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THE
INFORMANTS

PARALLEL OPS BOOK 2

*While on the run from international terrorists, a young couple
stumbles upon a dark secret in the mountains of Mexico's Baja.*

Prologue

(Monday, December 9, 2002)

Linda lowered the telephone handset onto its base and turned towards her new husband with a troubled look on her face.

“What’s the matter?” asked Javier as he dropped the two heavy suitcases in the middle of the couple’s Cancun apartment and shook his hands to restore the feeling.

Linda was silent for a minute, and then went to the couch and sat down.

“That was a voicemail message from Jim Barnes. He thinks Tony has gone missing and he says we shouldn’t attempt to contact anyone involved with NWIDI until we hear from him again.”

“What?” asked Javier, who had only been half listening. The couple had just returned from their week-long honeymoon in Cabo San Lucas, on Mexico’s Baja Peninsula, and the flight home had been long and tiring.

When Linda didn’t immediately reply, Javier joined her on the couch.

“Linda, did you say Tony is missing? Come, on, you know Tony. He’s probably just found a new girlfriend or taken off on some new misadventure. He’ll turn up, don’t worry.”

Tony Nicoletti, along with Linda and Jim had joined Frank Morton’s NWIDI organization eighteen months earlier and in that short year and a half they had uncovered some incredible evidence that suggested many ancient civilizations had developed, flourished and vanished long before our own civilization evolved in the Middle East. Frank’s obsession with the search had resulted in his disappearance – and assumed death

– in the Bahamas just three months ago and the rest of the team was still struggling to cope with the loss.

Linda shook her head. “No, Javier, I think this is serious. There was a sound of fear in Jim’s voice that I’ve never heard before and it’s not like him to be vague about *anything*. I think he knows something but didn’t want to go into details on the phone. I’m worried, Javier!”

After some effort, Javier finally convinced Linda that there was nothing they could do until they heard from Jim again so the newlyweds began unpacking. Javier had to return to work in less than twelve hours and he was beat, so as soon as his suitcase was empty, he took a hot shower and got ready for bed. When he came out of the bathroom, Linda was sitting on the bed with the phone to her ear. When she saw Javier, she motioned him over.

“Jim, I’m going to put you on the speaker phone. Please don’t hang up, because I want Javier to hear what you just told me,” she said into the phone as she pressed a button.

“Can you hear us, Jim?” asked Javier.

“Yes, but we have to keep this short,” replied Jim. “As I just told Linda, I have very good reason to believe that Tony has been picked up by Edwards or someone associated with him. He called me a week ago, the day after your wedding, and told me he was going to meet with Edwards about Frank’s disappearance and I asked him to call me after the meeting and let me know what he found out. When he didn’t call, I tried his cell, but I got a message indicating that it was turned off or out of service. I’ve tried several times each day ever since and I always get the same message.”

“Isn’t it possible that he lost or broke his phone?” asked a still-skeptical Javier.

“I suppose, but he promised to call me a week ago and he would have found some way to make contact if he could,” replied Jim. “Listen, I’ve got to cut this off in case we’re being monitored. I’ll let you know if I hear anything, but I think the two of you should get out of Cancun for a while. There’s someone at the door, so I need to...”

And with that, the line went dead.