

CHAPTER 1

Three men sat around a French bistro table that sat on a narrow crescent shaped beach.

A stone pot, containing the yellow flowered branches of the Moroccan Broom, sat centrally on a bleached white table cloth which draped over the side of the table and rippled in a warm wind. The perfume of pineapples filled the air.

Imad Zar, dealer in hashish, human traffic and prostitution, sipped a martini. His thick black hair, slicked back away from his forehead, glistened in the fading evening sun. He drove a brown-bodied 1940 Buick Phaeton, Casablanca style. He wore a white tropical suit and loved to be called Rick.

Imad, educated in America, born into the Ait Waryaghar tribe, crossed cultural differences between West and East. A direct link to the Berber tribes of the Rif region, a mountainous area perfect for growing cannabis plants and nothing else, gave him control of the Moroccan psychoactive drug market place.

The man sitting next to him wore a green uniform; white braids hung loose from an epaulette. He did not move. He did not speak. Imad introduced him as Yousef Berdugo, captain of the Fnideq police



force. He liked the Wild One. He rode a Harley, he dug Marlon Brando and had a penchant for young boys.

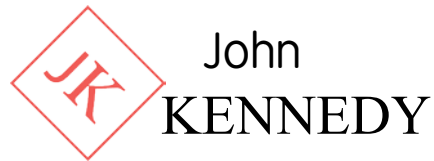
James Bishop did not like these men. In the words of Doctor Seuss, he did not like them standing up, he did not like them sitting down. He did not like their evil eyes; he certainly hated all their lies.

To his left, the jagged shadow cast by the mountain of Jebel Musa inched its way across the stone strewn sand. Across the blue of the Mediterranean, some fifteen miles away, captured in the glare from an orange sun stood the black rock of Gibraltar.

Parked next to Imad's gleaming car, at the end of a gravel road that stretched back up and over the mountain, stood a vintage American truck. It's badge long departed. Paintwork dulled by sun damage. Blue plastic wrapped bales, stacked four high, sat cocooned within a hog-tied chicken wire and wooden pole fence that ran around the periphery of the flat bed.

Two young men, dressed in the uniform of the football terraces, Sergio Tachini track suits and white Adidas trainers, stood either side of the headlights on Imad's car and watched a line of men as they carried the bales from the truck, past a white Bedouin tent, where an African American, who to Jimmy's amusement went by the name of Dinky Cox, played old standards on a piano, and disappeared underneath a camouflage net propped up on a series of wooden poles.

Mitrofan Budnikov, a short stocky man, that neither smiled or frowned, lay under the netting, with his back flat against wooden decking. Mitrofan, Russian, Lenin poster boy, his face covered by a black wool Soviet navy peaked cap, rested his head on a canvas kit bag wedged against a light grey structure that towered some twelve feet above him. His legs reclined at a thirty-degree angle rested on the brass breach of an 88mm deck gun. The light grey and rust pocked metal tube of the pride of the German



Kriegsmarine, U boat U-1064, to give it its wartime designation, rolled gently underneath him as the waves lapped against the makeshift quay.

After the war the Tripartite Naval Commission allocated the submarine to the Russian navy where she spent the remainder of her time with the Baltic fleet. In 1974 as she was about to be decommissioned, Günter Eisenberg, World War II relic, drunkard, whoremonger and ex Kapitänleutnant of the German navy, purchased the submarine, along with the boats engineer, Mitrofan Budnikov.

Günter, resident piss artist at Mongo's bar, the Laughing Cavalier, in Puerto Banus, Spain, bragged drunkenly about his exploits as a U-boat commander. Günter sank thirteen ships. Günter had the Knight's Cross with Oak Leaves. Günter pissed off the British ex-pats who frequented Mongo's bar. He threatened to sink their yachts if they ventured into the Mediterranean. Mongo intervened and prevented a bout of fisticuffs.

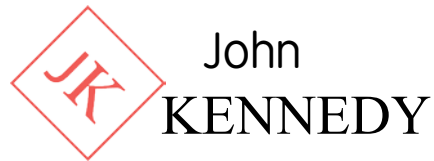
The next morning, Jimmy was somewhat surprised to get an invite from Günter to visit him in Ceuta, a Spanish enclave situated in North Africa, bordering Morocco.

Günter wore his Iron cross and a Luger pistol tucked into his belt. He took Jimmy to a man-made dock. Gob-smacked Jimmy took in two-hundred foot of U-boat.

The rest of the operation swiftly fell into place. Günter introduced Jimmy to Imad Zar, who introduced him to the blonde bricks of hashish.

Imad raised a hand. His words whistled through clenched white teeth. 'Tea?' Beckoning fingers brought forward two girls, who stood under the shadow of the tent flaps.

They distributed green glasses to each of them and filled them with light brown liquid from an ornate teapot.



A brown bib of sand coated the white of Jimmy's shirt, under his blue and white striped seersucker suit. 'Simon Le bon' blonde hair, whipped incessantly by the grit filled winds, stung his sunburnt forehead.

Jimmy sipped. The Mint tea sweet.

Dinky Cox played 'Round Midnight

'Manuke Khara, shit, fucker.' shouted a man from under the camouflage netting.

Jimmy turned toward the source of the curse. The blurred image of a sandal in free-fall and the slow spiral of one of his precious packages quickly replaced by the sickening thwack of bone contacting metal and closely followed by the spadoosh of water.

The suitcase sized package bounced from the deck and continued its downward trajectory to meet the open sea.

'Blöde Fotze, stupid cunt.' shouted the tall figure of Günter Eisenberg, silhouetted atop the conning tower.

The air filled by multiple languages: French, Arabic, and the native Moroccan dialect of Darija.

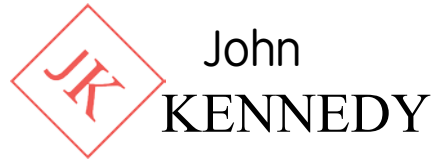
Günter pushed his forage cap to the back of his head and yelled. 'Halt deine Fresse, shut your face.'

An explosion ripped through the air.

Günter held a Luger pistol in his outstretched hand. A thin wisp of smoke curled from the barrel. He jabbed his finger toward the sea. 'Sie Ihn Nicht, not him, them.'

Two of the carrying crew, dressed in the long lose garment of the djellaba, jumped into the water.

Jimmy ran toward the gangplank. The wood bowed and bounced beneath him, shifting against the hull of the boat.



Mitrofan, tanned almost black, appeared from around the side of the conning tower, nearly knocking Jimmy over in the process. He carried with him a long boat hook.

Jimmy positioned himself behind the 88MM canon and watched.

Mitrofan, kneeling at the boats edge, extended the boat hook. He made stabbing motions toward the water before he hooked on to his catch.

Two Moroccans leant over the edge of the boat. A wave lifted the body and they grabbed at his clothing, dragging the inert body with them onto the deck.

Jimmy gagged as he stared into a gaping hole above the man's left temple. The grey tissue pumped. Blood flowed, filled the hole and cascaded down the man's cheek. The missing skull fragment hung limply, held by a few strands of hair and a small flap of skin.

The man coughed and water spilled from the corner of his lips.

Mitrofan looked up to the conning tower. Günter nodded and Mitrofan placed the boat hook just below the man's Adam's apple. He pushed. There was a gentle snap.