

chapter one

“Just one last visit today and I’m off.”

That’s all that was on the mind of Dr. Maxwell Barrows when he arrived at the State Prison Facility. Barrows, a thirty year prison psychiatrist walks down the long empty corridor dressed in his all black, all business suit with matching leather briefcase. Waiting at the other end of the corridor is a youthful looking prison guard.

“What’s up doc.” he asks.

“I’m taking some time off and going to my private home upstate with my wife and daughter. It’s a vacation I have very much been looking forward to.” replies Max.

“Sure wish I was going with you doc. I could use some time away from this place.” Says the guard.

Max waits in a private room inside the prison facility. He sits at the table with an empty chair at the other end. This is where he and the inmate will speak. A tape recorder and some files lay on the table top. As Max waits he looks over the headline story in a newspaper. On the front page is a photo of a large man who looks to weigh well over 400 pounds. The man is in handcuffs and is surrounded by several police officers. Below the picture in large as life text reads the word **KILLER!**? The next line reads *Model murdered along with same sex lover in their Eastside hills apartment.*

As Max continues to delve into the headline story the door opens and in walks two prison security guards. Between them is the large man from the photo. He is dressed in a bright orange prison issued jumpsuit and his hands are cuffed in front of him. The large man towers over the two Prison Guards. His ethnicity appears to be African American though his skin is light toned. A long scar starts at his right cheek and runs directly across this right ear.

The large man is escorted to the table opposite Max. The prison guards pull out the chair and the large man is seated with his large frame barely fitting in the seat. Once seated the two guards back away remaining behind him on either side.

Max presses two buttons on the tape recorder and speaks into the microphone.

“Dr. Maxwell Barrows taped session with Mr. Raymond Cobb. July 12th 1998”

The large man looks over the table remaining silent he squirms in his chair.

“Mr. Cobb, my name is Dr. Maxwell Barrows. I am the prison psychiatrist. Mr. Cobb you are being charged with the murder of two women. Do you understand what that means.” asks Max.

The large man does not reply. His attention seems focused on the tape recorder and microphone.

“Mr. Cobb. You are being charged with the murder of two women. Do you understand what that means” asks Max making a second attempt to gain the large man’s attention.

The large man is silent for a moment then finally speaks.

“Something bad happened.” he says in a soft almost childlike voice.

Max is stunned to hear such a soft innocent like voice coming from the large man.

“Mr. Cobb...” Max begins when suddenly the large man speaks again cutting him off “Raymond.” The large man says.

“Raymond, Is okay if I call you that?” Max asks.

Once again the large man is silent. Max opens a folder that lies on the table and pulls from it a black and white headshot photo of a woman. She has long blonde hair and is stunningly beautiful. Max places the photo directly in front of the large man.

“Raymond, did you know this woman?” he asks

The large man stares down at the photo as if to have fallen into some sort of daydream state. Max notices the large man’s reaction.

“Beautiful... she was” mumbles the large man in his soft childlike voice.

“Tell me Raymond. Where did you see this woman.” asks Max. “*Where* did you see this woman?”

Raymond stares up at a fluorescent tube light bulb overhead that flickers endlessly. His facial expression is blank, his eyes are frozen. Suddenly his attention shifts from the flickering bulb to the endless flow of traffic on the department store showroom floor. This is where Raymond works as a day custodian. He stands there wearing his faded blue jumpsuit holding a dust broom while men, women and children of all walks of life dodge past him.

The sound of electronic cash register beeps, paging bongs and credit card machines with beeping noises ring constantly around him while the department store music blares out overhead like a shopper's theme.

He pushes the dust broom across the glossy floor looking down at his distorted reflection. Suddenly, raising his head he notices the highly attractive woman walking down the main isle several feet in front of him. The woman has long flowing blonde hair and is dressed in Jeans with a short white top. The woman struts down the main isle as if time had somehow slowed down. No longer heard are sounds of paging bongs and electronic beeps. The department store music has changed to a more seductively teasing theme music. The woman removes what appear to be designer sunglasses then tosses her hair around.

Raymond watches on as the woman circles a plastic display model standing on the showroom floor. She touches the fabric of the yellow outfit the display model is dressed in and pulls at the price tag. The large showroom appears to have gone empty with only Raymond and the woman remaining.

Standing in the small Janitorial room Raymond stands face to face with the plastic display model. The one he has taken from off the showroom floor. He looks into its lifeless eyes while moving in closer and closer suddenly pressing his lips against its plastic mouth.

chapter two

Max looks over at the large man who after several minutes of endless stares has returned from a daydream.

“what then Raymond.?” Asks Max. “What happened next?”

The large man looks at his hands clamped between his massive legs.

“acronomical agents” the large man softly replies.

“*What?*” Max immediately asks.

Raymond sits in the Janitorial room on a stool facing a shelf filled with plastic bottle filled with colored fluids and bright colored labels that read TOXICLEAN, BEAUTIFUL BOWL CLEANER and O’DUR REMOVER: GINGERBREAD SCENTED. Having worked as a custodian for a little over two years Raymond has read the instructions label of every cleaning product he has used. He has acquired a vast knowledge of how, when and why to use certain products. Not that he knows what things like peroxides are and mean