

Déjà Vu
(Prologue)

The eerie feeling that you've been here and done this before is called déjà vu. It's French for “already seen,” and it can be a very strange and even unsettling experience. Logically, you know you haven't experienced this moment before, but your brain is telling you otherwise.

Scientists believe this is caused by a split thought taking an alternate path in your neural network that lags the same thought on a different path.

I have experienced that before, but not to the extent that I do now. Somehow, I can see what might have occurred up to 5 minutes before and chose to take a different course of action. This ability has saved me countless times and also caused me some uncomfortable moments.

“(I got the idea to write this story based on the movie “Next” starring Nicolas Cage. He was able to see into the future, but only for a couple minutes.

What would you do if you could see your next moves and change them for the better? I think it presents some interesting concepts.)”

This phenomenon started happening to me when I was around 16 years old. In the beginning, I only got a glimpse of the future for a few seconds. As the years passed, the time into the future increased until it stopped at around 5 minutes. At first I just ignored it. Later I discovered that I could rewind what transpired and choose an alternate path. So what would a 16 year old use this gift for? What else, I was interested in Naomi, but she was indifferent to me. My opportunity to impress her happened when she was being harassed by the football team captain. He kept asking her for a date and she kept refusing. He didn't seem to take no for an answer. I intervened. My first attempt ended up with me punched out and laying on the ground. After several repeated actions that resulted in the same situation, I saw what I was doing wrong. He always swung from the right. The last time, I ducked his right and landed a left hook that Mike Tyson would have been proud of. He went

down like a sack of potatoes and did not get up. Naomi and I just walked away. She thanked me for rescuing her and offered to buy me a coffee after school. Even though we hooked up for awhile, it didn't last. We ended up going in different directions, but that was the beginning of a long line of altered time frames.

You might think that this ability would result in me being some kind of superhero fighting crime and saving humanity. But no, generally my life was rather simple. After high school, I did go to college for a couple years, but I got restless. War was going on and I got tired of worrying about being drafted so I joined the Army.

I skated through basic training without incident and was sent to Afghanistan to fight the Taliban.

My gift came in handy on several occasions. I would have been blown up by a land mine while driving down a dirt road. I grabbed the wheel of the car and pulled right. The Sargent was extremely angry with me until after we stopped the car and I showed him the tip of a clay-more mine that we would have hit. In fact we did hit it until I did one of my rewinds. This type of thing happened enough times that my fellow soldiers started asking me how I new this stuff. I just told them that I get premonitions sometimes and they are usually correct. They started to never doubt me.

I don't have complete control over events. Just things that happened directly to me. We were pinned down in a bunker and another squad was worse off. There was a machine gun nest that was keeping them holed up. Without being commanded, I sprinted to rock precipice at a higher level than the enemy. From that vantage point, I could cover our guys until they made their escape. During my movements, I was shot multiple times until I reversed the events and zig zagged back and forth to reach safety. That particular maneuver earned me a Silver Star and the appreciation of my comrades.

Déjà Vu
(Chapter 2)

After my military tours, I decided to go into law enforcement. Seemed like a natural progression. Although, the rules were very different. With all the anti-police rhetoric, the job had many dangers and not only from the felons and psychos. I breezed through the police academy. I didn't even need my gift. I was combat experienced and in great physical shape.

I started out on a street beat. My goal was to gain experience and progress to detective. I had to pay my dues first. I used my gift often to avoid dangerous situations. You would think that this would come from facing hostile suspects. Not true. The most dangerous encounters were with families of domestic abusers. While trying to subdue a violent wife beater, it was the abused wife who intervened when she saw her husband being taken down. When I envisioned events take a turn for the worse, I altered reality to protect my fellow officers and prevent harm to the innocent.

My partner is Sharon Riley. Just like in the military, we go by last names only. Even though I was more experience than her, she was my senior. So I had to follow her direction. We were on a stakeout, waiting to see who would showed up at a drug hangout. It was early morning around 6 AM. We were both tapped out spending all night just watching. Finally some action. Three savory individuals entered the building carry some packets of some kind. We had already gotten a search warrant and we were ready to act on it. We called for back up. Riley signaled for me to step aside as she approached the door. In the next moment, I tackled her and pushed her aside as the door exploded. Someone had seen our approach.

I need to clarify how my gift works. I don't wait for the event to occur before I see it. It is more like a premonition, but stronger. So I felt that she would have been blown away, so I acted. Backup arrived and we cleared the building arresting several bad guys in the process. Later she asked me how I knew what was going to go down. I told her that it was just a premonition. We let it go at that. Over time we became really close. Your partner is like

your guardian angel. Backing you up, spending life threatening situations with you along with some boring times just sitting and waiting. It was not surprising that we started a relationship. I had saved her life multiple times as she did mine. It is a sad truth, that police officers don't do well with marriage, family, or even girlfriends. Eventually it leads to divorce or separation. The civilian just don't understand the dangers we face every day and really don't want to hear a rundown of what transpired each day. Also we deal with the lowest forms of mankind. It gets to you making you kind of jaded. So yes, Sharon and I became a couple, but we did not acknowledge it to the squad.

It became very frustrating working as a police officer in LA. We would apprehend violent criminals only to see them freed by liberal judges and city district attorneys. After a while, we became even more jaded and often would not even answer calls to dangerous areas. We pretty much left the homeless alone. The liberal politicians were not interested in enforcing the laws of no camping on public lands. They even made it worse by offering free needles, port a-potties, shelters, and food. More and more homeless came from colder climates to bask in the California liberal sunshine.

Still, I kept at it and eventually was promoted to detective in homicide. This is what I wanted to be, but not where. I decided to start my own private practice. Sharon also changed jobs. She had been going to night school studying forensic science. Both of us were off of the street and away from the dangerous violence. It was time to elevate our relationship. We were married the following spring.

We made a good couple. With my new career as an investigator and her education in forensic science, we could assist each other.

Our first case involved a guy who use to work for a military defense company. The company claimed he committed suicide by blowing himself up on a boat at sea. His sister claimed that John would never do such a thing. She also said that he appeared troubled the last few months of his life. This whole thing looked suspicious to me.

I decided to use some of my own time to investigate. The first thing I did was to try to talk to his wife. When I approached her, she was very reluctant to talk to me and was even hostile. I told her that there was a chance that her husband really did not commit suicide. You must have been talking to his sister. She said that her and her son had been through too much and just wanted to move on. Her son, who appeared to be around 15 years old, heard our whole conversation. I also found out that she had been given a large amount of settlement money from the company. This added to my suspicions. Why would his company dole out such a large amount of money if he really did commit suicide?

