

crusade, but largely he said little to Chuck, seething inside, perhaps, but seemingly satisfied to wait his turn at revenge.

Still out of work, Chuck toyed with the idea of striking out on his own. He had let Mooney know he wanted to go into a legitimate business, preferably in construction. But he'd heard nothing about such an opportunity from his brother and waited in silent frustration, afraid to act on his own without Mooney's permission or endorsement. He hated to think what his brother's reaction might be if he dared be so brazenly independent. "I have to be patient and lie low," he explained to his wife.

Indeed, any possibility of Chuck going outside the Outfit seemed increasingly remote. He resigned himself to waiting for word from his brother, spending his days miserably idle, frequenting the Outfit bars and dives throughout the summer and fall. But in so doing, Chuck heard the whispered comments. "Mooney's gonna have to do somethin' about the Kennedys," Needles insisted. "Mooney's gonna fix them," said Milwaukee Phil.

The general consensus was that something had to give—and it wouldn't be Sam Giancana. Chuck refused to submit to curiosity; he didn't want to know what his brother's plans entailed. And he refused to worry about what lengths Mooney might go to, mostly because he was far more concerned with his own family's welfare than any national security issues that might damage the myth of a Kennedy Camelot.

On November 22, 1963, Chuck turned on the radio in his car and learned that President Kennedy had been shot in Dallas. Somehow, he wasn't surprised: He'd heard everyone from gas-station attendants to guys in the Outfit say, "Somebody should get that goddamned Kennedy bastard." So finally, he thought, somebody had.

Several years would pass before Chuck would know the truth; and then, he would hear the entire incredible story from Mooney himself—but even now, deep down, he knew who had been behind the President's murder.

Still driving, Chuck saw the roadway and the surrounding countryside blur past him with the nauseating intoxication of a spinning carousel. Mooney's recent prophetic words now echoed in Chuck's ears—". . . it's all taken care of . . . I always win."

Later, when Dallas authorities announced the capture of a lone assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald—a man the media quickly portrayed as a schizophrenic nut—the 1933 assassination of Chicago's mayor, Anton

Cermak, sprang to Chuck's mind. Initially, Oswald sounded strangely similar to Cermak's killer, Joseph Zangara. Chuck remembered hearing about Zangara from Mooney when he was a kid. Zangara had been a patsy, set up to appear to be a political fanatic, but was in reality nothing more than a rumrunner who'd owed the Mob too much money to refuse a job. Like Oswald, he'd also been described as an excellent marksman.

As more of the story trickled out over the following days, Chuck found himself dumbfounded that the nation could fall for such an obvious scheme. He'd always believed that the Outfit's one failing was its predictability. If you knew how they thought, you were never surprised, because their tactics were always the same.

But when the all-too-familiar name of Jack Ruby sprang across the airwaves, when Ruby killed Oswald right on TV, in front of the entire nation, there was no doubt left in Chuck's mind. His brother had ordered the hit. The CIA had known it all along. J. Edgar Hoover had turned his head. And the nation would never be the same.

CHAPTER | 21

Just as the nation changed irrevocably after the fateful day of November 22, 1963, so, too, did the lives of Chuck and Mooney Giancana.

After almost a year of waiting for a job—a desperate time financially and one in which Chuck morosely spent his time sitting with his brother Pepe, shooting the breeze with old Outfit friends from the Patch—Chuck got word from Mooney to visit several Chicago builders, among them a man named Sam Pezzette.

Pezzette's firm gave Chuck the opportunity to demonstrate his special talent for construction. He soon discovered that he thrived on haggling with suppliers and tradesmen, and enjoyed meeting the continual challenge of scheduling and production.

That he could be really *good* at the business was, for Chuck, a revelation. He suddenly had an identity, an expertise, outside the Outfit. And that fall of 1964, armed with a new self-confidence and the blueprints for an ambitious large-scale building project, Chuck decided to pay his brother a visit.

