

kind of a nut and he had fallen for his line. His face flushed hot. He slammed down a coin and walked dejectedly down the street toward the three-story walkup hotel in which he had a room. He didn't sleep well.

The next day a buyer offered him fifteen thousand dollars cash for his Model Car Racing Center. After that he believed in Ansel Adams.

Twisting to get up from his narrow seat, Wilson managed to smile at the thin blonde and the stupid kid. They sleepily moved their legs as he edged out into the aisle. In the washroom he vanquished the stale, overnight taste in his mouth with a mouth wash. He soaped his beard and carefully shaved the rugged, tanned face reflected in the mirror. The square jaw and the unruly, sun-streaked blond hair gave an impression of handsomeness flawed by small blue eyes and thin lips. There was a suggestion of coarseness about his features that the ten extra pounds he had gained since his thirtieth birthday emphasized, but he did well with women. It was the crooked grin that made him look faintly unrelatable and unpredictable.

Wilson slipped on his wrinkled suit coat, flexed his muscular shoulders, and walked back down the aisle. His tweed topcoat was laying across his seat and the NO SMOKING sign was lit. The plane's angle of incline increased. Then with a slight bump they were on the ground and the great engines in reverse thrust roared their greeting to Madrid.

Wilson was cleared quickly through customs and immigration in the immaculate new air terminal building and followed a smiling porter carrying his two bags to the first of a line of identical black taxis with a three-inch red stripe gaily circling each of them be-

neath the windows. "The Palace Hotel," he said to the blue-smoked driver, who tipped his black cap as he closed the rear door behind his passenger and hurried around to the driver's seat.

Wilson slumped in the rear seat, assuming what he believed was the proper air of nonchalance for an espionage agent who was going to shake the government of a highly armed Communist state, but his pulse was racing and his eyes were bright with excitement. From time to time as they approached the center of Madrid along the tree-lined boulevards and around circular plazas with ornate fountains of splashing crystal water or dignified triumphal arches in their center, he glanced through the rear window of the taxi to see if he were being followed.

Before the turreted facade of the Palace Hotel, an eye-blinding white in the bright spring sun, he paid the taxi driver and walked into the Victorian gloom of the hotel to register. One of the cheaper single rooms had been booked for him, but he promised himself that he would not spend much time in it.

He did not unpack. He had a little vanity that he could always snap his cases and move on in a few minutes time. This had never in fact been demanded of him, but it fitted his conception of himself to remain prepared for swift departures to shadowy, ill-defined places. He extracted his toilet kit and a clean shirt. A few hours of shut-eye to adjust to the five-hour time difference and the short night of the eastward flight, and he would be ready.

About two in the afternoon he went down for lunch and after an hour's window shopping under the newly-leaved trees of Calle de Serrano, he returned to the hotel and entered the wood-paneled bar. He or-

dered a scotch and soda and sat relaxed, smoking a cigarette, listening to the animated flow of conversation around him. He identified English, French, and German, as well as Spanish. He concentrated on the Spanish and was gratified at how easily he could still understand it. In the hills with Fidel he had become quite fluent, but in the highly idiomatic Spanish of Cuba's Oriente Province. He probably would sound like a Yank or a Cuban to a native of Madrid. He drew on his cigarette and idly watched the busy bartender making a Daiquiri. No one ever asked if you were Canadian . . . just a bloody Yank. It was the same problem the Scots had—always being mistaken for Englishmen.

The woman was to contact him. She had been informed of his arrival time and of his hotel. It was too soon. Take it easy. He wondered what she looked like. Cuban women were among the prettiest in the world, especially if you liked them sexy. Maybe she would be a real looker. He swallowed the rest of his scotch and soda and lit another cigarette. Hell, this was the political type of Cuban woman, thin, sallow, intense, cruel as hell. He had known plenty in the hills. He ordered another drink and the afternoon slowly grew older. From time to time he looked around the bar. No one paid the slightest attention to him. Even the waiters were concentrating on the large parties where the tips would be bigger. He began to feel very lonely. At this rate he'd end up drunk by the end of the evening . . . not very reassuring for the Americans . . . not very smart for you, Jack old boy.

He glanced at the check on the little table before him, laid some peseta notes on it, and arose. On his way to the door a figure from a nearby table bumped clumsily against him and a double martini cascaded down his shirt front. A tall, slim young woman in her

late twenties with chestnut hair and a small sprinkle of freckles on her nose stood staring at him, stricken, a hand to her mouth, the empty martini glass still grasped by her fingertips. It dropped to the floor and shattered.

