

LADY JUSTICE



AND THE CONSPIRACY

**A WALT WILLIAMS
MYSTERY/COMEDY NOVEL**

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Lady Justice and the Conspiracy

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1. Fiction, Humorous
2. Fiction, Mystery & Detective, General

What People Are Saying About The Lady Justice Mystery/Comedy Series

He takes what goes on in the world at the moment and incorporates it into his books. C. Toste – Amazon Review

Ripping scenes from recent headlines, Robert Thornhill has written one of his best novels yet. Sandy Penny – Amazon Review

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This is yet another gripping novel by Thornhill, who spins the web so intricately the reader is unable to take a break before completing the book. Venky – Amazon Review

LADY JUSTICE AND THE CONSPIRACY

CHAPTER 1

Jack Carson switched on the dome light of his car and looked at his watch for the fourth time. The man he was supposed to meet was forty-five minutes late.

His first contact with the man who would only identify himself as 'Falcon' was two weeks ago. He had told Carson he had contacted him because he had seen his name in numerous bylines in the *Kansas City Star*. It certainly made sense. Carson was the number one guy working the *Star's* crime beat. His name was connected to at least a half-dozen stories every day; everything from drive-by shootings to domestic disturbances.

Carson had nearly hung up on the guy when Falcon announced he was an Air Force pilot who had been recruited to fly missions solely for the purpose of dispersing deadly chemicals into the atmosphere. Carson received bogus calls every day which included everything from Elvis sightings to alien spacecraft landings, and part of his job was to sort the newsworthy tips from the obviously absurd.

He was about to dismiss the guy as just another crackpot when he happened to glance out the window and see a series of fluffy white trails crisscrossing the sky. The trails had become so commonplace he hardly paid any attention to them anymore, but he remembered wondering once, why there seemed to be so many more and why they lasted so long before dispersing and forming a grey haze which blocked the rays of the sun.

What the hell, he had thought. It was a slow news day and what did he have to lose other than an hour of time? He agreed to meet the man for the first of what turned into three clandestine meetings; all were at secluded locations and all were under the cover of darkness.

The first time they met, Carson had halfway expected to see a guy wearing one of those tin foil hats which are supposed to keep evil forces from reading your thoughts, but quite the contrary, the man could have been the poster boy from an Air Force recruiting ad. He could have been Tom Cruise's stand-in as Maverick in the movie, *Top Gun*.

Falcon made it clear from the beginning he was to remain anonymous and under no circumstances could the information he would give be attributed to him. If his identity was disclosed, at the very least he would be court martialed --- or worse.

Just like Woodward and Bernstein's 'Deep Throat' in All the President's Men, Carson thought as he listened to Falcon's demand for anonymity.

At that meeting, and the two which followed, Falcon shared details which turned Carson's blood cold. He took meticulous notes about the men who were recruited to fly the covert missions, the planes that were loaded with deadly chemicals and the purpose of the 'chemtrails' which stretched from horizon to horizon across the entire United States.

After each meeting, Carson would spend long hours trying to verify what Falcon had given him. He found enough evidence to give some credibility to the frightful scenario which Falcon had painted --- enough that he was willing to move forward if Falcon could provide him with the one piece of evidence which would convince him the story was true --- a sample of the brew Falcon said was pumped into barrels in the huge bellies of the Boeing KC-135 Stratotankers. Falcon had agreed and was supposed to deliver the sample at tonight's meeting.

Carson looked at his watch again. Falcon was an hour late and probably not coming. His story had been captivating, but when pressured to produce the one thing which could verify his wild

claims, he would come up empty, because his story was just that --- wild claims which could not be substantiated.

Carson sighed, started the car and headed home. On the one hand, he was relieved. It would be far better for our country if Falcon's assertions were figments of his imagination. On the other hand, if what Falcon shared was true, the story he would have written had Pulitzer Prize written all over it.



