

Free's World

Chapter One

The force of the Internal Security Officer's truncheon played its dull tune against the side of the suspect's head. That it hurt so much appeared to shock him. "Served the rich capitalist pig right. Don't know why the party tolerates them at all," he said to himself. There will be a promotion in this for sure. As he dragged the dazed man to his feet by his tie, the officer tripped over the curb and stumbled.

"No, not when I'm so close!" With a suddenness that surprised him, Mark lunged at his staggering attacker mounted his chest and began to pummel him. Smith tried to raise his billy, but Mark caught it, and it became the instrument that ended the career of Federal Internal Peace and Security Officer Samuel J. Smith.

Mark drew back in astonishment. He had never seen a dead man up close, the helpless way his eyes rolled up and to the left. Mark had killed him. He had never wanted to hurt anyone. He fought the sick to the stomach panic to turn and run.

His mind raced. I didn't mean to kill him, it just happened so fast. He stepped from the shadows and grabbed me. I didn't know that it was a government agent.

Out of unthinking reaction he had pulled away. That was all the excuse an Internal Peace and Security Officer needed to use the government issue leather wrapped stainless steel truncheon with the weighted end. "Couldn't let him take me! Not now. Not when I'm so close, but I didn't mean for this to happen."

Mark became aware of his heavy breathing. He fought down the nausea and looked around. There appeared to be no witnesses. He stumbled to his feet and dragged the body; the body that up until a few moments ago had breathed with life, with a heart that beat just like his; behind a bush.

These people have locator transmitters buried beneath their skin. They would soon find him. He found the official car, backed it up to the body, and loaded it into the trunk. If only they had waited a few more days. He drove to a flooded quarry near the closed steel mill. It might take them a day or two to figure out what happened. He loaded the body into the driver's seat and released the brakes.

It had rained earlier in the evening, but it did not feel fresh. Already it was hot and muggy. Rain water backed up in the trash filled puddles. Most of the yellow street lights had been shut off giving the street an ominous character.

It was a long walk back to where there was a phone to call a taxi. Mark did not believe he could walk so slowly while putting so much effort into it. He felt alone, trapped, helpless, a poor kid again. This only increased his nausea. Now in an unstoppable wave, the reality of what he had done overcame him. He fell to his knees and vomited. Lights! A car was coming. He struggled to his feet and stumbled into the trees.

The taxi dropped him off a half mile from his estate, and he waited until the lights disappeared to make his way home. First he ordered his helicopter readied, then hit the shower. He called his butler to the study. Mark gave him the documents that would give each member of his household staff a piece of the property when they were unsealed after his disappearance. After the butler left, he went to his hidden safe where the last items he needed to make his final escape were kept.

The chopper lifted over the wall. Though he knew they could not catch him now, he began to calm down only after he was out over the gulf. "I didn't mean to kill him. It was an accident. What else could I do?" He flew on. Mark switched on the emergency locator transmitter for thirty seconds and then off. With this done he dropped the oil and a few pieces of debris that would float. The oil slick would keep them occupied, if only for a short time.

"I'm sorry for the agent, but he brought it on himself," Mark said aloud before turning the helicopter toward the Mexican coast.