

Chapter Fifty-One

John Raymond sat at his kitchen table eating breakfast, transfixed by the Tuesday morning paper's headline and attached article.

Wife of State Senator John Raymond found brutally murdered. *Police are baffled by the appearance of the Senator's wife in the Golden Gate scrub brush. A department spokesperson indicated that the legislator's wife was most likely strangled at a remote location and her body dumped among the park's dense foliage afterwards in an attempt to conceal the crime. At present, no suspects are in custody, however, during yesterday's interview with the Senator, concerns were voiced about his refusal to sponsor legislation favorable to the banking*

industry. When asked for specifics, the Senator volunteered the name of only one organization, NAPCO, an international financial conglomerate whose U.S. headquarters are located right here in downtown San Francisco. Calls to NAPCO have gone unanswered ...

I hope I've made the right decision, he said to himself. Those son's of bitches so much as said that they would do something if I didn't heed their demands. Well, I ignored them and poor Connie had to pay the price for my self-righteous bullshit. No, he thought to himself while staring at the newspaper, wondering if he had made a false accusation, there is no other explanation for something as heinous as that. The paper fell from his hands as tears began to roll down his cheeks. I never thought it would really come to this, he said to himself. Why didn't I tell her how much I loved her, why? And what harm would it have caused to have done what they wanted. Was I really protecting my constituents? Credit is like a drug but drugs are something you have to actively seek out. Any debt that they amassed is of their own doing, the banks didn't force them to use the easy credit. But, then again, what makes the bankers any different than drug dealers? As he reached for a length of paper toweling to dry his eyes, the telephone rang.

"Senator, it's Diane Boxer. I'm so sorry. I read today's paper ..."

"Thank you for calling," he curtly interrupted, signaling his desire for solitude.

"I'm sure you don't, but if you need any help planning services and all, please call me."

"I'll let you know when and where it'll be but so far, the M.E. has not released her body," he said, his voice cracking.

"I know that I shouldn't ask, but have the police told you anything that the papers haven't printed?"

"Like what?"

"Well, like who may have done such a terrible thing to my best friend?" Diane asked, sobbing.

"No, nothing at all."

"What about the bank mentioned in the article, do you think that they were involved?"

"I'm not at liberty to discuss that with you, Diane. I really wish that I could tell you more but there really isn't-- wait a minute."

"Yes?"

"Didn't you say that you were out with Connie on Friday night?"

"Yes, she left a little before I did."

"Left where?" he asked suspiciously.

"Uh," she hesitated, "we went to a little gathering."

"Did Connie leave alone?"

"Yes, she walked out by herself. You know, senator ..."

"It's John, Diane," he broke in, "I don't feel very official right now."

"OK, but I just wanted to say that the police have already asked me the same questions."

"I assumed that they would but I needed to hear it for myself."

"Is there anything else I can do, John?"

"Not unless you can bring her back," he said, his voice trailing off as he lowered the receiver. Hmm, *she walked out by herself*, he reflected, I wonder why she put it that way? Well, maybe she was just being literal. Anyway, right now, I need to concentrate on those animals. I need to come up with an idea that will put them away for what they've done.