The next morning, Carson was at his desk reviewing the stories from the night before. There was nothing earth-shattering, but one piece about a fatal car wreck caught his eye. The accident had taken place just a mile from where he was to meet Falcon. He vaguely remembered hearing sirens as he waited for the whistle-blower to make his appearance.

Naturally, the name associated with the story meant nothing to him. He had only known the informant as Falcon.

Finally, his curiosity got the most of him and he headed to the county morgue.

His position on the paper's crime beat had taken him to the morgue many times and he knew the people running the place by name. All he had to do was ask and the attendant led him to the vault where the body from the previous night's wreck was stored.

A cold chill ran through his body when the attendant pulled out what was left of the man who was supposed to bring him evidence of a massive covert plan which, if true, was affecting every citizen in the United States. The attendant identified him as Dale Fox, a pilot in the US Air Force.

He thanked the attendant and as he headed to his car, he pulled out his cell phone and scrolled through the names until he found the name of the officer who had filed the report, George Wilson.

Nearly everyone called the officer Ox, because of his robust size. Carson placed the call and a sleepy voice answered, "What do you want Carson? I worked last night and I'm trying to get some shut-eye."

"Ahh, caller ID. The age of technology. Actually, that's why I'm calling. You made a report on a car wreck with a fatality last night. I have a few questions."

"If you read the report, there's not much more I can tell you. It was pretty cut and dried. It looked like the guy lost control on a curve and rolled into a tree. Probably died on impact."

"So you didn't find anything out of the ordinary?"

"Like what?"

"I don't know. Just something which didn't look right."

"Nope, nothing like that."

"One more thing and I'll let you go. Did you happen to find a vial of some kind of liquid in the car?"

"No, again. What kind of liquid? You mean like booze? There was no alcohol in the car."

"Okay, thanks for your time. Sorry I woke you."

As Carson pulled out into traffic, he remembered Falcon talking about his commanding officer's dire predictions of what might happen to any pilot divulging information about the program known among the aviators and crews as 'Indigo Skyfold.'

Falcon had done just that, and now he was dead.

A coincidence?

Carson didn't think so.



CHAPTER 2

Surveillance is boring and mind-numbing and I had been doing it for three solid hours.

Actually, I should have been grateful for the boredom. During my five years as a Kansas City police officer, I had been shot, beaten, thrown off a roof and nearly blown up so many times, I finally made the decision to turn in my badge and at the ripe old age of seventy-two, open my own private investigation company. I figured I could choose the cases I wanted to work and avoid any which put life and limb in jeopardy.

Unfortunately, that had not been the case. In the few short months Walt Williams Investigations had been in business, I had tangled with the Russian mob, a serial killer, and terrorists with ties to Al-Qaeda.

Three of my previous cases had involved tailing a subject and taking a few photos from the safety of my car, all of which paid handsomely and totally avoided personal injury to my aging body. I figured my current gig would fall into that category.

I had been hired by a woman who suspected her husband was fooling around. My job was to tail the guy and catch him in the act. I had followed him to a motel on Broadway and got a shot of him entering one of the rooms. To my dismay, his lady friend didn't step outside so I resigned myself to sitting in the parking lot hoping to get her on film when their tryst was over.

I figured if he was like most men, he would take care of business and be out in twenty minutes tops, but the guy must have had exceptional stamina and the clock had ticked off three hours.

Otto Kruger was certainly a healthy specimen. He was a nose tackle for a semi-pro team and had to be at least 6'6" and weigh 320 pounds. He was used to pounding an offensive line for sixty grueling minutes, so maybe three hours in the sack wasn't such a stretch.

I had come prepared with all the accoutrements of a P.I. on surveillance. In addition to my binoculars and digital camera, I had a full thermos of coffee and a bag of snacks. I would have preferred a box of Krispy Kreme donuts, but my sweet and protective wife, Maggie, had nixed that idea and provided me with protein bars and a bag of trail mix.

