

Who: Fredrico, last name Unknown

Movie: Thunderball

Previous Employment: Henchman for Emilio Largo

Met James Bond: Subdued by Bond in order to take his diving gear

Fredrico woke up in a cold sweat, his headache almost causing him to vomit as he struggled to a sitting position. He knew something was wrong, not merely because he was struggling to not empty his stomach out on the beach, but the fuzziness of his thoughts weren't letting him recall exactly what. It was something drastically important though because he could feel his heart beating fast, like his body knew something his mind just couldn't recall.

He felt the sand under his palms, its warmth from the morning sun slowly spreading its heat along his fingers. The sun was beating down on him, its brightness beating against his eyes and head like someone swinging a sack of oranges at full strength. He wiped the sweat on his forehead underneath his dark black hair, leaving grains of sand across his tanned forehead as he struggled to get a leg underneath himself. That persistent feeling that something was wrong was still beginning to tear up the back of his skull.

He continued tossing ideas back and forth in his mind as he struggled to get to one knee, finally managing to get a foot flat on solid. He reached his hand out to his side in an effort to help steady himself, but instead ran his hand into what felt like the solid bark of a small palm tree. He pushed against it as he used momentum to bring himself to his feet, only to find himself falling against the tree as the world seemed to tilt out of balance. Fredrico shut his eyes tightly as he held onto the just slightly taller than him palm tree, steadying his shoulder against its rough white bark.

Beyond the pounding that felt like it was situated somewhere between his brain and his skull, he began to notice other pain spots. The sides of his neck hurting terribly was one place, his fingertips were another. Now that they were out of the warmth of the heated sand, there was a peculiar ache in the tips of his fingers. It reminded him of a time he had fallen off some scaffolding at a job site when he was younger. He had been the new guy and his introductory task had been setting up the planks that allowed himself and his coworkers to traverse atop the structure. He hadn't fully understood the assignment and slipped off the top of the metal bars, only barely catching himself by his fingertips. The pain almost felt the same... like he had gripped onto something for dear life with just his fingertips.

Maybe it was his reflection into the past, or the pain in his hands, but Fredrico, also known as Freddy to his co-workers, suddenly remembered what was missing. He was supposed to be underwater right now, helping the boss move something large they'd taken from a crashed fighter jet. That string of consciousness almost made him laugh, it seemed almost comical with its absurdness. Even if he didn't know that talking to anyone about the business was almost instant death, for himself and the few pieces of family he had left, he still wouldn't have been able to say it with a straight face. No one would believe him.

So he had opted to isolate himself despite the mostly decent money he made per dive. This excursion was supposed to have been the final one for at least a little while. He had heard the boss mention it to his ship's dive master, who in turn had hinted to Fredrico that he didn't think this was the case. The boss was the scariest man he'd ever met, though before the last few months, he hadn't been able to nail down exactly why he felt this way. The boss's money had never been anything to laugh at, and had brought him power as well, but that wasn't why Fredrico had begun to fear his boss.

No, it hadn't been Largo's cold, calculated indifference when one of his house guards had fallen into the pool fighting someone. An intruder, he discovered later. Without a second thought, he had ordered his other men to open the divider between his swimming pool where the guard and whomever he fought were fighting and drowning, and the shark pool that ran adjacent. The pool had sent shivers down Fredrico's spines the first time he'd encountered it during his job interview. From that moment on, he had been respectful if slightly alarmed at the thought of keeping sharks in captivity in this way. As a diver, he'd brushed up against some of the biggest killers in the ocean. Maybe that was part of the reason, but whatever it was, the fact that they were mere pets to Largo had put him on notice that this was a boss not to be trifled with.

His thoughts began to circle and swirl around his conscious mind again. He was supposed to be underwater right now retrieving whatever it was, so why was he still on the beach? He put his thumb against his temple and his middle finger on the other as he struggled to focus on the last thing he remembered before blacking out. He had arrived at the designated location in the last car in the

twilight of last light, and had changed into his swim trunks and shirt before heading down to the beach where the diving equipment had already been laid out. He remembered getting there, looking at his gear, and then... a sudden pull from behind! He began to sweat and brought his hand down to the touch the bruising on his neck as he realized something had been placed around it last night. Fredrico had a sudden flash of his hands clawing at what he'd thought was an arm encircling him just below his chin. He remembered that he couldn't breathe in or make a sound, and the panic he had felt in that moment began to seep into the current one.

He gulped as he forced himself to pull his hand away from his throat and stumbled out into the sun towards the low rock-wall that had been the staging area not 20 feet away. His first thought when the wall came into focus was how close it had been to where he'd awoken. It almost felt maddening... no one had come to his aid. His fellow employees were cordial at best, and outright rude at their worst, but they had stuck together through a sense of loyalty that could only come from a decent paycheck and steady employment. Most were single, and the others didn't talk about any family they had for fear of what might happen if everything was to go sideways at some point.

