

CHAPTER TEN

~ 10 ~

"Where's Phillip?" Tom asked as he approached the reservation desk.

"My brother had the morning shift today. How can I help?"

"I can see the resemblance." Tom motioned over his shoulder at Tina with one Gucci bag over her shoulder. Mr. Chen was toting her two other pieces of luggage, plus his army green duffel bag.

"We are twins and..." A red LED started flashing on the overhead security camera and reflected off the glass counter top. The British twin noticed and halted giving out anymore personal information.

"My niece has a reservation. It is under Tina Williams."

The Brit typed in the information and then said. "Yes we have her room with a twin bed and free Wi-Fi."

"A twin bed! Like, I need a queen bed at least." Tina piped in as she checked out the lobby. "What is this place like a one star hotel?"

"Could you upgrade Ms. Tina to a suite and give her room to Mr. Chen?" Tom pointed back over his shoulder toward Kenny Chen.

After about a minute of typing and several mouse clicks they got the bad news. The hotel was booked by a photography club and no extra rooms were available until Monday.

Mr. Chen set Tina's luggage down and then repositioned the duffel bag on his shoulder. His CCP mission had no backup or plan B. Being raised at different cadet academies prepared him for long periods of isolation; no contact with family helped. But traveling solo halfway around the world inside a metal shipping container had Kenny on the verge of a mental breakdown. His assignment was only half completed. The saving grace was that just the human interaction of staying in a motel could push out the black cloud of solitary confinement. Now that reprieve looked to be off the table.

"Give Ms. Williams room to Mr. Chen and then book a room with a king bed for my niece starting Monday for a week." Tom figured that he could sleep in the motorhome for a few nights and that Tina could

34 sleep in his bed. At least she'd have a queen bed to sleep in for a few
35 nights.

36 Without hesitation Kenny Chin took the motel room. The Brit stored
37 one piece of Tina's luggage in the back room and said that his brother
38 would handle the paperwork in the morning.

39 On the trip back to the church Tina was crammed between Tom
40 and her Gucci luggage. "I like the smell of your cologne uncle Tom.
41 What is it?"

42 "Old Spice," Tom replied and took a sniff over Tina's head of blond
43 hair. "You smell good too."

44 "No I don't. Like I need a shower ASAP," Tina replied.

45 "There is a shower in my apartment. That's where you can stay
46 until Monday."

47 "Like does that mean I'm going to have a sleep over with you?"

48 Tina wiggled in tighter to Tom.

49 "No, I'm going to air out the motorhome and then sleep in it. It
50 smells like dirty grease. I noticed Mr. Chen was using a Wok to cook."

51 "If your cottage has a king bed we can share it." Tina put her hand
52 on Tom's thigh.

53 Tom moved her hand away. "Tina let's not play games!"

54 "Oh come on Tom. Remember how you used to bounce me in your
55 lap. What am I too old for you now?"

56 "Tina quit fooling around. We are adults and need to act like it."

57 "I'm only kidding Tom! Like, you really are a prude." Tina wasn't
58 used to men pushing her away and Tom strained to keep his emotions
59 intact.

60 Jacob ran from the church porch to the yellow Kekes and grabbed
61 for the biggest piece of luggage. Tom pulled out the handle and flipped
62 it, wheels side down. Tina followed the two across the parking and into
63 the apartment.

64 "There's the shower, Tom said as he reached overhead into a
65 small linen closet, "here's some clean towels."

66 Tina took the two African print towels. "These bright colors better
67 not fade off into my blond hair. Do you have an exfoliating sponge?"

68 “No, but here’s a fresh bar of soap. Tom reached back into the
69 linen closet. “It’s only a ten gallon hot water heater so get wet, soap
70 up and then rinse off.”

71 Jacob’s young eyes fixated on Tina as she unbuttoned her blouse.
72 Flawless white skin and wavy blond hair had a seven year old captured
73 with the perfect queen like beauty. Jacob had never experienced such
74 a lack of modestly from the few white women he had encountered.

75 Tom dug around under the sink for different cleaning supplies and
76 handed a spray bottle of yellow green concentrate to Jacob. They
77 exited the apartment to clean and air out the motorhome. Idogbe was
78 busy around back working on the kennel. Ekon showed up after school
79 and joined in with the motor home deep cleaning.

