

Fit to Kill

A Novel

By Donnie Ray Whetstone



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CHAPTER 1



La Flore

The sun creeps over the horizon, its beams piercing the cloudless summer sky, waking the city of La Flore. This sprawling scenic city of four hundred thousand has had a good year. Forbes magazine ranks it fifteenth on its list of best places to live. Better Health magazine has La Flore top five on its list of healthiest cities. Two of its five high school sports teams, the La Flore Bears football team and the Woodland Hills Pirates women's basketball team, won this year's 5A State Championships.

Its towering skyline stands majestically in the morning sun while the hustle and bustle of downtown life begins its daily cycle. Shops ranging from Mom & Pops to those found at the ever-popular Mega Mall, open their blinds to invite the new day. Humble homes and apartment complexes on La Flore's Lower East Side along with the lavish homes and condominiums of Woodland Hills, nestle lazily in the morning as equals. Gilder Park, the most popular of the city's scenic parks is dotted with early morning fitness buffs jogging, cycling and power walking its manicured trails and roadways. They are seen in fitness clubs, gyms and private training studios scattered throughout the city. Being listed in the top five healthiest cities by Better Health magazine is well deserved by its sheer number of fitness facilities. Well-known gyms like 24 Hour Fitness and Gold's Gym exist along with

Fit to Kill

local generic brands like the hardcore Iron Man's Gym, and the Roman Health Club. Those seeking plush surroundings with every amenity frequent the lavish Woodland Hills Athletic Club where an annual membership for a single La Florian will set them back three thousand dollars, sales tax not included.

Other popular fitness venues for La Florians are private personal training studios. They provide personal service and fitness disciplines that their larger counterparts cannot match. Pilates by Monique, Kevin's MMA and Chad's Pro Fitness are just a few among the hefty list of private training studios La Florians flock to.

These trainers are as unique as their studios. While trainers at a typical gym vary in skill level, they are the industry's foot soldiers, while the owners of La Flore's private studios are the fitness elite with the experience, skill level, business savvy and confidence to customize, personalize and oversee workouts that demand the top dollar La Florians willingly dish out.

One such studio is located on the La Flore's west side. It is in a lush secluded area where scores of private offices and a few tall buildings dot the landscape. Of modest size, the studio sits next to Baker Brothers BMW Auto Sales. A simple but immaculate sign mounted next to the entrance with red block letters against a white background reads,

“Fit Now Private Personal Training.” Inside is a small waiting area with a front desk that is unattended since Becky, the receptionist, is not due to arrive until nine a.m. The cardio room houses a treadmill, an elliptical machine and a stationary bike with each piece parked in front of its own wall-mounted flat screen TV.

An office, a single coed bathroom and change room separates the plush cardio room from the training floor. Waist level mirrors run along three of the four walls of the enclosed main training floor making the room look much larger than its nine hundred square feet. The training floor has an array of free weights and machines. An abused heavy bag hangs at the far end of the room. Speakers are mounted on all corners of the training floor and provide a perk that sets La Flore’s private studios apart from their counterparts; theater grade surround sound to a client’s favorite satellite music station or CD.

Speakers transform the music from Aerosmith’s Greatest Hits into a live concert with front row seats. It is Wanda Brooke’s second consecutive month playing the CD. She assaults the plate loaded leg press for a grueling fifteen reps while the song “Just Press Play” and the firm barking of her trainer give her inspiration. She is ten minutes into her thirty-minute gauntlet, otherwise known as leg day. Anyone who knows her would not be surprised that

leg day, loathed by many clients, is her favorite. Wanda had been a highly driven athlete all through high school and college. Family life plus a thriving career as a drug rep has not slowed down the trim well toned thirty-eight year old brunette.

“Is it time for that surprise you promised?” she asks, between heavy breaths while laying semi limp on the leg press machine.

“No, not yet...but we’re getting there,” her trainer responds.

The workout continues and the duo are now in full throttle with the trainer in his zone and Wanda pounding out one demanding set after another.

“Give me more Wanda! C’mon! I want more!”

The tone of the trainer’s voice, along with the heavy breathing and grunting from his client, could easily mislead a person not privy to what was happening, into believing that trainer and client were engaged in unbridled sex, rather than a training session.

Later, Wanda lays sprawled out, face up on the training floor drenched in sweat with arms and legs stretched out; a common posture for her after a leg workout.

“That was a great one. I take it we’re at that time now,” she says, exhausted. The endorphin rush makes her oblivious to her surroundings. The

trainer observes his client with an unwavering stare from a bench he is straddling.

“Yes, Wanda, I believe it is.”

“So, what is it you’re going to do that you promised me?”

