

The Vigilante
(Chapter 1) (Prologue)

I don't know what drives these evil people. Is there something missing from their consciousness? Do they not have a soul? Are they devoid of any emotions? Do they believe there is no God and no reckoning for their actions? Perhaps the last question is the answer. So maybe they are right. Maybe there is no God and no punishment after their life's end. No one really knows for sure. So my mission is to punish them before they leave this world and help them enter the next.

I am no spring chicken. I have had a long life of successes and failures. When I was young I was reckless. I was also very good at fighting. For a while, I was a semi-professional boxer. I studied Karate, Kung Fu, Jujitsu and any other martial arts I could find. Now, at my age that ship has sailed. Now, I never confront an adversary head on. In fact, he or she never sees me coming. I am not interested in playing fair. I am only interested in justice.

These days, the criminals, robbers, rapists, child molesters all get the benefit of very liberal laws and sympathetic authorities. Rehabilitation, second, third, and forth chances. My personal policy is one felonious strike and you are out. These poor misguided individuals have just had a bad upbringing. They aren't really to blame for their actions. My goal in life is to blame them and make them pay for their actions. I plan to rehabilitate them right out of existence.

The first time I acted on this, I had just purchased groceries at my local supermarket. Upon leaving, I witnessed some hoodlum accosting an elderly lady. He took her purse, knocked her down, and drove off. I did two things. I memorized her license plate, jumped in my car and followed the guy to a 7-Eleven. I saw him take the money out of her purse and enter the market. When he came out, I was waiting for him. I had a tire iron behind my back. I casually asked him for a light. He said, "Fuck off!" I hit him with the tire iron and he fell like a sack of potatoes. Luckily, no one else witnessed my actions. I retrieved her purse from his car, took all the money in his wallet, and drove off. I don't even know if he lived or died. Later that night, I

dropped off her purse at her front door with her money and all his extra money inside. I left a typed note in her purse. Compliments of the Vigilante.

This guy was just a minor blip on the spectrum of bad guys. I stepped up my game to the real bad guys. All the criminals that I mentioned before being let loose without any consequences by the liberal prosecutors, became #1's on my hit list. I watched and listened to the local and national news. Wherever some lowlife was released without paying a price, I was there waiting for him or her.

It is hard to get away with murder in public. Security cameras, witnesses, unforeseen circumstances. It is easy to kill someone in private. Of course, some would call it murder. I called it justice served. I was aware that the police would not approve of a citizen taking the law into his own hands. I also was aware of the details of forensic evidence. Not only did I plan my attacks with precision, I also paid attention to be sure not to leave any DNA evidence at the scene. My MO (modus operandi), as the police would call it, was to lure the subject off to a remote location, so that no one would see or hear what was to transpire.

You would think that I needed to study all these preparations from some kind of book called "Murder for Dummies", but I actually had a whole life time of education. It is called TV and movies. In trying to remain authentic, these scenes showed how to do it, and how not to get caught.

Movies like Nicolas Cage in Thailand Dangerous, Charles Bronson as an assassin. These guys knew how to do it and to make it look like an accident. Undetected poison in a mixed drink, failed brakes over a cliff into the sea. Stage it so that there is no need for a murder investigation.

So by watching the news, I made a list of the most offensive felons that were granted an early release. Then I systematically started to eliminate them one by one.

"Going through the list"

The Vigilante
(Chapter 2)

Being old is an advantage in this type of work. No one expects an old guy to be of any danger to him or her. Also, it is easy to wear a disguise. Baggy pants, perhaps something under the sweater to make you look heavier. A beard, a hat, and a cane. Never wear the same disguise twice. This is just in case you are spotted by some unknown surveillance camera. My normal look is fit and clean shaven.

The first guy on my list was a chronic wife beater. She had left him and moved, but he always was able to track her down. He had been sentenced to a year in prison, but only served three months for good behavior. I set up surveillance on him from the day he was released. He holed up in a 2 bit motel for the first week. He must have had some friends or acquaintances, because he got some computer and was able to find where his ex-wife was living. At first, she had moved to a shelter for abused women, but eventually she found her own place. She held down a job in a beauty salon making fairly low wages.

