

The weather tends to change on the island of Manhattan this time of year and tonight was no exception. The fog rolled in and the temperature dropped like a deflated balloon. I stood by the Port Authority sign, in the shadows, and the thick mist, my appearance like a specter in the night. My trench coat flapped from a burst of wind over the docks. I knew it would happen tonight. He would be here, armed and perhaps with a small army to try and take back his treasure, his prize, and to seek revenge on those trying to stop him. I put my right hand in my coat pocket and felt the handle of my Colt pistol, a gift from old west legend Wyatt Earp. I waited. The minutes passed by. Everything was ready. My eyelids were beginning to droop and I had to pinch myself to stay awake. A misty rain began to add to the fog. I looked over and could barely see the large freighter where Angela Lang and I were once part of the cargo, to be dropped in the middle of the Atlantic and to the seabed below. That is why I did not contact her tonight and made it a point to exclude her if this should go sideways. I heard voices. My patience paid off. Through the fog I saw dark figures moving silently toward the freighter, guarded by two seamen from the U.S. Coast Guard. Heavily armed with tommy guns and assault weapons and hand grenades, the dark figures quietly approached. I waited, knowing he would come. I heard voices speaking in a foreign language and I knew DeSharde was here with his enforcer, Bruno. The assault on the freighter was about to begin. I gripped the Colt and lifted it out of my trench coat and pointed it to the sky, my finger on the trigger.

"DeSharde!" I cried.

He appeared out of the shadows, his men ready to attack the ship. He adjusted his line of sight and saw me with my arm raised.

"Oates?"

He saw me grinning and did not comprehend what was about to happen. I fired the Colt and in a flash, the spotlights came on, flashing brightly on the arms dealer's small army of assassins, equipped with Thompson machine guns and hand grenades. A loudspeaker amplified the voice of Simon Eldridge.

"This is the United States Treasury Bureau and the United States Coast Guard. You are completely surrounded. Drop your weapons and raise your hands!"

DeSharde was shocked to be sure, but he would have none of it.

"No! Attack! Attack!"

The dozen men he hired to steal back the gold and the canisters of deadly chemicals were confused and Bruno had to grab one of the men and shake him unless he fired his machine gun.

"Don't do it!" Eldridge cried.

Bruno aimed his Stoner 63 assault rifle and started firing at the spotlights, and two were shattered and it darkened the area of battle. Eldridge gave the order to engage and a firefight broke out scattering deadly bullets, with the government sharpshooters having the advantage since DeSharde's gunmen were out in the open. Adrian DeSharde cursed me in French and tried to run away with his henchman Bruno close behind. I went after them. With my Colt pistol in hand I saw DeSharde head away from the docks. Like a rat in a maze he did not realize there was no place to go. The NYPD set up a blockade shortly after my phone call to Simon Eldridge, who contacted the chief of police, who in turn contacted the precinct captain, which happened to be Lester Baldwin of the 35th.

"We are surrounded. What do we do?" Bruno said.

"Kill them!"

Before he could open fire with his assault rifle, I called him out.

"Bruno! Turn around!"

The brutal killer saw me and raised the assault rifle, but not before I fired my Colt revolver twice, hitting him square in the chest. Bruno paused to look at the blood oozing out of his bulky jacket. He was still on his feet and the mischievous grin on his face let me know two bullets hardly made him wince. He pulled the trigger on the Stoner 63 assault rifle and I had to duck behind a metal dumpster to my right. The pinging of bullets on metal wreaked havoc on my ears. My heart was pounding faster and there was not much I could do to return fire without exposing myself to a volley of deadly projectiles. Bruno came forward, still emptying the lethal weapon of its ammunition.

“You will be dead, Oates! I will end you!”

Just as it looked like he would get his wish, the sound of a single gunshot rang out and Bruno stopped in his tracks. The shooting stopped. I poked my head out and saw the large man drop the assault rifle and try to focus his eyes to no avail. A small bullet hole could be seen on his large forehead, the blood dripping down like a leaky faucet. He staggered on his feet for two seconds and collapsed on the pavement. I came out from behind the dumpster and placed my pistol in my coat pocket. A voice from a distance spoke to me.

“Are you okay?”

“Angie?”

We ran to each other and I held onto her with a longing and a huge sense of relief and surprise. I kissed her passionately and wanted this moment to never end.

“Hey, break it up, will you?”

We stopped long enough to see police sergeant Sean Bannon holding a .38 special, now pointed at the ground. A group of cops were looking over the dead body of Bruno LeBoney. Patrolman Sam

Crane went up to Bannon and patted him on the back.

“Great shot, Sarge, one in a million.”

“Sean Bannon, you saved my life,” I said.

“If the situation happens to me one day, you can do the same for me.”

“In a heartbeat.”

We shook hands and Angie hugged her sergeant.

“Not in front of the beat cops, Angie,” he said, half heartedly.

The NYPD secured the area, placing crime tape and waiting for the coroner to arrive to examine the body. In the background we heard some gunfire and an explosion from a grenade, but the Coast Guard and Treasury sharpshooters, led by Simon Eldridge, were too much for DeSharde’s machine gun toting army. I was so relieved to not be lying face down somewhere with a body full of bullets, that I forgot that Adrian Maillot DeSharde was not accounted for.