

THE LIBRARY

The explosion of metal hitting metal brought Maggie out of her chair. It was unusually loud and likely destroyed the vehicles that had collided. Someone dead? Maybe — it definitively upset the serenity of the library that she managed. The other librarian standing next to her turned, mouth agape and eyes wide.

“Omigod,” she cried. “Another one?”

Both women walked out the library doors, onto the stone patio that fronted Victory Road to view the mangled wreckage. They watched a man help a bloodied driver crawl out of an aging Mercedes that rested on its roof. Maggie was talking to the dispatcher as they peered over the stone wall. They were joined by at least five other people who were working at reading tables near the check-out desk. Only Christopher remained in the library. He watched as the people left. He looked around the room, rose from his chair, gathered his laptop and notebook, walked to the antique case, and threw his cocked elbow onto the thin glass. It broke easily. He brushed aside glass shards, picked up the dusty, worn leather tome, tucked it under his arm and walked past the librarians and flashing lights. He ignored the sirens, casually opened the car door, and gently placed aged novel on the seat.
