



The King Maker

Ben Reinhart

The King Maker

by

Ben Reinhart

*Thanks to my Grandson Dylan Reinhart, for
his creation of the character Dylan Rains.
Without his help, support and assistance,
this book would never have been written.*

A Trilogy - BOOK 1

Chapter One – The Attack

Madison and Morgan were giggling and laughing as they stood on the deck of the world's largest cruise ship, the Emerald Green. The two girls were looking out over the water at the Fort Lauderdale beach as the ship approached Port Everglades.

They were returning from a family cruise to celebrate the twins seventh birthday, which had been planned to coincide with their 2nd grade classes Caribbean cruise field trip. Miranda, their 84-year-old grandmother, was watching over them as her daughter had gone back down to their cabin to finish packing and preparing to disembark this wonderful ship, they had just spent seven days on. Miranda lived with her daughter and had hoped to still be alive when the twins were grown, so she could attend their weddings. She did have exceptionally good genes and expected to be around another fifteen years or so.

The entire class, along with their chaperones, had saved for two years to pay for the trip. A total of 32 students and 16 chaperones. During this two-year period, they conducted several fund raisers and were able to purchase tickets at a discount, which the ship's owners used in its advertising to promote family travel.

The entire class, as part of a class project, had collected over one hundred “show and tell” souvenirs to bring back to the school once they returned. The girls had spent several hours per day while on the cruise, working on their school project which was to describe the islands that made up the Caribbean.

They were unaware that just one deck below were three recently added containers placed on the cruise ship while docked in Havana. These containers were supposedly being transferred to Louisiana via Port Everglades.

As the ship approached the entrance to the port, the girls watched as three large tugboats drifted alongside the cruise ship to guide it into the port. Speeding past them on the other side of the ship, while still inside the inlet, was a go-fast-boat with its bow high in the air, trying to leave the port entrance through the choppy water caused by the large wakes of the Emerald Green.

The inlet was wide enough to handle all this boat traffic, so this was not anything to be alarmed about. The speed boat had the cruise ship on its port side, and the jetty was on its starboard side as it made its way out into the ocean. The Emerald Green’s stern slowly glided past the jetty, and into the center of the turning basin. The ship was almost as big as the turning basin itself.

Within the blink of an eye, a huge blast changed everything. The sky lit up as if an atomic bomb had just gone off. White billowing smoke rose out over the ocean being carried by the sea breeze and appeared to be as high as a nuclear cloud rising straight up and glowing with bursts of orange fire. Within a split second, the entire sky was on fire, giving the sky a look of mid-afternoon. This was immediately followed, without warning by a second and then a third explosion both sending giant fireballs into the heavens.

The fireballs increased in size and the clouds of smoke appeared to reach the top of the sky and mix in with the puffy clouds that were already there. Something or someone had blown up the Emerald Green.

Out on the street, along the 17th Street Causeway, many of the surrounding buildings and storefronts had most of their glass blown away, causing the glass to fall onto the street below. Pedestrians were running westward (inland), away from the Inter-Coastal and the bridge. Some ran into the street, dodging cars trying to escape the falling debris. Damage was extensive for at least a quarter mile from the inlet.

The initial deafening noise subsided, leaving behind it, a lot of smoke, fumes, and plenty of debris in the air. And now there was water beginning to puddle on the roadway along the many homes and streets that surrounded the inlet.

And to make things worse, the sun had almost completely set, making the light from over the ocean appear the most frightful red and orange. It was easy to see that something big was on fire. What remained of the Emerald Green, and there wasn't much, was sitting in the middle of the turning basin at Fort Lauderdale's Port Everglades, Florida.

Part of the ship was above water and part was under water in the 40' deep turning basin. Bodies were everywhere. The ship was blocking the main entrance in and out of the port halting all boat traffic in either direction. As the tide changed, and began to exit the inlet, many bodies were being taken out to sea by the current. Sharks were beginning to move into the area as it looked like there would be plenty of human bodies to fill their belly's.

This was clearly a terrorist attack, and it would go down as the largest attack on American soil since 9/11.

The TV bulletins were saying that the death toll would be greater than 9/11, including the collapse of the World Trade Center twin towers, the Pentagon attack, and the fourth airplane, a United Airlines flight that crashed in a field in rural Pennsylvania, combined.

All north and south bound traffic along the Inter-Coastal waterway was being halted as well, so as not to interfere with the ongoing coast guard search and rescue effort above and below the water level. One could tell that this was soon to change from a "search and rescue" effort to a "recovery" effort.

As quickly as the explosion occurred, talking heads on the TV were saying that it looked like the work of the NMWO, the New Muslim World Order. However, some were saying maybe not, as this group hasn't claimed responsibility yet.

The President of the United States, Bill McPherson, was under significant pressure to identify and quickly punish those responsible for taking the lives of almost four thousand innocent Americans. His reelection was at stake if he didn't act correctly and swiftly.

He had no choice but to enlist the aid of his best friend and loyal supporter, Jason Williams. Without a moment to lose, he sent a text message to Jason, requesting his presence at the White House immediately.