As I sat there, listening to my Elvis CD's and munching on the nuts and seeds which came in my trail mix, I thought about Euell Gibbons, the old guy on the Grape Nuts cereal commercials and wondered what ever happened to him. Strange how your mind wanders when your butt's been glued to a car seat for 180 minutes.

I had just poured the last of my coffee when the motel door opened. Kruger came out, paused, and turned for a good-bye kiss from his illicit lover. She was visible just long enough for me to snap her picture.

Job well done.

I was feeling quite elated until Kruger turned and saw me checking the shot on my camera screen. Our eyes locked for just a moment, and my elation turned to concern and then to sheer terror as the behemoth charged toward my car.

I quickly checked to make sure my doors were locked and reached for my keys which had been in the ignition powering my accessories during my vigil. I figured that discretion being the better part of valor, my best bet was to make a hasty exit. I had what I needed and there was absolutely nothing to be gained by hanging around.

Imagine my disappointment when I turned the switch and all I got was a low growl. Three hours of Elvis tunes had sucked the life out of my battery. Kruger was charging hard and I was dead in the water.

I thought about escaping on foot, but there just wasn't time.

As he approached, his face was flaming red, eyes bulging and jaw set. It was then I remembered his wife telling me he had been cut from the Oakland Raiders for anger management issues.

His fist was as big as a Honey Baked Ham and the moment he reached the car, he slammed it into my hood, leaving a cantaloupe-sized dent.

"The camera!" he shouted. "Give it to me. Now!"

I didn't respond. I just sat there in shock trying to figure a way out of the mess.

He pounded the roof. "Give me that damned camera or I'll rip off your head and shit down your neck!"

I recognized the line from Stanley Kubrick's 1987 war movie, *Full Metal Jacket*, and I briefly wondered if Otto was a film buff or if his act was just something that came naturally to him. Either way, it didn't really matter. He had made his point.

As he beat on my roof, I regretted I had left my gun at home. I have a concealed carry permit, but I never dreamed I should be packing heat on a lame surveillance gig. Live and learn.

When the pounding didn't produce the desired result, Kruger adopted a different tactic. He began rocking the car back and forth. The specter of this huge man moving two tons of steel brought to mind Lou Ferrigno as the *Incredible Hulk*.

I hung onto the steering wheel for dear life while coffee splashed and trail mix scattered. When this was all over, I would have a nasty mess to clean up, assuming, of course, that I would survive.

After one final shove, he glared at me through the window. "Hand it over or I'm coming in to get it!"

When I didn't respond, he stormed off, searching the parking lot for something to bash in my window. It didn't take a genius to know once he was inside, I was toast.

I reached for my cell phone and punched the speed dial for my former partner, Ox.

"Hey, Walt! What's up?"

"Where are you? I hope to heck you're close by."

"Main and Linwood. What's going on? You sound terrible."

"Get over here as fast as you can. I'm in the parking lot of the motel at Linwood and Broadway. A 300 pound Neanderthal is about to rip off my head!"

"On my way. You can explain when I get there."

I heard the siren in the distance and I just hoped Ox would get here in time to save my ass. Kruger had just wrestled a handicapped parking sign out of the asphalt parking lot and was heading my way.

He had just aimed the sign post at my driver's window when Ox roared into the parking lot. I ducked for cover and heard his booming voice on the loud speaker.

"Drop the sign! Do it now!"

The sight of Ox and his new partner, Amanda Parrish, bailing out of their cruiser with guns drawn evidently got Kruger's attention. He didn't hit the car, but he didn't drop the pole either.

As Ox and Amanda advanced, I saw Kruger scowl, raise the six foot sign over his head and fling it at my friends. They both ducked, but the metal pole struck Ox in the head and knocked the gun out of Amanda's hand.

Seeing they were both temporarily distracted, Kruger charged at Amanda, ignoring Ox who was on the ground, dazed. Amanda deftly side-stepped the huge nose tackle's charge and as he stumbled past, turned and planted her foot squarely between his legs.

