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Chapter 1

Cryptodom, my home, the most secret place on the face of planet Earth, never seen on any map, was under threat. Number 99, a criminal more commonly known as the Truth Teller was looking to reveal all of our secrets to the world. Revealing Cryptodom to the world would mean the loss of thousands of lives, it would reveal our agents' identities, exposing them to danger.

It's 2020, five weeks since the Truth Teller stole classified information from our secure database. At HQ everyone's top priority is to find the Truth Teller. Whatever it took. I was trying to use our software to locate the Truth Teller by accessing every camera, and satellite in the world. Nothing was working. The Truth Teller was personally trained by me; I taught him how to avoid being detected so I blame myself for this catastrophe. Suddenly, I heard ear piercing alarms telling everyone to get to the main screen. There, I saw the Truth Teller on screen, a Caucasian man with piercing blue eyes, standing at 6'4", much like myself.

He calmly said, "Do not attempt to track me. Here is a timer. After forty-eight hours, I will release all of the secrets that you hold. Unless we can come to an agreement before the deadline, you will pay for your sins."

I was stunned; I couldn't move. Seeing the monster that I created really cut deep. I was snapped back to attention by my commanding officer commanding me to track that call. We worked tirelessly until we found a location. A warehouse right on the outskirts of Brazil.

The flight was five hours, which left me with 43 hours. Me, and my men waited outside the warehouse for the go ahead. A minute later, I kicked down the door. We swept the place clean. All we found was a laptop with the text, "I told you not to trace me." Suddenly, a loud boom shook the floor. The building made a loud creaking noise. Me and my men got out of there as quickly as possible. Just before the building collapsed in a cloud of dust

Back at base, after we coughed our lungs out, my commander bellowed "you screwed the operation up, and now we only have 38 hours."

It's been 15 hours since the timer started. It was two minutes until I was supposed to meet with the Truth Teller. We had an entire SWAT team around the place.

Soon, I heard a familiar, chilling voice, "15 million and all the files will be deleted."

I responded with, "We don't negotiate with terrorists."

The voice answered, "I don't negotiate with people that surround me with SWAT teams. That's why I'm not here. Bye Secretive One"

Back at HQ, I was taken off the case with only 5 hours remaining. The commander, who was assigned to the case, was raging mad at me. I didn't see how he could do better than me.

As he was leaving, I figured him out, lunged at him and quickly put him in handcuffs.

The day after I arrested my commander, I secretly received the medal of valor. I thought it was highly suspicious that the Truth Teller knew that we were going to raid his base, as only the commander knew. I also thought it fishy that the Truth Teller knew that there was SWAT team, as only the commander knew. It turns out that the commander was working with the Truth Teller. He leaked the files to the Truth Teller, his sidekick. We quickly used him to track down the Truth Teller, seized the files and secured them in an upgraded vault.

Chapter 2

Cryptodom was corrupt. The government of my home, that thrives in an artificial glacier, was really a dictatorship. The person that ran it was being bribed and blackmailed by a super-wealthy elite by the number of 98. This elite was the twin brother of the truth teller, a criminal that I put away two months ago. They do say on Cryptodom, the apple never rolls far from its twin apple. It truly seems that crime ran through the family.

It's 2020, at HQ. I was doing some regular paperwork regarding the espionage mission that we had commenced. I had a major breakthrough! I went to my commanding officer, and as I was about to enter, I saw 98, the supposed brother of 99. I knew I couldn't trust him. Right then and there, my curiosity gripped me. What would he be doing in my commanding officer's office? Surely, they wouldn't mind if I just eavesdropped a bit. I quickly grabbed my earpiece and tuned into the conversation. What I heard was truly mortifying.

A voice that I immediately recognized as 98's spoke, "Number 36, stage the escape of my brother, number 99, or else his mission will be completed."

I wondered what that meant.

My commanding officer said in a terrified voice, "You know I can't."

98 retorted, "You have 24 hours."

I suddenly heard footsteps rapidly approaching the door. Quickly, I took off my earpiece and rushed back to my desk.

That night, I couldn't sleep. I kept on wondering what 98 meant, and how long this has been going on. I decided on confronting my commanding officer.

The next day, I swiftly walked into my commanding officer's office without even knocking and asked him, "Are you really going to stage the escape, and what did he mean by 99's mission?"

"Sit down and close the door behind you," my commanding officer said quietly, "It's time you know the full truth." Then, he proceeded to say, "Number 98 is a world-renowned billionaire. He basically treats our government like his puppet. Yesterday, he blackmailed me by threatening to complete 99's mission to release the files that you recovered. Yet they were not really recovered. 98 has a copy of the files. Now I have a dilemma: either release a criminal and let him and his brother complete whatever they are up to or risk shutting down Cryptodom. The

only way to stop them is by getting hard proof of g8's crimes. That is why I am assigning this case to you. Good luck."

