

## Chapter 8

*If things go bad, and I mean really bad, don't panic. Don't feel that you have to make a quick and hasty decision. Take a breath and give yourself at least a few seconds to think through some options. You almost always have enough time to do that. Rushing into a decision without considering at least a few alternatives is a great way to make a bad situation even worse.*

“What do we do now?” Sutton said to Will as she stood up. It was too late for her to pretend she was just an innocent bystander. She was the one that shouted out the warning about the gun. The video cameras would have seen that. It had been a mistake but it was too late to take it back now.

Will was silent for about 30 seconds. It was obvious he was thinking and her and Toby let him. Then, slowly and deliberately, Will lifted his pistol and pointed it directly at the old man. Dante began to lift his arms in a sign of surrender. It was a futile gesture and Will squeezed off two rounds directly into his chest.

“What the fuck are you doing?” Sutton screamed. She was heartless when it came to ruining someone's life, but actually taking that life was beyond her. This was a new experience and one she was terrified to be a part of.

“No witnesses,” was all Will said as he turned the pistol on the last remaining hostage. Her name was Megan. She was 23 years old, with long, wavy brown hair and beautiful, big brown eyes. When she was standing she was just over 5'7” and had the kind of curvy body that every man loves to have near him. Her friends all loved to hear her laugh, which she did often, and she was the centerpiece in any room she entered. On top of it all, she had a wonderful smile that no one would ever see again.

“Please,” she began to plead for her life, “I have a family. I'm engaged. Please don't - ” Will squeezed off two more rounds from his pistol and Megan's life was over.

Everyone stood for moment to absorb the scene around them. Riley was dead along with four other people who had started the day with much hope and joy.

“Oh my God, what have you done?” Sutton gasped.

“What had to be done,” Toby answered for Will.

“Calm down,” Will ordered Sutton in a stern but non-combative tone. “Grab the diamonds.” Sutton just stood frozen in place. “Sutton,” he continued in the same way, “clear your head. What’s done is done. We have to get out of here now. So grab the diamonds.” Her stare remained blank but she did as she was told.

Will surveyed the entire scene. Janet lay slumped over Danny, Megan was about 3 feet away lying on her side, and Riley lay behind him. “Let’s grab him,” he said pointing the muzzle of his gun at Riley’s body, “and let’s get to the car.”

“Why take him along?” Toby asked, “Why not just get the hell out of here and be gone.”

“Because,” Will explained, “he put this crew together. If he’s left here it’s only a matter of time before they figure out who he is and then us. We take him with and get rid of his body.”

A shiver ran its way down Sutton’s spine. She liked Riley and, for that matter, even the old man who owned the store. Yet here was Will, all calm and collected as if he was working at a restaurant and someone had just messed up an order. She didn’t like it. It was just too cold.

Will slipped his gun into his holster, walked over to Riley, and pulled the detonator out of his hand. He had one thing left to do besides getting them all out. He was going to blow the entire place up as soon as they were out the door.

Toby reached down and pulled Riley’s limp body up by an arm and then slung him over his left shoulder. “Alright, I’m ready, let’s get out of here.”

Will stepped outside first and motioned Murphy to bring the car around in front of the store. Will then walked over to the car, “Pop the trunk,” he said. It was the tone in which he said it that stopped Murphy from asking why. This wasn’t quite how things were supposed to go. They should have all come out together and just hopped in the car. He popped the trunk.

Will then motioned to the window of the store. Sutton, holding the diamonds, emerged first and headed straight to the front passenger seat. Toby followed her out carrying Riley. A few

people on the street turned their heads at the scene. “There’s no choice,” Will thought, “besides, they won’t recognize me or Toby and we’ll deal with Sutton later.” Toby flipped Riley into the trunk, Will slammed it shut and both of them got in the car.

“Drive,” Will ordered.

Murphy put the car in gear and headed towards the second vehicle. Then he asked, “What the hell happened in there?”

“Things didn’t quite go according to plan,” was Will’s response. He then pushed the red button on detonator and a large explosion erupted from the storefront behind them.