I followed him to her current residence. He approached her door, but could not enter because she had a security door. When she came to the door I heard him say, you thought you could run from me. You will never be able to leave me. You are my wife. She said you gave up that privilege the first time you hit me.

I had spent many years riding a motorcycle. I still could ride well, but I did not own one. At times, I just rented one and drove around for old times sake. This time, the motorcycle would come in handy for what I had in mind. I changed the plates with an old one I had gotten off another bike in a junk yard. I just forged a new sticker so the cops would not stop me.

He was banging on her door when I drove up. I yelled at him, I am calling the cops. He knew being in the vicinity of his ex-wife, while on parole would get him sent back to prison. So he started to walk away. He yelled

back at her, I will be back. This douche bag was not evil enough to be removed from the planet, but I needed to make him less of a threat.

The guy started to walk toward the bus station. I advanced on my motorcycle and grabbed a nine iron from my saddle bags. This was about the right weight for my plan. As I got close to him, I diverted off the road and up on the sidewalk. He heard the noise from my motor and turned around. As I drove by, I swung my golf club and connected with his knee. I heard a resounding crack and saw him grab his knee and fall down. It will be a while before he can move quickly. This will give his ex-wife some ability to avoid him, if he bothers her again.

He looked up and said WTF? I said, if you bother your ex-wife again, it will be your head that I crack next time instead of your knee. He said I am calling the cops. I said, good luck with that. I am sure they will wonder why you are bothering your ex-wife. I sped away. He could have called the cops, but if he remembered my license plate, it would lead nowhere.

The next guy on my list was a real A-hole. He was one of those movie mongrels with tons of money. He thought his money and position isolated him from the rest of us. So far it had worked. He had been accused of raping dozens of women, but his lawyers always portrayed them as money hungry gold diggers who could not be believed. I believed them.

He was worthy of the ultimate removal.

I needed to plan this carefully. He lived in a multi-level home with a fantastic view overlooking Hollywood. One advantage of that for me, was there were no close neighbors. His large picture windows gave me an unobstructed view of his kitchen and living room.

I had to make this look like an accident. In one of my former jobs, before I retired, I was working for a security company. I had learned all kinds of tricks on how to prevent unauthorized entry into all kinds of homes and businesses. I also knew how to circumvent these security measures. My home was filled with all kinds of gadgets to read lock codes and disarm

security devices. There was a rocky knoll across a ravine from his home. It was the ideal spot to watch his movements. There was adequate foliage for me to hide in. I set up a high powered spotting scope. For the next three days, I watched him through his windows. He was a creature of habit. Shortly after arriving home, he opened a bottle of wine and sat down with his pipe to read some magazine. Apparently he didn't bring any prospective rape victims to his house. I guess he did his dirty work in his impressive studio office. This aided in his display of power. There are several undetectable poisons on the dark web. Drop something in his wine bottle, add something to his tobacco pouch. These would work, but I came up with a better idea. I could have just shot him from my vantage point, but that would lead to a murder investigation. I didn't want that. I set up the following sequence of events. This was going to be a gas leak explosion. I chose next Tuesday to implement my plan. So when he left for work, I entered his home undetected. I went to his garage and found a ladder. Took it to his closet and popped the panel that gave access to his attic. Once inside, I took a small drill from my tool kit pouch and made a tiny hole in the gas pipe leading to his furnace. This didn't produce a large amount of leaked gas, but over time, the entire attic would become a bomb.

I had checked the weather report for this day. It would stay fairly warm until about 8 PM. Then the outside temperature would drop below 50. His thermostat on the heater was set at 70. When the heater fired up, it would ignite the built up gas in the attic, and boom! The resulting explosion would eliminate any evidence of my tampering.

On my exit from his house, I noticed the magazine that he was reading. It was about everything that went on in the movie industry. His face was prominently display on the front cover.

I waited in my car parked down the street. At about 9 PM, I heard a large explosion. I guess my plan was a success. I immediately left the area. My own home was no where near Hollywood.

The next day I read in the papers that a prominent Hollywood movie producer was severally burned in an explosion at his house. He sustained 3rd

degree burns on large parts of his body including his face. I had been going for total elimination, but maybe this was even better. I don't think any up and coming actresses were going to be lured in by not so pretty Mr. Bigshot.