I had wanted a quiet life after the whole gg kerfuffle. Now I had a new case. Great. I immediately went to find my friend 101. He was a master hacker and I was hoping that he could help hack g8's laptop. He agreed and we got right down to business. We found that the g8 would be in Cryptodom for the next 12 hours. We could not get through his firewall though, as he decrypted them in so many layers of impenetrable code. The code patterns were that of 306's, the most powerful criminal hacker. All we knew was that we had 12 hours and that he was working with a master hacker. The only way that 101 could access his computer was if I physically accessed it.

There are 8 hours left before he releases the file. I asked my CO to hold a meeting with g8 while I installed the virus. The most that the CO could buy us was an hour.

g8 arrived and I left at the same time. I quickly hopped in my BMW and sped to g8's bunker. To get through the front gate, I had to do a biometric security scan. I completed this with ease as I had a fingerprint belonging to g8 from the CO's desk. I knew that I needed to encounter this. After the gate, to get through the front door, I ducked and jumped over lasers. If anything touched the lasers, g8 would know. Next, to his computer room, there was an eye scan. Since 101 deactivated this alarm, I went ahead and shorted out the lock with my spy pen. Inside, I opened the computer with 10 minutes remaining. I installed the virus and got out of there with no evidence.

Back at HQ, 101 accessed the computer and downloaded all the proof we needed. He also deleted the files that gg wanted.

Chapter 3

It was the fateful day of April the 15th, 1912. The people of Cryptodom watched as a seemingly large ship was approaching a huge iceberg. Something didn't seem right, and Cidel knew it. Cidel quickly ran to the communications room and watched as the ship approached the iceberg. They were going to crash! Cidel knew he was not allowed by Cryptodom federal law to communicate with the Titanic, even though he was president. This was to keep Cryptodom's record as the most secretive country on the face of planet earth. But Cidel couldn't resist. He was too good of a person to just let thousands of people die. So he broke the law and alerted the Titanic. This is why the Titanic did not hit the iceberg straight on but swerved and brushed it's side. Still, the Titanic sank. But Cidel probably saved hundreds of lives, and he was happy that he did.

It was 1912, May, the 15th. Cidel Fastro had just been unelected in a flash election due to the Titanic incident. Or so they said. Cidel knew the truth. The only reason he was unelected was that he tried to turn the government of Cryptodom from a dictatorship to a democracy. The people of Cryptodom loved him. But his actions were causing problems for the super-wealthy elites that basically ran Cryptodom.

That was then.

Today is 2020, September the 3rd. I just read my Grandpa's diary. Could Cryptodom still be as corrupt as it was in 1912? Not many things have changed; we still live in an artificial iceberg that sinks to keep hidden; we are still in Antarctica; and we're still hidden. The government now says that it is a democracy, but is it? Could the entire democracy thing just be a cover for the hidden dictatorship of Cryptodom? I decided to find out.

I formulated a plan. First, break into the embassy and install some surveillance equipment. Then, do the same for the Black House (president's house). If I found anything, I would share it with every citizen of Cryptodom.

Today is September the 4th. We were closing our water-tight barriers and preparing to go underwater. Apparently, some exploring ship was supposed to be headed on a course that nears us. I was in charge of making us go into stealth mode. This, first of all, cancels out all of our heat signatures. Second, it makes us invisible to radar using the same technology as the b52 bomber. Lastly, it also enabled us to dive underwater so we could not be seen by the naked eye.

Today is September the 6th, 2200 hours. I was preparing to go on my mission. I brought gloves, dark clothes, night vision, and a ton of microphones and cameras. I sped on over to the embassy. Once there, I scaled up the wall and stealthily opened the attic window. Inside, I was sure to not make a creak as my goggles scanned for strains in the wood. I installed microphones in the president's office.

Next, I trespassed into the Black House. I blended in perfectly with the house and the mission went smoothly as I was in and out before anyone saw.

Today is September the 7th. I finally found something fishy. Maxwell Lord from Lord Tech was in the president's office, discussing a business proposition.

Maxwell said, "I need you to lift the ban on Lord phones."

President replied, "I can't, they're easily tracked. If you could make them stealthier, then sure, but what am I getting?"

Maxwell said, "I promise that I you can guarantee at least 1 000 000 sales on my phones, I will spin the votes in your favor."

The next day, the president made a new law saying that the only phone you were allowed to have was the new Lord tech phone. Our government really was a corporatocracy controlled by Maxwell Lord.