He wanted nothing more than Mooney's blessing, having already secured financing for the \$3 million project through both an area bank and the Chicago developer Jack Pritzker, owner of the Hyatt Hotel

chain. But because Mooney was his brother and because it was “the right thing to do,” Chuck offered him a third of all profits from the project as a courtesy or “tribute.”

It was customary in the Outfit to pay tribute to one’s sponsor or mentor. Paying tribute assured having a partner whose name could be far more valuable than any financial backing—lending protection and stature to the project.

But Mooney refused Chuck’s offer with a simple “Thanks, but no thanks . . . keep it all for yourself.” And so Chuck left having gained his brother’s nod of approval *and* something more—his independence. For the first time in his life, at the age of forty-two, Chuck was striking out on his own.

Chuck brought in Sam Pezzette and made him his partner. First, they built homes in Rosemont, the west Chicago township where the Thunderbolt had been located. Then, they parlayed that success into other projects, constructing and selling thirty-eight apartment buildings. With his share of the profits from the sale of these apartment buildings, Chuck went it alone, financing the development of a shopping plaza. All this he accomplished without Mooney’s financial backing—and he was proud of that. By 1966, for the first time in his life, Chuck felt independent, removed from the shadow of his brother’s influence.

No longer technically “connected” to the Outfit, Chuck anticipated no further scrutiny from the G-men. However, to the FBI, he was still Mooney’s brother, still a Giancana, and his change of employment had done little to cool their interest in his affairs. The agents were convinced Sam Giancana and Outfit money had bankrolled Chuck’s new enterprise.

Mooney had his own troubles to contend with in the three years following the Kennedy assassination. There were rumblings among his younger, less powerful underlings, complaints that he was unfit for the job, that he was too “hot-tempered” and “high-profile” to run the day-to-day business of Chicago’s Outfit. Mooney told Chuck he had that under control, but what continued to irritate him was the scrutiny of the FBI. The G-men continued to shadow him relentlessly, despite the fact that Bobby Kennedy—still attorney general until Katzenbach was appointed in 1965—no longer took a personal interest in gangster busting. In fact, after his brother’s assassination Kennedy never again met with his special task force on organized crime.

But even with the loss of Bobby Kennedy, the man who’d given

"Yeah, the government's sure been good to you," Chuck retorted sarcastically.

"Hey," Mooney said sharply. He leaned forward and knotted his hands into two tight fists. "Forget about the fuckin' G-men . . . I'm talkin' CIA. They're different. Like night and day. We've been partners on more deals than I have time to tell you about. You should know that by now, for Christ's sake."

"I guess I'll never understand, huh?" Chuck challenged, irritated by Mooney's cavalier know-it-all attitude.

Glowering, Mooney stood up from his chair, cigar in hand, and marched across the room. When he reached Chuck, he lowered his voice and hissed, "Maybe this will help." He fixed Chuck in a steely, impenetrable gaze. "We took care of Kennedy . . . together." He lifted his cigar to his lips and a cruel smile curled like an embrace around it.

There was a deadly silence in the room as Mooney stalked back to the comfort of his chair. Chuck felt as if his mind had just gone blank, become an empty slate of shock, and, still, a million questions rushed in just as quickly. He finally knew for certain what he'd secretly feared all along; his brother had been right—the government and the Outfit really were two sides of the same coin. But hearing the truth—and hearing it directly from Mooney—left him speechless. He saw his hands tremble as he reached for the reassurance of a cigar.

"How's that?" Mooney said, smiling triumphantly from his chair.

Chuck could only nod. He cleared his throat and muttered, "I guess . . . I guess I see what you mean." †

For the next hour, Mooney shared the darkest and most horrifying of his secrets. Deep down, Chuck wanted to tell his brother to stop, wanted to cover his ears. These were not, he thought, the secrets a man should know if he valued his life. But somehow he couldn't call a halt to the stream of words.