“Don’t worry; you’re going to love it. Close your eyes.” he says with an air of confidence. Wanda, feeling euphoric, closes her eyes, exposing near perfect teeth, smiling in eager anticipation. After a time of darkness and silence, “Are you ready?” she hears the trainer ask. Wanda responds, still in her euphoric state, “Yes, I’m ready.”

Overtaken by curiosity, she opens her eyes. A surge of adrenaline instantly kills her endorphin high. Her mind cannot relay the input to her muscles fast enough to avoid the fifty-pound dumbbell dropped lengthwise from a height of six feet, now hurling towards her face. The heavy metal projectile slams dead center on its intended target, delivering a crushing blow followed by a loud distinct crunch, as if someone had stepped on a large insect. The dumbbell, now stained with blood, rolls harmlessly to a stop leaving a gruesome trail. Wanda’s body spasms while expelling urine and feces. Her head, once that of an attractive woman, now resembles a broken vase with its parts and contents scattered about the training floor. The trainer casually kneels over his victim to examine

Fit to Kill

the carnage left by the deadly collision. The smell of fresh blood, exposed flesh and brain matter is pungent, filling his nostrils. He kneels and his gaze traverses the body from toe to what was once his client's head. The trainer stares keenly at the fragmented mass. He smiles after a moment, and then confidently says, "See Wanda, I knew you'd love it."

Donnie Ray Whetstone

CHAPTER 2



Sheridan Park

The morning dew covering the woody terrain of Sheridan Park located on La Flore's north side gradually dissipates as a crime scene slowly unfolds. Bands of yellow tape begin to form a thirty square foot perimeter around a lifeless body. A middle-aged couple and their golden retriever discover the body of a woman lying within a cluster of trees and brush while embarking on their ritual morning walk. The husband embraces and consoles his wife. Her blank stare and ashen skin tells him she is in a state of shock from the grisly discovery. An officer, observing the severity of the wife's condition, calls for an ambulance to attend her as he waits for an opportunity to interview the husband.

Later that morning, the crime scene is abuzz with activity as additional squad cars, an ambulance and a CSI van arrive. Many park patrons are curious about the ominous activity and abandon their morning doings to become spectators. Although La Flore is not immune to homicides, they do not happen very often. Mayor Myron Hondo Saks, affectionately referred to as Hondo, along with La Flore's "Top Cop" Vince Nirez, proudly boast the city's violent crime rate is among the lowest in the nation. They have vowed it would remain that way on their watch.

Two unmarked cars arrive, trailed by a news van. Emerging from the first car is Detective Calvin McVey, a thirty eight year old, six foot former Marine MP Captain with a fresh crew cut and beach boy looks. He

holds the distinction of serving five consecutive tours of duty in Iraq at the height of its bloody insurgency. Hunting elusive killers and seeing a degree of bloodshed that would severely damage the psyche of most, more than makes up for his mere three years of experience as a detective. He stands and waits by his vehicle. With blue eyes, deep set and piercing, he observes the controlled chaos ten yards in front of him.

The second detective joins McVey. Detective Bob Cummins is a La Flore native and former standout quarterback for the La Flore Bears back in the day. He received the MVP award in their second State Championship win when his team miraculously demolished an undefeated opponent that was the unanimous favorite. A full ride scholarship to Boise State and a high probability of playing football on Sundays ended tragically with a career ending knee injury. As a result, he abandoned his lifelong dream of fortune and fame to pursue law enforcement. Cummins, now forty-two, a fifteen-year veteran detective and a full inch taller than McVey, looks around, reminiscing. This is where his team had their private post state victory party. It is here where the hottest members of the cheerleading squad fulfilled their promised rewards for the miracle victory.

“Where’s Tanner?” Cummins asks scanning the area.

“I don’t know,” McVey replies. “Personally speaking, I don’t care,” he says sarcastically under his breath.

Fit to Kill

The two walk casually toward the crime scene. Passing them is a news team consisting of a camera operator and reporter Carol Chase of KAPO 7 News. They scurry to the scene to set up a live report. When the two detectives approach the crime scene, an officer meets them and seeing their detective badges, escorts them inside the perimeter.

Soon afterward, a third unmarked car appears and parks a few feet behind the news van. Inside, Detective Tara Tanner sits for a moment gazing at both of her hands in a firm grip on top of the steering wheel. She fixes her dark eyes on the crime scene that is finally starting to lose its frenzy. After a long sigh, she emerges from her car. Tara's eyes stay glued on the crime scene. Her five foot eight athletic frame strolls past the vehicles of Cummins and McVey.

It's been a long time since we've had one of these, she thinks.