I shared the findings with the public. Soon afterwards the president was overthrown. We now have a new president: Trustin Judeau.

Chapter 4

Cryptodom, the most secretive planet ever was finally free of all its troubles. No more dictators or terrorists. Just a country thriving.

I took a long nap in my alpha class sub on the third floor of Cryptodom. I woke up to a loud boom. The entire vessel was shaking. Well, technically Cryptodom is a hollowed asteroid that looks like an iceberg. I worried that the hull of Cryptodom might have been damaged. But then I came to my senses, they could just patch it up with all of the Cryptium that they had. They could put it in the radiation chamber and morph it into a perfect plug. But the ground didn't stop shaking. I was worried that something terrible had happened and that the lower classes on level 1 would have to evacuate first in their omega class submarine/homes. I figured that I would be fine as I was an upper class individual, and I was on the top floor. Curiosity overwhelmed me and I got out of my bed and stepped through the side hatch of my alpha class submarine. Outside, I headed to my hovercar powered by Cryptium, which I was low on. At the elevator, I clicked level 1, and within seconds, I was sitting in the elevator. I figured that the problem would probably be at level 1, so that's where I went. Once there, I was so shocked that I didn't even notice the cold water splash over me. The entire level was covered in 5 feet of water. I found that the cause of this was from a hole in the hull. I snapped out of my trance and quickly went back to floor 3. The flood was not serious enough for the lower classes, but they evacuated. Why did they not seal the hole yet? I decided to pay a visit to my good friend #25, who is the captain of Cryptodom. I hopped in my hovercraft and zipped on over to the captain's submarine. He quickly came to the door after I knocked.

“Good evening #1. I suppose you're here to inquire about our leak on level 1?” he said. “I'm sorry, where are my manners? Come on in and make yourself at home.” He followed up.

“so, why have they not sealed the hole yet?” I asked. “what's holding them back?”. I asked again.

“well, I won't sugar-coat it for you. Our Cryptium was stolen. the hole was struck by Hydra's ship, the Dartmouth.”

I immediately knew that this was bad news, Cryptium is the reason that we were so advanced. It was basically pure energy. Without it, we would never be able to fix our vessel. But I knew that Cryptodom was the fastest vessel on earth. Couldn't we just outrun our surrounding ships?

So I asked, “Why can’t we just outrun the enemy and find what to do once we’re safe from our surrounding ships?”

#25 responded with, “First of all, we can’t outrun a torpedo, and secondly, our surrounding ships are just as fast as us. They are 60 knots while we are also 60 knots. Our only solution is to find the Cryptium that they stole and retrieve it. Since Cryptodom is 1km², I would say we have 24 hours, give or take.”

“We have to find that Cryptium fast.”

“Yes, but first, we must escape.”

I had a genius plan. “They have to have a tracker on our vessel for them to be able to track us. All we have to do is find it, and send it floating up so that they can’t track us.”

To pinpoint the location, we had a team of 1000 people sweep all three floors with Geiger counters. The search was boring, but in the end, we got a ping. On floor 3, in submarine #72, there was a tracker. So we had a swat team retrieve the tracker and the traitor that had it. The traitor turned out to be #54, using #72’s submarine. We put him in holding and worried about escaping. I wrapped the tracker up in life jacket cut-outs. I let it out of the water-tight hatch and gave the order to dive. I crossed my fingers that this would work, for if it didn’t, it would be the end of Cryptodom. Two minutes later, we heard torpedoes firing using our radio tech. But the torpedoes were just headed for the tracker, instead of Cryptodom. Our plan worked. But our troubles were not over. We had to make landfall soon, to patch up the hole.

Today is June 2021. We were arriving in the southern part of Brazil, where our contacts would make a temporary fix. By then the water had expanded to the second level. A fleet of omega and beta submarines were following us. These submarines housed the evacuees of the second and first floors. We stopped at around 3 km from the mainland and turned on stealth mode, which we could only do for two hours because the fuel of Cryptium that powered it was gone. I went out in my submarine to pick up the plumbers that were going to patch up our vessel. On Cryptodom, we wore our wetsuits and started diving from the second floor to the third floor. The water was icy and I knew I could only survive for so long before getting hypothermia. On the first floor, they got to work. They welded plates of titanium to patch up the hole until no more water was flowing in., We only had time to pump out water from 1 floor before our stealth would be deactivated, so we did. By the time that we were done, Cryptodom was no longer leaking water, but we still needed the Cryptium to power our cars.