I arraigned to meet with the sister at a local coffee shop. We met in the parking lot across the street. While crossing the street, I visioned a car approaching at a high rate of speed, and if not for my Déjà Vu, we both would have been hit. Now I was sure that something evil was going on.

I went to the library and checked out a newspaper around the time of the “accident”. The article mentioned that a couple of fishermen on a trawler had witnessed the explosion. I wrote down their names and the name of their boat. I found them and their boat at the fishing wharf. They were sitting on their boat deck drinking beer. I had previously spotted them and purchased a couple six packs before I approached them. Hi guys! How about sharing some beer with me. They were wary of me, I suppose, suspecting that I was from immigration or the police. They did have a kind of guilty look. I assured them that I was neither the police nor immigration. I told them I wanted to ask them about the boat that they saw blow up. Why should we tell you anything? Well, there might be some money in it if I find out the truth of what really happened. This greased the skids some. One started to say something, but the other silenced him. He said, we already told the police everything that we saw. The one who had began to talk said, maybe we should show him the video. This really peaked my interest. I said if you let me copy the video, I will give you \$100 right now. Cold hard cash won over the other one. Back at my office I watched the video. This did not look like someone who lit a stick of dynamite. This looked like something totally different.

I decided to stir the pot. I made an appointment to talk to the senior officials at Terabyte. This was the company that John had worked for. At first, they were very cordial, offered me coffee, and inquired why I was there. When I told them I was following up on John's supposedly suicide, their demeanor completely changed. This whole unfortunate event has already been investigated by the police. They even found a suicide note in his home. I said that is one fact I did not know. I told them that I had been hired by his sister. After I left, a private conversation between the two senior managers went like this:

I don't like where this is going. This whole thing should have been squashed. It is the sister who is causing the trouble. We already compensated the wife. We should do something about this detective and sister. I already tried to eliminate them, but somehow it didn't work out. What! You mean you tried to murder them? I don't want to get involved in that kind of thing. You are already involved. The cover up is a felony. We would stand to lose millions of \$\$ if the truth got out and probably end up in jail. That metal that we had been developing should never have touched the water. We knew that it was very volatile. It was illegal for us to have even been testing it in open waters. We need to try again to eliminate this new threat.

Déjà Vu
(Chapter 3)

I have two friends, one former combat soldier, and his partner in a law firm. I contacted them and told them what I had been doing. What do you want us to do, Karl asked? I explained what had transpired over the last several weeks. I also said, these guys have some deep pockets. It might be dangerous for you to get involved. Danger is my middle name. I always like to go after these types who think they are above the law.

My plan is to have the son bring charges against the company. The only problem is his mother is against any further investigation. Is there some way to allow the kid to proceed, if he is willing? I could get my partner, Lucy, to be his legal conservator, as long as she isn't his council. OK, I will try to talk

to the son away from his mother.

I cruised by their house several times until I spotted the kid outside by himself. I approached him and told him what I wanted to do. He said he was willing to go along. He never believed that his Dad would do such a thing. I said just wait until you receive a court order to appear. Keep this a secret from you Mom for now, OK. Alright he answered.

I still needed some additional evidence before we were ready for court. Sharon and I spent some time searching on our computers for a list of former employees of Terabyte.

We found one guy who had been fired, but I did not know the reason or what he thought about his former employer. I contacted him at his home. He would be what I would call a disgruntled former employee. I am not sure what kind of witness he would be. He seemed high strung, but he did know what kind of products the company was working on. One in particular spiked my curiosity. It seems that the company was working on some special alloy metal, lighter and harder than steel, but it had one aspect that they had not resolved. It was highly volatile and exploded when in contact with sea water. Maybe the salt was the catalyst. The connection to John's demise was too much of a coincidence for this not to be important. The guy's name was Alex. He was a metallurgical engineer. He would be valuable as an expert witness. I just needed to convince him to help. He said he would like nothing more than to bring down the company. What would be in it for me? It always comes down to money. I said the settlement, if we won our case, would be in the multi-millions. We would have you sign a contract that would give you a 10% cut. This won him over.

So Karl prepared the summons and had it delivered to both of the senior partners at Terabyte. He also had the court order for Jeremy to appear as the relative of John and the one bringing the case against Terabyte. Any settlement that came from our efforts would go to him, minus our court fees and Alex's cut. Jeremy's mother was furious. That was to be expected, but there was nothing she could do. She tried to get Jeremy to opt out, but Jeremy would not be dissuaded from going through.

The next morning was going to be our first day in court to present the case before a judge. Something out of my vision happened to Karl. On the way home from his office he was stopped by cops. They claimed he was DUI, even though he had not had a drop of alcohol. He ended up spending the night in jail and missed the court appointment time.

Terabytes lawyers did not. They asked for the case to be dismissed. The judge said he would rule on that later.

Fortunately for us, the judge knew and respected Karl. Later, when Karl came to the court, he told the judge what had happened. He said there is something devious going on here. The judge ruled that a continuation was granted. I told Karl that I should accompany him until his appearance in court the next day. I expected the company to try another trick to keep the case from moving forward. They had already tried attempted murder, so anything was to be expected.

So far, they did not know about Jeremy or our expert witness. The sister was not really a danger too them, now that I was on the case and the main target. I met with Karl and told him about my suspicions. We decided to set a trap. Lets go out in the open and see if we can draw some fire. We were both experienced in warfare, so this was right up our alley. We took the subway downtown and walked to a bar several blocks away. The path we took went by some side alleys that no sane person would enter. We spent an hour or so inside drinking a couple of drafts. When we left, we both faked like we had drank much more. As we left the bar, it didn't surprise us when we spotted a tail. As we got closer to one of the alleys, we both faked like we were going to vomit and entered the alley. I had envisioned a couple of scenarios before a safe one occurred. In the other ones, we were both fired upon. We waited until our follower came around the corner and I pulled him far enough away from the sidewalk that we were somewhat hidden. I pulled a knife from my leg sheath and had it firmly positioned across the gunman's throat. Tell us who hired you or this will be your last day on earth. Without the advantage of his gun, he was not so brave. He mentioned one of the senior partners at Terabyte. I said, give a message to both of them. Your only method to fight

us is in the courtroom. If anything happens to us or our witnesses, you will be the next victims. We do not miss either.

Déjà Vu
(Chapter 4)

So we were almost ready for court, but not quite. There was still the matter of the suicide note supposedly found in John's home. This would be problematic unless I could render it fake. No matter what other witnesses and evidence we brought forward, the defense would call it all conjecture. I had some surprises for the defense. I needed a way to hide the video of the explosion because the defense has access to all evidence before the trial. I have an idea that may or may not work. They did not know about the video of the explosion that we had in our possession, and I wanted to keep it that way. I needed another expert witness to say that the explosion was far greater than anything remotely resembling someone blowing themselves up with a stick of dynamite. I found a handwriting expert that could look at the suicide note and determine if it was fake. There was plenty of opportunity for Terabyte to get their hands on examples of John's writing and forge it.

