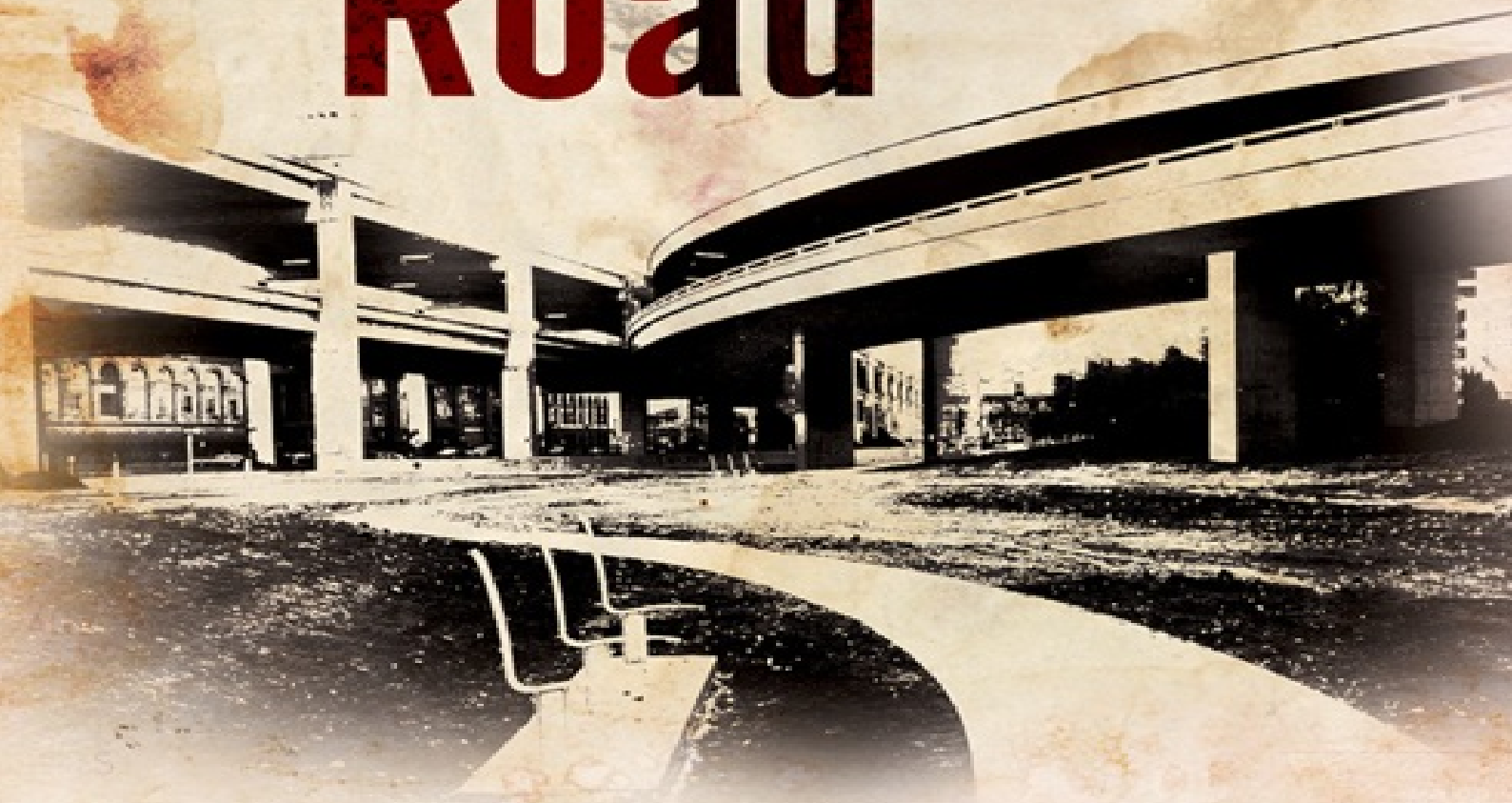


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KIRK RUSSELL

Counterfeit Road



“A city storied with characters gains a relentless new hero
with Ben Raveneau”

Michael Connelly on A Killing in China Basin

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A KILLING IN CHINA BASIN *
COUNTERFEIT ROAD *

** available from Severn House*

COUNTERFEIT ROAD

A Ben Raveneau Mystery

Kirk Russell



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*For my mother, who refused to pack up four kids and move after my father died, and grew a business
and kept us in the same house, the same schools, right on through.*

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The video ran two minutes twenty-eight seconds, about the length of your average YouTube. When Raveneau hit play the camera panned from left to right, catching winter sunlight reflecting off windows of the Ferry Building. A glittery sliver of bay showed as the victim, Alan Krueger, and the unknown shooter waited for a car to pass before crossing into the shadows of the lot once used by commuters beneath the former Embarcadero Freeway.