Our cars looked like sports cars. Instead of wheels and gas, they used Cryptium to power four hover engines where the wheel slots should be. These engines allowed our cars to hover and drive at incredible speeds. In case of an emergency, the hover engines also worked on water. The hovercrafts were basically our only way of transport, and I relied on Cryptium to power it. We also needed Cryptium to power our houses, which were submarines. The three classes of submarines belonged to three different classes of people. The lower class got omega submarines,

the middle class got beta submarines, while the high class got the alpha class submarines. In case of an emergency, the submarines were beside a trap door that could open to release the submarine. Since the submarine was your home, you would take all your belongings with you when you flee.

To find the Cryptium, I would have to raid hydra's ship, the Dartmouth. I had yet another plan. All I would have to do is get to the Cryptium, once I was there, I would then eat a piece of Cryptium, which would give me superhuman abilities. like the ability to lift heavy loads such as the Cryptium. Or to be immune to damage, or under water breathing to swim back to our vessel.

I took my sub and headed for the Dartmouth. Once there, I stealthily climbed aboard and knocked one of the guards out. I then took his uniform and snuck to the Cryptium vault. I ate our last remaining piece of Cryptium, prayed and kicked the door open. I quickly grabbed all the Cryptium and ran overboard, there, I tethered the Cryptium to my submarine and quickly sped towards Cryptodom. I was warmly welcomed at Cryptodom and our Cryptium was put into secure holding. We used the Cryptium to power powerful pumps to pump all the water out. We also used the Cryptium to patch up our hole.

Chapter 5

Cryptodom was looking good. Disguised as an iceberg, we were cruising near 68.4380° S, 160.2340° W Antarctica. All the systems were running perfectly. It was a regular day on the most secretive planet on earth. We had been diving underwater more frequently than usual as we were passing an area inhabited by the first nations. Suddenly, the entire vessel shook violently. I fell to my knees at the sheer force of the impact. I headed for my alpha class submarine/home on floor 3. Just in case of a disaster, I could always abandon ship in my submarine.

In my submarine I waited patiently for a broadcast either explaining what happened or telling us to abandon ship. A moment later, from my submarine speaker, the voice of the ship's captain; #25 said, "just as we were about to surface, a huge glacier fell of all four sides of us, and we are officially trapped. But do not fear, citizens of Cryptodom, as we still have our Green Powerhouse. It will be more than enough to supply us with an endless amount of power. Our algae grow super-fast, and we can use that algae to produce energy that can power Cryptodom. We reclaim hundreds of gallons of water each day. We get biochar that replenishes nitrogen, potassium, and phosphate that soil needs. Together, these materials can go in our greenhouse and grow us food. We are vegans, we do not need meat, so everything will be normal. Fear not."

It is November the third. We have started rationing food. Apparently, the ice damaged our greenhouses, and limited our harvest abilities. Now, we can only have a meal a day and I was told that this would not continue for long. We had food for only another week; then we would starve. We might have to start hunting for whales and seals in the ocean.

It is November the 10th. We have stopped receiving food. People are starting to complain that they are hungry. There is nothing more we can do about it. We have already converted our underwater agents to hunters to get us food. So far, all we have come across are a couple of fish. But that was not anywhere near enough to feed 500 watering mouths. Soon, the couple of fish we saw would be gone as the monsoon would happen. We were trying to get as many fish before that happened.

It is November the 15th. The monsoon season has started and we are still trapped between icebergs. I have given them the idea of using c4 to blow the icebergs up but the council just brushes me off. The council is what makes decisions for Cryptodom. They are paranoid that the c4 might trigger another catastrophic flood. Since last year's fiasco, the last thing they want is another flood. I have tried to reason with them that we can patch the holes up with our Cryptium, but they were having none of it.

Meanwhile, Cryptodom is going in a downward spiral. We were once vegans but that changed. Now, we will eat anything to just survive, even seals. The worst thing is, jokes about

cannibalism were getting more and more serious. I was afraid that if this continued, people would resort to cannibalism. I was extremely close to defying the council.

It is November the 20th. So far, 1 person has died from hunger, while the rest of us are just skin and bones. Could this be the end of Cryptodom? Suddenly, number 14, armed with a fork and knife, charged at 15, intending to kill. I guess they just couldn't handle it. I ran over to them as quickly as I could to stop number 15 from being the victim of cannibalism. I put 14 in captivity to make sure that it never happened again. But something inside of me had snapped

It is the night of November the 20th. I took four pieces of c4 and climbed on the top hatch of Cryptodom, I got in my wet suit and opened the hatch. As I climbed out, my body became cold. The water was freezing. I quickly scrambled to the two icebergs clamping Cryptodom. Making sure to carefully put two pieces of c4 on each. I climbed back in Cryptodom and set the c4 off. Everyone woke up. Immediately, there was a flood, but the holes were patched up in 30 minutes. We surfaced and moved swiftly to the southern part of Brazil. Our Brazilian contacts fixed up the greenhouses and even upgraded them.

