



**Bob  
Brennert**

**A Short Story**

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**Bob Brennert**  
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## The Criminal Dead

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## Chapter 1 – PLANNING

Early in the evening, inside a boarding room hotel, dark, lit only by a lone, unshaded lamp hanging from the ceiling, sounds of a TV whispering hides in the room. The television program is National Personalities, a program detailing the lives and personalities of Hollywood personalities and the very rich.

In a chair across from the TV sits Tony Grange, a dark-skinned male, not black. You would not be out of place thinking he's Greek. He looks into the TV as if it's got him in a trance; pen and paper hand.

As video information flies by, "...Lavington, the most successful media tycoons to date. Many of his contemporaries struggle beneath his huge media juggernaut never really knowing the man behind the power." Tony quickly jots down a handful of notes regarding the current subject matter on the TV. A slight series of nods from the man gives only the slightest hint to his state of mind.

The host on the program leads, "Rudy Lavington, 65, is a multimedia leader with more charm and compassion than would ever be expected. The estate behind me is a true reflection of a man, who, in 1945 started an astonishing radio and television career and went on to build a media empire. When we come back, we'll talk with Rudy Lavington about his life's achievements, shortfalls, and future. "

Not like the average person who would get up during a commercial break or at least change positions Tony Grange hardly blinked. Waiting, waiting... He knew what he was after.

"Welcome back to National Personalities, I'm Chris Brown. Today we are afforded a rare opportunity to speak with broadcast legend and media tycoon Rudy Lavington. Mr. Lavington, thank you and welcome."

"Thank you," Rudy said cordially.

"Now, you've been in broadcasting since 1945 and have had more success than you could have dreamt of in those early years. What made it all happen?"

With a sigh, Rudy Lavington reminisced before speaking. "I can't really say there was any given formula to everything I've done. The only way I can only describe it is by pointing out that some people are born artists; pick up a brush and go. I think I've got the same knack in the media as some people do with painting. No rules, but sense what's right and what to paint next. I sensed where broadcasting was going, which is why I started KSMA here in Boston in 1949."

As time passed, Tony learned more about his target, the opportunity relished. The television clips displayed numerous holdings, the great wealth accumulated by the Lavingtons. In particular, the host announcer commented on a collection of rare US mint gold coins from the first years of the United States and early 1800s; how such a simple thing in 1960 had turned into millions today. Tony smirked and took more notes. The television interview moved to leisure topics.

"I've also heard you race Sailboats. Have you got any designs on America's Cup?"

"I do race," Rudy confirmed. "But I'll have to admit I'm getting a bit old for that sort of thing, so it's not really me racing. My daughter Carmen's now the racer in the family. I'm generally along to give a hand as needed."

"Now as a special treat," the host promoted, "I hear you've lent us a video clip from your last race in San Diego. Let me see, this was last summer and we're going to start it near the finish line. Why don't you tell us about the unexpected fun?"

The video swapped from the interviewer to the race clip; Rudy Lavington does a play-by-play, his image in a small box on the top left of the screen.

"...the boat made the finish line first, but, as you can see, not all the players were on the deck. Carmen was a good pilot and I was a good swimmer. Carmen cut hard to get the best of the wind, tacking in front of the Aussies, and as I hadn't expected the move, into the drink I went. Right there..."

The feed switched back to the interviewer; he had a childish grin on his face.

Tony reached for the remote control and backs up the clip. He rewinds the video of Carmen piloting the sailboat. It plays through and again it's backed up for the third look. This time it continues.

"...good swimmer."

"So how about Carmen then? Is she an America's Cup Candidate?"

With a light laugh, Rudy joked. "I don't think so. She's got too much ambition and doesn't want to pursue sailing as a career. She's fourth year Harvard Law, which worries me."

"Oh, why's that?"

"If she passes the BAR," Rudy laughed, "I've got to stop collecting and telling lawyer jokes!"

Tony stopped the video and made a few more notes, then walked to the fridge and grabbed a beer. He opened it and lifted it to the air. "Well Jim, it's got the makings of a great job."

Tony retired for the evening, sleeping in the rooming house, knowing it would only be his last night.

At 6:30 am, Tony was awakened by the sound of demolition across the street. He looked out the window. "God Damn bastards!"

Again, he made his way to the fridge, pulled out a beer, and adds a cinnamon roll to his haul. *Breakfast of champions*, he thinks to himself. After his meal, he washed his face and grabbed the phone to dial Alex Brodie.

"You up?" Tony asks.

"Shit, no man," Alex retorts. "It's not even seven yet! What do you want?"

"I'm working on a job and I need a 1991 Harvard Law yearbook, class schedules, and campus maps and from Harvard. I need you to know what's-what about the place."

Tony hesitated to give Alex a few seconds to think about the request. "Can you do that for me? There's \$50K in it for ya."

"Damn right I can," Alex answered in an optimistic voice. "What's the game?"

"Kidnapping," Tony answered coldly.

"Wow!"

"I may need your help when the time comes if you're game. But meet me at the Boston library at 7 pm."

"Yeah."

Tony heard a click. Alex had developed the habit of concluding phone conversations without notice.

Tony grabbed his jacket and headed out into the city. Down the street, he stopped and opened the door of a weather-beaten 1980 Beaumont. His pace out of the city is lazy and he manages the 120-mile drive to Kent Maximum Security prison in just under three hours, putting him at the prison shortly after 10 am. Parked outside the main gates he waited patiently. While waiting, he started the car every once in a while to keep the interior warm. The late fall air sucked the heat out almost as fast as it's created. Finally, at noon, the standard release time, the main gates rattled and open. Slowly a dark figure emerges from within a corridor and out to walk under an awning. The man is Jim Walters. The man was beaten by the public system; he was an angry man of little expression. He walked straight towards Tony's car, made his way to the passenger side, then steps in. Tony speaks first.

"I've got an idea," Tony announces, bypassing the typical greeting one might expect.

Jim glanced at Tony in an uncaring fashion as the two drove away in silence. It's a minute or so before Jim made any comment. He's distracted. During his eleven years in prison, he'd lost the unfamiliarity of a car moving at speed.

"What, when, and how?" he finally acknowledged.

Tony replied, "Kidnaping, next week, we pick up a girl on the way home from school. It's a rich family. Seriously rich family."

"You're outta your mind," Jim insisted. "Kidnapping's too hard to pull off. You end up handing over too many leads and it's pretty much impossible to walk away with the cash. It just ain't worth enough money."

"Is two million," Tony blurts out. "Does that interest you?"

"I'm listening...."

Tony began to outline the plans he'd been working on intermittently over the last six months: They pick up the girl, Carmen Lavington, on her way home from Harvard. The idea is to grab her after dark in the quiet of the early evening, then move her from van to van and finally to a hotel.

"Police would never consider a hotel as a kidnapping HQ," Tony bragged.

Then they would contact Rudy Lavington by payphone and demand \$2M in \$100 bills in a briefcase. Once that ransom was delivered, it will be picked up by a patsy who would most certainly be picked up by the cops. Not knowing anything about the job or players, it's just a kid looking to make a few bucks picking up a case from a garbage can. It's a distraction from the main event; the real prize. Tony has planned all the details: weapons, multiple vehicles for the apprehension and transport of Carmen, the hold-up location, false ID for the hotel, the type of suitcase, how to get the money from Lavington, 15-second phone calls to contact the family, the taped voice of the girl for contact, and escape.

Tony concluded, "Even if the money's marked, it won't matter in Columbia."

"What makes you think you've got this thing wrapped up," Jim questioned. "You can't cover all the bases, all the things that would go wrong. Like what about the fact that they'd have you nailed if you use the same technique for the second ransom. They'll know what to expect. And what if they refuse to play the game?"

"The second ransom will not be a problem. I have a great plan for that too. As for them playing hardball, we'll just videotape the girl getting smacked across the face a few times...They'll move. Or if required, we'll deliver a severed ear, Getty style."

"There are only a few remaining details left to work out and we can talk about 'em at the Boston library. I've arranged to meet up with a guy I know at the library in the evening. We can work through site plans, review maps, look at timing, and hopefully find just the right location."

"The library? Hide in plain sight, huh?" Jim asked rhetorically.

Tony turned to Jim, "And we can do a site drive-by the later tonight, you know, where we'll grab her."

"Fine," said the man with no expression.

Tony picked the Boston Central Library because the interior had no video cameras. Book theft had been addressed via a magnetized strip in every bookbinding and therefore, the security benefit of cameras was deemed unnecessary. Tony and Jim arrived shortly before 7 pm catching up with Alex in a secluded section of the reference area.

Alex shared the current Harvard Law Yearbook, maps of Harvard Law School grounds and the various related Halls he'd found, and notable details of the area surrounding the Law Campus. Before Alex can speak, Tony studied the maps looking for escape routes. Alex takes Tony and Jim through the campus map, pointing out the main law center and the location of the nearby Church Street parking lot. Alex further identified the most isolated areas and the distances from the halls between them.

"Maybe she parks nearby at the Church Street lot," Alex suggested.

Tony cuffs Alex on his head, "Don't give me your pathetic guesses. I don't wan-'em. Just give me and get me the shit I asked for all right?"

Alex pulls back, his mood no longer excited, he continued; only the promise of \$50K is keeping him civil. "On the south side of the building is the Littauer parking lot and another lot here. But I think they're for staff only. That's why I mentioned the Church lot. It has quick access to the street, but it's a high pedestrian traffic area. But I've been there at night, it's quiet except for students leaving the Law Library."

Tony then explained what else he needed from Alex. The job needed two cars, two vans really. Each to be equipped with swapped-out plates. Alex was happy to hear he's getting paid a handsome amount for such a simple task.

Jim sat by and listened not adding anything to the conversation.

"This is a good starting point, to get the lay of the land," Tony admits. "We'll just have to figure out where she goes on a daily basis."

Tony pointed at the yearbook. "Pass me that."

Alex slid the book across the table. Tony opens it to the page hiding the picture of Carmen Lavington.

As Tony points, "This is her. She's the daughter of Rudy Lavington. He's the rich guy who owns half the east coast TV and radio stations. He's worth about \$900 million."

Tony looked toward Alex and assigned him the job of watching for Carmen to note her habits on campus over the next couple of weeks. He had to find a low-traffic area suitable for grabbing her. Tony suggests perhaps she regularly studies late or visits the Harvard library in the evenings.

"So that's her," Tony announced again as if to excite the others. "Alex, as I said, you watch for her and what she does. We'll meet here again in two weeks from today at 7 pm. Here' \$5K, you'll have one more job before you get the rest of your \$50K."

By the time the library closed, the men had been quietly talking in the isolated section of the library for a little more than an hour;

"Aside from this, I've got all the other details covered and I've even got some operating cash from a bank job I did last year.

Jim still has concerns but didn't reject the operation outright.

Alex left the two men behind to let them study the campus infrastructure. They had to find the most practical location for the abduction even though, at this time, where it could happen will be set by Carmen herself. The pair study the plans for another forty-five minutes, then finally return the maps and leave the library separately. Tony and Jim meet up in the car looking to book the needed hotel rooms for the required three weeks of the caper. Sufficient time to conclude the plans that had been in the making over the past six months. Tony had chosen a hotel near the Old Town area of Boston as it is was considered a low-risk area and not likely to be considered as the epicenter of an elaborate crime. Cover for getting Carmen into the hotel room makes up part of the selection process. The hotel generally plays host to numerous university student parties. In and around young drunk students, a drugged Carmen would blend right in if need be. They'll book two adjacent rooms to move the girl back and forth while the other room is made up. Further, the hotel had a side entrance, allowing easy access to the room for taking the girl into the hotel without going through the lobby. All contact with Rudy Lavington would be made from phone booths far from this location while the other waits with the girl at the hotel.

As Tony then explained his idea surrounding the ransom payment, Jim realized Tony had a sound plan. "Damn, this is brilliant Tony. Fucking brilliant."

Two weeks later at the library, Alex has news of Carmen's activities.

Alex explains, "She parks her car in the Church parking lot at about 8:00 am. Looks like she has a private spot there. She drives a yellow Boxster. From there she walked along Church to Peabody, goes north, to get to the main entrance of the law building, cutting across the lawn and through the gardens



by the Littauer Center. One day she had a vending machine breakfast in a lecture hall with some friends and the other day she went to the pizza place up on by Everett Street for lunch. Each day she also returned to her car well after dusk, about 8:30 pm. Tuesdays, a bit later, she's by herself after leaving the law library, and Wednesday she's usually with a boyfriend or what have you."

Jim responds, "Great. Timing's good. We'll grab her tomorrow night, with or without any company. The hot cars we're gonna use can't be left around for long. Too great a chance of being noticed."

"Right, we go Tuesday, tomorrow. Alex, you get the first van and park it at the southeast corner of Donnelly Field at York and Berkshire southeast of Harvard. Then bring us the other van of some sort, with no windows. Park it in the lot on the south side of the cemetery just off Coolidge. We'll meet you there at 6:00 pm. After sunset." Tony adds to cement the plan.

Tony and Jim met at 9:00 am at the Magic Café on the morning of the kidnapping. They sat at a quiet booth discussing the final details of the day's activities. Weapons, a police scanner, and masks have all been taken care of by Tony over a month ago. Even the driving route to the second van had been planned. The discussion eventually leads to what gave Tony the confidence to pull this off. He responded that over the six months he had learned the pitfalls of kidnapping through television.

"I know it sounds dumb, but it's true," Tony explained. "TV's got all the problems laid out and how TV criminals get around 'em. It might seem like a joke but the crimes on TV have to cover all the same bases we do or else shows like Magnum would just look hokey. I know that in TV shows, the kidnapper gets caught, but that's because they write it that way. The truth is most kidnappers get away with it. The biggest pitfall in the kidnapping game is how to get the money without giving away who you are. And we got it beat. The cops won't know where the hell the money's going, or even if it's going anywhere. Phone contact can't be traced in less than fifteen seconds. And even if they do get the number or location, we'll be long gone. With each of us having a mil, I kill the girl, we meet later, drive to Mexico and fly to Columbia."

Their confidence is high as the men return to the hotel to set up for Carmen's arrival. With seven hours to kill, Tony distracted himself with TV and Jim slept; Jim had in incredible affection towards the hotel mattress having slept on prison beds for more than ten years. At 5:00 pm the men dress in nice suits as not to draw unneeded attention to themselves during any in and out activities at the hotel. At 5:10 pm, they departed for the cemetery.



## Chapter 2 – ACT ONE

Walking through the hotel and down into the underground parking area, a discussion between Tony and Jim turned to moving the girl into the hotel room. It is decided, that once the girl is secured, in the second van, they would delay returning to the hotel by driving out of the city and kill time until 11:30 pm giving the party-goers enough time to drink, get drunk and be rowdy.

Before transporting Carmen, Jim plans to walk about the hotel grounds checking for anything which could pose a risk when moving Carmen into the room at the wrong moment. A simple whistle would signal all clear. Only Tony is to take the girl into the room, further casting off suspicion. A couple returning to a hotel late at night is not unusual, even if one is drunk and passed out.

The men drive quietly through the city center towards their crime. Tony drove and Jim opened a cardboard box containing the props for act one. He rummages through the box searching for nothing in particular but finds Zap straps. He pulled one out, played with it, and commented that nothing is missing. The box contains:

- A bubble envelope with \$45K
- Chloroform
- Two face cloths
- Zap straps
- 9mm handgun
- 9mm Uzi
- Gloves
- Masks
- Flashlight
- Binoculars
- Portable police scanner
- Gaffer tape

Within forty-five minutes they have arrived at the cemetery. It is a quiet spot, the business nearby closed up at 5 pm. Traffic is light and the only people in sight are a few adults jogging alongside the tombstone gardens. They are racing the November cold. Minutes later Alex drove up in a near new, blue Chevy van. He parked the van and walked to meet Tony who was getting out of his Beaumont.

Tony leaves the keys in the ignition; Jim also gets out, the box in his hands. Alex hands Tony the key to the van.

"She's got a half a tank, the other's full."

Tony replied, "My keys are in the ignition. I want ya to park it in the Herald Street Parkade, top-level, and lock the keys in the glove box."

He handed over an envelope then added, "And here's another \$15K. The last \$30K will be available once we get our cash."

Before entering the van, each man donned gloves. Now the men slowly drive off towards Harvard University. At 6:40 pm, the van circled Harvard once then focused on the Church Street Lot, hoping to spot Carmen's car. They select an empty spot in the lot and park such that Tony could watch the street where they expected Carmen to approach. It's a perfect spot with Jim having a clear view of both her car and Tony the route she would take. As Carmen was not expected to appear until 8:30 pm. Tony and Jim prepared by pocketing the guns, stripping off pieces of tape, and sticking the lengths to the back door for easy access. Zap straps were tucked into their pockets and masks rested on their laps ready for. As zero-hour approached Tony and Jim briefly discuss the possibility of a group of people; if

that happened, they would give up the attempt. Although if she was only accompanied by one person they would still go ahead as planned.

The stillness of the fall air trickled into the van, all is quiet as a light haze appears on the windshield glass. The patient silence in the van is not broken until Tony spotted three people walking towards them on Church. In anticipation, Jim placed a small cloth in the plastic bag he has gotten from the box and proceeded to dump chloroform into the bag as well, and quickly stuffs the bag into his pocket.

