

*A notorious escort, a daring
heist...the rest is history.*

The
Seduction
of



Sunni
Sinclair

NOEL MEALEY

Bestselling author of *Murder & Redemption* and *The Icon Murders*

The Seduction of Sunni Sinclair

Glass House Books

Noel Mealey skilfully blends well researched true stories and compelling characters to create entertaining and captivating fiction. From dealing with mega-rich entrepreneurs to associating with wanted criminals, crooked police and corrupt politicians, Noel has lived a varied life that allows him to build characters such as bent clergy, wily journalists, gangsters and murderers.

An Engineering graduate, Noel was inspired to write by his father, who had a wonderful talent for storytelling. Those stories, told under the stars on humid summer nights, focused on the eccentric personalities he knew and encouraged Noel to create characters that share some traits with his real life associates.

Noel's first books *Murder and Redemption* and *The Icon Murders* were published by HarperCollins.



Glass House Books
Brisbane



The Seduction of Sunni Sinclair

Noel Mealey



Glass House Books
an imprint of IP (Interactive Publications Pty Ltd)
Treetop Studio • 9 Kuhler Court
Carindale, Queensland, Australia 4152
sales@ipoz.biz
<http://ipoz.biz/shop>
First published by IP in 2024
© 2024, IP and Noel Mealey

All rights reserved. Without limiting the rights under copyright reserved above, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise), without the prior written permission of the copyright owner and the publisher of this book.

Printed in 16 pt Avenir Book on Caslon Pro 12 pt.

ISBN: 9781922830555 (PB) 9781922830562 (eBook)



A catalogue record for this
book is available from the
National Library of Australia

To my wife, Thérèse, who allowed me to dream
and encouraged me to turn my dreams into reality.

Acknowledgements

Book design: David P Reiter

Cover art: Design by Committee

I have lived a lucky life and am grateful to have been surrounded by a great network of friends and family.

While I was writing, my wife Thérèse did not once complain about the time I spent sequestered in my office. She assisted me by offering suggestions and positive criticism. Without her, this book would never have been started.

I want to acknowledge, from the beginning, David, Tuddy, George, Shammie and Merv for my early education, Frank and Joe for their mentoring, Maurice for his enormous help in my life, Anna & Chris and Emma for their early input into my first writing experiences, Kevin & Margaret and Rossa for their friendship through thick and thin.

Thanks to my family, David, Sarah, Emma and Eliza, for their care, enthusiasm and good humour.

I am grateful for the support and encouragement of the extended families on my and Theresé's side, my engineers, and Hilda and Rosie, all of whom continued their enthusiasm and interest through my arid years.

I have used excerpts from Henry Lawson's poem, "Taking His Chance", from *In the Days When the World Was Wide and Other Verses*, Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1903 [first published 1896].

Kate Goldsworthy is an outstanding editor who put me on the right track. Anna Valdinger played a massive part in keeping up my morale.

Dr David Reiter from Interactive Publications has given the right advice through the publishing process. His forty-plus years of experience in the industry has been of enormous help in his fine editing of the text and his knowledge of all aspects of modern publishing.

Josh Durham made a lovely cover for the book.

Theatre, film and television actor Fiona Press, the rich and commanding voice behind Sunni in the audiobook, has been delightfully skillful in her interpretation of Sunni, and audio engineer Martin Gallagher has edited it to perfection.

Contents

1. Trouble Finds Her	1
2. A Hitman's Shock	4
3. Illegal Casino Time	10
4. Becker's Criminal Reflex	18
5. Justice, Vigilante-style	23
6. What Becker Does to Impress	31
7. Search Warrant Time	44
8. Who's Doing Who in the Sauna?	49
9. Clawing Back Consciousness	58
10. Vengeance is Mine	69
11. Becker Near the Edge	76
12. A Daring Rescue, A Romance	81
13. Hang the Getaway Driver	91
14. Pit Pony Underground	97
15. Challenging the Sydney Mob	108
16. Boss Gangster Inside Track	118
17. Who's a Feminist?	125
18. King of the Kids	130
19. Sinister Red Eyes	141
20. Making Like Solomon	146
21. Becker Gets Fit	151
22. Royal Chats at Randwick	154
23. The Best Laid Plans	157
24. Committed at Last?	166
25. Calm Before the Heist	170
26. Queen Elizabeth II & Lesser Distractions	179
27. Our Getaway	194

28. Après Heist	200
29. Living It Up with Suspicion	206
30. Treasure Trove Revealed	211
31. Payback Time	214
32. The Great Pretender	219
33. A Prayer, an Engagement and Jealousy	222
34. Why Did the Cock Crow Thrice?	227
35. Timebomb Walking	232
36. Take Only What You Can Carry	237
37. No Time for Love	242
38. Razor's Edge	246
39. Baser and Higher Desires	259
40. A Pitch for Love	268
41. Captured?	275
42. The Chase	280
43. Here's Missing You, Kid	287
44. Rush of Pale Men	291

1. *Trouble Finds Her*

Dudley, NSW. Monday, December 28, 1953.

