

THE ADVENTURES OF A POLICEMAN

CHAPTER 1

Jim Barkley had always wanted to be a policeman. So when he graduated from High School in Russelville, Virginia, he enrolled in Policeman's Academy, a two-year, special school where the students were taught everything about being a policeman, including all the laws that pertained to their career. Jim was a good student and was always near the top of the class.

When Jim finished his schooling he graduated with an outstanding record, so he was given the rank of lieutenant. He was also given a badge and a billfold that contained his license and his picture. And because he had such an outstanding record he was also given a document which authorized him to operate anywhere within the state and within the cities; his working hours were from seven o'clock in the morning to five o'clock in the evening.

He was also given an unmarked police car and a partner, Bert, to patrol with him. The car was equipped with an under-the-hood siren and a rotating blue/red light that could be set on the car top and held there by a magnetic base. The car also had a radio system that enabled him to communicate with other police cars and the Police Headquarters.

Once he got well established in his police work he bought a house, and then he went to a night school and learned how to cook and keep house. When he had everything going well, he said to himself, "If I could just buy a working wife I'd have it made. With both of us working we could make enough money to retire early and do a lot of traveling;" Jim chuckled at the thought.

Every morning Jim and the rest of the police officers attended a meeting in which they were assigned to jobs; some jobs lasted for weeks, and others lasted only a day.

Jim's assignments were special, so he got called into the Chief's office to be told what they were.

Jim was a bit nervous about having something "special" as an assignment, but he was determined to do his best— regardless.

So for his first assignment Jim walked into the Chief's office with a confidential look on his face. Then the Chief motioned for him to sit down in a chair that was close to his desk.

"Jim," the Chief said, "I have a very important job for you. I chose you because your school record was very good, and I think you have the ability to carry out this assignment successfully no matter how long it will take.

"The assignment is to find out the name of the one man who apparently has control over all of the narcotic activities in the city; then we'll put him out of business.

"Unfortunately, this will mean there will suddenly be a sizable number of people going into withdrawal symptoms. This in turn means the Police Hospital for

Rehabilitation will probably be quickly filled; but I guess we'll cross that bridge when we get to it."

To help Jim with this assignment he was given an unmarked car and clothing that would make him appear to be a wealthy individual. They also gave him a wallet of bills totaling a thousand dollars.

Jim decided to drive all over town to get some idea where it would be best for him to find a person that was most likely a narcotic user. He figured that if he could get some information from a regular narcotic user, he might come up with an idea on how to get the address of the boss who regularly supplied all the users with narcotics. And based on his tour of the town he felt the slum area would probably be the best place to find a man who could supply the information he needed.

CHAPTER 2

So he went well dressed to the slum part of town, walking slowly and letting his eyes wander around, looking for a person likely to be a drug user.

After walking several blocks, he spied an old man who looked like he was “high” from a recent fix; so he approached him with a need-a-fix look on his face.

“Hello sir,” Jim said. “I’m looking for someone who can help me find how I can get a steady supply of narcotics. I have only recently gotten into narcotics; but I guess I liked the drug highs and consequently I got hooked. But fortunately I have plenty of money, so I can afford my habit and still live like a rich man.”

The old man said, “Mister, you must be a pretty smart man. What can I do for you?”

Jim said, “Well, I can afford getting narcotics on a regular basis; I just don’t know how to go about doing it. So mister, if you can tell me how to do it, fifty dollars are yours.

Then the old man said, “Okay, mister, let me see the color of your fifty-dollar bill and I’ll tell you what I know about getting narcotics on a regular basis.”

Jim pulled out the bill and handed it to the addict. “Now tell me what you know.”

“Okay, I will tell you how I get my stuff regularly. I put the money for the stuff in my mailbox after one o’clock every Monday night. Then early the next morning I go to my mail box and get out the dope.”

Jim asked, “You mean you never see the man that sells the dope to you?”

“No sir, the man who sold me my first fix told me how the business works. He stopped me on the street and asked me if I would like a fix. I could tell he was probably in disguise just by looking at his beard and mustache.

“So I asked him about it, and he said he changes his disguise frequently so he’s less likely to get caught by the cops. And since I wanted a fix, I went ahead and ordered some narcotic and gave him my address.

“Then he told me if I would put a hundred-dollar bill in my mailbox tonight after midnight, I would find the fix in my mailbox tomorrow morning. And if I wanted to keep on getting my narcotics, I would just have to keep putting my hundred-dollar bill in the mail box after midnight every Monday night.

“He also told me if I wanted to get enough of the stuff so I could sell some to other dopers, all I needed to do was just put a request and some extra money in the mailbox along with my regular hundred-dollar bill. Then my delivery man would put in the mailbox the extra amount of narcotic my extra money would buy.

“And I understand that a lot of users have built up a very profitable business just by continually increasing the amount of money they put in their mail box. They get more narcotics than they need, and they sell the excess for a nice profit.”

Jim said, “Mister, I have a question. What is your name and address just in case I need a fix really fast?”

“Well, my name is John Walker and I live at 3815 25th street.” Jim thanked the man, gave him the fifty-dollar bill for the information, and walked back to his car.

The next Monday night Jim parked his car a block from 3815 25th street and watched for the narcotics deliverer. When he finally appeared about midnight Jim followed him and saw him put the narcotics into Mr. Walker’s mail box. Then he continued following him about two blocks behind.

He kept the address of any house where narcotics were deposited in the mail box. That would show just how large the area was where narcotics were used; and Jim was sure the Chief would like to have that information.

He kept following the delivery man until he finally finished delivering and drove up to a no-delivery house. He got out of his car and went inside; then in a few minutes he came out, climbed into his car, and drove off. Jim quickly wrote down the address of the house, and then he set out to follow the delivery man to his home so he could get his address also.

When he got the deliver man’s address written down, he decided it had been a very profitable night; so he drove back home and went to bed. And shortly thereafter he fell asleep while thinking about the information he would be able to give to the Chief tomorrow.

The next morning he called the Chief and suggested they meet in his office at seven a.m. so he could give him the information he had gathered. The Chief thought that was a good idea, as he was very anxious to get the information.

So they got together at the Chief’s office that morning, and Jim shared with him how he had collected the information he had. The Chief listened to what Jim had to say, and then he examined the information Jim had written down for him.

Then he said, “Jim, I believe we have enough information to enable us to capture the boss man and shut down the narcotics business in this city.”

Jim then asked, “Chief, when do you plan to shut down the narcotics ring?”

“Well Jim, I have not yet made up a plan because I had no idea you would complete your assignment so quickly. But now that you have, I would like for you to help me draw up a good plan.”

“Chief, I’ve already written up a plan.”

The Chief then said, “Jim, I wish all my men had the brains and enthusiasm you have; we would be able to clean up this city in no time!

“But now Jim, I would like to read your plan and hear your advice on how we should go about cleaning up the city of its narcotic problems.”

“Well, Chief, I believe if we arrest and convict the boss of the narcotics ring, we will see the ring fall apart. The reason I think that is because all the narcotics that come into this city come to just one boss, according to some of the men I have talked with.

“So without the boss as a source there will be no narcotics available to keep the ring in existence; and consequently there will be hundreds of people who will need hospital treatment to overcome their narcotic habit. And I have a plan from a

Korean veteran who went through a four-day treatment that cured him of the narcotics habit—forever.

“After we get the narcotics boss out of business, I will tell you how the cure treatment works. But right now let’s go and arrest the narcotics boss.

CHAPTER 3

At once the Chief picked five policemen to go with him and Jim—just in case they met some armed body-guards.

