

THE PLOT OF EUROPE

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LetterRijn publishers, Leidschendam, The Netherlands

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First print, November 2021

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Cover photo: Shutterstock

Graphic design: LetterRijn

Publisher: LetterRijn

www.letterrijn.nl



isbn: 978-94-931923-2-4

Prologue

The former Yugoslavia

A row of three men and three women stood opposite an armed man, a us Army Colt 45 in his hand, obligingly handed over by one of the many soldiers of the UN peace-keeping force whom they had baited and plundered during the past few months. The open eyes of the only woman thirsty to look at him, and the mouth of the weapon were in line. She looked at the other man, who did not move. His face was grooved with many lines that ran down his cheeks, continuing on past his mouth, and his eyes were two glittering slits. A face ravaged by war. She wondered if she were going to scream, she wanted to, but she wondered if she would, and that one second seemed to last an eternity. The slits kept appraising her, and it was deathly quiet under the burning sun.

Higher up on the mountain, unseen and unheard by the woman and man on the narrow path, a camera clicked. The camera was in the hands of one of two UN-soldiers - too far away for any possible action - who watched the region through his tele. Automatically he made the photo. Some action.

The armed man below assessed the situation, looked at his panting prey, then scanned the mountain slopes. His eyes became even narrower slits and the thin mouth curled with amusement and the barrel dropped slightly, a little game of suspense. He shot through her left breast and the dum dum bullet blew a crater in her upper body, pulverizing her heart. She was already dead by the time her back hit the ground. Five quick shots followed, the three men were hit in the crotch and the other two women in the chest. The dum-dum bullets made every wound a deadly one. He turned and walked away. Once he looked back, as if in triumph. He could not hear the camera click again. The first flies were already feeding on the carnage.

‘Jesus! He gunned them down! What the...?’

The camera now dangling from his neck, the words of the Dutch UN soldier faltered. His superior officer’s eyes followed his pointing finger, seeing the dead bodies only now.

‘Jesus!’

The photographer picked up his gun, wanting to shoot, but there was nothing to aim at. ‘We have to do something,’ his voice rose despairingly, as his trembling rifle barrel canvassed the jagged cliffs in vain.

‘We are not going to intervene, we’ll do better,’ said his superior grimly, and his warlike, flaring mustache seemed to quiver. ‘We are going to report this.’

Chapter 1

Amsterdam, Day 1, The Assassination

The waiter, pushing a cart carrying an elaborate breakfast for two, made his way through the broad hallways of Le Géant Hotel accompanied by the Chief Police Commissioner of Amsterdam, now in charge of European Coordination, and an alert security agent. Their footsteps were muffled by the thick carpets, in which many a rock star had left his immortal footprints – and God only knows what else. For this occasion the Commissioner had found a suitable uniform with enough gold braid and insignias to enable his reflection to nod in the morning mirror and say: ‘You can do it.’ Outwardly he now appeared calm, but he was nervous about the general security precautions for the European Summit Conference now taking place. Despite public criticism of the rigid security measures during the previous Summit, when hundreds of people were unjustly picked up and detained, security measures this year were more extensive than ever.

However, that was not the most important reason for Commissioner Cordduwer’s nervousness. It was the breakfast he would be having with the German Federal Chancellor, whose room they were now heading toward. Flying in the face of protocol, this meeting was, but that didn’t worry the vain Commissioner. If the German Federal Chancellor let it be known through friendly German-Dutch police channels that he would like a word in private with a Dutch Chief Police Commissioner for European Coordination, a little fact-finding mission, nobody was going to stand in his way. Naturally the Commissioner had informed the Minister who was in charge, but the man could only shrug his shoulders in resignation, realizing that there were no adequate guidelines for this kind of situation. The Dutch Minister had sighed, but go ahead, do as you please.

The minister sighed for good reason: Commissioner Cordduwer was regarded by more than one person as an unguided missile, led by vanity alone, and that was simply not enough, even for a politician. The minister's sighs and the Commissioner's nerves – however decorated with honors he might be – stemmed from The Sensitive Topic on Summit's agenda. There were two main items on the agenda: a far-reaching decision which eventually would lead to the Federation of Europe and The Sensitive Topic, the formation of a European Court of Justice.