Due to my actions, I was forced into captivity by Cryptodom law enforcement. I didn't care. As long as Cryptodom was fine, I was fine.

It is November the 25th. I was escorted to the supreme court of Cryptodom where I was to face my judgement. Outside of the court, hundreds of were protestors yelling repeatedly, "FREE AGENT 1." I was touched. As a response to the protestors, the judge promised to be impartial. My sentence was house arrest for 1 year.

Chapter 6

It was December the 5th. We were floating near Antarctica. We were disguised as an iceberg since we were the most secretive country on Earth. But there was a slight problem this time around. After the hunger problem that occurred last month, we were forced to eat only fish. It was our only option as we were so hungry. Apparently, going on an all fish diet does not give you enough fiber and nutrition. Also, we were all getting sick. It was a strange illness that malnutrition could not have caused. Everyone was working double time at the testing laboratories. Although I have not felt the side effects of the illness yet, our scientists and doctors were working together to find a cure for our malnutrition and illness.

It is December the 8th. I finally feel the side effects of the fish. I basically had no stamina, and I always feel lightheaded, like I'm about to tumble over at any given point in time. To combat this, I mostly sit down, or lie down. It feels like standing on a cruise ship in rough seas. Although we have not yet found the cure for this illness, I am sure we will soon. Recently, we have been taking a lot of vitamins, almost ten per meal. This was to regain the energy that we lost and to help combat the side effects of malnutrition. This too, has not yet made a great difference. I barely feel any improvement before and after swallowing my vitamins.

It is December the 18th. Our scientists say that they found a medicine that is effective in reversing this sickness. They have handed each of us a bottle and tell us to eat one of the vitamins per day. I was skeptical at first. But I started taking them. Immediately, I felt enlightened. I felt as if I could do anything. Maybe this drug did work.

It is December the 25th. The government is taking back all of our medicine. It was causing problems. Even though it was effective, it altered your perception and tampered with your brain. People were putting up quite a resistance to the medicine recall. Not only because they feel that they need this drug, but also because they have become addicted to it. I myself cannot stop taking this drug, Even though I knew I should. When the collectors came to my door, I had to force myself to bring them the bottle. It was hard for me to give up such a valuable possession to me.

It is December the 31st. The people of Cryptodom were still suffering from malnutrition and the mystery illness. Well, it wasn't such a mystery anymore. Apparently, the fish were contaminated with heavy metals and we got lead poisoning. It was unbearable to watch people on the street just collapse on the ground. It was time for me to take action. At the next council meeting, I suggested that we stop giving out man made remedies and let nature do the work. Give the people of Cryptodom good quality, organic foods, set up a food plan for them, and teach them how to prepare the meals.

It is January the 25th. Thanks to my suggestion, lead poisoning and malnutrition are no more. Cryptodom looked as healthy as ever.

Chapter 7

It is February the 8th. We were floating near Antarctica. Although we were still disguised as an iceberg, not everything was okay. Because past events haunted us, most of the people on Cryptodom developed PTSD. I myself have woken up in cold sweat on multiple occasions because of nightmares. I dream of the hunger that I have endured, the sickness, and the great flood that almost destroyed us. Not only does this occur during the nighttime, but also in the daytime. In other words, I constantly have flashbacks.

I feel alone. I am infuriated by anything minor, and I constantly feel guilty for all the deaths. Most of the people on Cryptodom have resorted to therapy; my appointment with my therapist is on the 10th.

February the 10th. I got in my hovercar and drove towards my therapist. I was anxious and nervous at the same time as I had never tried therapy before. I didn't like the idea of doctors messing with my mind. At the same time, I wanted the flashbacks and nightmares to stop.

When I arrived at the therapist she beckoned me to her office.

In her office, she said, "sit on the couch and make yourself comfortable"

she would start by asking me a series of questions. "What do you think of when you see a gun?"

I answered truthfully, "gun, shoot, bood, die?"

These questions went on for an hour until our appointment was over.

"Okay agent 1, I think you should go on corticosteroids for a month"

February the 11th was my first day on the pills. They tasted okay, although they were a bit hard to swallow. I knew that everyone was taking them, and I noticed that everyone on Cryptodom have become more obese. The corticosteroids pills may have been a cause of the obesity. As a result, the iceberg was sinking. We were still afloat, but the water level is rising alarmingly. This was extremely bad. Unfortunately, although we were all black ops agents, meaning that we all had to be prime physical specimens capable of performing our duties, we weren't in good health and we couldn't swim ten strokes.