There are three parts to a jury trial.

One is jury selection. Dozens and dozens of people are selected from voting records and DMV files and sent jury summons.

The first day is just waiting to see if you are called to a court. If nothing is happening that day, you might be released and not have jury duty for at least a year. If you are called into a court, the judge tells you what kind of trial it is going to be and estimates how long it will take. Then he tells you that if you have no objection to the case and no reason to not appear, come back the next day. Others are given the opportunity to give a reason why they cannot serve. Some reasons are economic. A shop owner who would lose business by not staying in his shop would be excused. A mother watching children at home is also excused. Some have health reasons.

The next day inside the court there maybe 50 potential jurors. The judge asks

questions about their job type or possible conflict of interest, etc. Out of the entire group, 12 jurors are chosen. Both the defense and prosecution lawyers can reject up to three jurors. They don't need a reason to kick them out. If they think they would not be advantageous to their client, they can dismiss them.

After all that, 12 jurors remain and 1 alternate. That is in case someone gets sick and can not finish the trial. The alternate has to watch the entire court proceedings, but does not get to go into the deliberation room.

So all that had already been set and this is our first day at trial. Here were the proceedings:

The judge states the nature of the case. Jeremy Smith against Terabyte. Unlawful testing of forbidden material in open waters causing the death of his father in an accidental explosion. Cover up by Terabyte.

The prosecution gets to go first. We call Jeremy. The defense objects. This will be a constant move throughout the testimony. This witness is irrelevant. Karl says, it is important for him to express his belief that his father would not have committed suicide. The father's actions previously to his death would show if he was distraught and emotional.

The Judge: Objection overruled.

So Jeremy did paint a picture of a caring father who had everything to live for. A loving wife and happy home life.

We needed to address the suicide note and get that out of the way. Karl called the expert handwriting witness. He was in another state and could not attend, but we sent him the letter and he made 5 videos of his analysis that we could use in court. Actually, this helped us in a way you would not think of. His videos were quite lengthily and boring. He described the art of handwriting analysis pointing out all the fine points of his profession. Even the most astute viewer would fall asleep watching the whole dissertation. Later, he decided to fly to our city and appear in person in court.

Here is his testimony:

You examined the suicide, true? Yes. What was your conclusion? The writing style is very close, but there are certain small tell-tail signs that point to this as being fake.

The defense: Is it possible that while writing this under stress, the slight changes to his writing style would occur. Yes, that is possible.

We didn't entirely eliminate that hurdle, but we did put some doubt in the jurors minds.

Our next witness was the metallurgical engineer. He gave his testimony about working there and what products were being developed. He especially spent time talking about the volatile metal that was being worked on.

The defense classified him as a hostile witness suggesting that he was just trying to get revenge for being fired. Still the idea that they were working on dangerous metals reached the jurors. At least they were being attentive and listened to all his explanations. I was happy with our witness. It got our point across.

I was hoping that the jurors would notice the disparity between the two councils. Our side with just Karl and Lucy as Jeremy's legal guardian. The other side showed up with one lead lawyer and 7 assistants. David vs. Goliath. I was hoping David would win again.

This all seems like a short span for the reader, but actually the trial took most of the day. We didn't start until 10 AM and we took a 1.5 hour lunch break. It was 4 PM when the judge ordered the court adjured and to be continued the next day.

All in all, this was a good day for us. I was in the wash room at the end of the court session when the top senior at Terabyte entered. He said, I guess you feel pretty good about the progress of your case. Even if you win, we will hold the settlement up in court on appeals for years. No one else was in

the washroom. He was 6' 10" and outweighed me by 50 lbs. I grabbed him, spun him around and squeezed his throat with my forearm. You guys already tried to kill me twice. I won't give you another chance. If there is any appeal, you will never see the end of the trial. We do not miss either. Do you understand? I could see his face turning red with lack of oxygen. Nod your head if you understand! He nodded his head. I let him go just as his partner entered the washroom. I pointed to him and said, he is suffering from high blood pressure. Maybe you should stay with him until he is OK.

The next day we were back in court. This was going to be our final pitch. It was time to bring out our surprise.

Karl: Your honor we admit evidence item #6. All those at the defense table looked surprised. Karl explained that this was a video of the actual explosion on the boat.

The defense: Objection you Honor. We have not seen this video.

Why not Karl added? You were given all the evidence in advance. This was video #6. With all their backup lawyers, no one had taken the time to watch the last video. They all thought it was just another boring lecture on handwriting analysis. My trick worked to perfection.

After the viewing, we brought forth our expert bomb witness. He stated clearly that this could not have been an explosion caused by one man. It was too massive.

Karl stated that this was obviously cause by illegal experimenting with volatile metal in open waters that was being developed by Terabyte.

The defense: Objection your Honor. Objection sustained. He admonished Karl to only bring forth facts, not conjecture. That was OK. The seed was planted in the jurors heads.

(You will hate me for this)
(Verdict to be revealed next chapter)

Even I don't know what the verdict will be.

Déjà Vu
(Chapter 5)

After the trial, Sharon and I needed a break. We decided to go to Las Vegas. They used to call it Sin City. That was in the past. Now it is really a good family vacation place. Of course there are still some seedy parts of the city, if you are looking for that. All in all, it is very tame. When I was younger, I used stay in only the cheapest hotels and motels. Now that I have a moderate amount of money, I feel that the hotel is also part of the vacation and I want to enjoy the best. I have stayed at The Bellagio, The Venetian (nice, all suites), New York New York, MGM Grand, Caesars Palace, Trump International (my favorite so far), The Mirage (now only a 3*), Circus Circus, The old Sahara, The Frontier (now gone), the Silver Slipper, (now gone), The Paddle Wheel or Riverboat (not sure what was the name) (now gone, used to have a \$4 buffet that was pretty good), The Tropicana (I really got married there), The Hilton, Mandalay Bay (endless river), The Aria (my least favorite, 4*, but no fridge, no in room coffee machine), Luxor (one of my favorites), Treasure Island, Paris Las Vegas, Excalibur, The Imperial Palace (I thought this was gone, but it is still there), The Lucky Dragon

The Flamingo (The first hotel in Vegas)

Mobster Bugsy Siegel opens the glitzy Flamingo Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada on December 26, 1946 to celebrate my birth two months earlier.

The first week it rained and rained and almost no one came. It turned out to be a bust and he was murdered because he lost millions of the mob's money. The rest is history.