They threaded through parked cars, Krueger ahead, shooter trailing, and once again Raveneau got the feeling they were friends, or at least knew each other. He let it run another five seconds then clicked the mouse and froze the frame. He stared at the screen.

The videotape was made with a hand-held Sony camcorder and shipped four days ago in a used Amazon box from a FedEx drop in Los Angeles. It arrived here addressed to him, Inspector Benjamin Raveneau, Cold Case Unit, Homicide Detail, Room 459, Hall of Justice, San Francisco. That was two days ago, Tuesday, January 11, 2011, exactly twenty-two years to the day after the murder of Alan Krueger.

Raveneau had cut the packing tape, opened the box, and emptied out the Styrofoam peanuts. He left the cassette taped to the bottom of the box and walked it down the hallway to the video unit in the Crime Scene Investigation lab. In the lab they eased off the tape holding the videotape cassette and tested the sticky side for fingerprints and DNA. But whoever sent it was very careful.

Whoever sent it stuck a white label on the black plastic videotape cassette that read 1/11/1989. Raveneau took that date to the cold case closet. He pulled the murder log for '89, looked up January eleventh and found the Krueger files. In the Crime Scene Investigation lab they produced ten digitized copies of the videotape. They gave him the ten CDs, emailed him another, and he forwarded that to his Cold Case partner, Elizabeth la Rosa. He had watched the videotape at least a dozen times since. He started it again now and the shooter and Krueger cleared the cars, the dark hulk of the Embarcadero decks towering above them as they moved toward two concrete pylons.

They moved diagonally away and as they got smaller the steady-handed filming turned jumpy. In the video unit they said whoever made the tape had started walking, probably following Krueger and the shooter. Raveneau zoomed in now. He froze the video when Krueger had only seconds to live.

Alan Krueger worked for the Secret Service for fourteen years before quitting in 1986 and becoming an independent contractor. At the Secret Service he'd been a counterfeit expert. He was carrying sixty-one new US one hundred dollar bills in the left breast pocket of his coat, the bills folded and held by a silver money clip. The second bullet, the fatal shot, passed through a corner of the bill but missed the clip.

Two homicide inspectors who used to be called the go-go twins, Ed Govich and Henry Goya, caught the case. Goya and Govich showed the bills to the Secret Service and were told they weren't counterfeit. That was well documented. Yet yesterday Raveneau retrieved the bills from storage. He signed them out and handed them off to a Secret Service agent he knew, figuring they were worth another look.

The rest of Krueger's effects were stored out at Hunters Point in Building 606. Krueger was left-handed and wore a hand-tooled leather shoulder holster on his right side. He was licensed to carry a gun but the holster was empty. The holster was out at Hunter's Point. So was a wallet found near his

body. The wallet was lying against one of the concrete pylons holding up the freeway. It was covered with newspapers. ~~No driver's license, credit cards, or smaller bills were found.~~ The wallet was empty. Two forged high-quality but fake passports were found in his coat, one Canadian for an Alan McCormick, the other a US passport with the name Allen Jons. In the right front pocket of his pants was a piece of paper with 'Captain Frank' written on it and a phone number that PacBell had identified as a pay phone at San Francisco Airport.

Goya and Govich chased the Captain Frank lead and without any good place to start they worked the wharves and local marinas. They talked to boat captains and harbor masters. They canvassed. They knocked on doors. They didn't get anywhere.

In the video the shooter shortened his step now. He drifted behind Krueger, who turned with a gesture Raveneau read as frustration, as though they had started to argue. When he turned back, his left leg jerked up spasmodically as the first bullet struck. The video barely caught it. If the cameraman intended a clean recording he failed.

Krueger fell and the shooter closed. He read as a dark shape leaning over Krueger. He was fast, efficient, without hesitation, and though in all his previous watching of the video Raveneau had frozen the action at this spot, he didn't now. He let it roll and thought about the two newly-wed Canadians who had found Krueger's body. He was trying to locate them and so far had learned they divorced in 2001. Both claimed not to have heard any gunshots, though an anonymous caller had. The caller didn't leave a name but did leave the time of day he heard the shots, 3:42 p.m.

The Canadians also noted the time they found the body, 3:45, so were probably close enough to have heard the shots. But maybe they were talking or distracted by something else. He remembered how noisy it used to be, the big trucks and busses, the echoes. The old Embarcadero Freeway was gone, demolished after the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, and the Ferry Building where the video started, renovated and reborn as a food court and now a popular tourist destination. He was there that morning. He bought a coffee, and carried it outside across the promenade and the tracks of the light rail system and worked his way down and tried to find where the video maker had stood.

Raveneau's cell phone buzzed now as the video went dark. He turned the computer off as he answered, knowing it would be la Rosa.

'They're here. I took them into the kitchen.'

'How many are there?'

'Three. Two that look like regular Secret Service and a third who looks like he's in charge.'