When they got to the boss's house, Jim and the Chief went up to the door. Then the Chief knocked and hollered, "Open the door, Police!" and stepped to the side. Instantly there was gunfire and five bullet holes appeared in the door. The Chief immediately fired five bullets into the center of the door, and then he kicked it open. There on the floor lay the boss and his gunman, both dead from the Chief's bullets.

Quickly the Chief called the five policemen to come inside. Then he told them to search the house for money and narcotics with their pistols in hand and cocked—just in case. He and Jim then went outside and checked the area around the house.

They found a small, heavy metal building about fifty yards from the house. The Chief pried the padlock apart; then he and Jim went inside. Surprisingly they found a stack of wooden boxes filled with narcotics.

Jim made a guess. "There must be at least a million dollars worth of narcotics in these boxes. And I suspect that's a pretty good indication of how big the narcotic circle is."

"Yes, Jim, that is a good guess. And we will get rid of all of these narcotics by burning them in the city disposal."

After he was sure the policemen knew what to do, the Chief and Jim went back to the Chief's office to discuss what would have to be done now that the supply of narcotics had been stopped.

"Well Jim," the Chief said, "Let me hear your plan for helping the Rehabilitation Hospitals handle the people that have a narcotics habit and will need to be treated. .

Jim replied, "This is not a plan I originated, it is the one I got from a veteran friend of mine that got shot to pieces in the Korean War.

"They flew him back to the United States, and put him in the best available hospital to keep him alive and help him recover his health. Unfortunately, they had to use large doses of narcotics to enable him to withstand the pain from his wounds.

"He got physically healed enough to be released from the hospital, but he had to be cured of his dependence on the narcotics before they would release him.

"They told him he had two choices on how to cure him: cold turkey, or several weeks of gradually reducing his narcotic dosage until he no longer had any need for it. They also told him that if he took the cold turkey treatment, he would never again have any desire for narcotics; so he chose the cold turkey treatment.

"They removed all of his clothing so he could not strangle himself. Then they put him in a small room that was lined with walls made of heavy, inflated bags so he could not hurt himself by pounding on them or banging his head on them. The only thing in the room was an unbreakable plastic bottle of drinking water; so there was no way he could commit suicide.

“He later told me that the emotional and physical pains of the cold turkey treatment were initially so bad that he thought about suicide, but he had no way to commit it. Then four days later he was without any pain and he had a strong hatred for narcotics.

“He also told me that when he has to go to a hospital for treatment that requires injections by a needle, he makes sure that the contents of the injections have absolutely no narcotics in them. And he also makes sure that none of his medications have narcotics in them.”

“Jim, that sounds like a tough treatment but a good one, because it would cure the addicts quicker and keep them from ever going back to narcotics. Also, the hospitals could have multiple small treatment houses they could construct as fast as they are needed.”

So the Chief sold Jim's idea to the “city dads” and they promised they would see to it that small treatment houses would be constructed as fast as they were needed.

CHAPTER 4

A few days later the Chief called Jim into his office, told him to pull up a chair, and then he said, “Jim since you have proven yourself to be very good at planning and executing special needs for the Department, I am going to move you up in rank to a major; and I’ll have you in my office as a specialist for the difficult cases. Also your salary will be increased by twenty percent. What do you think about that?”

Jim was so dumbfounded that it took him a few moments to answer the Chief. Then he finally said, “Chief, I’m flattered and honored by what you are offering me. But to be right honest about it, I would much rather keep things the way they are; I like to be where the action is.”

The Chief replied, “Jim, if that is your desire, I will honor it. But if you change your mind, just let me know.” Jim responded, “Thank you, Chief; I’ll keep that in mind.”

CHAPTER 5

Jim told his new partner, Bert, all about his discussion with the Chief. Bert responded, “Jim, I’m very glad you decided to stick with me as a patrolman; and you can bet your bottom dollar we will have plenty of action;” and he was right.

The next evening when they were on patrol they saw a flash of light inside a jewelry store, and they immediately concluded that a robbery was in process.

They parked the patrol car a short distance from the store, and Jim said, “There’s an alley next to the store, so I’ll go around behind the jewelry store because there is a back door there where the burglars probably went in and will probably come out.

“And when they start out the back door I will yell at them to drop the jewelry and put their hands up, or I will shoot. But they will probably start to turn around to run back in the house, so I will shoot them before they can get turned around.

“Do you understand all of that, Bert?”

Bert nodded his head, so they got out of the car and took their positions.

The robbers had just finished their stealing and had reached the back door; and when they opened it, Jim hollered, “Get your hands up!”

They immediately dropped the two bags of jewelry, and started to turn around; so Jim fired twice and the thieves fell to the floor.

Bert heard the shots and ran around to the back of the store and up to where Jim was standing, looking down at the two robbers who were lying motionless on the floor.

Then Jim pressed the jugular veins of the men and declared that they were both still alive. So he called Police Headquarters and told them they had two thieves who were wounded and unconscious; then he gave them the address of the jewelry store.

In about five minutes the ambulance arrived with a doctor aboard; the Chief was right behind the ambulance in his car.

The doctor put his stethoscope on the chests of the thieves and found they both had strong heartbeats and would likely live; so they put handcuffs on both of them.

The Chief took a good look at each thief and said, “These two thieves have been on our list of wanted murderers for about six months; but they won’t be able to do anymore robbing or killing because I’m sure they will be imprisoned for life.”

About that time the ambulance arrived, and the two ambulance men loaded the thieves in the ambulance, thanked the Chief for the call, and sped away toward the nearest hospital.

The Chief stayed with Jim and Bert for a while so they could tell him exactly what had happened. And after they had told him all about it, he said, “Thank you men, you did a good job.” Then he picked up the two bags of jewelry and departed.

Jim and Bert got into their squad car and resumed their patrolling.

CHAPTER 6

The next day Jim and Bert were driving down the Freeway at the speed limit of forty five miles per hour. Suddenly a car zipped by them, obviously driving considerable above the speed limit; so Jim “put the pedal to the metal after him.”

Bert turned on the siren and the rotating light on top of the car and said, “That son of a gun is really in a hurry; I wonder why.”

Jim didn't comment as he was trying to keep an eye on the speeder. It was obvious to him that the driver of the speeding car was not watching his speedometer, or he had some emergency place to reach as quickly as possible.

Jim floor-boarded the car but was unable to catch up with the speeder. Then all of a sudden the speeder jammed on his brakes and made a sharp right turn. He was still traveling at a high rate of speed and went down into the ditch and almost lost control of his car.

Jim was traveling too fast to safely make the turn when he passed the intersection; so he slammed on the brakes, slowed down, and made a U turn.

He sped back to the intersection and made a left-hand turn onto the dirt road; the speeder was nowhere in sight.

So once again Jim floor-boarded the squad car in an effort to catch up with the speeder. Unfortunately, there was a railroad track at the top of the hill they were approaching, but Jim was so intent on catching the speeder that he missed the road sign that said: CAUTION: REDUCE SPEED TO FIFTY MPH. So he went over the tracks at about ninety miles per hour, and the car became airborne and landed in the ditch.

Jim almost lost control of the car, but he finally got it slowed down and back on the dirt road. Unfortunately, the speeder had disappeared over the big hill about a mile ahead; and by the time Jim got to the top of the hill the speeder was out of sight.

Then Jim said, “Well, Bert, what do you think we should do?” Poor old Bert didn't answer immediately because he was still trying to get his nerves back under control.

But after a few minutes he was calmed down and said, “Jim, I'm not sure we will ever be able to find him, but I think we should probably reduce our speed somewhat and drive on down the road a few miles.

Then Jim said, “There may be another hill that will enable us to see a large area; and maybe we can use our binoculars and at least see the dust he's stirring up.”