This time we stayed at the Wynn. I decided to try my luck at gambling. I should not have done this, but it was too tempting. I used my Déjà Vu to wait until the slot machine paid out. This was too easy. I decided to move to the blackjack table. I could have won every hand, but that would raise a red flag. These tables are always being watched over head by experts. They can spot a card shark. So I would win moderate hands and lose small hands.

After a while I was approached by security. I had won around \$10K. Not an enormous amount, but apparently over their limit. I was escorted to a back room. We don't know how you are doing it, but we suspect you are counting cards or have some other secret method. You are banned from gambling here and we have notified other casinos not to let you play. So much for my gambling career.

Oh ya! About the verdict.

Prior to the final court appearance, Terabyte lawyers tried to persuade Jeremy to accept a \$500K settlement. After all, a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. It was our duty to present the offer to Jeremy. He said he was not here for the money. He wanted to clear his father's name in public, and winning this trial was the only way to do it. He declined their offer.

Here is the account of the final court day:

Closing arguments:

The judge reiterated the two charges before the court.

#1 Terabyte willingly and illegally tested dangerous material in open waters and tried to cover it up.

#2 Wrongful death of one of its employees due to negligence on the part of Terabyte.

The judge informed the jury that closing argument statements made by the prosecution and defense are conjecture and opinion, not facts.

The prosecution goes first:

Karl:

What we have here is a multi-billion dollar company not owning up to their negligence that caused the death of one of their employees. They tried to buy off the widow with a measly \$200K survivor benefit, then covered up their illegal operations.

Jeremy has stated that he knew his father well and he would not have committed suicide with all he had to live for.

In their cover up scheme, Terabyte inserted a fake suicide note, most likely during their condolence visit. Terabyte had many examples of John's handwriting so it would have been easy to hire a hand writing forger to fake his style.

You saw the video and heard our expert witness testify that this enormous explosion could not have been the act of one desperate man. I urge you to find the defendant guilty of both charges.

The defense:

We truly feel sorry for Jeremy losing his father. Perhaps prodded by money seeking lawyers, he is being used to extort money from a legitimate defense contractor. There was no real evidence presented here. This was just a tragic ending to a troubled man. We hope you will see through this smoke screen, craftily presented here, and find the defendant not guilty of all charges.

The jury deliberated for one whole day. The next day the judge ordered the court in session and asked the jury to read the verdict.

The jury foreman read the verdict.

Count #1 Terabyte willingly and illegally tested dangerous material in open waters and tried to cover it up. The jury finds the defendant not guilty.

Count #2 Wrongful death of one of its employees due to negligence on the part of Terabyte. The jury finds the defendant guilty.

There was a hush in the court room, then loud applause. The judge pounded his gavel and said, Order in the Court!

The jury reconvened to decide on the financial award.

Lots of discussion occurred in the jury room. Issues of future financial loss and pain and suffering.

Jeremy was awarded \$3.5 million dollars. This appeased his mom who had only received \$200K from Terabyte before. Even though the Terabyte executives did not end up in jail, this was a big hit to them and their company. Also, the exposure from the trial put a hold on their volatile metal development and their stock took a substantial hit. Both of the top executives were let go for personal reasons.

Right after the trial, the Terabyte execs asked for a meeting with me and Karl. You know that we don't have total control on whether an appeal is asked for. Since this is a substantial amount of money. The Board of Directors have the final say.

I made two statements.

#1 Your company has already suffered in the court of public opinion. Another trial will not improve that impression. I would expect your stock to take another big dip.

#2 I want you to use your influence to squash any talk of an appeal as if your life depended on it. Because it does.
Justice was served! And there would be no appeal.

Both John's sister and widow met Karl and I outside the courtroom. They both thanked us for vindicating John. I said, you should thank your son. His courage and belief in his father made all this possible. Yes, Jeremy is just like his father, very determined when he sets his mind on something.

Karl and I split the 30% legal fees minus Alex's cut. So Sharon and I increased our bank account by about \$500K

After our vacation, we will return to our investigative practice. For now it is margarita time, lounging by the pool, and relaxing in a luxurious room.

This is not the end.

Next chapter, next case.

Déjà Vu
(Chapter 6)

After our Las Vegas vacation, Sharon and I returned to our office. We were fairly new at this so there wasn't a line of prospective clients at our door. An attractive lady in her mid-forties came in our front door. I want to hire you to follow my husband. I believe he is having an affair. Actually, I don't do that kind of detective work. I am offering \$100 per hour plus expenses. I guess I do do that kind of detective work. Like I said, there wasn't a rush to our door hiring our services. So why do you think he is having an affair? A woman knows these kinds of things. Out of touch too many times day and night. Out of touch with me for many months, if you know what I mean. So this has been going on for a while. Yes, that is correct. Can you give me a run down of his habits and routines. He is an accountant and usually is present at work from 9-5. Sometimes I call his office and they say they don't know where he is or when he will be back. Much too often, he says there is a late client that he has to do work for. He may be gone for 2 or 3 hours late evening. This all started, like I said, several months ago. Maybe 6 months. OK, if you can advance a retainer for \$500, I will start working.

This seems like a simple use of my talents, but beggars can't be choosers. First thing to do is follow him when he leaves for work. Trudy gave me her address and cell phone number. She also gave me his cell phone number. Even though it is not legal, the easiest way to find out what he has been up to is to hack his phone records. It is easier than you might imagine. This is something that I don't know how to do, but I have friends in low places. Gerald is a computer specialist and can hack almost any computer or phone. For a modest fee, he agreed to do just that to Bill's phone. This will be part of Trudy's plus expenses.

So the next morning, I was waiting outside Trudy's apartment when Bill left for work. I followed him to his work place and waited until lunch when he left the office. He drove to a local cafe and entered. There he was met by another man. I guessed he may have been a client of his. This would be normal practice for an accountant type. Nothing unusual happened for the

rest of the day. Boring day for me, but financially profitable. \$800 for just sitting in my car. I decided to watch his house for a while before going home. At around 7 PM, he left the house. He drove in the Palm Springs direction and stopped at a bar in Cathedral City. I decided to go inside and observe his behavior. Much to my surprise, he met the same guy he had lunch with. Maybe this is a lucrative rich client needing someone to fight the IRS. I sat down in a corner table where I could watch. While sitting there, minding my own business, a nice looking guy came over and asked if he could buy me a beer. I already have one, thanks. Can I join you? Actually, I am here on business, maybe another time. I am supposed to be a hot-shot detective, so why did I not detect that this was a gay bar? After a while a small band started up and Bill and his friend got up to dance. OK, I have seen enough, I got up and left.