"Oh, I am so sorry! I was just—I lost my balance, my God, I've ruined you!" Blue eyes met his. "Let me help." She reached to the table she shared with three other young women and taking up a small paper napkin, began to dab ineffectually at his chest. A waiter hurried over and deftly cleaned up the debris on the floor.

"That's O.K.," Wilson grinned. "Thank God for wash and wear. Or is that an old vaudeville team?"

She smiled back artlessly. "I feel like a fool. If you don't think you will catch cold, stay and have a drink with us. Another drink, that is." Her eyes sparkled with amusement.

Wilson laughed. "It's a deal." He looked appraisingly at her companions. "I'm Jack Wilson."

"I'm Jane Forbes; this is Judy Warren, Barbara Davis, and Mary Olson."

Wilson sat down and gave a low wolf whistle. "I just got into town this morning. I was wondering how to meet you gals."

"You weren't! You sat over there brooding. You didn't even notice us."

He looked at Jane Forbes. "I'm beginning to think that you planned this."

She sipped the new martini the waiter had placed before her. "You will never know. But an unattached American man is usually noticed in the Palace Bar by unattached women and, we hope, the other way around."

"I am Canadian."

"That's the same thing."

"Thanks, but it isn't. We don't have the imperial manner."

Mary Olson giggled. "Jane, you will have to do better than that or let me try."

"I suppose that you girls are Americans?"

There was a chorus of assent.

"Embassy? Tourists? Students?"

"Mary and Barb work at the embassy. Judy is with the Air Force. I work for a Spanish bank," Jane said.

"*Habla español?*"

"Sí, señor, but my job is with the English and the Americans . . . and the Canadians." Her blue eyes mocked him. In the course of two more drinks the others drifted away to real or imaginary appointments, leaving Wilson alone with Jane Forbes. Her manner softened and became faintly possessive. "You ought to change. You can't be comfortable that way."

"If I do, you might go away."

"Not if you ask me to dinner."

"Will you have dinner?"

"If I say, 'yes,' you will think I'm pretty aggressive."

"I like aggressive women. I'm pretty aggressive too."

She reached over and touched his cheek with her fingertips. "Yes." She handed him a card on which she had written an address. "You can call for me here at ten."

"Is this where the foursome lives?"

"Just me, Mr. Canadian. Isn't that a gas?" She arose and giving him a warm, direct smile, left the room. The waiter presented him with the check. He paid it absently.

Wilson's taxi drew up in front of Jane Forbes's apartment a few minutes before ten. She lived in a narrow, five-story apartment building of modern design on Calle de O'Donnell. A lighted shaft of glass brick was set vertically in the building's plain cement facade, marking the small automatic elevator which rose in the center of the building to a private landing on each floor.

He asked the driver to wait and stepped across the sidewalk and up two cement stairs to a small exterior lobby lighted by a brass-and-glass overhead fixture. A row of bell buttons protruded from a brass plate on one wall. He pressed the button beside "5 Forbes" and a shrill buzzer signaled that the door to the inner lobby was unlocked. The dimly lighted elevator stood in the center of the lobby in an ornate, wrought iron cage. He stepped inside, slid the iron door shut, and punched "5" on the control panel. The elevator shuddered ecstatically and then rose in slow majesty to the fifth floor. The door to Jane Forbes's apartment was open.

"Jack?" she called.

"In the flesh."

"You're early, you dog. Come in and wait. Fix yourself a drink. The things are on the table near the window." She spoke through the open door of her bedroom off the living room.

"I didn't know how long it would take to get here. I overestimated the time."

She mumbled something with her mouth full of hairpins and Wilson had a provocative glimpse of a gorgeous figure in a black brassiere and step-ins moving past the door.

"I'll bet you are sitting in the gray chair," she said.

"Right. How did you guess?"

"It gives you wolves a peek where you shouldn't see."

"Well, I see a blue chair against the other wall. You would be disappointed if I moved."

"Maybe. But you won't move."

"I might barge in there."

"Too late for that. I'm all dressed." She emerged in a simple knee-length black dress that caressed her figure without clinging to it. The neck was cut deeply to reveal her tanned, well-formed breasts. She wore her glowing chestnut hair loose on her shoulders. At her neck was a single strand of pearls. She was barefooted and carried a pair of plain black suede pumps in her left hand. She smiled at his obvious approval.

"Hi."

"Hi."

"How about a drink?"