80 Tom used an oversized hose to empty the gray water tank into the
81 field behind the church. There was a couple handfuls of rice left in a
82 white cloth bag which had 50kg stenciled on the side. There was about
83 half a dozen eggs in the refrigerator and an almost full five gallon
84 barrel of rancid smelling cooking oil. The eggs and rice went to the
85 boys and Tom set the oil barrel outside, he’d dispose of the smelly
86 used dark oil after dark.

87 Ekon was down on his knees mopping the floor when he figured
88 out the trap door on the side of the bench seat. After he saw the guns
89 and ammunition he quickly 45 degree twisted the plywood partition; it
90 snapped hard back onto the four super strong corner magnets.
91 Nervously Ekon put the dirty bed linen and the wet cleaning rags into
92 his red bucket and then told Tom he’d wash the stuff and bring the
93 laundry back after school or on Saturday morning.

94 Tom gave each brother a thousand Naira, the eggs and the almost
95 empty bag of rice. Next he laid out a sleeping bag; at least he had a
96 place to sleep for a few nights which had air conditioning. His next
97 moves would have to wait until after dark. First the used cooking
98 grease would get dumped in the field and then he’d move the guns
99 and ammunition behind the false wall in the church closet. Each
100 brother knew about one of the two hiding spots but neither knew
101 about both.

102 Curiosity got the best of Tom, he pushed the plywood side panel
103 away from the magnets and then twisted it 45 five degrees. Under the
104 bench seat was a long box — a gift from Hank the hog hunter. Tom
105 quickly set the box on top of the table and opened it. His hunch was
106 right! A fully assembled AR-15 built from internet parts that was
107 unregistered and had no serial number. Black markets guns are barely
108 legal in the United States and definitely prohibited in Nigeria. Ever
109 since the Nigerian Explosives Act of 1964 anyone caught with a gun;
110 registered or not could be put in prison for a minimum of five years.

111 The electronic red dot optic sight was better than an old style
112 scope; plus target acquisition was twice as fast. The two boxes of 223
113 cal hallow point ammo was banned for warfare but was more humane
114 for hunting viral hogs. One shot anyplace to the torso of a hog was like
115 an internal explosion and instant death. In West Africa boars are called
116 forest pigs but they still belong to the swine family. No matter what
117 continent — boars will eat flesh when grass and grain become scarce.

118 Hank held the gun club record for knocking down 12 Texas viral
119 hogs in less than two minutes. A kill ratio of 1 hog per 5 seconds was
120 considered elite sniper level. With this new AR-15 fitted with red dot
121 optic sights Tom might have a chance to beat Hank's kill ratio. Tom
122 put the semi automatic long gun back in the box, tilted and then pulled
123 the wood end panel back into place. The corner magnets *snapped* loud
124 enough to be heard outside the motorhome!

125 Tom did an outside perimeter check around the motorhome; it was
126 odd that any protruding vent cover or hatch cover had been removed.
127 Also all the tires were under inflated. Tom speculated that the reason
128 for these oddities were to let someone squeeze between the steel walls
129 of the shipping container and the Sprinter. The low tires were so that
130 the air conditioning compressor on the roof would clear the shipping
131 container ceiling rooftop. Everything else seemed to be in place. Tom
132 walked to the apartment and knocked.

133 Earlier that day he had made a reservation at an authentic Nigerian
134 restaurant for Tina's first night in Lagos. After almost a month at sea
135 Tina was ready to experience some night life. Tom should have
136 stopped with his second glass on African palm wine but Tina insisted

137 they order another the bottle. They laughed and shared old memories.
138 There was a serious moment when Tina talked about her stepfather;
139 Tom's brother. She said that her stepdad was lucky to only get two
140 years for his part in the Purdue Pharmacy Oxycodone kickback
141 scheme. The real collateral damage was her mother with the ongoing
142 addiction and rehab cycles. Very few people ever get the pain killer
143 monkey off of their back.

144 It was dark when the Kekes driver dropped them out front of the
145 church. Tom unlocked the apartment for Tina and told her that she
146 would get a suite or that he'd find her a better place to stay after the
147 weekend. Inside the motorhome Tom found the old notebook
148 computer in the cupboard under the sink and then plugged it in. The
149 battery still showed over half a charge. His main concern was that the
150 chess game worked. Tom sat at the table and had just lost his queen
151 to the computer when he heard a knock on the rear motorhome door.