The next day, Gerald showed me Bill's phone call record. Dozens of calls to a guy name Al. This case didn't take me long to solve. I didn't want to string Trudy along just to take her money. It was time to give her a report. I called her to my office. When she sat down, I said, you were correct. Bill is having an affair. Who is the woman? He has been associating with Al. You mean, as in Alice? No, I mean as in Al Gore, Al Capone, Al Bundy. Your husband is gay or bi-sexual. I could see the blood drain from her face. It took her a moment to regain her composure. Then she said something that surprised me. I am relieved that he did not find a younger woman. I guess I can understand your feelings. If my wife Sharon confessed that she was having an affair with a woman, I would kind of be relieved too. I might even ask her if I could join in. Sharon heard that. Dream on macho boy, you can barely handle one woman, let alone two.

So I solved this case in record time and put some cash into our business account.

Sharon told me that we had another case. While I was following Bill around, a couple came into the office and talked to Sharon. They wanted us to try to find their missing daughter. Her daughter was 23, not a child. She did not live at home anymore. She had a female roommate that she had been living with. Inquirers to the roommate resulted in no specific answers, so they

thought something suspicious was going on. Their daughter had not contacted them for a couple weeks. This was not unusual since she had left home under strained relations. They just wanted to confirm that their daughter was safe. I told them about my usual fees, that did not dissuade them from hiring us.

Our first task was to talk to the roommate. She let us in, after I explained that her parents hired us. Can you tell us where she might have gone? I told her parents that I don't have any specific information. She kind of just disappeared. She had been writing to someone on her computer. Maybe she hooked up with some guy and is staying with him. Do you mind if we look around her room? Not at all. I want to make sure she is safe too.

This is where Sharon's expertise comes in. She can find clues that others might overlook. She took some hair samples from Wendy's comb. This might come in handy later, if we find she had gotten her self into trouble. Can you tell us if she had any other close friends or where she usually hangs out. She did frequent a bar not far from here and use to talk to a guy named Danny. That is about all I can tell you. In general, she was a private person. That was our first stop. The bar was called Last Stop. It was a typical neighborhood bar. Nothing looked too off beat. We asked the barkeep if he knew of a patron named Danny. He motioned toward a guy who was playing pool with another. After the game, we approached Danny and asked if we could talk to him. What is this about? We are trying to find out the whereabouts of Wendy. We understand you knew her. Is there anything you can tell is about where she might have gone? Yes, I know her. We are just friends. She came in here about a few days ago with some guy. It looked like they had hooked up. They only stayed for a hour or so and she didn't even acknowledge that she knew me. It did seem kind of strange, since we were kind of good friends. OK, thanks for the info. We left the bar and went back to our office.

I could not think of how to continue. We needed more clues. I decided to use Gerald again. I had gotten Wendy's phone number from her parents. Before we did any hacking, I just called her phone. It was still active, but went straight to voice mail. Gerald did his thing and came up with a list of

calls she had made. This was of little use since we did not know any of the callers. We went back to the roommate's apartment and told her we were at a dead end. Is her computer still here? Yes, she kept it in a drawer in her room. Can we take it to see if we can find any clues? Sure, I am surprised that if she went on some trip, she did not take it with her.

Back to Harold's lair. He hacked into her email and found some clues that we needed to follow up on. It seems she had been emailing some guy name Cliff. Harold was able to pin point the location of his IP address. It was time to visit Cliff at his home.

We knocked on the door and a guy opened it and asked what we wanted. We want to ask you some questions about your relationship with Windy. He immediately tried to slam the door. My foot acted as a door stop as we pushed our way inside. You have no right to enter my house. Actually, you invited us in, isn't that right Riley? If you answer some questions, we can leave you in peace.

What do you want to know? When was the last time you saw Windy? We had gone to a local dive that had a small band. That was where a guy I knew asked if he could join us. What is his name? His name is Darin. I really didn't know him that well, but I don't like him. He has a bad reputation. It seemed that girls that were attracted to him don't stay around too long. They kind of disappear after a while.

Where is this bar? It is down on 7th street in a kind of shady part of town. OK, that is all for now. If we have any further questions, you will see us again.

The bar's name was the Salty Dog. It was indeed a dive. We decided to enter separately. I went in first and ordered a beer. I chose a corner table against the back wall. About 10 minutes later Sharon entered. I may have said this before, but she is a real looker. Even though she is in her early thirties, she could still pass for mid-20's. She went to the bar and ordered some girly drink. It didn't take long before some guy approached her. He gave the usually pickup lines, but she shrugged them off. She said that one of her girl

friends had met a guy named Darin who looked extremely handsome and interesting. Do you know if he is around? As a matter of fact, I am one of his best friends. He pulled out his cell phone, stepped away from the bar, and made a call. Sharon could not hear the conversation. About 5 minutes later, a guy, I assume was Darin, came into the bar and walked up to Sharon. They conversed for several minutes. I did not hear what was said. Then, both Darin and Sharon, got up and left the bar. I quickly followed out the door. A white van pulled up to the curb and I saw Sharon try to disengage from Darin's grasp. It took a few rewinds for me to pick one where Sharon was freed unharmed. Another man had come out of the van and both would have dragged Sharon inside, if not for my Déjà Vu. I had successfully rescued Sharon, but Darin and the other guy made their escape. I memorized their license plate. It was time to involve the real police. With our former association in the police department, we still had some friends on the force. After explaining why we were in that bar, they picked up Darin's friend. It didn't take long before he gave up Darin's address. Six hours later, Darin was in custody. The police department sometimes called on Sharon, due to her forensic specialties, to aid in their investigations. She was able to visit Darin's house and there she collected some DNA samples. One matched the DNA from Wendy's hair. The police used this evidence to threaten Darin into confessing his part in the kidnapping scheme. He was tricking women and sending them to a human trafficking ring. The police busted the ring. Wendy was one of the women who had been snatched up.

Wendy was returned to her parents home. It would take some time, if ever, for her to get over her traumatizing ordeal. She was back with her parents and that was probably the best situation to help her recover.

Back in our office, our next case walked into our door. He was a small business owner. His partner had gotten involved with some local loan sharks. They were threatening him with extreme bodily harm if he didn't come up with the money owed plus the VIG.

I was not sure if we should take this case, but there were no others pounding down our door. Here we go!

Déjà Vu
(Chapter 7)

So Dave, tell me how you got into this mess. My partner Roy wanted to expand our business, but the bank refused to give us a loan. He thought that borrowing the money from these guys would work if we paid them back right a way. The only problem was that Roy didn't understand the VIG. It was 20% after the first week then compounded on top of the original loan. You know this kind of lending is illegal don't you? I know, but how can I enforce the law against these types of thugs. Well, I know of a lawyer who might be able to negotiate a way out for you and Roy.

