

a musty old smell as he entered, age and woodworm combining to leave their distinctive odours. He was soaking wet and distressed. Tank wasn't scared of any man alive, and he wouldn't think twice about killing a wanted terrorist, but he was still only human. He'd been born under the star sign of Cancer the Crab, which his sisters reliably informed him meant that he had an extremely tough exterior, but was soft once you got inside the shell. The news that Major Timms had imparted to him earlier was already at the back of his mind as there was an aura of grief around the mourners that had already infected him. He needed to deal with the funeral first then the terrorists would have his full attention, which was something that they would not enjoy.

The church was warm as the funeral party entered it, relieved to be out of the thunder storm. Visible puddles were forming on the ancient wooden floorboards as umbrellas were closed, and raincoats dripped on the floor. They were greeted at the door by a portly man dressed in a simple long black religious robe. There was a plaited rope tied around his ample belly and a wooden cross hung from his neck, on the centre of his chest. He welcomed the guests with a solemn greeting which suited the occasion.

The last guest entered the church and the usher noticed that he was an unusually large man with a shaved head. He looked like his suit would split down the back if he moved too quickly. The holy man noticed rainwater forming tiny rivers that were running down the bald man's scalp, and for a second he thought he had seen a red dot of light on the back of his head. As the church usher closed the door he noticed a dark panelled van driving slowly past the church, the driver was of Middle Eastern appearance. That in isolation wasn't so unusual, but the fact that he was wearing dark sunglasses in a thunder storm was odd.

If Tank had noticed it then he would have realised that something was afoot. He hadn't noticed the van, nor did he notice that there was a man aiming a sniper rifle at the back of his head. The sniper had been about to take the shot when the lightning flashed, blinding him for a second through the telescopic sights, and distracted him. When his vision returned, he looked back through the scope but Tank was inside and the door was being closed behind him. They would have to wait for the funeral party to emerge before they could complete their mission.