

He pivoted on his toes, surveying the boats that bobbed against the jetty, before he narrowed his eyes at the harbour master's office and buildings beyond.

The place was deserted, save for a boy of about twelve fishing at the water's edge.

'David? How the bloody hell did you get this number?'

His mind raced.

He'd been careful, abandoning every aspect of his old life, even going as far as having his boat re-registered in Marseilles before sailing towards the Moroccan coastline, zig-zagging across the Mediterranean under cover of darkness.

After that, he'd kept his head down, telling any locals he'd befriended since his arrival that he was a former executive, tired of the city rat-

race, while he regrouped and tried to figure out what to do next with his life.

His mouth dry, he gripped the phone tighter.

‘How the hell did you find me?’

‘I’ll explain later. We’ve got a problem.’

‘Sort it out yourselves. I’m retired.’

‘Bored, more like,’ said David Ludlow, a note of contempt underlying his calm tone.

Dan placed the bag on the ground between his feet, and then straightened and scratched at the stubble on his cheek while he tried to formulate an appropriate response in his mind.

His former boss interrupted his thoughts.

‘Got a job for you. No time to waste. Might even get you in the good books with the new Prime Minister.’

‘New Prime Minister?’

‘You do read something other than the sports section of the newspapers?’

Dan bit back the retort on his lips and instead did a quick mental calculation.

‘I must’ve been at sea when it happened.’

‘Right.’ David sounded unconvinced. ‘So you’ve only been checking the football scores for the past two weeks, then?’

‘Wait.’ Dan held up his hand and then sighed. ‘How did you know where to find me?’

‘Hi, Dan.’

He closed his eyes and cursed under his breath. ‘Mel?’

The analyst giggled at the end of the line.

‘Bloody hell,’ said Dan. ‘You put a tracker on the boat, didn’t you?’ He frowned. ‘Hang on. If you’ve known all along where I am, how come I haven’t been dragged back there and

arrested?’

‘Because we haven’t told anyone where you are,’ said David. ‘Which brings me to the matter at hand.’

‘David? I’m standing here in ninety degree heat, and the milk for my coffee is about to turn into butter. Like I said, I’m not interested.’

Dan ended the call, picked up his bag, and stalked towards his boat, swearing profusely.

The good mood he’d had since he’d woken up that morning had disappeared, replaced with frustration and a seething anger that, despite everything, David thought it was okay to phone up out of the blue and demand his help.

‘Screw that,’ he muttered.

Dan forced a smile and raised his hand in greeting as he passed a 32-foot wooden-hulled ketch, her German owners enjoying a lazy

brunch under a dark blue shade-cloth.

He swallowed, his throat parched as he envisaged the brew he'd make as soon as he returned to the relative coolness of his own vessel.

Despite the heat, the harbour allowed a little more of the Atlantic's cooling winds to reach its residents, away from the closeness of the town's sprawling buildings.

He trudged on along the jetty and tried to ignore the bead of sweat that ran between his shoulder blades, despite the cotton short-sleeved shirt he wore. His sandals saved his feet from being scorched by the hot concrete surface under his soles, yet even those were beginning to wear thin as the summer progressed.

He stopped at the end of the jetty, crouched