That Europe was being shoved down the people's throats in bits and pieces was nothing new: European money, the European Central Bank and so on and so forth. The product Europe was being introduced in separate components – first the wheels, then the windshield wipers and the trunk and next the motor and the steering wheel, and before people knew it they were traveling in a European car against their will. Nobody ever asked them if they wanted a European car. *Where's my American convertible?*

But the Commissioner didn't have such thoughts. He was already riding in a beautiful black European limousine. Just the same, he was nervous. He was aware of the protests against a European police force, the Europol. Misplaced, of course, because Holland would be the seat of that Europol and the present government considered this a diplomatic success. Never look a gift horse in the mouth, Dutch politicians had learned. Still, protests were vehement and who would bear the brunt of the Chancellor's annoyance? The Commissioner in his best regalia.

Despite his eccentric outward appearance – round head with nut-brown eyes and the wrong attire – Commissioner Cordduwer wasn't crazy. He knew what kind of pressure the Chancellor would exert on him and he was acquainted with the nervousness of the Dutch population when it came to surrendering national powers to vague international bodies. Like the dreaded word 'cancer', which has spawned so many synonyms and acronyms, the Federation of Europe had acquired many evasive synonyms in order to disguise the fact that the F.E. was not a Federation. The initials

EE! – with an exclamation point – were adopted enthusiastically by opponents of the Federation of Europe to protest a body they considered cancerous, using the F word for Federation. There was even a popular international hit called *EE!* and its popularity was not only due to its musical virtue. *EE!* had become just as popular as the *V for Victory*. Even his own granddaughter sang the song at the top of her lungs and she took part in demonstrations, too.

The hallway in Le Géant Hotel seemed long to the Commissioner, long enough to dwell upon what urgent questions a Federal Chancellor might put to him at eight o'clock in the morning. 'Tell me, why wouldn't the people feel safe with a European police force protecting them?' That question coming from the mouth of a German would be difficult to answer without insulting such an important guest, the Commissioner felt. He didn't like to insult important guests. Bad for business.

When Germany and France jointly supported the proposal for a European police force, nothing seemed to stand in the way of implementing the idea. But there was still one more barrier: the decision had to be upheld by a general majority. And this was putting poor Holland in an awkward position at the Summit. Now that it held the Chair, it would be impolite to block the resolution all alone; there should be at least one other opposing vote. Perhaps it was no coincidence that this sensitive resolution – to which the Dutch raised the greatest opposition – was to be voted upon at the summit that Holland was hosting. Didn't the little country behind the dikes have the reputation of going to practically any lengths to oblige?

Cordduwer himself had no fundamental objections to the Europol. You had to be able to adapt to the new European order. But what did the Chancellor want of him? The conversation would center on this subject; that was certain. *What did he want?*

The little party of men had reached the door of the Federal Chancellor's suite. In front of the door were two vigilant bodyguards, machine-guns in hand, a German and a Dutchman. The Dutchman was an accommodating gesture from Weber, the courteous German Commander. The two seemed superfluous consid-

ering the fact that the entire floor was hermetically sealed off and all entryways were guarded by security agents. As was the entire hotel, to the point of hysteria. No one could enter unseen. Dutch security, German security, and French security guaranteed it. The French President slept beneath this safe roof also - the symbol of French-German unity. The Géant, formerly so very Dutch and at one time the city hall, was now a French possession. And of course the Federal Chancellor slept in the best suite, formerly the room of the mayor himself. Only the red-light district behind the hotel and the 'coffee shops' selling hash and marijuana betrayed the fact that all this French grandeur was situated in Dutch territory.

One of the two bodyguards - the German, not entirely without coincidence - knocked on the door and waited politely a moment. The little party - the waiter, the Commissioner and their security escort - stood at a proper distance from the door. Only after some hesitation did the German give a second, more insistent knock. The Chancellor's temper in the morning was notorious. No sound came. He took the risk of a third knock. No reaction.

The German guard coughed in embarrassment, took a deep breath, he had to do his job, and now drummed firmly on the door, calling out: '*Herr Kanzler.*' He had expected an irate thunderstorm, not the silence that followed.

After deliberating somewhat, the guard summoned up all his courage and gently turned the doorknob. The room was not locked, of course. It might be necessary to gain access quickly for security reasons, and no one would dream of taking that liberty without well-founded reason. Slowly he pushed the door open and knocked once more on the beautiful wooden paneling. '*Herr Kanzler?*'

The door was wide open, giving the curious heads a clear view of the room and the bed to the right, behind the library corner. The Chancellor lay on his back in bed, stretched out at full length. But the proposed conversation would never take place. In the buzzing silence, they gazed upon the impossible: the gigantic torso naked, the sheets red, and the mouth open wide in a soundless scream that would never be heard. A large knife stood upright in his gut,

making a dot, as it were, at the conclusion of the gruesome marks carved diagonally across the Chancellor's chest. The blood flowing from the carved marks thickened the letters they formed: 'F.E,' followed by a cruel, bloody exclamation point dotted by the knife.

