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His usual genre is spy thrillers, with the Frank Delaney series winning new readers year after year. The first thriller in that series, *The Mazovia Legacy*, won critical acclaim and was shortlisted in the prestigious Arthur Ellis Awards for Best First Novel. The second volume, *The Burma Effect*, drew similar attention. The third, *The Tsunami File*, was shortlisted in the Arthur Ellis Awards for Best Crime Novel of 2009.

Rose has travelled extensively to many of the world's trouble spots including Nicaragua, Haiti, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Burma and East Timor. He has drawn from those experiences for the gripping stories and characters in his thrillers, and now for *Interpol Confidential*.

After spending a number of years in the UK and France, Rose now lives with his Australian wife and Burmese cat in Sydney. For more about him and his books, visit www.michaelrosemedia.com.

PRAISE FOR *INTERPOL CONFIDENTIAL*

“Rose writes with a deft hand, a twisted wit, and an insider’s knowledge of Interpol. A hilarious page-turner.”

Terry Fallis, award-winning satirist and
author of *The Best Laid Plans*

“Michael E. Rose’s hilarious satire takes us into a massive bureaucracy faithfully dedicated to combating crime and corruption, breaches of security, evil plotting and disloyalty – all in its own ranks. Departmental warfare and buried animals in the Interpol HQ garden are just the beginning. Add a paranoid, philandering Secretary-General who likes dressing up in silk kimonos, his wife who packs a mean Heckler & Koch, an executive of careerist back-stabbing multinationals, and bent cops who won’t share what they know with anyone, least of all other cops, and comedic stress leave is definitely in order!”

Tony Maniaty, journalist and author of
Shooting Balibo and *Smyrna*

“A contemporary, character-driven farce that works wonderfully. The author of several previously-published crime thrillers, Rose skilfully draws on his own experience working within Interpol to fashion an entertaining mix of incompetence, scheming, and paranoia that will have readers gripping their sides with laughter. When delegates from around the world convene in Munich, ostensibly to re-elect the

vain and ambitious Secretary General to another term, it all comes deliciously unglued in an entertaining farce that once suspects is closely rooted in fact. There are naïve junior technocrats struggling to comprehend what their boss requires (and who are unable to provide it), paranoid senior officials and their equally suspicious wives, and a CNN news crew eager to penetrate the walls of Interpol in search of scandal and incompetence, both of which abound. Once this tale hits the streets Rose should expect to find himself dropped from Interpol's Christmas-card list."

Jim Napier, reviewer at Deadly Diversions

INTERPOL
CONFIDENTIAL

A LAW ENFORCEMENT FARCE

MICHAEL E. ROSE



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Everyone sees what you appear to be.
Few know what you really are.

Niccolò Machiavelli

ONE

It was, everyone agreed afterward, not a good thing for the giant Interpol sign to suddenly fall off the side of the headquarters building and smash itself, two storeys below, into a catastrophic pile of broken glass, billowing dust, twisted aluminium and hissing, sparking electrical wires.

It was not a good thing because the Interpol sign was a mere three weeks old when it plunged to the tiled entry forecourt, narrowly missing an arriving delegation of clearly intoxicated police officers from Belarus and a fetching young French data compiler from the stolen motor vehicles database department. And because it was a pet project of Interpol Secretary General Didier Herriot-Dupont.

Few inside the glass and steel fortress that housed the world's largest international police organisation dared voice the opinion that the incident was perhaps a bad omen of some sort. Or that it was divine retribution for Secretary General Herriot-Dupont, who was known almost universally as DHD. He was also known secretly, to certain of his many detractors, as ADHD, with no apologies to sufferers of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. No one would dare venture such opinions just months away from the Interpol General Assembly at which DHD's re-election by the world's police was at stake, and, it was said, in serious question.

Few inside the glass and steel fortress on the banks of Lyon's Rhone river dared venture an opinion in public on any topic anymore. Herriot-Dupont ran a very, very tight ship. He did not suffer fools, or dissenters, or pretty much anyone, gladly. To run afoul of

Herriot-Dupont as he went about the business of putting his stamp on Interpol was to put oneself in great peril.

He was a short man, very short, but his physical presence could strike fear into the hearts of even the most seasoned Interpol officers. He was stocky, solidly built. He was the product of Normandy peasant stock; broad-shouldered, ham-handed and small-bottomed. He had the gleaming, close-set eyes of a predatory bird, a similarly bird-like beak, and a mane of salt-and-pepper hair, always immaculately coiffed, it was said, to better impress his female admirers, real or imagined.

