

Your main commentary should be focused on questions. Other topics may also be addressed

She walked over to Duncan, gestured for him to pass her the phone. 'Joe? This is Phoebe. I'm with the police department. How are you doing out there, Joe?

'Why?'

5 'I want to make sure you're okay. You hot out there, Joe? Sun's pretty strong today. I'm going to ask Duncan to get us a couple bottles of cold water. I'd like to bring them up, talk to you up there.'

'I've got a gun!'

10 'I hear that. If I come up with a cold drink for you, are you going to shoot me, Joe?'

'No,' he said after a long moment. 'No, shit. Why should I do that? I don't even know you.'

'I'll bring you out a bottle of water. Just me, Joe. I want you to promise you won't jump or fire that gun now. Will you promise to let me come on out, bring you a bottle of water?

'Rather have a beer.'

The wistful tone in his voice gave her a little edge. 'What kind of beer would you like?'

'Got Harp in the bottle in the fridge.'

20 'One cold beer coming up.' She walked to the refrigerator, found there was little else but beer. Even as she took one out, Duncan moved beside her to open it. She nodded, pulled out the single Coke, popped the top. 'I'm coming on up with the beer, right?'

'Yeah, a beer'd be good.'

25 'Joe?' her voice was as cool as the bottles in her hand as one of the cops fitted her with a wire, removed her weapon. 'Are you going to commit suicide?'

'That's the plan.'

'Well now, if that's your plan, I don't know as it's a good one.'

30 She followed one of the uniforms out of the apartment, then up the stairs to the roof.

'Got nothing better to do.'

'Nothing better? You sound like you're feeling pretty low. I'm at the roof door now, Joe. Is it all right if I come on out?'

35 'Yeah, yeah, I said so, didn't I?'

She'd been right about the sun. It was strong enough to bounce off the roof like a red-hot ball. She looked to her immediate left, and saw him. He was wearing nothing but what looked like black boxers. Sandy-haired guy with fair skin - and that skin had already turned a painfully bright pink. He

40 squinted at her out of eyes swollen from crying.

'I guess I should've brought out some sunscreen along with the beer.' She held the bottle up so he could see it. 'You're getting toasted out here, Joe.'

'Don't matter.'

45 'I'd sure appreciate it if you'd put that gun down, Joe, so I could bring you your beer.'

He shook his head. 'You might try something.'

'I promise not to try anything if you put the gun down while I bring you the beer. All I want to do is talk, Joe, you and me. Talking's thirsty work out here in the sun.'

50 With his feet dangling over the roof ledge, he lowered the gun, laid it in his lap. 'Just put it down there, then step back.'

'All right.' She kept her eyes on his as she walked over. She could smell him, sweat and despair; she could see the misery in his bloodshot brown eyes. She set the bottle down carefully on the ledge, stepped back. 'Okay?'

55 'You try anything, I'm going off.'

'I understand. What happened to make you feel so low?'

He picked up the beer and, closing his hand over the gun again, took a long pull. 'Why'd they send you out here?'

'They didn't send me, I came. It's what I do.'

60 'What? You a shrink or something?' He snorted on the idea, drank again.

'Not exactly. I talk to people, especially people in trouble, or who think they are. What happened to make you think you're in trouble, Joe?'

'I'm a fuck-up, that's all.'

'What makes you think you're a fuck-up?'

65 'Wife walked out on me. We hadn't even been married six months and she walks.'