'Then it's about the money. The bills must be counterfeit and they're worried about something. I'll be there in a few minutes.'

The conference room off the Cold Case Unit office had a few beat-up chairs and no table, so the kitchen was where they usually met. The kitchen had two tables pushed together and covered with a striped tablecloth. The Secret Service agents took up the corner of the table that put the refrigerators behind them.

‘Can I get anyone water, a soda, or anything to eat?’ Raveneau asked.

‘We’re not here for lunch.’

The one who answered was Nate Brooks, assistant special agent in charge. The other two agents were Jack Swensen, who Raveneau had turned over sixty of the hundred dollar bills to yesterday, and Michelle Raff, a counterfeiting expert.

The bills were no longer in a San Francisco Police Department money envelope, instead were individually wrapped in clear plastic slips and in bags with the Secret Service stamp. Raff looked like she was guarding them. Swensen looked uncomfortable and Raveneau guessed there was some sort of game plan here that Swensen didn’t like. He nodded toward the money.

‘Thanks for returning the bills.’

‘We’re not,’ Brooks said, and Raff followed with ‘They’re counterfeit. We were wrong in 1989.’

She said that as if she owned the mistake but she was probably eleven years old at the time. Brooks wasn’t there either, also too young. Raveneau took a closer look at him, trying to get a read, trying to understand why anything about this meeting would make him tense. Watchful eyes stared back at him.

Nowadays, one hundred dollar bills were all big-head Ben Franklins with the colors and squiggly lines, but these notes predated those changes. These were what an advertising company would not market as ‘classic’ bills, the design used for decades, the design before counterfeiters upped the game following advances in printers.

Brooks reached over. He touched the bag in front of Agent Raff.

‘These were printed in the same series as bills used last summer to buy weapons grade explosives. Those bills were laundered through two foreign banks, one in the Cayman Islands, and the other in Mexico City. Both banks took in substantial quantities, as in two million, give or take.’

‘Just like these?’

‘Exactly like these, same series, same print run, and though you wouldn’t see many of this style inside the US, there’s a lot of cash floating around the world. The dollar is still the world’s reserve currency and sometimes caches pop up. The banks probably didn’t want the bills, but they have relationships, and their client is a black market weapons dealer who moves a lot of money so they took them in.’ He paused before adding, ‘We were already tracking this particular weapons dealer.’

‘Why?’

‘It has to do with a threat I can’t talk to you about yet. In fact, I’m here to ask for your complete cooperation. We need your murder files on Alan Lansing Krueger. How these counterfeit bills tie in or why Krueger had them, I don’t know the answer to. But as we learn information and as I can, I’ll pass it on to you.’

‘Is that why there are three of you here?’

‘Special Agent Swensen could have come alone, but I don’t want any misunderstanding. We want to work with you.’

‘OK, well, the murder files are on my desk. I’ll go get them and you read through them in here, and then decide what you need.’

‘We’d rather take them with us and get more time to go through them.’

‘Of course you would, but that’s not going to happen.’

‘I’m not bullshitting you when I say this is a very significant threat.’

‘And I’m not stonewalling you. I’ll give you plenty of time to read but I don’t think you’re going to find there is that much in these files.’

La Rosa was at her desk when Raveneau walked back into their office. She took off her reading glasses. She watched as he picked up the Krueger files and the murder logbook for 1989.

‘I’ll be right back.’

In the kitchen he opened the logbook and showed them the entry with Krueger’s murder. He explained the columns with date, time, location, victim’s name, if known, and the inspectors assigned to the case and their summary.

He slid the murder files out to the middle of the table like a plate of sandwiches.

‘Inspectors Goya and Govich didn’t have much to go on. They had a piece of paper with a phone number and the name Captain Frank, but that turned out to be a phone booth at SFO. The Secret Service did their own investigation but they didn’t share what they found with us, so you probably already know a lot more than I do.’

He looked at each of them. ‘I’ll give you fifteen minutes or so to read. Then we can talk.’

When he returned to his desk he slid one of the CD copies of the murder videotape into his coat pocket and asked la Rosa, ‘Want to go across the street to Roma and get a coffee?’

‘Aren’t they still in there?’

‘They’re reading.’

‘That won’t take long.’

When he shrugged, she stood up.

‘All right, I’m ready for coffee anyway.’

Everybody shares the same elevator in the Hall of Justice and you can wait awhile for a ride. When Raveneau and la Rosa returned from across the street there was a wait and the Secret Service agents were a little agitated as they got back upstairs. Also, the kitchen smelled like popcorn, so they probably weren’t alone in here and didn’t get much of a chance to talk. Brooks avoided eye contact now, focusing on the cuff of his shirt as if something there had suddenly drawn his attention. The mood changed as Raveneau laid the CD on the tablecloth.