Chuck had already known Jack Ruby was not a stranger to Chicago. Ruby had been Chicago's, meaning Mooney's, "man in Dallas" for years, running strip joints, gambling rackets, and narcotics for the Outfit and running guns—and, he heard, narcotics, as well—for the CIA. All the activities were carried out under Mooney's direction, largely through the insulatory channels of a small, trusted handful of lieutenants: Lenny Patrick, Dave Yaras, Paul Jones, and his old Cal-Neva pit boss, Lewis McWillie, as well as Mooney's Outfit Teamsters men Red and Allen Dorfman.

Ruby's murder of Oswald, an act that placed Chicago's Outfit and its leader squarely in the middle of the assassination cover-up for anyone who understood the Outfit hierarchy, was, as Chuck had already suspected, not inspired by a sudden outburst of patriotism on the part of a two-bit racketeer.

Mooney told Chuck that he'd kept Johnny Roselli as his liaison to Marcello, Trafficante, and the CIA, while concurrently directing his lieutenants to put Ruby in charge of overseeing the Outfit's role in the assassination, collaborating in Dallas with the government agents.

So it came to be that another Jack Ruby—a smart, clever man, one very different from the person erroneously portrayed by the media as an overzealous yet bumbling nightclub owner—played a major role in the events surrounding the murder of the President.

Ruby, Mooney told Chuck, had been a logical choice. The guy had previously demonstrated his extreme loyalty and ability to work with the CIA during the planning for the Bay of Pigs invasion. Mooney said he'd heard through Lenny Patrick that Ruby actually had come into his own while collaborating with his intelligence buddies; over time, the Dallas gangster had formed fast friendships with undercover agents—men like Lee Harvey Oswald. Indeed, at one point, Ruby went so far as to give CIA operative and Outfit pilot David Ferrie a job in his Carousel Club.

But there was another reason Mooney said he selected Jack Ruby for the job: His relationships with Dallas law-enforcement officers were unusually good. Since first coming to Texas, true to his Chicago Outfit training, he'd massaged the local cops and politicians, gradually getting to know most on a first-name basis. These friendships, Mooney said, had been extremely useful in overcoming problems "with the local cop in the street" in the aftermath of the assassination.

As the person representing the Outfit in Dallas, the task had quite naturally fallen to Ruby to silence Oswald when he was unexpectedly captured alive. "Having Oswald alive . . . and in custody . . . put us on the spot, real good," Mooney said, chuckling. Chuck, for his part, didn't see the humor.

Utilizing his associations with the Dallas police force, Mooney explained that Ruby was able to gain entry to the police station—an astounding feat for a person the press later referred to as a "half-witted strip club operator"—both immediately after Oswald's incarceration and, more critically, during Oswald's transfer.

The look on Oswald's face at the sight of a man he knew, should

have tipped the cops, Mooney admitted. "Shit, I heard they were queer for each other," Mooney said. "They sure as hell were friends. . . . Oswald knew what the story was when he saw Jack comin' at him. He knew he'd been made the patsy already and then he knew Jack was gonna take him out . . . but what the fuck was he gonna do about it then?" Mooney shrugged impassively. "It was too late."

Chuck knew from years of association with the Outfit that a guy in Ruby's position would have to go to any lengths to kill Oswald, who had the knowledge to blow the lid off the entire operation. There wasn't an Outfit guy alive who didn't think it was better to die in prison as a murderer—to be executed in the chair for that matter—than to die at the hand of one of Mooney's vengeful enforcers for a screwed-up job. The gruesome memory of Action Jackson's torture and murder still lingered. Ever the loyal Outfit guy, Jack Ruby did what he had to do.

