

The Collineau Covenant

Screenplay Proposal

By

Sam Clinton

Genre: Action Crime Thriller for 16+ audiences

SWGW Registration: 1894797

Proposal: The Collineau Covenant

Tagline

Nine-Eleven meets Angels and Demons

Logline

The Collineau Covenant, a family secret for centuries, emerges from the shadows of history in our own time to inspire a world-stunning crime against the Vatican with the hidden agenda of an organized and well-financed plot to take over the riches and power of the Catholic Church.

Starlines

- George Clooney as Colonel Fabio Sebastiani (age 55, Italian Carabinieri)
- Natalie Portman as Luisa Fabian (age 35, university professor, religious history)

Genre

The Collineau Covenant is a fiction-crime thriller by Sam Clinton. One might reasonably suggest that the historical background and flavour of the film could have the feeling of a docudrama. The film centres on a contemporary investigation by the Italian Carabinieri that also requires discovering the meaning behind the mysterious Collineau Covenant.

This Offering

Provides a full scene-based synopsis of the completed screenplay and is backed by the legitimate publication of the author's novel of the same title.

Capsule Synopsis

A massive act of terrorism against the Vatican destroys St Peter's and kills the new pope elect. Rome's Carabinieri anti-terror chief faces an enigmatic mix of the criminal underworld and ostensibly legitimate groups driven by ruthless greed, historical feuds and delusions of heavenly glory. He soon learns that these immensely wealthy, influential and powerful enemies have him in their sights.

The Collineau Covenant, with its origins dating back to the 14th century, is the Holy Grail inspiring the collaborators, but what does it really mean? Is there a hereditary connection and vendetta mandating the current Pope's assassination? Can the billionaire American fundamentalist behind it all and prepared to risk everything he possesses, take control of the New Catholic Church—its doctrines *and* its riches—like Richelieu succeeded in doing centuries before him?

Spoiler denouement: the nature of the Covenant and the conspiracy is gradually revealed, leading to a grand finale in which the usurpers are in their private jet near Rome when their plot is nailed. They have the choice between surrender to the military jets flying alongside and landing to await their secular fate, or taking another more immediate path to immortality and the welcome they believe awaits them in heaven, despite their failure.

The acts of terrorism and the unexpected denouement more than fulfil the Tagline.

110,000 word published novel (120 minute screenplay).

Robust Scene-based Synopsis: The Collineau Covenant

ACT I

The year is 1628. A heavy door creaks open in darkness and a growing flickering light from a flaming torch held by a guard illuminates him, an accompanying priest and the stone steps they are descending in the bleak and grimy Bastille dungeon in which a Roman Catholic cardinal (it's Cardinal Jean Collineau but his name is not revealed at this point) is incarcerated. His tongue has been cut out and after ten days of foul food he is weak. A priest, the prisoner's friend, has come to obtain his last written statement and witness the execution. At a table under the torchlight, the imprisoned cardinal writes a letter. The priest silently reads it, glares at him, looks around and secretively hides it in his garment. The cardinal sights the executioner leaning on his axe and smiles.

Today: In the darkness of early morning Hasan is alone in his hotel room. He has awakened from a dream of his terror training in Pakistan. A telephone call from a compatriot in another hotel returns his mind to the horror they plan to perpetrate this June day in Rome.

He is prepared to die with his three friends from Milan in a suicide bomb attack on the crowds that are gathered in Rome to celebrate the installation of Emilio Gaetano as the new pope, Boniface X.

Rome's anti-terror chief, Colonnello SEBASTIANI and his deputy, Maggiore Luca FERRI, who are overseeing their elaborate security measures for the event, receive intelligence that the four Milan terrorists are in Rome. Sebastiani is working his radio hard, barking orders to others involved all over the city and beyond. As the new Pope's massive procession sets off from the Colosseum towards the Vatican, Sebastiani drives around to check out the deployment of his five thousand troops. His sharpshooters are in high places while other carabinieri are checking security on the street.

MONTAGE: Scenes of the deployments, Sebastiani jumping out of his car to confer with some, always on the radio with others. We see the corresponding aspects of the magnificent procession winding along the streets. As the pope-mobile enters onto a bridge...

Just as Sebastiani and his command are hopeful that the most dangerous time is behind them, massive bomb blasts devastate the papal procession. Pope Boniface and many hundreds of onlookers are killed.