In the first few seconds the silence in the room and the hallway was deafening. The security men trained their guns, more out of habit than to aim at a non-existent target and they looked all over the place, dumbfounded, but there was nothing.

The waiter, at least, had some presence of mind: 'Call the police,' he stammered.

'I am the police,' said Commissioner Cordduwer, but of course he was totally confused again.

Chapter 2

The Friends of Peace, before the Assassination

There was also a shadow European Summit that had taken place that autumn, and there was not one journalist to be seen. There were no barricaded streets or demonstrating shopkeepers angrily brandishing their fists, for protests were conspicuously absent. Also absent were weldedshut manhole covers and the circus of shrill sirens and flashing lights enacted by overzealous motorcycle cops every time a map of Amsterdam was forgotten and had to be retrieved for the second assistant to the first speaker of one of the advisors to the French President.

This was an unofficial and very secret Summit of the people behind the screens, not the chosen politicians. The Summit had no name. But no secret can survive decades, and on occasion it had been obliquely referred to by the outside world as ‘The Lodge.’ Journalists love nothing better than a lodge. But participants of long standing preferred that this term not be used by third parties. The German and French members sometimes used it among themselves a summit has its own small élite but the preferred term was ‘The Friends.’ *Freunden vom Frieden, Les Amis de la Paix, Friends of Peace.*

This autumn Summit was situated in the German-speaking section of the Alsace, and for good reason; if you needed personnel you could trust completely, who would never betray your secrets, you had to stay off the French side – steer clear of France altogether, in fact, although Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, Luxembourg would do. As would Switzerland, but if you have something to hide, convening there would only call attention to that fact. The German Alsace would suffice.

For this Summit the entire castlecumhotel had been rented - unheard of in October, a stunning time of year in the Alsace with its superb wines and prime hunting. Normally the castle had to be reserved a year in advance, and only because those attending were all important people with equally important schedules did the organizers take the same precaution. A single phone call by the owner, who was also the proprietor of a large international, yet very French, chain of hotels, was sufficient to acquire all desired rooms for the summit weekend, free of charge. The invitations had not been issued in writing, but had traveled via special messengers operating in strictest confidentiality. The Summit had no protocol, no founding statutes, and most importantly, no written agenda. Ever since its founding during the Second World War, the agenda had always been Europe and European peace. Peace was a noble aim, but the conventionally accepted means by which to achieve it left most of the participants cold, one good reason for shrouding the meetings in airtight secrecy, a lesson learned the hard way during the Summit's 75-plus years of existence.

The hotel had its own private access to the station and nearby airport with its own shuttle service. But the shuttle was not used; instead, anonymous and rather subdued-looking limousines collected the sundry guests, who preferred to keep their own chauffeurs entirely in the dark about such meetings. The odd guest made his own way, such as the Dutch former Prime Minister who surprised one and all by arriving with a racing bike on the roof of his car, yet another reminder that no one need take this 'nether land' too seriously should the impulse ever arise.

The Summit was pan-European with a German-French accent and had a high Roman Catholic content: as such it recreated the structure of the European ideal during the Holy Roman Empire in the Middle Ages. But it was not presented as such, but rather couched in more palatable formulae such as 'peace' and 'cooper-

ation.' The history of The Friends began in the most roaring part of the twentieth century. Its composition had changed over the decades, but its reason for existence and ideas remained the same. The germ of its existence could be traced to the Second World War, specifically after the Battle of Stalingrad in December 1942, when the Russian armies decided to stop retreating and stand their ground, after which they encircled the Sixth German Army and, aided by bitter winter weather, soundly defeated them.