Tony whispers, "We got someone coming close," then he raised the binoculars, but quickly relaxes. "No, it ain't her."

Now well past 8:30 pm, tension mounts. Tony starts thinking about giving up on the attempt. He wrestles with the decision, looking at his watch every minute.

"Christ, if she doesn't show by 9:00 pm, we're out here!"

A few more minutes pass. The men feel the anxiety. They look back and forth almost as if they fear for their lives. At the same moment, two figures appeared at the crosswalk in front of the jewelry store. Tony had missed them approaching earlier on the street. Both walked towards Carmen's car, passing right by the blue van. In the surrounding area, nothing else is moving.

In a sudden instant, Jim realized this is the target, "That's her!"

"Christ she's right there! You ready?" Tony responds; the men quickly don their masks.

Ready to move, the last few seconds drag, then, the van side door slid open. Realizing they've stepped out too late, Tony charges at the girl, Jim right behind. Carmen and her boyfriend turn towards the sound of footsteps. They see two men in masks, instantly feel the threat before them. They turn away and begin to run. It's too late. Carmen strained to outrun Tony and Jim, but the men had gained too much ground and speed. Reaching the girl first, Tony grabbed her arm. She spun around from the sudden stop; fighting, she's too shocked and scared to scream.

Now, a couple of steps ahead and realizing Carmen's in trouble, the boyfriend braced his feet, stopped, turned back, and tried to free the lock Jim had on her arm. Tony stepped in and smashed him in the face with a solid fist. He fell to the ground stunned and pained to get up. Jim now wrestled Carmen into a position where Tony could apply the chloroform. Taking only seconds, Tony covered her face with the cloth, taking enough time for Carmen's boyfriend to attack again. He grabs Tony's shoulders and manages to push him away. As Jim suddenly twists, he released Carmen into Tony's outstretched arms. She partially collapses from the effects of the chloroform. Jim stepped forward and drove a straight-on blow to her boyfriend's face that propels him back a few yards. Jim then reached around his back and drew out his 9mm. As Carmen's companion looked up from the ground, a lethal shot is fired from a distance of only six or eight feet directly at his face. His body flops to the ground without pause, face down. Carmen, now hysterical and panting quickly from the horrific sight she just witnessed is again covered with the chloroform cloth by Tony. With her rapid breathing, she succumbs quickly to the vapors. The strength of both Tony and Jim are required to pull the dead weight of Carmen's flaccid body into the van. Tony drove again; Jim stayed in the back with Carmen, administering small doses of chloroform to keep Carmen unconscious or disoriented.

In the dimness of evening, it took only 20 seconds to complete the kidnapping but felt like minutes and it did draw attention. An elderly couple on the other side of the street spotted the commotion and watched helplessly as a man was shot and the girl was carried away. The witnesses did not stand idly by. The elderly man in his 50's, ran to the nearby grocery store to call 911.

He gave the location and what he witnessed, "I saw two men grab this girl and take her away. The guy with her was shot. And it looked like they took her in this Chevy van, maybe late 1980's. They've been gone now for about two minutes." He further explained the van was light blue but did not get a license plate. It was too dark.

APB notifications to the police officers in the area were given within a minute and a half. News of the incident was also heard by the men in the van. The scanner provided all the details they needed. Through the scanner in the van, they would be privy to the information which was to be their greatest threat; the information, however, was also their greatest asset. They would learn if a description was given, areas where searches are underway, and the current whereabouts of the police. They had only five more minutes of driving before they reached the second van at Donnelly Field. But after turning on to Broadway, they randomly passed a police car. The off-duty car had not radioed in its position and caught Tony and Jim by surprise.

Even though the car was off duty, it still had its radio on. Coming face to face with a van near a crime scene that matched the description of the given vehicle, the driving officer inside turned his patrol car around and began pursuit in Code 2 mode. Flashing lights but no siren. He advised dispatch of the pursuit of a 1989 light blue colored Chevy van, license DFS 860.

With the news relayed over the scanner, both Tony and Jim knew that a high-speed chase would only make matters worse. They chose not to pick up speed; they slowed slightly. They knew they had to disable the car or cop fast. Smashing the police car may also damage the van they're driving as well.

"We've got to take them out!" Jim nodded and Tony said "Yeah," under his voice.

Jim moved to the back of the van and told Tony to slow down and stop. The gap between the van and the police car had closed to less than twenty feet as it too came to a stop. The officer stopped behind the van just slightly off-center of the van, blocking part of the lane. Jim took his gun from his pocket, positioned himself at the back of the van aiming through the tinted glass. The officer radioed in his position and made a few notes. From only twenty feet away, as the officer reached for the door handle, Jim rapidly fired a dozen or more fast shots right through the glass. Splatters of blood now covered the inside of the police cruiser.

Within two minutes Tony and Jim reached York and Berkshire and the second stolen van. They had only a short time before the officer, after not reporting in, would be found and the full force of the police would be swarming the area looking for DFS 860.

The familiar neighborhood was now quiet, the fall temperatures ensuring privacy. They parked behind the Toyota van quietly, calmly, never giving away signs of trouble or danger to anyone who may have glanced out a window. They now had to move Carmen's limp body from their van into the large cargo trunk hidden inside the Toyota van.

Jim kicked open the back doors of the Chevy Van and hauled Carmen's body forward towards the waiting Toyota. Anyone man would not succeed. Quickly, Tony jumped out of the Chevy, walked to the Toyota, opened the back doors exposing the trunk inside. Struggling with the dead weight, Carmen's unconscious body proved very difficult to place inside the trunk within the small confines of the van. The entire exchange takes only a minute. With Carmen secure in the trunk, both men return to the Chevy to remove all traces of them ever being there. Tony leaves the keys in the ignition hoping someone would steal the van yet again and further throw off this lead of location.

Driving away Tony and Jim shake hands as if what they have so far accomplished has merit. They now make themselves comfortable, removing the masks but not the gloves as they drive around the city pushing the time closer to 11 pm.

Across town, Tony and Jim reach the Herald Street Parkade without any other incidents. Tony pulled alongside his car on the roof of the parkade; the van comes to a quiet stop. Jim exited and unlocked the doors for Carmen to enter. By that time Carmen has just barely regained consciousness. With a gun in hand, Tony unlocked the lid from the trunk and opened it. Carmen looked up at a face that has taken her hostage.

In a strained quiet voice, "Why are you doing this?" Carmen asked.

"It's nothin', personal love. We just want some money for selling you back to your family." Tony answered. "Now let's keep quiet shall we, but I'm pretty sure you already know all the rules to keep yourself alive. Right now we're going to move to another car and you will cooperate right?"

Tony nudged Carmen with the barrel of his gun as if to solicit a positive response.

Carmen nodded and began to rise out of the trunk as indicated by more motions of Tony's gun. Jim watched at the van to see if Tony is ready. Carmen stepped out of the van first, followed by Tony. Jim opened the passenger door and pointed his gun to the open door of the car, ushering Carmen to get in. Tony followed in behind and closed the door. Lastly, he pulled a thin piece of rope over her head and around her neck.

Tony restrained her as he settled into the back seat. "Don't try and open the door to try and get away. While the doors are unlocked, any sudden movement might just result in a severed trachea. Do you understand?"

Jim stepped into the car on the driver's side, started it, and drove towards downtown. It's 11:04 pm.

## Chapter 3 – INVESTIGATION

At the scene of the crime, the police have cordoned off the area. Familiar yellow banners jump from tree to tree to a lamp post. Four officers from the Harvard University Police Department stand guard ushering away the growing crowd who come too close to have a look at the body. A dozen or more police cars and a CSI van flood the area with headlights, illuminating the fog which has filled the area. In the distance, yet another siren wails its way to the crime scene. This time after it stopped, two men step out, the others at the site seem to take notice. They walked towards one of the officers standing guard.

"I'm Detective Collins, this is Detective Alvarez. Who's currently in charge here?"

The officer, showing his respect, answers two questions at once, "You'll find officer Trawley over there with the witnesses."

They walked past the ribbon to the center of the parking lot; Collins and Alvarez stopped to look at the covered body on the ground. After he stoops, Alvarez uncovered the face of the victim and quietly shook his head without a word.

Collins motioned for them to proceed, and catch up with Trawley. Collins spoke first, "I'm Detective Bradley Collins, this is Detective Zeke Alvarez. We're from the Cambridge Police Department, we're here to take over the investigation. We've been told of the murder and the kidnapping, but what else have you got? Fill us in will ya?"

As they walked back to the body, Trawley explained that according to the only witnesses who had come forward, that at about quarter to nine, they heard one shot coming from across the street. The couple looked towards the noise of the shot and saw the victim collapse supine to the ground. Two then men overpowered a woman and forced her into a light blue van. It then sped away. The victim is a male caucasian, about 25 years of age, killed with a single gunshot to the head. We haven't IDed the victims yet. We're waiting on the coroner to get here before the body gets moved."

"The coroner should be here any minute," Collin's said. Forensics won't be too far behind. Tell me, do we know anything about the victim that was taken?" Collins prompted Trawley.

"The only thing they could say is that she was also in her mid-twenties," he answered.

Trawley couldn't provide any more detail as the site survey and investigation had just begun. He explained that two other officers are searching across the street for more witnesses. Another had gone up the street towards Harvard. Two more officers are searching the grounds for traces of the assailants, but so far nothing has been found. The three men start to look about the area next to the body.

Zeke stops slips on a glove and pulls a small cigarette but from the ground. "This could be something. It's rather fresh."

He then pulled an evidence bag from his inside his breast pocket and placed the butt into a small bag for forensics just as two more vehicles pull up to the lot; the coroner and the ambulance.

The coroner stepped from his car and approached the lot and crossed the police line without hesitation. Bradley Collins stood up to greet the man. He is Gerald Forbes from the Cambridge Coroner's Office. After the formalities, he quickly asked what had happened and when it happened. After being informed of all the necessary details, he returned to his car and returned to the victim with a 35mm camera and substantial lens. At the body, he reached down to uncover it completely where it fell just fifteen minutes before and started to take pictures of the victim and scene. Gasps erupted from the crowd. Collins took the time and continued to look around. The back of the victim's head has been saturated with blood and bone fragments.

After all the photographic data has been collected, Forbes proceeded to turn the body over, and only then do Collins, Alvarez, and Forbes realize the implication of the wound. The bullet was aimed directly at the head and entered the brain stem through the mouth.

Forbes commented, "The poor bastard would have dropped like a stone. Like a cow in a slaughterhouse." He took more pictures then added, "The average muzzle velocity of a handgun is about 1500 feet per second, outstripping the sound. Add that to the fact it takes about 50 milliseconds for the brain to process the sound. He would have fallen limp before he even knew he was shot."

With the body prone, Forbes searched the body, finding his wallet in his inside-front jacket pocket. The victim was Peter Thomlinson, a student at Harvard and there were no other notable items found on the body. Once all the pictures had been taken and the wallet of the victim was covered up again, out of respect.

Inside his wallet, a picture of a young woman and two tickets to the Boston Bruins game against the Canucks Saturday. Perhaps this was the kidnapped victim.

"Zeke, why don't you head inside and see if you find someone in the Law buildings who might ID this guy and who the girl might be."

Collins needed to know more about the man lying on the ground. He asked Trawley was to contact the Harvard Campus Police office and find out who Peter Thomlinson is and what he might have been doing at the university this evening.

After eight minutes, Zeke Alvarez returned with Kashi Yamoto a student who had recognized the descriptions of Peter's clothes. He brought her to Collins who had remained by the body.

"I'm sorry dear, but we'd like you to ID the man under the sheet. And before we uncover him prepare yourself. There is a fair amount of blood around his mouth." Collins explained, and with much concern for the girl he asked, "Do you think you're up to it?"

She nodded an uncertain yes and motioned him to lift the sheet. Collins kneeled beside the body and slowly lifted the sheet, careful not to make any sudden moves. She glanced at the face, but then quickly turned around, covering her face in the process.

"Ma'am, Are you okay?" Zeke asks as he touched her arm in a vain attempt to calm her. She paused a moment, then speaks, "That's Peter Thomlinson, he was a law student here."

Collins followed up with the necessary question. "He was in the company of a young woman; might you know who she was?"

Through her tears, she mumbled, "It was likely Carmen Lavington. Is she dead too?"

Collins didn't acknowledge her question. "When did you see them last? Were they in good spirits? Do you have any idea who may have done this? Did either one have any enemies? Did they have any unusual plans for tonight?"

He peppered her with so many questions, she partially collapsed. Zeke steadied her.

The only valuable information Kashi provided was that she had seen Carmen Lavington and Peter Thomlinson leave the lecture hall at about 8:30 pm. She was positive Peter had left with Carmen and no one else. Kashi pointed out that Carmen was the daughter of media tycoon Rudy Lavington.

Collins and Alvarez now had a possible name of the missing girl. Zeke walked back to the Law Library with Kashi, comforting her along the way. He collected her personal information and reached out to the office of the registrar to further the investigation obtaining her full name, address, phone, age, height, weight, and photo, before contacting dispatch and operations with all the information necessary to place an APB for Carmen Lavington.

Collins copied Carmen's phone number from Zeke upon his return and called her apartment from the squad car. Quietly he waited. Letting the phone ring many times, he is about to close the radio call, but someone answered, a roommate. She explains Carmen was usually home by about 9:00 pm. It's now 9:20 pm.

The forensic specialist, Marion Calloway arrived last. Collins and Alvarez received the report of a dead officer from Calloway. It's related to a stolen Chevy Van with a rear window shot out parked two miles away. They decide to head out and pass off the local investigation to Calloway.

"How about we meet ya at 8 am tomorrow and we can go over your report. OK?" Collins says with demand in his voice.

Calloway sighs, but responded, "8 a.m. it is. See you then." As Collins and Alvarez drive off, Calloway began her forensic assessment. She closely searched around the body, morbidly studying the hands and neckline, and bagged the hands afterward. She looked over the clothes, searching. The grounds nearby are investigated again; she finds a few scattered items which may or may not be important. She bagged each one; every possibility is given a chance.

On their way to check out the stolen van, Zeke wondered about the abduction. "It may have been a kidnapping," he guessed. "I the girl's family has a great deal of influence in media circles, that means money. Maybe that's why they took the girl. If she was indeed Carmen Lavington, ransom money is the highest likelihood, but extortion or even national television exposure for some cause isn't off the table."

The Chevy van was as it had been left. Keys in the ignition, unlocked. Collins and Alvarez concluded this was the van used to kidnap the girl, it was consistent with the reports from the witnesses and the police car which pursued it with such brutal results. Collins slipped on a pair of gloves before reaching to open the door careful to avoid smudging any prints which may be present. Once opened, it was clear that more evidence was going to be found here. Inside, was the cloth that had been used for the chloroform and fifteen spent shells from a 9mm automatic. Zeke ran back to the car to radio Marion Calloway.

"We've got some more work over here over here Marion," He radioed.

"I've got a bit more work here. 20 minutes okay?"

"Sure, but if you can make it faster, make it faster!"

Outside the van, Collins heard back from the officers canvassing the locals in the area. One man reports he heard the shots. He explained that the shots came at a very fast rate. The man had been in the Forces twelve years ago and stated that the firing rate was greater than that of an automatic weapon. He explained it as a Brdrb-Brdrb-Brdrb of shots, not the fast succession of bang, bang, bang of a semi. "It was Uzi-like", the man said.

Marion Calloway arrives at the abandoned van. 10: 13 pm.

"Looks like we've got something here to work on," Collins explains. "We've got spent shells, a rag, probably used with chloroform, and some hair on the deck of the van." He points to confirm his findings.

"I'll go through it, bag it all, and include it in my report tomorrow morning," Calloway confirmed. Collins thanked Calloway and said good night.

He and Zeke plan to return to the police office and contact the Lavington family. They step in their car, contact the radio center with their plans. From the information gathered at Harvard, it has become clear that Carmen was the daughter of Rudy Lavington, a well-known figure in the Boston area. Zeke suggests that perhaps the best approach to notifying Rudy Lavington would be in person. Collins considered the option and concurred.

Before arriving at Lavington Manor as it's locally known, Zeke requests a phone link to Carmen's apartment to confirm whether or not she had perhaps arrived at home. But both Collins and Alvarez suspected that this would not be the case. The fact that Carmen's family was rich and powerful, only pointed to the increased likelihood that it was indeed Carmen who was kidnapped and a ransom of some sort was imminent.

"Hello," a quiet voice answered, seemingly already knowing of Carmen's fate.

"This is Detective Zeke Alvarez from the Cambridge Police. I would like to speak with Carmen Lavington please."

"Sorry, Carmen still hasn't been home yet."



"May I please leave a message for Carmen? That Zeke Alvarez from the Cambridge Police would like to speak with her. And my number is 555-1700.

"Is Carmen in some kind of trouble? This is the second call I've gotten from the police"

"No, she's not in trouble. It's just urgent that we speak with her as soon as possible. Thank-you."

With Carmen not returning home, the suspicion that she was the victim was unavoidable. The Lavington's may already know of the events of the evening and that their daughter has been abducted. Bad news travels faster than good news.