Two more miles down the road there was another big hill. So Jim stopped on top of it, and Bert got out with the binoculars and scanned the countryside.

He spotted an opening in the trees just to the left of the road at the bottom of the hill, and the speeder's car was setting in the opening.

Bert said, “Jim, do you suppose he has a building back in the forest where we can't see it?”

Jim answered, “Yes, I’ll bet he does, and I think we should park our car where it can’t be seen from any direction. That way if the speeder decides to leave, he won’t see our car.”

Bert agreed, so Jim drove off the road and in among the brush and trees where the car would be out of sight.

Then they got out of the car and slowly walked through the forest until they could see the speeder’s car sitting in an opening in the trees and brush.

And about that time they saw him get into his car and drive it out of the opened area and into the brush and trees where it could not be seen.

In a few minutes a pickup truck came out of the trees, drove up onto the dirt road, and sped out of sight.

Jim said, “Well Bert, let’s go see what is hidden outside that open spot where the car was setting.” So they walked down into the open area and on into the forest. There they found a small, steel building that was padlocked.

Bert said, “Here is where my special keys come in handy.” In just a moment he had the padlock off the door; Jim opened it and they went inside.

There was a kerosene lamp sitting on a long table. Jim lighted it so they could see what was on the table, and in the rest of the room.

On the table was a large wooden box, tools, and an envelope addressed to James Smith at 1035 Pine Street, Russelville, Virginia. The return address on the envelope was John Williams, Box 246, Liberty, Georgia.

Jim picked up the envelope that someone had already opened, and pulled out the single sheet of paper; the paper had typed instructions on it.

Jim read the instructions aloud so Bert could hear what they were.

“James, follow these instructions to the letter and you will have no problem. On May 1 at exactly nine o’clock, take the merchandise to the public pier just south of the last house on Riverside Street. There you will find a privately owned House Boat. Put the merchandise on the deck where we can inspect it. And if it is what we ordered we will pay you two hundred dollars in unmarked cash for each rifle.”

Jim copied the instructions into his note book—just in case he might forget them.

Then Bert said, “Jim, do you think that wooden box there on the table might be filled with rifles as it is about the right length to hold them?”

Jim said, “Let’s pry off the top and see if you’ve guessed right. And I’ll bet you did, even though the box is marked ‘HANDLE WITH CARE, FRAGILE MERCHANDISE INSIDE.’”

They found a large screwdriver and a big hammer lying on the table. So Jim drove the tip of the screwdriver between the top of the box and on one side of it, and then he pushed down on the screwdriver. The top of the box came up about an inch, so Jim continued his procedure until the top was completely loose. Then they lifted it off and laid it on the table.

The box was filled with rifles, so Jim and Bert each picked up a rifle and examined it.

Then as Jim examined the rifle carefully, he said, "These are the kind of rifles the army uses, and they were probably stolen from an army warehouse; and I wonder what revolting country they will be sold to.

"Now there is a way we can ruin the rifles that will make the bandits buying them very angry with the seller because they won't be able to kill anybody with them; we can just cut off the firing pins."

Bert had been examining a rifle very closely, and he said, "Jim, that is a good idea, and I believe we can easily cut off the firing pins; and their absence will be hard to detect."

Jim picked up a chisel and the hammer, and Bert held the rifles steady on the table while Jim cut off the firing pens. Then they carefully put the thirty rifles back in the box and refastened the top. They also put the tools, and the box containing the guns, back in their original places so the bandits would never know that the gun box had been opened.

Once they were satisfied that everything was in the place where they had found it, they blew out the lamp and went outside. Then they closed and relocked the door and hurried out to their car. They climbed in and carefully backed out onto the road.

CHAPTER 7

They drove back to Russelville and reported their activities to the Chief. Then Jim said, "Tomorrow, May 1, we plan to be at a pier reasonably close to where the houseboat will be, and with our binoculars we will be able to clearly see what will be taking place on it, but they won't be able to see us."

The next day at eight-forty-five, Bert and Jim got behind a big crate sitting on the pier where they wouldn't be seen, but they would be able to clearly see the activities on the houseboat.

Promptly at nine o'clock, the houseboat with two foreigners on it appeared just as the man with the gun box pulled up in his pickup.

The two foreigners got off the houseboat, picked up the gun box from the pickup, and carried it to the deck of the houseboat. The deliverer of the guns climbed up on the deck and waited for the foreigners to give him his money after they had examined the guns.

The two foreigners set the gun box down on the large deck of the houseboat and began to pry off the top. In a few moments the top was off, and the two foreigners got out a rifle apiece and began to examine it.

What the foreigners didn't know was that the gun peddler had put a time bomb under the packing in the gun box. The bomb was automatically activated when the first rifle was picked up, and it was set to go off in ten minutes.

The peddler had put the bomb in the gun box because the enemies of the foreigners had given him a hundred thousand dollars to do so.

Suddenly Jim and Bert saw one of the foreigners shoot the peddler and throw him overboard.

Jim said, "They must have discovered the damage to the guns, and it obviously made them very angry. And I'll bet the peddler didn't get a dime."

Then the foreigners started their houseboat and headed out to sea. They got about one hundred yards from the pier when the bomb went off. It blew a large hole in the boat, killed the two foreigners, and immediately sank out of sight.

The sea waves made by the houseboat carried the peddler up to the shore, and Jim and Bert pulled the body onto dry land.

Bert took a good look at the man, and then said with amazement, "I know this man. His name is Howard Miller, and he was the President of the Russelville Bank."

So Jim called the Vice-President of the bank and told him about finding the bank President selling guns to some foreigners. The Vice President thanked him for the information and said he would contact an ambulance and the Police Department.

In just a few minutes the ambulance arrived and the driver and assistant picked up the body of the gun peddler and put it into the ambulance. Then they drove away with a silent siren.

Jim and Bert drove back to Police Headquarters and told the Chief about what they had seen that morning; then they went back on patrol

CHAPTER 8

The next day Jim and Bert went to the usual morning meeting and received their assignment, and it was truly an important one: It was to find the mayor's eighteen year old daughter who had just been kidnapped.

So Jim and Bert went back home and put on a shirt and a pair of trousers. Then they drove to the parents' home in their unmarked car.

They got out of the car, went up to the door, and rang the door bell. The mayor opened the door and asked them to come in.

They exchanged names, and then Jim told the mayor they were policemen, but they were casually dressed in case the kidnapper should see them. Then they apologized for intruding at such a time, but they said they needed to ask some questions.

The mayor introduced his wife and motioned for the policeman to sit down on the couch there in the living room. Then he assured them that he and his wife, Mattie, would be glad to answer any questions. So Jim began asking questions as politely as he could.

"Mr. Morgan, would you please tell us exactly how the kidnapping started?"

"Well sir, we were eating breakfast this morning, when suddenly the front door opened and a man came in with a gun in his hand. He had a silk stocking over his head and gloves on his hands.

"He was about six feet tall and probably weighed between one-hundred-eighty and two-hundred pounds.

"But I have no idea of how old he is, but his voice sounded like that of a young man. He said 'I am here to kidnap your daughter, so don't you make a move or I will shoot you and your wife.' Then he went over to the table, took Joanna's hand, and pulled her out of her chair.

"They started toward the door, but Joanna said, 'If you are going to kidnap me you can at least allow me to put on some different clothing.' Joanna went upstairs to make the change, and the kidnapper went with her. In about ten minutes they came back down the stairs with the kidnapper carrying a suitcase in one hand and the other hand was holding a gun in the back of Joanna.

"As they started out the door, the kidnapper stopped and said, 'And don't forget, if you call the cops I'll kill your daughter.' Then they walked out the door; and that's all I can recall about the behavior of the kidnapper.