A week later, I read that they had released a “rehabilitated” child molester. Let me see what I can do about that.

The Vigilante
(Chapter 3)

Child molesters, the scum of the earth. They all should be eliminated. I couldn't accomplish that, but I could take care of this guy. He had had multiple convictions, but was said to have been “rehabilitated”. So I was there when he was released. For the first week or so, he kept a low profile. His parole stipulated that he can not be within 10 blocks of a park or a school. So far he had adhered to that rule. But after a week, I saw him using some binoculars to watch school kids depart from the school grounds. You can't rehabilitate someone with a mind like that. It would only be a short while before he reverted back to his old habits. I was going to make sure that didn't happen.

These types of guys usually used their computers to set up a trap. Pose as an interesting guy with a hobby that was attractive to kids. I hacked into his email. Not as hard as you might think. When he left his house, I entered and installed a keyboard virus on his computer. This would send me a copy of every keystroke that he typed. He was fishing for victims. I answered one of his inquiries. He claimed to be a 15 year old looking for someone to join his band. If you are interested, meet me at the old abandoned warehouse on such and such a street at 5 PM. Sometimes it is just me, other times my band mates are also there. That is where we practiced. Our parents objected to the loud noise our music made. We have amplifiers for our guitar pickups and a small generator to supply electricity.

So I set up the trap. I even brought a generator and amplifier. I set it up playing some guitar music. The warehouse was a perfect spot. It had a large partition in the middle. As you entered the front door, you could not see

beyond the partition. So when Mr. Childmolester entered the warehouse, he could hear some music being played. He slowly crept up to the partition door entrance. When he stepped through, I clobbered him with a baseball bat. This did not kill him, but it rendered him unconsciousness.

One of the axioms of this type of work is do not leave a body anywhere to be found. No body, no murder investigation. I backed my SUV up to the warehouse front door. I had already lined the trunk with double plastic sheets, the kind painters used to protect the floors. This was in case I had actually killed him there. I didn't want any blood or fluid leaking around in my trunk. I bound his hands and taped his mouth. Dumped him into the trunk. I drove miles out to a place called Glamis. This was huge sand dunes at the bottom of California, not far from the Mexican border. Lots of dune buggy enthusiasts camped out here. My SUV was a four wheel drive. I didn't want to take a chance on getting stuck. I drove way past the popular giant sand-dune hill called competition hill. I kept going miles from any other people. Then I got my shovel out and started digging. The hole had to be at least 4 feet deep and long enough to accommodate a body. After I was finished with the hole, I retrieved Mr. Childmolester from my trunk. He had woken up during the drive down here. I tossed him into the hole. Before I did that, I removed the tape from his mouth, but kept him bound. He could not climb out of the pit. He started pleading with me. I said, so you are rehabilitated. What were you going to do with the teenage guitar player? He started to cry. I just kept flinging dirt into the hole. Eventually his cries became muffled and then stopped all together. No one was going to find this guy and certainly no one was going to miss him.

The next guy on my list had spent 10 years in prison for murder. He was paroled by our liberal governor. Once again, I was waiting for him when he was released. When prisoners are released, they are given some money, clothes, and a place to reside. Usually it is some boarding house that caters to that sort. Once placed there, a bulletin is posted with potential places to work. Dishwasher, trash pickup, community service jobs. Nothing that will give them much of an income, but a place to start. I watched him for a couple of weeks. He seemed to do the jobs he was given without complaint. I needed to find out more about the circumstances of his incarceration. I

noticed that a couple times a week he visited a neighborhood bar. I decided to go there in person to gain some intel. He never drank too much. Just a couple beers, then went back to the boarding house. The bar had a pool table. I put some quarters in the slots and started to shoot around. He looked up and notice me there alone. When I caught his eye, I asked if he wanted to shoot a game. I'm not much of a pool player he said, but I will give it a try. So we shot a couple games, I won one and he won one when I scratched on the eight ball. Well, I guess neither of us are Minnesota Fats. This brought a smile to his face. We quit and returned to the bar stools. I bought him a beer. I told him I was retired and just enjoyed some leisurely fun. I hoped he didn't think I was gay. After a couple drinks, he told me that he had just gotten out of prison. What were you in for? He said I was convicted of murder. Without me asking what happened, he recounted his story. His sister was raped by some gang member. He found out who it was and confronted him. During the ensuing fight, the guy fell back and hit his head on the corner of the bar rail. Even though the guy deserved what he got, the prosecutor told the jury that he had instigated the fight. They should have considered why you were there in the first place. Some of the other gang members testified that was not the guy who raped my sister. That is not the worst of it. After I was put in prison, those same gang members raped my sister again. She is now living far away and will be traumatized for the rest of her life.