The game kicked off in fading daylight three days after Christmas '53 when Becker fled, leaving the police sergeant bleeding out in a dark alley between towering silos at Newcastle's coal wharf. I'd never heard the name Franz Becker. But, within a week, he would burst into my life like a firecracker in the henhouse, and I would emerge from the explosion, battle-stained and hardened, a wanted outlaw with a target on my forehead.

If you believed the sensationalised stories spun by Sydney's newspapers, I was the notorious Sunni Sinclair, a glamorous escort catering to the wicked desires of the wealthy and powerful. While that may have held some truth four years ago, it was no longer the reality. I escaped Sydney and invented a new identity—the hard-working publican up to her glamorous elbows in soap suds or serving beer to sweaty coal miners and tradies in overalls or grimy singlets. They flocked in at first, moths to the limelight glow, but lingered on, contented puppies basking in the radiance of the empty stage.

Ten miles from where the sergeant lay dying in torrential rain, The Dudley was alive, with Happy Hour in full swing below the same thundercloud racing south. Behind the bar, I bustled about, lively, animated, cheeking my regulars, flirting with the unattached, flattering the timid, topping up empty schooners and offering impromptu marriage counselling to those in need. But, while my feet and fingers danced to the tune of taps and glasses, my mind sometimes took off on a different trail away from the routine daily grind.

The batwing doors squealed open and click-clacked shut, and a tall, lanky stranger stepped into the cigarette-smoke haze. Lightning behind glass window panels advertising Toohey's ale wreathed him in their multi-coloured glow and held his face in shadow. He wore a brown wool fedora with the brim snapped down, a pinch in front and a tiny blue feather nestled in its golden band. The gorgeous hat knocked me over, and he pushed through to the bar before I registered the polished tan shoes, the crisply starched blue and white check dress shirt and the sharply creased beige wool trousers.

A hush spread through the crowded bar as it does on those rare occasions when a furious wife bursts in to drag her husband home, and I swear the crush of coal-lined and grease-stained miners opened before him as if Moses himself had parted the Red Sea in little old Dudley.

Hesitantly, he fronted the bar and said quietly, 'Hello, Sunni. Remember me? Lou?'

He was late forties, tallish, with a good body, and, up close, I recognised him from Sydney, where sometimes I would see him in one dark hangout or another consorting with Kitty Balushi. Upright citizens knew nothing much about the goings-on of Kitty's razor gang, preferring to live like the three monkeys. But nasty stuff happened in the dark lanes of Sydney's Kings Cross, and Lou was often somewhere nearby. From time to time, the police would arrest someone close to me—a client or a gangster of repute, and the papers would paint a bleak picture, darker than the truth. We blamed the war and carried on.

Lou's face appeared pale, his high cheekbones casting him as the scary twin to Jack Palance. He put out a nervous, jittery energy and wanted to stay for a week or two, and I wondered about that. However, he sparked my curiosity, and I sensed his loneliness, so I slid him a Tooheys Old, ran a cloth over the bar, and acted out a show, bustling about nearby.

Evenings can be dreary in a country town, so I gave him the

key to a ground-floor room across the hall from my suite. After my customers packed and headed home to wife and family, I appreciated a man's company.

I closed and tidied up. The bar grew silent, but Lou lingered on a stool, staring at his beer, watching the head fade. I stayed on, hoping to get the latest scuttlebutt on Kitty. The war had changed everything for Lou. It worked him over well and truly. Like many returned soldiers, he relived the murders and mutilations of his war but couldn't handle the peace, and, with no one to love him, he turned to crime.

'Troubles?' I asked, sensing his mood.

'You'll read about it in the paper. Sergeant Moran is dead, and Albie Fowler killed him. Becker drove the car, and now they're after me because I witnessed the murder. Fowler and Becker. I need to lie up for a week or so. Until things quieten.'

And so it began.

I'm no stranger to trouble. It's like those old friends you invite home for dinner, and they stay on until their feet are permanently beneath your favourite chair, and your journey is their journey, and they think they own your future. I should have kicked Lou out that night and lost the key.

You've Just Finished your Free Sample

Enjoyed the preview?

Buy: <http://www.ebooks2go.com>