MONTAGE: The streets and bridges leading to the Vatican are scenes of destruction: smoke and surging thick clouds of dust obscure the hundreds of mutilated, bloodied bodies that are scattered amongst the marble and concrete rubble. Then after a short pause, just as the emergency services are on their way to those sites, a further series of massive explosions bring down St Peter's basilica and surrounding buildings, with onlookers at the periphery running for their lives from the immense cloud of dust and debris reminding all of 9/11.

The vastness of the bombing exceeds what the four Milan suicide bombers could possibly have accomplished alone and it is immediately apparent to the authorities that this goes far beyond anything the four Milanese or any other known terrorist organizations could have mounted.

Sebastiani, himself injured, bloodied and grubby, organises his men to gain control of the situation and rescue victims from the rubble. His boss and head of the Carabinieri, Generale Ferdinando CONTI, seeks him out and in a harangue demands answers and action. But all are left standing in awe of the devastation that earlier had been the Vatican City and the nearby streets of Rome.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

Sitting in his barracks office with his wounds now dressed, Sebastiani receives a startling phone call on his secure phone from a French secret service telephone in Paris. The caller is ELAINE BRUNEAU who [says she is](#) with the French Security Service DGSE but also claims to be his daughter by his university soul mate, Bernadette Bruneau. They arrange to meet when she visits Rome to confer with his boss, General Ferdinando Conti, over a matter unrelated to the bombing. He is at first shocked but then suspicious about why she should contact him only after the bombing of the Vatican and why she would be meeting General Conti. He sends his Italian secret service colleague, Ricardo DA CORTE, to investigate her.

Sebastiani and his deputy/partner Luca Ferri receive information that three of the four Milan bombers have been found murdered. Sebastiani knew the bombers were being tracked by carabinieri so he suspects that his own agency may have been involved in their deaths. He sends Ferri to investigate that crime scene.

A secret conspiratorial meeting is taking place between a priest and a high-ranking Carabinieri officer (neither for now revealed on camera—in the priest's gloomy office—interspersed with a silent background montage in which the Milan bombers are attacked, tortured and killed) indicate these two are implicated in the Vatican attack and the deaths of three of the Milan bombers. After an angry exchange in which they accuse each other of failings, they leave together to attend a meeting between Carabinieri high-ups and surviving cardinals, set up to question the surviving cardinals about the attack.

Sebastiani also joins this gathering. He and his bosses are advised that absent a sitting pope, Archbishop Roger COLLINEAU is the new leader of the Church and that the cardinals have decided to move the papacy to Avignon in France, supposedly for security reasons. Sebastiani wonders why they would do that when all the offices that drive the worldwide Roman Catholic Church are in Rome. He formulates a theory that the attack could have been organised from within the Church itself, to effect precisely that change in the power structure. This is a minority view and is not well received by his bosses.

Sebastiani's line of inquiry requires an expert in Roman Catholic affairs and his boss, General Ferdinando Conti, agrees and arranges for Luisa FABIAN, a university professor and Vatican expert, to work with him. She is not what Sebastiani expected given the job description: she is young yet sophisticated and stunningly sexy. The sight of her stirs dormant desires in him, which he has to suppress as he presents his hypothesis to her.

Luisa agrees that his power-grab theory is plausible and elaborates the history for him:

Eccentric Pope Celestine V (1209–1296) gave over Church lands to cardinals in the Colonna family. After Celestine's death, Pope Boniface VIII repossessed these lands and properties for the Church. The Colonnas moved to France where they gained favour with King Philip who hated Pope Boniface VIII. Under orders from the king, Sciarra Colonna attacked and dethroned Boniface VIII (1303), threatening vengeance and cursing him and the Gaetano family for eternity. For their support, King Philip rewarded the Colonnas (the French descendants now known as the Collineaus) with large estates in France that formerly belonged to the Roman Catholic Church.

Sebastiani appreciates her argument: if this hypothesis were true, a Gaetano pope with the papal name Boniface on the Vatican throne might signal the exact moment in history that this family had long awaited to inflict their vengeance.

A certain doctor VETTORI is treating survivors and contacts Sebastiani because he believes a man lying in a coma is the sole surviving Islamic terrorist Hasan Muhammet Al-Qali. Sebastiani confirms the identification and is sure that Al-Qali witnessed the murder of his compatriots.

Because he suspects their killers to be in his own Carabinieri, he colludes with Vettori to keep Al-Qali's identity and whereabouts secret until he recovers sufficiently to be moved to a secure military hospital beyond the reach of the Carabinieri. Sebastiani believes the Milan bombers were set up and targeted so they would deflect attention from the bigger plans to blow up the Vatican.