Mooney said that the "alleged lone gunman," Lee Harvey Oswald, like Ruby, had ties to both the CIA and the Outfit. Oswald had been connected to the New Orleans Mob from the time he was born; his uncle was a Marcello lieutenant who had exerted a powerful influence over the fatherless boy. Early in life, Oswald had formed a powerful alliance with the U.S. intelligence community. First, as an impressionable young man during a stint in the Civil Air Patrol with homosexual CIA operative and Outfit smuggling pilot David Ferrie—a bizarre, hairless eccentric whom Mooney said he and Marcello frequently used to fly drugs and guns out of Central America. And later, when serving in the marines during the late fifties, when Oswald attended a series of intensive intelligence training sessions run by the Office of Naval Intelligence in a top secret Japanese spy base. The short of it, Mooney said, was that Lee Harvey Oswald was a CIA agent.

Oswald had been a spy for the U.S. government in the Soviet Union, and had been trained to speak fluent Russian. He was not a Castro sympathizer nor Communist at all, as the misinformation that spewed forth from government agencies in the wake of the assassination had the public believing. In truth, Mooney said, "Lee Harvey Oswald was a right-wing supporter of the 'Kill Castro, Bay of Pigs Camp' . . . CIA all the way."

After serving the CIA and its military intelligence division in the Soviet Union, Oswald had returned to work at a company involved

Jaggar-Chiles-Stovall

in top security projects for the U.S. government. Once back in New Orleans with his Russian wife, he was directed by the CIA to a man very well known to Mooney, former Chicago FBI agent and Commie-buster Guy Banister.

Banister's Camp Street detective offices were a front for CIA covert domestic operations as well as clandestine Outfit and Cuban exile operations—just as had been the case with the Miami-based detective agency in which Richard Cain had worked following his stint with the CIA, where he trained Cuban exiles. Likewise, Mooney said Bob Maheu's Washington–Las Vegas detective agencies served a similar purpose. All were fronts, designed to cloak illegal CIA-Outfit activities and draw top-notch agents for the CIA.

When Oswald was sent to Dallas by his intelligence superiors, he met with Mooney's Dallas representative, Jack Ruby, at Ruby's Carousel Club and reestablished his relationship with David Ferrie. Oswald was also put in contact with another of Mooney's associates, a man Mooney dealt with through both his Haitian and Dallas dealings, the Russian exile and CIA operative, geologist George DeMohrenschildt. "That guy helped me make a lot of money in oil, man oh man, did he have the contacts with Texas oilmen back then. He introduced me to a lot of 'em, too."

Over the years, Chuck had heard the names of many oilmen mentioned by his brother as "business associates," among them Syd Richardson, H. L. Hunt, Clint Murchison, and Mike Davis—a man who was later rumored among Outfit guys to be connected romantically with Phyllis McGuire. Chuck had also heard the names of several Texas politicians, including Lyndon Johnson and John Connally, said by Mooney to have received substantial Outfit and oil-money backing.

Mooney now confided that the dollars raised for the hit on the President—each man involved in the assassination plot received fifty thousand dollars; Mooney said he personally received "millions in oil"—had come from wealthy right-wing Texas oilmen. Precisely who these financiers were, however, Mooney never disclosed. And following a code well-ingrained over many years in the Outfit, Chuck never asked.

Mooney told Chuck he sent Johnny Roselli to New Orleans to check out Oswald early on. "When I told Marcello what the deal was, he said he liked the way Oswald looked for the job and so did Banister. Roselli came back with the same impression. . . . 'He's perfect,' that's what Roselli said after he met him in Banister's office," Mooney

recalled. Roselli returned to Banister's New Orleans office several times in preparation for Dallas, his last trip being in October of 1963.

Contrary to popular opinion, Oswald, Mooney added, had been a bright kid. His downfall had been his unyielding patriotism and malleability; he was easily manipulated.

In early spring of 1963, when the decision was reached by Mooney and his CIA associates to finalize plans for their elimination of the President, Oswald was the natural choice as fall guy. "They'd already laid the groundwork to make him look like a Commie nut, by goin' to Russia and with all that pro-Castro shit. He was perfect . . . he acted like a Commie . . . he smelled like a Commie . . . so they figured it would be no problem to convince people he was a Commie."

