



Beautiful Rage

a novel

**SANDRA
SCOPPETTONE**

Beautiful Rage

truck that picked up the trash from police headquarters.

Even though it was a great view, she couldn't have it and have privacy so she shut the blinds. She flicked on a light. The place was furnished with a double bed, a once white, now gray chenille spread, one motel style dresser and an orange chair. She wondered why, no matter where you went, they were always orange? And the carpet was a stained mess that had darkened over the years. But it seemed that the room was clean.

She went into the bathroom because that's how she always could tell. She was amazed. Bright and sparkling. New wrapped soap in the dish and new toilet paper. The towels were thin, but they were clean.

Okay, they'd stay. She flung her bag on the bed and took out a T-shirt which she exchanged for the long-sleeve blouse she was wearing. Then she hung up her things, and stored the other items in the dresser. It didn't matter how long they were staying, she always unpacked.

Out at the car she asked Jack how his room was; he shrugged and said he had a great view but the room was early fifties. She agreed.

"So where to first? House or work?"

Fincham consulted his watch. "Better go to his workplace, it's four o'clock already."

"Okay. Trimble's Gardening it is."

Chapter Sixteen

It took them about fifteen minutes to get to Trimble's. Beautiful flowers and plants lined the parking area. The place was a medium-size cement building, and it was clearly well kept, lovingly looked after.

When they went inside a little bell rang announcing their entrance. It only took a few moments before an attractive woman of about thirty-five stood behind the polished wooden counter. She asked if she could help and Dove showed her shield.

"You're here about Lyle, aren't you?"

"Yes. How did you know?"

"The phone call from your office in Virginia."

"Oh, of course. So what can you tell me about him, Ms. . . . ?" Dove shrugged.

"Sorry. I'm Anita Bell." She ran her fingers through her long red hair.

They all shook hands.

Bell said, "What's Lyle done?"

"We're not sure yet. How long did you employ him?"

"About three years. He was a hard worker. Then one day last week he didn't show up, didn't call. We, my partner and I, thought it was odd but didn't do anything about it until the next day. We phoned him but no answer. He hasn't been back since."

Fincham asked, "Did you do anything more about finding him?"