

## ALONE

He closed the door behind him. With palms sweating, temples pounding, he staggered into the vacant room. When he glanced around, he smiled, " I really am alone!

"No crowds to push and shove against, no long lines to fight.". He spun around just for the sheer pleasure of not bumping into a living soul.

"Alone." He allowed the word to simmer in his conscience. Then he frowning, he murmured, "how long will it last? He wished now, he'd read the small print on the admittance slip. But he wouldn't worry about that now. He'd just savor the moment.

What to do first? He'd spent all day yesterday, just thinking about what he would do, when the time actually came. Now he couldn't remember a single thing.

No matter, for now, he'd just sit in this chair and enjoy the solitude. For a moment he thought how great it would be, if Nancy could be here with him.

But that was stupid, they never let more than one person inside this room at one time. Besides, he'd see her in a little while. *Oh yeah, along with ten thousand others!*

He shook his head, when he realized he'd just wasted precious moments. Hadn't he swore that when his time came, he would spend each moment wisely?

What counted was right now, nothing else mattered! His glance took in every item in the room. There was for instance, a kitchen table (with only one chair) loaded with all sorts of delicacies.

As he walked toward it, he hesitated, looking around to make sure someone bigger and

stronger wasn't about to force his way ahead of him.

For an instant, he had the distinct feeling that he'd been here before, but that couldn't be. He was only 30, much too young to have been awarded such a prize for a second time.

The best part of the meal he'd just eaten, was not only that his hunger had been satisfied, but that he hadn't had to gulp it down with one hand, while the other protected the remainder on his plate.

The meal over, he sat back and clapped his hands. "What to do next? Damn, why hadn't he written it down? "Next time".....the words stuck in his throat. He'd be a very old man, if in fact, there was even to be a next time.

He rolled off the chair and onto the bed. Laying there for an instant, he frowned, then pulled himself to his feet. This was no time for sleep!

Tearing off his clothes, he jumped in the shower. The luxury of just soaping himself, as steaming water beat down on his body was enough to convince him, that he really was *alone*.

He got out of the shower dripping wet and put on the thick terry robe. When he approached the table a second time, he could see it was laden with all sorts of delicious pastries, a bottle of Chardonnay and along side it, a humidor filled with the finest Havanas.

Later as the good food and drink caused him to feel groggy, he sat back on the bed. Then shooting up, he cried out, "no, I'm not going to sleep, there's still too much to do."

There had been rumors about others, who had done just that. Giving in to sleep and when they awoke, they'd found themselves back outside. As he tightened the sash on his robe, he shook his head, "no sir-ee, that's not going to happen to me."

Looking around, he mumbled, "there had to be something more." At the very least, a moments happening that he could take back and share with Nancy. But what? All sorts of crazy

things bounced around in his head, "climb a mountain, swim a river, make a speech. Anything but just sitting here and let the minutes race by.

Suddenly, he heard someone at the door. As he turned, he felt an excruciating pain pierce his chest, roll down his left arm and into tingling his fingers. He had no feeling in his legs as he tried to get up off the bed.

"What was going on?" Then another pain hit! The veins in his neck seemed to explode as his body hit the floor.

The last thing, he remembered was the door opening, two figures dressed in white lifting him up and placing his body on a table. Then stepping back as a person in hospital greens bent over his naked body.

The man pulling the microphone closer to his mouth, took a deep breath, "I am about to perform an autopsy on a male, approximately 75 years of age. Who, just hours ago, died of an apparent heart attack as he was leaving Shay Stadium."

As the sound from the pathologist's saw started to cut into his temple, he was aware of a tiny voice, perhaps his own, saying over and over, "unfair, unfair, it's so damn unfair."