

Sample Chapter From *Criminal Tendencies: The Salvatore Luzani Story*

CHAPTER TWO

The first run-in with the mob.

We've all seen the movies. You know the ones, "The Godfather," "Goodfellas," "The Sopranos." We've watched those movies and all wondered if things were really as brutal out there as these movies portray. Well, I'm here to tell you that they are. In fact, I'll take that a step further: movie bad guys are pussies compared to the real life bad guys. You see the real-life bad guys aren't actors and don't have a script in front of them. Everything they do is out of impulse and reaction and sometimes they just flat out get it wrong. But unlike the movies, when real bad guys get it wrong, they die for real.

In June 1973, I had rented a small store on Northern Boulevard in Flushing, New York. This would be a front for my drug dealing activities in this area. Downstairs was a very old, creepy basement. We turned it into a target practice room so that we could sharpen our gun skills. Gun skills were a very important part of my new business endeavors. Without gun skills you would most likely become a victim rather than a victor. I worked very hard on my skills and became pretty good at shooting from the hip.

I set up a working chemical lab in the back room. There was a chemist who was going to make all the LSD I wanted. All the chemicals were available from chemical companies, but you had to be a company to make the purchase. I came up with the idea that I would use the chemical name for meth, Dextro Desoxyphedrine-Hydrochloride, and try to buy it from a chemical company. This would be much easier than attempting to manufacture LSD, and more profitable. I used stolen purchase orders that were obtained from a break-in on a business, we just changed the name and address.

At first I bought some run-of-the-mill chemicals from several different companies just to get things going. Then later it was time to get the real stuff. I got a call from Aldrich Chemical Company in Wisconsin. They wanted to know why I needed this item. I explained that I was in the process of filing a patent for a new chemical process for Sepia Toning Photographs. I said I could not disclose the process, but that this chemical was a vital component of the formula. Those morons at Aldrich Chemical bought my story, and soon I was receiving cartons with glass bottles of 100 percent pure meth! It could be cut several times and still be killer stuff. All you

had to do was break the seal, open the jar, and take a whiff. The crystals floating up would give you a buzz, this was incredible shit.

Moving this stuff was the next order of business. I wasn't used to dealing with meth freaks. They were a whole different kind of people. They were clearly addicted to the stuff and you never really know what was going to happen with them.

One of my people knew some guys that were vouched for, that could make a \$50,000 sample purchase. If they liked it, there would be larger buys. I approved the deal and set a place for it to go down. A family member ran a kitchen cabinet factory called Peerless-Mayer, Inc., in Hunts Point, which was located in the Bronx. This was not a nice place to be sure. Garbage littered the streets. Junk yards were across the street. Gangs of wild dogs were roving all over the place. They called this place Fort Apache, and for good reason. We could drive into the building and do our business and then leave. It sounded like a simple deal.

So, I met with my guys at the store. We knew we would be armed for the deal. It was a big deal, and we were wary of the buyer. Only one guy vouched for them. Everybody carried their weapons of choice. I had my 9mm, a bullet proof vest, and a .38 caliber strapped to my ankle. The deal was to go down at 10 p.m. on Tuesday night. This meant that we would get there at 9 p.m. to check it out and secure the area.

I had a key to the building, and so did my friend who set it up. The deal was to meet at the Hunts Point Diner at 9:30 p.m., so I could check them out. My friend would call me at 10 p.m. at the factory for the OK to come on over. We had it all figured out and what could possibly go wrong, right?

We arrived on the scene in three vehicles. An initial pass of the building revealed some vehicles that did not belong there. We parked down the block at a junk yard and observed with binoculars. Five guys arrived and entered the building. This looks like a set-up, an inside job in the making.

This stinks, I thought. Not much time to think, I figured. We had to make a move quickly because they could be ripping off our guy. We decided to enter the building from two points. The paint spray booth ductwork was installed with quick disconnects for service. I would enter through there with Carlos and Larry. Mario, Jimmy, and Vinny would go in through a restroom, way in the back of the factory. There were hundreds and hundreds of boxes full of kitchen cabinets piled up all around. It would be easy to sneak about unobserved, and very easy to knock something over and make noise. We all had to be very careful.

In the shop foreman's office, we could see a bunch of guys sitting around a table snorting some blow. I heard one of them say this would be easy money. I gave my guys the signal, and it was time to rock and roll! I pulled my 9mm out and kicked open the door, followed by my crew, with Mario securing the area outside the office.

"Everybody freeze! Get down on the floor and just maybe we won't put a slug in your fucking heads," I yelled in the most menacing voice I could muster.

We had them face down on the floor as we searched them for guns and ID. They sure looked like a bunch of Italians.

"Are you fucking crazy?" one of them yelled. "Do you know who we are?"
"No!" I yelled back. "But if you don't keep your mouth shut, you won't be anybody anymore, Capeche?"

The phone rang. It was my friend who set this up.

"Sal, I am at the Hunts Point Diner. The guys must still be at the factory securing it for themselves."

I said to myself: "Are you shitting me?"

"Why didn't you tell me you asshole? Who are these guys anyway?" I said to my friend.

"They are connected with Galantino's family," he replied.

"You better get your ass over here quick and identify them, or I will dust them all!"

I was getting a sick feeling in my gut. I didn't want a war with the mob. If this were a mistake, we would have some time getting out of this mess. My friend finally arrived.

"Sal, these are my guys, what the fuck are you doing?" my friend yelled.

"How the hell was I supposed to know they would be here early, this was not the plan, was it?" I said, feeling sicker with every word.

"No, but they insisted. Sorry Sal, Sorry guys," my friend said.

I had to do something.

"OK, everybody shut the fuck up," I said. "This is what we are going to do, we are going to lower our Roscos, and nobody gets killed."

We lowered our weapons, but Mario kept a trained eye on what was going down. The guns were returned along with their wallets. I apologized profusely and asked

them to join us for a drink, some blow and a joint. After a little while, we were all laughing about the incident.

"Sal, you guys are something else. You caught us with our pants down, and we know you could have iced all of us," said Pasquale, their lead man. "You have earned our respect here today for the way you guys handled this situation, it could have been ugly"

All the while my friends were also cooling them down. These wise guys hadn't been up against a criminal organization like ours before, and I think it really shocked them. You see, all that practice in that basement really paid off for us, along with the fact that we were built with military discipline, using guys from Vietnam that were trained in all of the killing arts, and very proficient. This is the new criminal organization. It's not just the mob anymore. We all made it home alive that night, so it was a very good day.

I am the author, Steve Stanley, and I hope you enjoyed this sample chapter of my new true crime book release: *Criminal Tendencies: The Salvatore Luzani Story*

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