As he'd done with the Castro assassination attempt and other covert operations previously, Mooney told Chuck he relied on Roselli as his main conduit to the CIA—but only after he said he held an initial meeting with Guy Banister, Bob Mahue, and former CIA deputy director Charles Cabell, then employed in Mahue's detective firm. There was also a man Mooney described as a "covert operations specialist" and some top brass in U.S. military intelligence from Asia in attendance.

After this meeting, Mooney said that Roselli met "several times" with members of the original group as well as the CIA's Frank Fiorini. Roselli also continued to serve as Mooney's go-between to Marcello, Trafficante, and Hoffa, men who were equally eager to see their nemesis, Jack Kennedy, eliminated.

Mooney said that the entire conspiracy went "right up to the top of the CIA." He claimed that some of its former and present leaders were involved, as well as a "half dozen fanatical right-wing Texans, Vice President Lyndon Johnson, and the Bay of Pigs Action Officer under Eisenhower, Richard Nixon."

The more Chuck understood about Mooney's plot and its multitude of players, the more apparent it became that there were few, if any, lines of demarcation between the Outfit and the CIA. There were no black hats and white hats; that was all a sham for, as Mooney put it, "saps to cling to." In many instances, the Outfit and the CIA were one and the same.

Such was the case, according to Mooney, with Frank Fiorini, Mooney's lieutenant who worked simultaneously with the government intelligence agency and would go on to become embroiled in Richard Nixon's Watergate fiasco under the alias Frank Sturgis.

The same held true of Richard Cain. Cain was an operative and Outfit man who secretly had worked as a spy for Mooney in Chicago Sheriff Richard Ogilvie's department. Cain was now the man whom Mooney intended to make his confidante, international traveling companion, and CIA deal-maker.

From Mooney's point of view—one that Chuck couldn't help but embrace when faced with the facts his brother threw down before him—the CIA and Outfit had become so intertwined that to say there had been a conspiracy between the two overlooked the mere fact that they had become—for all practical purposes—one.

For all its apparent simplicity, Mooney said the Dallas assassination had taken months to mastermind; dozens of men were involved and the hit had been planned for several different cities—Miami, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Dallas. But ultimately, the President had been lured to Dallas, the city affording the best opportunity for a successful assassination. Mooney said both "Richard Nixon and Lyndon Johnson knew about the whole damned thing," having met with him several times in Dallas immediately prior to the assassination. What exactly was discussed between these men, Mooney didn't say.

"The politicians and the CIA made it real simple," Mooney explained. "We'd each provide men for the hit. . . . I'd oversee the Outfit side of things and throw in Jack Ruby and some extra backup and the CIA would put their own guys on to take care of the rest."

According to Mooney, the nuts-and-bolts planning had involved some of the top people on the Dallas police force; most conveniently, the mayor, Earle Cabell, was the brother of former CIA deputy director Charles Cabell. As the man responsible for citywide security, the mayor provided the police protection for the presidential motorcade. Mooney grinned. "They made sure it was so loose down there on the day of the hit, shit, a four-year-old could've nailed Jack Kennedy."

Chuck would later learn through the Outfit grapevine that Mooney solicited professional killers from several quarters. Killers, who the guys said, were required to be "top-notch marksmen": two of Marcello's men, Charles Harrelson and Jack Lawrence, as well as two of Trafficante's Cuban exile "friends." It was rumored that one of these exiles was a former Havana vice cop turned mobster and the other a radical-turned-corrupt U.S. Customs official.

From Chicago, Mooney brought in Richard Cain, Chuckie Nicoletti, and Milwaukee Phil, all having worked previously on "the Bay of Pigs deal." Mooney said that both Cain and Nicoletti were actual

gunmen for the hit, being placed at opposite ends of the Dallas Book Depository. In fact, he asserted it was Cain, not Oswald, who'd actually fired from the infamous sixth-story window.