I called Karl and explained what was going on with my latest case. I would understand if you refuse to intercede since this could be dangerous. Danger is my middle name. That is one of Karl's repeat sayings. OK, meet me at my office tomorrow morning. I told Dave that we would represent him in negotiations with these crooks. Tell them that you want to meet with them tomorrow morning around 10 AM. Don't tell them anything else. I expect they will think that you are going to pay up.

So Karl and I arrived at Dave's shop about 9:45. I brought Sharon along. The presence of a woman helps to lower the testosterone level and perhaps make for a safer meeting.

Two guys show up. Vic and Rick. They do look like the typical thug types. What is going on here? We represent Dave here in negotiations on his debt. There are no negotiations, he has to pay up. Are you aware that what you are asking for is illegal. Karl here is an attorney and he is representing Dave. We are offering to pay off Dave's debt, but by using customary loan rates, say about 7%. That is 7% a year, not a week.

I'll tell you what, we will give Dave a discount since we don't want to him go out of business. We will cut the VIG to 10%, if you throw in the chick as part of the deal.

That was the wrong thing to say. Vic started to grab Sharon's arm. She is not such a delicate flower as she looks. Sharon grabbed Vic's wrist and bent his fingers back until he was down on one knee. Rick started to make a move toward her. I swung my leg 6 inches past where his ribs were. Of course his body was in the way and I heard his ribs crack as he went down.

Tell your boss that we gave him our best offer. Take it or leave it. Karl and I escorted them out of the shop. Somehow they tripped and fell down in the street. They must have slipped on a banana peel or something.

So the stage has been set. Karl and I knew that retaliation would be swift and forceful. We are not strangers to combat. I told Dave to just remain in his shop and that we would handle the rest. He looked dubious. Are you sure you know what you are doing? Yes we are sure.

So Karl, Sharon, and I had a short meeting. We decided that we have to be careful. We don't want to murder anyone and don't want to attract the police into this conflict. How do we go about solving Dave's problem with out starting a minor war with the local gangs. We need to make their leader/boss an offer he can't refuse. That means we can't wait for their retaliation. We need to strike first. We knew where their boss's operational center was located. I told Dave that he and his wife should leave their shop until this all blew over. He did not object. I just hoped that these idiots would not try to fire bomb his shop. That was a distinct possibility. I needed to call on another of my ex-army buddies. I had saved his life more than once and he owed me. He was one of the most elite snipers the army ever had. Phil, I need you for a situation. This won't involve shooting anyone, but I need you to lay down some suppression fire. Can you help me? You know you can count on me. I gave him the details of what I wanted. Now I felt that Dave's business would not be in jeopardy.

Karl, me, and Sharon would pay a visit to the boss's establishment while his goons were out planning their revenge on Dave's shop. I told Phil to notify me when he saw them coming. Shortly after he set up, he called and said there were about a dozen guys approaching Dave's shop. You know what to do, correct? Yes. As the hoodlums approached the shop, Phil started firing

rounds at their feet. They immediately retreated to safe distance. Karl, me, and Sharon entered the boss's establishment just as Phil laid down suppression fire. The boss yelled, you can't come in here. Do you have a warrant? He thought that we were the police. We don't need a warrant. We don't play by the rules either. Vic was in the corner. Normally, he would have stood up to protect his boss, but he saw who we were and just remained motionless. I could see that he was still nursing his ribs. I bet that hurt. So Vic, I see you learned your lesson about touching another man's woman. Sharon piped up. I am not any one's woman. I am my own person. My bad! I forgot how independent she was. I will pay for that comment later.

What is your name? Who the fuck are you? I was within arms distance from him and round up my arm and smacked him hard across the face. You don't answer a question with another question, understand? I could see that he was not used to being in this position. Maybe no one had ever done that to him before. After a moment, he said my name it Vito. Of course, Vito. I didn't expect him to be named Alfred.

Look Vito, we offered you a fair deal, but your goons disrespected my wife and spit on our offer. Is that any way to end negotiations? Since you failed to take the first offer, this is the second. Dave will pay you the money his partner borrowed from you without any interest. If you do not take this offer or any harm comes to Dave or his shop, we will return and you will not like the results. Comprende? Why are you speaking to me in Spanish? I am Italian. OK, then maybe you will understand this. If you do not take this offer, you will be sleeping with the fishes. Capeesh?

Now call your goons back before they get hurt and we will call this the end of our negotiations.

That ended Dave's worries and also our case. I told Dave he could pay my fees when his business got better. We didn't need the money right away. We were still living large on the 500K from the Terabyte settlement.

The next case was all Sharon. She was called in again as a forensic specialist. She was gone most of the days collecting evidence in a murder

case. She didn't fill me in on the details. What I could garner from overhearing her conversations, it involved a high profile official who was suspected of killing a rival. I asked her several times about the details, but she always said it was confidential. She did inform me that she was getting close to finding the truth. Several days pass and I didn't hear of any conclusions. Then she didn't show up at home. At first I just thought that she was just busy at the police station. I called to inquire about her whereabouts. They said she had not reported in all day. Alarms went off in my head. I guess that she had gotten too close to the truth for someone and they needed to silence her one way or another.

Déjà Vu
(Chapter 8)

I needed to stay calm and think clearly. If I let my emotions guide me I might make mistakes. I need to treat this just like any other case of a missing person. That means talking to Harold. He was more panicky than I was. He knew how much Riley meant to me. Can you tell me the last location of her phone. The phone was still active, but went to voice mail when dialed. The last location I found was 6th and Harbor. That area was not too far from the police station. How about surveillance cameras in the area? He hacked into the traffic cams and security cameras in that general vicinity. We spotted Riley walking toward her car when a white van pulled up and two guys grabbed her. We were lucky and were able to get a shot of the license plate. A call to one of my friends still on the force got us the registered owner.

Fast Forward to Sharon's rescue:

I broke into the warehouse through a rooftop window. The warehouse looked like it hadn't been used for awhile. A good place to stash a hostage. I crept along the upper floor and looked over the railing. I saw Riley tied to a chair with a gag over her mouth. The relief of seeing her still alive hit me with full force. There was one guard sitting at a table. I tried to remain calm. I needed to be my stone cold self to keep from jumping for joy. As I worked my way toward the stairwell leading to the bottom floor, I stepped on a piece of glass that made an audible crunch. That alerted the guard and he immediately grabbed his gun and had it pointed at Riley's head. I no longer

needed to remain in hiding. I approached the railing and yelled down, "Drop your gun!" You drop your gun or I'll blow her head off. One of the things they taught us at the academy: Never drop your gun. Riley knew this. All that would do would get us both killed. I had to play this with precision. It took me several déjà vus before I found one that didn't jeopardize Riley's life. Riley knew the drill. We had practiced just for this kind of scenario. I said, on the count of three, I am going to shoot you. One, two,---. At the count of two, Riley elbowed the gunman hard enough for him to lower the gun away from her head, then I shot him between the eyes.