February the 15th. I have a suspicion that the antidepressants are behind the obesity. After some research, I had my proof. I took it to the high council and expressed my concern. Although, there was one problem. Without the pills, our PTSD would come back. Perhaps I have to find a way to cure PTSD without pills for the council to accept my suspicion, so I was back to research. I found that 30 minutes of mindfulness a day could cure our PTSD. We had to

meditate and do yoga for 30 minutes a day. Still, that's better than obesity. I took my solution to the council and a plan was put into action immediately. All pills were confiscated and all citizens were forced to do 30 or more minutes of mindfulness activities a day. Citizens were not happy, but at least we could keep the general population safe from PTSD.

It is February the 20th. There was still a slight problem. The problem was that people had to exercise to get back in shape. To help the citizens, we constructed a fitness plan for each and every day.

It is on February the 25th. Obesity and PTSD were no more.

Chapter 8

March the 26th. Today was the annual celebration of nougats. It was a special day on Cryptodom as nougats were important in our tradition. Other than that, it was a regular day on the most secretive planet on earth. We were dealing with everyday stuff at HQ. We were floating near Argentina, still disguised as an iceberg. Suddenly, my assistant came in my office. He said that I have a mission of low urgency. Apparently, agent 96, who liked to travel, was refusing to come back to Cryptodom. He had met an attractive other who had convinced him to stay with her in Argentina. Their little romance could not be. We needed agent 96 as he was one of our best, and we also could not risk exposing Cryptodom. I decided that the best route was to just talk face to face with him in Argentina.

I got in my boat and cruised to Argentina. Once there, I docked under a fake boating license and number.

I asked through my earpiece “agent 54, can you pull up agent 96’s tracker and send the location?”

He responded with, “Sure thing boss.”

Within minutes, I had an uber headed towards agent 96’s location. When the uber dropped me off, I looked around the cafe. Today was quite a busy day. Soon enough, I spotted agent 96 with his companion.

I walked up to them and said, “Hey, can I just take him aside for a moment? We have business to discuss.”

Immediately, agent 96 recognized me and agreed. I took him outside the cafe and into an alley.

“You know you can’t leave Cryptodom. You’re essential to us and we can’t risk her catching wind of our country.”

Stubbornly, he replied, “I can do whatever I want. Make me go back. You can’t control me.”

I showed him a contract that he signed when joining Cryptodom. He didn’t even deign to read it. I flipped to page 56 and read, “Agents shall not have relationships outside of Cryptodom. Agents may not leave Cryptodom, or reveal Cryptodom.” The look on his face told me that he was oblivious.

I took agent 96 back to Cryptodom after he apologized thoroughly to his date about having to attend business. On Cryptodom he was thrown in a cell and he was to await his trial.

It is March 30th. Today is the trial of agent 96. We started the trial with the laws that he broke, which included breach of contract. We were looking at 10 years of jail time. He was not happy. In his defense, he said that it was against his human rights for anyone to disallow him from having relationships. Ultimately, he was facing 8 years of jail time. He accepted and said that he wanted to see his companion one last time before going behind bars. We granted him this.

In Argentina, we met with his girlfriend. He told me to give them a minute and I agreed. About 10 minutes later, I walked in the room and they had pills in their hands. I asked them what they were and he responded with, "We would rather die than live life apart," and they swallowed the pills.

It is April the 5th. We were hosting a funeral service for both people. Their story reminded me of Romeo and Juliet. Perhaps it was meant to be.

Chapter 9

Everyone on Cryptodom was in a massive panic. As the most secretive country, disguised as an iceberg, we could not let anyone know the identities of our agents. Yet a powerful hacker by the name of Darkwalker had compromised Cryptodom's mainframe. They had stolen a list of all the agents of Cryptodom before we were able to shut them out. With the list of agent identities, our agents that were currently in the field were in danger. My assignment was to track the I.P address of the hack. It was a hard task; the hacker used a powerful VPN to disguise his location. I thought that the hacker must have a purpose for the hack, and it was either to harm our agents in the field or to blackmail us. I was hoping that her purpose was the latter. As if Darkwalker read my mind, the screens at headquarters turned blank. Then, a masked face appeared.

“This is Darkwalker speaking on behalf of Hydra. We have a list of your agents and would like to pitch a business proposition to you. We would like to trade this list for 448 sets of your mk2 battlearmour.”

My commanding officer replied, “We do not negotiate with terrorists. We will find you, and when we do, you will pay for your actions against Cryptodom.”

Darkwalker said with a smirk, “I thought so. See this timer, ‘that's how long you have until I release the list. 48 hours. Better hurry up. The clock is ticking. Tik tok.”