Although the forty year-old detective grew up on La Flore's lower east side, she is not a native. Her family, a rather dysfunctional one, moved to La Flore from Hueytown, Alabama, a small town just outside of Birmingham, when she was eleven years old. Her father, who she loved dearly, was a functional alcoholic with a rapacious thirst for Seagram 7. Her mother, who she blamed for his affliction, was a philanderer with a rapacious appetite for younger men. Nearly thirty years as a La Florian has all but eroded the heavy southern drawl she was often teased for as a teenager; but enough remains to spark curiosity in listeners during a

conversation. At twenty, Tara attended La Flore's City University as a single mom working two jobs after going through a bitter divorce after only eight months of marriage. Although she prides herself as having a keen nose for bad souls, which greatly influenced her decision to become a detective, it often failed her in matters of the heart. Tara went through a string of abusive relationships throughout her twenties. She met her present husband, Dale, when she was twenty-nine and they married a year later. A nine-year veteran, Tara's tenure as a detective in La Flore is a mixed bag. Her keen intuition has been instrumental in putting away some of La Flore's most notorious criminals. She has earned several commendations including the city's prestigious Medal of Valor award presented by Mayor Hondo Saks himself for solving La Flore's biggest criminal case in recent times.

Tara was grief stricken upon the death of her father, affecting her instincts. She was the lead detective in a controversial case shortly after her father died. The infamous Sexton case resulted in the deaths of two people, one, a four-year-old child. As a result, Tara felt she had lost her intuitive touch and wanted to resign, even though an extensive inquiry cleared her of any wrongdoing. Tara's decision whether or not to resign became a highly controversial topic within Division. Her decision to remain a detective was encouraged by her long time boss Commander Robert Johnson, a six

foot seven former NBA player with the Portland Trailblazers.

Arriving at the tape of the crime scene, Tara encounters the same officer who met McVey and Cummins and upon flashing her glaring gold ornamental shield of La Flore's Detective Division, is escorted inside the perimeter. She dons a pair of surgical gloves she had retrieved from her trouser pocket. She immediately sees Cummins and McVey, and then fixes her eyes on the gruesome sight at their feet, a female body with virtually no head.

"This is some piece of work." Cummins says as Tara approaches within earshot of the two detectives.

"Yeah, to say the least," McVey adds.

"Hey Tanner, glad to see you could make it this fine morning," Cummins exclaims in a lighthearted tone.

Tara joins her colleagues and intensely scans over the victim.

"So, give us an expert opinion, Sherlock" Cummins says.

His obnoxious humor draws a cynical grin from McVey that she catches. Not in the mood to deal with him, she lets it go.

"Well, it's not a decapitation, her neck is not severed," Tara says.

"You're right," a voice intrudes.

The voice comes from the CSI leader and acquaintance of the three detectives, Nolan Sumner.

“From a preliminary standpoint, the victim died of blunt force trauma to the face and a violent one at that.”

“So simply put, she got her brains bashed in,” Tara concludes.

“I’m afraid so,” Sumner replies.

“We’ll confirm the ID once we’re at the lab, but judging by the tattoo on her left ankle, I’m positive the victim is our missing person.”

The small tattoo depicts a pair of doves in flight over a banner. Engraved on the banner are the letters “BFFL” meaning “Best Friends for Life”. The tattoo is identical to the one worn on the left ankle of Sophia Palomar, who reported her missing. Sophia has been the victim’s best friend since grade school. She asserts they both got the tattoos together, as sophomores in college, to signify their undying friendship. The missing person, Terri Gibson, is a thirty-six year old assistant manager at one of La Flore’s high-end clothing stores. Terri, along with Sophia, coach the Lady Hawks, a girl’s league soccer team.

“I can’t imagine anyone having enough of a beef with this woman to do this,” Detective Cummins says.

“Apparently somebody did,” Tara responds, looking upon the carnage spread out before her. She looks

Fit to Kill

around to observe the picturesque splendor of Sheridan Park with La Flore's scenic skyline standing in the background. Then, a sense of foreboding snatches her back to reality when she gazes once more upon the unfortunate victim.

She does not get a chance for a word or thought as to the wayward soul responsible for such an unspeakable act before a stern voice speaks for her.

Detective McVey boldly proclaims, "Or... whoever did this, is just one evil son of a bitch."

Donnie Ray Whetstone

CHAPTER 3



Careful What You Wish For

Thelma Carson epitomizes what an unwavering commitment to training, a healthy lifestyle, great genetics and a little help from a gifted cosmetic surgeon, who happens to be a close friend, can accomplish. At sixty-one, her five foot six inch frame can easily rival that of an exceptional looking woman in her forties. With silky brown hair, an alluring smile and her trademark green eyes, many local women's magazines praise Thelma. Their accolades give her a great deal of happiness and sense of accomplishment, but it is her ability to spawn the arousal of men less than half her age, that pleases her the most.