The Lavington Estate dwarfs the nearby houses. Yet it doesn't overwhelm anyone approaching it; it welcomes you. Beside the entrance gates, the large fence is covered with vines convey a warmth. Collins pulled the car up alongside the intercom on the gate post and pushed the button. Almost immediately a voice comes forth. Consistent with the surroundings, the voice is friendly,

"Hello, may I help you?"

Collins leaned out of the window, believing that would help the communications, and introduced himself. He asked to meet with Rudy Lavington.

Without hesitation, the gates slowly swing open. Collins was perplexed as no ID or reason for the visit was required. Alvarez suggested they had been on video, and the squad car gave them away as not needing clearer identification. They and the car proceeded up the driveway. As they arrived at the house, the opulence of the estate is very clear. Then, before they step out, a host steps forward to meet them.

Collins and Alvarez are guided into the building and are asked to remain in the lobby. They are informed Mr. Lavington will be out to meet them in a moment. Collins and Alvarez discuss that Lavington likely doesn't about the possibility that his daughter may have been kidnapped and that they must not only explain the investigation but also have the difficult task of breaking the news to him as well.

Rudy Lavington walked into the room talking to someone he has left behind in an adjacent room, turning to be heard. He invited the officers to be seated in the waiting room beside the lobby. He immediately clues in on the expressionless faces of Collins and Alvarez.

Lavington speaks, "Good evening officers, is there something I should be aware of?" He had speculated that they bring bad news.

Collins introduced himself and Alvarez and began to explain the events of the evening and announced his daughter's involvement. Alvarez jumps in, saying Carmen's is not yet confirmed, only suspected in the abduction. She has not yet been positively identified, nor has there been any word from the abductors to the police. They then begin to explain the chain of evidence leading them to suspect that Carmen is the girl involved.

Rudy Lavington struggled to believe what he was hearing but agreed it's best to assume Carmen has been abducted. His expression saddens with every word and every breath. He believed that throughout his life he had total control over everything which influenced him, but this has shattered a stable environment of control. Now he must relinquish control of the situation to kidnappers if there are any. As of the current hour, no ransom had been demanded the return of Lavington's daughter. And now Lavington would also be subject to police demands as well which provoked him to make a decision.

Lavington responded in a demanding voice. "I don't want any police involvement in this. You people don't have all the answers and you can't guarantee my daughter's safety. So, I'm going to handle this as the kidnapper's dictate."

Collins reassures Lavington that they would follow whatever instructions he may have for them. Dealing with kidnappers never has any rules, only decisions to be made on how best to proceed. It would be Lavington's choice if there was to be any police involvement beyond that of the murder investigation. Stressing the outcome of other kidnappings of the past, Collins pointed out that the

greatest likelihood of returning the kidnapping victim unharmed was with direct police involvement. Still, without any solid proof that Carmen was in danger, waiting for either Carmen or the kidnappers to call was the only option. Lavington asked Collins and Alvarez to leave but comments that he would call them if he hears from Carmen or the kidnappers.

Collins choose not to argue with the man and only offered Lavington a business card. "Goodnight then. Call us if you change your mind, or if you hear from Carmen. We'll phone you in the morning either way."

As Collins and Alvarez walked out, Alvarez recommended that they contact Peter Lau at Police Intelligence Division as he had helped to trace phone calls related to another kidnapping the year before. He may still be available if Rudy Lavington were to change his mind.

The investigation at the scene of the murder of the police officer had concluded. The results and answers would be provided at the 8 am meeting, whereupon Collins and Alvarez were to go over the Coroners and Forensic reports and decide how to proceed. By that time, they would have discovered Carmen was not the victim and her whereabouts would likely have been determined, or communications with the kidnappers may have been established.

## Chapter 4 – RANSOM

At 11:25 pm, Jim Walters slowly pulled alongside the side door of the downtown hotel. The entrance was only forty feet away, the room only one floor up. Before stepping out of the car Tony instructed Carmen not to make any sounds that may attract attention and should they pass by anyone on route to the hotel room; she's not to look at them and no eye contact. Further, he added what consequences would result, a bullet to the skull like her friend. She would hit the ground like her friend, fast and lethal. She nodded her head slowly in response.

Jim asked Carmen for her father's unlisted phone number and before leaving told Tony he should return in a half-hour after contacting Carmen's father.

Before Jim drove off, Tony lead the way pulling her out of the car and maintaining a firm grip on Carmen's wrist. He whispered a reminder of a threat of instant death if she tries to flee, then eased up on her wrist to grab her hand. They then walked side by side toward the hotel door holding hands. Tony carried a gun in his other hand. Proceeding to the room, they encounter no one.

Once inside the room, Tony changed his disposition and asks if Carmen would like something to eat. He assures Carmen would be treated well if she caused no trouble. But after ordering room service Tony explained he must tie Carmen up before it arrived at the room next door. From his pocket, he pulled out several Zap straps and binds both Carmen's legs and hands as she lay on the bed.

"This is to make sure that you do not try and escape while I am next door. Keep quiet and I won't have to use this." he shakes the gun at her face.

He takes some gaffer tape from the briefcase and holds it before her face. "You going to keep quiet or do I need this too?" Tony added.

"I'll stay quiet," Carmen responded slowly.

Tony opens the lock between the two rooms. He entered and waited for the food to arrive. When the food arrived and the delivery steward has gone, Tony returned to the next room and cut the straps around Carmen's hands and legs. They eat without speaking.

Locating a phone booth in the downtown core was easy as Jim expected. He pulled the car up to the booth and talked to himself about how the abundance of payphones in the area will allow many calls to be made without any chance of being traced. Then, careful not to leave any unnecessary evidence, Jim dons gloves and goes to the booth. After picking up the receiver, he dropped a quarter into the phone and dials the Lavington household. Rudy Lavington answers, "Hello."

"Is this Rudy Lavington?" Jim checked.

"Yes, who is this?"

Jim rambles off a prepared speech. "We've got your daughter. If you ever want to see her alive again, prepare to deliver \$2 million in \$100 bills by tomorrow night. If you work with the police your daughter will be killed! We'll contact you in the morning."

Rudy Lavington tried to speak, "I want to talk with my...", but Jim hung up the phone leaving Rudy Lavington helpless, speechless, almost clueless, and without the control, he's managed to maintain in business throughout his entire life. Still holding the phone in his hand, he cradled his head in his hands and begins to shudder. The police were right, he now feared might never see his daughter alive again, with, or without the ransom money. He sat still, head in hands. The handset started beeping loudly to alert whoever is around to replace the handset on the cradle; the noise scared him. The shock moved him to realize he had little choice but to cooperate with the police if he was to have any chance of getting his daughter back alive. Rudy returned the phone to its cradle, waited a few seconds, and picked it up again to dial the number of the Cambridge Police listed on the business card. Collins and Alvarez

have gone home, so he leaves a message that he has been contacted by the kidnappers. The duty officer asks if he would like the detectives alerted.

Rudy Lavington says, "Yes."

Jim Walters returned to the hotel shortly before 11 pm. He knocks on the hotel room door with his knee; his hands are full. Do Not Disturb signs are displayed on both doors.

The voice for inside asks, "Yes?"

"It's Jim." He quietly returns. "I've got some grub and I can't open the door."

Tony unlatched the deadbolt, the chain, and unlocked the door to open it; Jim entered. Tony prompts him to set the food down on the dresser. Jim then took off his jacket and opened up the food bags. Even before Jim opens the bags, the aroma betrays its contents.

"Here, you want some chicken? It's been eleven years since I've had Kentucky Fried Chicken."

Tony shakes his head a couple of times left and right and says, "No. We've eaten. Room service left about forty-five minutes ago."

Carmen remained sitting in a chair watched the goings-on between Tony and Jim. She also monitored the door which hadn't been locked. She was thinking she might have a chance to run.

Jim and Tony discuss the watch schedule. Jim will stay up to keep watch over Carmen until 3:00 am. Tony would then step in allowing Jim a bit of sleep before contacting the Lavington estate by 10:00 am. Each man slept in the other room providing the necessary lived-in look to the other room, in an attempt to minimize any attention, they may draw. Carmen lost her opportunity for escape when the men discussed a watch schedule.

At 9:00 am Tony moved Carmen to the next room, hanging a maid service sign on the door before he leaves. He woke up Jim for breakfast and a shower before he would again contact the Lavington estate with the specific ransom demands.

At 6:00 am Collins and Alvarez meet Rudy Lavington at the Estate. A

Collins does the talking. "I understand you've heard from the kidnappers. Did they demand anything, and provide any instructions?"

"They called shortly after you left last night. They didn't provide any more information than that they have Carmen, wanted 2 million dollars, and that they would call me in the morning. But they didn't even say a time."

"Did they offer any proof of life?"

"No," Lavington said solemnly.

"Okay. We're going to head to the office and see if the coroner and forensic results are back yet. Do you want one of us to stay here with you?" Collins explained and asked.

"No. I don't see the point. Just let me know what you find." Lavington asked.

"We will and we'll be back and fill you in then. See you then and if you hear from the kidnappers, please call us immediately."

"I will."

"Good. We'll head out now, should be back between 8 am and 9 am."

At the Police Office, the men find the reports had been completed and hurry about gathering the reports from the coroner and forensics.

Shortly after they arrived, Collins received a call from Peter Lau from Intelligence. Together they discuss the needs of the kidnapping investigation, tracing phone calls specifically. Peter points out that in the last three years many of the Boston telephone exchanges have been upgraded to electronic switches allowing computers to report the phone number of the originating phone if it's also on an electronic switch. With this technology the called person would know what phone number is calling him before he even answers it. The feature is called Caller ID. It may be used to isolate the kidnapper's

location. But this feature does require an electronic device to be attached to the local phone, and it only takes a minute to install. Collins thanks Peter for his comments and asks if he is available to assist during the investigation if need be. Peter agrees to assist as needed and that Collins should call when he knew.

"Sawchuck wants to see you guys", pierced the room just as Collins hangs up. The Duty Sargent had simply yelled down the hallway.

The men both stepped into Captain Larry Sawchuck's office to discuss what the reports say, current leads, and what plans Collins and Alvarez have.

"I think what we do next is up to Mr. Lavington," Collins admits. "But should we concentrate on the kidnapping or the murder? Whichever it is, the other team can begin work as needed."

With a life at stake, both detectives opt to work on the kidnapping.

"If Lavington decides to go along with us, we're gonna need an audio guy from the Radio Shop.", Alvarez comments.

And with that, they contact Gerry Hope and fill him in on the situation. He offered to rig the estate with phone interfaces, recording devices, video, and monitoring equipment. The two men leave for Lavington's estate by 7:30 am and go over the reports again while on the road.

Once they arrived at the Lavington estate, getting to talk with Rudy Lavington is easier than before because he greeted Collins and Alvarez at the door. He immediately exclaims his feelings of helplessness.

"Haven't I heard from those bastards!" Lavington states before any formal greetings are exchanged. "And hate that I'm powerless. I am willing to do anything for my daughter but I just need to know what they want. And they appear to know it too. The only control I can have is to allow you to assist in the return of my daughter but under my direction and approval. Is that understood?"

Alvarez pointed out that he does have experience in dealing with kidnappers and the management of the situation must be in the hands of the police. Collins stepped in and pointed out that although handling the situation would be a police responsibility, Lavington may offer ideas and is free to discuss his opinions at any time and may veto any methods at any time.

With hesitation and without any other viable choices for the security of his daughter, Rudy Lavington, agreed to the terms presented by Collins.

Immediately they all begin to prepare for the eventual ransom call. Collins then contacted Peter Lau and instructs him to proceed with the Caller ID equipment. Peter says he will be at the estate in thirty minutes. He further contacted Gerry Hope in the radio department of the police force. He is instructed to meet Bradley and Zeke at the estate with telephone monitoring equipment. He was expected to be onsite in forty-five minutes and no later than 9 am.

Alvarez waited with and supported Lavington over the hour before the expected phone call. They discuss the call Rudy received late last night and the techniques they would use to isolate the location of the kidnappers and hopefully Lavington's daughter. And, why would they want \$100 bills specifically? How do they plan to get the cash?

Gerry Hope arrived at 8:50 am. As he was bringing in his equipment, Peter Lau arrived; he was later than expected. The men are introduced and proceed to work together to outfit the home and phone line for the call.

Within minutes the Caller ID equipment is installed. Connection to the phone is through the standard phone jacks and plugs. Peter further explains how the system works. If the calling phone is connected to an electronic exchange that exchange sends digital information on to the next exchange and so on with the destination exchange, then sending that information on the ringing current to the phone set and Caller ID device attached to the phone line.

Peter Lau tried to explain the nature of the equipment. "This will work to identify where the caller is calling from, and we can get the address through a data link to the main billing computer. But

we'll be lost if they call from an old-style exchange. Then it'll take anywhere from 30 seconds to a couple of minutes; If they're in town."

Peter Lau has made it painfully clear that this was only a start. More leads would have to be found.

Gerry added, "The sound recording equipment is down line from the Caller ID Hardware and will not interfere with it. I also connected a ring current detector and used that as a remote start for the reel to reel tape machine. We won't need to start it manually. I guess we're set."

Collins asks Lavington, "Is anyone else likely to call on this line?"

Rudy Lavington answered a welcome, "No." The line used by the kidnappers is an unlisted number and is only used by the family. Other phones in the house may ring more often. Knowing that other lines are available Peter requested to see one, such that he may use his laptop computer to dial in and go online to the main billing system at the main exchange.

Now the wait, the difficult, mind aggravating wait began. It had been twelve hours since Rudy Lavington's daughter has been seen.

Only twenty minutes after the hardware had been installed, the phone rings for the first time. Bradley Collins jumped up and over to the phone and signaled Rudy to wait. Gerry immediately confirmed the deck started. Peter moved over to the Caller ID box on the phone line. He looked down on the small display. A second ring, a third. The Caller ID picked up the number. He motions Rudy to pick up the phone.

"Lavington," the voice asks.

"Yes." Rudy replied without emotion.

A very short message followed, "The banks will open in five minutes. Assemble Two million dollars in non-sequential \$100 bills and place them in a Pelican 1500 Case. We'll contact you at five." The line is then disconnected.

Rudy just stood there holding the phone, "I expected more, I expected them to say more."

Within 12 seconds Peter shouts that he can't ID a location, the originating line is not a private number. The call was made from a bank of numbers that are payphones. It's going to take him more time to isolate the location. He needs to call the "Phone People."

It now occurred to Rudy that the first message from the kidnappers stated that if the police were involved that his daughter would be killed. Collins quickly dispelled that comment from the kidnappers, by saying that without his daughter alive, the kidnappers would have no bargaining chip. It's a common tactic to scare you into handling the kidnapping by yourself and avoid police involvement until it's too late.

Peter Lau announced, "It's a payphone near Washington and Court in the old town area."

Zeke Alvarez immediately radioed for all units in the vicinity to investigate the booths in and around the crossroads and question anyone acting suspiciously.

Collins turned to Rudy Lavington and assured him that all the resources possible are being used to locate his daughter.

Lavington seems to have overcome the anger and helpless feelings he displayed earlier and commented that if the money was to be delivered by 5:00 pm they had the best start getting it now. Two million in hundreds doesn't just lie around the bank waiting for someone to ask for it. He expected it would take five or six hours before a handful of banks in the area could assemble such a rare monetary package. Rudy has gone to another room to contact his bank. His instructions were clear and accompanied by the resolve that the bank manager can feel to call the phone line. Delivery of the two million would be made by armored van at 4:30 pm.

The only other detail of the ransom is the curious request of a Pelican model 1500 Case. Why the hell do they want that one?

Upon rejoining Collins and Alvarez, Rudy commented that one of the house servants could go out and purchase the needed briefcase. But Collins overruled the idea and directed Alvarez to contact the office and get one of the duty officers to locate and purchase the requested briefcase and bring it to the estate.

Shortly, the radios come alive, the first officers' on-site radio back to Collins that the phone booths are all empty. The location is busy with people going to work and milling about. It's easy to hide in a crowd. But Collins insisted that the officers on the scene cordon off the area and try and find witnesses anyway. Somebody must have seen who used that phone booth. Once Forensics is on-site, they may get some prints, hair, or what have you. Collins requested that he be kept up to date on the investigation.

"All we can do from here is wait," he advises, speaking into the radio.

Collins turned to the men in the room. "The reports from the on-site investigation at the phone booth should be available in a few hours. The money is on its way. But if you have any comments..." Collins leads Rudy Lavington.

But Collins received only an admission from Lavington that he can't offer any other ideas to improve the situation. Peter Lau offers no assistance either except for the benefit of the Caller Notification System which wasn't even available five years before.

Gerry Hope offers some acceptable thoughts regarding the recording. He points out that the tape recording made during the kidnapper's call will be dubbed and delivered to the acoustics guys.

"They might be able to detect something with their EQs and other equipment such as gated audio companders," he explained. "And, the audio on the tape would also be used to ID the caller if he is apprehended. We can also ID the Kidnapper by using a new technique to match voice recordings with suspects. The principle uses FFT, that Fast Fourier Transform analysis to break down the audio into distinct segments. Samples from both the tape and the suspect may be compared and matched. And the process is very accurate."