Sebastiani's pathologist colleague Dr Enzo MARTINI is engaged in identifying the hundreds of dead victims in coffins lined up in an aircraft hangar. He makes contact because a Cardinal RICCI, known to have been alive *after* the bombing, is now amongst the dead along with another potential murder victim that Martino has registered as NoID#4. Sebastiani needs to determine if these two deaths were an intended consequence of the Vatican bombing and if so, why.

Sebastiani now believes that the Vatican explosives had been planted long beforehand in the structure of St Peter's Basilica as the long planned second wave in the attacks. Suspiciously, of the directors of the firm that recently worked on St Peter's Basilica, three have gone missing and one has been killed (in a building-site accident according to the death certificate but the circumstances of his death are also suspicious). The lines to be investigated are now multiplying.

Sebastiani gets a tipoff that Giulio GAGLIANO, a known contract man, killed cardinal Ricci. Gagliano is arrested and under intense interrogation, confesses to the murder but demands a deal: his freedom and a new ID for the names of his clients.

Sebastiani and Luisa Fabian find themselves alone in his apartment. In preparing to leave she holds his arms and kisses his cheek. Almost automatically, his arms embrace her. She responds with tenderness and they make love. This brings emotional and physical release to them both but afterwards she senses that he is suffering the pangs of a guilty conscience. Noting they have to work together, she suggests that they step back but remain good friends. This is agreed but he remains in emotional turmoil.

Sebastiani and Luisa Fabian become mistrustful of the surviving cardinals when it turns out that they are mostly French coupled with an implausible list of extraordinary escapes and reasons for not being under the falling masonry. They are also moving the Curia to Avignon so Sebastiani decides to keep tabs on their activities. He sends Luisa Fabian there under the cover of doing general research. Another questionable victim-corpse found in the rubble of the Basilica turns out to be that of Bishop Francis SINCLAIR, an American with strong ties to the French Roman Catholic seminary in Barbentane near Avignon. This discovery firms up Sebastiani's suspicions about the French connection to the Vatican bombing and raises an American connection.

Ferri's contacts in the American CIA identify a subterranean and well-financed religious terror group, a right wing Christian sect that violently opposes Roman Catholicism and has been attacking local Roman Catholic churches and institutions in the USA. Ferri's interest is sparked by the fact that two sect members have come to Italy and are presumed to be in the country. They need to be found quickly.

The man tagged as NoID#4 is identified as the American Edward C Barnes. Forensic examination confirms that he has been murdered with an altar candlestick on which his fingerprints are found, along with those of his fellow traveller into Italy Clifford T. Simms, and Bishop Sinclair. Three Americans pulled dead from the ruin of St Peter's have all handled this murder weapon. Sebastiani demands background information on all three, from Italy and America.

Luisa Fabian is seeking further information about the Collineau family on assignment at Avignon in France as an obvious starting point because Archbishop Collineau is the new *de facto* head of the Church. Using her cover story of researching the French clergy's influence on the Church, she meets with Madame LOUISE COLLINEAU, Archbishop Roger Collineau's mother. Madame Collineau shows Luisa Fabian a covenant that is handwritten in French and when Luisa Fabian realises the covenant's meaning she is overcome by *déjà vu* because she feels she has seen this text before but not in French.

Madame Collineau explains the origins of the covenant:

The ownership of lands given to our ancestors by King Philip of France is, over many years, the subject of legal and power disputes between our family and the popes of the day. We eventually regain the lands legally and, to hide our ancestral name from the Church, it is changed and represented as Collineau in the legal documents. But the pope's agents uncover this fact, and to repossess the properties for all time, Pope Urban orders Cardinal Richelieu to execute the last remaining members of that family. In Paris in 1628, Richelieu disputes with Cardinal JEAN COLLINEAU his ownership of the property and believing he is the last surviving member of the family throws him into the Bastille to be executed for his crime of expropriating Church property illegally. Before he is beheaded, Collineau writes the covenant and gives it over to his friend, the priest who is the execution witness.

Sebastiani keeps his meeting appointment with Elaine Bruneau (his daughter) in a hotel. Using documents and photos, she confirms he is her natural father. She will not, however, disclose to him anything about her work or why she is meeting with his boss, General Conti.

Elaine Bruneau's secret business with General Conti takes her to Tunis. As soon as she exits the plane at Tunis International Airport, she is arrested by Tunisian secret service people on a pretext and thrown into prison. She is charged with spying, which, in Tunis, carries the death penalty.

