' cars waiting to pass the preliminary security checkpoint along the access road, showing his CIA identity card and badge to the armed guard there before rolling to one of the huge parking lots nearly surrounding the complex. Being a senior field agent, Dean had a reserved, numbered spot near the main building and pulled into it at twenty to eight. Shutting down his engine and stepping out of his car, he was locking it and was about to walk to the main entrance when his longtime partner, Erik Johnson, rolled into the adjacent parking spot to his right. Erik, a fit man standing five feet ten inches with medium length brown hair and a short, carefully trimmed beard, stepped out of his well used 2010 Ford Explorer SUV and went to Dean to shake his hand.

"How were your two weeks of leave, Dean?"

"Just fine, Erik. I finally was able to participate for the first time this year in a pistol shooting competition, which I won by the way. And you?"

Erik, a man with hard, penetrating brown eyes and a nearly inscrutable face, nodded once at the question.

"I did some fishing in Vermont and caught a few nice trout. Well, time to get back to work, I guess."

"Right! I am sure that plenty of stuff happened around the World while we took some time off. We will probably end up spending the whole morning going through the backlog of classified traffic."

"You can bet on that, Dean." Said Erik before looking at the hard briefcase in Dean's hand. "I suppose that this is not your lunch, right?"

"Hardly!" Replied his partner with a smirk. "I want to do some pistol practice today, after all these days off."

Erik shrugged at that, knowing what kind of handgun enthusiast Dean was, and didn't ask more questions about the briefcase.

The duo then walked together to the main entrance of the old CIA headquarters building and entered its main lobby, which was alive with the morning crowd of employees arriving for work and lining up to pass through the security turnstiles. Dean and Erik patiently waited in line for their turn to pass, showing their CIA badges to one of

the armed security guards checking on the newcomers. Once through, they walked towards the section lodging the Operations Division of the agency, passing through no less than four security checkpoints and coded access doors before entering the large, open office space where they and other field agents and analysts worked. That room had no windows and was rated as a Secure Contained Information Facility, or SCIF in short, a place where one could discuss highly classified subjects without the risk of eavesdropping or electronic retransmission to unauthorized persons. Those entering the room had in fact to hold a minimum security clearance of Top Secret in order to be given access to it. Since a recent reorganization of the CIA, the room no longer housed only field operations agents, but rather a mix of field agents, analysts and subject matter experts assigned to work as a team, sharing their various talents and skills. Erik had approved that reorganization with enthusiasm, seeing in it a long needed step to improve operational efficiency at the agency. Their particular joint section was also a special one that took care of especially difficult or sensitive tasks and missions overseas, a section which answered directly to the Assistant Director for Operations, Julian Moore.

Exchanging greetings with the other CIA employees they passed by, Dean and Erik arrived at their work desks, with a thin, unimpressive-looking young man smiling on seeing them and waving a hand in the air from his own desk, set nearby.

"Hey! You are back from leave! How was it, guys?"

"Just nice!" Answered Dean first, shaking hands with Ian Dorset. "I went hunting in Alaska and bagged among other things one of the biggest grizzly bears you could think of."

"Good for you! And you, Erik?"

Erik smiled at the young analyst, whom he valued a lot as a team member. While the complete opposite of what an action agent would look like, Ian Dorset was a true genius as both an intelligence analyst and as a computer and electronics expert. His expertise, knowledge, quick thinking and problem resolution capacity had often meant success for the missions on which he was employed. Because of that, it was easy for Erik to excuse the somewhat nerdish personality traits of Ian.

"It was a good one indeed: I went fishing in Upper Vermont State and caught some nice ones."

"And could we hope to help you eat these soon, Erik?"

"It will depend on our caseload, Ian. I froze my catches for the time being. When we have some free time, I will get Dean to show off his culinary skills by cooking those fish for the group."

"Sounds like a plan." Said Ian approvingly, who knew how good a cook Dean was.

"So, how much shit happened around the World while we were trying to forget about it, Ian?"

