Jack White's fingers danced across his keyboard. The rhythm and cadence of his typing increased in intensity as he completed each piece of the search warrant. The description of the location was, by far, the easiest part of the process. What judge wouldn't allow you to search a cave on government owned land?

The compound itself was all but guaranteed due to Tuefel's history and the shootout on his land. White pulled up Google Earth and typed in the address to the compound. He copied the image and pasted it directly into the document below a brief description of the building. The judge would know with absolute certainty that he knew which residence he wanted to search.

His fingers tapped the keys to complete the attachment for the list of items they would be searching for. The list was fairly broad- narcotics, dead bodies, weapons, and the crime scene on the property. White knew that they would be able to search anywhere because small things can be hidden in small places. If they were only searching for bodies they would be limited to searching where a body could be hidden. The meth in the cave opened up everything. He quickly completed the attachment, his hands swinging back and forth on the necessary letters.

White's waltz transitioned to a mosh pit of keystrokes when he started to work on the affidavit. While it was basically a, “Dear Judge, we want to search here, for this crap, because dingus did X, Y and Z” letter, he knew that he needed to include every detail Deacon gave him to shut down any challenges that a defense attorney would surely raise later in court. Jack always compared it to making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Unless you had peanut butter, jelly, and bread, you didn't have a PB and J.

This particular affidavit was easy for him to write. There was more than enough probable cause to search the compound. The problem was the volume of information that he had to include. If he didn't put the reason for searching for the items on the list, none of the evidence would be admissible. The whole thing would get thrown out of court and Tuefel would walk- again.

He dialed the sheriff's department dispatch center. The dispatcher, clearly annoyed by the call so early in the morning, put him on hold for several minutes before she transferred him to an on-call judge.

The on-call judge happened to be “Hang 'em Harry” Pavelski. When White heard who he was being transferred to he grinned. With this luck, I should go buy a lotto ticket. Harry was known for his quick temper and long history of giving out the maximum sentences possible. He loved to throw the book, the desk, the gavel, and the kitchen sink at them.

On one trip to traffic court that Pavelski presided over, a twenty-year-old kid contested a ticket that White wrote for running a stop sign. The idiot called Judge Pavelski “dude” in the his own courtroom. Pavelski told him, “Don't you ever call me that again in my court room.” The kid replied, “Alright dude, whatever.” You could have heard a pin drop.

White never knew if it was out of habit because of the slang of the idiot's generation, or if it was intended, but the kid had said it either way. His reward was getting his ass thrown in jail for contempt of court for three days. Three days for calling the judge dude. Pavelski even impounded his car for a month for good measure. When asked if he had anything else to add, White told Judge Pavelski that if he ever needed a kidney, he had a spare for him with his name on it. All he had to do was call.

The transferred call connected and the old man answered. His voice was more groggy than his normal speaking voice. It was easily the deepest that White had ever heard. The man had to have missed his calling to do the voiceovers for movie trailers. “You’ve got one minute to get my attention Detective.”

“Sir, Detective Jack White. Cain Police Department. I’m sorry to bug you at this hour but the reason why I’m calling is—”

“Forty-five seconds.”

Jack’s mouth went dry. “—is because I have a search warrant I’d like you to look over for the residence and surrounding property of Ubel Tuefel.”

The grogginess vanished. Clarity and purpose returned to the judge's tone. “For what?”

“For the residence of Ubel Tuefel sir. We found his methamphetamine lab in Tollhouse Cavern. It’s just outside his property line and in US National Forest. He must have thought it was on his property when he set it up. There’s pallets of meth down there, along with a pit full of deceased individuals who cooked the meth Your Honor.”

“Get your ass to my house with that warrant. Now.”

White ran out of his home to his unmarked unit parked across the cul-de-sac. He smashed the accelerator to the floor and left ten thousand miles worth of rubber on the pavement. He tore out of his neighborhood like a mad man.

Everyone drives their work car harder than their own car. His work vehicle was a Ford F-150 and he drove it like he stole it. Unmarked and Code Three equipped, it came with a visor mounted red and blue light. He flipped down the visor and flipped the switch. The front of the truck was bathed in the bright glow of a steady red and flashing blue lights. The siren embedded in the grill came to life and blared full blast. Middle of the night, no traffic, and hitting every light green, he made it across town to Pavelski's house in "The Bluffs" in under ten minutes.

"The Bluffs" were known for being ridiculously expensive custom homes. Each of the homes sat upon multiple acre parcels of land on the edge of a small mesa. They were also known for housing egos that rivaled the size of the properties. Pulling into the subdivision, White kicked off his siren to avoid waking up the high and mighty while driving down the main thoroughfare. The houses all seemed to grow in size as he came closer to the end of the subdivision. White turned onto Pavelski's street. His house was the only one on it. Being a judge has its perks, and the perks were even better when your wife was a neurosurgeon.

Pavelski's estate was just that, an estate. It was a three-story, seven thousand square foot mansion sitting on a little more than ten acres. Each of the four garages housed a European car that was worth more than a year of White's salary. The driveway had a roundabout with a three tiered fountain centered in the middle that was easily ten feet tall. The sculpture depicted people with crazed looks on their faces clamoring over one another in a mad attempt to reach the top.

Atop the fountain was a three foot tall gargoyle that had to weigh at least four hundred pounds. The behemoth exuded an oddly sinister aura for an impartial judge. It gave White the creeps.

