

Honeymoon, Chapter 6

By James Patterson & Howard Roughan

THE NEXT DAY at a few minutes past noon, on the corner of Forty-second and Park in front of Grand Central Station, a woman screamed. A second woman turned her head to look and she screamed, too. The man beside her muttered, "Holy shit." Then they all ran for cover.

Something very bad was happening. A train wreck, so to speak, just outside one of the most famous train stations in the world.

The chain reaction of fear and confusion quickly cleared everyone from the sidewalk. Everyone, except for three people.

One was a fat man with dense sideburns, thinning hair, and a dark mustache. He was dressed in an ill-fitting brown suit with wide lapels. Wider still was his shiny blue tie. on the ground by his feet was a medium-size suitcase.

Next to the fat man was a young woman, perhaps mid-twenties, attractive. She had red hair that hung straight down to her shoulders, lots of freckles on her face. She wore a short plaid skirt and a white tank top. A beat-up knapsack hung over one shoulder.

The fat man and the young woman couldn't have looked any more different. However, at that moment they were very much connected,

By a gun.

"If you come any closer, I'll kill her!" barked the fat man with a thick, Middle Eastern accent. He jammed the cold steel of the barrel hard against her temple. "I swear, I'll shoot her dead. I'll do it in a second. No problem for me."

The threat was directed at the third person remaining on the sidewalk—a guy standing maybe ten feet away, wearing baggy gray khakis and a black T-shirt. he looked like a typical enough tourist. From the Pacific Northwest, perhaps. Oregon? The state of Washington? A runner maybe. Somebody in decent shape anyway.

And the *he* pulled a gun.

The Tourist took a step closer, his gun pointed at the forehead of the fat man with the mustache. Dead center, actually. The Tourist didn't seem to care that the young woman was in his line of fire.

"No problem for me, either," he said.

"I said stop!" said the fat man. "Don't come any closer. Stay where you are."

The Tourist ignored him. He took another step.

"I swear, I'll fucking kill her!"

“No, you won’t,” said the Tourist calmly. “Because if you shoot her, I’ll shoot you.” He took another step forward but then stopped. “ Think it through, friend. I know you can’t afford to lose what’s in that suitcase. But is it worth your life?”

The fat man squinted and suddenly looked to be in great pain. He appeared to be thinking about what the Tourist had said. Or maybe not. Then a maniacal smile filled his face. He cocked his gun.

“*Pleeeeeease,*” begged the young woman, trembling. “*Pleeeeeease.*” Tears poured from her eyes. She could barely stand.

“*Shut up!*” the fat man yelled in her ear. “*Shut the hell up! I can’t hear myself think!*”

The Tourist stood his ground, his flinty blue eyes locked on one thing: the man’s trigger finger.

He didn’t like what he saw.

Twitching!

The fat bastard was going to shoot the girl, wasn’t he? And that just wasn’t acceptable.