"But I immediately called the police and told them what had happened because I knew the kidnapper had no way of knowing that I made the call.

"The police Chief said they would send two policemen in plain clothes as soon as they reported for work, and we could tell them all about the kidnapping. And we will really thank you officers for finding our daughter

"Mother, can you add anything to what I have said?"

Helen said, "Well, I did notice one thing; Joanna had changed from her dress and shoes to a pair of slacks and her boots."

Then Jim said, "Sir, I have just a few more questions. Did he tell you the amount of money he wanted for her release?"

"Yes, he did," the mayor stated. "He wants one-hundred-thousand dollars from us if we want to get her back."

"Are you going to pay them that amount?" Bert asked.

"I suppose I could raise that much money, but I have a hesitation about doing so. I have read that kidnapers will kill the victim as soon as they get their money. So I'm not going to pay them a dime until I know for sure that Joanna is released."

"Another couple of questions please. How had she been behaving the last few weeks?" Jim asked.

"To be honest about it," the mayor said, "she has become a regular little tiger in the last month, probably because I put her on a curfew because she was staying out too late with her boyfriend."

"Do you have the name of the boyfriend, and his address?" Jim asked.

The mayor replied, "Yes I do sir, if you will give me a few minutes I'll dig them out for you."

In a few minutes the mayor returned with a piece of paper and gave it to Jim. Then he said, "Here is his name, John Drake, and his street address, 4002 36 Street; and I sure hope he will be able to help you find her."

"So do we, Mr. Morgan," Jim said, "and thanks for the information. We will keep you posted on what we find out."

Then Jim and Bert drove over to the boyfriend's address, parked, went to the door, and rang the bell. Mr. Drake answered the door, and Jim and Bert introduced themselves, and asked if they could talk to his son.

The gentleman called out, "John, there are a couple of men here who would like to talk with you." In a few moments John appeared and Jim and Bert introduced themselves.

Then Jim said, "John, we're sure you don't know this, but Joanna has been kidnapped. So we would like to ask you some questions that might help us get her back."

John's mouth dropped open, and he said, "When did this happen, and have the police started looking for her?"

Jim answered, "Well, John, she was kidnapped this morning, and her parents were told that if they called in the police he would kill her. So whatever you do, don't say anything to anybody about our conversation."

"And John, I have no reason to believe she will be able to contact you, but if she does, please call me immediately. Here is my card with my cell phone number on it; and I carry my cell phone twenty-four hours a day."

Unfortunately they did not look into John's car where Joanna was hiding.

CHAPTER 9

Then the policemen went back to the mayor's house to give him a suggestion for getting Joanna back.

"Mr. Jamison, I think we can get Joanna back for you without you losing your money. I'm sure he will be contacting you to tell you how he wants the money delivered. Here is what I want you to tell him," and he handed the mayor a sheet of paper.

The kidnapper did call and the mayor read the instructions that had been typed for him to speak.

"Kidnapper, I want to tell you right up front, we promise you we will not have any police involved.

"And now I want to read you our plan for you to get your money, and return Joanna to us.

"In order to maximize the odds that this will work, and the police will not know about it, we are going to implement the plan one hour after midnight as the streets will likely be deserted then.

"Just be sure to arrive at the intersection of Maine and Ohio at one a.m. tomorrow morning. I will have the fifty-thousand dollars in a suitcase and be waiting with it in my car just a short distance down Maine Street from Ohio Street.

"So when you get to the intersection of Maine and Ohio, stop. Then I will flash my lights to tell you to turn the corner and slowly drive down Maine Street.

"I will then step out of the car with the suitcase, set it in the center of the road, and get back in my car.

"You are to stop when your car is even with my car so I will be able to see Joanna in the back seat of your car.

Then you open your door, pick up the suitcase, and open it. Once you see the money is there, close the suitcase, and put it in the front seat of your car. Then you open the back door and let Joanna out. Then you can drive off and we swear we will not follow you."

But Jim and Bart had an additional scheme that would get both Joanna and the mayor's money back after the kidnapper had obtained it and departed.

They got an old semi-trailer truck and parked it in the alley in the next block down Maine Street. They parked it with the trailer facing the street but out of sight.

They knew the kidnapper could not gain much speed in one block, so they were going to back the trailer out in front of the kidnapper's car to force him to hit it and be stopped. Then they could get both the kidnapper and the mayor's money at the point of their pistols.

The initial plan went smoothly and Mr. Morgan set the suitcase in the middle of the street. Then he got back in his car and watched the kidnapper pick up the suitcase and look into it; then he put the suitcase in his car and climbed in. But

instead of letting Joanna out of the car, the kidnapper floor-boarded it and sped away.

Unfortunately, just as Jim was getting ready to push the trailer out in front of the car, the truck sputtered and died; so the kidnapper sped down the street that had no obstacles. So now the mayor had lost not only his money, but his daughter as well.

Then Jim walked up the street from the truck to the mayor's car. He told him how sorry he was that they didn't get his daughter back; then he came up with a startling statement.

"I have come to believe that the escaped couple is John and Joanna. Remember that you told us that the man always kept a stocking over his head, and he even went up stairs with Joanna while she packed her clothes."

Her father said, "And I noticed that Joanna never gave any signs of fear or resistance when the kidnapper was pulling her around by her arm; in fact she almost looked glad that she was being kidnapped."

Jim thanked him for his help, and then said they had a plan they believed would enable them to capture them. They told the mayor the plan and then returned to their car.

As soon as he got into the car, Jim asked Bert a question. "Bert, would you agree that John and Joanna are probably together in this kidnapping?"

Bert replied, "I believe you are one hundred percent correct. So what do you think we should do now?"

"Well, Bert, if I were John, I would leave the country immediately because I would have both my sweetheart and one-hundred-thousand dollars. Whereas if I stayed in this country, the families would realize that both Joanna and I were missing and they would conclude that we must be together; and immediately they would have the police looking for us.

"So if Joanna and I were the couple, we would take the first plane headed for Great Britain so we would be out of the reach of the police."

Bert said, "I agree with your thinking, Jim, so I believe we should head for the airport right now;" and immediately they sped to the airport, parked, and went up to the ticket booth.

They asked the ticket agent when the next plane was leaving for Great Britain. He said the International Airline plane was due to leave for Great Britain in two hours.

Then Jim showed the agent his badge and identity card, and asked to see the list of people that were going to take that flight. The agent complied with Jim's request and handed him the list. Jim quickly searched the list and found that the names of John and Joanna were on it; then he returned the list to the ticket agent.

Jim turned to Bert and said, "Bert, it looks like all we need to do is sit down and watch for the couple to arrive here. And when they do, we will arrest them, take them to Police Headquarters, and put them in jail. Then I will call their parents and tell them we have the couple in custody.

“I’m sure they will come down immediately, and try to bail out their kids. I am also sure the mayor will want us to take possession of the suitcase with the money in it when we arrest the couple.”

Then the policemen found a couple of chairs at a spot where they could easily see anyone in the line to board the plane.

Time passed slowly, but at last the line to board the plane began forming. So Bert and Jim took new positions where they could grab John and Joanna out of the boarding line.

In a few minutes John and Joanna came in and promptly got into the boarding line; they had previously obtained the tickets.

Jim approached the couple from one side, and Bert approached them from the other side. When they got close enough to arrest the couple, John recognized Jim and immediately grabbed Joanna by the arm and started to run for the entrance with her.

Jim hollered, “John, don’t run or I will have to shoot you!” John disregarded the command and continued to run.

Jim fired one shot into the air, hoping John would stop running, but he didn’t. So Jim started running after them shouting, “Stop or I will have to shoot!” But John and Joanna kept running toward John’s car.