"Oh, the usual. The Middle East is its customary shit pit, with civil wars continuing in Syria, Iraq and Yemen and with Islamic fundamentalists destabilizing most of Northern and Central Africa, while the Taliban is quite active still around Afghanistan and Pakistan. In Europe, indications are that Putin is not finished yet with the Ukraine, despite all his claims of wanting peace there. There are also indications that he may soon sow trouble as well around the Baltic States. Of particular interest to us is the situation concerning ISIS¹, or Daesh if you prefer, in Syria and Iraq. It is deepening more and more the rift between Sunni and Shia Muslims in the area and many Arab states in the region are becoming increasingly irritated by the not so covert role Iran is playing in Iraq in raising militias there to fight ISIS. With Saudi Arabia and other Arab states combining forces to counter the Shia rebellion in Yemen, the whole Middle East could soon become a Sunni versus Shia battlefield. You can imagine how bad this could turn out."

Dean made a grimace at those words.

"With so-called devout Muslims ready to blow up even mosques and kill other fellow Muslims during prayer time while screaming 'GOD IS GREAT!', that could be quite a bloodbath indeed. Couldn't we find a way to divert those damn arctic jet streams that have been freezing our northern states last Winter and send them to the Middle East? That would cool down their fighting spirits over there."

"Well, my parents living in Boston certainly wouldn't mind that one bit, I suspect, but no luck on that, big guy. Anyway, I will let you read through your traffic backlog, since you probably have enough lecture there to easily fill your day."

Dean sighed at that but sat nonetheless at his desk and started his computer. To be an effective clandestine agent, one needed to acquire and keep a nearly encyclopedic

¹ ISIS : Islamic State in Syria and the Levant. Is trying to form a modern day Islamic caliphate in Syria and Iraq.

knowledge of history, events and actors concerning the various areas of interest, on top of knowing at least the basic local customs and mores. If you could also learn the local language, it was even better. The lack of such basic knowledge and skills on the part of CIA executives and operatives during the first decades of the agency after the Second World War had resulted in many badly bungled or misguided operations, particularly around the Middle East and South and Central America. That lack of professionalism and the stubborn refusal to understand the fact that American values and ways were far from universal in their appeal to far-flung, non-Christian populations, had caused long-term damage to American interests in many countries, contrary to what may have been intended at first. Iran was a perfect case in point, where a coup organized by both Great Britain and the United States in 1953 had toppled the local, democratically-elected government and replaced it with a monarchy that soon ruled through arbitrary arrests and torture of political opponents. That had eventually resulted in the Iranian Revolution of 1979, which had brought to power the mullahs, who were still in control in Iran today.

Dean had been reading on his computer for over one hour when Erik spoke up from his adjacent desk.

"Hey, Dean, have you read yet the classified weekly personnel report?"

"Uh, not yet. What about it?"

"Go to the second item of that report. Two of our agents were murdered in Cadiz, Spain, two days ago. Unfortunately, the relevant information has been compartmentalized and is not available in the report."

Curious and worried at once, Dean opened the said report and started reading the second item on the menu. While far from unprecedented, the death on duty of CIA clandestine agents was not a daily occurrence and, when it happened, was often an indicator that something bad was brewing. The terseness of the report made Dean frown nearly at once.

"Hell, this says nearly next to nothing, apart from the fact that our two agents were on a mission in the Cadiz area and were found dead on Saturday. Their mission must have been a sensitive one indeed for the facts to be covered up like this."

"Agreed!" Replied Erik before looking at Ian Dorset, who was typing on his computer two desks away.

"Hey, Ian! Do you know anything about the reported death of two of our agents in Cadiz on Saturday?"

"I do! I took the liberty of looking at the relevant file when I first read about those deaths. Basically, those two agents, who were from our Madrid section, were investigating a possible case of weapons trafficking involving a so-called retired Russian tycoon living in Cadiz. Our agents were severely tortured before being executed with bullets to the head. Their bodies were found by the local police in a ditch outside Cadiz. The report didn't say more at the time."

