

The Encounter Series...TWISTED

Part 6

Regrets

A white Chrysler 300 cruised at a normal speed from Fort Benning taking Victory Drive to the city of Columbus. After a quick stop at the Krystal on Victory Drive, it wasn't too long before the Chrysler parked in front of a white, two-story house at the corner of 6th Street and Veterans Parkway.

General Benson stared at the house for a moment. It appeared to be...deserted. The windows painted black. When he opened the car door, got out and Staley joined him, the 300 quickly speed away. Seconds later, the front door of the house creaked opened slightly. "Hang ten, here..." General Benson said then disappeared into the house.

After ten minutes of waiting and no sign of the General, Staley took it upon himself and entered the house. Once inside, a hallway leading to a red door at the back of the house that was opened slightly, caught his eye. Black and blue lights were blinking on and off...could have been a television that was left on. He didn't know, didn't give a shit but curiosity got the better of him and slowly, cautiously, he crept forward, was about to open the door when an unknown voice from within the room said. "We know everything, Staley. Join us, embrace our way of life...work with a winning team for a change."

Nervous, Staley was sweating, now...profusely. Things got even more complicated when two men suddenly stepped out of the darkness into view.

Staley shook his head. *Special Agent's Smalls and Stone...?*

"Good...y'all know one another." The unknown voice said then stepped into view.

"Staley..." Smalls interjected. "Say hello to your new benefactor...General Roger Benson."

Staley frowned. *What y'all want from me...?*

"Nah..." General Benson said then grinned. "You should be asking yourself...what is it that you will be doing for us?"

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Consciousness of Guilt Fort Monroe, Virginia

Their instructions were simple...drive to the outer perimeter of the post to a remote location on the waterfront. When they got there, two red brick pre-World War II buildings were in plain view.

When #1 pulled into the parking lot and parked the van, both feds sat quietly staring at the windshield like they were expecting someone. They were hoping Staley wouldn't make any un-sudden moves. That's all they would need is for him to finally wise up and figure things out.

The feds had Staley under tight surveillance. However, it never occurred to them to devise an alternate plan just in case he suddenly decided to bolt from the van and take off running. But then maybe they aren't as dumb as they appeared to be or...were they?

Finally, after fifteen minutes, #1 opened the glove compartment and pulled out a black leather pouch. Seconds later, #2 got out of the van and walked toward one of the brick buildings.

The next few minutes were critical as each second turned into an ever-ending game of cat and mouse between # 1 and Staley until Staley stood up, took two steps toward the front of the van. Reacting quickly, #1 threw the leather pouch on the dashboard, bolted from the driver's seat, turned to face Staley, held up both hands and pointed toward the back of the van! His attempt to move to the front of the van, although unsuccessful, caught #1 completely off guard. Only after Staley sat down did #1 return to the driver's seat.

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Part 7 *Judgment Day*

Playing a major role in the apprehension of Major Street and his thug strike team was supposed to be the biggest day of his career. Yet, for reasons, unbeknownst to Staley, his biggest day was turning out to be filled with suspense, trepidation and heightened anticipation.

El Q. Hawk was looking to do bad things to Staley. Fat Peggy and Blind Bro' along with his Goons that specialize in finding people that owe money that don't want to be found, already had Staley's name on a head stone. Still, he believed it was easier to be a snitch bitch than to have to deal with the wrath of the Hawk. And, for his hard work and dedication, if nothing else, Staley figured...he deserved better. At least a pat on the back for a job well done.

Meanwhile, the side door of the van swung open and locked into place. #2 stepped forward and to Staley he said. "Come with me."

As soon as they were out of sight, # 1 backed the van to within ten feet of the building. Moving quickly, he began to unroll plastic, the heavy duty industrial type, across the floor of the van in layers using duct tape to connect each layer. Minutes later, a black 1961 Buick Electra 225, Duce and a Quarter, four-door sedan pulled into the parking lot and parked.

General Benson, Special Agent's Smalls and Stone climbed out of the Electra. When #1 turned toward the Electra, he saw a man and two women sitting in the back seat. Before he could spit, Smalls and Stone grabbed him under both arms. They turned him around to face General Benson who replied. "Is he in the building?"

"Yes Sir..." #1 replied. "Special Agent Staley...he in the building."

"And, you're certain..." Stone narrowed his eyes and continued. "...t-t-t-that Street saw y'all b-b-b-back there...onnnnn the highway, on the highway?"

"Affirmative...!"

