

# The Profit

By : **Ian Dawn**

Ray Dawn awakes to find himself staked out in teh unrelenting heat of the desert not 100% sure how he got there but he knows the Prioifit is teh cause, a man who is single handedly responsible for more death and destruction than any single person on the planet. His cyber army his subversive weapon world wide but now he has set his sights on the one place on the planet he can cause the most damage per square foot! Las Vagas!

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The landscape was barren and unfamiliar and as Ray Dawn peered out through dirt encrusted eyes he became aware of the oppressive heat that weighed down upon his soul like a two tonne elephant who precedes to sit on your chest. The red rust color of the earth around him was broken up by the jagged rock outcrops that created the natural stadium setting that surrounded him. He felt the frailty of his humanity in almost every muscle and joint of his body, and as he tried to move, he realised he was pegged out Indian style to allow the elements to slowly destroy his body.

The waves of heat gliding from the baking earth, moved like an unseen serpent as he tried to think of a way out of this mess. His clothes were torn and bloodied with wounds that were inflicted upon him were to incapacitate not kill. The nature of his being here was in part his own doing and the rest that of the man who called himself "The Profit". This so called human being had so far terrorized the US and before that he laid waste to multiple innocent people in Zimbabwe. A man who was a sadistic and brutal individual and one who refused to conform to any teachings in life other than his so called higher purpose which was his self delusions that he was the real god "The Profit" one who can foresee the future and those that have a place in it and those who do not. The problem is he has a legion, a cyber army that fight his cause for him in covert and often unseen ways.

Ok no shoes and only what I have on ropes at my wrists and ankles, staked out for all to see. Ouch my tongue was dry and parched and the metallic taste of blood filled my nose and taste buds, creating a nice cake on my lips . Pulling was not an option it just made the ropes tighter, but the tighter they got the more slack I had, so dilemma, if it doesn't work I loose circulation to my hands and feet with the possibility that I loose them both and die out here of exposure or worse the bugs eat me alive. I decided to try and move the bindings on my feet that way I can sit up and hopefully release my hands. Using all the effort I could muster, I lifted my left leg, and as I tugged the ropes tightened around my ankle and I could feel the numbness moving from my toes to where the ligature was now digging into the skin around my swollen appendage. The pain in the foot was abated by the loss of feeling and the wound in my thigh opened afresh and seeped fresh blood onto the red dirt below me. Raging thirst hit me then my head started to throb with pain from my wounds mixed with the pain of being laid bare and staked in the dessert must have taken its toll and my mind drifted and consciousness was something that was going to elude me very soon. I started thinking about the previous forty eight hours and what I could have done to prevent the deaths of so many and my own plight. The sun started to disappear and the heat turned to cold and the darkness overcame my mind and I blacked out.

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"Ray, ray are you hearing this, that mad bastard has just taken out the Luxor casino and with it almost three hundred people."

My mind was hearing but my brain was struggling to process the information being broadcast live on the CNN news feed. "Shit Dave where is Lou and Jessica? We need them, NOW!"

I moved around the spacious room filled with technical and electronic equipment and more field agents than I have seen in one place before except in the underground stronghold back in New York. The data was flowing fast and the destruction of the Luxor was just a taste of what was to come. The room was quiet except for the buzzing of electrical components as all of the agents watched the feed, some with tears and others in a state of shock but all of them with a sense of urgency. The room filled with noise once more as the information was being fed back from field agents to the command centre. "Dave we gotta get out of here and move ass, where was the last sighting of this so called Profit guy."

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"In a small town outside Vegas Ray, but its an old lead he could be anywhere by now and we have to think he is somewhere in downtown Vegas as we speak after what just happened."

"Not really, he has a network remember, that could have been his followers, but what sort of man makes others commit an atrocity like that!"

Dave and I made way towards the exit door the heavy cedar solid timber hand made doors swung easily on gold hinges that belied the weight of what was hung from them. The red carpet was plush and the wall paper a myriad of transparent circular swirls embedded in hues of yellows, oranges and reds. The two guards out front of the room were positioned in such a way that no egress was hidden on the way to the command centre. Two more agents were stationed by the lift and as we approached the bell sounded and the metal doors slid open and another agent who I had seen once before stepped out and flashed her security tag to the guards and waved her on as we stepped into the lift, the smell of her perfume filled the small confined space and as the doors slid shut, Simon and Garfunkles "the sounds of silence" softly played in a muted instrumental track that was the elegance of elevator music. As I pushed the large golden ring marked "G" the muffled noise of the explosion rocked the metal box and sirens started wailing and water flowed from burst fire sprinklers. The lift had only travelled inches before the blast and as Dave and I forced the doors open the smoke and smell of death and viscera filled my nostrils and as the screams of survivors filled my ears, I knew this was all part of the Profits doing. The female agent who we passed in the corridor was the human bomb and another part of the entwined network that was his cyber army.

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