All three men nodded in appreciation.

Collins and Alvarez now had some time to discuss how to tail Lavington as he delivers the ransom money. They will need an unmarked car from impound and a mobile transceiver that does not use standard radio police frequencies which are marked on consumer scanners. Slowly the two men hammer out all the available options and scenarios that they may encounter. Confident that they will not pose a risk by being detected on the air, they both now discuss the plan with Rudy Lavington. Gerry believes he can make this happen and contacts the office to secure all the equipment for the ransom drop is assembled and delivered along with the unmarked car.

The wait continues as the four men now sit quietly waiting for the report from the officers on site. The stillness only exaggerates the tension in the room. Aside from idle chats, at 10:10 am the radio is the only thing loudly to break the silence.

A witness has been found. The officer explained that two women eating brunch in a restaurant across the street had an ideal viewpoint. They were seated facing the street directly across from the phone booth from which the call was made. One of the women watched a rather attractive man in a gray double-breasted suit, about 6 foot, 195 pounds, long hair, but tidy. Little physical description of the man's face could be drawn from the women as the distance to a phone booth was prohibitive. In stating that no other people used the phone, the information regarding the suspect was believed to be correct. Further, the description of the suspect matched the man who shot Peter Thomlinson the night before during the kidnapping. The Forensic Specialist is currently on-site as well and will have something shortly.

Collins now pointed out to Rudy Lavington that the investigation will surely put together a good picture of the kidnappers. This is just the beginning. He now also volunteers some of the information contained in the police reports from the previous night. As he proceeds, a brutal description of a



professional kidnapping emerges. The men involved have taken great care to plan counter-measures for the police investigation, except for the incident with the team of officers who had seen, and followed, the escape van after the kidnapping. These people knew what to do and had no reservations about killing anyone to meet their objectives. These are professionals or desperate thinkers.

Again, the silence fills the room. The solemn expression on their faces introduces questionable hope for the safe return of Carmen Lavington and Rudy Lavington can see it.

But as the somber mood wains, Rudy steps forward and asked anyone if they would like some lunch. The offer seems to snap the others out of their stillness. Lunch is a good idea and they all concur. The day is half but over, yet it seems like two or even three. The lunch break is a well-needed diversion.

Shortly after lunch, the radio speaks again. It's Forbes from the forensics lab. He reported that no fingerprints were available from the phone itself. The only thing found as evidence was a strand of hair removed from the earpiece of the phone. It matched the color of the suspect's description given by the woman at the restaurant. Another piece for the puzzle without a complete picture.

Duty Officer Larson arrived at the estate at 3 pm with the specialized briefcase, unmarked car, and a VOX-operated mobile radio. Alvarez receives the briefcase, opens it, trying to determine its importance. A product tag inside the case lists the only unusual characteristic of the particular case. It's waterproof. Do the kidnappers want the drop to be made in the water? In Chicago River and grab it with a speed boat? It's a logical conclusion, but these people have prepared well for this; it could be a diversion. Still, Collins must plan for all possibilities and directs Alvarez was to contact the Coast Guard and have them prepare for a boat on short notice. Before Larson departed with Collins' squad car, he asks if he needed anything further; with the answer no, Larson then leaves.

At 4:10 pm a bank vehicle buzzed the estate from the main gate. It proceeded up the lane. Collins and Lavington take the briefcase to meet the armored van as it pulls up to the front of the estate. The driver steps out and introduces himself. Then without any further hesitation, all three men step into the back of the van.

Inside sits a man dressed as if he's about to enter a war. The security for two million dollars is uncompromising. Before the money can be released, Lavington signs one form for it, allowing the transfer of the money into the briefcase began. Slowly the purpose of the case now appears not to be the waterproofing but its size. The \$2 million fits perfectly into the case. The neat stacks of \$100s make up 200 stacks of \$10,000 stacks each; they line up just right. With all the different briefcases available, it still puzzles Collins that there must be more to it.

"We've got size. We've got waterproofing. What the hell are they up to?" Collins angrily spurts. "They could use any bloody case. Yet they wanted this one. Why? This waterproof thing bothers me."

"It's also a damn rugged case Brad," Alvarez shares.

The guard inside the van stopped Collins from rambling on about the briefcase and asked Lavington to sign a magnitude of other documents before they leave the van. At then the end of that, Collins and Lavington left the van and return to the estate, \$2 million heavier.

With the 5:00 pm deadline approaching Collins and Alvarez prompted Rudy Lavington to arrange the delivery car just in case the kidnappers demand that the money be delivered at once. Lavington then calls the butler to retrieve the Volvo from the garage and bring it to the front entrance and leave the keys in the ignition.

Moments later as the five men remain poised to act on the expected ransom call, the butler enters, the car is ready he explains. The distraction temporarily throws all of them off guard; the phone rings. Each one of them is startled just slightly more. Rudy ran over to the phone and is about to pick it up.

"No," shouts Peter Lau, just managing to halt Rudy before he picked up the set. "We need three rings to get the number if it's available."

As the third ring stops Peter shouts again, "Go."

With tape recorders running and audio fed into the room, they all hear the conversation.

"Yes," Rudy Lavington greeted the caller

"Take the suitcase to 161 Granite Ave, Dorchester. Go to the end of the parking lot. There you will find a garbage can. Put the suitcase inside the garbage can. We'll pick it up later and return your daughter if we are not interfered with. If you do not follow our instructions or have the police involved, we will kill your daughter!"

As the words, "we will kill your daughter!" rang in Rudy Lavington's ears, the caller hung up. Rudy had no opportunity to say or ask anything. Ten seconds of helplessness.

More evidence regarding the suspicion that these kidnappers are professional. They limit the amount of contact between each of them and the police. Collins also began to suspect that because they operate independently and without the risk, that Carmen would be under constant supervision by the other partner.

Both Collins and Alvarez turn to Peter Lau. This time he has the location of the phone call coming from a different phone booth ten miles across town. Without hesitation, Alvarez calls for a unit to investigate the site and to tail anyone leaving the scene.

Now with the latest message in hand, the decision to deliver the money must be made. Gerry stops the conversations regarding the delivery to point out that the caller never specified the expected delivery time. It must be now. They must expect Rudy Lavington to leave at once.

Collins to Lavington, "Hang on. Let's have a look at the maps and see where this drop is.

After a map of the city is unfolded, Collins quickly found the drop site, it was located about an hour from the estate and in a quiet part of town. It's by a cemetery and the Neponset River. As the fact was digested by everyone in the room, they assumed the kidnappers would stop at the shoreline nearby, come ashore, recover the case, and depart by the river to Squantum Channel and from there they could go anywhere. Collin's alerted the Coast Guard in case they could follow the boat if it materialized.

"Look Rudy," Collins requested. "there's no need for you to be involved any more than this. We can get Gerry to the drop, and we'll let you know how it goes."

"Like Hell, damn it. I'm not letting anybody ride shotgun for me. It's my daughter and I'm going to do everything necessary to secure her release." Rudy Lavington erupted.

Per Collins' promise, he allowed Lavington to do the run but insisted they lie in wait in the parking lot with another vehicle to monitor the drop. Lavington doesn't fight the idea directly, instead asks for another "plain" car and ununiformed officers. Collins agreed and said that they would serve the purpose.

Before Lavington left, preparations are made. He is fitted with the Voice Operated Transmitter by Gerry Hope. It uses the same transmit frequency as the special radios delivered earlier in the morning. Both Collins and Alvarez work out the best route to the drop site. They also plan to arrive ten minutes early to stake out a vantage point. It would be just after dark and visibility was a concern. But after a brief discussion and quick planning, the men uneventfully set off to deliver the ransom money. Collins and Alvarez in one car, followed by Rudy Lavington in another. The detectives planned to arrive at the drop site by 6 pm, Lavington ten minutes later.

## Chapter 5 – SURRENDER

As Rudy Lavington leaves his estate, he can only imagine the isolated location he is driving to. He expected little in the way of buildings, little in the way of light, and few, if any, people walking about the cemetery at the time. He thought the lot might have been full of garbage. After following the highlighted line on a map, he draws close to the drop site. His only experience of neighborhoods like this is from television. The image he created for himself based on the TV proves an inadequate model for the sights that greeted him as he arrived.

Talking on the radio as if to assure himself, Collins and Alvarez listen in to a frightened man. He takes the time to describe the things he can't help but fixate on. He rambles. This location, this time of day, no one should be here.

He drove on in the police-sourced 1989 Volvo. He felt the danger in the streets, but there is none. Few people are out that November evening to watch Rudy Lavington pass by. Yet couldn't shake off the fear. In a few more minutes he arrived at the lot, luckily the physical fear started to ease as he saw and entered the lot. Rudy pulled the car over at the garbage can identified by the kidnappers. Collins and Alvarez parked mid-way into the lot scarcely see Lavington; one sparse streetlight over the lot is all they have.

The radio stirs, "I'm stopping now. The garbage can was right where they said it would be. OK. Here we go," as the sound of the door opening also passes through the radio speaker.

"I'm stepping up to the can now. There's lots of garbage in it. Putting in the briefcase. It still almost disappeared into the garbage. Christ, I hate to surrender like this."

Rudy returned to the car and drove off. "You better get these bastards." This is the last thing the men hear from Rudy's radio.

Alvarez uses the radio to contact the office to advise them that the drop has been made. Both Collins and Alvarez have no idea how long they may have to wait. But it is expected to be no more than a few hours. They monitor both the garbage can and the riverfront.

Darkness has now engulfed the area. Shadows cast by the dim lights in the distance seem to move. Is anything there? Collins has underestimated the visibility. He thinks to himself, that he should have been better prepared for this. "*Might have been good to have night vision gear,*" he thought. Worry starts to make inroads into his consciousness.

"Damn. If these bastards get away 'cause we can't see, I don't know what the hell I'm going to do."

Alvarez provides reassurance, "It may be dark, but it's not just dark for us, it's dark for them as well. It's an even handicap."

Now, crossing into the next hour, Bradley and Zeke are feeling the elements. It's forty degrees outside and they can't run the engine to keep warm. Waiting... waiting... It's not like the men have that much to talk about; they spend over forty hours a week together. All the fishing stories had run out alone time ago. Yet they keep up a sporadic conversation regarding the upcoming Christmas season. Family events highlight the dialogue. Pretty boring stuff if you're sitting in a car, in the dark, at night, waiting for something but you don't know what.

"Has the drop been made in the wrong place?" Collins asks. "Did something happen to whoever was supposed to pick it up? Did they miss the pickup?" Alvarez radios to the Precinct to get permission to approach the drop site and confirm that the pickup has not been made. A growl is heard off in the distance. Just then a garbage truck rounds the corner a couple of blocks away.

"Center this Alvarez."

"Center, Sergeant Cross here."

"Has Captain Sawchuck left for home?"

"No, he's just packing up. Is there anything I can do for you, Detective?"

"Yeah. Get him on the horn will ya."

"Roger. Standby"

Cross yells down the hall to the captain, "Sawchuck, radio."

"Captain, this is Alvarez. Looks like we've got some action here. There's a garbage truck approaching the drop."

"Okay. Keep on it and watch for any other people moving near the drop or the truck. If the truck does anything with the can, stay with the truck and follow to wherever it's going. Make sure the case isn't chucked out the window or something. I'll stick around for a little while, keep me updated."

"10-4, Captain. Alvarez out."

Collins now started to put together the puzzle of that briefcase, if it goes into the back of the garbage truck, its ruggedness could protect it from the crusher. And in the back, it might even be insulated by the other garbage. Wow, he thinks. To be sure the case is not tossed aside or otherwise separated from the trash, he'll need to get a better view.

Collins opened the car door, the little body heat in the car from the men disappeared into the night air. He looked around. There's nothing in sight as he walked across the lot to get a better view of the can. Collins watches, Alvarez monitors the area.

Slowly the truck does a three-point-turn and stopped, its back facing the can. Releasing his grip from the railing the man on the back stepped off the tiny platform on the right side. He steps toward the can, grabs the top edge then pulls it towards the back of the truck. Lifting from the handle on the side, he empties the contents into the crusher. Thunk, the case collides with the metal frame of the crusher. The noise did not go unnoticed by the man at the back and before signaling to the driver to continue, he reached in a pulled the case out from amongst the other garbage, and had a good look at it. He then placed it in a small shallow opening at the back of the truck. After he smashed the side of the vehicle with a broken broom handle, the truck begins to pull away. Collins stands in amazement and asks himself, *Garbage Men are behind this?*

Alvarez pulls the car out to where Collins was standing, "What the hell are you doing? Let's go!"

Collins was distracted. "Garbage Men? Can't be..." Collins said as he opened the door

"Get in," Alvarez demanded.

At the Lavington estate, Gerry Hope and Peter Lau have long since left. The electronic equipment is still in place; set to start automatically. Rudy Lavington had paced the estate building since he returned from the drop. His daughter's fate is solely in the hands of the kidnappers. He has no idea how the drop proceeded after he left.

He'd hoped upon hope that there would have been news about Carmen, that she will have already have been or would soon be released, or at least he'll get a call telling him where she is. He tried to reassure himself by thinking that the kidnapper's instructions and money had been followed without question, save for the involvement of the police. They would return her as they indicated during their telephone call. He now waited for a call from his daughter, or the police with more bad news. The events of the evening were hidden from him until that moment.

At 9:10 pm, the phone rang. Rudy was about to grab it but quickly remembered the three-ring requirement to get the Caller ID. He waited for the prescribed number, then picked up the handset. Click, the tape deck starts.

"Yes."

"Seems we've had some trouble, Mr. Lavington." The voice proceeded without the slightest hesitation, "The money was never delivered as directed. Now we're very upset about this Mr. Lavington. Carmen is still alive, but you've got until 5 pm tomorrow to try again. This time make it two cases, same

model, four million. We will provide proof of life and provide further instructions. Fail to comply and Carmen will be dead by 6 pm. And we want your gold coins too. 1900 and older. All of them."

The line went dead, leaving only a slight hum to be heard in the earpiece caused by the recording equipment. Bradley Lavington slumped to the floor, his legs gave way to the emotional bullet delivered by phone.

Labored breathing overtook Lavington as he sat there on the floor. He had been betrayed by the police now his daughter is at more risk than ever before.

Collins directed Alvarez to stay back from the truck a good distance, there's no need to keep right on the truck. The likelihood of a high-speed chase with a garbage truck was nil. And its lumbering size makes it hard to lose. Radioing in, Collins chats with Sawchuck and gets a direction of how the Captain would like to proceed.

"Follow them to the next stop," Collins directed Alvarez. And let's make sure they don't chuck the case out the back the next time they do stop. If nothing happens with the case earlier, we'll take them down when they stop at the end of their shift. I'll radio in and get a few squad cars lined up and ready for the takedown."

At almost 9:30 pm, the truck had made its way to the large transfer station on the east side of the city. The driver stopped the truck at the end of a long line of other City of Boston Garbage Trucks. The driver steps out and the bin man stepped off one last time for the shift and grabs the case. He showed the case to the driver and smiles. The twenty-something men step to head their separate ways.

Without sirens, four squad cars pulled up at full speed, dirt flying, surrounding the two men. The Jeep with Collins and Alvarez was right behind. Four officers step out almost simultaneously, weapons drawn, the men with the case freeze, panic overcomes their faces.

The closest officer shouts, "Drop the case and place your hands on your head, interlock your fingers!"

Collins shouts right behind, "And get on your knees!"

The two men, almost crying, comply without hesitation. You just don't deal shit when a gun or five are pointed at you.

Collins walked up, the weapon still in his hands, grabbed the case, and opens it with a key. The cash was still there. With a trifle ounce of bravery, the man who had the case asks, "What's going on? I found that case a few hours ago in a public bin."

"Shut up," Collins responded.

Two officers, step forward, cuff the two men, read them their rights, and guide them to and into separate squad cars.

Collins shook his head slightly to Zeke, "There's something not right here."

Collins decided to get a jump on interrogating the younger of the two men and rode in the squad car with the briefcase man back to the office. Alvarez took the Jeep. The takedown and recovery of the men and briefcase took only a minute, start to finish. No fight, no excuses, no attempt to run.

"What's your name son?"

"Pete, uh Peter, Peter Brown, what's going on?"

"What do you think?"

"I have no idea! Alcor and I were just finishing off our shift when you guys just appeared out of nowhere and just surrounded us. I have no idea why really. We didn't do anything."

Collins pressed a bit, "Interesting. You say you didn't do anything, yet you had a briefcase with two million dollars in it. Looks like you're lying."

"Fuck, what? Two million? No way man. I just found that case in a bin about four hours ago after doing our rounds, shortly after we had our lunch. I found it in a bin over near the Cedar Grove Cemetery. I didn't even open it. It was locked and I figured I could pick the lock after my shift."

Collins pressed more. "You were clearly in the right spot at the right time with an opportunity to collect the ransom cash just as you did. Perfect cover, perfect recovery."

He hesitates a bit like he's listening to his radio earpiece... "You've got kidnapper written all over your face. Where's Carmen?"

"Kidnapper, ransom? What the fuck man? I don't know anything about no kidnapping. We were just doing our job. Sometimes we find weird shit. Today I found that case. I swear."