It had all started with two Alsatian families whose vast estates bordered at various points. Like two winegrowers having a chat across the hedge, they began a dialogue motivated primarily by practical considerations: war hurt business. In addition to their vast estates, these prominent families were at the helm of a portion of the steel and coal industries and the emerging oil industry, and those who figured in these primary sectors of national importance also figured in the war and had access to its makers. Although in principle war could be highly profitable to these sectors, in practice it was peace that netted greater gains at lower cost, and without the loss of too many human lives. It was a truth quite like those that apply to making prime wines. And thus the two founding fathers, each from his own imperium, discussed peace and the division of power. Power is like fine wine: he who dispenses it takes care not to spill, and pours for a select group so as not to weaken the effect. Democracy had proven to be a powerless host.

The first dialogue was based on this shared premise and led eventually to an unavoidable conclusion: this war too would end. And after Stalingrad, the German branch was prepared to acknowledge that this war would have no winners, at the time a compelling reason to talk in secret.

The Friends were in overwhelming agreement that European peace could only be secured on the basis of a German-French axis. Given time, both could learn to trust in this collaboration. Mentally they were already ripe for it, judging by the impeccable cooperation between the Germans and French during the former Vichy regime in unoccupied southern France. To be se-

cured, peace and cooperation had to be based on equality; this was the only way in which to put an end to two centuries of European wars. The remaining European countries, this much was clear, would have to anchor themselves to this axis for stability, become a part of the tapestry of a new Europe.

England was in a category by herself, about this the partners were in agreement. At the time the island was still playing its global role, but after the war it would be permitted to pull up a chair or not, as may be the case to the European table. After all, this was to be a European Europe, not a Europe under the supervision of the AngloSaxons, which included the mutually disliked Americans.

War causes acceleration in all areas. The German and French families spoke frequently and each gathered a supportive network of industrialists, merchants and politicians; the uniting and driving force here was not political ideals -- much too explosive -- but practical considerations like postwar reconstruction.

The think tank, as it would be called today, was not to be looked upon as a resistance group, and no objectives were defined in that direction. It started out with exchanging ideas and discovering what it was that inspired trust in the other, and what gave rise to suspicion. When an idea found mutual support, it was shared and propagated. In those dangerous times, the dissemination of such an idea amounted to creating a confidential circle: ideas were a dangerous commodity in dictatorial Germany and occupied France.

No program, no points of action, no governing structure. During those perilous years the group grew under adverse circumstances, warily, elusively, its structure consisting solely of multiple talks, gatherings of small groups with shared interests, the driving force behind it the German-French Friends. Violation of secrecy meant the death penalty and the disclosure of the ideas would also have meant death - death of the idea.

It was during those perilous years that The Lodge of Friends assumed its cloak of secrecy, which was to remain an essential characteristic. Secrecy, working in silence behind the scenes. Ideas

were developed into concrete goals and goals in turn called for action, but The Lodge was not to become an action group. If it had, it would never have survived the war; treason and opportunism were rife in all strata of the German and French populations. The Lodge itself never acted in the capacity of executor; it had no apparatus of its own, issued no direct orders. It merely created the conditions that could lead to a new situation. The power of the spoken word was supreme: consult with friend and enemy alike, keep all contacts open and reap the benefits. Take the time, be patient.

As the war years progressed and America joined the arena, the German-French partners arrived at the critical and perilous conclusion that consensus on the Western front was unavoidable if they were to make a collective Western fist against the advancing Russian hordes. The Friends clearly saw that the West would never accept a truce with Hitler in the saddle, yet a truce was necessary if they were to escape destruction at the hands of the barbarians from the East, the Huns. The Friends arrived at a dire conclusion: Hitler had to be ousted. A sacrifice had to be made. The year was 1944.

With utmost discretion, The Friends consulted their extensive network in search of alternatives for Hitler, and for a Western regime that the Allies would accept as their representative willing to capitulate. Their contacts even reached as far as that camp, and were utilized with the greatest prudence to explore the possibility of peace talks.

The Friends discovered to their great displeasure that doing business directly with the Allies was simply not an option. 'Seeing is believing.' The Friends realized that Germany had to make this sacrifice just to open up dialogue with the Allies. As treacherous as it might be, the idea of deposing Hitler was not theirs exclusively, The Friends learned.

As The Friends always left the execution of their plans to other social or military groups, they looked, not without reason, to the young colonels: there was a young group under Von Stauffenberg that took offense to the 'yes men' generals under Hitler. There were exceptions, such as the renowned General Rommel. But by and

large, the generals had been in league with Hitler too long and owed too much to him to have the strength to turn against him. In addition, the distrust and embitterment that the Allies felt for the clique of generals was so great that they would never accept them as negotiators of peace on behalf of the 'Thousand Year Reich' that they themselves had helped defeat. So The Friends attempted to construct a new network that would serve the interests of the potentially rebellious colonels.