Indeed, in his heart of hearts, Interpol Secretary General Didier Herriot-Dupont wanted very much to be a boxer, or a bricklayer or an ill-tempered riot cop. Instead of a career officer, a bureaucrat, from the highest echelons of France's Police Nationale.

DHD wanted to be a man's man, a policeman's policeman. But he was, alas, not. He was, inescapably, the former head of the least interesting, the least respected of the French police divisions.

Only the bravest of Herriot-Dupont's detractors would suggest, in public, that the Directorate of Resources and Competencies was anything but a crucial element of the French law enforcement system, doing essential work to keep frontline police officers well trained and well supplied.

The fact that some unkind members of the law enforcement community found the DRCPN to be a bit of a minor-league outfit was something no one would dare point out to him. That sort of unfounded criticism was not something Herriot-Dupont wished to hear. Though he would, in dark moments, acknowledge, only to himself, that running around making sure the French police had enough boots and handcuffs and whistles and procedural handbooks was not glamorous work.

For reasons perhaps best known to France's byzantine foreign policy establishment, it had been decided that a Frenchman must at all costs succeed the brash American woman who had attempted to drag Interpol kicking and screaming into the twenty-first century. That the American Secretary General had instituted a scorched

earth policy in her reform drive, that there had been much collateral damage of various sorts during her tenure, was only half the story. The French had simply decided it was time to wrest control of Interpol away from the upstart Americans and steer international police cooperation once again into a European orbit.

That campaign, after intense diplomatic manoeuvring in world police circles, had succeeded. DHD won the vote at the Interpol General Assembly in Belixico City almost five years earlier and France had its diplomatic victory.

The Secretary General was very, very upset about the smashed sign. He had summoned his Chief of Staff for an emergency meeting as soon as security sent up the news. Freiderikos Milonakis was an outstanding Chief of Staff who, Herriot-Dupont clearly assumed, would have already ascertained the cause of the incident and taken steps to punish, severely, the guilty parties.

“What the hell has happened with my sign, Freiderikos?” Herriot-Dupont hissed, even before Milonakis was fully inside the office.

The Secretary General liked to pepper his conversation with the sort of swearing used by case-hardened American cops. A frightened appointments assistant in the anteroom hunched closer over her keyboard as Milonakis closed the door.

“It almost killed those inebriates from Minsk,” DHD said. “How will it look at the General Assembly if important visitors to headquarters are being crushed by debris falling from my building?”

Milonakis was usually, almost always, unflappable. He had learned from his days in the Hellenic Police how to deal calmly with victims of testosterone poisoning, and superior officers suffering from small-man syndrome, or, in this case, stocky Normandy peasant womaniser small man syndrome. He was determined not to let the sign incident ruin his day.

The new Interpol sign had, in fact, already ruined a good number of Milonakis’ days. When the Secretary General decided that something needed to be done, something public, something that would

enhance Interpol's somewhat chequered image, that something would have to be done at top speed, with no handwringing about cost or operational fallout, or how many nervous breakdowns were induced among his police or civilian staff.

Indeed, the sign project had just about killed Interpol's long-suffering Chief of Communications, Alf Mortman, a lugubrious, overweight, extremely unhealthy police officer seconded from Estonia. Mortman had the sorry task of managing, or failing to successfully manage, the organisation's communications with the outside world, with the world's police, and with the world's frequently unappreciative media. Milonakis had passed to Mortman the poisoned chalice of the Interpol sign project and Mortman had immediately become a target for obsessional DHD wrath.

Mortman had at one point very unwisely argued in a meeting with the Secretary General that the debate over security regarding the sign was beside the point, as the Interpol headquarters was clearly indicated on the bus stop outside. The Interpol headquarters was also marked on all maps distributed by Lyon's tourism authority. But the debate, led by the Secretary General himself, had raged for weeks as to whether putting a giant illuminated Interpol sign on the outside of the building, the first time any Interpol headquarters building would be thus identified, might make it a target for terrorist attack.

Secretary General Herriot-Dupont had begun professing concern that the building would indeed become a target, despite the sign having been his idea in the first place. The Secretary General liked any discussion, among his senior advisors or among certain high-ranking police visitors from key member countries, that added an element of drama to the life of Interpol. He liked anything that made it seem that he, Herriot-Dupont, was at the helm of a crime-fighting organisation with major challenges and threats on all fronts.