Then Jim stopped because he did not have the heart to shoot them; so they jumped into John’s car and sped away.

Bert had seen the couple running toward John’s car, so he quickly ran to the police car, started it, and drove to where Jim was standing.

Jim got in and Bert questioned him, “Why in the hell didn’t you shoot them?”

“I not sure why, but for some crazy reason I suddenly decided we could catch them some other way without having to shoot them. So let’s get after them!”

Bert opened his door and jumped out hollering, “Dammit, you let them get away, so now you have to catch them.” Jim didn’t argue with Bert; he just slid across the seat and grabbed the steering wheel.

As soon as Bert got into the car Jim started the chase and Bert immediately turned on the siren and the revolving light on the car’s roof.

The airport was at the end of a paved road three miles from town. So Jim floor-boarded the squad car and was very quickly up to one-hundred-miles per hour. He spotted John’s car ahead and was gaining on it. But then they entered the city limits and the traffic forced him to slow to fifty miles per hour. And John saw in his reviewer mirror that Jim was three blocks behind him but was gaining on him.

So John made a right turn onto another street, thinking he could lose Jim. He was wrong, because Jim turned on the same street and was catching up to him. But then a car backed out between John and Jim.

Jim slammed on the brakes, and almost slid into the car before he got stopped. The driver waved at Jim, then turned left on the street, waved again at Jim, and drove away. Jim swore a little under his breath and resumed the pursuit.

He saw John turning onto another street; so he turned on the same street. Then Jim saw John stop—the street had a dead end.

John and Joanna got out of the car and started running. But they got only a short distance from their car before Jim and Bert arrived and jumped out of their squad car.

Then Jim hollered, “Stop, John, or I will put a bullet in Joanna.” And to convince John he meant what he had said, he fired a shot and the bullet hit just a few inches from Joanna’s foot.

John stopped immediately, put up his hands, and said, “Don’t shoot, I surrender!”

Bert quickly walked up to John and put a set of handcuffs on him while Jim was putting handcuffs on Joanna.

The policemen took the two youngsters back to their police car, put them in the back seat, and locked the rear doors. Then Jim got the suitcase out of John’s car and put it in the trunk of the police car.

Then Joanna began crying, and said, “Jim sir, what are you going to do with us?”

Jim looked at her in the car’s rear view mirror and answered, “I am arresting you for being part of a kidnapping, and for cooperating with the kidnapper to extort one-hundred-thousand dollars from your father. And John, I am arresting you for kidnapping and extortion.

“I’m headed for the county jail right now. Once I get you behind bars I will call your parents and have them come down to the jail. They will probably want to bail you out, but they will have to wait until tomorrow for the judge to set the amount of the bail. And in the meantime you will have to spend the night behind bars; tomorrow the judge will set your bail

When they arrived at the police station, Bert and Jim took the two captives inside and put them into separate cells.

Then Jim went to the jailer’s office and phoned the parents of the two. He told them their kids were in jail, but they could come and see them if they desired to do so.

The parents thought that leaving the two youths in jail overnight would teach them a lasting lesson. So they did not get the kids out of jail.

The next morning the county judge set the bail on each of the youths at twenty-thousand dollars; and he also set tomorrow as the trial date.

The next day Jim took the suitcase with the money in it out of the police car, and he and Bert took it over to the mayor’s home.

The mayor thanked them for bringing him the suitcase of money, and for arresting the youths and taking them unharmed to the jail house.

The next day the two youngsters were taken before a judge, and he decided to have them imprisoned for six months; then he would put them on probation for a year.

They served their time, got out of jail, got married and became good citizens. The parents were now proud of them and were already planning for a grandchild for them to spoil.

CHAPTER 10

Jim had been so busy that he had not given much thought about getting a wife. But now that things had slowed down he decided this would be a good time to start looking for the right girl; so he went down to the “I Need A Mate” office.

The lovely young lady who was sitting at the Welcome Desk said, “My name is Jill, sir, may I help you?”

Jim was really feeling his oats, so he answered with a smile, “Yes ma’am, my name is Jim, and you can help me by letting me take you out for dinner this evening; how about it?”

The lady was very experienced about “wise guys,” so she said with a smile, “Jim, I will be glad to go to dinner with you if you will let me bring along my husband and our four kids.”

Jim was caught off balance for a moment, and then with an embarrassing look, he said, “I’m sorry ma’am, I was only joking. I am here to see about getting a girlfriend that might make a good wife.”

The lady said, “Well, Jim, you have come to the right place. Could you please have a seat and then describe how you would like for your wife to look, and what kind of disposition you would like her to have?”

“Well, Jill, I would like for her to be as pretty as you are, and to have a sweet disposition like I am sure you have.”

Jill responded, “Jim, I will take what you just said as a real compliment. But I would like to show you some talky motion pictures of some ladies who are looking for a husband. Would that be all right with you?”

Jim nodded his head and said, “Yes, Jill, that would be great.”

Then Jill said, “Jim, I’m going to show you pictures of ten ladies that we have questioned and carefully examined; they are all outstanding and we have them numbered.

“So if you see one you would like to date, just write her number down.” Then she handed him a small pad and pen.

She showed Jim the ten pictures and gave him plenty of time to examine them.

After a few minutes Jim handed the pictures back to her.

She took back the pictures and asked, “Jim, “Did you write down any numbers, Jim?”

Jim said, “Yes ma’am, I wrote down ten numbers.”

Jill looked a little surprised, and said, “Jim, are you kidding me?”

He answered with a straight face, “No, Jill, all of the ladies were pretty, and they all sounded like nice women.

“You know if I dated each of them a few times, I could probably do a better job of picking one that I could get serious with. And in the process I would have a date for a lot of Saturday nights!”

“Jim, I have had a lot of men find wives from dating my girls, but I have never had a man go about it like you are going to. I think your plan is very good, but you know it is going to be rather costly, fifty dollars for each girl you take out.”

Jim said, “If I can get a wife out of the ten girls, then my money will have been well spent.”

“I agree with you on that, Jim. So you give me the five-hundred dollars and I will give you the pictures, names, addresses, and phone numbers of all ten ladies.”

Jim gave her the five-hundred dollars, and she handed him the pictures and neatly typed information for the ladies. Then he thanked her and left, feeling as high as a kite!

He studied the information about each lady and then listed on a pad in alphabetical order the first names of the ladies. The first name on the list was Alice. So he called her and got right to the point.

“Alice, my name is Jim Barkley and I am a customer of ‘I Need A Mate,’ and your name is first on my alphabetical list of ladies. So could I meet you for dinner at Mary’s Café at six o’clock this evening?”

Alice answered with a nice voice, “Yes, Jim, I would be delighted to have dinner with you at Mary's Café, and I will be waiting for you there at six o’clock.

Jim said, “Thank you, Alice.” Then he hung up the receiver and hurried to his bedroom to get dressed for his date.

CHAPTER 11

He arrived at the café a few minutes early so he could secure a table in the most remote place in the café. He wanted to be able to visit with Alice without having to talk loud to make his conversation understandable.

He was successful and got a table in a little nook with a curtain that could be drawn to complete the privacy.

He had hardly gotten seated when Alice entered. He immediately got up and walked to greet her as she had no idea what Jim Barkley looked like.

He extended his hand and stated his name. Then Alice smiled, took his hand, and gave him her name: Alice Moreland.

Jim escorted her to the dining table he had secured, and got a chair for her so she would be seated near him.

Then he said, “Thank you, Alice, for accepting my invitation. I’ll be honest with you right off the bat. I have not dated a lady before so you will have to forgive me if I make some blunders.”

