

Chapter Twelve, in which Taxi is offended, Mickey is flattered, and the Mounties are dispatched.

Angie could hear that Fat Freddie's was fairly noisy as she paddled around the shore before turning into the harbour that gave access to the land. You could see where the bar had to be from the ocean side as there was an old fishing boat, about thirty-five feet long, perched high up on the craggy shore, its old faded paint blending in with the rocks but still visible from up close. From the land side this boat actually served as a lookout and sometimes patio, when the wind was down and the weather balmy, as it was tonight, with a deck built all around the base affording an uninterrupted view of the Atlantic. It also served notice that the harbour entrance was about to appear, an entrance that was hard to spot at times.

Angie made quick work of the short paddle up the harbour and pulled the kayak up the beach, stowing the long paddle beside the boathook in the bottom. Thinking of the noise, and still jittery, she untied the painter and quickly jury-rigged a lead for Taxi out of the line. He looked up at her, obviously deeply offended, and she patted his head while explaining that she trusted him, just not other people. Mollified and in complete agreement with her reasoning, he began to sniff around turning his attention to the important task of selecting which of the myriad objects that he could smell needed a little dose of Taxi scent to improve the night air. And as they made their way up the path to the bar, the lights and music and laughter began to lighten both their steps after such a ludicrous day.

Mickey Finn's face brightened as he saw the pair approaching over the boardwalk leading up from the beach, and he flashed his beaming smile at her. She smiled back, and suddenly realised that she was not going to tell him about the cocaine. Not because of lack of trust in him, more in herself. She liked him and what was she going to say? "I found a body and it vanished, and then I found some cocaine, but I gave it back and have no evidence, not even a flip-flop." No, she was going to say, "One ice cold Kalik for me, and a bowl of water for my dog, please, Handsome," and take it from there.

Which she did, and Mickey quickly reached down into a cooler to hide the flash of pleasure her words had caused, coming up composed with a dripping bottle for Angie, having also added a fresh bowl of water to the bowls already out for me'mam's little pooches. The television

was on, but muted, that irritating habit that so many restaurants and bars now had, a talking head talking about the latest disaster but the sound track replaced with music and chatter, creating a horrible disconnect.

In this case, however, it was tuned to a game, and Angie had to laugh because it was a Canadian Football League game, the mighty CFL determined to show Americans how football is played: in the snow, on a longer field, with only three downs, one for each of the fans in the stadium. She had explained the difference in rules between the CFL and the NFL to Mickey, who being of Irish decent had glazed over immediately, once he remembered that the ball wasn't round and you weren't allowed to kick it much, despite it still being called football. But he must have been a little curious, Angie thought, because there it was on the big screen, and Angie felt a warm glow as she sat down and drank in the ambience.

The game was coming up on half-time, and the coverage turned briefly into a mini newscast, a brief taster of the delayed Canadian national news to come, the CBC's Newshour. Words began to appear across the bottom of the screen, and suddenly there was Andy's face. "Larger than life," Angie thought with a guilty gasp as she read:

"SEARCH CONTINUES FOR ANDREW ANDERSON, SON OF TORONTO REAL ESTATE DEVELOPER MAGNUS ANDERSON. RCMP TO SEND SMALL DETACHMENT TO MIAMI AND EXUMA, BAHAMAS, WHERE HE WAS LAST SEEN. AGAINST POLICE WISHES, MAGNUS IS OFFERING A REWARD OF \$10,000 DOLLARS FOR ANY INFORMATION ABOUT HIS SON'S WHEREABOUTS."

"Ten thousand dollars! Cheap bastard ... poor Andy, even in death his dad just had to insult him one more time. No wonder he grew up to be so irritating," Angie said to Mickey after explaining what she had read.

"Oh, Andy, you came and you took without giving," Mickey sang with a grin as he handed her another beer. "And now the Mounties are coming ... and they always get their man, or Mandy as the case may be," he finished as Angie laughed and he watched, happy to see her happy.