"I've just heard from the other car. It seems your friend Alcor has something different to say. He's been quite a chatterbox. You better be honest now and give up Carmen before it's too late. You knew about the briefcase drop-off... Where and when. The sooner you talk, the better for your future son. Don't you understand that?"

Peter gives Collins a worried but innocent look. "I'm not saying anything else until I speak with a lawyer. But really man, I have no idea what the hell you're talking about."

And with that Peter fell silent. Collins persisted, continually pointing out the shit storm coming Peter's way. Peter never said another word.

At almost 10 pm, Alcor and Peter are delivered to the lock-up at the Cambridge Police Department; they get a free night's stay at the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Hotel. Collins and Alvarez plan to head home after a sixteen-hour day. Before leaving, they call Rudy Lavington to inform him that the kidnappers had been caught and are now in lockup.

Collins gasped when Lavington informed him of the call he had just received from the kidnappers. Were the kids in the cells patsies or accomplices? Collins took a quick moment to update the interrogating officers and returned to the phone.

"We'll keep on the two who picked up the money overnight and I'll call you with the results in the morning. I think they'll talk."

"I'm not sure Detective Collins."

Collins and Alvarez believed they had their men, a solid connection to the kidnappers, and by morning, without any sleep, they'll be broken. A fresh team of Detectives worked with the two men throughout the night. Peter reconsiders and decided to talk but staunchly maintained his stance, Alcor refused to talk at all despite the effect it's having on his appearance of guilt.

Wednesday morning, Bradley Collins and Zeke Alvarez returned to the office. The plan was to once again go over the details of the police, forensics, and coroners' reports of the last couple of days and review the information collected from suspects Peter and Alcor by the night crew. Lost somewhere in the pages, is a lead, a pattern that the men can work with. Knowing that the ransom was not fully delivered, they expected news that Carmen had been found dead. With a great deal of relief, no reports of that nature had arrived at the Police Department. But what the men did find was just as bad. Lavington had already called.

The message was collected from the duty officer. The kidnappers still wanted their money, and now were demanding four million, plus the collection of rare coins Lavington had been assembling over the past forty years; a treasure unto itself. Lavington also reported that another drop would be allowed that evening. Details would follow. The only good for Collins news was that Carmen's body had not yet been found. Furthermore, no reports of a Jane Doe have been reported from the morgue.

As Collins and Alvarez reviewed the transcripts and the reports, they had to consider that they had been duped? Had they been fooled? Were Peter and Alcor just at the wrong place, wrong time? The texts said that Peter kept up his innocent stance with Alcor not confirming or denying anything.

It also led the Detectives to wonder if these kidnappers are true professionals considering they lost the two million in a random garbage pickup. No prints other the Peter's were found on the case. *How the hell would they not have thought of that?* Maybe they just figured nobody picks up trash in that area that late and expected to get the cash at some time late in the night. This was more than

unexpected; it was confusing as well. Not in the history of working kidnapping had either Collins or Alvarez ever heard of or seen anything as stupid from a kidnapper. Rookies? If yes, maybe they might be able to turn that to their advantage.

As both Collins and Alvarez exchanged thoughts about the kidnapping and Carmen's fate, Collins realized that they must now answer to Rudy Lavington, to call him soon. It's a frustrating prospect. Yet, this situation might yield some good news. It gave the detectives more details about the kidnappers and more time to compile evidence to find them. Otherwise, Carmen may still have been killed for convenience, ridding the kidnappers of the best witness the police have.

But as Rudy Lavington answered the phone, the tone in his voice immediately informed Collins of the contempt he now has for the police, their perceived incompetence weighed heavily on Lavington's mind. His anger, his disdain for how the police have handled the situation. Collins can only listen and not try to respond to absolve his part in the loss and recovery of the money by citing the lack of direct connection and evidence to lead the police to the location of his daughter. He had to own this grievous mistake and for lack of a better choice, spin it to his benefit without Lavington getting wise.

"I know that you've heard from the kidnappers," Collins starts.

"Yes as I said last night. How could you people get this so wrong? How could you have caught the wrong people? When was this decision, and why was I not consulted?"

"Mr. Lavington, our goal is to secure the safe discovery and safe release of your daughter. By utilizing the information, we had and the resources at our disposal, the steps we took were not ill-conceived. They have been tested and vetted in real-life situations similar to your own. We suspect that kidnappers had made a mistake in the drop location and have now exposed their hand as we suspect rooky kidnappers and that's our advantage. They are not professional, they are inexperienced and careless, and we will use that advantage to get your daughter back. What else did the person on the phone say when they called you?"

"You told me you would consult with me regarding the work and decisions made as you try to get my daughter back. How the hell can I let you continue with this?"

Collins felt the anger and emotion in Lavington's voice and wasn't surprised that he didn't answer the question. "I'm sorry for not giving you all the details. We needed to be sure you acted like you expected nothing more than to drop off the case. If you had seen anything, picked up a piece of evidence, or hesitated, and the kidnappers were watching, as they often do, then we lose our advantage. I believe you can understand that. As the night went on the actions of the men on the garbage truck did exactly what was expected if they had done the kidnapping. I'm still not sure that these guys weren't involved somehow. We're still interrogating them."

"But you miss the point. This is my daughter and I have the final say as to how things play out. Do you understand that? You should have contacted me once the case was picked up."

In an almost challenging voice, Bradley replies "Put yourself in our place for a moment. You know what we know, saw what we saw. Would have just let the men walk away or apprehend them when their guard is down?"

Exhaling, Lavington spoke slowly, still not answering any of Collins' questions, "I need you people, to get my daughter back. I understand that the thugs who grabbed my daughter appear to have little idea of what they're doing. I just need you to get her back. I'm willing to pull together another two million and try again to give you a chance to get these bastards. I know this could have turned out the same with or without your involvement. I really do. But, please get her back."

Bradley Collins further explained their intent to research the police reports again and would visit the estate to discuss the investigation with him. The phone conversation ended with Rudy Lavington demanding, "Get those bastards and get my daughter back."

The piles of papers of combined police reports must contain something that Collins and Alvarez can work on. They sit down, each opening the first report on their respective piles. Collins, the



murder/kidnapping report, Alvarez the forensics report. The first thing recognized by both men is the lack of evidence that overwhelms them. No fingerprints, no substantial witnesses, only a few strands of hair, which may or may not be from the kidnappers. It might be possible that a DNA breakdown may help, however, DNA reports take a month or so. Add to that the fact that there's little to compare it to, just the two young men in custody and neither had grey hair. Audio from the ransom calls contained no unusual characteristics. The spent shells and the cotton cloth found in the van appeared to be the best thing going.

Retracing the events of the kidnapping, they rambled through the information within the reports and paint a vague picture in their mind's eye. Tracing each step of the kidnapping to the next. Then, extrapolating beyond the reports, they put themselves in the kidnapper's shoes. All the needs for just such a job are slowly revealed. Perhaps these not-so-common items will provide better leads than say a stolen van would.

A 9mm Uzi machine gun or pistol was suspected in the strafing of the police car, it leads the list of uncommon items used in the kidnapping. The 9mm shells left behind told that story. Chloroform is available but rarely purchased. Zeke called over the duty officer and directs him to secure some men to search for the possible origin of the 9mm Uzi. While popular with gangs, it's made inroads to the US since its development in the 1950s with the pistol version being introduced in the mid-1980s. The report from ballistics regarding the shots that killed the officers who pulled over the van indicated full automatic firing. A twenty-round magazine in automatic firing mode is more than deadly, it shreds a body. Zeke asked a couple of desk staff to research gun shops for recent gun sales.

Although the chloroform was easily obtainable it's generally not a high-volume item. Two men were also assigned to canvas the local pharmacies by phone. Perhaps the purchase had been made recently. By now some fourteen officers are involved chasing down the evidence and where it leads.

Collins and Alvarez planned to leave the office just after 10 am spending the next two hours finishing their review of the reports. Not much more came from the time.

## Chapter 6 – ACT TWO

Tony and Jim changed shifts twice in the night, each one keeping watch over Carmen. This morning, as the day before, Jim showered and left to phone Rudy Lavington. It was 9 am when Jim left and Tony moved Carmen to the other room.

This morning Tony turned on the TV. He sat himself down on the bed beside Carmen.

"You should watch this. This could be about us."

A local news program is featured in a short promo. Few commercials follow. As the show begins, feature video is displayed, "This morning on KBST, Governor Thompson endorses Bill 4039, The Boston Aquarium gets city council approval for an expansion, a gas price war gives a pre-Christmas present to city residents and in sports, The Boston Bruins extend their winning streak to 10."

With just a few minutes left in the news, Jim returns having delivered the call. He's got breakfast and a newspaper. Tony announces, "Doesn't look like we're in the news yet. Well, at least not the kidnapping. The boyfriend was."

There's a visible reaction from Carmen.

"Looks like we're clean so far. We'll finish act two tonight."

It was hard for Collins and Alvarez to just sit quietly during the drive to the estate. They continued to speculate about the kidnapping. *How could they have lost the money like that? Are they just rookies or idiots? Why did the kidnappers use local telephones? Why were they still in the city? Two kidnappers, perhaps three?*

When only a few minutes away from the Lavington estate when the radio broke squelch and requested Collins pick up.

He picked up the handset and radioed back. "Collins here."

Captain Sawchuck informs them that Lieutenant Browne and Officer Brown had visited a gun shop on the east side. They reported that the shop had sold a 1987 9mm machine pistol about a year ago to a John Wilson, likely a fake name. Picking up the pace, Collins and Alvarez arrived at the estate close 11 am, three minutes after receiving the news of the gun purchase.

The gates had already been opened for them. They proceeded without hesitation to the estate entrance and again, they had been expected; the doors were held open by the butler. He also directed the detectives to the location of the master.

Rudy Lavington was sitting in the main library. This location was already familiar to Collins and Alvarez, as it had been used for previous communications with the kidnappers. Rudy greeted them as they entered. He immediately started rehashing the morning's contact with the kidnappers.

Again, they wanted an additional two million cash, in the same kind of case and oddly all the gold coins dated older than 1900 from his collection. Another call will be made for delivery instructions. "I don't get why they want the coins. It would be hard to sell just like a famous painting. Each one is unique in its markings caused by the limited use they had as a currency at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. I have detailed documentation about that. Melting them down would be pointless.... Oh, and the call recording is on the machine."

Alvarez walked over to the tape recorder, rewound it, and set it playing.

"Hello, this is Rudy Lavington."

"Seems we've had some trouble, Mr. Lavington. The money was never delivered as directed. Now we're very upset about this Mr. Lavington. Carmen is still alive, but you've got until 5 pm tomorrow to try again. This time make it two cases, same model, four million. We will provide proof of life and provide further instructions. Fail to comply and Carmen will be dead by 6 pm. And we want your gold

coins too. 1900 and older. All of them." The click of the phone hanging up was the last thing heard from the recording.

Collins replied to the tape as if they can hear him, "I can't believe this! Those bastards want more money by pullin' the same shit again! Christ!"

Rudy Lavington looks blindly across the room at him. Collins played a card he should not have, revealing that the police had little to go on. Lavington waited for either Collins or Alvarez to explain what the hell that meant. Aside from the obvious, they want more money, the police have been granted another chance to find the kidnappers and return Carmen safely. Although the previous night's experience proved, that the results can be unexpected.

Alvarez starts, "Let's get Peter Lau over here again. "

He proceeded to the kitchen and called him from the phone there. Not more than a minute after leaving the guest library, Alvarez returned. He has reached Peter and can expedite the address search by giving him the number over the phone. Zeke walks over to the Caller ID Box connected to the phone, then looked at the LED display. Immediately after writing down the number held by the display inside, he returned to the kitchen for another call.

As Alvarez works with Peter Lau, Collins started to explain the status of the investigation currently underway. He also leads Rudy Lavington into believing his daughter must still be alive and well. With the kidnappers coming back for an unbelievable and unheard-of second ransom, she must be alive. These comments are heard but not appreciated. And the truth is no one knows. Proof of life is a must.

Rudy asked a question to the room and demands an answer. "If they want more money, they must understand I need to know she's alive first... Why then, have they not let me speak with her?"

"It sounds like they will be," Collins said as he referenced the recording.

Yet, he's just a police officer using every resource at his disposal, giving his best personal effort. What came to Collins' mind calmed Rudy Lavington to a small degree. They did not permit Carmen to speak on the phone due to the necessity of transporting her, in daylight, to a telephone booth somewhere in the city. Despite their pick-up blunder the day before, kidnappers never take victims into the public.

Zeke ran back into the library. "It's another phone booth. This time it was a booth across the street from city hall."

Lavington complained to Collins that with all this technology, almost instantly knowing the caller's location, why can't you just pick up whoever calls from the phone booth and demand to know where his daughter is. The desperation of Rudy Lavington is starting to show through. His simple solution appears coherent to himself but is quickly proven flawed by Collins. Collins explained the truths hidden within Lavington's quick plan.

Peter's best effort of getting the phone booth location would take some 30 seconds, even with the Caller ID.

"If the Caller," Collins explains, "speaks for only ten seconds or so as we have seen, within that amount of time after the call, the caller at the phone booth could move away more than 100 feet. Currently, the kidnappers' M/O accounted for this possibility, by selecting a high pedestrian traffic area. It's easy to hide in a crowd. Furthermore, even if the kidnappers couldn't move away from that fast, there's just not enough manpower to watch every phone booth in the city. Picking up only one of the kidnappers would place Carmen in further jeopardy. If the kidnapper didn't return to what we assume to be the stash house after making the call as he has planned, the other kidnapping partner would kill Carmen, and disappear without a trace."

Lavington was set back a little. He countered just thinking out loud. The conversation among the men proves that the kidnappers have indeed left a trail to follow. Every time they contact the Lavington estate, it's by phone. That much is clear and Collins expected the kidnappers to again use a payphone this afternoon.

Rudy Lavington asks if it was possible to set some men about the city in a coordinated pattern to cover the greatest number of phone booths as possible, perhaps giving some weight to the fact two of the calls so far have been from the Old Town area. Collins gave the idea some consideration. As he and Alvarez hammered the idea into better shape, Rudy listened.

The current investigation regarding the gun shells and chloroform may not turn up anything for a few days. A possibility, albeit a slim one. Lavington drove the conversation on, asking how many men could be used to form the surveillance net for the payphones. Collins assumes twenty-five or more. Peter Lau would need to fill in the count of payphones in that area. Yet he had to admit that fewer than twenty men could likely be assigned to the investigation if pressed. Lavington now fueled by his agenda, puts a question to Collins.

"Why can't we get more men?"

Collins, "The Precinct has only 200 officers to cover the downtown core. Over half are off duty. The rest are assigned by the captain to serve the community as best as possible. There just aren't enough men, nor the money to get them, the off-duty officers, in."

Lavington offers, "Could I get my security company to provide the manpower we need?"

Lavington now pushes even more from Collins. "They can monitor the payphones along with whatever officers are available. And I can pay for the OT if required. I don't want cash to be an issue here. The opportunity must not be missed because the precinct doesn't have enough men. My group could provide sixty men, plus or minus, and that would at least give us a fighting chance."

Collins tried to reason with Lavington, "The police can't allow civilians to be involved in a police matter such as this. What if the suspect notices he's being watched, pulls a gun, and starts shooting. If that's the guy with the Uzi, we'd have a lot of dead and wounded people in the street. It's a non-starter, even if it appeared to be a good idea when you first suggested it."

Lavington refused to give up on the idea and suggests pulling in Off-duty officers who can assist after 4:00 pm from other Departments and Sheriffs' Offices. Lavington offers again to fund the OT himself. To encourage off-duty officers to respond to the offer, each officer who assists in the surveillance of the telephone booths would be paid \$400 for the expected four to six hours of stakeout time with a minimum of \$200 if the job ends early. Also, he offers to cover any other expenses incurred by the police during the effort.

Even though Collins' response to the scheme is subdued, he knows that more manpower is the best chance that they have, but The Police Commissioner would now also have to be involved. His approval is necessary to arrange for the off-duty officers and other precincts involvement. Unsure whether or not the plan could be orchestrated in time, he instructed Zeke to contact Captain Sawchuck to get things moving in that direction.

In keeping with the goal of reaching the kidnapper at the booth at the phone booth, Collins also contacts Peter Lau again. "Can you tell me how many payphones there are in the Old Town area and is there any faster way to find out which phone booth the kidnapper is calling from?"

Peter Lau surprisingly had a map of the area open on his desk. He took a half-minute to mark the payphones and came up with sixty-seven including those inside buildings. He had also been thinking about the speed of identifying the payphone locations.

On the phone, "I was thinking about this last night.... If only a limited number of phones are considered, then the engineers at the downtown or Mutual exchange can modify the software of the electronic switches to supply an activity list. It would almost immediately provide the number of a telephone whose handset had been lifted, even before a call is made, providing the phone number is in the central switch office of an active phone line. There'd be no data connection between the switch and the address database so a manual lookup would still be needed. It would still have time regardless. I suppose the software could specifically detect the Lavington's number and trigger an alert for that one originating phone booth. The one that's calling the estate."

