

### Chapter Nine

"Is something wrong, young man?" the elderly receptionist inquired, as Mick nervously stared at the wall clock.

"I'm here, ain't I?"

"The doctor is on the telephone, he will be with you shortly," she replied, curtly.

"Yeah, whatever."

"You can go in now," she said, seconds later, when a soft chime signaled his availability.

Mick settled into the recliner and waited.

Vigo, seated at his desk, closed the travel magazine that he had been reading and walked the short distance to his interview chair. "Nice to see you again, Mick," he said, "have there been any further revelations since your last visit?"

"Revelations?"

"Regarding your childhood obedience ministrations."

"Not really," he replied, while rubbing the back of his neck, "but I've been losin' time."

"Please clarify."

"I can't account for hours and sometimes, even days."

"Hmm, very interesting--go on."

"I've been afraid to discuss this with anyone but ..."

"Yes, yes, what is it that you fear discussing?"

"I think I have amnesia."

Vigo stared at him while mindlessly tapping his pen on a yellow legal pad and then suddenly, stopped. "Tell me about your amnesia theory," he asked with a nod.

"It's like my life has a hole in it."

"Can you be more specific?"

"Well, there are a few years from my past that are totally blank. I don't know where I was, what I did or, for that matter, anything else."

"Where does the blank period begin and end?"

"It started shortly after my time at Juilliard."

"Are there any friends or relatives who might be able to fill in the missing information?"

"No."

"What about your friend Melanie?"

"We met after that," he said, as a lone tear fell from his eye," she helped me find my way but I never really told her about this stuff."

"How long ago did you two meet?"

"Been about four years," he replied, hoarsely.

"As you may recall," Vigo stated, while cracking his knuckles and thumbing through Mick's chart, "your insurance will not support a lengthy course of therapy, so, for the purpose of expediency, I would suggest hypnosis. How does that strike you?"

"I thought that hypno-stuff was all a bunch of crap, good for a laugh but nothing else."

"I agree," Vigo commented, with a suppressed chuckle, "that there have been less than ethical practitioners who have found various non-medical uses for hypnosis, however, I assure you that it is perfectly safe and that the information gained may help to speed your recovery."

"OK, doc, whatever you say ... let's get started."

Vigo walked to his desk, lowered the writing pad and buzzed the receptionist. "Did the next patient cancel as expected?" he asked.

"Yes, Dr.," came the muffled reply.

"Well," he said, as he lowered his thin body into the leather interview chair with a whoosh, "it seems that I have an opening; roll up your sleeve."

"My sleeve? Aren't you gonna swing a pocket watch or somethin'?"

"No time for that," he said, as he rose and walked towards a small closet that adjoined his office to retrieve a syringe, a pair of gloves and a small bottle of clear liquid.

"What's that?" Mick questioned, with terrified eyes.

"Sodium amytal."

"Are you sure?"

"Don't worry, you'll feel like you're floating and besides, it's much quicker than the pocket watch."

Mick looked away as Vigo carefully inserted a small needle into a prominent vein in his left forearm.

"Ouch."

"OK, we're ready," Vigo said, as he taped the connected tubing to his arm and gently pushed the syringe's plunger. "I want you to begin counting backwards from one hundred starting, now."

Within seconds, Mick began to slur and repeat himself.

"How do you feel?" Vigo asked, with a softened tone.

"Relaxed."

"Where are you right now?"

"In your office."

"What year is it?"

"Uh, two thousand and four ... I think," he whispered.

"What is your name?"

"Mick, I mean Michael Carrera."

"Where do you live?"

"A shitty apartment in the Bronx."

"Do you live with your parents?"

"No, man, I'm too old for that an' besides, they're dead."

"Do you have a job?"

"Sometimes."

"What do you do?"

"I play the horn."

"Where?"

"Wherever they'll pay me."

"OK, take a deep breath. When you are finished exhaling,  
you will have the power to go back in time."

"I can't seem to let it out."

"You are doing fine ... just let the air out slowly."

"OK, I think I did it."

"We are moving back in time two years, tell me about your  
life."

"It's cold, man an' it sucks in here."

"Look around and tell me what you see."

"An' old pizza box and dirty laundry--there's shit all over  
the place."

"Where are you?"

"I'm home; I have to pay the rent an', oh crap, I don't  
have it."

"Don't worry, it will be taken care of. Let us go back  
another two years, tell me where you are."

"I'm in bed."

"Are you alone?"

"No."

"Who is with you?"

"Mel."

"How do you feel?"

"Warm and safe."

"What else?"

"Her perfume, she smells so good."

"Are you in your home?"

"Shit no, she won't go there."

"Why?"

"Too dirty or somethin'."

"Does she live nearby?"

"Not too far, Riverdale."

"You are doing well. You are happy and comfortable. I want you to go back two more years to the year two thousand."

Mick's eyes widened as he drew further into the confines of the chair while making gurgling sounds.

"What is happening, Mick?" Vigo asked, with concern.

Mick did not answer but instead lifted his arms in a warding off gesture.

"Mick, tell me what you see."

"He won't let me," he stuttered.

"Who is, he?" Vigo demanded, with alarm.

"I can't, I can't ... gooo away," he shouted.

Reaching for the syringe, Vigo slowly pressed the plunger. As the amytal surged through Mick's vein, the ranting ceased. He

removed the needle, discarded it along with the syringe and walked to his desk. Standing by the intercom, he stared at Mick's slumped body for several moments, then reached for the button and pressed. "I have a bit of a problem here," he said, "cancel the rest of the day."