"Have you even *thought*, Monsieur Mortman, about the security risks involved in having a sign installed on the outside of this building?" DHD had thundered in a recent meeting whose main

agenda item seemed to be humiliation of the defenceless Estonian.

“Secretary General, you yourself asked to have the sign put up,” Mortman had said, sweat beading most unattractively on his doleful face.

Mortman’s one saving grace in DHD’s eyes, Milonakis knew, was that he was short as well as being overweight. This pleased the Secretary General when official photos were to be taken of him alongside his Communications Chief. Mortman – and Milonakis, for that matter, himself not an overly tall man – did not draw undue attention to the Secretary General’s vertical challenges. Milonakis hoped there were other reasons for his continued tenure as Chief of Staff than the fact that he helped make the Secretary General look less short in official photos.

“So no risk assessment is required, in your view, Mortman,” Herriot-Dupont asked. “Is that correct? Putting the world’s largest international police organisation in danger just so we can have an *advertising* sign out front?”

“Everyone in Lyon knows that this is the Interpol headquarters, *monsieur*. It’s on the bus stop. It’s on all the maps.”

“I see,” Herriot-Dupont hissed. “And what have you been doing to rectify this communications problem?”

Milonakis had watched the ritual humiliation with a slight sense of guilt, but also with the relief of those whom a schoolyard bully had chosen, on this day anyway, not to target. Other senior Interpol staff in the meeting room cast their eyes downward; very quiet, very careful not to draw undue attention to themselves.

“Can you tell me, Monsieur Mortman, why I pay you more than 100,000 euros a year virtually tax free, and plead every year with the Estonian National Police to extend your secondment here in the south of France, if you have not even thought of why bus stops outside this building have the name Interpol inscribed on them for every terrorist operative to see? Have you ever spoken to the Lyon bus company about this problem? As my highly-paid *Chef de Communication*?”

"The bus stops have always had that on them, *monsieur*," Mortman ventured. "Long before any of us came along."

Survival Rule Number One at Interpol was to never engage the Secretary General in debate. DHD slammed his fist down onto the boardroom table.

"*C'est de la merde!*" he shouted. Sometimes shouting in French was the only way DHD seemed sure he was making himself properly understood. "I don't want to hear about problems! I want only to hear about solutions!"

Mortman went silent. He was onto his third heart attack. The Interpol doctor had told him that his ulcer was about to perforate and that he should avoid stressful situations at all costs. He ate lunch alone in his office each day, listening to Vivaldi and hoping the telephone would not ring.

"Freiderikos," Herriot-Dupont said. "Can you now take responsibility for this project as I wanted you to in the first place, and get a proper risk assessment done before we go further? Ask that new FBI man on the third floor to help out, and then send a note to his superiors back in Washington praising his work here. I haven't heard from the FBI Director for a long time. What's the young man's name again?"

"O'Brien," Milonakis said.

"*S'il vous plaît*, get O'Brien working with you and send a note to the FBI saying what a wonderful officer he is. Give the Director my regards and ask if he will attend the General Assembly."

"I will," Milonakis said. He was a man of few words when the Secretary General was in a rage.

"How would it look in the United States if we put up a sign without looking properly at the risk?" Herriot-Dupont said to the meeting at large. "Do we want Homeland Security to think we are fools? It is a dangerous environment we're in. It's a powder keg waiting to explode. We are living, as our American friends say, in a post-9/11 world. So let us all please get serious on risk. And I want that infernal sign installed by the end of next week. We have

an Executive Committee meeting coming up and we will need to get every member's picture taken out front to send home with them. Are you able to assist me on this, Freiderikos? The highest priority, *vous comprenez*? Mortman, I want you to stick with whatever inconsequential communication dossiers you've got going at the moment and stay clear of this sign project. And where is that CNN profile you've been promising me since last year?"

Milonakis, despite being a very proud Greek, was a student of Machiavelli, a devotee. He kept a small portrait of the Italian political genius in a metal frame on his desk, as one would with pictures of a wife or children or a favourite pet. The image faced inward, so as not to generate unwanted queries or discussion among those who visited him in his office. But if Machiavelli had been a rock star, Milonakis would have camped out all night to get concert tickets in the front row and bought the T-shirt after the show.

When Secretary General Herriot-Dupont was in a Level One or Level Two rage and heading toward gale-force incoherence at Level Four or above, Milonakis always drew on Machiavelli for inspiration before taking action. There was nothing in *The Prince* that dealt directly with such things as fallen Interpol signage, but there was always guidance. Milonakis kept in his upper right-hand drawer a well-thumbed copy of this indispensable manual for those serving as advisors to the powerful and the capricious.