I said how would you like to get even with those gang members. He said, I don't want to do anything that will put me back in prison. I told him that I could use him and would pay him. Also, that I would never ask him to do anything illegal. We agreed to meet another day at a coffee shop not far from the bar.

I was a pretty good judge of character. It seemed like this guy had gotten the raw end of the deal. Maybe that was why the governor pardoned him. I was thinking I could use him in some way with my vigilante projects.

His name was Stan. I was breaking one of my cardinal rules. Always work alone. Still, there were some situations where I could use some help. If I kept him in the dark about the true nature of my actions, maybe it would pan out.

So I hired him to conduct some surveillance. I gave him the equipment to keep him from being detected. I wanted to know how many gang members were still around and what they were up to. He watched them for a week, took pictures with a telephoto lens, and gave me a rundown of their activities. I paid him enough money to keep him satisfied and kept him in the dark about my plans.

Stan identified several of the gang members who were still around. Especially the one who testified against him at his trial.

These guys were dealing in meth. They had set up a makeshift lab in an old garage out of site from the police. I wondered why the police did not shut down this drug operation. One picture Stan showed me told me why. It clearly showed a patrolman taking a bribe from one of the gang members. It also clearly showed his face. I could use that in the future. This was perfect for what I had in mind. After all, meth labs are inherently unstable. One going up in flames would not arouse any suspicion of foul play from outside.

I just needed a clever way to fan the flames, so to speak.

The Vigilante (Chapter 4)

Looking at the photos that Stan took, I could not see a good way to get in to the garage. There always seemed to be guys working inside. Must be a round-the-clock operation. I needed some personal surveillance. I rode my motorcycle around back to the alley behind the garage. There were some rain gutters and pipes leading up to the roof top. I wasn't as lithe as I use to be, but I could still scale a pipe. Once on top of the roof, I tip toed across the garage roof until I was at a large fan vent. The fan was in operation and I suppose it was to remove the vapors from their meth cooking operation. I could vaguely see through to the garage floor. A plan clicked in my brain. I now knew how to proceed. I scaled back down the pipe and rode away. Back in my home, I took a taser out of my gimmick locker. A taser has 50,000 volts of a spark. I modified it using a vibration switch. When it is

dropped, it fires the sparking mechanism. This is going to work just fine. At the grocery store, I bought a 5 lbs sack of general purpose flour. I am sure no one else ever used this for the purpose I had in mind. I put the bag in a back pack along with my modified taser and returned to the back alley behind the garage. Once again, I scaled the pipe. When I got to the fan, it was whirling away. I cut the bag open and dumped the entire contents down through the fan vent. I could hear the workers saying WTF. I quickly backed 10 feet away from the fan vent and tossed the taser in. It made its way through the fan blades and hit the floor. The fan had pulled much of the flour off the floor and produced a haze of powder. When the taser went off, the entire garage exploded in a giant ball of fire. I am sure the meth chemicals added to the blast. It is a good thing I was not near the fan vent. I would not have survived. I quickly slithered down the pipe and rapidly sped away. I was about 3 miles away when I heard the fire trucks.

The next day I read in the papers about a meth lab that blew up. The police captain said they were not aware of this drug operation that took place right under their noses. I sent the photo of the corrupt cop that Stan had taken to the police captain with a typed note. I am sure this police officer knew about this operation.

Stan never knew my home address and the only way we contacted each other was to meet at the coffee shop.