Alice laughed and said, “Jim, you don’t need to be concerned about your behavior because I was told by Jill that you were a very polite person, and that I would probably enjoy having dinner with you.”

Then Jim said, “Well, I must remember to thank Jill for her telling you such a nice thing about me. And since you have talked with Jill, you know that I’m serious about getting a wife. So would you please tell me all you want me to know about yourself? Then I will tell you about myself. Are you okay with that?”

Alice smiled again and said, “Yes, Jim, I am satisfied with that. So here I go on the ‘Life and Times of Alice Moreland.’ ”

“To begin with, I am an only child, and I was born, raised, and educated in Russelville. I graduated from Russelville State University last year with a Bachelor of Arts degree with two majors: Business Principles and Office Management. And after I finished college, I got a job as private secretary of the owner of Home Depot.

“I dated several different young men while I was in college, but I never felt any leading towards marriage. But since then I have developed a feeling that I don’t want to be an old maid;” and she laughed just a little.

“Incidentally, my father, Walter, is the manager of Bern’s Auto store, and my mother, Virginia, is a teacher in the Russelville High School.

My parents wanted a son very strongly, but mother had an illness that left her sterile. And now back to my story.

“I love to go bowling, and to watch football on the TV. I do help Mom with housekeeping and cooking. I am not the best cook in the world, but my parents think I’m a very good one; of course that compliment may have been given as an incentive for me to do more cooking.” Then she smiled and said, “I’m only kidding about that.

“My parents are both Christians and so am I, and we attend the Church of the Living God. I am not a radical about religion, but I do believe what the Bible says about salvation and living for the Lord.

“Now Jim, do you want to ask me any questions? If you have none, I would like to hear about your life.”

Jim responded, “Alice, I appreciate your being so upfront and so complete in your life’s story, but I do have one question. Would you marry a policeman?”

Alice thought a moment and then said, “Jim, I know the life of a policeman is considered a dangerous one, but where would we be if we didn’t have them?”

“But I suspect the danger of driving a car, particularly in heavy, high speed traffic, is as dangerous as being a policeman. So, yes, I would marry a policeman if he says he is a Christian and really lives like one.”

“Thank you, Alice; I try to live like a genuine Christian. And now I’ll give you a brief story of my life.

“I also was born, raised, and educated in Russelville. But I guess I am about four years older than you, and that’s the reason our paths never crossed.

“I was raised in a Christian home, and when I was twelve years old I gave my life to the Lord; and that same year both my parents were killed in a car wreck.

“Fortunately, my Aunt Lora took me in, raised me in her Christian home, and then saw that I got educated in a good twelve-year school.

“Then when I finished High School I immediately went to Policeman’s Academy for two years, and graduated with the rank of Lieutenant.

“But speaking of parents, I would like to meet yours, and I’d like for them to meet me. As I’m sure you know that I will become part of your family, and I would like for them to look upon me as being a worthy son-in-law.”

“Jim, I know they will love you, and I will take you to meet them next Saturday. However, for now I would like to hear the rest of your life’s story.”

“Okay, now for my life’s special activity. When I was not on duty I attended a Home Economics class in the evening, so I am a fair housekeeper and cook; but I do eat out a lot,” Jim said with a smile.

“I’m hoping my wife will have a job outside of our home. Then she won’t be bored stiff, and start looking for some outside activity that will not be conducive to a happily-married life.

“But when we decide to start our family, I want my wife to stay at home and see to it the children get the love and care they need in order to grow up as good Christians. I want to see them get well educated and not afraid of the rough spots in life. And I want my wife to be a loving partner for me until we are parted by death.

“Now Alice, how do you feel about my hopes and expectations for a wife?”

“Jim, your expectations for a wife are very honorable, but would be rather challenging to live up to. However, I would be willing to try my best to live up to your expectations; but I would expect my husband to do his part in raising the

children. It is well known that the father really has the most important part in raising the children.

“He must always find the time to play with them while they are young, and his behavior must be such that the children look up to him with love and respect.

“Often it is a real challenge to the father to do these things, especially when the child becomes a teenager. When they reach that age, they must give up their childishness and begin to accept the behavior and attitudes of being an adult.

“And the life and duties of the parents really become stressful when their youngsters begin dating. There is always the concern about their level of determination to resist having sex, smoking, and drinking alcohol.

“This is the time that the parents, and the child’s Christian upbringing, are put to the test; and there is probably no youngster that is completely immune to the temptation of these three things.”

“Alice, how come you know so much about these matters?”

“Jim, I wanted to be as prepared as possible for marriage and raising a family. So while in college I took two semesters in the course called ‘Marriage and Child Rearing.’”

“I really admire you, Alice, for preparing yourself for marriage and bringing up children.”

Then Jim continued, “Now Alice, let’s finish our dinner and go for a ride to the outside of the city where we can see the stars, and breathe the cool, clean air.”

Twenty minutes later they were in the large Russelville Park where they could see the stars and breathe the cool, fresh air.

Jim was at a loss as to what he should do now. Alice sensed his problem and decided to help him out.

“Jim, I get the impression you are very earnest in seeking a wife, just like I’m very earnest in seeking a husband. So may I ask for your honest opinion as to how you would rate me on a scale of one to ten, with ten being ‘very good’?”

“Alice, interestingly enough, I have just such a scale on the notepad on which I was going to rate the ten ladies from Jill’s office.

“But I can’t imagine my finding another lady among the nine left on my list that would be as loveable as you. If you are willing, I would like to date you until you and I are both convinced that we would make a marriage work—‘until death doeth part.’”

Jim slid across the seat, took Alice in his arms, and kissed her as lovingly as he knew how. Then the loving couple held each other very tightly for a few moments with no conversation.

Then Jim spoke up very quietly and lovingly. “Alice, I fell in love with you before we finished our first dinner, but I wasn’t sure if, or how, I should tell you. But now I want to say it: Alice, I love you dearly, and I want to marry you as soon as you are ready to be my wife.”

Alice hesitated a few moments, then said, “Jim, I love you too, very much, but I believe we should do as you suggested: date until we are really assured we would make a marriage that would last, as you say, ‘till death doeth part.’”

Jim replied, “I’m willing to do that starting tomorrow evening at Mary’s Café; and I don’t believe it will take many evening meetings until we are sure that we would have an everlasting marriage.”

Jim was correct. So ten days later they set the wedding date, with the pastor’s acceptance, for Saturday two weeks away. In the meantime they went shopping and bought three rings, a lovely bride’s gown, and a box of invitations. And that evening they signed and addressed twenty invitations that had the date, place, and time in them. They did all of this in Jim’s home which was a very neat three-bedroom house; Alice loved it.

Also during that two-week period Jim got well acquainted with Alice’s parents, and vice versa; he really became a “member” of her family. In fact the parents considered Jim as their son because they had always wanted a boy in the family; and they really believed that Jim would be a good son-in-law as well as being a very good husband.

The marrying ceremony was very lovely and all twenty of persons invited attended; and afterward a catered meal was provided for all of them

And as the invited people finished their meal they thanked Jim and Alice, congratulated them, and departed; and soon Jim and Alice were the only ones remaining.

When that came to pass, Jim said, “My darling wife, I believe it is time for us to begin our honeymoon; are you ready to go?”

Alice replied, “Yes, I am; and our suitcases are already in your car, so I say let’s go!”

In a few minutes they were on the road to the Honeymoon Resort in the mountains about two hundred miles west of Russelville.

Jim had made reservations there for them, and they arrived a little too early for dinner. So they checked in at the Honeymoon Resort, and then went to their cottage and unpacked.

Jim smiled and sweetly said, “This bed looks comfortable, and I sure would like to try it out—now.” Alice was in favor of doing so; so they tried it out.