This time the advice for Milonakis' latest problem was obvious. Milonakis didn't even have to look up the relevant quotation: *Whosoever desires constant success must change his conduct with the times.*

This had been one of Milonakis' guiding principles since arriving at Interpol from the Greek police eleven years ago with his third wife's lawyers snapping at his heels. Before Herriot-Dupont had wrested the top job away from the incumbent American, Alexandra McGraw, and during the reign of the redoubtable Welsh Secretary General, Jonathan W. Holmesworth.

Milonakis had been Holmesworth's devoted and unflappable

Chief of Staff. He had served, devoted and unflappable, under McGraw, and he was now Herriot-Dupont's devoted and unflappable Chief of Staff. He intended to be the Chief of Staff for the next Interpol Secretary General, and quite possibly the one after that. The better to avoid a return to Greece and the complications of ex-wives and ex-children. The better to amass large piles of tax-free euros and work on his retirement fund, his collection of exquisitely tailored suits and his racks of handcrafted shoes.

Milonakis made it his business to know where all the bodies were buried, no matter whom he worked for. In the case of Secretary General Jonathan W. Holmesworth – a flamboyantly eccentric former Deputy Chief Constable or Assistant Chief Constable of the North Wales Police; Milonakis could barely remember now – the metaphoric bodies in the last tumultuous year of his reign were everywhere. There was even an actual (i.e. non-metaphoric) body: that of his small dog, Toodles, beloved by both Holmesworth and his neurasthenic wife, Gladys. Toodles had been buried in the Interpol headquarters garden in a bizarre, secret late-night ceremony attended by a select group of trusted staff, among whose number had been one Freiderikos Milonakis.

When it became clear during Alexandra McGraw's subsequent tenure that Herriot-Dupont, then France's representative on the Interpol Executive Committee, was going to make a move for the American's job, Milonakis offered the Frenchman, and powerful players in the French Interior Ministry, his services. Discreetly, very discreetly.

Herriot-Dupont's campaign for election as head of the world's largest police organisation was not pretty. Milonakis had been invaluable in orchestrating the damaging whispering campaign about McGraw's (alleged) blunders and misjudgements, about her (alleged) losing battle with Cotes du Rhone wine, about (alleged) ineptitude in the latter stages of her previous career at the US Postal Inspection Service. Allegations do not have to be true to be damaging.

Just as effectively, Milonakis had also orchestrated the whisperings,

when he was assisting previously with Secretary General Holmesworth's departure, about, among many other things, a deceased Yorkshire terrier having been buried, at the insistence of Holmesworth's wife and against all imaginable organisational regulations, security procedures and/or French national health standards, late at night on the Interpol grounds.

Herriot-Dupont had swept to power in a landslide vote at Interpol's General Assembly in Belixico City, at which every trick in Machiavelli's book had been employed. That victory involved, among other things, extravagant funding for delegates' travel and hospitality, provided ever so discreetly by various supportive law enforcement agencies in Europe wishing to depose the American and install one of their own at the Interpol helm.

Quite why it was deemed appropriate for the latest French Secretary General of Interpol to be the former head of the least interesting and least respected of the French police divisions was not clear. And why it was appropriate for that new Secretary General to be a broad-shouldered, ham-handed and small-bottomed product of Normandy peasant stock, with a legendary predilection for extramarital affairs and dalliances with hotel chambermaids, bargirls and university students, was also a question so far unanswered.

Perhaps, some suggested, DHD knew where certain political bodies were buried in Paris or Brussels. Perhaps somebody in Paris owed him a very large favour. Or perhaps, the most uncharitable of observers suggested, incoming Secretary General Didier Herriot-Dupont, from an obscure department of the French national police, a man with lofty ambitions, would be easy to control.

Control would be easier still if a French intelligence agency mole were to be installed inside Interpol to keep track of things. Indeed, the existence of a French mole was an open secret at Lyon headquarters, just as was the existence of the CIA mole. It was common knowledge even among the lowest of the building maintenance and cleaning staff who looked after the little offices on the second floor set aside for Interpol's various moles.

Absolutely clear as well was that Freiderikos Milonakis had survived the recent transitions in style. And would go on surviving. Though the challenge of winning unanimous re-election for Secretary General Herriot-Dupont, his latest assignment, was of an unprecedented order of difficulty.

