

## High Rise Hostages

### Prologue

The day had just broken over the slumbering city. The sleepy residents were getting ready for their day. The quiet hush of night was unwillingly giving way to the electric buzz of daylight. The rising sun glittered off the glass spun city. Oh so slowly the city breathed to life.

In a quiet alley a car was idling, its occupants were watching the building just across boulevard. The silent building looked like a sleeping giant about to wake as the sun broke the horizon. The men were waiting on another of their posse to return from a run to the local McDonald's. They had been waiting all night for the doors of the high rise to open for business. Their wait would be over in about an hour.

The man who went on the breakfast run returned with bag laden arms. He gave a quick motion with his head to open the door on the front passenger side of the car. When he got to the open door, he slid in beside the wheel man. Quietly he passed out the different bags to the other four occupants of the car. Every man grunted his thanks and went about to open their bags and eating their breakfast.

"Yo! Where is the coffee, dude?" said the youngest member of the gang. He had sea green eyes, light brown hair and a face that only a mother could love. He looked like someone who had thrown into the side of a building one too many times. The young man took up no more than a fourth of the back seat. His thin build and tall frame belied the strength that was hidden under that façade of weakness. He was a force to be reckoned with in any fight. He was the strangest of the small group of men. The others in the car called him "Kid".

The man next to him elbowed him in the ribs and whispered harshly, "You don't want to piss the man off, Kid. He has no patients with idiots. And you Kid; you're at the bottom of the ladder." This man was a good two hundred pounds, with light brown eyes which could look like gold at times. He was bald and had many scars on his head. The scars were not from fights; no they were from the straight razor he used to shave his head. His bulk and his scarred head were enough to make people cross the street while they were walking. Most people said he was a bull of a man and that nickname stuck.

The man next to Bull grunted his agreement. This member of the five man team was not known for his talkative nature. He was so silent that many people mistakenly thought that he was mute. But when he spoke it was with great authority and persuasion. His eyes were violet with a hint of blue green mixed in. His Nordic face was complimented by a golden crest of hair as soft as baby yarn. He was of average build and temperament. It was rumored that he once told someone that his name was Ed. Whether that was true or not no one dared to ask.

The wheel man gave a sharp curt laugh. He was slightly overweight for a man that was

five foot four. The man had a pudgy belly and jowls that reminded one of a Blood Hound. In his face were eyes that reminded people of a pig. The hair was rust red and cut in military style. His arms were tattooed and the colors continued up under the sleeves of his tee shirt in a way that gave the impression his entire body was covered in tattoos. To look at this man you would never believe how fast he was in a run from a dead start. Speed was something this man enjoyed. That is why he would always sign on to be the wheel man for any job. His moniker of course was Mr. Speed and he loved to work with the man sitting next to him.

The man who had made the run to McDonald's was in charge of the crew. He was a no nonsense man that could kill with just a look. The look he gave the Kid was one such a look. The Kid to him just became expendable. This man had raven black hair that was pulled back in a ponytail. The hair dropped to his waist. He had a bronze face that had nothing to do with the sun but more with his ethnical background. His eyes were sunken and black as night. His build was that of an Adonis. Most people called him Eagle or Chief. To him it didn't matter as long as it didn't piss him off.

"Smart ass, you want coffee, get it yourself! I ain't your servant!" Eagle snarled at the Kid. He continued, "We will go over the blue prints again. I do not want any mistakes," he said as he looked right at the kid.

Ed pulled out the blue prints and spread them over Bull's massive lap. The interior of the high rise showed the eight floors in cross sections. On the first floor in the corner was a bank that seemed to be a standalone unit but that was dispelled by the blue prints. The employees' area was attached to the high rise by a door and opened in towards the back of the main lobby of the building. On the second floor was the diamond exchange for the region. And on the sixth floor was the gold market. On the fourth floor a glass bridge spanned across the street level buildings to the adjacent building's top floor. It was this area that Eagle had looked at two nights before. This was a possible point of escape when the police showed up. Yes, Eagle even anticipated the police coming before they could get out of the building.

Eagle said, "We will enter the bank about fifteen minutes after it opens." He looked at his watch. "That is in about forty-five minutes. We will get all ready cash and whatever is in the walk-in vault. Kid, you will grab one of the tellers. She ..."