Peter Lau pointed out the only drawback to the idea. "They must get cooperation from Ma Bell and have the engineers start on the software immediately."

Collins and Lau exchange comments for a minute and concluded with

"It's 11:12 am and if the next call is at 5 pm, then ya, let's get all these pieces moving."

Lavington pipes up. "If this is doable, then damn it, let's get started. I can support this financially if required."

Peter added, "I'll contact Bell and get a research team to go over to the telco office and build a list of the payphones. We'll then need to do some guesswork and ID the possible phones which the kidnappers may use to make the next call."

Looking over a map, Collins quickly outlines the boundaries which Peter can use as the target area.

The first problem appears. The area inside the boundaries was covered by two different telephone exchanges. Peter explained that the software written for one exchange may not necessarily work with the equipment in the other exchange. Additionally, time would not permit the development of two separate programs. All the software engineers would need to be involved in one program. Collins thanked Peter for his input and requested that they start immediately, using all the phone booths originating from the Mutual exchange. Peter shared one more piece of information, he estimated that there could be better than sixty-seven public phone booths in the downtown area alone.

Zeke returned to rejoin Collins and Lavington. "The captain says go ahead with the plan. He'll contact the Commissioner and fill him in on what's going on. He'll also start canvassing the off-duty officers and the other departments for more manpower."

"You better get him on the horn again. We might need as many as sixty-seven officers to cover all possible phone booths in the Old Town core," Collins responded.

Collins turned to Rudy Lavington. He filled him in, explaining the outcome of his conversation with Peter Lau. It's possible to locate the kidnapper as he makes his call, but we might not have enough men. There are more than sixty-seven target phones that qualify for instantly getting the location. If the kidnapper calls from a phone outside that area, the only thing to ID the location is the Caller ID, and then only if the kidnapers maintain their M/O of calling from within Old Town. Then, they must proceed as they had before. Lavington winced. He doesn't care for the odds either way. Regardless, he got up and left the room to prepare for the second ransom.

Slowly, Collins and Alvarez developed a blueprint for the afternoon's events. All the technical details have been solved. Payphones located at street level were selected as priority sites. Followed by phones in malls, street-front shops, hotels, and phones located at public attractions. Each man would carry a handheld VHF radio operating at 128.05MHz for communications, avoiding the police band.

Monitoring at a distance, the officer closest to the originating payphone would radio in the kidnapper's description and pursue him at a distance. Location and direction information would be radioed in every thirty seconds or so. Officers in the area would converge on the suspect and an arrest would be made. The suspect is to be considered very dangerous and every effort is to be made to protect the lives of the officers involved, but under no circumstances is the suspect to be killed.

Collins and Alvarez complete the plans as best they can. Later in the afternoon as the last details are being taken care of. Rudy Lavington re-entered the room. He explained the status of the money and coins, he asked when the briefcase will be delivered. With all the concern about apprehending the kidnapper, it had been overlooked. This time, Collins permitted one of the estate servants to secure the second case but instructs him to return without delay. He should return in about an hour, but no more than two. The original case and money had been delivered shortly before 1 pm.

In the next room, a phone rings.

Alvarez got up, "I gave the captain the number here." He walked to the next room and returned only moments later. Captain Sawchuck has recruited fifty-six officers. They will all meet at the Cambridge office at 3:00 pm for assignments. That was a little over an hour away.

Collins must now decide where each man should be stationed. Eighteen locations would be unattended. The possibility that several phone booths may be in close proximity to each other could stretch the men more efficiently. Again, Collins tries to get in touch with Peter Lau. Collins is informed that Peter Lau has left the office for the Lavington estate. Collins will have to wait.

At 2:20 pm the servant returns with the additional briefcase.

2:37 pm, Peter Lau arrived up. He brought good news. The software engineers will have the monitoring software in place by 3:30 pm. Peter sets a Toshiba 386 laptop computer down on the desk against the wall. Once it is set up, he explains how the software at the exchange is planned to work.

"Off hook signals generally trigger the release of a dial tone to the open line. That's why you never hear one immediately after picking up the handset if you try and catch it as fast as possible. But off-hook signaling is routed through a signal gateway of software and hardware. To get the tracking of open line activity the engineers needed to insert a subroutine that would send a character string to a host computer to log the event. My laptop is that computer. The only other matter was removing the information noise from the screen. Consider the seventy-four we've ID'd phones and every time someone picks up the handset, we see it. That could be a lot of noise. Now, how many notifications would we see? I'm not sure. I guess it depends on how many people use the payphones. Maybe we'll see one every thirty seconds. A can only guess at this time.

"But the software guys included a partial number detection. If the first number dialed is not a part of you're your number, Mr. Lavington, then the notification would not be sent and we won't have to notify the officer at that site. Likewise, if the next number is not a 7 and so on. But a cool thing is that the software also will give us an ID number of the phone. Not the phone number, a number like a serial that's tied to the physical phone. And that's the number they send me. They also gave me the list of serials and the locations in a spreadsheet. A quick Control-F and we have the location of the phone."

He goes on, everyone captivated by the technology, "We should have the exact location of the caller available here no more than five seconds after he pushes the last button of the phone number. I just have to find that code in the list. Had he been using standard phones; we would not have been able to do this. We'll run a test at about 4 pm.

Additionally, Peter had brought along maps of Old Town with the locations and addresses of all the payphones there. He noted the maps were also shared with Captain Sawchuck.

Immediately, Collins removed himself from the guest library to study the maps and assign surveillance duties to the off-duty officers back at the office. Spreading out the map on the large coffee table, he started by highlighting locations where one officer can observe two or more booths, he manages to reassign free six officers in the process, bringing the total phones covered up to seventy-two.

Only the phone booths in malls will be unattended. He assures himself, of all the phones in this exchange area, the possibility of the kidnapper using one of these phones is very slim. Being out in the open is always better from a criminal point of view. What he silently worries about is the possibility of the kidnapper using one of the other phones available in the city. Yet, if he's in this exchange area, the web is set and he's not getting away this time.

After completing the surveillance worksheet, which took twenty minutes, and just before a three o'clock assignment meeting at the Cambridge office, Collins contacted Captain Sawchuck with the payphone selections. Thereafter, men in plainclothes were allocated a radio and a payphone to watch. They were ready for the fieldwork.

When Collins returned to the library, he noticed a commercial bank bag on the table. The money has also arrived. Collins is also informed by Alvarez that Gerry Hope will arrive with two VHF radios for

monitoring and controlling the surveillance net around the city center. All the activities have been completed, all except for the programming of the phone switch and test, and that they must wait for.

Early in the afternoon, the hotel room remains quiet. Carmen up until then she had not been mistreated. Knowing the risk she would be taking in making any move to escape, she has kept still and quiet, but yet watching for an escape opportunity with a high confidence level of success. While alone in one of the rooms, she considered her best time, although she would have to break free of her restraints first.

Tony had been monitoring the local News station but turned off the TV. He moved Carmen one last time and headed to the next room where Jim was again sleeping. He rudely awakened Jim and announces it's time to prepare for the final chapter in their game with the police. This time a discussion takes place.

As Tony and Jim laid out the afternoon's events, Carmen lost her hope for a safe release. She can't help but listen in on the conversation going on just a few feet from her.

Tony laid out the chronology. At 4 pm or a little after, Jim leaves the hotel, and drives to a phone booth to make the first call to the Lavington estate, leaving Tony to guard Carman for the last few hours. The call is to be made at 5:00 pm. Jim is to instruct Rudy Lavington to take the briefcase to a specific phone booth within eyesight of another public phone a half away and then wait for another call to that phone. He's also to provide the near proof of life. They figure it should take Lavington about forty-five minutes or so to get to the first phone. And another thirty seconds to make his way to the second phone. After the drop has been made, Jim picks up the money and calls the hotel.

Once Tony knows the money has been secured, Tony would then deal with Carmen and leave the hotel to meet Jim several blocks away from the hotel, traveling on foot. The final escape is to drive out of the city during rush hour, hidden by the traffic, while Lavington waits for Carmen's release.

With the details behind them, Jim prepares for his outing. He showers, dresses, and he heads for the car.

"I'll see ya at about a quarter to six," Jim said then disappeared into the hall behind the door.

Tony turns to Carmen, "Well doll, in about two hours it'll all be over, what shall I do with you now?"

Peter Lau reached the main telephone exchange using a computer link.

"It looks like we've got some action on the phone network. I'm seeing lines get picked up then cleared as they're not detected as the ones we're after."

Collins primed Rudy Lavington to keep the caller on the phone as long as possible giving the officers on-site time to identify the kidnapper for shadowing. Rudy pointed out that during the ransom calls he had no control over the call. But still, Collins urged him to seize the opportunity if it occurs. Lavington agrees.

Captain Sawchuck radioed on the special kit to confirm all the available officers had duly been assigned to their respective surveillance sites. Each one was briefed on the possibility that the kidnapper will approach and use the phone booth there.

Finally, an all-up test of the new telephone exchange software starts. A message on Peter's computer tells him a line had been picked up. He announced it to the other men in the room. Peter hunched over his computer as if to get a jump on the information. After nine, the phone rings at the estate rang.

Within three seconds, "I've got the serial. Hang on... The location is Charles and Revere."

Collins picked up the telephone set. "Collins here."

"This is MTC Mutual. How did the test go?"



"Great. Hang on..." , with that, he passed the phone to Peter and turned to confer with Alvarez and Lavington again. Double-checking the list of points, he had written down earlier in the day, they were ready. Now luck was the only thing left to make or break the efforts of all involved. The last few minutes leading up to five o'clock proved as silent and as long as it was the previous day.

As expected, the phone did ring. First a click from the tape machine. Immediately they would know if their efforts were in vain. Everyone turned to face Peter as if he alone had the power to break the stalemate with the kidnappers. A second ring... Nothing yet. The stress level in the room jumped 10-fold. The answer had to come soon. No one moved. Everyone physically held their breath. With the third ring, the expression on Peter's face changed from anticipating to stressed. As the last ring was still fading, Peter finally spoke, "We haven't got it."

Collins slams his hand down on the coffee table in anger and shouts to Rudy Lavington, "Pick it up."

"This is Rudy Lavington."

"On the phone, a familiar voice, "Dad, I'm OK. This is your proof of life. The first TV commercial in the 4 o'clock hour on KBST was for Dell's Auto." A slight hesitation and rustling. "There you have it Mr. Lavington, proof of life. Now take the money to the phone booth northwest corner of Deerfield and Bay Street by 6 pm. Wait there for further instructions."

As before, Lavington had no chance to say a word. This time he didn't have any time to discuss the call. He had only sixty to make it downtown and find the phone booth. He simply repeated the important details: Deerfield and Bay Street. Wait at a payphone there. Quickly, Lavington picked up the two cases and started for the door, Collins tailing him.

"Was there proof of life?" Collins asks. "Something recent that could not have been predicted, like a newspaper headline from tomorrow's printing.

"Yes, it's on the tape," Lavington said as he walked out the door.

Collins followed and replied, "We'll get someone to check it out and let you know. We'll have someone standing by you downtown if you need any help. We'll also check out the caller's location from the number recorded in the Caller ID. Good luck."

Bradley Collins strained to show continued optimism.

Peter Lau pointed to his computer, "I didn't get the automatic ID so that means the caller didn't call from our expected area. I have the caller ID but need to look it up, standby for the location.

Thirty seconds later, Peter Lau announced, "It's at Arlington and Boylston. Just outside our catchment area."

Lavington quietly thought to himself as he drove off. *How can the police be so helpless in this situation? Here we have another attempt by the department to get the upper hand but lose it before it's even started. Thoughts now emerged from within his mind's own chatter, Why did I even bother? The police may have the manpower, technology, a certain amount of familiarity with the situation, but still, I'm no better off.*

Collins walked back into the library. He knew what must be done and got straight back in the race. Alvarez had already radioed for any officers in the vicinity of the phone booth at the Arlington and Boylston. The closest officers reported back that they would take about three minutes to reach the site. Alvarez already knows; they won't find anything.

Collins stopped moving as if something has caught his eye. He turns to Peter Lau and asks if it would be possible to program the number of the that payphone Lavington is going to into the switch software. "Can we do that?

He asked if his logic is sound. "The guy who gives Lavington the next set of instructions that is?" Peter responds favorably, "Well yeah, that should work."

Alvarez added, "We know one kidnapper would have to pick up the cash near the drop site, and the other kidnapper must then be the one providing the instructions to Laving ton. And that gets us the next location of the other kidnapper? Right?"

"Right?" Alvarez asks again.

Peter points out the reality of time, "I guess so, but we've got less than an hour."

Collins commits. "It's still our best chance. Peter, get it done."

Peter starts by calling the Mutual exchange looking for the number or numbers of payphones at Deerfield and Bay Street. There is only one. He confirmed that the computer software at the exchange does track the activity for the phone booth at Deerfield and Bay Street.

Collins clapped his hands together, indicating his renewed conviction. At last, the efforts of the previous few days have provided another opportunity to isolate the kidnappers. Collins started pacing back and forth in the estate, mumbling slightly, running the scenarios through his head. *How will the new payphone number and software help them? Where will the call to the phone booth be made from? Would Carmen be at that location?*

Alvarez picked up the radio to respond to a call. As expected, the officers have found nothing at the Arlington and Boylston. No trace of anyone, no witnesses found nearby. He asked them to also question anyone waiting for a bus in hopes of getting something of a description.

Collins then took the radio from Alvarez's hand as he sat it down at the table. He radioed the officers who took part in the surveillance and requests they do not sign out until 6:30 pm By that time, Rudy Lavington would have arrived with the money at the assigned phone booth and will have received new instructions. With luck, the origin of that call would then have been resolved and shortly thereafter, the second kidnapper and Carmen were found.

Peter called the Mutual and got them engineers scrambling. He explained, "While the software has been written, is it possible to change and update the switch cores with the number of the payphone in software?"

Collins and Alvarez listen to one half of the conversation and miss the mutual engineer's response. They are impatient.

The engineer at the exchange explained that the software can only be loaded on the exchange in banks. The main exchange handles the 35x-xxxx range and that all ten banks handle 10,000 lines each. Each bank software must be reloaded and that takes about 5 minutes each. Almost an hour including setup time. Duplicate systems handle the outage but that is now twenty full banks to update.

Peter pauses the call and updates Collins, recapping the situation

Collins's heart sinks. "Sounds like they'll never make it."

In a moment of inspiration, Peter asks the engineer of a possibility, something not in the operation manual. Update one-half of the duplicate banks 0 through 9 at once. Then after that set is online again taking calls, the other can be updated. The issue is that this leaves the switch without a backup and unless the banks are put offline and live calls are slowly self-terminated, shutting down the switch would just drop every single live call on that bank. And that's not something the Telcos are keen on doing.

Peter in a fading voice to the engineer, "I don't even know how we could make that happen, or who we could talk to for approval for that sort of update."

"I do," Collins announced and grabbed the VHF radio. "Rudy, are you there?"

The VOX kicks in, "I am."

"Do you know the president of AT&T?"

"Yes. Why?"

"We have an idea and need them to shut down their Mutual exchange to update the phone software so we can track the caller of the payphone you're going to."

"I think I can make that happen. Can you connect this radio to a phone line?", Rudy asks.

Collins positively replies, "Yes we can. Standby. Oh, I got the report from the TV station. That was the commercial at 4 pm which means Carmen is still alive and okay."

"Thanks for that Bradley. That means a great deal to me."

"Zeke," Collins urges, "get Gerry Hope on the horn for me to loop Lavington's radio to a phone line."

"Rudy, we're setting that up. Is there something I can do to speed this along?"

"Yes," Rudy replies, "Get my executive Secretary on the phone and have her set up a call from me to Charles Graison. Then tell me how I dial on this thing..."

At 5:18 pm all 2018 active calls on Mutual Bank One suddenly dropped. Most customers affected just hang up, pick up, and dial again, simply thinking that they just got disconnected somehow. By 5:32 pm most of those calls were now routed through Mutual Bank Two. This time, 3729 customer calls were all dropped in rapid succession.

Collins felt he was getting the upper hand. But knowing that he's dealing with amateurs still worried him some. *What will they ask for? Will it simply be the same? Drop in a garbage can and try and grab it again? They must realize that they would be caught as soon as the pick-up is made. Right?*

His mind continues to race: *Still, there's the Uzi shooting of the police officers and the shooting at the Harvard parking lot. A professional calling card? Rather intense for rookies. Yet, with no fingerprints or evidence left behind at any of the sites maybe these men were experienced, but not professional? The 9mm casings would have been easy to miss in the dark, otherwise, these guys are spot on. Was the first drop a ruse to lead the police down a distraction rabbit hole? What the hell are they going pull?* It was less than a half-hour before the hand was dealt.

Collins radios into the Precinct. Double-checking. Everything is confirmed in place. The wait begins. It's a long twenty minutes before the radio bristles with life again.

Tony prepared for the final act. Jim is already on-site to get the cash, but Tony still needed to deal with Carmen. He needed to be confident that while he's out of the room she doesn't yell, grunt or make any sounds of any kind. He had given this some critical thought.