“Freiderikos, it has to be unanimous, you know that, don’t you?” Herriot-Dupont had told him one night as they sat in the Secretary General’s private quarters.

One of the many perks of office was a spacious apartment for the Secretary General on the top floor of the headquarters building. It had sweeping views of the Rhone and the verdant hills beyond. It also housed the Secretary General’s impressive collection of rifles and shotguns, mounted in all their phallic splendour on every available wall.

“Nothing else will do. No one will ever take me seriously again as Secretary General if even one member country votes against me in Munich. You know that, don’t you, *mon ami*? Tell me you understand this absolutely.”

“I will do my best, you can be sure of this, *monsieur*,” Milonakis said.

“Call me Didier, Fred,” the Secretary General said. “I invite you to do so.”

Herriot-Dupont routinely invited Milonakis to dispense with formalities when he (a) was meeting with the Chief of Staff in his private quarters and (b) needed something from his Chief of Staff very, very badly. Milonakis had never been able to bring himself to address the Secretary General in this way because (a) he had come up through the ranks of the Greek police, where such informality was unheard of and (b) such familiarity would make betrayal, if betrayal ever became necessary, somewhat more difficult, though never impossible.

“I can only do my best. Your record, however, speaks for itself.” Milonakis delivered this along with his best princely-advisor smile. His opened his palms to the ceiling in a gesture of submission and devotion. “I am here to serve.”

Milonakis kept a notebook of the finest black leather, in which he recorded, among many other things, a list of the Secretary General's enemies (ever-expanding) and Interpol's foul-ups and failings (ever-expanding). A unanimous re-election at the Munich General Assembly, in light of what was in that notebook, was achievable. Possibly. But it would be far from easy.

Milonakis had successfully taken on for the Secretary General a large number of seemingly impossible tasks in the previous four-and-a-half years. His salary had risen accordingly over the same period.

He had helped clear out what Herriot-Dupont considered, in the first heady weeks of his mandate, to be dead wood. That this group included a disproportionately high number of those loyal, or seen to be loyal, to the previous American and British Secretaries General was a mere detail. That the clearing away of dead wood had generated a number of extremely expensive appeals to the full Administrative Tribunal of the International Labour Organization in Geneva, and a spate of scathing media coverage, was, in DHD's view, beside the point. He had pledged to draw Interpol back into the European orbit, tribunals or no tribunals, unions or no unions, collateral damage or no collateral damage.

Milonakis managed that project, as he had managed the incessant tinkering with Interpol's allegedly state-of-the-art electronic police communication system, X-24GT. This had replaced, by order of the previous Secretary General, the organisation's antiquated (some would say laughable) reliance on telephone, mail and fax to communicate with the world's police.

The new system installed by Alexandra McGraw had run millions of euros over budget and it was still, some eight years after conception, gripped by major teething problems. Much high-tech X-24GT equipment lay unused and gathering dust in faraway Interpol offices in places like Panama City and Brazzaville and Bishkek. Herriot-Dupont had seen this as his cue to recreate the system in his own image and make it the triumph the American

contingent had so badly desired. He and France and Europe would be seen to be creating a truly new Interpol, with appropriately high-tech communications. In a post-9/11 world. Et cetera.

And of course all such innovation would certainly look very good on a CV someday, perhaps someday soon, when DHD made his move back to the French law enforcement arena where he longed to be taken seriously at last.

Milonakis had helped the Secretary General shift Interpol, at great expense and even greater upheaval, further and further away from its bread-and-butter police work of worldwide Red Notices for wanted persons and fingerprint files and stolen vehicle registration number databases and the tracing of stolen works of art, into uncharted waters of terrorist watch lists and intelligence-gathering and chemical weapons interdiction.

That a large number of member countries were clearly reluctant to have Interpol sail into those post-9/11 waters, that many of the world's police who had in fact even heard of Interpol actually preferred it to stick to the basic police business of apprehending fraudsters crossing borders or chasing drug dealers was, in DHD's view, irrelevant.

That many of the new Interpol projects and initiatives flew in the face of what experienced cops the world over knew to be true – police, in their heart of hearts, do not want to share information with other police forces unless they really have to, and police forces the world over want to be the ones taking credit for all possible arrests, all possible successes, and not share the glory with Interpol officers or anyone else – was, in the Herriot-Dupont view, entirely beside the point.

The new Interpol was now clearly in the twenty-first century, like it or not, and one Didier Herriot-Dupont was indisputably at the helm.