Their week of honeymooning consisted of exploring the area around the Resort, taking pictures, eating, sleeping, and making love. When their week ended, they packed their suitcases and started for home.

When they arrived at Jim’s house he carried Alice over the threshold; then they sat down on the couch with her still in his arms.

Jim whispered in Alice’s ear and said. “Do you suppose that our bed is as soft as the one in the cabin at the Resort?” Then Alice whispered in Jim’s ear, “Shall we find out?”

CHAPTER 12

On Monday the love birds went back to their respective jobs and were greeted by their coworkers with hugs and congratulations. Then Jim went to the usual Monday meeting to find out what his assignment was going to be; and he was immediately confronted by the Director.

“Jim, I have a rather rare assignment for you. The sixteen-year-old daughter of Sergeant Jack has run away. So let me call Jack and tell him to go to the conference room immediately. Then he can tell you the whole story.”

Jim went into the conference room to wait on Jack, and he arrived in just a few minutes. He was surprised to see his good friend, Jim. So he shook his hand and said, “Jim, I don’t believe you should take this job. After all you have just gotten married, and what will Alice think about your leaving town for an unknown length of time? I’ll just try to get someone else to take the job.”

“No Jack, I will take the job. We have been close friends for many years, and I just believe I am the man for the job; and I feel sure Alice will understand. So fill me in on the circumstances of Susan’s running away.”

“Well, Jim, we have been having a problem with Susan for some time. Now that she is sixteen, she thinks she is a grown up and should have the right to do as she pleases.

“She has an eighteen-year-old friend in Floris that she worships; her name is Joanna. And Susan thinks that she should be able to do everything that Joanna does.

“Well, apparently Joanna has the complete liberty to smoke, drink, and carouse around at night with a bunch of kids that have complete liberty. They seem to believe in actual sex acts, and some of the girls are already pregnant. Jim, I just can’t tolerate such behavior in my daughter.

“Joanna has just recently moved to a small town sixty miles north of here called Floris. I figured Susan had gone up there to see her, so I drove up there. But Susan was not there; at least Joanna denied that she had seen her. So the Lord only knows where she is.”

Then Jim said, “There is the possibility that Joanna knows where she is, but she was not about to tell you the location. But I think I’ll go up to see Joanna, and I believe as a Lieutenant Policeman I can put the fear of God in her. Then I suspect she will tell me where Susan is if she knows, and I’ll bet she does.

“Jack, do you know the last name of Joanna, and her address?”

Jack said, “Yes Jim, I got the information from an envelope in which Joanna sent her all the information we need.” He went to his bedroom and came back with the envelope which contained the needed information, and handed it to Jim. He took it and wrote in his shirt-pocket notebook the needed information: Joanna Monroe, 208 Kentucky Avenue, Floris, TX, 79501.

Then Jack said, “Jim I hate to tell you this, but I feel I should. Susan stole my little pistol and took it with her. I can’t imagine her using the gun; but being in the

state of mind that she's in, and probably using a narcotic, she just might use it. So be careful, Jim, and take the gun from her just as soon as you get the chance."

That evening when Jim got home, Alice already had dinner ready to serve. So he decided he would not say anything to her about the assignment until they had finished the meal.

Then after dinner he told Alice about it, but he omitted the part about the gun because he didn't want her to worry about the possibility that he might get shot by a doped up sixteen-year-old girl.

Alice was silent for a few minutes, and then she said, "Jim, before I married you I told you that I would marry you, even if you were a policeman. Now I am married to you, so I have to accept your assignments whether or not I like them; that is my duty as the wife of a policeman. Yes, my darling, you go on and do your duty. And I will pray for you and put you in the hands of the Lord, just as I always have."

Jim took her in his arms, hugged and kissed her, and said, "My sweetheart, I love you so much for loving me and trusting in the Lord to take care of me; now I can go on my assignment without any fear or reservations."

So the next morning Jim drove up to Floris, went directly to Joanna's home, and rang the door bell.

When Joanna answered the door, Jim asked, "Is your name Joanna?"

Joanna answered; "Yes." Then he asked if she was alone, and again her answer was "Yes." Jim then told her his name, showed her his badge, and asked if he could come in and talk with her for a few minutes.

She put on a brave, smiling face and invited him into her home, not having any idea what he wanted to talk about.

Jim immediately said, "Joanna, I am trying to find Susan and I was wondering if you might know where she is. If you know where she is, and you don't tell me, you're committing a crime and I will have to arrest you." The smile disappeared from Joanna's face, and it turned as white as a sheet.

She thought for a moment and then said, "Mr. Barkley, Susan has been staying with me, but right now she is visiting with another one of her friends; but she should be back here real soon."

Then Jim asked, "Johanna, do you know where Susan's gun is? If you do you need to tell me, because if you don't I'll have to arrest you."

Joanna immediately rushed into Susan's bedroom, got the gun out of the dresser, and took it to Jim. He thanked her and put the gun in his coat pocket.

About ten minutes later Susan returned to Joanna's home and entered the door unannounced. When she recognized Jim she started to run back out the door, but Jim stopped her, and said, "Susan, you are in a heap of trouble and you may wind up in jail. But if you will cooperate with me and do what I say, you may just be put on probation and not have to spend any time behind bars. However, since you had an unregistered gun with you, you may have to spend some time in jail."

Susan's face turned pale and she began to cry. "I don't want to spend any time in jail. Please Jim, isn't there something you can do to keep me out?"

Jim said, "I'll do my best, Susan, but your sentence will be up to the judge. But I will tell him the Police Department has a policy for a young girl like you, and he may just put you on probation if you will agree to quit smoking pot and take the Course.

"I know you would like to know what the Course is about, so I'll tell you. You and your parents will have to visit our police psychiatrist once a week to learn how to love each other, and how to love yourselves in the way the Lord loves you. And you, Susan, will also have to quit using pot.

"The end result of doing all these things will be a well balanced family full of love for each other. It may take a few months to accomplish the needed goal, but I can assure you that you will be very glad that you went through all the necessary steps to achieve that goal."

The plan worked very well, and within a year a loving and peaceful family came into a lasting existence.

CHAPTER 13

Jim went into the Chief's office Wednesday morning to get his assignment. The Chief said, "Jim, your assignment is to track down and arrest the teenager who is wanted for committing a murder here in Russellville. The last time that Bobby, the suspect, was seen was yesterday as he walked through Oakland going west toward the mountains. And we suspect he was headed for the mountains to hide out from the law.

"The local policeman in Oakland is Andy Brown, a friend of mine, but he can't be of any help to you physically because he messed up an ankle and has to get around on crutches. However, he is the one who saw the suspect as he walked through Oakland, but he was not aware that the young man was escaping the law. But he may have some information that will be of benefit to you.

"Jim, be very careful, the suspected killer may have a gun; and if he does, he probably won't be afraid to use it."

Jim thanked the Chief for the information. Then he drove home and loaded the car's trunk with his sleeping bag, food and water, and his guns.

He told Alice not to worry as his assignment was just to find a youth suspected of committing a crime.

He hugged and kissed her and said, "Don't worry, Sweetie, I should be home in two or three days."

Alice hugged her husband, gave him a kiss, and said, "I won't worry darling; I'll just pray as usual, and go on to my job."

Then Jim climbed into his car, threw a kiss to Alice, and headed for Hapeville, New Mexico; three hours later he arrived there.

He found the sheriff's office easily as the town was rather small. He parked in front of the sheriff's office and went in.

He held out his hand and said, "My name is Jim Barkley and my Chief told me your name is Andy Brown; and I'm glad to meet you, Andy."

"Jim, I certainly am glad to meet you. And how are things going with you?"