152 "Uncle Tom could you show me how to get more water pressure?
153 My hair has cigarette smell from that black people's restaurant." Tina
154 asked when Tom half opened the door."

155 "Sure no problem." Tom stepped out of the motorhome and walked
156 across the parking lot toward the apartment. "Remember you only
157 have ten gallons of hot water."

158 "Like that wouldn't be good for taking a shower with someone."

159 "Like, two people couldn't fit in that shower," Tom replied jokingly;
160 he could still feel the effect of the palm wine. "But on the upside it's
161 larger than the shower in the motorhome."

162 "I don't know how big the shower in the motorhome is. I stayed in
163 the captain's guest quarters. Kenny Chen stayed the entire trip in your
164 motorhome. He only came out at night; he stayed to himself and just
165 kept daily records." Tina babbled as they walked into the apartment.

166 Tom showed Tina how the shower nozzle twisted for more water.
167 "What did Mr. Chen keep records of?"

168 "He said CO levels and Scurvy. Whatever Scurvy is?" Tina
169 unbuttoned her blouse and let it drop on the floor. She then pushed
170 her skirt down and stepped into the small bathroom and left the door

171 open. By her deep tan Tom could tell she didn't miss out on sunlight
172 while crossing the Atlantic.

173 Tom took an extra long gaze of Tina's backside before he pulled
174 the bathroom door shut. *There's no doubt that Tina was gifted with*
175 *natural beauty. Too bad she lacks brains and sensitivity even though*
176 *she had a privileged life until... Oh crap I left the tablet computer in*
177 *plain sight.* From the parking lot and thru the side window Tom could
178 see the glow from the LCD reflecting off the cabinets. The chess game
179 timer showed **4 min 23 sec**, most of that elapsed time was spent in
180 the apartment.

181 Finally Tom moved the black Bishop and the timer started all over
182 again. Almost instantaneously the computer took a rook. Against his
183 better judgment Tom ended the game. He shut off the computer and
184 tucked it back under the sink.

185 This time Tom remembered to lock the motorhome. *I need to find*
186 *out about why testing for Carbon Monoxide and Scurvy was so*
187 *important? Maybe that's why the vent covers were removed?*

188 It wasn't even three minutes before Tina yelled out, "Damn it! I'm
189 out of hot water."

190 Tom's thoughts switched gears, *Beth won't be pleased with such a*
191 *short shower either.* The bathroom door swung open and Tina came
192 out with one towel around her waist and one wrapped around her wet
193 hair. Her chest was completely exposed.

194 This time Tom got more than a backside gaze. He opened the small
195 linen closet and got another towel. "Sorry about the hot water
196 situation. Here's another towel."

197 Tina purposely let the towel around her waist drop. She stepped
198 over it and fastened the new towel around her waist. Tom looked to
199 the side so to fight off his growing arousal. He picked the towel up off
200 the floor and said, "Here cover up your chest."

201 "It's okay Tom. You've seen my boobs before. Remember at my
202 high school party when I was showing off the graduation gift your
203 brother and my Mom gave to me?"

204 "Yeah, a, a, sure I remember... Weren't you asking us if they look
205 natural?"

206 “Like, yes I was. So now after all these years do you still think they
207 look natural?”

208 “Sure Tina, your breasts still look natural.”

209 “Don’t be such a prude Tom. They’re called tits.” Tina let the towel
210 around her waist drop and stepped closer to Tom. “But, do they feel
211 natural to you?” Tina took Tom’s hand and put it over her right boob.

212 “A... I’m, no expert but the implant feels natural. Maybe it’s a little
213 more firm compared to Beth. But then Beth’s a lot older than you.”

214 Tom replied in a distressed tone as he pulled his hand away. Many
215 times he had preached about gouging out an eye and throwing it on
216 the ground so to avoid lust and covet.

217 Tina grabbed Tom groin and sensually whispered, “I hope my tits
218 are not as firm as this hunk of flesh.”

219 There was no turning back now. The adulteress act didn’t take
220 more than two minutes before Tom lost it. Tina had learned how to
221 satisfy boys with her hand at the age of fourteen from her mother. It
222 was a VD safe sex act and was also a sure way not to deal with an
223 unwanted pregnancy. Tina was sex safe wise, thanks to her mother
224 and Tom’s brother.