Dean and Erik exchanged glances then: arms trafficking was a ruthless business and also an ever expanding one, as the number of wars, both declared and undeclared, around the World seemed to grow constantly.

"Do you have the name of that 'retired' Russian tycoon by chance, Ian?" Asked Erik. Before Ian could answer, a female voice made them all look towards the desk of Julie Prost, an analyst, linguist and subject matter expert that worked in the same special joint section as Dean, Erik and Ian. Julie was widely acknowledged to be a near genius, with encyclopedic knowledge of the Middle East in general and of weapons trafficking and Islamic extremists groups in particular. However, one thing Julie was not was a beauty: while not truly ugly, no man would call her even pretty in the least. She was physically fit, being built like the proverbial matron, but her square face, prominent chin and large nose gave her a nearly masculine profile. One could in fact be excused to think at first sight that she was a transvestite or a transgender person. More than one CIA employee had compared her, in her back of course, to the ex-prime minister of Israel, Golda Meir. Thanks to her physical attributes, Julie was probably the only CIA female employee less than forty years old and working in Langley that Dean Price had not tried to date.

"Viktor Grachev is an ex-SVR officer who retired from Russian government service about seven years ago and went to live in Cadiz, where he officially runs an import-export business. In reality, he is suspected of heading a very active weapons trafficking network based in Cadiz. Most of his clients are from around the Middle East, which is why I took a special interest on him. I don't know if Grachev is the culprit in the death of our two agents, but I can assure you that he is one very mean bastard."

"What else do you know about that Grachev, Julie?" Asked Dean just before Erik could. In response, Julie took a file out of one of the piles of documents on her desk and got up, walking to Dean's desk and putting down the file on it.

"This is what we know about him. He is said to be an old friend of President Putin and is supposedly still very chummy with him. He is thus able to call in quite a few

favors in Moscow from time to time. In return, he is a believer in the old Soviet regime, like Putin, and is rumored to help Moscow's agenda around the World with his arms trafficking network. While the details of the mission given to our dead agents have not been released yet, I suspect that Grashev's links with Moscow attracted our attention on him."

"And why would the details of that mission be kept confidential still, even at our level, Julie?" Asked Erik, frowning. "Is somebody trying to cover something up?"

"I can't say for sure, Erik, but my feeling is that someone goofed and that some higher up is trying to hide possible mistakes or shortcomings in the mission. I unfortunately can't speculate further at this time: the facts that were released were slim indeed."

Erik had to contain his anger and irritation then: this would not be the first time by far that some CIA senior officer would try to hide his mistakes, typically by blaming the field agents who had paid the price for those mistakes. He already had a bad feeling about this Cadiz affair but, as long as he would not be directly assigned to follow up on it, he would not be able to dig into it on his own authority. He thus reluctantly nodded his head, acknowledging the information from Julie.

"Very well. Please tell me if you see anything new about this case, Julie."

"I will be happy to do that, Erik."

As Dean was reading the file on Viktor Grashev, Erik switched his computer to the personnel files of the CIA and quickly reviewed the files of the two agents killed in Cadiz. One was an experienced old hand that Erik had met a few times in the past and who had an exemplary service record. He was not the kind of man to fall easily into some trap or to commit serious mistakes during clandestine missions. His partner was a much more junior agent but was still highly rated and was no idiot, according to his previous field assessments. Somehow, Erik suspected that someone else goofed. Either that or they had faced a truly dangerous adversary. Dean was soon finished with Grashev's file and passed it to Erik, who eagerly started reading it. The file was actually rather thin when it concerned the post-retirement life of Grashev in Spain, but his service history with the SVR was in comparison well documented. The man had been the head of the Middle East division of the SVR, with the rank of Colonel General when he had retired and was said to have directed many crucial operations in the region during the 1990s and early 2000s. He was credited with speaking a fluent Arabic, on top

of English and French, and was said to be by now reasonably fluent in Spanish as well. What attracted the attention of Erik was the part describing him as a cold, calculating psychopath who had not hesitated in the past in doing some of the dirty work himself. Concentrating back on Graschev's years in Spain, Erik was troubled by a couple of things and looked up at Julie, who had returned to her desk.