Mooney also alleged that the CIA had added several of their own "soldiers" to the team, using Roscoe White and J. D. Tippit as the actual gunmen—along with Frank Fiorini and Lee Harvey Oswald, the man Mooney said they intended to frame as the lone assassin.

During the operation, Mooney said the CIA upper echelon sequestered themselves in a hotel, surrounded by electronic equipment. With the aid of walkie-talkies, the men were able to secure their firing positions and learn of Oswald's whereabouts immediately following the hit. Mooney's backup, Milwaukee Phil, stood armed and ready to handle any last-minute interference with the shooters.

To eliminate Oswald, Mooney said the CIA had selected White and Tippit, who both—like Richard Cain, who'd served in Chicago's Sheriff's Department—held positions in law enforcement, on the Dallas police force. Under the guise of self-defense and in the line of duty, they were to murder the "lone gunman." However, Tippit had wavered, Mooney said, allowing Oswald to escape. Thus, White had been forced to kill his partner. "Probably the only real screwup in the whole goddamned deal."

"And the rest is history," Mooney said, grinning. "For once, we didn't even have to worry about J. Edgar Hoover. . . . He hated the Kennedys as much as anybody and he wasn't about to help Bobby find his brother's killers. He buried his head in the sand, covered up anything and everything his 'Boy Scouts' found. But there was a line into the CIA. If somebody knew too much, the CIA found out about it and took care of the problem." When Mooney used the phrase "took care of the problem," Chuck caught the tacit message being conveyed.

From what Mooney said that day, the CIA had indeed stepped in with immense efficiency and removed all traces of conspiracy. As for any evidence that Chicago's Mob boss was a participant in the events of November 22, 1963, Mooney said he was well insulated, thanks to his practice of delegating the details to his trusted lieutenants. Mooney—like the higher ups in the CIA—cared very little about the minute details of the plot's inner workings; the results were all that mattered. He'd met one last time in Dallas, right before the hit, with the top guys in the CIA group, some politicians, and the Texan assassination backers, and that was that.

Chuck had listened appalled while Mooney unveiled the story of the President's murder. Now, his brother suddenly looked away, falling quiet as he apparently searched for the right words. He turned back to Chuck and went on. "The hit in Dallas was just like any other operation we'd worked on in the past . . . we'd overthrown other governments in other countries plenty of times before. This time, we just did it in our own backyard."

He said the murder of President Kennedy was little different from the plot to kill Castro, the murders of Vietnam's leaders, that of Panama's president—or any of the other dozens of military/CIA-sponsored coups propagated throughout the world.

"On November 22, 1963," Mooney stated with chilling authority, "the United States had a coup; it's that simple. The government of this country was overthrown by a handful of guys who did their job so damned well . . . not one American even knew it happened. But I know. I know I've guaranteed the Outfit's future . . . once and for all. We're set here in the United States. So, it's time to move on to greener pastures. Spreadin' the Outfit's power and makin' a fortune in deals overseas are two of the best reasons I can think of to leave the country." He paused and smiled somewhat sheepishly. "And I guess we could add that it'll be damned nice not being tailed by the G."

Just days later, Mooney was in Mexico and Chuck was left alone with his terrible secret.

Thanks to his brother's revelations, Chuck felt he would now live forever in the shadow of fear. And that fear—the fear that came with knowing the truth—gripped him now. He even wondered how Mooney could have shared it, why he had laid it all out in such glowing detail, knowing it might jeopardize his life.

Chuck didn't know what the guys in the CIA were really like. He had a pretty good idea already; he didn't want to know the *full* truth. But he suspected he now had far more to fear from U.S. government agents knocking on his door than any Outfit henchmen. As the years passed, Chuck realized that sometimes he hated Mooney for that. Hated him more for confessing his sins than for committing them. Hated him for telling the truth. After all, the truth had never been a source of comfort to guys in the Outfit, himself included. "Ignorance is bliss"—that's what Mooney had always said, and Chuck decided now that his brother was probably right. Because if the wrong