I rushed down the stairs and freed her from her bonds. Instead of thanking me, she said, why did you shoot him? He could have given us some valuable leads. So much for my heroic effort. Don't worry. I've got plenty of leads prior to your rescue. I gave her the rundown on how I arrived at the warehouse.

After I contacted Gerald and got the address of the van's registered owner from the police, I asked Karl to help me. He was more than willing, knowing that Sharon's life maybe was at stake.

We arrived at the address given by the police. Inside a stand alone detached garage, we could see the white van. This was obviously the right place. As police officers, we would have had to obtain a warrant in order to enter a private citizens home, but I didn't have time to mess around and we weren't police officers. We slipped into the house undetected. A guy was lounging in an easy chair watching TV when I stuck a gun in his face. Your van was used in a kidnapping a day ago. What can you tell me about that? I don't know anything about a kidnapping. Some guys wanted to rent my van. They claimed they needed it to move some stuff. I asked them why didn't they just go to U-haul? They said it was closed on Sunday and they needed to move today. They offered me \$50 to rent it for ½ day. Who were these guys? My friend Albert called me and told me I could make a quick \$50. I didn't know these guys, but I didn't think Albert would do anything illegal.

So our next stop was to talk to Albert. The van owner was happy enough to give us Albert's address as long as we left him alone.

Albert told us that he was asked by City Commissioner Davis to arrange the van rental. I guess he owed him some kind of favor for something Davis had helped him with in the past. Other than that, no contact was made by Davis. We could not find the two guys who kidnapped you. Thanks to Gerald, I found the warehouse by tracing the van's route via public street cams and private surveillance cameras.

What have you found out through your investigation that got you captured? City Commissioner Davis was on my radar. I had gotten some DNA off of the murdered victim that matched Davis's DNA. You know when public officials take office, they are fingerprinted and their DNA is supplied to a central data bank. This is supposed to prevent them from using their office and position for corruption and sexual harassment. Some never learn.

Shall we call the police? Normally that would be the correct thing to do. In this case, I didn't think so. Someone is going to return to this warehouse to check on you when your guard does not call in. We need to set a trap to catch whoever shows up. Secondly, calling in the police will just slow down our investigation with all the paper work. I will get rid of the body. There are plenty of open dessert areas with deep ravines. I will just take the body there and dump it. Anyone who aims a gun at my woman doesn't deserve a proper burial. I am no one's woman. Yah! Yah!, I've heard all that before. I am taking a cue from the movie series "Yellowstone". Those guys knew how to handle things. Even though that is fiction, there is a lot of common sense to their actions. The vultures and coyotes should take care of the rest. No one is going to miss this scumbag. Even if someone stumbles across the body, I am not going to leave any of my DNA. My bullet went right through his head. No evidence left.

I called on Cliff again. I need you to cover me. I expect some bad dudes to show up soon at this warehouse. Just perch yourself up on this upper level and make sure I am not over run. Don't kill anybody unless it is necessary. We need these guys alive.

We waited for a couple hours. Cliff spotted two guys with guns drawn

approaching the warehouse building. He signaled for me to get ready. I still had my gun. I am a licensed private citizen and have a gun permit due to the dangers of my profession. I had asked Sharon to leave the warehouse. There was no need to put her in any more danger. The two guys entered and I yelled hands up! Neither complied. Cliff shot one in the arm and he dropped his weapon. If he had been using a high powered rifle, the guy would have been dead just from the body shock. The other saw what happened to his partner and did drop his gun and raise his hands.

Through our interrogation we learned that they had been hired by Davis's personal secretary. This was after I explained that they were facing long prison sentences for their part in the kidnapping. We now had enough evidence to give to the police. I decided to call the police at that point. I had Sharon return to the warehouse so that when the police arrived she could verify what happened with the dead guard. I didn't need to dump the body after all. This was less complicated. The police would take it from here.

So all is back to normal. Sharon and I are waiting for more clients. We heard on the news that City Commissioner Davis had been arrested for murder and was awaiting trial. If he somehow wiggles his way out, there is a vigilante loose in our city that would be waiting for him.

On second thought, after Sharon's harrowing ordeal, I thought we needed another vacation. I asked Karl if he would answer any forwarding calls to our office from clients while we were gone. No problem. Maybe I can pick up some of my own clients.

I wanted to try something different than the usual vacations spot. New York, San Francisco, Europe, none of those places appealed to me at the moment. How about Thailand? I've always wanted to go there and I heard they have some reasonable prices and awesome street food.

Not Bangkok though. It just seemed too busy and hectic. I wanted to find a nice peaceful out of the way place. My Google search found this place.



#1 KOH KOOD - The perfect place for a relaxing getaway

Arguably Thailand's ultimate island getaway destination, Koh Kood has kept its peaceful and laid-back charm. Located very close to the Cambodian border, this relatively undisturbed paradise has long been off the tourist radar. While its sister island, Koh Chang, has become more developed over time, Koh Kood continues to wow wanderlusts with its incredible beaches, jungles, numerous cascading waterfalls and eco-friendly resorts.

Top tips:

- Getting there: Ferries depart regularly from Laem Ngop, and high-season speedboats connect Koh Chang to Koh Mak
- Bring cash: There are limited ATM and banking facilities, so it is essential to bring enough cash
- Scooters: Due to the lack of transport, the easiest way around will be to hire a scooter

That is where we are headed.

Déjà Vu
(Chapter 9)

You only can get here by flying to a different island and arriving by boat. I guess that kind of explains why this is not overrun with tourists.

Check out the kinds of food served here in their restaurants.





That yellow coconut milk curry soup is absolutely delicious. I have had the same type here in the states in Thai restaurants.





This is what I came to Thailand for. Giant fresh water prawns. Almost as big as lobsters.



This is not quite Bora Bora, but it will do.

Since we had some time on our hands, I thought it was time to come clean with Riley about my Déjà Vu gift. I approached it in this way. I know this was a round-about way to explain it, but she needed some scientific theory to

back up what I thought was the basis. I explained it in this way:

I have always been fascinated with time travel and Einstein's theories. Mathematicians have speculated that there are many more dimensions beyond the 4th that we are frozen in. So I told her that somehow I can view alternate dimensions and chose one that is the safest path. You know how I always seem to predict what is to come about? Yes, I have always wondered why you were so lucky. You remember when I tackled you on our first stakeout? My premonition alerted me to the possibility of you being killed. I just chose a path where that did not happen. I have had this “gift” ever since I was a teenager.