The big man stopped in his tracks and I could see his body quiver as the blow to his gonads resonated through his body. He staggered a few steps and crumpled, face down, into the asphalt. Amanda was on him in a flash and cuffed his hands behind his back.

It occurred to me that like Euell Gibbons, Otto Kruger would probably have grape nuts the next morning.

As soon as he was down, I rushed to Ox's side. He had a nasty cut on his head, but seemed to be okay otherwise.

He looked at the beached whale lying beside him in handcuffs. "Unbelievable! I thought you were only taking cream puff cases. I guess not."

"It was supposed to be," I replied. "Thanks --- again. The two of you pulled my fat out of the fire."

I shared my side of the story as we waited for the paddy wagon to arrive and haul Kruger to lock-up.

After Otto, still reeling from Amanda's well-placed punt, was loaded, I got a jump start from the meat wagon before it headed back to the precinct.

I stopped at the Soapy Suds car wash and vacuumed the trail mix from the front seat.

As I headed home, I marveled that once again, Lady Justice had prevailed, the bad guy was in jail and I had avoided another encounter with the grim reaper by the skin of my teeth.



I was about to call my client and tell her I had the goods on her cheating husband, when the phone rang.

"Hi Walt. This is Jack Carson."

I knew Carson very well. He was the top crime reporter for the *Kansas City Star*. He must have a police scanner because he was johnny-on-the-spot at most every crime scene Ox and I worked. Inevitably, he would press us for information about what was going on, and without exception, I would always reply, "No comment."

I knew the guy was just doing his job, but the last thing I wanted was to be the source he quoted in the next day's paper.

I figured he had gotten wind of my encounter with Otto Kruger and was fishing for a story.

"Look, Jack, I'm not a cop anymore. If you want information on a case, call the precinct."

"That's not what this is about. I'd like to come by and talk to you."

I was still in my clothes which were wet and stained from the coffee that was sloshing around while Otto was rocking my car. "It's not a good time. Can't we just talk on the phone?"

He hesitated. "I'd rather not. What I want to discuss is rather sensitive and you never know who might be listening."

His comment aroused my curiosity. "Give me a half hour."



Thirty minutes later, Carson was sitting in my office.

"I know what I'm about to tell you will sound crazy, but please hear me out."

For the next hour, Carson told me how Dale Fox, whom he knew only as Falcon, had come to him with the incredible story of being a pilot in a clandestine, black ops program whose mission

was to alter and control the world's weather by spraying chemtrails of deadly poisons into the atmosphere. He gave me details of their three meetings, and ended by sharing what he knew of the accident which had prevented Falcon from delivering the evidence which would verify his claims.

When he finished, I sat in stunned disbelief.

"Why are you telling me all of this? What can I do?"

"The reason I've come to you is the officer who covered the wreck was your old partner, Ox. You must know if I went to the cops with this story, they'd laugh me out of the precinct and my credibility would be gone forever. All I'm asking you to do is talk to Ox and ask him to take a closer look at the accident scene. On the surface, it appeared to be just another traffic mishap, but knowing the background of the situation, wouldn't you agree his untimely death just as he was about to blow the whistle on a covert government scheme is quite a coincidence?"

I had to agree that it was.

"I'll talk to Ox, but I can't promise anything."

"That's all I ask."



I gave Ox a call, but he was at the hospital getting his wound dressed.

I finally reached him an hour later.

"Hey, Partner, how's the head?"

"I've got a killer headache and five stitches. This thing is gonna leave a scar."

"I'm sure it will only enhance the vision of your rugged manhood."

"Thanks a lot."

"I need a favor."

"Another one! I just saved your ass. How many do you want in one day?"

"Just one more, I promise."

"Well, as long as it doesn't involve a 300 pound gorilla coming at me with a traffic sign, I might consider it."

"You worked a case the other night, a Dale Fox wrapped his car around a tree."

"You're the second person who's called me about that case. The crime reporter, Jack Carson, called too. What's going on?"