She and her husband Bob own a number of businesses inside and outside of La Flore. They are a part of La Flore's elite, residing in Woodland Hill's most exclusive area. Raising three kids, building a small empire and occasionally, running across a perfume scented phone number or a hotel stub in her husband's coat pocket, have taken their toll on her. At times, when she's feeling down, Thelma ponders the notion, with all of the accoutrements she and her husband have accumulated over the years that they have actually lost far more than they have gained. She is a far cry from feeling that way this evening. Bob is out of town for another week and the staff is gone for the day. The sounds emanating from her bedroom are unmistakable.

Thelma's pelvis works her partner's tool as she moans uncontrollably.

"Now?" he asks with remarkable composure.

Thelma does all she can to convey to him what she wants.

"Ok then."

Her partner slows his rhythm, causing her head to thrash gently.

"I want you to hold it," he says calmly. "I want you to hold it longer than last time."

She cannot speak and is fighting a losing battle of containing a category five orgasm.

"Just a little longer; you can do it," he says encouragingly.

Her head now thrashes violently as the attempt to contain herself becomes unbearable.

"See, Thelma, you did it. Now let it go."

Her cry echoes throughout the enormous house. She succumbs to the massive release of dopamine and endorphins that engulf her. After her release, her body goes limp, overwhelmed by passion and exhaustion.

Later that evening, she lies face down on the sturdy king size oak bed. A white satin sheet covers her from the waist down. With her eyes closed, she basks in the afterglow of her intense experience.

Fit to Kill

“I don’t know what’s better, your training sessions or your sex,” she says.

Thelma’s eyes open, and she finds herself lying in bed alone. Looking around, she sees her partner, standing nude at the foot of the bed, leaning on the heavy footboard with muscular arms outstretched and unreadable eyes focused on her.

“How long have you been there?” she asks.

“Just a few minutes,” he replies.

She reaches out her hand and he capitulates. He lies in bed with her and she rests her head on his well-developed chest. There are no illusions in her mind that this will go beyond sex; he has made it quite clear. Though she has more than one stud in her stable, Thelma feels the hundred and fifty thousand dollars she invested in his training studio is well worth the physical fulfillment he gives her.

Silence fills the room as they lay together. Soon, a question that has been eating at her breaks the quiet.

“Did you, you know, cum this time?” she asks, trying not to be offensive.

Her partner answers her question with stoic silence.

“I’m not saying you have any hang ups, but other guys can barely last five minutes with me. I

just want to know if I'm pleasing you as much as you're..."

"Do you want me to?" he asks, in an abrupt tone. "I will, if that's what you want."

Thelma's head has stopped spinning but her body has not fully recovered. Still, the opportunity to satisfy the only partner to take her to such sexual heights is too strong to turn down. What she does not realize with this partner, is there are times, to be careful what you wish for.

"Yeah, it's what I want," she replies.

It does not take long for his member to respond, to her surprise, fuller and harder for what awaits.

"Come," he gestures softly, holding out his hand, wearing a placid face.

He gently positions her on all fours in the middle of the bed, facing the headboard. From behind her, he slowly runs his hands along her back and upon reaching her shoulders, presses her gently onto a pillow, with her hips vaulted and exposed.

Thelma becomes aroused again, A little to her surprise, as she is still spent from their last bout. Her breath becomes heavy as her heartbeat quickens. The two moan as they join together. He penetrates her deeply; gently working his hardness while strong hands caress her back. She can tell her partner is far more aroused than earlier.

“Is this what you want?” she asks in a seductive tone.

“Yes. This is what I want.”

“I want you to cum for me,” she says, starting to lose herself.

In a voice not nearly as controlled as the previous session, he replies, “I will, real soon.”

He places a hand behind her head and presses it firmly into the pillow. His movement gradually becomes intense, then painful, finally, brutal. Thelma emits agonizing screams but her face lodged in the pillow muffles them. More ominously, she soon realizes it also inhibits her ability to breathe.

Thelma tries to lift her face away from the pillow. She meets stiff resistance from her partner’s talon-like grip. White satin sheets begin to stain with blood as she is mercilessly assailed with violent thrusts. Out of instinct, she reaches behind her head trying to pry away the hand locked on the back of her head to no avail. She begins flailing her arms frantically in a final attempt for precious oxygen.

“I’m almost there,” says a voice that is now impassioned.

Her flailing arms soon go limp, then still. As life leaves her body, a deafening scream echoes

throughout the house. In a single powerful contraction, a massive load of semen floods what is now a bloody grotesque wound. Exhausted, he gently lies on top of Thelma's lifeless body. He is breathing and sweating as if he has just finished an hour of cardio at top speed. Thelma's head remains lodged in the pillow as his breathing soon slows and returns to normal. He looks down upon what is now a lifeless corpse.

“My...you are a sadistic one,” he says aloud, referring to himself. He gently turns her head to one side, pushing back her hair to expose an ear. Kissing her softly along the neck, he reaches her ear and calmly whispers,

“See Thelma...I knew you could make me do it. Was it as good for you as it was for me?”