And just like that, the transmission went blank. I knew that this was not good. Darkwalker working with Hydra, the sworn enemy of Cryptodom. I had no doubt that they would do as they said. The mission just became a whole lot harder. I looked in the video for any clues that may lead us to the hydra base of operations. All I saw was white marble. I ran the footage through an image enhancer in the hope of finding reflections on the marble. After about five minutes, the results came out. It was hard to see, but you could make out the outline of a castle-like structure with lots of statues around it. I thought of what else I could pick up from the reflection. Perhaps it was so hard to see because it was also white? That was it! It was the Parthenon in Greece. I took careful measurements and came to the conclusion that the base of operations must have been 1.04 km from the Parthenon and at a 30-degree angle from the entrance of the Parthenon. I confirmed this with google maps and pinpointed their location to room 3401B in the Athens Residence Apartments.

Immediately, I showed my commander and we started planning a mission. We could not take the iceberg to the middle of the equator; it would look fishy if it didn't melt. We had to take one of our alpha class submarines. I was to go with one other agent. Agent 14 was my choice.

We suited up. Our pants and suit were bulletproof and could make us go invisible. Our glasses made our faces look like old businessmen and had augmented reality to contact HQ. Our top-hat made us invisible to surveillance. The shoes that we wore wiped out our treads and eliminated the sounds we made while moving. They also had blades that came out of the tip to cut us free if we were in trouble. To add a finishing touch, we had watches that could hack any computer, had stun darts, and could open any door. I felt completely prepared.

We got on agent 14's alpha submarine and departed. It took us quite a long time to reach the Mediterranean sea. After an uneventful trip, the sub docked at Moschato and we took a car the rest of the way to Athens. Once we arrived, we had only eight hours left before we were in serious trouble. Unanimously, we decided to dedicate four hours to reconnaissance and the other 4 hours to the actual mission. I wanted to go in at night-time since we had night vision and they did not. We rented a hotel that had a view of the room that they were in. Using the binoculars feature on our glasses, we took turns watching their behavioral patterns. They tended to take a 20 min break every two hours they worked. That was our time to strike.

There are 4 hours before the files are released. We are standing outside the apartment complex waiting for them to take their break. Soon enough, four thugs came out of the apartment, including Darkwalker. We walked into the building casually. Once we were out of their range of view, we rushed to their room. I used my watch to pick the lock and we were in. we found a computer and went straight to work. I used the watch to bypass the login on the computer. We looked for the file. We were too slow. Next thing I know, there were footsteps coming to the door. I decided to stay with the download of the files. Just as my watch finished downloading all of it and deleting it from the computer, the four thugs were back, and we turned on the invisibility feature. Slowly, we made our way to the door, but my partner stubbed his toe.

“Aaaaaaa!”

The four people in the room immediately looked at us and tried to catch us. I managed to slip out the door while my partner was caught. We delivered what they wanted right to them: the battle armour. I waited until my partner had his suit taken off. Everyone in the group wanted to feel the suit, and I chose that moment to strike. While they were gawking and touching, I pressed a button on my watch. This immediately stunned everyone holding the jacket. While they flopped on the ground, we put them in handcuffs and took them back to Cryptodom.

Chapter 10

It was national nougat day again. We were preparing all sorts of entertainment of Cryptodom, including fireworks, a huge party, games, and food such as a nougat fountain. I couldn't wait for the big night. It was the day that we honoured the nougat gods and thanked them for creating Cryptodom. We believed that the gods called chocolate and nougat fought over who was the best dessert. During their last battle, the nougat gods shed a nougat tear which eventually turned into cryptium and then Cryptodom.

It was exactly 9:01 pm when the nougat tear turned into Cryptodom. The party commenced. I was so eager to try the new things they had this year. It turns out they invented a nougat flavoured alcoholic beverage called nougat gin. First, I went to get a taste of the melted nougat coated apple that they served every year. It was delicious as usual. I decided that I should admire the art exhibition before going to the games and the party. The 3D art that they shaped out of nougats was amazing. One of them featured a chocolate figure fighting a nougat figure. I couldn't wait any longer, it was time for the games. First, I went to nougat gin pong, which was similar to beer pong, but instead of beer, they used nougat gin. There was also Bob-the-nougat, which I thoroughly enjoyed.

Next, I visited the party on the third floor. There was a dance floor in the middle, a bar, and tables that people were chatting at. I went to the dance floor. After about 5 minutes of dancing in bright lights, I went to go grab a drink of nougat vodka and went above deck to enjoy the fireworks show that would start in 5 minutes. Although I was already tipsy, when I was offered another drink I gladly took it while the fireworks started. They were awesome and so bright. Soon enough, a ship with a red cross on it appeared behind an iceberg and approached Cryptodom. I couldn't care less. People from the ship started coming above deck with a ladder. I was happy; I thought, the more the merrier.