"And, Staley never saw the car or who was inside?" Smalls asked interested.

"No...b-b-but Street...he sure as hell saw Staley!"

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Smalls looked at Stone who inched closer to #1. “For your sake...” He narrowed his eyes. “When we get up in there, don’t screw up. Don’t twitch, scratch ya ass or clear your throat. You got, you got that?”

Nervous, #1 nodded, took a deep breath then let it out slowly. He reached forward, his hand trembling noticeably, gripped the doorknob and held it for a moment to allow his nerves to settle. Calm now, he turned the doorknob, pushed the door open and went inside.

He stood in the foray looking around the dimly lit room inside the semi-empty building for a few moments. The only furniture visible...a gray metal military desk and two black metal office chairs. Staley was sitting in one of the chairs, his back to the front door while #2 stood behind the desk his arms folded across his body.

The little snitch bitch just sat there, in the chair never looking, glancing around. But, he should have ’cause if things couldn’t get any worse, the front door slammed then opened followed by footsteps. He cocked his head. *Wait a minute...!* He darted his eyes back and forth and was about to glance over his shoulder but thought better of it when General Benson walked into the room. Stunned, he swallowed hard. “General if you’re here...” Staley whispered. “Then Smalls and Stone can’t be...”

“Not far away...” General Benson said then glanced from Smalls to Stone. “Boyz...say hello to Special Agent Christopher Staley so we can get on with the rest of our fuckin’ day.”

Without question, Staley had a reason for being concerned. As far as he knew, his work as a double agent, after all is what brought Major Street and his team to justice. Not to mention gathering intelligence on sensitive governmental matters.

Apparently, it wasn’t enough. General Benson knelled down on one knee beside him putting a hand on his shoulder for balance and to Staley he whispered. “Look heah, bwoy, you have got to be the sneakiest mole I have ever had the pleasure of working with. I know you searching your brain trying to figure out what brought me here? You can stop trying to figure it out ’cause I really don’t believe it was all your fault.”

Staley raised an eyebrow. He couldn’t think of anything that would prompt a visit from the General and most notably the deadly bushwhackers, Smalls and Stone...of

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all people. He bowed his head. And when he didn't speak, General Benson shrugged and said. "I don't really care whose fault it was. All I know is that I got to fix things...handle my business. You know what I mean?"

"No diggity..." Smalls shrugged. "Unfortunately for you..." He went on. "This time around, the General's business..." He glanced at Stone. "...turns out to be you, Staley."

When General Benson stood up, it must have been a signal to #1 and #2. Both men walked around the desk and stood on opposite sides of Staley, who noticed when he looked at them...both men lowered their heads, looked away.

Hold up, wait a minute! His eyes widened. These dudes ain't ready to throw down! They gon' probably blink when the time comes. But, will I have enough time?

"I trusted you, General." Staley said his voice beginning to crack. "I got you Street. Not even your high price Goon squad could deliver that package!"

"Yeah...that's right. I agree. You played the hell out of Street...even fooled the shit out of me, too. I didn't think you had it in you, bwoy."

General Benson walked over to the front of the desk. With his back to Staley, he appeared to be having a conversation with # 1 and # 2. Then, he slowly turned around and to Staley he said. "So...tell me Christopher, what is today?"

Startled, Staley looked at him with a blank expression.

"Today...?" The General glanced at Smalls then grinned and went on. "This day, what is it...the past, the future...the present?"

After a long pause, Staley replied. "Today is the present." *Why the hell is he asking me a stupid ass question like that?*

"Good...you should know that today is all that matters! The future is now!"

"Testify...!" Smalls barked.

"B-B-But, why me...?"

"Cause, 'cause...you a loose end!" Stone interjected.

"And things, Staley..." Smalls rubbed his pinky ring and continued. "Are really jacked up! You been unmasked...compromised!"

General Benson glanced at Smalls and Stone who had moved to a dark corner of the room. But, it was Smalls who walked over and stood directly behind Staley who

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by now was sweating, profusely. Nervous, he took a deep breath, let it out slowly. He looked down at the floor, closed his eyes.

Alligator shoes...!

These guys only come around to play when things get really jacked up. The gold Movado watch and diamond nugget pinky ring on the left hand...Smalls! If it were the affable, double talking Stone, I would feel better about my chances of getting out of here.

Silence followed as he twisted uncomfortably in the black office chair as Smalls continued to stand behind him, stalking him, like a predator waiting for the right moment to strike...end it all, make the kill!