His second thought wasn't really a thought. More like a sudden and unmistakable feeling of utter terror that gripped his heart and spread to almost every inch of his body. He almost shivered despite the outside island warmth. He had been the weakest link in the group, and through either plain bad luck or lack of awareness, Fredrico knew there was no escaping the responsibility that he had not only let his guard down, but had been . He glanced up the path to where the cars had dropped him the night before. Gripping the half-wall for a moment to maintain his balance, he quickly moved in the direction of the parking lot. His legs were sore, and new pain was shooting through his skull worse than when he had woken up.

Aided by his growing sense of dread, the man quickly made his way to the dirt and gravel car lot above the beach. Steadying himself on a random car, he quickly found the black four-door sedan he had arrived in. He tried the door, hoping it was still policy to leave them unlocked in case a crew needed a vehicle suddenly. He opened the door and sat down gripping the wheel tightly in his hands. Having sat down in the comfort of a car, he almost felt himself blacking out. Some of the pain eased even as his headache struck him so hard he was forced to lay his head in his hands. He gently rested his forehead on the steering wheel while he tried to think of what to do next. There was a humming coming from outside, but Fredrico ignored it being too focused on his next steps.

He wanted to go home but he didn't know if that would keep him alive. He thought for a quick second about heading back to his boss' complex, but it felt wrong. He thought it would feel like walking into his own grave, so he decided to head home as quickly as possible.

Finding the key in the over-head visor and starting the car, he drove carefully as to not draw attention to himself, even though every nerve in his body was telling him he had to hurry. He took side streets and avoided the toll highway as he made his way back to his apartment. Parking the sedan in an alley two blocks from his place, he walked as quickly as he could to the entrance. He made his way to his second floor apartment, his floor painted in the sea-green that a lot of Florida Keys buildings seemed covered in. He stuck his spare key in the lock after retrieving it from the loose light outlet at the end of the common area hallway and entered his place. It was just as he had left it yesterday afternoon.

He leaned back against the door and breathed a sigh of relief. He knew he couldn't stay, but the fact he had made it back in one piece washed over him in a glorious and almost sadistic sort of way. He knew he wasn't actually safe, but the feeling of being locked in a place that was familiar was a sense of relief that struck harder than he expected.

Quickly removing himself from the door, he retrieved his duffel bag from the hallway closet before quickly entering his small bedroom. The place was mostly clean, though some clothes were strewn about in random places, pieces he now went about the room gathering up and stuffing into his bag. First clothes, then various notebooks and binders filled with various dive information. Nothing was here that could incriminate himself though, he had learned to burn anything of the sort after someone disappeared at work while rumors circulated that he had taken something home he wasn't suppose to.

After the binders were packed he moved to the kitchen, emptying the shelves of all non-perishable foods before grabbing veggies from the fridge and fruit from the bowl on the counter. Leaving the bag at the door, he gathered up a few diving tools next: a small speargun, fins, and his personal mask. Dropping them into a paperbag, he finally reached into the space behind the fridge to withdraw a magnet covered envelope containing most of his cash. He stuffed this into the bottom of

duffel bag before gathering up both bags and quickly exiting the room and almost bounding down the stairs.

The sense of urgency was returning, he knew he had to get out of The Keys as soon as he possibly could. He would head north quickly, there was a place in Las Vegas that would take him in. A part of the criminal network his boss was apart of was located there, and it was the only place and thing he could think to do in that moment. The organization stretched far and wide, something he had only come to learn recently. During some down time between dives, the other divers had talked about their travels. Places in Europe, Africa, Russia, Las Vegas... it had all sounded so adventurous to a man that had never left Florida.

Now here he was, heading north on the Florida Keys highway in his personal rusted two-door truck, driving away from his home of the last few years. Away from a gaffe that he knew might still cost him his life. He hoped they thought he was dead, he hoped the intruder that had knocked him out was dead, and he even sarcastically wished for his bosses demise as well. He gripped the steering wheel tightly in an attempt to calm his racing heart. He told himself to slow down as he traversed the bridges between islands. He kept thinking of the name of the group he had somehow stumbled into. It sounded sinister in his mind, and the one time he had said it out loud had almost cost him his life. Luckily the men initiating him into the group had given him one extra chance as he had just learned the name, though they made it sufficiently clear it was his last chance.

S.P.E.C.T.R.E.

Fredrico was so focused on maintaining a proper speed and thoughts of what he would say when he got to Las Vegas, he never noticed the black sedan that pulled beside him.