"It's a long story. What I'd like you to do is have the crime scene guys take another look at the car, particularly the brake line. Remember the young couple who bought a house from Maggie and ran into the back of a semi on the way to sign the contract?"

"Yeah, I remember. Their brake line had been cut just enough to cause it to rupture. Do you believe something like that is going on here?"

"It's certainly a possibility. What about family? Have you notified his next of kin?"

"Dead end. His parents are deceased, he had no siblings and he was never married. The guy was all alone."

That certainly lined up with what Falcon had told Carson. He said the pilots were chosen from the top ranks of the Air Force, Navy and Coast Guard. One of the qualifiers was lack of familial connections. They wanted men who were 'hardened' and had no qualms about spraying toxic substances into the atmosphere. He actually referred to them as 'Tanker Terminators.'

"Even more reason to take a second look. Will you do it?"

"I will. I just hope you're not getting me mixed up in another of your crazy cases."

I didn't have the heart to tell him I just might be doing that very thing.



Later that day, Ox called back.

"You were right on, Partner. The brake line had ruptured, causing him to lose control on the curve. The bad news is there is not sufficient evidence to support the idea the line was deliberately cut. It could have just been worn and ruptured on its own."

"Well, we both know someone with skills can cut the line just enough for the thing to rupture when pressure is applied."

"True enough, but in this situation, there is nothing to suggest that happened, so the case is closed. Sorry."

"Thanks, I appreciate you looking into it."

"Glad to help."

Just as he was hanging up, I had another thought. "One more thing. Did you get an address on the guy and has anyone from the department gone by his place?"

He thought for a moment. "Yeah, I got an address, but no one's been there. Once it was determined it was an accident, there was no reason for us to pursue the matter further. You want the address?"

"Yes, please." As he was looking it up, I recalled my days as a landlord. More than once a tenant had died or disappeared and I didn't know about it until the rent was late and I came knocking for payment.

Ox came back on the line. "Got it. An apartment on Brookside, south of the Plaza. I'm guessing you're going there."

"Probably will. I need to tie up a few loose ends."

As far as the cops were concerned the case might be closed, but for me, it was just beginning.



CHAPTER 3

The moment I hung up from Ox, I dialed Kevin McBride, my brother-in-law and partner in Walt Williams Investigations.

“Hey Walt! How’d it go with Otto Kruger? Was he playing ‘hide the salami’ with some chick like his wife suspected?”

“Indeed he was and I got it all on camera, but that’s not why I’m calling. Can you come over? We need to talk.”

“Geese Walt, Victoria will be home any time now and I was thinking about hiding some salami myself. Why can’t we just talk on the phone?”

I had already considered that possibility, but then I remembered Jack Carson saying, “You never know who might be listening.” If Dale Fox was about to expose a government conspiracy, it wasn’t a stretch to believe Big Brother was listening to anyone and everyone even remotely connected to the case.

“Come on, Kevin. This is important. You can dip your wick tonight.”

“Okay, okay! Give me a half hour.”

Thirty minutes later, Kevin was in my office listening to what I knew about the chemtrail conspiracy.

He listened quietly and when I finished he just shook his head. “It was bound to happen sooner or later.”

“What was bound to happen?”

“One of those pilots would have an attack of conscience and the balls to tell the world we’re being poisoned by our government.”

I was in shock. “So you believe in this conspiracy thing?”

“I believe chemicals are being sprayed into the air. For Chris’ sakes, Walt. All you have to do is look up most any day of the week and see dozens of fluffy trails crisscrossing the sky. The official word is those are water condensation trails, but that’s bureaucratic bullshit. We have them almost every day here in Kansas City, but it was much worse in Phoenix.”

Before coming to Kansas City, Kevin lived in Phoenix for thirty years and worked as a private investigator.

“Angel hair,” he continued. “That’s what we would call the stuff which fell on us after the sky had been obliterated by the chemical emissions. They looked like very long cobwebs, but unlike cobwebs they would completely dissolve into our skin when we touched them. When we held a match to them, they would blacken and curl like plastic or some polymer burning. Scary stuff!”