The good ship *Interpol* was a much more modern ship, yes. And it was, thanks in large part to the policies of Alexandra McGraw, in many ways a more dynamic organisation and effective in some of its endeavours. But, as Milonakis was the first to admit, the headquarters building under DHD's stewardship was a pulsating glass cauldron of

grievances, disagreements, unfinished projects, abandoned initiatives, recrimination and discontent. Casualties lay everywhere, victims were regularly carried away. The headquarters building was boiling over with palace intrigues and plots and machinations.

Member countries, meanwhile, many of them, were up in arms over increased annual dues, inexplicably rejected applications from their national officers, trampled jurisdictions and public criticism by the Secretary General of their operations. Enemies literally abounded.

“Unanimous re-election, Freiderikos. Every single member country must vote for me. This is our priority. Are you with me?” Herriot-Dupont had said that night.

“I am, Secretary General,” Milonakis had said.

“Call me Didier. I invite you to do so.”

The emergency meeting about the fallen sign, involving only the Secretary General and his Chief of Staff, was not, therefore, a moment for passing the buck.

“What the hell has happened with my sign, Freiderikos?” Herriot-Dupont asked again. “And who is looking after the Belarusians?”

“I believe the problem must have been with the installation,” Milonakis said. “I’ll call the company. I already have a crew out front cleaning up debris. I’ve sent the Belarus delegation over to Le Passage for a late lunch and I’ve told the manager to order in more vodka for the evening.”

DHD’s harried senior secretary – one of a retinue of four assistants who toiled in cramped conditions outside his office – knocked lightly and pushed open the door a crack.

“*Monsieur?*” Yolande said tentatively. “*Permettez?*”

“Yes, yes, Yolande, what is it?” Herriot-Dupont barked.

“The Chief of Security is here to see you. It is *très urgent*, he says, *monsieur*.”

“*Merde*,” Herriot-Dupont said. “*Merde*. Excuse my language, Yolande.”

“*Je vous en prie, monsieur.*”

Bernard LeBlanc strode into the office, looking flushed. He was a career functionary at Interpol, ineffectual as security chief but, with no real threats to speak of, also relatively harmless. Most of his job consisted of supervising guards who quickly passed mirrors under all arriving vehicles and looked in visitors' bags for explosive devices and unspecified contraband.

"Monsieur Herriot-Dupont, there is a problem," the Chief of Security said.

"*Merde alors*," DHD said.

"What is it, Bernard?" Milonakis asked, getting up.

"A body," LeBlanc said. "The crew has uncovered a body."

"A what? A what?" Herriot-Dupont shouted, leaping to his feet.

"Where?" Milonakis asked.

"In the garden bed out front. Where part of the sign fell."

"Impossible!" DHD shouted.

"However, I think it may just be a dog," LeBlanc said.

"A dog!" Herriot-Dupont shouted.

"They have dug it up. It is badly decomposed. Perhaps you should have a look."

"I am the Secretary General of Interpol!" Herriot-Dupont shouted. "I am a graduate of the École Nationale d'Administration. I'm not going down there to inspect the body of a decomposing dog!"

"Are you sure it's a dog, LeBlanc?" Milonakis asked quietly.

"Is it a Belarusian?" said Herriot-Dupont. "Are you certain it's a dog, Bernard? *Très certain?*"

"The head is very small," LeBlanc said.

"But this could be almost anybody around here," Herriot-Dupont said.

"And, *monsieur*, there is something else. The media are here," LeBlanc said. "Television."

"What?" Herriot-Dupont shouted.

"What?" Milonakis shouted.

"They have heard about the body somehow. But it is local TV only. French TV, not foreign."

“How on earth...” Herriot-Dupont looked over at Milonakis in disbelief. “Fred, can the media possibly be here so fast?”

“I will get Mortman out there,” Milonakis said. “Or a press officer.”

“No, no, no. Handle it yourself, Fred. It is a media leak. We must have a leak.”

“And, *monsieur...*” LeBlanc said fearfully.

“What? What else?” Herriot-Dupont barked.

“Your wife has arrived.”

“What? But she’s not due back here until late next week. What is she doing back here?”

“She left Washington early, she said, *monsieur*. She is here now, downstairs with security. Still at the entrance.”

“Well why in the name of God did she not just come up to the apartment?”

“My men didn’t know just what to do,” LeBlanc said, looking imploringly over to the Chief of Staff. “She was carrying a gun...”