

## CHAPTER 1

I was shoved back harshly by the recoil of the rifle as I applied the last fraction of an ounce of pressure to the trigger. Downrange, at the target, nothing had happened. The expected fireworks had failed to materialize. No one down range was even alarmed. A few heads raised at the sharp crack as the bullet broke the sound barrier, but no one had heard the shot. This rifle, which I had built with my own hands, was equipped with a silencer as big as a car muffler, so no one had heard anything. Some really great strides have been made in sound suppression, particularly as pertains to firearms, and the hellacious noise they make. I could have purchased (or Uncle Sam could have) a suppressor nearly as good as this one, and much smaller, for this .264 Winchester Magnum, but for this endeavor, "nearly as good" doesn't quite fill the bill. This rifle was silent except to anyone downrange that would have heard a high crack as the bullet broke the sound barrier, but no one had heard the shot. Also contrary to what you might hear, the huge boom you hear when you fire a rifle is the explosive sound of rapidly escaping gasses, not the bullet breaking the sound barrier. The Buick sized silencer took care of the gas situation, and the sharp crack on the other end is only recognizable by those of us who have been shot at, or those who have had a bullet go past them, for whatever reason. Bullets don't "whisper", "zip", "whistle", or any of the other euphemisms you may have heard or read about. They crack. From behind the gun, I had heard only the click of the lockwork as the firing pin went home and released a 140 grain bullet at about a zillion feet a second.

I had picked this caliber precisely because it is one of the best long range rounds in existence, with the exceptions of the .50 BMG, and the .338 Lapua. (Not counting wildcats). The hunters

who may disagree with me do so only because they have not used the .264 to it's fullest capability. That 140 grain bullet covered the 400 yards to the target in much less than an eye blink, and the target should have exploded with the proverbial crack of doom, not the crack of silence.

I could tell you hand loaders out there the precise load to use to get the velocity I'm talking about, but the Government won't sell you the powder, and if I told you the load you might find some powder somewhere and blow your head off, and I might be liable, so I'm not telling.

There could only be one explanation for the lack of an explosion. After my building the rifle, designing and building the huge silencer, working up the proper load, and hauling this 45 pound monstrosity to its present site, I had missed the damn target. The 15 or so people down there hadn't even noticed where the bullet hit. Since the target was 65 pounds of C-4 explosive attached to a percussion detonator, (a pie plate size RED detonator) and nothing had gone boom, I must have missed that red detonator. In all truthfulness, the detonator was inside the building where I couldn't see it, but the red sign I was shooting at was supposed to be EXACTLY directly opposite the detonator. The detonator itself was supposed to be somewhat larger than the sign outside, to allow for any angle I might have to shoot from. Birds were chirping and singing and filling the air when the air should have been filled with wildly gyrating pieces of debris from a disintegrating building. Oh well. I had plenty of ammo. Now finding a .264 inch bullet hole from 400 yards away is a trick in itself. The 12 power Zeiss scope on the rifle would not do it. Not to worry. I dug a 60 power spotting scope out of my pack. You hunters will recognize it. You know, the one you can count the flies on a bighorn with at half a mile. I set the spotting scope up on its tripod and started looking at the building and the red triangle on its side. That red

triangle that said KEEP OUT on it and was supposed to be positioned exactly opposite a detonator and 65 pounds of plastic explosive inside the building, but wasn't.

I would love to be able to tell you that I found the bullet hole, compensated for the error, then blew that building off the map with the second shot. I did find the bullet hole. It wasn't much off center on that red triangle. That meant someone had moved the C-4. The chore facing me now was not one I was looking forward to. There seemed to be no option but to get inside the building, locate the C-4, then put the damn stuff back where it was supposed to be. Never having seen the inside of the building, that could amount to a day's work, even though the building was not actually that big. My problem was not time, but rather being able to move around freely in a Spanish speaking country south of the U.S.. My problem was my size, which is considerably taller than the average citizen down here. My problem was that I don't speak Spanish, or look it. Problems, problems. Of course that's what my outfit is supposed to do. Eliminate problems, whatever, or whoever, they may be. Langley furnishes the intelligence, we do the work. The outfit I lead is one you've never heard of. You may never hear of it. Same with my name. But my Code-name was, and is, Warlock.

## CHAPTER 2

I told you that the C.I.A. furnished our intelligence. I was now beginning to wonder if they had any to furnish, because it was they who said the C-4 was disguised, ( I know as what) and I know that some of you explosive experts out there are saying things like "65 pounds of C-4 explosive is enough to blow up several 40 by 40 foot buildings, so why is the idiot using so much, and why isn't the dummy setting it off with a radio or battery, instead of an inefficient percussion detonator?" All of these are valid points, but only because you don't know the whole story.

First of all, the explosive was placed in the building (by someone from the C.I.A.) when the building was erected. Because of the workmen there at the time, and the twenty or so people there 24 hours a day since that time, the agent was unable to lay wires to set off the charge electrically. Secondly, because this building and three others like it were built close to radio and TV transmitters, to have used an electronic detonator could have resulted in the C-4 going off as soon as it was planted. C.I.A. operatives are not known to be suicidal. Third and lastly, I could not care less if the building even blew up at all. I just hoped that 65 pounds of plastic explosive was enough to cave in the underground installation the building sat over. The entrance, exit, ventilation system, etc., were all right there in that 40 by 40 wooden building. Intelligence said that the underground installation was much larger than the buildings that sat over it, but the only building that had any access to the underground portion was the one I had just been shooting at. If I caved in the entrance, everything beneath the surface was there to stay, so to speak. The time it would take to dig it out after a cave-in would insure that no one (or thing) would remain alive. So even though the explosives were in the building and I was shooting at the building, it was not

the primary target. The same building in which someone had moved the explosives. I just hoped it was still in the building. To say that I hoped I could get into the building to find it would not be exactly truthful. I hoped the damned stuff would go off by itself. But I had to get in there to make sure that it did go off.