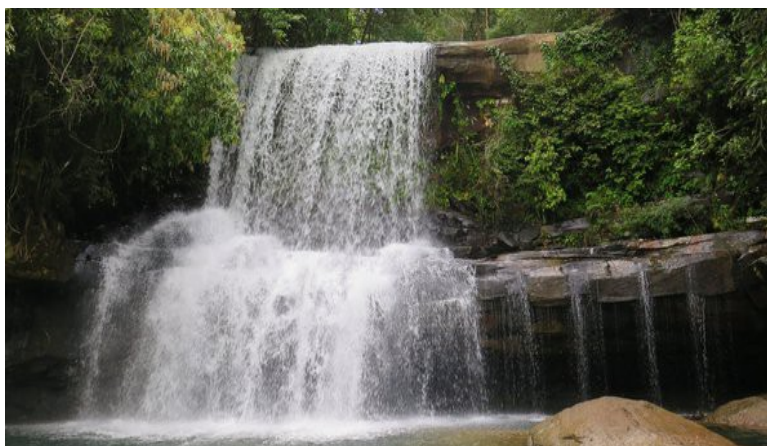
Why have you waited so long to tell me this? I was worried that you would think I was crazy. But you have been with me long enough to realize that our “luck” was way too lucky. I have never used this to take advantage of anyone or for devious reasons.

So there it was out in the open. I felt relief finally telling the person I trusted and loved the most.

After check-in we took a nap. This is on the other side of the globe and it usually takes a day for jet lag to go away. So we just relaxed until supper time and then it was time to sample those giant shrimp.

The next day we wanted to do some exploring. I rented a scooter. This the most economical and practical way to get around the island. I also had brought a fanny pack to keep my passport and cash. Credit cards were not always welcome, but cash is universal.

We booked a tour. The first day we swam in the warm tropical clear waters and also visited the waterfall.





While traveling to the waterfall, Riley got to experience the first use of my Déjà Vu. We were on the scooter and had just come around a corner. There coming towards us was a delivery truck. It was going too fast and hit a puddle of water and spun out. We would have been crushed if I had not taken another course. Riley said, that was close. I said, it was closer than you think. She realized I was talking about my fake luck.

We enjoyed a great day on tour and just seeing the natural settings of this island. Back at our hotel Riley said someone has been going through our stuff. Maybe you are just imagining this. Perhaps it is the maid service. No, they haven't come in yet. The bed is still not made and no new towels have arrived. Because of my job doing forensic science at murder scenes, I have a keen eye for detail. We checked around but nothing seemed to be missing. For once, can't we just enjoy life without all the mystery? I called Karl back in the states and asked him to send us a package. Just a bunch of small stuffed animals to give to the local children and one with a miniature spy cam. I will set something up in our room when that arrives. It took a couple days for the package to get here. Meanwhile, nothing else happened. I was wondering if someone had seen me take money out of my fanny pack. They might think we have lots of loot hidden in our room.

So with our spy cam in place, we ventured out again on another island tour.

Déjà Vu
(Chapter 10)

Once again we returned to our hotel room to find it disturbed. Not only that, the stuffed animal with our spy cam was gone. It didn't take long for my awesome detective skills to kick in and find the culprit. Of course it helped that the culprit took a selfie.



Further investigation found an unlatched bathroom window where I imagine he had gained his entrance. We rectified that situation and I was glad that my faith in the human race was restored.

Riley did distribute the remaining stuffed animals to children that we saw on our next tour.

We spent the next week or so actually relaxing and enjoying our environment. There are so many interesting places around the world to visit, we will have to do this again someplace else.

For now, we returned to our life of detecting and forensic science. While we were gone, Karl did get a couple cases for us to check out.

One was kind of a continuation of our last one.

Someone had seen the news about City Commissioner Davis and had read that Riley and I had been instrumental in his arrest. That someone was the

brother of the guy Davis's had had killed. He said, there are more villains in this plot that haven't been uncovered. We are not the police. Have you talked to them? I have talked to them until I am blue in the face. Either they are part of the corruption or are just inept. Maybe both. So what do you want us to do and we don't work for free. I was the beneficiary of my brother's estate. He had been planning on running against Davis in the next election. I think that is why he was eliminated. He must have had some dirt on Davis and his associates. I can pay your fees.

I will turn over the information I have and also my guess as to who is part of Davis's gang. That is what I think of them.

While Riley and I followed up on more evidence of City Commissioner Davis's nefarious acts, we were lead into a trap. Of the various future scenarios I saw, only one resulted in Riley's safe release. Unfortunately, I was taken hostage.

The next day, Riley received a phone call asking for one million dollars ransom. We did not have that kind of cash on hand and even if we did, we both knew that the chances of me getting out alive after payment was very slim.

I was blindfolded and driven about 10 minutes distance from my capture point. Even blindfolded I was able to hear noises and determine directional changes. Eventually, I was put down in some kind of cellar and handcuffed to a pipe of an old style gas radiator type heater. There was not much chance of me breaking loose.

Later someone came down to take a video of me. I suspect that Riley and Karl had asked for "Proof of Life". This is common in these types of cases. Without that, no one would cough up any ransom money without knowing that the kidnapped victim was still alive.

During that short video, I did something that the videographer did not pick up on. I tapped against the pipe a Morris code signal that I was 10 minutes away Northwest from where Riley had seen me taken hostage. The guard just

thought I was frantic or crazy. Karl would be able to decipher the message telling him the approximate location of where I was being held. Both of us being former military, this was a normal part of our training.

Given that information and Gerald's traffic cam hack, they knew about where I was being held.

Karl and Riley broke into the building and I heard shots being fired. The guard grabbed his gun and had it pointing at my head when Riley and Karl came down the stairs.

Déjà Vu for real this time, except that the roles were reversed. Also, I wasn't in control of future scenarios. I will count to three and then I will shoot. One, pow. The gunman dropped his gun and fell to the floor with a bullet between his eyes. I said, Riley, you didn't even give him a chance to lower his gun. Anyone who points a gun at my man's head doesn't deserve a chance. I almost smiled. I didn't even mind being called her man. Woman and men are different in how they think.

Riley and Karl had called the police before they had entered the building. The other guard that was shot didn't die. He gave up the names of the other criminals in Davis's "gang". More guys ended up in jail and further charges were leveled against Davis. I don't think he will be able to wiggle out of trouble this time around.

I told Riley that I was thinking of getting out of the detective business. Every time we turn around, one of us is in too much danger. Your career is fairly safe, since the crimes have already been done. What would you like to do? I was thinking of using some of the money we still got from the settlement to open up a restaurant. I have always enjoyed cooking and I can still taste those giant prawns from Thailand.

The End