He tells Carmen to get on the bed face down. She cooperated obediently, but slowly. She has an expression of complete surrender, eyes droopy, corners of her mouth turned down. On the left side of her face, by the cheekbone up to her eye, is a semi-circle bruise that's visibly swelling as she gets up from the chair, moving sluggishly towards the bed. She is weak.

"Come on darling, it couldn't have hurt that bad."

Once on the bed, Tony instructed Carmen to cross her wrists behind her back. He cinches two zap starts around her wrists. He then wraps two more zap straps around her ankles; the two sets, wrists, and ankles, are looped together like a chain. When Tony is finished, she presents as hog-tied, face down on the bed. Tony then loosely wrapped two more zap straps in place just below her biceps but above the elbows on Carmen's arms and flung a nylon cord under the bed. He pulled the rope ends up and laid them on the bed before he tied them to the straps on her upper arms before cinching them tight. To keep her from screaming or vocalizing anything he placed a washcloth in her mouth and wrapped her mouth and chin with several layers of gaffer tape. Each turn around her head about a half-inch was lower than the previous. As a final step, he pulled on the zap straps at both her hands and ankles to just before the point of causing severe pain, looped a pillowcase over her head.

"There you go, darling," Tony proclaimed as if he was proud of the job he did. "If you try and wiggle to make noise those straps will end up cutting you quite deeply, so it's best you don't move. You don't want to bleed out, do you? I'll be back in less than thirty minutes. I just have to make a phone call. Be a good girl now won't you."

Tony grabs the TV remote, turns the TV on, brings up the volume a bit, then exits the room.

The VHF radio chirped followed by a voice. "Cochrane here. Lavington just pulled up to the phone booth. He's out of the car waiting for the call. "

Collins radio's back, "Cochrane, let us know when he picks up the phone. "

"10-4. Cochrane out."

With a minute, as if someone had watched Rudy pull up to the phone booth, it rings. Rudy steps up, lifts the receiver, "This is Rudy Lavington."

A faint muffled voice replied, "Listen to me carefully and follow these instructions. Take the two briefcases north to Deerfield and Back Street. Locate the rain grate, lift it, and push the briefcases under. We will then release your daughter. If you fail we will kill your daughter immediately" As before, the caller hung up immediately after delivering his message. Rudy Lavington, having no intent on quitting or failing the drop finally sees an end to his ordeal.

Immediately upon detecting that the call had been placed, Peter Lau saw the phone data the police had been waiting for and cross-references it in only seconds. "The location of the originating call is just up the street one block on the far south end of Deerfield at Beacon."

Collins jumps on the radio. "Anyone got eyes on Deerfield and Beacon?"

Tony had just hung up the handset when the radio call came through. Officer Browne shouted into the radio, "I've got him! The suspect is a Caucasian male approximately forty-five years old, wearing a dark gray suit with a black wool overcoat. He has black ear-length hair. He's clean-shaven. He's not carrying anything and is walking slowly south towards Old Town on Beacon. He's moving at quite a pace. Will advise as required. Browne out."

With the radio channel clear, Officer Cochrane has now radioed Collins back at the estate. Cochrane here. Lavington has just left the phone booth. He's walking towards his car... He didn't drop off the money, he's getting into his car. He's starting to drive off... No, he's just stopped again right at Back Street... He's out, walking to the rear of the car, now on the passenger side by the curb he's looking down. Standby. He's just put the money into a rain grate, and it looks like it fell right in... Now he's back in his car and he's driving off. Cochrane out."

Rudy Lavington heard the exchange as well and when the channel was silent for a moment radioed Collins at the estate confirming that he has followed the kidnapper's instructions. Quite excitedly he passes on the comment by the kidnapper that Carmen would soon be released. He dwelled on the subject. Collins then cut him off mid-sentence and asked for more details regarding the call and money drop. Lavington could only say that the first briefcases just squeezed through the five-inch gap, then could be heard skidding a bit and finally landing in a splash. Rudy didn't wait for the splash of the second case. There was nothing to be seen through the rain grate.

Collins reacted and muttered to himself, "Waterproof, they're waterproof." Collins advised Lavington that they are tailing the man who called him and he suspects that the man will lead them to Carmen. Six officers are monitoring him.

The late fall rains had filled the drainage tunnels allowing the water to carry the cases downstream underground towards Jim waiting in the dampness. Collins concluded there's no point in trying to guess where the cases would travel or where the hidden kidnapper would exit above ground. There wasn't enough time. Still, a basic effort should be made.

Collins radioed all the active officers working the phone booths to now actively survey their areas for open manholes or note if they see anyone exit from underground. It's a long shot, but it's a sound step in the right direction based on the best information he has.

Below street level, Jim waits in his flashlight's glow for the underground system to do its job. Water dripping from above is the only sound; the echoing splashes are only slightly hidden by the waves produced by water flowing around the corners through the many switchbacks in the tunnels. Jim waits

for some eight hundred yards downstream from the drop site. He shined his flashlight up into the tunnel leading up and to the left; the expected track of the cases. He watched for the Pelican Cases thinking they might be hard to spot. It's not long before the first black briefcase rounds the final bend to where Jim is standing. The water carried it towards him having only taken three minutes twelve seconds to make the journey. Kneeling and reaching into the channel just above the water, Jim prepared to snatch it as it passed by. He managed to grab the case by the handle and swung it out in one smooth motion. He placed it down on the narrow ridge that lines both sides of the tunnel rain channel. The second case had not yet rounded the bend. For some forty-five seconds, Jim waited; he considered whether or not to just go. Two million is quite a figure by itself... Clook. It's the deadened sound of the second case hitting the opposite side of the turn before floating the remaining distance towards Jim. He snagged it swiftly as he had the previous case. Then with both cases in hand, he ran up another tunnel in the area. Within minutes Jim emerged from the underground inside an underground department-store parking lot. Now free from the possibility of being apprehended in the confines of the underground water system, he put the two briefcases into a mid-size travel suitcase he has planted in the lot. Undetected, he returned to the street level and walked out onto the street and to where he had parked Tony's car less than an hour before. He's scheduled to meet Tony at 7 pm at the George Washington statue in the Public Garden after Tony kills Carman.

Collins turns to Alvarez and summarized the kidnapper's strategy. He pointed out that the kidnappers had crafted a distraction and a sweet delivery method of the ransom money and are now possibly escaping with it. Further, as that delivery method had not been anticipated, the police had been outplayed.

The question of Carmen is still in play with Officer's Browne, Cochrane, and others are trailing the last and best lead they have. Peter Lau's impressive play was a stunning victory. It's now the only thread they can pull on to unravel Carmen's location. Collins remained concerned that she has surely seen the kidnappers by now and in all likelihood could identify them at a later time.

Alvarez nods his head slightly. "We'll have to share the bad news with Lavington when he gets back. Help him adjust for the possibility that his daughter is already dead. I know she could have been killed after recording the proof of life message. But let's keep the dead talk to ourselves, shall we? Let's just focus on the suspect and keep Lavington in the loop at all times."

Collins' eyebrows rise slightly, and the corners of his mouth turn flat, the expression of awareness. He reaches to the VHF radio calling Officer Browne.

"Browne, this is Collins. Do you still have the suspect? Over"

"Roger," is the quick reply.

"Where are you and do you have any idea where he's headed? Over"

"We just left Beacon and we're headlined south on Berkely," Browne radioed back.

"Might be headed to the hotel district. "

Collins is emphatic, "Do not lose him. Everyone. Keep your wits about you."

Browne reports back. "We've now got four pairs of eyes on him, and while he is walking quickly, I don't think he's in any kind of rush. He looks like he's trying to blend in with the after-work crowd."

"That's great, but let's get even more men on him in case he tries to shake an unseen tail. If he heads into a building with multiple exits, we could still lose him. Keep on him and keep me informed. Collins out."

"Roger. Browne out." Then the radio emits the squelch chirp and falls silent.

Collins begins to feel some true optimism but also realizes that he has to wait for both Rudy to return and Officer Browne to report in again it's a torturous wait. He does, however, have a feeling that things are going to move rapidly.

He radios Rudy. "Rudy, are you on the radio?"

Like before, "Yes I'm here."

"We have a suspect in view and are tailing him. He's the actual guy who made the call to you at the phone booth. And you won't believe it, he was just a half blocks away. Amazingly, he was within sight of you."

The radio chatters back, "Wow. I never would have thought of something like that."

"Indeed. We know he's either one of the kidnappers or is somehow involved. Right now, we're following him and are only planning on apprehending him if there's a danger of someone getting hurt. He might just lead us to Carmen."

"That's good to hear."

Collins concludes, "I'll keep you up to date as soon as my information changes. Collins out."

The radio sat silent for only a minute, then, "Browne to Collins."

"Collins here."

"Suspect is on the move. He's gone into the Four Seasons. I radioed the crew to monitor all the exits and report in if he tries to leave. We've also got a lucky break. I've got an ID. One of the officers tailing him recognized him from a robbery he had testified at about five years ago. It's a guy called Tony Grange. I don't have any other details right now. I'm going to see if he's a guest at the hotel."

"Roger. I'll have dispatch look him up. Collins out."

Acting accordingly, Collins radioed the office for several additional cars to quietly approach the hotel and hold station until he arrived. As the lead Detective, Collins being on-site to drive the investigation and apprehension is the best move. Collins headed out Lights on, siren bellowing, leaving Alvarez behind to update and consult with Lavington after he returned from dropping off the cases. He hopes he can be on-site by quarter to seven.

Tony Grange moved through the hotel room picking up the pieces left in the room over the last few days. He is still dressed in a suit but looks tired. The odd sleep and awake cycle has put him out of sorts. Mostly physically tired, his body movements are slowing, and his hair is somewhat out of place from its proper appearance the day before. It's almost time to leave, time to meet up with Jim.

In the next room, Carmen emotionally and spiritually exhausted, she continued to lay in the exact position on the bed where she was restrained twenty-seven minutes prior. Head covered, hands tied, legs tied, now struggling to breathe. Tony entered the room.

"Thanks, doll. You've been great. In a few minutes I'll be leaving, and this will be all over. For you anyways." Tony cuts the sap straps tied to the rope. He removes the pillowcase and tape over her mouth pulling several hundred hairs with it. She flinches and squeals as it's pulled but concentrates on taking several deep cleansing breaths. Her hands and feet remain bound.

Cradling her head in his right hand, Tony offered a quick summary of the rest of her life. "Now you be good, while I finish cleaning up. It'll be just a couple more minutes dear."

Having previously rubbed down all the handles and surfaces likely touched by hands with rubbing alcohol and rubber gloves. Tony continued to use the rubber gloves to rifle through the drawers and closets making sure all are empty like a departing guest of any hotel.

Carmen doesn't move or blink. She stared at the carpet with an expressionless face. A few minutes later, Tony returned carrying his small suitcase. He's ready to leave and put Carmen in the hands of the hotel staff, who, finally after disregarding the do not disturb sign, would find her dead body. He placed the case down on the floor beside the door and looked around one more time. Checking for any obvious pieces of evidence left behind. He wasn't worried about hair.

Glancing about the room, he looked out the window. Instantly his face changes from mild happiness to concern. Three police units are parked on the opposite side of the street just a half-block from the hotel. *Might be nothing*, Tony first thought.

Carefully, he approached the window, planning to take a closer look. He pulled the curtains a bit wider, three police units confirmed, red and blue lights blinking. Instantly he knew he had to plan for the worst-case scenario; they have found him. Tony ran through his options, talking to himself in the process. As he sees an unmarked police unit drive into the hotel parking lot that makes four, plus how many unseen officers. Tony convinces himself he's been found.

Once inside the hotel, Collins, Officer Browne provides an update on the activities since they arrived on-site. A picture of Tony from the case five years back has been found and is circulating amongst the service staff. The maid on the main floor recognized the face as the man in room 0105. She does not know anything about, nor has she seen a woman with him. The manager standing close at hand points out that it's the lower floor, east wing, on the north side of the corridor. The room has easy access to the street via the west emergency door and main door on the north side.

Right off, two officers head to monitor the doors. Collins remained at the front desk to obtain the guest's name and try and phone the room. It's booked under Lawrence Smith from Vermont.

*Fake name*, thinks Collins. He proceeds to call the room.

Tony doesn't answer it. Pacing back and forth, looking around the hotel room as if something inside it will help him decide what to do, Tony finally picked up the telephone receiver. Calmly he says, "Yes, Hello."

Collins, surprised to hear that someone is there, quickly checks if the occupant has been there a while. "Thank you, hello. This is Roger at the front desk. We have had an issue with power on the first floor and our maintenance people have been working to address the issue. Have you had any unusual power problems in the last little hour or two?"

Tony is quick to respond. "I'm sorry, but I have just returned to my room after a few meetings and everything seems fine right now."

Collins's face turned a puzzled look. "Thank you sir for your time and your help. Have a good night."

Detecting a familiar tone in the voice on the phone, Collins phoned Alvarez back at the estate. He requests he play him the recording of the last ransom call to the estate. As soon as Alvarez starts the tape Collins instantly recognizes it as the voice he has just heard. The kidnapper is in the hotel room. He's in room 0105. Without any further delay, he has doubled down on the number of officers monitoring the hotel exits.

In the hotel room, Tony's actions reveal his state of mind. Rubbing his face with his hands, looking out the window periodically and at his watch. He should have left the hotel by now. He scheduled to meet Jim in only a matter of minutes.

Opening the door to look over to the exits, his suspicions are confirmed. The police had posted sentries at the emergency exits at either end of the hallway. He returned to the relative safety of the hotel room and suddenly he stopped his erratic behavior. Realizing that he has no possible way to leave the hotel, he decided to take the initiative to secure his safe passage. Quickly he forms an alternate escape plan.

Using Carmen as a bargaining chip, he would demand and receive the necessary means to escape. Now calmer, he dials the front desk, knowing that the police must be planning on breaching his room any minute.

## Chapter 7 – END GAME

"This is room 0105. I want to speak to the police that are in the hotel."

The front desk operator routes the call through the front desk. The Manager picks up the call and she held out the handset to Collins for further dialogue. Taking it from her hands, he already knows what it's about.

"This is Detective Bradley Collins."

"As you already know, I've got Carmen Lavington. She's still alive and if you want to keep her that way, you will cooperate. Do you understand?" Tony is clear to emphasize "will" for the benefit of Collins.

Two things are revealed, Carmen is still alive and she's confirmed in room 0105 and that Collins must somehow delicately negotiate with Tony for the safe return of Carmen and appease Tony in the process. Before agreeing to cooperate and answer the question put to him, he takes a fleeting moment to decide how he can stall the kidnapper. But he has no choice. He needs more time, more men on-site, and a police negotiator.

"Yes, I understand. Before we will negotiate, I want to speak with Carmen."

Tony, even knowing he's cornered, still doesn't give Collins the upper hand.

"You are in no position to ask for anything," Tony boasts "I want a car to drive me to the airport. You will arrange for a Lear to fly me to Mexico City. A Non-Stop flight. You have one hour before I kill Carmen Lavington." Tony abruptly hangs up the phone.

Quickly Collins is reminded of the savage determination displayed by the kidnappers only three days ago. Even before the police negotiator is contacted, Collins knows he must not let the kidnapper think he has control over the situation. Things are happening too fast; he's got to call the kidnapper back and force the issue of talking to Carmen. Waiting any longer would minimize the seriousness of the police's attempt to get control. He dials room 0105. One ring, "Yeah."

Collins musters all his convictions and makes his own demands. "We will deal with your requests only after we have spoken to Carmen. We must know she is still alive or all options are off the table and we storm the room, either killing you or putting you in cuffs. The choice is yours. Which will it be?"

Collins waited for a reply. There is no sound from the telephone set. He waits. Then after what has a very painful six seconds, Tony breaks the silence.

"You've got one hour, and if you don't show any progress and do what I asked, fifteen minutes from now, I will shoot Carmen in the foot to prove she's still alive. You decide."

A loud sound of the handset hitting the plastic cradle blasts through Bradley's phone before it's cut off by the disconnected line.

Again, Collins is left holding a deadline. Suddenly realizing he has two officers heading to the room, Collins radios in to avoid contact with the kidnapper and a possibly deadly situation.

Now having at least fifteen minutes to work with, Collins started contacting all the necessary departments. First up, is to contact the office to call in extra units including several sharpshooters for backup support. Then after reaching Captain Sawchuck by radio, Collins delivers the necessary, albeit, somewhat abridged report. Afterward, Sawchuck assures Collins a hostage negotiator will be assigned to him immediately and would radio in as soon as he is on his way to the hotel. Finally, he radioed over to Alvarez back at the Lavington estate. Having little time, he quickly sets Alvarez straight on what has happened at the hotel. Rudy Lavington has not yet returned from the drop.

Even though knowing that the kidnapper was unlikely to attempt an escape, Collins still redeploys the men currently at his disposal. Two men at each end of the hall leading to room 0105, six others outside by the doors.



"Prepare for shots to be fired," he warns them. "Keep your eyes open and note anything unusual and radio back to me. And let's get the shooters on the west side of the hotel. Get a clean line."

Now relocated in a room beside the front lobby by the hotel staff, Collins has set up a command center. He made notes regarding what has happened since contact with the kidnapper was made. Two other officers wait for instructions.