‘What do you want me to copy?’ Raveneau asked, and sounded like he was at a baseball game getting a head count before he went for hot dogs and beer.

‘Everything,’ Brooks said. ‘And what’s that in front of you?’

‘A copy of a videotape we received Tuesday.’ He turned to Raff. ‘I’ve never known the Secret Service to look at counterfeit bills and mistake them for real bills. Are you sure it was a mistake?’

‘Inspector, it was before my time, but I’m sure it was a mistake.’

‘Would you mistake them?’

‘No, but now we know what to look for.’

‘And you didn’t know then?’ She looked to Brooks. She wanted his permission and when he didn’t say anything, she said, ‘The bills are very, very good.’

‘What am I starting to remember?’

Raveneau knew la Rosa was starting to remember something as well, something right about the time. He asked Raff, ‘North Korea. Help me here, Michelle. When we called out the North Koreans f

counterfeiting our money it was around that time wasn't it?'

Raff looked to Brooks and Raveneau said, 'Let her talk.'

She waited until Brooks nodded.

'The bills you're referring to were called supernotes. That was because the quality was so good. Before these here on the table the first known supernotes were spotted by a banker in the Philippines in 1989.'

She touched the bills in front of her.

'That's what these are now. Alan Krueger's murder occurred before those in the Philippines were spotted, so now these are the first known supernotes.'

Raveneau took a moment to absorb that.

'And these are the same as those passed by the weapons dealer to the Cayman Island and Mexican banks?'

Brooks answered. 'That's correct.'

Raveneau pulled Brooks' card from his coat. 'What's the best number to call you at?'

'Hand me that and I'll write it on the back.'

Raveneau watched him write a number and when he got the card back slid the CD across the table. 'Watch this and then give us a call. You'll recognize Krueger. If not, he's the taller one.'

Retired homicide inspector Henry Goya was in his mid-sixties. Not too long ago he had quadruple bypass surgery that Raveneau knew about only because Cynthia, the Homicide Detail's secretary, was good friends with Goya's daughter. Goya's daughter also got her dad to join Facebook.

On his Facebook page Goya looked like an ageing, slightly crooked art dealer. A photo showed him in a wicker chair on the porch of his house in Petaluma, gray beard cut short and carefully trimmed, left hand resting on the carved knob of a wooden cane. In his right he held a thin cigar. A whiskey sat on the glass-topped table in front of him, a small terrier expectantly at his feet. The photo was probably meant to communicate the wonderful time Goya was having in retirement, but Raveneau had heard the quiet excitement as Goya connected with the Krueger case again.

'Did you find the Canadians?'

'Not yet.'

'Did my old partner ever call you?'

'No.' Raveneau had left several messages for Ed Govich, but Govich was yet to call back.

'Henry, tell me again what you remember about the Canadians other than there was something off about them.'

'OK, well, they were newly-weds here for a week and staying at the Hyatt, so that put them in the general area where the murder happened. They told us they liked to walk a city when they visited and that's what they were doing, out walking when they decided to cross under the Embarcadero Freeway. They happened upon the body and called 911. Ed and I weren't far behind the first uniformed officers, so we got to the Canadians right away, and they were helpful, especially her.

'But she was also shaken up or seemed to be. Or she was nervous. Ed thought she was nervous the way a suspect might be, but I didn't get that from her. Now the husband was different. He got huffy later when we asked them to come in with us to Homicide, and when they did come in he stopped cooperating. That's part of why Ed flew up to Calgary to re-interview them.'

Goya sighed.

'I'm sorry, Ben. I'm not answering what you asked about. They showed us passports, wedding rings, their itinerary, where they had eaten and visited, all the details of their visit, maybe too many details. So many that we checked on a restaurant they said they ate at and there wasn't any record on them. Ed checked on that. Then a few days later we got an anonymous tip from someone who was farther away than the Canadians said they were and he reported hearing gunshots, but I already told you about that. Are you getting any closer to finding them?'

'Not yet.'

'Maybe I ought to look for you.'

This was the second time Goya had suggested this and the department did occasionally hire retired officers in what got called the 9-60 program. In it a retired officer could work twenty hours a week but no more than nine hundred sixty hours a year. Goya wasn't particularly coherent in how he framed his memory of the case, but then the murder was twenty-two years ago and what mattered most to Raveneau was that Goya still carried the case with him.

Raveneau had learned the truth in the cliché after he and la Rosa started the Cold Case Unit, the

the good inspectors often carried their unsolved cases with them. Anytime a retired inspector phoned he always took the call. He thought of the retired inspectors as a collective consciousness that made the Cold Case Unit larger. They were his network. But Goya was a decade into retirement and getting him into the 9-60 program would be a very, very hard sell.

‘Henry, why don’t you come in tomorrow and we’ll go to lunch and talk the case through.’

‘Are you buying?’

‘I am.’

‘What time?’

‘Eleven thirty.’