"Coming right up. Scotch?"

"On the rocks. A little water."

"That's my girl."

She sank down on a sofa across the room from him and tucked her feet beneath her. "How do you like my apartment?"

"Very nice. It looks like a new building, but where did you get that elevator?"

"Isn't that something? It's from the old building this one replaced. It dates from 1910. We think it gives this modern building a little character."

"Great, if it doesn't dump you into the basement someday."

"It won't. It has all new insides."

She sipped her drink and studied him over the rim of her glass. "Where are we going?"

"Casa Botín."

"Wonderful. How did you learn of Casa Botín? You only arrived this morning."

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"It was recommended in a Canadian whiskey advertisement."

She laughed. "Well, you're frank. But it is a good choice."

They finished their drinks and took the elevator to the street level and the waiting taxi. The driver took them on a slightly circuitous route to the old restaurant, up Calle de Alcalá, through Plaza de la Independencia and Puerta del Sol and past the lighted façade of Palacio Oriente before turning into a maze of narrow cobbled streets lighted with ancient wrought iron fixtures and the warm glow from the interior of scores of restaurants, cafés, and coffee houses. There was a small traffic jam before Casa Botín's and Wilson paid off the taxi driver a few doors away. They pressed through the crowd and up a narrow sidewalk to the open door of the restaurant. A harried headwaiter with a tablet of paper in his hand looked at him.

"Sí señor?"

"My name is Wilson. A table for two. A ten-thirty reservation."

"Yes, Mr. Wilson," the headwaiter replied, consulting his list. "We have your reservation. Alas, it will be about twenty minutes." He snapped his fingers at a waiter. "Let us serve you a drink while you are waiting, with our compliments."

They stepped outside again and stood at the edge of the narrow street, jostled by the crowd, occasionally pushing toward the sides when a taxi passed, sipping dubonnet over ice.

"I guess a lot of people saw that whiskey ad," Wilson said. "But this is fun. I like it."

"I am so hungry," Jane said. "You won't be able to afford me."

"I'm scared pink."

The headwaiter caught his eye and beckoned

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them inside. They walked through a small dining room and down a sharply curving stone staircase to the wine cellar. They were seated in the narrow, low-ceilinged room under massive hewn beams from the Middle Ages, their backs to a wall of handmade, rose-hued bricks. They ordered a dinner of roast suckling pig with a light, delicate wine, and breaking the browned pastry shell covering the tender white meat, they laughed and talked gaily, leaning toward one another to be heard in the happy din about them. He was conscious of her body touching his, her shoulder, sometimes her thigh or her leg. A little corner of his mind told him that while it was great fun, things were moving very fast.

Who was this gal whom he had met only that afternoon? An American agent? That was out. The Americans had made it clear that he was on his own, and why should a love bomb like this become an agent? What was in it for her? Was she connected with the Cuban woman he was seeking? Was she a high-priced whore? Maybe she was just an independent American who had no date for the evening. Maybe she was a nymph.

"What are you thinking, Wilson?" she whispered in his ear.

"I was just thinking how easily I picked you up."

"I picked you up, remember? Are you sorry?"

"God, no. I guess I'm the suspicious type."

"You only enjoy it if you do the hunting?"

"Something like that."

"Now I do believe that you are Canadian."

"You mean that you could feel my sex appeal even across the Palace barroom?"

"My newly found pal, this is all fun, but don't get big ideas. There may be less to this than your overheated imagination tells you. A lot less."

"That would be a letdown."

"But you would feel better about it. I know how the suspicious little male mind works."

"There was an edge to that. I talk too damn much. I'll louse up the whole evening."

She leaned over and bit the lobe of his ear. "Now you're getting smart."

After coffee and a brandy, Wilson paid the check and guided her up the twisting staircase, through the still-crowded first-floor dining room, and into the coolness of the street. The overflow crowd had disappeared and other than a taxi driver waiting patiently by his taxi at the curb, the sidewalk was deserted. Wilson looked up the street toward the great gray bulk of the Arco de Cuchilleros and the soaring flights of stairs leading up to the Plaza Mayor on the crest of the hill. "Why don't we try that way?" he said, nodding toward the staircase. "I hear music."

She smiled and took his arm. "O.K."