Two days later, I was sipping espresso when Stan sat down at my table. He said, "I want in!" I said, what do you mean? I know that it was you who blew up the meth lab. I have no problem with that. I thought you didn't want to do anything illegal. I don't know how you did it, but apparently you got away with out suspicion. I try my best. If you want to become my assistant, I still have some rules. For your own safety, I will remain as anonymous as possible. You will not know my real name, where I live, and what I really look like. I had always worn one of my disguises when meeting him. Our only contact will be this coffee shop. Do you have any problem with that? Not at all.

My next focus was going to be on human trafficking. There was still open

prostitution up near Hollywood boulevard. I was too old to spearhead this operation. I told Stan what I had in mind. He was to solicit one of the young girls. I rented a car for him to use in the operation. The plan was for him to pick up one of the girls, go to the motel they used and see if he can get her to supply him with some information. Make sure you tell her that you are not a cop and that you have a rich client who is interested in exposing the ring. Pay her the regular rate and slip some extra money on the side as an incentive. Don't go through with the sexual arraignment. This will let her know that you are legit. Tell her that I will pay her handsomely for any future help. Your only risk is you might get caught by the police for soliciting.

Stan did what I asked. He said she was reluctant to accept our offer. Something about that is a good way to get killed. I understand her fear. Try again next week with the same girl. Tell her that she can meet up with me at the coffee shop. This might loosen up some of her reluctance.

Again, he did as I asked. Several days later, she showed up at the coffee shop. I was wearing one of my disguises as I always did. What is your name? My name is Bunny. No, I want your real name if we are going to be partners. Her name was Adele. She had been brought up from Mexico by the Cartels. There was a grooming house (if you could call it that) in the general vicinity. This is where they made it clear to the girls what they must do to work off the cost of bringing them across the border. Adele was still not on board with my plan. We were feeding her extra money, more than she made in a day. She told me that she was afraid of Mario her pimp. He treated her harshly and took too high of a percentage of her earnings. I said, how about I give Mario an attitude adjustment. What is that? Don't worry, you will know when it happens.

That evening I followed Mario home. I waited until he retired for the night. He had consumed several bottles of beer and a couple shots of JD. Breaking into his house was a piece of cake. He woke up with a knife at his throat. I told him that I was sent my the Cartel. We had heard he was taking more than his share of the prostitution money and that we didn't approve. If this keeps up you will disappear from the landscape. Do you understand? He

gave off an up and done nod. Just for good measures, I made a thin slice across his neck. Not enough to be a danger, but enough that it would show up in daylight.

The next time Adele met us, she looked much more relaxed. How's it going? Mario started to treat me with kid gloves. Not sure what happened, but lately he has been wearing a scarf around his neck. I am what happened. I have resources that can protect you. If you help us break the trafficking ring, there is a large reward in it for you. I know where the other girls are kept. I will give you the address, but I don't want to be seen with either of you again. I have risked my life already with what I have given you. I understand. We will not jeopardized you any further.

This operation was not going to be as easy as the last several ones I did. The Cartel has lots of resources and lots of solders. I have to be extra cautious with my next move.

First I need to recon the building where Adele gave me the address. If this sounds like a military operation. You are correct. I did my tours in Iraq and later in Afghanistan. Among my collection of gadgets are some illegal armaments. Not exactly an arsenal, but enough to do some serious damage. I am not trying to blow up the holding cells where the girls are kept, I just want to get in there and free those who want to be freed. I wonder what Stallone is doing these days. I could use Rambo about now. Well, this is not a movie, it is real life and that doesn't always work out for the best.

I set up surveillance with both me and Stan. Him during the day, me at night. I wanted to see if we could spot any movement. Girls being sent out, new victims being brought in. Nothing unusual happened for about a week. Then a van pulled up and some girls were herded out. Later that night, a new truck pulled in and I just got a glimpse of a dozen or so young girls brought in. The building looked like an old hotel. No longer in service, but lots of rooms. I guessed this is where they oriented the girls. Oriented, now that is the wrong word for rape. That is what is happening to these unfortunate women. Most looked like they weren't even 18. I had fulfilled my promise to Adele. I gave her \$10K and a one way plane ticket to Mexico city. That is

where she said her family resided. So at least she was out of the life and safe. I had witnessed about a dozen or so Cartel solders running the place. I also saw a few rich looking dudes enter and leave. I imagined they were paying a high price for access to the new girls.

