

They shook hands, and Colin pulled Patrick in close for a hug. Colin cursed when he pulled away to see the Director of the FBI heading their way.

“Oh, I almost forgot. It's just a hunch. If you go down there, keep an eye out for a college kid named Matthew.”

Flannigan turned to see the Director bearing down on them. “What's the scoop on this kid?”

“I'm not sure how he fits in, but I saw the name Eaton on one of your file tabs. The kid is some sort of energy savant, a protégé of Jackson. The kicker is his last name is Eaton.” He looked down at his notes and gave Flannigan a description. “And there's one more thing...”

“What the hell are you doing here, preacher? How did you get past security? Heads are going to roll, damn-it,” John Harrington yelled from across the room. His face was red, and his eyes wide with fury.

They both ignored Harrington. Flannigan asked Colin, “What else?”

“It seems an old friend of ours could be connected to the Jackson's somehow. He now calls himself Estebanez.”

“Estebanez?” Flannigan wrinkled his brow.

“Yeah, why?”

“That was the name of an agent who was poisoned by the KGB while he was undercover in Rome.”

“This Estebanez may have been involved in mentoring this Eaton for the past ten years, maybe longer. That's about all I know. I put his name on the back of the address in Miami.”

“Are you two just going to stand there and ignore me?” Harrington turned to a nearby phone in an administrator's cubicle. “Security, get your asses up to the sixth floor and escort Pastor Jester;” —he added an extra dose of sarcasm— “out of here, and put everyone who allowed him through the doors on report.” He raised his voice even louder. “Or I'll have every one of you on pre-school; cross-walk duty before the week is out!”

The men in the room still ignored the Director. Flannigan looked at the Miami address again and turned over the paper where there were only four letters. “Well, I'll be damned. I thought the SAVAMA,” Iran's Ministry of Intelligence and Security, “killed him on a black-ops mission in the late seventies —”

“My contact at the Agency says that when he resurfaced, they ran him through an intensive debriefing. All indications are that he is truly retired. His true identity and whereabouts are classified for his own safety.”

“But you found out.”

“I'm good. When he's not in Maine, he's on a sailboat the size of a small country. You might also remember that he had a proclivity for rare wines.”

Flannigan grinned; “As I remember, he used to stay a little too long in a target's home to study the stock.”

“Study?”

“Okay. Study; and abscond.”

“He has been seen at Sotheby's in London selling some doozies for as much as fifty big ones,” Colin said, and Flannigan whistled.

Colin continued, “My guy at the Agency says Estebanez flew here on a charter jet the

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Commented [HS1]: This sentence mixes multiple styles together. If you want it to be two independent sentences with a conjunction, you must add the verb “were” after “eyes.” If you want it to be an independent sentence with an expounding dependent clause, then get rid of “and.”

same day Dr. Jackson was killed by that sniper.”

Flannigan raised his voice, “And you punched out Harrington for taking us off the case and canceling the Jackson’s security that day. Man, that was a great punch. Ali style, I swear.” Flannigan and the preacher savored the recap at Harrington’s expense.

“Let me see that paper, Flannigan!” The Director reached for the paper, and Flannigan put it in his mouth.

The two chums laughed uncontrollably.

“Sorry, boss. I didn’t have my donuts yet,” Flannigan mumbled. “Can I pour you a cup of coffee?”

Two security guards came running off the elevator in a panic. They stuttered and sputtered about not wanting to put the legendary Colin Jester, a decorated war hero and one of the Bureau’s first and most respected African American agents, under arrest but also not wanting to infuriate the Director any more than he already was. Harrington threw his hands in the air and stormed to his office, muttering about Patrick Flannigan being the death of him.

The pastor put his arms around the shoulders of the two six-foot guards like they were small children. As they walked toward the elevator, he asked, “Have you boys accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior?”

Flannigan watched his buddy go and took the soaked piece of paper out of his mouth. He had already memorized the address, but he could not help wondering about the connection between one of the CIA’s most mysterious covert agents and Cameron Jackson. He remembered a friend of Cameron, he thought, who sent Cameron expensive gifts from around the world and helped with security.

He went back into his office to plan his trip to visit Cameron’s elusive son. Whether Tremont liked it or not, Flannigan was going to save him from himself

He sat at his desk and rang Juan Cerraro’s office on the fifth floor. “Juan. Would you and your team meet me in the seventh floor conference room at nine? Thanks, buddy. I have a lead that might help you, and if it’s okay with you, I’m going to attach myself to your detail.” His office manager, who also should have retired a decade ago, entered to put the *Washington Post* on his desk and clear a space for some fresh flowers she had cut from her greenhouse garden, as she had at least once a week for the last thirty years.

“Mildred, could you set up a flight to Miami sometime late this afternoon? And make me a reservation at the San Juan Hotel.”

“You look like hell, Patrick.” Without another word, she went to her desk.

Flannigan organized the thick worn files the Pastor had spread out on the desk; he reviewed each one as he had a million times before. The labels read:

Tremont C. Jackson
Senator Carson
Cameron T. Jackson
Senate Office Building August 1, 1989
Sean Eaton
Domenick DelGercio
OPEC-Saudi-bin Laden bin Taliffan
John Lomax
Solar & Fuel Cells

He made a new file and labeled it with two pseudonyms, then pushed the page button on his phone. “Mildred, will you do a complete search through all agencies and operations

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combining the names Zebo and Estebanez?" He spelled both. "And look up Sean Eaton's family in Maine. See if he has any siblings and print out anything you can find." He took out a few fresh manila files and wrote on one, *Miami Beach 94/95*, and on the other *kid brother of Eaton?*

He leaned back in his chair and looked at the ceiling. He thought about what his old partner had been saying to him about church, faith—~~w~~—~~W~~hen did he stop believing? Maybe it was after everything he prayed for went to hell in a handbasket. He thought he had found God in a foxhole while all his buddies were being picked off one by one by the Chinese. But that didn't last long. When he got home, he began blaming God for Korea, his first of four divorces, and many other things. "If you're up there," he said toward the ceiling fan, "let's work together this time to keep the last of the Jacksons alive; then I'll retire. Or die." He stood and poured a cold coffee. "Same difference."

He wished Tremont trusted him more, though he could understand why he didn't. Cameron's son probably blamed him for not doing enough to prevent his mother's and his father's deaths. He would be right.

The call light blinked. He turned in his chair and pushed the green button next to the word Merlin. Mildred said, "The Director would like to see you in his office." Flannigan cursed again and tucked all the files back in a brown and white corrugated file box.