Halfway up the stairs, opening off one of the landings, a stone doorway led to a small café. They moved to the door and the smiling owner, a short man with black pomaded hair and a small mustache, beckoned them in with a wave of his hand, and deftly clearing a way through the crowded room to a small table near a slightly elevated wooden stage, bowed them into their chairs. A group of about ten men and women dressed in gypsy costumes sat in a semicircle on straight chairs facing their audience. They were clapping their hands to a rhythm as a lithe girl dressed in the blue-and-red costume of Andalusia danced the flamenco. Her features were heavily accented by a vivid makeup, and she flashed back and forth across the small stage in a fierce and predatory manner, snapping her castanets as she yielded herself to the quickening tempo.

A waiter pushed forward from the depths of the

crowded, smoky room and took their order. During the wild applause at the end of the dance he reappeared with a glass pitcher of sangria and two glasses. Wilson lifted the pitcher. Its contents of wine, ice, and fruit juices glowed ruby-red through the frosty beads of moisture that covered its exterior. He filled their glasses.

They touched them together wordlessly before they drank and looked deeply into one another's eyes, but there was no answer there for the questions either was asking, and they turned again to watch the male flamenco dancer who had sprung forward on the little stage and was now in the early tempos of his complex and ritualistic dance. He stood, graceful, formal, and dignified in his black form-fitting suit and round, broad-brimmed hat, his starched shirt front a dazzling white in the spotlight that cut through the smoke to spill a puddle of illumination on him.

Time passed unnoticed and the crowd thinned, until they were alone except for the dance troupe, which sat laughing together at a corner table, drinking and eating a part of their fee now that the last performance of the night was over. A waiter stood against a far wall and watched this single remaining couple discreetly. Wilson and Jane Forbes drifted at last, arm in arm, out onto the stone staircase. She shivered in the morning air. Light appeared in the eastern sky as they climbed the remaining stairs to the Plaza Mayor. They walked across the cobblestones of the quiet and empty square. The floodlights which had illuminated the baroque facade all night winked out, leaving them in the chilly gloom of predawn with only a waiter, busy placing chairs atop the tables at an outdoor café in a far corner of the square, to keep them company. They walked down Calle Mayor to Puerta del Sol, where Wilson hailed a taxi. He took her home, a muscular arm

possessively around her shoulders as they rode. At her apartment building he paid the driver, who smilingly tipped his black cap and drove away.

She embraced him for a few moments before the glass door of the apartment entrance and then pushed him away with a light kiss. "Good night, Wilson, old pal." The door began to close before him.

"Hey! Is this all?"

"That's right."

"How about lunch tomorrow?"

"Be at the Ritz garden at one. I'll see if I can make it."

The door shut on her last words.

he had visited that morning. Through a glass brick wall daylight filtered in on the chipped black-and-white marble floor. The discordant sound of several phonographs playing simultaneously came faintly through the partition separating the lobby from a music store that occupied the remainder of the building's ground floor. Wilson awkwardly unfolded his map of Madrid to locate his fourth prospect. If Sail Exports were depending on Spanish trade, he thought sourly, it would soon be bankrupt.

A shadow fell across the map. A slight man with thinning black hair and a facial tic stood diffidently just inside the street entrance. He glanced furtively behind him and closed the door. "Mr. Wilson?" he whispered hoarsely, wiping his upper lip with a soiled handkerchief. "I'm Slade, U.S. Embassy."

Wilson stared at him belligerently. "What the hell is that to me?"

"The embassy, Fourth floor. I'm working with you." The hoarse voice became urgent.

"I don't know what you're talking about, Bud," Wilson growled, "but I don't like it. Now get lost."

The little man looked at him uncertainly for a moment and then turned and slipped out the door.

Wilson looked after him thoughtfully with narrowed eyes. He shoved the street map into a coat pocket and lit a cigarette. Then he stepped into the street and climbed into a taxi at a nearby cab stand. "Canadian Embassy," he said to the driver.

At the Canadian Embassy he asked the receptionist for the commercial Attaché and after a short wait was directed down a corridor to a smiling, studious-looking, middle-aged man standing by an open door. "My name is Evans, Mr. Wilson. Please come in." He motioned him to a leather chair by a desk covered with a disordered mass of papers.

Wilson slept fitfully for three hours, then ordered a breakfast of boiled eggs, fruit, and black coffee from room service and walked into the bathroom to shave. Over his second cup of coffee he leafed through a file of Spanish exporters and importers furnished to him by his Toronto contact. While he was waiting for the Cuban dame to contact him he might as well act out his cover identity.

Sitting on the edge of his unmade bed, a cigarette in one corner of his mouth, he circled on a map of central Madrid the locations of five small trading firms. And, stepping out of the hotel entrance into Carrera San Jeronimo, a scuffed brown leather briefcase under one arm, he walked slowly up the slight incline of the busy, curving street toward Puerta del Sol.