‘I’ll see you then.’

Unlike him Goya and Govich didn’t have a videotape to refer to. They had tested different theories including an idea that Krueger was a spy, before settling on robbery because his wallet and the shoulder holster he wore were both empty. They figured Krueger’s gun was stolen too. But that the thief didn’t want to stick his hand in the bloody breast pocket, so the counterfeit bills got missed.

Before leaving for the night Raveneau made a list of what he wanted to go over with Goya tomorrow. AFIS, the Automated Fingerprint Identification System was in place in ’89, but barely. California, Alaska, and Tokyo were the first places to use it. Goya and Govich ran his prints through AFIS and as soon as they got a hit the Secret Service stepped in and ID’ed the body. Something was wrong there too and Raveneau was pretty sure the Secret Service ASAC, Nate Brooks, knew the back story.

Overall, Goya and Govich did a lot of things well. They pushed the Secret Service. Govich dogged the Canadians and traced an appendix scar to the hospital where Krueger was operated on. That led to Krueger’s Vietnam War record that the Navy previously couldn’t find. They found the London maker of the shoulder holster and the Hong Kong tailor who made Krueger’s pants and coat. They chased down the stamps on the false passports and they got feedback on the quality of the passports. The quality was so good one expert said he believed them to be real. Krueger’s shoes were handmade in Rome and the shoemaker kept records. The shoemaker had shipped four pairs of shoes to a Hong Kong apartment, but SFPD wouldn’t pay for a trip to Hong Kong in 1989, and they drew a blank with the Hong Kong authorities. Raveneau finished with his notes and questions for Goya just as Cynthia put a call through from the front desk.

‘You’ve got a Captain Frank call, a young man who says his name is Ryan Candel.’

‘Put him through.’

‘OK, and then I’m gone for the day. Hey, when does your girlfriend’s place open?’

‘A week from Friday.’

‘She must be excited?’

‘She is.’

‘I can’t wait to go there.’

Cynthia put the call through. This was the fourth call since they put out the piece last week asking for help from the public. So far the calls were sketchy, but that they got any response at all surprised him. The case was so old he hadn’t expected to hear anything from anybody on this one.

‘Inspector, I’m calling about Captain Frank.’

‘What do you know about him?’

‘I know I was the abortion that didn’t happen.’

‘You were what?’

‘Dude, Captain Frank was my dad. He was poppa. He was the man, but he didn’t want my mom

have me. I've got these photos she saved. I'll give them all to you. Do you want to meet me tonight?

FOUR

Raveneau parked on Eleventh Street half a block from Café Agricole. He stepped between people waiting in line to hear music at Slim's, then crossed Agricole's front deck and went inside. The bar was to his left and it was easy to find Ryan Candel at the far end with a drink and a faded green shoebox on the bar top in front of him. He looked mid to late twenties and dressed like he wasn't quite sure who he was yet, constructed hip but about a year or two back, dark pants, leather coat with a Euro feel, styled hair, narrow, long sideburns dropping to his jawbone. It didn't look comfortable.

Raveneau worked his way through a happy knot of people drinking and blocking the path to the tables and the rest of the bar. As he neared, Candel picked up on him, lifting his drink in a gesture that said you stick out too. Candel was drinking a Tequila Daisy, lemon, grenadine, and hellfire bitters and from the shine in his eyes as they shook hands Raveneau guessed it wasn't his first drink.

Raveneau ordered rum with ginger and lime. He knew the Agricole from drinking here with Celeste as she debated mixology and what direction she was going with her new place, Toasts, whose concept was basically a bar with small plates, mostly appetizers. Not tapas though, she kept saying was going to be different than that and mostly crostini. Her plans and the building permit saw a restaurant but a lot had changed since then.

As Raveneau's drink arrived, Candel ordered another Tequila Daisy.

'I've got some friends meeting me here so I don't have a lot of time, but we can pretty much get this done in a few minutes. All the photos are in here.'

He tapped the shoebox with his fingers then rested his drink on top of it and Raveneau watched Candel's dark drink ring form. He had gathered that Candel's mother was dead, but this box supposedly held the photos she cared about so it surprised him.

'There are some things you should probably know about me.'

'Did you kill somebody?'

'No, but pretty close. I got busted a couple of years ago for assaulting the doctor who killed my mom and did ninety days in jail then home confinement and months of picking up trash and crap, the community service trip thing.'

'Killed your mom?'

'She died because her doctor blew her off.'

'When was that?'

'It was like June a year and a half ago. She was in a car accident and really badly hurt, in the hospital and just hanging on and he went golfing with his pharmaceutical company buddies.' He glanced at Raveneau and added in a tone that made Raveneau think he'd gone through some counseling, 'But that doesn't excuse what I did.'

'And what are you doing now?'

'For work, you mean?'

'Yeah, for work or school or whatever.'