From CIA-provided information, Luca Ferri learns that the man murdered with the altar candlestick, Edward C. Barnes and his compatriot Clifford T. Simms, are both members of the American extreme-right religious sect but he finds no explanation for these two men to be in the Cathedral on the day of the explosions.

A background search on Simms and Barnes throws up the name of their religious leader, Robert COLONNA, a fabulously wealthy Texas-American.

Hasan Muhammet Al-Qali's condition is deteriorating. Gagliano's evidence is now the key. Sebastiani does not fully trust his own Carabinieri to transport Gagliano to a safe house and freedom so he devises a complicated operation involving three armoured wagons, three army medical helicopters in a "three shells" game to deflect any counter plans. Giving only last-minute notice to essential senior personnel, three teams of guards, each with a "Gagliano", board the helicopters. As they rise up, one explodes and crashes, one returns to the ground safely (with a dummy "Gagliano") and the third helicopter flies off. Gagliano is not in the sabotaged helicopter

but, Sebastiani assumes, is on his way to certain death. Sebastiani is now convinced that his own Carabinieri are infiltrated and unsafe.

For losing the investigation's only witness, General Conti takes the leadership from Sebastiani and gives it to Ferri.

Luisa Fabian returns to Rome. Since the time they made love, Sebastiani has held his strong feelings for Luisa Fabian under control. Nevertheless, he seduces her and again they make love, establishing what is presented as a loving sexual relationship.

Even though Sebastiani now believes the Rome attack was done for pay on behalf of a powerful conspiracy, Luisa Fabian clings to the French Church connections. She has learned that Archbishop Collineau is establishing a so-called "New Holy Catholic Church" with its centre in Avignon, a move she sees as requiring the destruction of the Vatican. Now that the Vatican is in ruins and its leaders dead, the French have a power base that cannot be contested. She believes that the feud between the Colonnas—later the Collineaus—and the Roman Catholic Church is the root cause and motive for the Vatican attack. She constantly presses Sebastiani with this view.

CIA intelligence shows that Barnes had been a long-serving pyrotechnics officer in the US Marine Corps. His partner, Simms, had a history of severe mental illness and periodic imprisonment for violent behaviour. Barnes would have had the skills to lay bombs at the Vatican during building repairs and Simms the psychological aggression to kill Barnes. Learning that Barnes and Simms had shared the same hotel as Bishop Sinclair, forces Sebastiani to believe culpability lies with the French clerics.

Luisa Fabian learns that Robert Colonna is a fanatical American anti-Rome iconoclast whose zeal is driven by the decree contained in the family covenant written by his ancestor Jean Collineau. From her remarkable revelation of this, Sebastiani suddenly grasps that a long-lasting Colonna/Collineau feud with the Roman Catholic Church really could be behind the Vatican attacks. Sebastiani deeply respects Luisa Fabian for her clear thinking and dogged persistence in pursuing her hypothesis. That she has now convinced him of it only makes him love her more. He now feels closer to her, as a lover and as a partner in the investigation.

The St Alphonsus seminary caretaker, Eric Reynaud, cleans out the living quarters of the now dead Bishop Sinclair and finds photographic images of child abuse and a set of page-per-day diaries that give clues to the names of people involved in the Rome attack. When he reports his find to the Gendarmerie the innocent Eric Reynaud is thrown into jail (by crooked police officers later shown to be involved in Sinclair's crimes). Because Eric Reynaud's claims involve the

terror attack on Rome, Inspector Simon MOULARD, Marseille Gendarmerie, suggests Rome Carabinieri should question Reynaud. Sebastiani and Luca Ferri see him as a possible—much needed—breakthrough in the investigation.

Sebastiani travels to Marseille post haste. Before Sebastiani can speak with Reynaud he dies of a “heart attack”. As Reynaud’s coffin is carried from the Marseille police headquarters, Sebastiani encounters his wife Alice REYNAUD. He gains her trust and she accepts his offer of a taxi ride to her home on the outskirts of Barbentane—not far from Avignon where Luisa Fabian is staying.

Bearing her husband’s secret, Alice Reynaud now fears for her life. She tells Sebastiani her husband was an honest, God-fearing man and that he simply found the incriminating documents in Bishop Sinclair’s rooms. She knows the whereabouts of the documents but fears to tell Sebastiani where they are, even though he offers her protection. Sebastiani curses the situation: another block to vital evidence.