With this new information, I needed to meet up with Stan and compare notes. We needed come up with a plan to free the girls. I waited 2 hours for Stan to show up at the coffee shop. He never showed. There could only be one reason. Someone from the Cartel must have spotted him and taken him. They would be torturing him trying to get him to give me up. Only problem with that is he didn't know anything. I needed to rescue Stan before it was too late. I didn't have time to come up with a well thought out plan. This was going to get messy.

The Vigilante (Chapter 5)

I had been racking my brain trying to come up with a scenario where I could save Stan, free the girls, and not get killed. I decided there was no such scenario. I had seen guys approach the front door, knock, and speak their request through the tiny slide opening. When they flashed the cash, they were allowed entry. I guess that there would be a pat down before allowed to proceed and further. My plan, if you could call it that, was simple. I would pretend to be one of the johns asking for young girls. I would flash some cash and hopefully gain entry. Once the door was opened, all hell would break loose. No clever elaborate sneaky plan here. Straight on Rambo style. There was just no time.

I wore a large coat, had my cane, and it didn't take much of a disguise to appear as an old man. Under my coat were four 9 mm guns with silencers attached. I also had a couple knives in side pockets.

When I knocked on the door, I held up my roll of cash. It was just a \$100 bill with blank dollar sized paper sheets rolled up inside. If this went sideways, I didn't want these creeps to actually profit from my stupidity. I said Mario sent me. He said I could get some untouched young girls at this address. If

you recall, Mario was Adele's pimp. I was hoping that would aid in me getting inside. I heard the latch unhook and the door opened. Two muscled dudes greeted me as I stepped inside and shut the door. I held up the roll of fake cash and then dropped it on the floor. Their eyes followed it down. I pulled my first gun and shot both of them. One died immediately, the other grabbed my leg and was trying to stand up. I took one of my knives out and shoved it into his ear all the way up to the hilt. It reminded me of how to kill the zombies in the series, "The Walking Dead". I hoped the silencer did its job. There was a set of stairs headed up to the second floor. When I reached the top of the stairs, there were two guards in the hallway. They must have assumed I was just another client. I shot them too. I saw no one else in the hallway. I went from door to door and opened each one. If there was a client inside, I gave him the same treatment as the door keepers. As far as I was concerned, these dudes were nothing more than child molesters. I told the girls to leave. Some did, some froze. I will return, if I am not dead, and encourage them to leave.

So far so good. Another set of stairs leading up to a third floor. Where are the new girls kept? There was only one way to find out. So far, I had taken down four of the dozen or so Cartel men. The others must be dealing with the new arrivals and with Stan. There were no clients on this floor, therefore, there were no guards. As I walked the corridor, I heard what sounded like someone getting a beating. When I opened the door, sure enough, there was Stan tied to a chair and two brutes working him over. I didn't hesitate. I shot them both. I took out one of my knives and cut Stan free. He was barely conscious. He saw me and I could see a spark of recognition in his eyes. If you can walk, the path to the outside is clear. He got up somehow and hobbled to the door. He turned around and asked, "Do you want some help?" I said, no I've got it covered. Do you know where they keep the new arrivals? He must have seen something before they tried to beat him senseless. He said, there is a mini conference room right past Rm 707. Then he slipped out the door.

I was on a roll. No reason to stop now. When I opened the double doors, I spotted seven men and one old woman. They were securing the girls hands with ropes hung from the ceiling. Three of the girls were still free. The men

were in the process of evaluating their worth. They were all scantily clad. I started firing as soon as I cleared the doors. I had hit 5 of them before two of them rushed me as I tried to pull out another gun. When he charged me, his forward momentum knocked me down and made the gun slip out of my hand. It went flying across the room.

