

Warren held up the key next to the small gold lock on the sliding-glass door, and then immediately headed to the back door near the garage. He slid the key into the lock and turned the knob. The minute the door swung open, the high-pitched wail of a burglar alarm sounded. *Why didn't I ask where the control panel was?* A quick survey showed the keypad by the entry to the garage. He hustled over and punched in the code, then held his breath. He went into the house and gingerly moved the curtains aside to check the streets. All was quiet.

Once convinced the alarm had reset properly, Warren went into the den. He slid the leather executive chair aside and ran his hand underneath the desk's wood panels. His senses alert and adrenaline at a fever pitch, he rifled through all the drawers, but found nothing of interest. A hard-copy book lying sideways against the bookshelf wall caught his attention. He flipped through the volume and removed a faded, folded piece of paper, tucked between two pages. A bank emblem and accounting records, written in both English and Chinese, had the date of November 8, 2010. As he studied the document, the sound of a car engine came from down the street and up the driveway. He quickly folded the paper and stuck it in his back pocket. He thought about running out the front door, but realizing the alarm would sound, he stayed still. The garage door opener ground, a car door slammed, and the kitchen door squeaked open. All the while, Warren remained motionless against the den wall.

Footsteps tapped across the parquet foyer and went up carpeted stairs. Warren zipped out of the den and slid on a Persian rug. Cursing, he made a dash for the back door. A glass shattered above his head, and he turned around to see the petite housekeeper pointing the barrel of a shotgun at his mid-section.