I was stunned by what my partner was saying. “If that’s true and the stuff was falling everywhere, why didn’t someone report it?”

“Oh, they did!” he replied. “The Air Force denied they were spraying chemicals and the EPA said there was nothing to worry about. So who you gonna call next? Ghostbusters?”

“Unbelievable!”

“No kidding. If it’s the government doing the dirty work, it’s not going to do much good to go to them for help.”

“Back to our present situation. If Dale Fox was telling the truth, there just might be some evidence in his apartment. The cops think his death was an accident and didn’t even take a look. Are you interested?”

“You bet I am!” he replied with a grin.

“Got your lock picks?”

“Does Howdy Doody have wooden balls?”



Dale Fox's apartment was on the second floor of a brick four-plex on Brookside.

It took Kevin less than a minute to pop the deadbolt and get us inside. The place was a typical bachelor pad, small living area with a TV, an eat-in kitchen, bedroom and bath.

Falcon's kitchen looked a lot like my own before Maggie and I were married. There was a carton of milk which expired two weeks ago and a loaf of bread with green stuff around the edges in the fridge. A can of Spicy Hot Spam, a can of chicken noodle soup, and a box of saltines were on the shelf beside the stove. Typical fare for a single guy who spent most of his time flying jets across the country.

We found nothing of interest until we opened the drawer of the nightstand beside his bed.

“Bingo!” Kevin exclaimed as he pulled two photos out of the drawer.

I looked over his shoulder. The first photo was of airplanes with no visible names or lettering. On the back were the words ‘Pinal Air Park, Arizona.’



The second photo showed the interior of a huge jet which seemed to be filled with canisters of some kind.



“This must be some of the evidence Fox was going to give to Jack Carson,” I said, taking a closer look.

"So what do we do with it?" Kevin asked.

I thought for a moment. "We can't just take it. We're not even supposed to be here and if we did take it, we could never prove where we got it. Let's leave it here. I'll call Ox and tell him what we've found. He can say he received an anonymous tip that there was incriminating evidence in Fox's apartment, then when they search and find it, it can be used as evidence --- if this conspiracy thing ever goes anywhere, and that's a big 'if.'"

"Sounds good to me," he said, tucking the photos back where we'd found them.



I called Ox and made arrangements to meet him in the precinct parking lot after his shift. For the second time that day, I didn't want to chance a phone conversation which might be overheard.

"What's up?" he asked, sliding into the seat beside me.

I told him the story and what we had found.

Like me, he was stunned. "Holy Crap, Walt! You're telling me the government is filling the skies with poison and this Fox guy was one of the pilots and was going to blow the whistle. Then you're saying he got whacked before he could verify his story and the proof is in the nightstand by his bed!"

"That's it in a nutshell."

"Do you know how utterly ridiculous that sounds?"

"Of course I do, but don't you think it would be worth your time to get those photos and establish a chain of custody just in case it isn't?"

He shook his head. "How in heaven's name do you get mixed up in all this weird stuff?"

"Just lucky I guess. Will you do it?"

He sighed. "Yeah, I'll do it, but I think you're way out in left field on this one."



At ten the next morning, my phone rang.

"Walt, it's Ox. We went to Fox's apartment and went over the place with a fine toothed comb and guess what --- no photos! Nothing but some stale milk and bread. Are you sure you and Kevin aren't smoking something?"

"But --- they were there yesterday!"

"Well, they're not there today. Sorry, Pal."

"Someone must have been there after we were. Probably the same people who sabotaged Fox's car. You can see that, can't you?"

"What I see is a crazy theory and no proof to back it up. I really am sorry, Walt. Well, I've got to concoct some story as to why I wasted the department's time. Talk to you later."

The missing photos were just one more bit of evidence Jack Carson was on to something. I was really pissed they had disappeared.

It was a good thing I had photographed them with my phone.