The front entrance was a double door of deep mahogany standing nearly fifteen feet tall. When you stood before it, you were reminded that you were nowhere near as significant as his honor. White ran up the steps two at a time. He reached for the bronze door knocker and the old man opened the door before he could grasp the handle. The little man opening the giant door briefly reminded him of the dwarf opening the castle door on the Wizard of Oz. Only this time, there is no horse of a different color. He bit his tongue to avoid laughing and drew blood. “Det. White. That was fast as hell. It’s a long way out here from downtown Cain. I'm impressed.”

“No traffic and green lights. Thank you again for seeing me on such short notice and at this hour Your Honor.”

“Horse shit. On-call sucks and you know it. Come in.”

The entry way had another gargoyle bust centered between a double staircase which led up to the second floor. The floor was a gorgeous white marble, gold and black rivers swirled through its pearly skin. Tapestries of a Tuscan type village adorned the walls and were at least the size of White’s king size bed. The living room was just past the stairwells and all of the furniture he could see appeared to be wrapped in expensive red leather that matched the front doors. These people are seriously loaded.

They walked to Pavelski's library. The judge twisted the handles and threw open the double doors in an either overly tired or overly dramatic fashion. The walls were adorned with books from the floor to the ceiling twenty feet above his head. From the hand woven inlays on most of the spines, many of the books looked to be from the late eighteen hundreds.

Diplomas from Stanford and Hastings hung in frames behind the expansive desk. The desk reminded White of the stereotypical judge’s bench. A gold statue of Lady Justice, blindfolded and holding her scales, stood beside the laptop computer on one corner. He could see a large block with the word “Guilty” carved into it weighing down one side of the scales.

“Have a seat.”

“Thank you sir.”

“Would you like something to drink Detective?”

“No thank you sir. I am on duty.”

Pavelski removed the cork from a crystal bottle on the end table separating the chairs. He poured the brown liquid into the two glasses beside the bottle.

“I prefer scotch. Neat. You’ll have some, and no, you don't mind.”

“No sir, I don't mind.” He handed one glass to White and kept the other for himself.

“So you drove over here to beg for my signature because you think you got the Krusnik eh?”

“Well sir, it is because we have probable cause to believe...” Pavelski cut him off.

“I know what you are going to say Detective. Save it.” He took a long slow drink of the scotch. White took a drink as well. It was good and had to be expensive as hell. Pavelski started to run his finger over the rim of his glass. The crystal gave off a low hum.

“About two years ago, that sonuvabitch was in my court. He was up on conspiracy to commit murder amongst a litany of other charges. Most were drug related. The victim was one of his rival dealers. The case was good and everyone thought he was done. Half way through the trial, two of the three witnesses vanished. The trial was continued while the sheriff's department conducted an investigation. A week after the disappearances, the heads of the witnesses were found.”

“I remember that case. They never were able to finger the killer, but everyone knew that Tuefel was behind it.”

The hum grew louder. “Yes. You think that small find had any impact on the jury? It sure as hell had an impact on the only witness alive. The last and only remaining witness for the prosecution got on the stand and said that she lied to the police. Everyone knew that the murders were a message clearly sent to her. She heard it loud and clear. So, in the end, even though there was plenty enough evidence to convict him, the jury ruled not guilty and the bastard walked.

“Stupid, spineless sons of bitches. Most juries are. They’ll believe any bullshit thrown at them by a defense attorney like it came from the mouth of Christ himself, and they completely missed the point that if that asshole went away for life he wouldn’t be able to give them the same treatment he gave the witnesses.”

Pavelski poured himself another glass and topped of White's. Pavelski didn't hesitate to pound the second round. He poured a third while White held his glass and listened. “Before he walked, I told him on the record that someday he would burn in hell for what he had done. That sonuvabitch just smiled at me.” Pavelski got up and walked over to the dozens of volumes of California Constitutional Law. He pulled down Volume Eleven and peeled back the cover. He withdrew a single sheet of paper. He walked back across the room and handed it to White. Pavelski returned to his seat while White read.

The note was simple and the meaning clear. It listed the members of Pavelski's family and extended family. It listed their names, home addresses and places of work. There was a photo of each family member beside each entry. At the bottom of the note, a single line of type read, “They'll hang before I do.” Pavelski slammed the remaining liquor. “I've never told a soul about that letter Detective.”

White looked up and, for a moment, saw a defeated man behind the mask. In an instant, that man disappeared and the warrior judge he was familiar with returned. The brow furrowed and he slammed the scotch high ball glass on his desk. “But I swore that the next opportunity I got to take that piece of shit down, I’d do it. I owe my family that much.” Pavelski leaned over the top of his desk. “To hell with Tuefel. Do us all a favor and kill that piece of shit. If you guys get the chance, don’t hesitate to take it.”

Tuefel needed to be taken down and White swore to himself that they would do it by the numbers. He needed the paper signed so hefinished his scotch in one slug. He locked eyes with the judge and said, “Yes sir.” Pavelski picked up a fountain pen from its perch in the gold desk organizer. He twirled it in his fingers and quickly read the warrant. He double checked the attachments.

“Raise your right hand Detective.” Jack raised his hand. “Do you swear and affirm that the forgoing information contained within this affidavit is true and correct so help you God?”

“I do.”

The blue ink flowed from the pen like water. Pavelski initialed each page and drew a line from the last word to the bottom of the page, confirming that he had read it. His system also doubled as a means to ensure that no additions or changes were made to the document after the fact. Once finished, he quickly scratched his signature on the warrant.

“Thank you sir. We will get rolling now.” They stood and shook hands. Even at his age, the old man had the grip of a bear. White walked to the front door.

“Detective White, one last thing.”

“Yes sir?”

“You guys be careful, and don't come down that hill until he is dead. There is no telling what that asshole will pull in court this time, and it won't be just me he is gunning for.”