With the help of The Friends, minds were primed to respond adequately should *der Führer* meet a particular fate. It was a matter of timing, when the moment came, to have the proper divisions in the proper place to ensure that the power vacuum was filled by someone other than the feared and loathed Nazi clique. At the time, all these thoughts, cautious talks and cautious pledges by generals such as Rommel amounted to high treason.

Von Stauffenberg's bomb exploded on 20 July 1944. Hitler came away with only minor wounds, and in his hysteria made the mistake of immediately ordering the Gestapo to string up as many conspirators as possible. Otherwise he could possibly have had the perpetrator tracked down, starting with the executor and working back. But Hitler had no time for patience; paranoia had cast its shadow over him, and this in effect kept The Friends out of harm's way. But they knew they had blown their chance and that their last desperate contacts with the Allies, had been frustrated.

The English wanted one thing only, and that was capitulation. After Roosevelt uttered the term 'unconditional surrender' The Lodge had to learn, and swallow, its first lesson. A most unsatisfying conclusion that only reinforced prejudices on the side of the Germans and the French against the pigheaded AngloSaxons: impossible to talk to.

It would explain The Lodge's antipathy toward the AngloSaxons until long after the Berlin Wall came down in 1989: the East German provinces would never have been lost to the Communists if negotiations had only been held earlier. It also underscored the conviction that only a continental Europe resting upon a German-French axis stood a chance of survival in the future.

The Friends survived the war, and partly as a consequence of the attack, managed to keep up the network's standards, expand it and amass unwritten authority. On occasion, postwar German and French politicians would join the ranks of this informal body; young, talented politicians could also count on the support and esteem of The Friends. The Lodge was more than an animator of European union. It had an integral role in its very inception through its industrialist contacts and, as such, in the European Coal and Steel Community. This later spawned the European Economic Community, the predecessor and trailblazer of the European Union. And slowly but surely it was expanded into a political union, the beginning of a definitive route to German-French rule. It started with the introduction of a common currency and the tide was right for the Friends. When East and West Germany were merged after the fall of the wall, Germany could be put under French pressure to arrive at a common currency in the future. Giving up the hard Deutsche Mark for the new euro was the sacrifice the Germans had to make in exchange for a reunification of East and West. This made the road to political union irreversible. Borders would disappear and more and more European policy was introduced every year from the European central Commission, step by step but unavoidable for the European partners. Former Balkan countries were involved and the participation of the small countries was watered down. They were satisfied with that as long as the prominent leaders from those small countries were recruited. Every politician willingly sacrificed a piece of control over his own country for his own ego.

And the future now began to roll out at will, as if of its own accord: England left the European Union, much to the delight of the Friends. America turned away from Europe, which significantly weakened the great post-war transatlantic alliance and Europe had to stand on its own two feet, that is to say: a German and a French leg. The European countries held on to each other with the illusion that this made them more solid in their 27-member division. Collective pressure from Brussels increased year by year. Individual countries had no answer to this and national legisla-

tion was increasingly subordinated to European legislation. The Friends could now reap what had been sown in three quarters of a century. Charlemagne's ancient empire, once split into east and west, would once again take the place of previously divided Europe. France had coveted European power under Napoleon in the past, Germany had tried with Hitler, but the key to success was a combination of both countries, forging in peace.

How far it had come!

That weekend the spacious and exquisite drawing room of the Alsace hotel rang with heartfelt compliments and congratulations on the shadow Summit, and the satisfaction expressed seemed to lend a glow to the very surroundings, among them the choicest panels and crystal chandeliers in all of Europe. This glow was reflected in the exquisite cut crystal glasses and carafes and sparked an exalted smile on the face of the Dutch representative, who had just gratefully received a compliment for the Dutch Summit. 'Holland has done splendidly.' *Of course.*

When the Netherlands chaired, one factor could always be counted upon: the small pragmatic nation could disengage itself, even make concessions in the greater interest of a successful summit. For this reason, truly important decisions were inevitably made in the Netherlands or one of the other small European countries: Belgium or Luxembourg. Important decisions called for important compromises, and no really big nation is willing to reach a compromise on the soil of the country with which it is negotiating. The Benelux countries, though, were happy to oblige if the situation so demanded: the honor went to them, the loot to the big country.