But he later returns with Luisa hoping she can persuade Alice to hand over the documents. As Alice answers the door to them, she is shot dead by a sniper. Sebastiani searches the house for clues to the documents’ whereabouts and identifies their location from a photograph of Eric Reynaud. Sebastiani and Luisa find the documents, including the page-per-day diaries that give cryptic clues to the perpetrators of the Rome bombing. The documents also contain photographs that show Eric Reynaud was right in his claims about the abuse of children. Sebastiani secretly keeps the diaries but he passes the photographs to Moulard.

Luca Ferri makes urgent contact with Sebastiani. He fears that General Conti is working against the investigation and might even have engineered the helicopter sabotage. He claims Conti was aware of Sebastiani’s operation to fly out Gagliano even though it was essentially an “off the top of the head” last-minute secure operation, and would have had the means to arrange the sabotage. Sebastiani has known General Conti for many years and rejects Ferri’s claims. Nevertheless, Sebastiani now has doubts, not only about General Conti but also about Ferri himself.

Luisa Fabian, now working alone while Sebastiani is tied up with Ferri, discovers that the cardinals Sebastiani has asked her to research are all visiting the St Alphonsus seminary near Barbentane. So, against Sebastiani’s instructions, she drives there and makes inquiries about them that spark alarm. Driving back to her hotel, a gendarme stops her. She is grabbed, smothered unconscious by chloroform, bound and incarcerated in a cold, dark room.

Her kidnapers find her Carabinieri operations-room pass and conclude wrongly that she is a Carabinieri officer. They want to know why the Italian Carabinieri are investigating the cardinals

so they “juice” her (they are not choosy but it’s with a hallucinogenic drug) to make her compliant but she simply goes incoherent. She hallucinates about the Collineau covenant and remembers a similar Latin text engraved on a stone. Vivid images of a ritual ceremony run through her mind in which a young girl in a long white dress looms like a spirit out of a glowing fog and recites the Latin text before an altar. She thinks her hallucination has been a real experience and that she has actually seen the Latin text. She struggles with memory on awakening and concludes that it actually was a stone engraving she has seen—but where?

Sebastiani returns to Avignon to find Luisa Fabian’s note that she has visited Barbentane. He is anxious when she doesn’t return to the hotel as planned. He is understandably upset and frightened.

In a meeting with Moulard and Paris special policemen, Sebastiani learns that Elaine Bruneau has been released. Comparing findings at this meeting, Sebastiani and Moulard determine there are connections between the Rome attack and criminal activities involving the Avignon and Marseille police and the Barbentane seminary. Armed with the paedophile photographs and accompanied by Sebastiani, Moulard and his team raid the seminary and arrest priests whose faces appear in them.

Then they track members of a local gang Moulard suspects are involved with corrupt gendarmerie in child trafficking and follow them to an old house. By the time Sebastiani and Moulard arrive at the house, it is burning furiously. While Moulard calls his men, Sebastiani sets off around the house and, despite the danger, searches it. In a dark passage, he hears someone calling for help. It’s Luisa incarcerated in an old mausoleum, bound hand and foot. Sebastiani breaks down the doors and saves her. He releases her and they embrace.

Now alerted to the danger, Sebastiani identifies a man spying on them and decides they should return to Rome. The man follows their taxi but all hell breaks loose when Moulard and his mobile gendarmerie arrest several men from cars trailing the taxi. Moulard knows them to be part of the local gang with connections to Bishop Sinclair.

To pursue his plans for becoming the *eminence grise* of the New Holy Catholic Church, Robert Colonna flies to Europe (which he detests). First he goes to La Calmette to meet with Madame Collineau and to see firsthand the original Collineau covenant that has fired his campaign against the Church. Then he goes on to Avignon to stoke up his business with corrupt French policemen.

Luca Ferri, believed by these French policemen to have organised the helicopter sabotage, attends the meeting and confirms what he had long suspected: these people have insiders in the

Carabinieri. His ad-hoc cover is penetrated and his car is attacked on the way to the airport. He is injured but throws himself clear of the car as it explodes in a fireball. His assailant believes he is sitting there dead in the conflagration and leaves the scene.

Moulard concludes Eric Reynaud, reportedly dying from a heart attack during interrogation, has in fact been murdered. The good citizen Reynaud unwittingly reported crimes to police officers involved in them. No longer able to trust fellow officers, Moulard and his team abduct one of Reynaud's interrogating officers, a less than bright Andre BABIN. Babin is not only spending much more money than he earns, he's also associating with known criminals and had been present at Robert Colonna's meeting. Moulard and his team abduct Babin and under their interrogation he discloses that the meeting also arranged hit contracts on Sebastiani and Moulard.