It was the day after the party. I woke up and got dressed. I still had a slight hangover. I was dizzy and was coughing. Oh no, I remembered a boat that encountered. The lights must have attracted undue attention. I ran to the captain's submarine as I wasn't allowed to drive under the influence of alcohol. He was passed out on the couch. I went to wake him up.

“Huh?”

“It's me, agent 1.”

He responded with “Oh no, the people on the boat.”

I said “Exactly.”

We both got up to try and locate the people. We had to erase their memory before they told the world about Cryptodom. Suddenly, we heard a horn. The ship was departing! I told the captain to chase the ship, even though he was hungover. I rushed to HQ to activate our only option. Even though it was still a prototype, I had to use the synaptic memory eraser. I fired it up and rolled it above deck. Then, I aimed it at the ship and hoped for the best.

Five days after the incident, there hadn't been any report of an iceberg with people in it. Thank the nougat gods! Cryptodom was still a secret.

Chapter 11

It was a week after the national day of nougats. Some people on the boat were afflicted with some type of strange illness. It caused coughs, fever, and drowsiness. The people that had it were in quarantine as we were afraid they would spread it to other people. So far, our research has led us to the conclusion that it is a type of coronavirus. I was in the laboratory trying to learn more about the strange illness.

It was two weeks after the national nougat day. We had our first death. Agent 95, who died unexpectedly. This triggered a massive panic. People with the coronavirus had started to become afraid. Some people had gone as far as wearing hazmat suits when they were not self-isolating. I was sitting in my submarine, bored out of my mind. There wasn't anything to do. I tried arts and crafts, but I mostly just watched TV.

It was three weeks after national nougat day. By now, at least half the population of Cryptodom had gotten the coronavirus. There were approximately 10 deaths already. All we knew was that the infection rate was 100%. The government had shared a list of people with the coronavirus. People were in a panic. Consequently, they started to panic buy. I thought I had enough rations and did not want to risk getting the virus. A friend was supposed to come over later that day. I knew we were not allowed to have people over, but I was bored out of my mind.

Later in the day, my friend came over.

“Agent 14! It's so good to see another human.”

He replied, “Same here, how have you been?”

I told him to sit and I made some tea. We caught up with each other and shared how we were getting by in quarantine. A few hours later, Agent 14 left and I immediately felt bored again. I had nothing to do so I checked the coronavirus list just updated 30 secs ago. To my surprise, agent 14 was on the list. I started to panic. Although the infection rate was 100%, I wondered if I had the coronavirus. I wore my hazmat suit and went to the laboratory.

I was in the laboratory.

“Hey agent 1, is it your shift right now?”

I replied, “No, but I need to get tested for coronavirus right now!”

Hastily, agent 15 put me in a hermetically sealed room and used a robot to take a blood sample. Luckily, the results came in negative. But I was confused. If the infection rate is 100%, how come I didn't have it? I asked agent 15 and he told me that it was impossible. Perhaps I had something in my body that could fight off the coronavirus? He told me that he needed to examine me.

It is the 4th week since the outbreak started. 90% of the population has been affected. There have been a lot of deaths. Some of the remaining people that were not infected had decided to abandon Cryptodom on their boats. I wondered how far they would get. We were floating in the middle of nowhere.

It is the 5th week after the outbreak started. Everyone except me has been infected. We turned toward Brazil to try and see if the people on land had a cure. My intelligence informed me that 75% of the population had died already. There were more deaths everyday. By my calculations, everyone would be dead on the day we reached Brazil.

It is the day we reached Brazil. Everyone except me has died. The smell was horrendous. Almost ten times worse than rotting meat. And the grief that I feel is never ending. I parked Cryptodom at a dock in Brazil and sorrowfully disembarked. Rain poured all over me.

When I recovered my wits, I wrote a eulogy. It was time to honor the dead and let them rest at the bottom of the sea. I started to read my eulogy to a flock of curious and indifferent seagulls.

“All my friends on Cryptodom. I cannot believe that you were taken away from me because of a virus. We have had too short of a time together. But we have made the most of it.

“When we were recruited to Cryptodom, I immediately knew that you were going to be like family. We have had fun times together from the first nougat day to the last. We had many memorable moments. My most treasured one was having fun on the 4th nougat day. You grew to be more than family, and I will forever remember you. I hope the nougat gods treat you well in the afterlife. It is your time to rest now. You have done a great service to this earth. You have made the world a more peaceful place. And you will have an honourable funeral at sea.”

After my eulogy, I programmed Cryptodom to go to the Antarctic and sink to the bottom of the sea. I waved goodbye.

Now it was time for me to start a new life. I didn't know if I was ready to forget my comrades. But I must.