Now the second guy started pounding me in the face. I tried my best to fend him off. Ten years ago I would have. The other guy picked up a chair and was about to smash my head in when a hole suddenly appeared in his torso. One of the girls had the wits about her to know who the bad guys were. She had picked up my gun and apparently knew how to use it. The guy who had been pounding me, got off and started after the girl. This gave me enough time to pull out another one of my guns. Bang, it was all over. The girl gave my gun back and said others would be coming. I said, there are no others. The path to the street is clear. There is one more thing I need to do in this room. The old woman was down on her knees pleading for her life. I said of all the evil people in the room, you are the worse. As a woman, how could you abide by letting these men defile all these young girls. That being said, I shot her right between the eyes. I asked the girl, her name was Maria, to see if she can get all the girls dressed and then out of the building. But before you do, I need to go to my car and retrieve something. Shouldn't we call the police? If you do that, I will surly be arrested. You can see how many Cartel solders I killed. The police would not approve. Well, I approve and will do as you ask. Many of the others were so traumatized, that it took a while before they realized that the threat had been eliminated. I went to my car that I had parked not too far down the street and retrieved a stash of cash I always kept for emergencies. I returned to the building and gave Maria \$1000. Take all the girls to a safe motel. In a few days, meet me at this coffee shop. I told her the name of the place and the address. It was not too far from where they were now. I needed to burn down this building. Otherwise, when the Cartel bosses heard about their loss, they would just restart to whole operation. Also, I needed to leave this place before someone called the cops.

I went down to the bottom floor and found steps that lead down to kind of a basement. I did find some fuel containers and some matches. I also found a table with a pile of cash. There were some empty duffle bags laying around.

I stuffed them with all the cash. I didn't have time to count it, but it looked to be somewhere in the order of \$500K. I poured fuel all around the basement cabinets and lit it.

I had previously checked all the rooms. Maria had gone room to room and made sure all the girls left. The fire took off and so did I with the bags full of cash.

When I stepped out of the front door, there was Stan. He had recovered somewhat, but still looked terrible. I said, how about following me home. I can help bandage you up. Without a word, he walked behind me back to my car. We both were beat up pretty bad. If this had been Rodeo Drive, someone would have called the police. In this part of town, we just looked like another two unlucky homeless dudes or winos.

Back in my own home, Stan said this is the first time you trusted me enough to know where you live. Stan, you put your life on the line for me as part of one of my Vigilante operations. I owe you a lot. Our job is not done. I showed him the duffle bag full of cash. I said, a good portion of this is yours. I suggest you take it and go find your sister. Maybe this will help both of you recover from the unfairness that life has treated you. But before you leave, maybe you can help me with one last thing.

I am meeting with Maria, the girl who saved me from a sure death. Her and all the girls who were caught in the Cartels web need to receive some compensation for their trials. I want to give each of them \$20K to help them, either return to their families in Mexico, or establish a foothold here in the U.S. I think they have earned their right to stay. The other thing I would like you to do is contact Adele. Tell her about what transpired as a result of her information and help. Since she knows what these girls went through, maybe she can give them some guidance.

Two days later, Maria showed up at the coffee shop. I told her about the Cartel money. Stan was also there. While explaining to Maria what I had planned, who shows up, none other than Adele herself.

Adele says that if any of these girls want to remain in the U.S. they need some kind of employment. What kind of jobs are they suited for, I asked? Many of them have experience back in Mexico as hair stylists or beauty parlor attendants. That gave me an idea of what to do with the remainder of the Cartels cash stash. I said, how about we use the Cartel's money to rent a shop and set it up as both a hair style and beauty salon. Adele, are you willing to stay in the U.S. and spearhead this operation? Now that I don't work as a street walker, I am ready for something legitimate and satisfying.

Stan spoke up. I kind of need a job too. If Maria and Adele approve, I can help them set up. They may need an American citizen to help with the permits and to be a front man. I saw Stan and Adele exchange a look. I think there was something going on with those two. Adele said that sounds like a good idea. About half the girls wanted to stay, the other half wanted to return home to Mexico.

Other than Stan, no one else knows what I really look like and where I live. I was still wearing one of my disguises. No Cartel solders are alive to know either. The newspaper had a field day reporting on the old hotel fire. They found 17 charred bodies after the flames were put out. That sounds about right. Thirteen Cartel solders, three child molester clients, and one evil old woman. The police had no clue on what had gone down.

Several weeks later, I was leaving the same grocery store as before. Deja vu. I witnessed some guy trying to break in to someone's car with a crow bar. I approached him and called out. Get away from me old man. I swung my leg in a wide arc and connected with his rib cage. He cringed down and hobbled off. I guess my kung fu hasn't completely left me. I can see my job as The Vigilante is still needed.

The End