"Well, I'm looking for a young suspected killer named Bobby. He is hitchhiking and I figure he is headed for the mountains near Hapeville and will make a hideout there.

"I'm sorry you are on crutches Andy, so I won't expect any physical help from you. But can you tell me anything that might help me catch the killer?"

"Well Jim, you have probable already guessed that the killer is hiding somewhere in the mountains near here; and that is going to make it harder for you to run him down."

"Yes, I know it's going to be a hard to find him," Jim said, "but I'm determined to do it.

"It was good to meet you Andy, and I hope to be back here with the killer no later than two or three days from now." Then Jim said goodbye, climbed into his car, and sped off toward the mountains.

He arrived there before sunset, parked, and got a garden hoe out of the car. Then he began looking for the place where the killer had entered the brush near the foot of the mountain.

He soon found a place where the brush had been pushed aside, and there were footsteps going into it. He marked the place by digging with the hoe a shallow ditch about five feet long; then he walked back to the car.

It was already getting dark so he got his sleeping bag out of the trunk and unrolled it near the car. Then he got his food, water, and pistol and rifle out of the trunk and placed them beside his sleeping bag.

He ate a piece of jerky and drank a cup of water. Then he unrolled his sleeping bag and crawled into it; a few minutes later he was sound asleep.

Jim awoke the next morning just as it was becoming light. He opened a can of beans, and got out a piece of jerky.

He wanted to make some coffee but dared not to for fear the smoke from the fire would give away his presence. So he just ate his beans and jerky and drank a little water.

When he finished eating, he strapped on his gun belt and put his pistol in it. Then he put the sleeping bag and the food and water back into the trunk.

He looked around for any smoke that the fugitive's fire might be making, but saw none. So he picked up his rifle and walked back to the place where he had made the little trench.

He walked through the opening in the brush and began looking for some more footprints. He soon found some and began to follow them, walking at a slow and very cautious rate to keep from making any noise.

He kept scanning the sky, hoping to see smoke that would be made by the killer's fire. Fortunately, he had not walked very far until he spotted a little column of smoke. Believing it was being made by the killer's fire, he made his way very slowly toward it, trying not to step on anything that might make a noise.

He was successful in his effort, and was soon at the edge of a little clearing where the smoking fire was.

He squatted down and slowly scanned the interior of the clearing. When he didn't see anyone, he was afraid the killer may have spotted him; unfortunately, he was right.

"Get your hands up, mister, and drop that rifle and pistol or I'm going to put a chunk of lead right through your head!"

Jim turned around and saw the young suspect a few feet away with a pistol in his hand, pointed straight at him; Jim dropped his guns and put up his hands.

CHAPTER 14

Then the suspect said, “I’m glad to see you because I want to talk to someone I know will hear what I have to say. And you look smart enough to listen to my speech and not do anything dumb, like trying to escape. So just put your hands down, and put your rump on the ground.

“I’ve only killed one man, and that was to keep from getting killed; and I don’t want to have to kill another man—you.

“So just make yourself comfortable because I’ve got a lot to say; and I want you to hear every word of it.

“And if you want to stay alive, just listen carefully to my honest-to-God story so I won’t have to shoot you; and now I’ll begin at the beginning.

“I was born in Russellville, named Bobby, and grew up there. My parents were lousy drunks, and I wasn’t allowed to say anything unless I was given permission to talk.

“I hated my Ma and Pa. They were both sloppy booze drinkers and neither one was able to keep a job very long. They would work for a few days cold sober, and then they would have to have a shot of booze to keep going. And one shot was never enough; they would wind up drunk on the job and get fired.

“I was determined I wasn’t going to be like them; but I lost my chance to be a good citizen last year when I became eighteen years old. Dad had left a bottle of his booze behind one day when he went to work.

“I had always wondered what there was about whisky that made him and Ma keep drinking the stuff, so I took a swig of it to find out. I was surprised that it didn’t taste good, and it also kind of burned my mouth.

“But there was something in it that made me want to take another swig; and before I realized it, I was beginning to feel good! And dumb me, I just kept sipping until I was so drunk I passed out.

“My folks came home and found me lying on the couch, passed out cold. So they worked on me until I was awake enough to know what was going on. Then Pa beat on me with a rubber hose; dragged me to the door, and threw me out. He told me never to come back, because if I did, he would beat me to death.

“I went to the house of my only friend, and his mother cleaned me up and put some salve on my back. She didn’t ask me what had happened because she knew it was my dad who had beaten me so bad.

“I stayed with them a few days until my back got pretty well healed. Then I went into town to see if I could get a job and a place to stay.

“I got a job sacking groceries at the United Food Store, and I was making enough money to move into a little apartment in the slum part of town.

“I didn’t like it because there was some kind of ruckus going on all the time, and I was scared. So I went to the pawn shop and bought a small, 22 caliber pistol and some bullets; and I kept the gun loaded and underneath my pillow.

“One night I woke up and someone was knocking on my door. So I got out my pistol and held it behind my back while I unlocked and opened the door. Then two drunken bums barged in quickly and demanded me to give them all the money I had; and one of them had a gun in his hand

“Well, I had over five-hundred dollars saved up but I told them I didn’t have any money. Then the one with the gun in his hand pointed it at me and said he would shoot me if I didn’t come up with all my money. I said again that I didn’t have any. So he started to shoot me, but he was so drunk that was having a hard time pointing the gun at me. But I dodged him and pulled my gun out from behind my back and shot him.

“He dropped to the floor and the other bum immediately ran out the door, really scared.

“I thought I had killed the man lying on the floor, so I quickly packed my suitcase with some clothes, canned food, and my gun. Then I grabbed the suitcase, and rushed out the door and onto the sidewalk.

“I hurried down the sidewalk to the highway that ran to the mountains out to the west about a hundred miles. I stood by it and started thumbing for a ride. Fortunately I soon got a ride with Frank Mitchell, a salesman headed for Hapeville which was at the foot of the mountains.

“When we got there I got out of the car with my suitcase and thanked him for the ride. Then I walked the short distance to the bushes that were at the foot of the mountain.

“I paused for a few minutes and tried to decide what to do next. Well, it didn’t take long to make a decision to go up on the mountain and make a place to stay; and that is where you found me.

Jim said, “Bobby, you can’t stay up here. When the winter comes you will freeze to death. Now if you will go back home with me I will try to get you off the hook, and I think I can. I believe I can convince the judge that you were defending yourself when you shot the bum; but you just panicked and fled for the mountains.”

Bobby thought for a few minutes about what Jim said, and then he spoke up. “Mister, I believe what you said is probably true. So let’s go down, get in your car, and go back home.” So they did exactly that.

Jim and Bobby went to the judge and told him the story about Bobby’s problem. The judge knew Jim quite well. So he told Bobby that he believed what Jim had said was true. Then he looked strait at Bobby and told him that he was free from any law breaking and could back to his job at United Food Store. So Jim took Bobby to the store and explained to the owner what had happened to Bobby, and he put him back to work.

Then Jim took Bobby to his apartment and explained Bobby’s story to the owner. The owner believed the story and told Bobby to go back to work at the store; then Jim went home.

Jim had been at home only a little while when his beloved wife drove into the garage. She rushed into the house and into her husband's arms.

"Oh my darling, it is so good to see you home, and still unharmed! I am so glad that the young man didn't shoot you"

Jim continued his work until he was eligible to retire. And since his income from the retirement would be very adequate, he retired. And just a few weeks later Alice also retired with a good pension.

Then he and Alice stayed at home and only travelled in the city to the various stores for their needs.

The love between Jim and Alice grew as they spent almost all of their time together. Then when they became eighty years old, an attack of flu took the life of both of them, and the Lord called them home.