Inside the room, Tony has turned on the police scanner, having preprogrammed it to scan all published police channels, he has heard some radio chatter about officers going to the hotel, but nothing specific about him, Carmen, or the kidnapping. Not having much patience for things not going his way, Tony started considering stepping up his pressure on the police for a car and plane out of the country.

He turned to Carmen still tied up to the bed and calmly speaks, "This all about you my dear, you better start praying that they don't make me kill you."

Carmen can hear but doesn't react to these threats. Somehow, she's different than she was only one day before.

Using one of the standards radio channels monitored by, Collins and Captain Sawchuck, the negotiator for the department, one Captain Gray, radioed to Collins at the hotel. He reminds Collins not to let the kidnappers have anything without giving up something in return. But Collins argued that these so-called formulas will not apply here. Pointing out the history of planning, execution, and resolve of the kidnappers, he must leave any standard practices behind. Further, Collins insisted that Gray immediately deal with the request by the kidnapper for a car and safe passage out of the country. Responding as if from a textbook, Gray forces Collins to wait until his arrival.

While listening in on the scanner and understanding a negotiator is en route, Tony recognized his want and efforts for his secure getaway and freedom are not being taken as seriously. He decided he needed to teach this Captain Gray a lesson. Reaching the phone, Tony's expression changes from mild anger to macabre happiness. Dialing zero, he's once again in touch with the front desk, he calmly requests to speak with Collins. It had only been six minutes since that last call.

"This is Detective Collins."

Tony, in an almost monotone voice, directs Bradley to listen carefully. "I don't think you people are taking me seriously. You wanted proof that Carmen is alive, well hang on..." Then, following a few seconds of silence, Bradley hears muffled "No", a shot, and then a single, piercing, scream, and whimpers.

"There you go. Did you hear that? That was Carmen being shot. I want a car here in fifteen or she's dead? I'm not fucking around."

Collins can't control himself, in his mind's eye, he sees getting Carmen shot. He recoils a bit and then yells into the telephone, "You fucking bastard! You'll never get out of here alive."

Sarcastically Tony offers, "You're not having a good day. Are you Mr. Collins? I am, I'm even having fun." Tempting Bradley with a voice daring him to do something drastic, but even Tony knows from the radio conversations, Collins could do nothing.

This time, Tony wouldn't hang up. "Well, what do you say?"

Collins finally did.

Directly Collins picks up the radio. "Captain Gray, Collins."

"Gray here."

"That bastard just shot the girl because we didn't get him what he wanted."

Captain Gray acknowledges the message. "I'm sorry Collins. We can't always know or predict these situations. We have an extraordinarily erratic man there, but we'll get moving on his demands. We'll get that car on the way. Gray out."

With that, Bradley threw the radio on the desk and dropped his head on his crossed arms over the hotel desk. Taking a moment, and a few deep breaths, he picks up the radio again. Changes the transceiver channel and begins transmitting.

"This is Detective Bradley Collins, if any of you get the opportunity to get a clear shot at the suspect... Let one go. Let's make it happen"

Several minutes pass with no further activity. Tony wrapped Carmen's foot in a room hand towel, closing the wound tight with tape.

Then as backups arrive, they are deployed around the hotel and across the street. Captain Gray has also arrived. He confirmed a car with a trained driver will be here shortly. At the airport, preparations are being made to charter a jet to Mexico. Everyone hopes it never gets that far. Two men are now in control of Carmen's life. What they do in the next few minutes will be the only decisions that matter. Gray and Grange are the only two players from here on out.

Picking up the telephone, he takes the first steps to secure Carmen's safety and ultimate release. Before dialing, he pauses, looking at Bradley as if he has something to say. He doesn't react. Gray dials 1105.

"This is Captain Gray of the Cambridge Police Department." He stated, then asked, "I want to know if Carmen Lavington is okay."

Tony answers in a slow voice, "She's still alive...for now."

"Is she in need of immediate medical attention?"

Keeping control of the situation Tony steers the phone conversation in his direction. "You seem to have forgotten why we're all here. What she needs is not the issue, what I want is. And if you haven't got any good news for me, we've got nothing to talk about."

"All right, I can confirm that your requests are being looked after. Your car is on its way. Before we provide you with anything, I want a doctor in there to check out Carmen's condition."

"Again, you've missed the point, Mr. Gray. I'll have to demonstrate my conviction again to get what I want. Are you ready for that?"

"No, Mr. Grange, as you requested, a car and driver will be here in ten minutes. We just need to know that Carmen is okay."

Tony still defiant, "I don't care what you want."

"Mr. Grange, you must know your chances of getting out of this city are about as good as your partner. We picked him up to him in the underground about twenty-five minutes ago."

"That's Bullshit! You've got fifteen minutes before I kill the girl. And don't call until my car arrives." Then Gray received the same blunt end to the phone call as Rudy Lavington had many times before.

Bradley Collins can see in Gray's somber expression he has met the inflexible attitude of the kidnapper. Dealing with only a handful of options, Gray decided to allow the kidnapper to move out of the hotel as requested. This would minimize the possibility of other civilians being involved or injured. Using the supplied vehicle, the kidnapper would be driven to the airport tarmac where hopefully, an opportunity would open up and Carmen could be freed. The possibility of a hostage exchange was considered. This at least would have guaranteed Carmen's safe release, but at the expense of risking an officer's life and it was clear that Tony Grange would not likely be giving up his key asset and bargaining chip.

Collins, having spent the last few days learning to hate this man, immediately stepped forward to volunteer. His application is rejected before Collins can even finish his speech. Gray simply starts talking over Collins's voice pointing out that he is more valuable as an advisor. Collins has unfortunately gained the most experience with the kidnapper. One of the other officers at the hotel would be offered up instead. Now, hesitant to call, but still he does, Gray dials 0105.

"Yeah," Tony starts.

"This is Captain Gray of the Cambridge Police Department again. Your car will be here in five minutes. But I would like to make you an offer."

"I'm not interested in any offers," Tony answered in a calm voice. "If you call again without telling me my car is here, I will kill the girl." He then hangs up.

Gray turns to Collins and admits he has never had to handle a situation as blunt as this before. He too is resigned to buckling under Tony's pressure. Even having been under pressure from this professional criminal for several days himself, somehow Collins restores Gray's quickly eroding confidence with an expressive, "We get 'im."

Now having been forced by the demanding time frame to comply, they would continue negotiations with Tony once he has reached the airport. There, the car to the airport would have been something shown as complying with his demands. All hoped Carmen would be released before Tony Grange was on the aircraft thereby only risking the lives of the pilots. Though unlikely, it's the best chance of securing Carmen's release.

Higher in rank than Collins, Gray puts his cards on the table. If Tony does not release Carmen before boarding the aircraft, a commando-type team would meet and capture him on the aircraft. The plane was not getting off the ground with him in it.

Collins voiced his opposition to the Captain's plan, pointing out the bitter consequences of a similar hostage situation only two years before. There, Collins had been suspended from the force during an investigation into the shooting of a hostage victim held during a bank robbery. The situation was all too familiar. Once again, he was in a position where the vital decisions were not his to make.

"Under no circumstances do you ever surprise or jump a hostage-taker," spouted Collins, "You just can't predict what he will do. One shot is all it takes to get the hostage killed."

Gray expected better support, but the decision has been made.

The tension between Gray and the kidnapper has also affected the relationship between Gray and Collins, yet they couldn't see it. The change, albeit subtle, only occurred after the decision to allow the kidnapper to make his way to the airport was made. Collins sunk back into another corner of the room to consider his arguments further. He's not permitted to dwell for long. The driver and car have arrived.

Officer Stern had reported to the hotel office. Specifically trained to deal with hostage situations and he offers himself to Captain Gray, for duty. A brief discussion follows their introductions. The immediacy of the kidnapper's demands still looms. Stern agrees not to interfere with the kidnapper's movement to the vehicle. He suggests the car be located on the west side of the hotel, side the door close to the parking entrance. This was the same door Carmen came through when she was first brought into the hotel.

Grange had so far demonstrated a complete disregard for his hostage, for Collins, however, ensuring Carmen's security through any means possible was his prime goal. Making the kidnapper feel as if he is getting his way without resistance remained the best option. Captain Gray insisted. The men break off their discussion. Officer Stern heads out to move the car to the side of the hotel. Collins follows and briefs the onsite officers, preparing them for the kidnappers' exit from the hotel. Gray phones room 0105.

Curtly Tony answers, "Yeah."

"This is Captain Gray. Your car is here and will be at the west entrance of the hotel in a minute. It's a blue 1990 Caprice, unmarked. You can come out in a few minutes. We will not try and stop you."

Gray heard nothing further from the kidnapper. The phone line was disconnected when he mentioned the "1991 Caprice". Gray proceeded towards the outside doors to wait for Tony Grange to appear. Bradley Collins stops him before he walks out the door.

"You can't go through with this. You can't let Grange make it to the airport."

Gray stops just long enough to listen to Bradley's short speech and shakes his head.

"Have you forgotten who you're talking to? Get out the way. And you know as well as I do, you've never saved a victim in the 11th hour. You and I are done talking."

It's clear, Gray has taken command of what is now a different type of hostage situation. He bypasses Collins and shouts to the Officers in the area outside the hotel, "Lieutenant Collins no longer any part of this operation. I make the calls here."

Then to Collins says, "Get yourself outta here!"

Bradley Collins sank back into the doorframe, again recalling a bank robbery two years earlier. The call came in at 5:04 pm on a Friday. The reports requested backup for two officers who had inadvertently walked into a bank robbery. The bank guard had been shot and the suspect has demanded safe passage out of the city. Arriving on the scene, Collins was the highest-ranking officer. Instantly, Collins realized the situation had been underestimated. Upon rounding the corner by the bank, Collins saw for himself the body of the bank guard lying face down on the floor surrounded by a large pool of blood. Sadly, the guard had not died directly from the bullet wound but had bled to death as the stand-off continued. The first contact with the suspect led to the death of another bystander in the bank. Judging his actions would be taken much more seriously, he had also shot one of the bank tellers after he had given his demands to Collins. The suspect had achieved his goal. He was allowed to leave the bank, freeing all but one of the hostages. The bank manager was taken as an insurance policy. His demand for a small aircraft and a pilot were arranged as fast as possible. Collins had little time to finalize a plan which could secure the release of the bank manager and put the suspect into custody. He was advised by Gray, who at that time was not yet a negotiator, to hide at the back of the plane and "take him out" at the earliest opportunity. As the plane idled on the tarmac, the bank robber and his hostage were ushered in. It was a small two-engine plane with six seats, only the pilot was visible. The bank manager sat behind the pilot and the suspect across the aisle from her, holding a gun to her side. After receiving instructions, the pilot revved the engine, and the plane started to roll. When he thought the bank robber was distracted with the takeoff, Collins peered forward from behind the back row, having pushed a small curtain aside. The suspect was looking towards the front of the aircraft. Collins then quietly drew his weapon, stepped forward, and aimed it at the back of the bank robber's head. "Drop your weapon!" Without even the slightest sign of his intent, the robber fired a shot into the manager and started turning rapidly to move his weapon towards Collins. As reaction took over, another shot was heard inside the cabin of the aircraft. The suspect was also dead.

Collins raised his head, shook it briefly, still angry about Gray's involvement at the time, then ran through the doors towards the heart of the police cars assembled alongside the exit.

With two police cars blocking off the entrance to the one-way Hadassah Street hotel and several others on the south road, traffic into and out of the hotel area had been corralled. The Caprice to be used by the kidnapper sat idling beside the west entrance of the hotel. The dark mirrored glass of the hotel door restricted any attempts to see the kidnapper coming. Four officers were poised over their vehicles, guns at the ready. Gray too, was watching.

No further chatter is exchanged between Gray and Collins. The anger on Gray's face was undeniable. One might even think Gray was demoting Collins from Detective to Beat Cop in his mind. Only moments remained before Carmen and her assailant would step out the exit of the hotel; the same doorway Collins just had. As the automatic door at the side of the hotel started to open, each officer flinched, readying themselves for anything; taking a fraction of a second to play out a scenario through in his head before the door opened completely.

The door clicked all the way open. The first thing visible was Carmen who barely managed to hop and shuffle on one good foot, and finally, Tony Grange. A gun was at her back, a tight hand on her shoulder. They both stepped through the glass door out of the hotel into the cool November evening.

As they exit Tony reached out with his left hand and stopped Carmen from walking. He pulls her close, his arm now around her waist. The 9mm still pointed at her mid-back. Tony stopped to survey the

area for anything threatening. Looking around he sees the police guns pointed in his direction. They are no threat. It's procedure, he assumed. Tony started down the two steps towards the curbside and the Caprice. He took slow, deliberate steps. Constantly glancing around, Tony continued this protocol for his safety. When Tony and Carmen are within steps of the car Collins suddenly stands up and steps out from behind the police cruiser. Slowly, deliberately, he walked towards Tony's position.

Gray dropped to his knees to hide further behind his car curses to himself. "Fuck. What the fuck is he doing?"

The rest of the police complement reels at what Collins is doing.

Tony didn't react immediately, preferring to continue towards the car.

However, when Collins reached a critical distance Tony suddenly pulled back and shouts out. "Another step and she's meat on the ground."

Collins stopped as directed. He stared at Tony for a brief instant then quickly drew his Police issue Glock 19 pointing it directly at Tony's head.

He taunts Tony. "You know... Everybody's got to die sometime."

"So you think it's your turn to die Cop?"

Collins paused then uttered in broken phrases. "I'm talking about you... It's your choice.... Let the girl go... And you'll live to see tomorrow's sunrise."

In response, Tony displays the power he has over the situation and Carmen, slowly uses the fingers on his left hand to curl up Carmen's skirt revealing she was not wearing underwear. Letting it go, it flutters back down to her knees. Collins rages.

"You bastard COPS think you're so fuckin' hot... You city cowboys can't stop me and you know it."

Collins lost his composure because of what he had just seen and taunts Tony again responding in kind, "There's something they don't teach scum like you in criminal school."

"What's that Cop?" Tony demands.

Without warning, without any change in facial expression, Bradley Collins lifts the aim of his gun just five degrees, then, at a distance of twelve feet, standing in the glow of the Underground Parking sign, Bradley fires a single shot into Tony's face. The impact of the bullet caused Tony's head to arch back slightly and his body to buckle to the ground. All muscles immediately devoid of motor control, Tony's now loose arm offsets Carmen's balance and took her down to the ground with him.

Collins quickly placed his weapon back in its holster and ran to Carmen's side. She clutches his neck and begins to weep. Although he tried to comfort her as best he can, the emotional wounds exploded in a wave of hysterical crying. He picks her up, then moves her away from Tony's body which lay twisted on the ground, his legs awkwardly folded inwards.

Captain Gray stepped up to Collins and Carmen, "Miss, we have an ambulance coming and someone folks from the Victim Aid. But for now, let's get you seated in the car over here."

Gray looked briefly at Collins, "We're going to talk after that ambulance gets here."

Bradley Collins stayed by Carmen's side during the short wait before the ambulance arrived. He held her hand as her body shook and radioed the estate. Finding Rudy Lavington there, Collins passed along the good news that Carmen had been freed. Carmen spoke momentarily with her father, which released more emotions and she began crying once more.

At the body, Gray documented the events of the evening and directed the other officers to start compiling reports of what they witnessed.

When the ambulance arrived, Bradley looked to Carmen as if to ask permission, but says nothing. He simply squeezed her hand and stood up and began a slow walk towards Captain Gray.

Gray starts up, "You realize that was a lucky stunt. Right? It could have gone the other way."

Collins looked directly into the Captain's eyes, "It was no stunt. I knew she'd be okay because of something I learned from the coroner about the murder of her boyfriend."

"And what's that?" Gray asked.  
"You can't hear the shot."

At the Washington Statute, Jim waited patiently for his friend Tony to arrive. At 8 pm, well past the planned 7 pm rendezvous time, Jim looked at his watch, looked around one last time then started walking west towards Tony's parked car.

## About the Author



Now retired, Bob spent better than thirty years working the engineering side of the radio handling everything from volume controls to 50,000 watt transmitters. While in radio, Bob had a short stint on-air in a bit known as Ask Bob where he answered random and occasionally preposterous questions from listeners. As Bob worked in the engineering department and generally on air, he was a member of the Western Association of Broadcast Engineers. In 2013 Bob concluded his technical career in broadcasting and switched to Information Technology for the City of Surrey in British Columbia, Canada.

During his technical career, Bob expanded his talents by taking on various roles such as night school teacher and fitness instructor. The additional income helped finance Bob's lust for travel. He has visited extraordinary destinations such as Egypt, China, Peru, Croatia, Spain, Brazil, Poland, and India. After documenting his and his bride's experiences in travelogues, and with a few ideas in his pocket, Bob expanded his writing efforts to include novels.

He retired in 2021 and now with an overactive imagination, he's transitioned to writing and has embraced a career as a novelist. Bob has written two works of fiction as of November 2021 with several more titles in the frying pan.

Also, pursuing his love of Rum, Bob has a lifetime goal of tasting 500 Rums before he takes his last breath which inspired him to write his first novel, "The Last Tot".