

## **Chapter 9**

*["Help me--help me, I'm disappearing!"]*

Bad weather delayed the trip back to Chicago until Tuesday morning of the following week.

After leaving Durham and on a steady cruise, the pilot of the Lear Jet, Stan, spoke over the intercom to Royce. "Sir, Jamey Figg's on the phone again. Do you want to talk with him? He's been trying to get you all last week."

"No. Just say we'll be there in a few hours. Tell him to drop by to my Penthouse this evening. We'll have it out then."

"Jamey-boy is my Accountant," Royce said to Patricia. "His uncle was Justin Figg. Apparently Justin and my father, Lamont, were very close business associates--distant relatives, I read."

Jamey is all riled up because I'm spending--wasting--so much money." Royce smiled, "Wait until he finds out what I'm planning. He'll probably quit."

"I kind of agree with Jamey, Clyde ole man," Kelly said. "You can't keep going on like this. Neglecting business. Why, you even skipped the last two corporate meetings."

"Boring, boring."

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The Lear Jet landed at the Chicago Midway International Airport where Rafer, Royce's valet, was waiting for them with the DeVille. He first drove Kelly and Patricia to their home in Cicero and then proceeded to the Drake Towers.

When they entered the Penthouse by the elevator, Jamey Figg was sitting there waiting for them: "Mr. Royce, we must talk."

"Now calm down a bit Jamey-boy."

"Mr. Royce, let's go into your office."

"Okay, okay, take it easy."

Royce and Jamey entered his private office--Jamey talking impatiently: "Mr. Royce, we can't go on like this, spending cash like water. Your money is all tied up in restrictive investments. Why, I had to borrow just to meet your recent expense account. That donation to the Rhine Research Center was the last straw."

"I know, I know. Sit down and hear me out."

"Look, Mr. Royce! Ever since you disappeared, I'm been trying desperately to hold on to your investments."

"Jamey-boy, you have been doing a fantastic job and now I'm going to relieve you of some major tasks."

Figg folded his arms: "And what, pray tell, may that be?"

"First, I want you to sell my interest in the Drake Hotel."

Figg's jaw dropped: "WHAT? Why that's the dumbest thing I ever heard of. The Drake is one of the most prosperous hotels in Chicago. You can't do that, Mr. Royce."

"You bet I can. Do it! In addition, I want you to sell out my investment in Solomon Jewelry, Inc."

"No! No! You can't be serious. After all the effort your father put into it."

"I'm serious all right. I need readily available cash. Lots of it."

Figg pointed a stern finger: "You know, at first, I sort of took a liking to you upon your return. Prior to that, you were very difficult to work with. But, fortunately, you had, and I say had, a business acumen. I beg of you--don't do this."

"DO IT! And don't point your damn finger at me."

"What would your father think? He loved the Drake."

"Jamey-boy, after you have completed my DEMANDS, you're welcome to stay on--to protect what I have left. The Drake Towers--the Columbus Yacht Club--whatever is left."

"The taxes will eat you up."

"Good. Our Government needs the money."

Jamey dropped his arms in concession: "I guess there's nothing more to say."

"That's right. Start on it first thing in the morning.... Jamey, you know perfectly well that I have serious problems that require my immediate attention. I need finances to work on them--and many, many other tasks--which I do not care to discuss. These troubles are of ultimate importance to me now. Besides, despite such sell-offs, we have substantial resources to continue our lives in absolute luxury.... Jamey, I must do this. It is my money, RIGHT? Listen--you have been my most important asset since I returned, not to mention our distant relationship. So--let's continue our business camaraderie--for the sake of your Uncle Justin and my father."

Jamey Figg left the Penthouse mumbling and shaking his head, as Royce called in Rafer to make arrangements for dinner.

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