'I'm DJ'ing four nights a week but that's mostly spinning an iPod. It's bullshit, I know, and not really work but I get paid a little and I'm trying to get something going in the music. I know a lot of musicians, and I'm trying to get into producing.'

‘How badly was the doctor hurt?’

‘Broken wrist, concussion, and some bruises.’

Raveneau would have to check out Candel’s record, but it didn’t change the photos his mom had saved.

‘Let’s talk about your dad. Was he a boat captain?’

Candel stared then smiled.

‘You really don’t know shit about him, do you?’

‘No, I really don’t.’

‘His first name was Jim. He was an airline captain not some fucking crab boat captain. He flew for the Navy in the Vietnam War and then for some airline that went out of business. Pan something.’

‘Pan Am?’

‘Yeah, Pan Am and then United Airlines between Hawaii and San Francisco. That was his gig, bus driver in the sky. He did the Honolulu run for a long time. My mom was like the stewardess he got pregnant then ditched. But even when he dumped her she was still in love with him. She never would have made this call. She would never give you this box. She’d be crying right now if she could see me giving up the great Captain Jim Frank, asshole of the skies.’

‘Did she call him Captain Frank?’

‘She called him Captain. Is that weird or what?’

‘How close were you and your mom?’

‘Yeah, I know how I sound, but we were tight. My mom and I were close.’

‘Do you miss her?’

‘I definitely miss her.’

That quieted him for a moment, and then he signaled the bartender, ready for another. After he got the bartender’s attention he started sliding the rubber band holding the shoebox top on. It snapped before he could do that. He lifted the lid. He moved his drink to make room and said, ‘She was in a van with this friend of hers and this guy ran a red and hit them on Folsom.’

‘It must have been very hard.’

‘It was really horrible. I dream about it a lot, but the thing was it looked like she was going to pull through. She was talking again. Then she had a bad night and I was there the next morning when Dr Leonard came through. He’s the doctor I knocked down. There was another doctor or wannabe, a resident intern who was worried about her, but Leonard shut her down. I overheard it. Probably none of that would have happened if I hadn’t heard Leonard say he had an appointment and he’d be back in at three that afternoon.

‘But he didn’t come in until like seven o’clock, and basically by the time they figured out she had an infection it was too late. Her internal injuries were so bad she went fast. But, OK, I know you’re just here for the photos. Thing is, she’s in some of these.’

‘I’ll get copies made and get this back to you.’

‘I just want the ones of her back. I don’t care about him or any of the slides or any of the rest.’

‘I’m going to make copies and get everything else back to you. Keep going with your story about Dr Leonard.’

‘After she died, I blamed him and started following him, like stalking him, weird stuff I would never picture myself doing. At first I was going to kill him. In the end I just kind of tackled him hard and he hit his head on a car bumper and trashed his wrist on the street. I totally lost it.’

He took a sip of the new drink then turned to Raveneau.

‘I was like waiting my whole childhood for my dad to show up because my mom made it sound

like it was always just about to happen. But he never showed, you know, never once.'

'What was your mom's name?'

'Allyson. Allyson Candel.' He took a significant swallow, halved his drink. 'I hated him from the time I was twelve. I'm hoping you take him down.'

'Is that why you called? I'm wondering because I'm picking up some resentment toward your father.'

Candel smiled at that. He smiled and his face completely changed.

'You've got a sense of humor, dude. Here he is. This is him in the war, the one in Vietnam.'

He handed Raveneau a photo of a young man standing near the nose of a fighter jet on the deck of what was probably an aircraft carrier.

'You look like him.'

'Except I'm a failure and he was flying jets when he was my age. Here's another with his friend from the war. They all stayed friends. That one on the right was his best friend. I don't remember his name. Here's one when he flew for United.'

Raveneau studied a photo of Jim Frank in a United Airlines uniform and then glanced at Candel. Candel didn't need any DNA test. This was father and son, right to the cowlick on Candel's left side. Good looking guy, Captain Frank. Raveneau didn't doubt he attracted women. Candel handed him another six or seven photos and Frank had his arm around the waist of a woman in a bikini. Frank wore bright red swim trunks. Surf broke behind them.

The next photo and the one after it were landscape shots. 'Where were these taken?'

Candel shook his head. 'Don't know, probably Hawaii. He lived there. He definitely lived there when she was there.'

'Which island?'

'Check out the back of the photo.'

Raveneau flipped it over and read 'The house, Big Island.'

Candel slid the box toward him.

'Got to go, dude, my friends are here.'

'Give me your cell number.'

Candel scratched his number on a bar napkin and waved at two young women and a man working their way through the bar crowd. Before moving on, he said, 'I want one thing in return. You bust him. I want to be there.'

'He's not a suspect.'

'When he becomes one, when you go after him, you call me. Give me your word on that, man.'

'I'm not going to do that, but I'll call you tomorrow and we'll talk more.'