"Julie, if that guy is such an active arms dealer and has such connections in Moscow, how come we took an interest in him only now? According to this file, this was the first time that we have investigated him directly, or tried to."

Julie sat back in her chair, thoughtful, before answering him.

"Erik, please understand that arms dealers with customers around the Middle East are nearly a dime a dozen right now. Also, due to budgetary restrictions, our clandestine operations have been somewhat curtailed in the past few years, with a big chunk of what was left disappearing in the black hole called 'The War on Terror'. It seems that, as a consequence, there were not enough resources available left to properly check on this Graschev before. I however agree with you that something big must have pushed someone in finally looking at him. Unfortunately, I don't have any information on what may have prompted that new attention on Graschev."

"Yet, we now have lost two good field agents, killed in a most brutal way." Said Erik, frustrated. There was however little he could do about it, while Spain was a very quiet place compared to many other spots in the World. He thus did his best to forget about that case and concentrated on reading the rest of the backlog of classified information on his computer.

At about eleven in the morning, Dean stretched his body in his chair before getting up with a grunt.

"Damn, my eyes are straining with all that reading on a computer screen. How about a little pistol shooting session before lunch to stretch our muscles a bit, Erik?"

"Not a bad idea, actually. In fact, I need the training after that two-week fishing vacation. Let's go!"

Grabbing from a drawer of his desk a small bag containing some 9mm pistol ammunition, a cleaning kit and a pair of ear defenders, Erik was about to walk out when he noticed that Dean had grabbed the hard briefcase he had brought with him in the morning, on top of his own pistol gear bag.

"What's in the briefcase, Dean?"

His question attracted a malicious grin on his partner's face.

"My latest acquisition. It did marvels at putting back in their places my opponents at the Fairbanks metallic silhouette target shooting competition."

Erik didn't ask further about it then, but strongly suspected that it would be another hand cannon of the type Dean loved to shoot. For the big Louisiana native, anything under the caliber of .44 Magnum was considered a 'sissy's gun', while a .357 Magnum handgun would pass as a barely acceptable minimum. As for the 9mm Sig Sauer P226 pistol favored by Erik, it had attracted countless snide remarks and jokes from Dean.

Walking out of the Operations Division sector, the duo followed a series of long hallways, eventually arriving at the underground shooting range of the headquarters complex. There was actually more than one distinct shooting range, as agents had to train with submachine gun and assault rifles on top of practicing pistol shooting. The pistol range, with its long gallery of individual shooting positions and its remotely-controlled target frames suspended from overhead rails, was only partially occupied at this hour, to Erik's satisfaction: they were not going to have to wait before being able to start their practice. As for Dean, he smiled on eyeing the dozen or so men and women busy shooting up targets.

"Hey, look at that, Erik: the sissies from the Administrative Division are here, practicing with their peashooters."

More than a few of the so-called 'sissies' gave black looks at Dean then, as the latter had been quite loud when making his remark. Dean then chose a shooting position three places away from the nearest Administrative Division agent and put down his hard briefcase on the table of his shooting stand while smiling to Erik.

"We might as well keep some distance from these guys, in case of lost bullets that could hit our own targets."

Erik couldn't help smile on seeing the looks that these words attracted on Dean.

"Maybe their bullets won't even make it to our own targets: some of these guys are firing .38 Special snub nose revolvers, while a lady near the end is firing a .22 caliber pistol, I believe."

"Tsk ts! Such amateurs..." Said Dean while adjusting his ear defenders. He then opened his briefcase, revealing a pair of huge revolvers that made even Erik's eyes open wide. Both were obviously of the same make and model, but one had a long ten inch barrel, while the other had a four inch barrel supplemented by a muzzle climb

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