

CAREER THIEF

BY:

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AND

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A Note from the authors. We wrote and published this book in a new style of writing. We dare to be bold. Who says we have to follow the conventional norms of writing and publishing a book? Enjoy!

Michael King's acknowledgments....

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PROLOGUE

BOOM! A jolt. A thud.

I felt my heart stop. Lying on the floor was a man, face down. Blood was starting to pool on the floor around his head. I had just blown his face off. His brains were splattered all over the wall.

I looked down at my hands, not believing what had just happened, what I'd done. The gun, a Desert Eagle .50 caliber with a flat black barrel and custom rubberized grip, looked like some alien piece of technology, something poisonous. I had carried it for years. It was big and had felt good in my hands. I had practiced firing it at the abandoned quarry outside of town hundreds of times, but in all that time, I'd never imagined actually killing someone. Thoughts flashed into my brain like machine gunfire. Now what? It was him or me....what else could I have done?....Now what do I do?

Ooh, man, I just pissed the rest of my life away. My eyes turned to the body, and my thoughts turned to my past, the really big question. How did I get here?

CHAPTER ONE

My name is Malefic. I was born in Little Rock, Arkansas. I am of Russian descent; first generation American. My family moved here shortly before I was born.

My grandfather hated Americans. He harbored bitter feelings from when they abandoned his people and left them to fend for themselves during the great war. If not for their thick skin and resilience to the bitter cold, the Germans would have defeated them. If the Germans would have kept coming though, I'm sure that my people would have fought to the last person—man, woman, or child.

We Russians are not a timid people.

My grandfather beat this into my father, and my father made it a point to try to beat it into me.

I was a small child, so I was picked on a lot. I would get beat on by the kids at school, and then when I got home, I'd be beaten again by my father for allowing those kids to beat me.

I hated going to school. I hated going home. I had no friends. Even the girls picked on me.

When it was discovered that I was Russian, kids started calling me Ruskie, and Commie, and other names I won't mention.

For some reason, Americans hated Russians, just as much as my grandfather hated them. How could two countries that were allies in a war hate each other so much? It just didn't make any sense to me.

Either way, I was the poor little innocent kid, caught in the middle of it all.

As I said before, I didn't have any friends. What I did have was a dog. He was better than any kid could have had.

Old man Jones, who lived down the street from us, had some puppies, and he was giving them away. When I got there, there was only one left, the runt of the litter, the one no one else wanted. But I wanted him. I did.

I loved that dog the instant I saw him.

I named him Tiny.

My dad hated Tiny. He called him a worthless mutt. He even kicked him a few times. Only a few times though, because Tiny was smart. He learned quickly to stay away from my dad.

Man, my dad was such a mean and miserable man. How could he be so cruel to such a precious little dog? It didn't make any sense.

Sure, he beat on me, but I just figured it was my own dumb fault for being so small. I wasn't the big strong boy that my dad should have had. Plus, I was so uncoordinated. I was always bumping into things and breaking things. I never watched where I was going.

It was hard for me to concentrate. Even in school, I had a difficult time. I had problems understanding things. The teachers always thought that I was clowning. They were always sending me home with notes, telling my parents that I wasn't working up to my potential. Of course, this was just another reason for dad to beat me. After a while, I started forging dad's signature to return the notes to the teachers.

As I said, the teachers thought I was clowning, but I wasn't. My grades were just one more thing for the kids to pick on me about. That was alright though, because I didn't need any of them. I had Tiny.

I loved Tiny, and Tiny loved me. Tiny was my best friend. We were inseparable.

Our house bordered the woods, and Tiny and I would spend hours traipsing through them. I would pretend to be a warrior king, and Tiny was one of my many loyal subjects.

I fancied myself a good king, and that my subjects served me out of their love and admiration for me, a great escape

from reality. Tiny and I had a lot of fun.

Unfortunately for Tiny, he had to sleep outside. My father refused to let him in the house. As I mentioned before, he thought the dog to be of even lesser value than me. That lesson was pounded into me when we moved from Little Rock to Dumas, Arkansas, and my dad made me leave Tiny behind.

When we had everything packed and ready to go, I was carrying Tiny to the car when dad stopped me, picked Tiny out of my hands and tied him to the tree in our front yard. When I started to protest, my dad looked at me with that look he got in his eyes, the look I knew meant trouble was coming, and told me that if I said one word about that stupid mutt, if he heard one sound coming from my mouth, he would really let me have it. I believed him.

As we made our final descent down the long gravel drive toward the street and to a new city, I watched out the back window as Tiny tried to follow us. He was nearly choking himself, jumping and tugging for dear life trying to break free from the rope. I could hear him calling to me, "Where are you going? Don't leave me! Hey, my friend, why are you leaving me?" I answered him in my mind, screaming back to him, "I'm sorry....I am soooo sorry my friend." The tears poured down my cheeks and blurred my vision until I couldn't see him anymore.

