

Chapter One

THE KIDNAPPING

“Get in the trunk or I’ll blow your fucking head off. I’m a junkie and I don’t care who sees it,” threatened the customer-turned-kidnapper as he pushed the silver barrel of his revolver under the pale chin of the forty-six-year-old car salesman. The portly, blond salesman did as he was told and slowly climbed into the trunk of the car. He was ordered to give the abductor his wallet, watch, and rings.

The kidnapped victim was my husband, Matt. He reluctantly gave the kidnapper his silver wedding band of twenty-five years, his Timex watch, his college class ring, and his wallet, which had belonged to his father. Just as he tried to rise and ask the man a question, the lid slammed shut on his head, knocking him unconscious. When he awoke, he felt the car in motion and breathed the fumes from the exhaust, which was just a hand’s reach beneath him. He had no idea how long he had been unconscious because the darkness inside the suffocating metal tomb kept him in blindness.

Sickened by the fumes and thinking that his bruised head could not possibly ache more, he was jolted by the blaring of rap music. The density of the bass on the music was both deafening and made his heart beat so fast he thought it would explode. In a panic he screamed for help. No one responded. He screamed again. The car came to a sudden stop, smashing him against the luxurious interior of his death box.

He heard the door open and slam shut and then an angry pounding on the trunk. A voice shouted through the metal trunk, threatening to kill him if he made any more noise. Frightened, he obeyed his captor. He heard the retreating steps and then the opening and closing of the car door. Shortly, the car began to move again.

The next few hours put the car in a stop and go mode. Matt seemed less frightened when the car was in motion, looking at it as a stay of execution. It was the stops that terrified him—awaiting the kidnapper’s next move.

At one stop there was arguing—“You motherfucker, give me the money,”—then the sound of gunshots. He closed his eyes, took a deep breath, and waited to die. He heard a woman’s voice scream, “Calm down, I’ll get ya the money.”

A few minutes later the car was in motion, and the vulgar rap music began to blare again.

As time went on, Matt’s courage returned. He tried signaling for help by pushing part of his white handkerchief out the crevice of the trunk. While he held onto the end, he hoped that the other side of the waving hanky would attract