Celeste sat under a street light on the curb next to a dumpster, a black plastic garbage can on wheels next to her like a best friend. He tasted dust and sweat as he kissed her, and when he emptied the garbage can Sheetrock dust billowed out and enveloped him. He had a pretty good idea what her answer would be, but asked anyway.

‘How did it go?’

‘We failed all the inspections. Want to see?’

She showed him where the fire marshal who had reviewed and stamped the plans months ago now wanted her to add two more fire sprinkler heads. That meant draining the system, cutting into the walls, adding the sprinkler heads, patching, painting, and calling for another re-inspection. The Sheetrock dust that had spread through the almost finished space was from cutting into the finished walls.

‘It’s like fallout,’ she said. ‘It’s everywhere.’

There was also a code problem with the main flue and she unfolded a Health Department correction notice on the bar top for him to read. This was the day she had hoped to have everything she had to do with the City of San Francisco signed off and done. She pointed at two employees of the mechanical sub and said softly, ‘Double overtime,’ then brushed a strand of hair back from her cheek and acknowledged, ‘They’ve got me. I can’t do anything about it. Sprinkler sub is back at six in the morning. I have to get it done. I have to pay the overtime. The tables are delivering tomorrow. I don’t know where I’m going to put them.’

‘What does this do to opening day?’

‘I’m opening no matter what.’

Raveneau thought about Captain Frank and Ryan Candel’s story as he helped her clean. It was another hour and a half before the mechanical subcontractor finished. After he left they ate sandwiches and split a salad and a bottle of red wine at a place that served until midnight.

Then they went back to his place, an apartment on top of an industrial building at the edge of Chinatown Basin. Wind blew off the bay tonight and there was rain coming, but it was just the wind right now and he sat out on the deck as Celeste showered. The night was cold though not too cold and it felt good to sit out here and think. When he turned Celeste was in a T-shirt and otherwise naked.

‘What are you doing?’ she asked.

‘Holding on to the day.’

‘How would you like to come in and hold me instead?’

Before dawn Raveneau was back in the Homicide office. Yesterday he'd borrowed a portable ultraviolet light from the crime scene guys. He plugged it in now and spun la Rosa's lamp around to use as a second light. Two one-hundred dollar bills lay on the desk in front of him. One was a new 2011 bill in the current style and the other taken from the sixty-one counterfeit notes before turning the rest over to the Secret Service.

The Krueger bill was tattered where the bullet had passed through it. La Rosa called them the shot-dead notes, and that wasn't a bad name. He turned on her desk light and adjusted it to the highest brightness, then held up the new one hundred dollar bill first. With light shining through, it was easy to see the tiny print that read *USA one hundred dollars*. Using a magnifying glass he read *United States of America* and saw the embedded American flag. When he turned on the ultraviolet light and held the bill under it the threads turned red in the light.

He turned off the ultraviolet light and moved the new one hundred dollar bill back under the desk lamp, studying the watermark, a shadow of Ben Franklin alongside his face on the bill. The Treasury started making these changes in 1990 and steadily improved on them. The shot-dead bill had none of them. He picked up a counterfeit-detector felt pen and marked the tattered bill. This was stuff store clerks did daily, either holding the bill up to light or using the pen. The pen reacted with starch binder and acid. Genuine US notes were starchless and acid free, and he waited for the counterfeit bill to turn brown, but it stayed yellow.

He made another mark on it then marked the new bill to test the pen. It stayed yellow as it should. Raveneau wasn't sure what to make of the counterfeit bill not reacting. Either the pen was defective or the counterfeit bill was printed on starch-free paper back in 1989. But that wouldn't have been easy to do. He held it up again and it was still yellow.

He had learned that all the embedding was in response to counterfeiting, in particular to the supernotes. The supernotes scared Treasury and ever since US bills kept evolving. The latest had a textured surface, but given the way things had gone, the way printing also evolved, that wasn't going to be enough either. Neither was his trying to learn about counterfeiting. He unplugged the lights and slid the ultraviolet under his desk. He put la Rosa's light back where she liked it to sit, then adjusted it. He put the shot-dead bill back in an evidence bag and sent la Rosa a text before riding the elevator down.

It was still early when he walked out but he guessed Lim would be there by now. He walked to his car. Someone once likened the end of the peninsula where San Francisco was built to a thumb pushed out into the bay. Raveneau drove to the southeastern side past the desolate poverty of the Bayview and beyond the old power plant out to the crime lab in Hunter's Point with Allyson Candel's shoebox in a plastic bag on the passenger seat next to him.

At the crime lab Howard Lim who headed the lab slid it out of the bag and with gloves on opened the top.

'You've handled these already. Why didn't you bring them here when you first got them?'

'I just got them last night. I won them in a card game.'