Shortly before noon, he stood faintly perspiring in the stale, overheated air of a small lobby. Behind him was a worn, narrow flight of stairs leading up to the third shabby, noisy office in walkup office buildings

Wilson settled in the chair and lit a cigarette. "I am in the export-import business, Mr. Evans, just in from Toronto. Sail Exports. Here is my card."

Evans took the card politely. "Good. Good. What is your line, Mr. Wilson?"

"Novelties, costume jewelry, items with a strong Spanish identity."

"I wish you luck." Evans smiled. "We like to see Canadian-Spanish trade increase. It builds bridges of understanding. How can we help?"

"I'm doing all right with the trade end. That isn't my problem. I am here to make a complaint about the Americans, and since I am a businessman, I guess I ought to make it to the Commercial Attaché."

"By all means." There was a shade of doubt in Evans' voice and an almost imperceptible cloud settled across his face.

"I've been in Madrid just thirty hours. I am minding my own business and paying my own way. About a half-hour ago an American named Slade, claiming he was from the U.S. Embassy, tried to talk with me. It sounded like something to do with espionage to me. I told him to go to hell, but I don't like it at all. I am here keeping my nose clean, trying to do business with the Spaniards. I don't want any trouble. You fellows talk to each other. Tell the bloody American to leave us Canadians alone."

Evans looked confused. "Espionage, Mr. Wilson? Oh, surely not. You must have misunderstood him."

"I don't think so."

Evans was silent for a moment. "I will look into it, Mr. Wilson. Yes, I surely will. Don't worry about it. It may have been a crank. He may have nothing to do with the United States Embassy. As a matter of fact, he may not even be an American." He brightened and be-

came more brisk. "Now, Mr. Wilson, if you will. Please sign our Commercial Register. We like to have a record of our business visitors."

Wilson signed the register, a little smile on his lips. Evans! The usual useless diplomatic tynel But he had played the part of innocent outrage. It was the correct reaction and he had made it a matter of record, but who was Slade? He was sure of one thing. He was not an American and he did not come from the U.S. Embassy.

The garden of the Ritz Hotel, warm and inviting in the sunshine of another brilliant April day, was filled with a colorful, vivacious luncheon crowd. Wilson sat at a table near the fountain and watched the broad marble staircase to the garden from the hotel for the approach of Jane Forbes. She was already fifteen minutes late. He ordered another martini and munched on some potato chips. Maybe he'd drop this one. She was too damn independent. Still, he had to hang around until the Cuban contacted him. He might make some time with Forbes while he waited. He looked about appraisingly. Pretty popular spot. If anyone wanted to drop in on him, this was a good place to do it. He had read somewhere that the most public meeting place was often the least noticed. What the hell . . . time was all he had.

Wilson didn't notice Jane Forbes, when she finally arrived at one-thirty, until she dropped down in a seat beside him. He was amusing himself exchanging long looks with a dark-eyed woman in electric blue who raised her eyes to his when she thought her husband wasn't looking. The guy looked like a husband, anyway . . . concentrating all of his passion on his omelette.

"I got here just in time," Jane Forbes said, smiling as she sat down.

"Hi, sweetie. Well, it helps to pass the time. Where in hell were you?"

"I am sorry that I'm late, but it's Friday and they sometimes keep me. But now I have the rest of the afternoon off."

"No kidding? Does that mean the weekend too?"

"Who knows?"

He ordered another martini for himself and one for her. "I like you, Janie, but I don't quite follow sometimes. I hope you're not one of these stop-go-stop gals."

"I may be just stop-stop-stop."

"In that case, I'm wasting my time."

"What did you do with your morning? Work or play?"

"Work. I am in the export-import business. I called on a bunch of deadbeats this morning." He picked up the menu. "It gave me a good appetite. Of course it's damn near midafternoon."

"Now, now. This is Madrid."

They ordered flet of sole and a salad.

"What do you export-import?"

"Novelties."

"Do you make money at it?"

"Hardly any," he said cheerfully. "Still, you meet interesting people."

"Have you ever seen Segovia?"

"What's that?"

"The capital of Old Castile where Queen Isabella was crowned in El Alcazar. I thought we might rent a car and drive there. We can have dinner at Meson de Candido, a wonderful little restaurant beside the aqueduct, which was built in Roman times."

