

DC

By R.E. Fernandez

Tony used his thumb to spin his wedding band as he stared out of the diner's window. He exhaled a cloud of smoke and put the cigarette out in an ashtray that already had a few butts.

He sat in the last booth with his back against the wall and a steamless cup of coffee in front of him. The window was on his left and he had a clear view straight to the main entrance on his right.

He used his left hand to feel the gun on the seat between him and the wall. One was loaded in the chamber.

His trance was disturbed by the owner of the diner, Roberto. "Tony, you sit for half hour and not even drink your coffee. Are you okay?"

"I just came early and don't want to eat without Sergio."

Roberto glanced at the ashtray as he scratched the back of his neck. "Sure. How about a fresh cup?"

"No."

He took a step, then stopped. "I see in news about your friend Phil. Is—"

"I'll let you know when I'm hungry." Tony looked back out of the window.

Roberto dropped his head and continued to walk.

Tony straightened his back as he watched Sergio pull into the parking lot. He studied Sergio's shoulders and looked out for anyone tagging along in the background. So far, he seemed to be alone.

Sergio got out of his car as his head spun like a sonar screen. He walked toward the main entrance and spotted Tony at the window. He nodded and proceeded to the door.

The door opened with a ring of a bell.

Sergio walked in and put a finger up. "Roberto, I'll just take a coffee for now."

"Usual?"

"Yup. Black. Thanks."

Tony stood up and greeted Sergio as he approached the table. They hugged and sat parallel to each other.

Tony placed the gun on his lap.

Roberto walked up with the coffee. "Here you go. Let me know when you hungry."

"Thanks." Sergio picked up the cup, blew into it, and took a sip. "Crazy morning, huh?"

"Yeah, this ranks for the top spot." he opened his pack of cigarettes and offered Sergio one. He refused with a wave of his hand. Tony took one out and lit it.

Sergio exhaled deeply. "I can't believe they got Phil. You think he had outside dealings?"

"Not a clue."

"And why isn't Frank here?"

"I called him since I heard about it. Straight to voicemail every time."

"Same here." He looked at Tony for the first time. "You think he told?"

"I—"

"I mean, why is he not here? If I told, I wouldn't be here."

"He—"

"We all took an oath to uphold the wall of silence. I swear, if—"

"Enough. Shut up. Look, if Frank told, we would be in cuffs right next to Phil."

"You're right." He raked his fingers through his hair. "I'm just paranoid."

"We all are." He exhaled some smoke and put the cigarette out. "Maybe Frank decided to lay low and get away from everybody."

"That might be the smart thing to do."

"We can't do it all at once."

"I know, it'll look suspicious."

"So, for now, just stick to your routine. Minus the extra stuff, of course."

"You're right. If the Feds got him and not us, then that means he had to be doing other things."

"You know Phil has always been greedy."

"He's not greedy. He just has to constantly feed his nasty dick new pussy. That gets expensive." He laughed hard at his own joke.

Tony gave a half smile.

"I'm glad I spoke with you Tony. I'm a go home and get ready for my shift." He looked at his watch and then back to Tony. "Wow, in less than an hour. Let me go."

Tony extended his hand. "Remember, no extra activity for at least two weeks."

Sergio reached and shook his hand. "I'm going to wait a month."

"Good. Take care."

"You too." Sergio got up and walked out of the door.

Tony watched him get in his car and drive away. No one was following.

Then, he placed the gun in his holster, got up, dropped a twenty-dollar bill on the table, and walked out of the door.

He walked to his heavily tinted vehicle in the parking lot. Tony opened the driver door, got in, and turned the car on. The radio came on as he grabbed his badge off the closed laptop.

CAR RADIO

"Community in shock as the Feds arrest Officer Phillip Mor–"

Tony slammed the radio off.

END