

Chapter XI

Dressed in his blacks and white collar, the chancellor sat across from Grimaldi looking into the far corner of the room, as if a message had been written on the wall.

“They broke into your home and interrogated you.”

“That's right.”

“They blinded you with light.”

“Yes.”

“They threatened you.”

“Wouldn't you be threatened if someone broke into your home?”

Sullivan began pacing in front of his desk.

“The obvious thing to do would be to go to the police. And we should do that. Other precautions should be taken.”

Unlike in the encounter with Collins, Sullivan didn't appear to be enjoying these latest revelations. At least, that's the way it seemed to Grimaldi.

His pacing was crisper, shoulders straight, brow furrowed. Grimaldi could see Sullivan was thinking. It pleased him to see the concern Sullivan was showing, too.

Then Sullivan stopped and sat on the corner of his desk. He looked directly at Grimaldi.

“What are your circumstances?” he asked.

Grimaldi was taken back.

“I'm a widower, Sullivan," he said. “Katie was a beautiful woman. It was one thing after another, a still born child, then cancer. We were going to beat it, you know. And now, I live alone. But I'm not alone."

Grimaldi could feel the emotion welling up inside him.

“Sullivan," he said, “I'm proud as hell of Katie. Being with her was the saddest and happiest time of my life."

He looked up into the chancellor's face.

“Now she's with me in a different way. She's part of the communion of saints, an old-fashioned idea, I guess, that I can't live without."

Grimaldi rose.

“Anyway," he said, “I live alone. I've got a few relatives in the area. They don't come by often."

Sullivan shifted his weight, but he remained planted on the corner of the desk.

“This is going to sound strange, Jack," he said, “but would you consider staying some place else for the time being?"

“Sure."

“I'll arrange something, then."

“May I?" Grimaldi said. He stood over by the large window overlooking Main St.

“You have to remember there are no witnesses to this crime. It's my word against someone else's. I don't want to draw anybody into this mess and get them hurt.

“One more thing. I'd like to go to the press. But I'd like to do it on my own terms."

“The only thing I ask,” Sullivan said, “is that you let me know what's going on before you do it. Maybe our counsel would be of some assistance.”

“Maybe,” Grimaldi said, “but I'm still not over the last go round with Collins.”

Sullivan smiled.

“Collins' is okay,” he said.

“You know, Jack,” he continued, “I deal with a lot of people. Many of them are strange ones. People make threats and you can tell which ones to watch out for. At least, the majority of the time, you can tell. But lately, I'm not sure.

“In the city here our parishes are besieged by crime and drugs and homelessness and prostitution. I know those problems. The problems you're talking about here I'm just not familiar with. It scares the hell out of me.”

“Me, too,” Grimaldi said. “Me, too.”

The two men walked to the office door.

“Let's play some hoop,” Sullivan said and opened the door.

“That's something I understand,” Grimaldi answered.

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