"O.K., I'm game. I guess I can't do any good until Monday with these Spanish creeps in the trade."

They drove northwest out of Madrid by the massive brick buildings of the university and through Puerta de Hierro to take the broad, paved highway leading to the Sierra de Guadarrama and the pass to Segovia. Traffic thinned and the road narrowed as they began their climb into the mountains. The road curved and switched back and forth as they climbed into the still, cold air of the higher altitudes. There was snow in the shadows of the pass. Wilson pulled into a parking place at the summit and turned off the engine. They looked out to the north over a sea of pine forests. Neither spoke for a moment and in the silence they could hear the ticking of the clock on the dashboard.

"Shall we get out?" he asked.

"Yes, but it will be very cold."

They walked over to a stone promontory about which a low stone wall had been built to protect viewers from a drop of several hundred feet into a rocky moraine. A raw northwest breeze was blowing, causing the halyard on a nearby flag pole to swing wildly back and forth against the staff, striking chill metal against chill metal in an irregular and unpredictable sequence. Jane Forbes shivered as Wilson put his top coat around her shoulders.

"Doesn't everything look clear and sharp up here?" she said. "It makes you think that your mind is just as cold and clear."

Wilson held his open jacket as a shield against the wind, and after two unsuccessful attempts lit a cigarette and then lit her one from his.

"You did that like a sailor."

"I was once in a guerrilla outfit. You don't waste matches there either."

"I know. You were in Cuba."

Wilson stood tense and silent. "Yes, it was Cuba," he said after an interval in a flat, toneless voice.

"But I am not exactly a public figure. How did you know I was in Cuba?"

"My father took me on a business trip to Havana at Christmas time in 1958. My Mother had just died and it was his way of doing something for me and keeping me with him. We were in Havana for nearly ten days after Batista fell and Castro took power. All of you who fought with Castro in the hills had your pictures in the newspapers. You were heroes. The men of the hour. I remembered you. You were a captain."

"That's some memory."

"You also speak Spanish with a Cuban accent and Jack Wilson is an easy name to remember."

"Janie, you throw me. You really do."

"How do you feel about Fidel now? Isn't he kind of a stinker?"

Wilson shrugged. "I don't follow it. Politics don't interest me much. I did it for kicks. I was a pretty green kid. It was a hell of a lot of fun while it lasted. I liked the guys. We had a real old *compañero* feeling. When he won, it was over for me. I go back once in a while just to shoot the breeze about the old days. Otherwise, I don't think about it."

"Do you think he is a Communist?"

"No idea, and I can't say I give a damn. It doesn't make much difference what Cuba is . . . at least it don't to Jack Wilson."

She gave a brittle laugh as she pushed out her cigarette on the stone wall. "You don't like to talk about your past. Neither do I."

"It's over and done with. Why in hell talk about it? Let's get back to the car," he added curtly.

They found little to say to one another as they descended in spiraling curves through the great pine forest covering the foothills and into Segovia on its plain. After leaving the automobile with a smiling

*parquero*, they walked across the narrow cobbled street and entered the rugged oaken doorway set in the ancient façade of Meson de Candido. They were enveloped by a heavy, warm atmosphere suggestive of centuries of rich cooking and thousands of casks of good wine tapped and consumed by roaring fires.

The proprietor seated them on the second floor by a window of leaded panes through which the other roofs and saffron towers of Segovia, rising in tiers beyond the great stone bulk of the Roman aqueduct, were still visible in the lingering twilight. The aqueduct itself dominated the view—ancient and enduring, suggesting both the age of the city and its relative permanence. Despite its size it was incredibly graceful. As the last light faded, Jane Forbes looked at the aqueduct with an expression of solemn introspection tinged with sadness.

Wilson felt his suspicions and resentment ebbing. What the hell, maybe he had a teen-aged fan in the old days. "What we need is a drink," he said firmly. "We're freezing up on each other." He beckoned a waiter over. "Two martinis, *muy seco*."

Jane Forbes turned away from the window. "You seem very sure that I want a martini," she said in a disinterested voice.

"You get a martini just for starters," he growled. "Don't argue with me about the best way to get drunk."

She looked at him for a moment without expression, then her lips formed into a warm, seductive smile above eyes that remained coldly direct. "You tell 'em, Jackie. Make the dame toe the mark."

"That's better. First, we'll have about a pitcher of martinis to melt the ice. Then I think a good roast chicken, some vegetables, and a cold, dry white wine. No desert, but some fruit as an excuse to kill a bottle of brandy."