

David Becker. The only man she'd ever loved. The youngest full professor at Georgetown University and a brilliant foreign-language specialist, he was practically a celebrity in the world of academia. Born with an eidetic memory and a love of languages, he'd mastered six Asian dialects as well as Spanish, French, and Italian. His university lectures on etymology and linguistics were standing-room-only, and he invariably stayed late to answer a barrage of questions. He spoke with authority and enthusiasm, apparently oblivious to the adoring gazes of his star-struck coeds.

Becker was dark – a rugged, youthful thirty-five with sharp green eyes and a wit to match. His strong jaw and taut features reminded Susan of carved marble. Over six feet tall, Becker moved across a squash court faster than any of his colleagues could comprehend. After soundly beating his opponent, he would cool off by dousing his head in a drinking fountain and soaking his tuft of thick, black hair. Then, still dripping, he'd treat his opponent to a fruit shake and a bagel.

As with all young professors, David's university salary was modest. From time to time, when he needed to renew his squash club membership or restring his old Dunlop with gut, he earned extra money by doing translating work for government agencies in and around Washington. It was on one of those jobs that he'd met Susan.