Something happened to me that August morning. I felt something move and shift inside me. A part of me was left there on the driveway. A part of me died that morning.

CHAPTER TWO

So, the next chapter of my life began in Dumas. Things were a little bit different there. I learned a few things from my old school. I didn't speak much.

The teachers just assumed I was slow. The kids, for the most part, thought I was unsocial and just left me alone. Of course, this time, I didn't tell anyone that I was Russian.

That year, fifth grade, was pretty much a blur. I was still trying to get over the loss of my friend. I made no attempts to make any new friends.

At the beginning of my sixth grade year, we had to write an essay about our summer vacation, and also tell a little bit about our family. As I was reading my paper in front of the class, the teacher picked up on my accent. She asked where my people were from. I sure as hell wasn't going to tell her they were from Russia, so I picked a country that was close by. I told her that they were from Poland.

That started a few chuckles and sneers. The next thing I know, I'm the school idiot. Out came all the Polish jokes and I became the butt of them all. Once again, I was pushed further away from my peers and deeper into a world of my own.

There was a wooded area close to our home where I had

many new adventures. Tiny was with me there, not physically but in spirit, and together we would storm places, conquer villains, and some days, we even saved the world.

In school, I am called a retard, a Pollock, but in my world, I am the emperor supreme. My world is a better place.

The moment school is over I race home to do my chores. I try to finish them quickly, then eat dinner and leave before my dad gets home. If he gets home and I am there, it's pretty certain that he will find a reason to hit me, so I do my best to leave before he gets there.

He hits my mom, too, so she understands why I hurry to get out of there. She always covers for me by telling him that I am studying over at a friend's house. Of course, if he knew I had friends, he'd beat me just on principle, saying that it was to encourage me to try harder. How ironic life can be!

I do my homework in the woods. I do pretty much everything in the woods. It has become my home away from home.

The interesting thing about the woods is that they bordered up to the backs of many different houses. One of my favorite past times was to go to the edge of tree lines and to watch other families as they went about their lives. I would find a good vantage point where I could get

comfortable and not worry about being seen, usually a patch of Ivy or some thick bushes. Sometimes, I get up into a tree.

I became an excellent tree climber. I got to where I could scurry up a tree almost as fast as a squirrel. I even started jumping from tree to tree, and when I built up my confidence, from trees onto roofs of houses.

From the tops of houses, I would sneak in through an upstairs window while an entire family was downstairs having dinner or watching television.

On school nights, I had to be home before the street lights came on, but on Friday and Saturday nights, I had no curfew. Sometimes, I would ask my mom if I could spend the night at a friend's and then I would go exploring. When I was tired, I would sleep in the woods. When it rained, I would end up sleeping in someone's tool shed. There were plenty to choose from.

I never had any problems with any of the dogs in the neighborhood. They got so used to me that they would get happy when they saw me. Of course, I made it a point to always have some treats on me.

I ended up spending most of my weekend that way, prowling the woods and sneaking into homes in my neighborhood.

I came close to being seen a few times. There were a few nights where I had to spend the whole evening under a bed or crouched down in the back of a closet, my heart pounding in my bony little chest and my body shivering in fear.

Because of these incidents, I soon developed a keen sense of awareness of my surroundings and learned to be very patient.

As time passed, I ventured out from my little neighborhood into the surrounding suburbs and eventually into the city of Dumas itself.

Late at night, I would climb on buildings; department stores, office buildings, apartment complexes, any type of building that I could find. I figured out all kinds of ways to get in and out of those buildings. It made me feel like a big shot.

I imagined myself to be the owner or manager of the place, coming and going as I pleased. I felt pretty special.

I failed to mention this earlier, but my father was an alcoholic and had trouble keeping a job, so we were really poor, and so, having access to all these buildings and homes, it just seemed to reason that in no time, things would stick to my hands.

At first, I would play jokes on people. I would just move things around so they would they would think they were losing their minds. You know, moving keys that was hanging on hooks in their kitchen and then laying them on the roof of their cars. Or, leaving a freezer door open so that by morning, everything inside was melted.

Soon however, the pranks stopped. I graduated to stealing things.

I started out taking small things: video games and DVD's. It only took me a little while after that cash and other items were of more value: Jewelry, video games, cell phones, etc...

If, while I was prowling around inside a house at night and came upon a safe, I would rig a window so I could get back in, leave everything in the house alone, then come back later when the house was empty.

Through trial and error, I figured out that I could pry the cover plate off of an electric safe and short it out. When the safe shorts out, it automatically pops open to keep from being permanently closed and locking the person's valuables in there forever. It just pops right open. Nice!

The video games and DVD's were pretty easy to get rid of—if they were new, I'd take them to the store and get store credit or sometimes cash, and if they were used I would take them to a guy who sold stuff at a flea market in

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