It was a summit in the near future and it was a tricky issue: the European fight against crime. Within the Union it had been agreed, despite Dutch protests in front of the stage, that there would be a European uniform anti-drug abuse regime. And that had to be enforced by the European police organization: Europol. The Netherlands could be headquartered, but Europol could in-

investigate internationally and prosecute before the European court. That meant surrendering an important part of sovereignty. Germany and France had already wholeheartedly agreed, the Dutch tolerance of drugs had been a thorn in the side of both countries for some time. This also applies to the Scandinavian countries. Even the Balkan states could agree because what they had with it went east and not west. But the Netherlands was a different story. Almost all Dutch crime was run on drugs, an estimated black economy of twenty billion euros per year. If Europol was allowed to intervene independently in the Netherlands, no one could be sure of his life, not in the underworld as well as in the whitewashed upper world. The Netherlands persisted in its rejection for a while, stating that it could take care of its own safety and that something must go very wrong somewhere if it wanted to deviate from it.

The Friends knew that international peace did not automatically lead to democracy or vice versa. And wasn't democracy more for internal use? On an international level it had yet to prove its worth.

Chapter 3

Amsterdam, Day 1

Commissioner Cordduwer was shoved roughly aside by the security agents who flooded into the room from the hallway. They too were confronted with the impossible, the unbelievable, and after many seconds of denial, were struck by naked fear. This was followed by a collective pulling of weapons, but there was no visible enemy to fend off. It was quiet in the room: no devastation, no havoc, no traces of a struggle. Only this, the one utterly unthinkable scenario, entirely impossible. The carnage on the bed was an optical illusion.

Panic filled the air, electrified it. Three hands simultaneously produced cell phones and pressed panic buttons, alerting the German and Dutch security forces. The dazed agents moved through the room slowly, entirely unprofessionally. They pulled open cabinets with their weapons at the ready; kicked in the bathroom door: nothing; roughly flung open all the other doors: nothing; gave the closed window a sharp tug: nothing. Their training went no further.

Then salvation arrived from the hallway in a rush of shouting, rapidly advancing footsteps that thundered audibly even upon the thick pile carpets. Suddenly the room was packed with grimfaced men wielding machine pistols and shouting. Granted, the Germans were first, then the Dutch. More bellowing issued from a protesting German personal physician fighting in vain for space at the Chancellor's bedside. The room was full to the bursting point. Gradually a group consciousness crystallized, a command rang out; finally someone had taken charge. The shouts died down and slowly the men formed a silent stunned circle around the bed. Nothing more could be done. There was no screenplay to consult.

When the initial alarm sounded, not only did guards storm up

to the Chancellor's room, they also sprinted for the chamber occupied by *Le Président*. The bewildered man was dragged from his bed and, enmeshed in an impenetrable human wall, was borne off to the parking garage, then hastily deposited in a limousine that tore away in a squeal of rubber, surrounded by a fleet of motorcycles with flashing lights and shrieking sirens. Within five minutes the frantic procession was trapped behind a chugging delivery truck on a narrow canal street. That situation was remedied.

The hotel thundered with the rush of feet. Security forces trained weapons on all doors and emergency exits to prevent passage into or out of the building. The hotel personnel began to mill about in panic. Deserting their stations, they sought communal cover in the lobby.

After storming the rooms of the German Chancellor and the French President, the officers burst into the rooms occupied by the second echelon, powerful figures in their own right. Aside from catching one diplomat redhanded with an under-aged redhaired girl, they found nothing out of the ordinary. Eventually it came to an end: the rushing along the corridors, the flinging open of doors, the threatening pointing of guns at curtains, the kicking in of bathroom doors. The entire hotel had been covered and the men were waiting for reinforcements from outside. Their arrival was heralded by deafeningly shrill sirens. Squad after squad emptied from hastily parked vehicles, the men in bulletproof vests, helmets, carrying machine pistols. These troops too invaded the hotel, and for a moment it seemed that the previous exercise would be repeated.

But there was Weber.

A hard and grimfaced German, postwar generation, he was accompanied by his second-in-command Schnellinger, who called to mind an old bloodhound. Weber shouted several commands and all fell silent. He listened to the story and, where anyone else would have rushed to his Chancellor's room, first carefully appraised the situation. Observing the chaos in the hotel, it was clear to him that the search had been conducted in the same chaotic fashion. It would have to be done over, systematically and without anyone being able to evade the search party. Second, a forensics team had