

An Early Start

Chapter 1

John O' Connell was just a normal every day photographer who worked for the Irish Times. He worked with a man called Patrick Horgan who was a writer and happened to be John's best friend. So John was very shocked when he heard the doorbell ringing at a quarter to five in the morning. At first he thought it was just the postman but when he opened door Patrick Horgan stumbled through the door.

"Quick, fill your suitcase with anything you might need" Patrick said in an urgent tone.

"But wh...?" John attempted to ask.

"No time to explain just pack your biggest suitcase to the brim." Patrick was looking warily out the front window as though he was being followed. John thought he might have lost his mind but if he couldn't trust his best friend whom could he trust.

When he came back downstairs with a bursting suitcase, Patrick hurried him out the back door and to the end of the garden. They clambered over the back wall and hopped into Patrick's car which he had left there to aid their escape. When they were on the main road John bombarded Patrick with questions but Patrick was just as secretive as before and said that he would explain everything when they got there. After a while they turned off on to a small country road John had no idea where they were because Patrick was driving with no lights on as if he didn't want his presence to be known. Just as dawn was breaking a loud bang rung through the air and a bullet shattered the back window and shot into the back of John's seat. They both bent over double as they tried to put themselves out of the shooters vision. Another bullet smashed into the rear view mirror and they could count themselves very lucky that none of the glass injured them in any way. Suddenly Patrick turned sharply into a small gateway, which led up to a small barn of some sort. When they were about 100 metres from the door Patrick pressed a button on the side of the wheel and the door slid open. They drove into the barn and Patrick pressed the button again which closed the door and locked them in. There was a humming noise and lights flickered on and John saw that this wasn't just any

old barn. It had a bank of monitors in the corner which showed the outside of the barn from several different angles. There was a shelf which had every weapon you could ever need from guns to daggers and hammers. There was what looked like a room better equipped with more medical equipment than John had seen in any hospital, there was also a room that had enough food to feed an army. Suddenly there was a loud bang and John instinctively dived on the ground but Patrick didn't even flinch at the sound of the bullet and he explained that the walls were made out of vanadium and it would take a nuclear bomb to penetrate it. As soon as John was relaxed he asked Patrick a hundred and one questions on why they were at an abandoned barn equipped with everything you could ever need and why there was men following them and trying to kill them. He explained that their rival newspaper *The Daily Mail* was trying to get rid of the two of them so that they would win more awards at the Scoop of the year awards in London.

Chapter 2

When all this was explained Patrick offered John an anti-shock pill which John took gladly and after a while he calmed down. They then went over to a corner of a room which contained a desk that seated twenty people. There was a large whiteboard on the wall with a bucket full of markers. They discussed what they should do. John suggested that they just wait until the people from the newspaper *The Daily Mail* left. Patrick replied that that would take too long because they probably had some food and ammunition in the boot of their car, or they could get someone else to bring them more food. They eventually decided to surprise the people who were staking out in front of the barn. They began to prepare. They each took a small handgun, two smoke bombs and a dagger. Then they started up the car and Patrick threw a flashbomb out one of the bullet proof windows and they sped away from the barn before their enemies had time to react. John announced that they had ten hours until the Scoop of the Year awards commenced.

Chapter 3

They decided to stay in a hotel about one kilometre from the centre of the West End where the awards were to take place. They still had their weapons and when they got into their room they immediately locked themselves in. They then emptied the suitcase with the weapons and they strapped them around themselves using their belts as holsters. They were about to discuss more plans when suddenly the window shattered and they both instinctively dived behind the bed. They ripped out their guns and they began to load their guns when a chunk of the wall broke away mere inches above their heads. They heard muffled footsteps coming towards them and Patrick pointed his gun towards the ceiling and shot. He shot the light bulb and it went out and since it was only six o' clock in the morning the lone gunman could not see a thing. The two friends burst into the hallway and scared the living daylights out of a cleaner as they sprinted around the corner and down the stairs. John threw the key to the receptionist and they ran out the door and they looked for shelter in the cover of a newspaper stand. Patrick counted to three and the two friends sprinted from their cover and up the bustling street they entered a café and tried to look calm as they sat down at the back of the shop and a coffee each. For the rest of the day they moved from shop to shop seeking cover in each shop for a half hour or so. They bought themselves new suits and they headed to the theatre where the awards were taking place. It turned out that they won an award for being the best two man team of a writer and a photographer. When they went up on stage to collect their award they could see the chief editor of the *Daily Mail* absolutely fuming in the front row. When they got back to their seats they laughed until they were crying.