

Cancelled Vows

Mac Faraday Mystery

By Lauren Carr

Excerpt

Prologue

East River, New York City, New York

Police Officer Milt Sauer collapsed onto the pavement. Blood spilled from his gunshot wounds to pool around him.

All David O'Callaghan could see was the silver police badge pinned to Officer Sauer's chest. *I shot a cop. I killed him. One of my own. A brother. Two brothers.*

"This one's buzzard bait." Dallas Walker's announcement broke through his thoughts. "How 'bout that one?"

Stunned at what he had done, David could only stare down at the police badge shining in the late morning sunlight sparkling off the waves of the East River a few feet away. Later, he would not remember seeing Dallas come around the car, extracting the Ninja spikes from his hand, and kneeling down next to Officer Sauer to check for a pulse.

"They're both dead." She took Officer Sauer's gun from his holster and handed it to David. "You're gonna be needin' this."

His hands were so numb that David could barely feel the cold metal when he took the weapon. He tucked it into the waistband of his pants and covered it up with his sweater. "Take his spare magazines, too." His own voice sounded like it was in a fog.

She was already handing him the magazines, which he slipped into his pockets. Seeing the bloody tear through the left sleeve of his sweater, she gasped. "You've been shot."

Squinting at her, David shook his head. He didn't understand what she had said until she was poking through the hole in his sweater to examine his wound.

"Looks like Stan managed to clip you before you took him out," she said. "You might be needin' a couple of stitches. Right now, we need to get out of here."

She dropped back down next to the dead police officer to search his pockets. She extracted the backup weapon that he had taken from David earlier. While David was placing his weapon back in his ankle holster, Dallas was removing Officer Sauer's backup weapon to place around her own ankle.

"Do you know how to use a gun?" David asked.

With a grin, she un-holstered the thirty-two semi-automatic, extract the magazine to check the rounds, shoved it back into the grip, and then checked the sights. "I wouldn't be a real Texan if I didn't know how to use a gun." She slipped the gun into its holster, pulled down the leg of her pants to conceal it, and rose to her feet. "Sugar, we need to get out of here," she urged while pulling him to his feet. "Police are gonna to be here faster than a prairie fire with a tail wind. Since we don't know which ones are the bad guys, we need to go underground until we get it figured out." Clutching her shoulder bag close to her with one arm, she tugged his arm with the other.

David took one last look at Officer Sauer. "I'm sorry," he murmured.

Grabbing him by both arms, Dallas forced him to look at her. Her tone was gentle, yet firm. "You had no choice, hon. They were gonna *kill* us."

Far in the distance, David heard police sirens growing nearer.

"It's time to swap spit and hit the road, partner," she said. "Now!"

Forcing one foot in front of the other, David allowed her to lead him down the river and through and alleyway back toward the city—away from the approaching police sirens.