'You see, you're getting old. When you were younger you would have driven them straight out.' He looked over at Raveneau and shook his head. 'You should see yourself. I hear the medic'

examiner comes up every afternoon to just make sure you're alive and not a cold case. If you've already handled everything why did you come out here to bother me?'

'I want to know what you can tell me about the photos.'

Banter aside, Lim got it. He understood. He was an avid photographer, had been for decades. He sifted through. There were seventeen photos and a handful of Kodachrome slides. Six of the photos he set aside, glancing at Raveneau, saying 'Polaroid. You remember Polaroid. Seems so long, long ago now, like when you were fifty.'

In one of the six Polaroids a dark-haired woman swam beneath a waterfall. Raveneau thumbed through the shots and left the waterfall picture on top. Lim adjusted his glasses, looked at Raveneau started to say something and didn't. He picked up a small black and white of Jim Frank in his Navy uniform.

'In Honolulu there used to be these photo booths for sailors. This is from one of them.'

'Taken when?'

'I guess early 1970s.'

'Is your family still in Hawaii?'

'Some are. My father is. He's old but he still drives. In Hawaii it is OK to drive when you are older. Everyone drives slower, not like some old crazy detective in San Francisco trying to catch a killer who is already dead.' Lim turned. 'What connects now to this killing?'

'I don't know yet but it ties to counterfeiting and a victim who once worked for the Secret Service and later possibly other US agencies.'

'A spy?'

'I haven't learned much yet about what he was doing, but I think he was trying to penetrate counterfeiting rings.'

Raveneau and Lim came in the same year. Then, Lim was black-haired and smooth-faced, an ever-so-serious about crime lab techniques and cross contamination. He was much more easy-going now. He set the photo booth shot of Jim Frank trying to look like Robert Mitchum or James Dean. He took the uniform off to the side. He picked up another black and white. He kept the banter going because it helped him think.

'You need to sit down, rest your back?' Lim asked. 'You want to get your walker out of your car?'

'No, I rode a bike out here. I exercise every couple of hours. I've got two marathons next weekend both are on Saturday.'

'That's probably the only way to get blood to your brain now. Other agencies you say, maybe the CIA?'

'The original inspectors actually thought it was possible, but I don't have any reason to believe that.'

'You don't have any reason yet.'

'That's right.'

'Very careful slow inspector and . . .' Lim seemed to forget where he was going with that. He picked up one of the 4 x 6 photos and said, 'Hapuna Beach.'

'Where is that?'

'On the Big Island and a very nice beach, a famous beach. Who is the woman with the man in the uniform?'

'Allyson Candel. His name is or was Jim Frank. He was a pilot for United. I'm trying to locate him and hoping he's still alive.'

'You are, so maybe he is too.'

Raveneau smiled and let it be.

~~‘She was a stewardess and her son told me that photo was taken in the mid 1980s.’~~

‘Mid eighties is about right, I think.’

‘How do you tell?’

‘The type of paper.’

Lim turned the photo on edge and ticked his thumb along it. He flipped it over and showed Raveneau spots where the paper was yellowing. He flipped it back over, laid it down gently. In the shot Jim Frank had his arm around her. It looked as if they both had just gotten out of the water. Frank was dripping wet but wearing dry sunglasses and Allyson Candel was quietly beautiful.

‘What about the one you set aside?’ Raveneau asked, but you couldn’t rush Lim. No one could rush Lim. The chief of police wouldn’t get anywhere pushing him. Lim took the photo with him and came back a few minutes later.

‘Ben, come back here,’ he said, and then picked up the shot of Frank and Allyson Candel on the beach. A different photo was under a lens and magnified. Lim slid it out, replaced it with the beach shot. Now the beads of water on Frank’s face were more visible as was the unevenness of how he shaved that day. But the photo also became grainy. The look Raveneau caught in Allyson Candel’s eye was less resolved, became blotchy.

‘OK, now look here.’

Lim slipped the other photo, the landscape shot back under the lens. His voice was quieter as he asked, ‘What differences do you see?’

On the back of the photo written in pencil were the words, ‘the house.’ But the photo caught much more than a house built in a notch on a steep grassy slope. The day was quite clear and the line of the Kohala coast swept south with a white line of breakers. The corrugated roof of the house and the star of trees below and the two-lane highway well below stood out sharply.

‘It’s nowhere near as grainy. The quality of detail is at a whole other level.’

‘Many levels up,’ Lim said. ‘This kind of resolution at that time was uncommon. This is very high quality. It could be a professional photographer who shoots this, someone who photographs landscapes for art or books. This is better than you would use then for magazines. Some military and government agencies were at this level, so maybe this Frank is a spy. Maybe he worked for the CIA.’ He smiled at Raveneau and added, ‘If I took your picture with this camera, even you would look good.’

‘Thanks, Howard.’

‘No problem, I’m here for you.’

He was chuckling as Raveneau shut the door.

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