Vigilantes, Payback And Poetic Justice

A novel by

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Vigilante: A person who is not a member of law enforcement but who pursues and punishes persons suspected of lawbreaking.

Payback: Retribution or revenge.

Poetic Justice: The rewarding of virtue and the punishment of vice, often in an especially appropriate or ironic manner.

"Out here, due process is a bullet."
John Wayne as Colonel Mike Kirby in 'The Green Berets' (1968)

Chapter 1

Cadillac Springs is a small town located on the Western Slope of Colorado. It has its good points and it has its bad points, just like any small American town in the twenty first century. Cadillac Springs also has a somewhat shady component which most of the residents are not even aware of, and it is seems to be comprised entirely of me and my eclectic group of friends.

About a year ago, due to circumstances totally out of our control, we had to combine our various talents to help one of the crew get out of a bind and to get his girlfriend away from some seriously bad actors. This little adventure resulted in a splinter group of Irish mobsters from back east getting 'disappeared', in the classic Argentinian fashion of the late 1970's and early 1980's. Luckily for us we had the consulting expertise of an old Basque gentleman who, at one point in his checkered past, had been fairly influential with the Cosa Nostra. His advice and connections ensured that we stood a good chance of never showing up on law enforcement radar either during or after our little escapade. But that is another story.

An introduction is warranted at this point. I go by Jeb, which is the short form of Jebell. My full name is Jebell Rose and I live on five sections of undeveloped and unfenced land north of town which was willed to me when my parents passed away. It's an old ranch which has been in the family for a long time and was somehow included in the old Mexican land grants in the 1830's. The ranch is a rustic sort of place consisting of a ranch house, a bunkhouse and a barn arranged around a big courtyard. The driveway comes in from the east through a cut in the hill which conceals the ranch buildings from the county road. The ranch house is on the west side opposite this cut. The bunkhouse is on the north side and the barn on the south side. Over the years, since I returned from living and working overseas, I have renovated the ranch house and the bunkhouse and have rebuilt the barn to use as a proper workshop. It's a nice place that sits in a little bowl in the hills with a rock ridge behind the barn and small hills with aspen and lodgepole pine behind the two houses.

My parents passed away a few years ago in a fatal traffic accident and I inherited a few oil leases down in the Texas panhandle near Borger, which keeps me financially independent. I'm closing in on forty now, but at five foot eleven and one hundred and seventy-five pounds I am not a candidate for a rocking chair on the porch just yet. I work in

the oilfield as an international drilling consultant when I get the urge. I enjoy a good book, shooting, guns, restoring old cars and hot rodding the same. I also enjoy harassing, ogling and studying the body geography of my long suffering 'significant other', Rachel.

Rachel is in her late twenties. She is half-Israeli, half-Chinese and incredibly hot both in appearance and in temperament. You really want to avoid annoying her too much, although I occasionally push the limits just for grins. Although she has a good sense of humor the majority of the time, she also has a volcanic temper when pushed too far. She's keeps fit by working at her auto restoration shop and her addiction to Bikram yoga, boxing and that Israeli Krav Maga stuff. She moved out here a few years ago and one thing led to another. She bought out my automotive restoration business and shortly thereafter we became an item. Most folks can't figure out how someone like myself, who as I said earlier is approaching the forty-year mark and is showing significant signs of male pattern baldness, could possibly have hooked up with a mixed race, centerfold ready, five foot eight, nationally renowned automobile restorer. I honestly don't know myself. Male pattern baldness is supposedly caused by an excess of testosterone which perhaps she picked up on. When this is mated to my incredible charm, personality and good looks perhaps it is just sheer animal attraction on her part. On the other hand, it is entirely possible that her eyesight is poor and that she is mentally deficient. In either case, I am not complaining.

Okay, enough with the backstory, you'll meet the rest of the crew as this tale progresses.