"What if the teller isn't a dudette, dude?" The Kid interrupted. This earned him a hard shot to the ribs from Bull. The Kid gave a breathless yelp and glared at Bull. The man held up a finger to warn the kid to keep his trap shut.

"Listen, smart ass, if you so much as interrupt me again, I will kill you." Eagle breathed out the threat. Then he continued, "Do you understand? If you have a problem with the way I explain things, just keep your comments to yourself."

The Kid cringed from the threat. He swallowed hard and nodded his head. He had heard of Eagle's rep. It was not something he wanted to test today. He wanted his payday.

“Good. As I was saying,” Eagle shot the Kid a withering look and continued angrily, “you will grab one of the tellers. *She* will be our ticket through the employees’ door. We will gain access with *her* to the building from the bank’s entrance. Taking the *girl*, we will walk calmly to the elevators. We will wait until the elevators power up and then take two up to the second floor.”

Eagle paused to check out the layout of the second floor. This was the objective for most of the men in the car. But it was not Eagle’s objective nor was it the gold on the sixth floor. His object had to do with the bridge spanning the distance between this building and the older Victorian style building. There was something in that building that was more precious than diamonds and gold to him. As he pondered his goal, Eagle glanced at his watch. It was time to move. “Let’s go!” he barked to the three men in the men in the back seat. “It’s time to set up before the bank opens.”

The men filed out of the car. Bull made sure he got out on the same side of the kid. He put his arm over the kid’s shoulder. He decided to keep the kid in line until Eagle said otherwise.

Eagle hung back as the boys filed out. Once they were out of ear shot, he breathed.

“Speed, get to the other car and have it ready to move. When things go south, I want to get out fast.”

“You are planning to stir up a hornet’s nest, aren’t you, Eagle.” Mr. Speed said as a wicked smile played across his pig like face. “You know I got your back. The car is already set up. You just need to give the word and I will be there to pick you up.”

Eagle gave a laugh and punched Mr. Speed in the shoulder. Then he exited the car and walked to his position to wait until the bank opened.

## Act 1

### Scene i

As the citizens of the city were sleepily waking up, the locker room area of the Tactical Unit was full of the raucous noise during a shift change. Men and women chatted for a few moments as they changed in their respective locker rooms. They even yelled for the other locker room to hear the conversations that swirled through the rooms. When the exchange of clothing was completed; the doors of the lockers would bang shut with a metallic clang. The two shifts high fived and wished the other team a good and safe day. Some laughed at this remarks since most were going home to get a good days sleep. The hustle and bustle of the shift change was now accented by the Team 1’s grunts and exhales as they worked out. Each person was at their favorite equipment. There was little if any talking during the workout. Though everyone was wondering where Julia was this fine morning. She was the one who would arrive two hours early and

completing her workout when the others team members arrived. There was speculation on where the wayward Officer Duncan was. But the speculation was not spoken; they would find out at the morning briefing.

The team started to file out to the fitness room and back to the locker room. Some would wash up, while others just changed into their uniforms. Once everyone was in their uniforms, they walked quickly to the briefing room. It was time to go over the nights activities and plan out who was going to cover what positions on their shift.

Captain Allen Johnson, the Boss to his officers, began roll call. He skipped over Julia Duncan's name. The distinguished silvered haired captain informed the team, "Julia will join us later in the day. For some strange reason she was pull to instruct a class at the academy. Ladies and gentleman, if I see Officer Duncan's name on the rooster for the academy again in the next six months, I will be assigning people to take some of the classes. This is a final warning people."

The men and women of Team 1 gave nods of agreement. Each was a little disappointed in the captain's decision. It was fun signing up Julia for something she despised.

## Scene ii

The dawn broke with Julia finishing a 5 mile run. She entered her sparsely furnished home. She had only moved in a month ago and she didn't have time to get everything unpacked. Today, she could take her time getting to work. She had been scheduled as guest instructor at the academy. The academy class she was to go in for did not start until 9:30 AM. She had plenty of time to have a good breakfast with coffee and orange juice. After breakfast a nice long shower would help her to de-stress and be at ease when she had to leave.

Julia went over to her coffee pot. She place the filter in the basket, added the just the right amount of coffee for a strong mug and 4 cups of water in her Braun brewer. It was next to her espresso machine. But today was not an espresso day. It was a coffee day. She did not need to be totally wired today.