225 Tom practically ran out of the apartment and barricaded himself in
226 the motorhome. He’d been chaste in high school and never unfaithful
227 in college or in his marriage. The guilt and the thought of Beth finding
228 out was wrenching at his soul. Self-hated for not being strong and not
229 living in the image of God was overbearing — two minutes of pleasure
230 had just destroyed a twenty year marriage.

231 At three am Tom looked out the motorhome thru the uncovered
232 vent hole toward the apartment; all the lights were off. Tina wasn’t at
233 all bothered by what had happened; in fact she slept better now that
234 she had good blackmail material. Down on his knees Tom opened the
235 secret compartment and unboxed the AR15. He put the barrel thru the
236 open six inch vent hole and used the red dot site to focus on the peep
237 hole on the apartment door. *Certain things need to be taken care of.*
238 *Action is always stronger than words.* Tom didn’t know where this
239 discernment was coming from, he squeezed the trigger — click.

240 In the cover of dark Tom used a flashlight to carry the rifles and
241 ammunition from the motorhome to the false wall Idogbe had built in
242 the church closet. He needed to get the long guns out of reach and out
243 of his sight for the safety of others. The 357 magnum handgun got
244 moved to under the driver's seat! Since the fake Stolen Valor story his
245 life had been on a downward spiral. Killing himself might be a solution?

246 Shutting up Tina was what the most elite class of men and a few
247 women would do and have done — it crossed Tom's mind. **Thou shalt**
248 **not kill** is the commandment that is embedded in most God fearing,
249 human elements within the common class. It could be an alternate
250 solution? After all, Tina wasn't related by blood or religious affiliations.

251 Tom shinned the flashlight beam on the apartment door and then
252 taped an envelope over the peephole. He opened the parking lot gate;
253 delivery trucks were just starting to move up and down Frontage road.
254 Tom set the in-dash GPS for Abuja city; the capital of Nigeria. Next, he
255 needed to find an all night service station to get fuel and air up the
256 tires.

257 Tom drove a solid five hours; the rising sun was beating thru the
258 windshield. He turned off highway 121 onto an unmarked road spur
259 and pulled into an open field of communication and cell towers. He
260 then parked behind a cinderblock radio building and two large propane
261 tanks. The in-dash GPS unit went nuts from all the spurious RF
262 emission from the towers. Tom got out stretched his legs, took a pee
263 and then bent in thru the passenger door to retrieve the 357 handgun
264 from under the driver seat.

265 In the rear of the motorhome Tom pushed the gun under a pillow
266 and then pulled all the curtains closed. Lying on the bed the sun
267 beams shinned thru the uncovered side vents which made it
268 impossible to sleep. Unbearable squawking outside was the next thing
269 Tom had to contend with. It sounded like a bunch of animals in
270 distress or ready to attack. Tom rolled over on his stomach and peered
271 thru the porthole sized vent opening. A family of Guenon monkeys
272 were swinging and jumping from one communication tower to another.
273 The bigger primate looked to be the mother yelling at her

274 rambunctious children. Tom pulled the handgun from under the pillow
275 and shot out through the vent hole. The Guenon monkeys scattered!

276 Tom rolled onto his back and pulled pillows to both sides of his
277 head. His ears were ringing; most of the blast from the 357 magnum
278 had been contained inside of the Sprinter along with the dark gray
279 sulfur smelling smoke.

280 It took twenty minutes before the ringing subsided and Tom was
281 able to start discerning life again ... *Beth stood by me during my Stolen*
282 *Valor blunder. If this incident was with someone other than Tina our*
283 *marriage might survive. Especially, since Beth had sinned against the*
284 *flesh before we dated. That football player boyfriend always bragged*
285 *about how many sorority girls he had in his dorm room. It was an*
286 *unwritten perk in his scholarship contract! Beth ended up being known*
287 *as just another hunk of flesh around campus. If that jock would had*
288 *never laid over his Harley and broke his ankle I never would have had*
289 *a chance with Beth. Maybe I'll just keep quiet about what happened*
290 *with Tina. After all, we had a President that told an entire nation, "It's*
291 *not sex unless..."*

292