END OF ACT II

ACT III

Now that Luca Ferri is missing, presumed dead, Sebastiani is reinstated as head of the investigation.

Secret service chief Ricardo Da Corte uncovers links between Carabinieri officers DOMENICO GRIZAFI, his brother ANGELO GRIZAFI and General Conti and finds evidence that they organised the helicopter sabotage. Sebastiani arrests Domenico and Angelo. Conti disappears.

Under interrogation by Sebastiani, Domenico admits to the conspiracy. The unexpectedly now recovered prisoner Hasan Muhammet Al-Qali has watched the interrogation and identifies the Grizafis as his attackers and the killers of the other would-be suicide bombers from Milan.

In Sebastiani's hotel room in Avignon, he and Luisa Fabian are planning their next inquiries in France. Suddenly she is gripped in a drug-reaction flashback and holds desperately onto him as she describes aloud what she is seeing in the hallucination: the stone with Latin text is in the crypt below an old church in Avignon. As the hallucination fades, she finds herself in his arms. Falling back together on the bed, they embrace and make love.

The very old Father CANTELLO is in a French prison. Because Cantello was at the Barbentane seminary with Bishop Sinclair, Sebastiani questions him about Sinclair and his relationship with Archbishop Collineau and obtains taped evidence that Archbishop Collineau was instrumental in the bombing of the Vatican. This is new evidence, which Sebastiani hands to Moulard.

The next day, Sebastiani and Luisa Fabian follow Archbishop Roger Collineau to a church. They find him on his knees praying before the altar and Luisa recognises the Latin text about which she hallucinated engraved in a stone above the altar. She has a flashback of her hallucination and appears to be possessed. This sends Archbishop Collineau into a rage and he tells them to get out of the church. But Moulard arrives with gendarmes to arrest Archbishop Collineau. When they attempt to take him, he fights them and grabs a ceremonial dagger and slashes his own throat. Sebastiani and Luisa, understanding the Latin, now see the full context: Jean Collineau knew of the 14th century Latin engraving and had adapted it for his own 17th century French version just before his execution. They now see its fulfilment through the death of Emilio Gaetano as Pope Boniface X and the devastation of the Vatican.

General Conti learns about the release of Elaine Bruneau and the planned arrest of Robert Colonna and realises things are unravelling. He drives off intending to flee Italy but Elaine

Bruneau, with the aid of a French spy, tracks him down, beats him mercilessly and threatens to shoot him. Sebastiani comes on the scene and pleads with her to release him. She cries out that she was raped in Tunis and was about to be executed when her captors revealed it was Conti who betrayed her.

Accompanied by his own retinue of advisers, bodyguards and an all-female team of cabin attendants, Robert Colonna flies to Rome in his private jet to see the results of the devastation he has wreaked upon the Roman Catholic Church. On approach to Rome, fighter aircraft intercept his plane and order it to land at a military airport. Seeing the heavily armed military force waiting for him Colonna realizes he's beaten. He goes frantic, demands his pilots ignore the arrest and fly off. They refuse. He draws a gun, shoots the co-pilot dead, clears the captain out of the flight compartment, locks it and takes over the controls. In a state of manic exultation in the expectation of heavenly glory, he pulls the stick back and forces the nose of the aircraft upwards, flying towards his Kingdom of God. Pandemonium erupts in the cabin. Attendants scream, Colonna's personal religious assistant prays while bodyguards uselessly shoot at the flight compartment door. The pilots know what is coming and strap in. One of them puts a mobile phone to his ear while the other writes a hasty note to his wife and puts it in his wallet. The plane reaches the top of its parabolic climb, stalls and with Robert Colonna at the controls and calling for heavenly glory, it descends and crashes into the ground at full power and such a speed that nothing larger than a sheet of paper remains of it.

Ricardo Da Corte invites Sebastiani and Luca Ferri to a plush restaurant ostensibly to review the completed investigation. They sit at the only table in a private room while Da Corte's man FILIPPO stands near the door with his gun at the ready. Sebastiani explains to Da Corte how Sinclair was the instigator and very hub of the bombing conspiracy. Sinclair saw the opportunity to silence the new pope who had threatened to expose his illicit trade in children by using the Collineau covenant to reignite the family feud against the Rome Church through Robert Colonna, a visceral hater of Roman Catholicism and its popes.

Da Corte unexpectedly declares that he is now their new boss, replacing the disgraced General Conti. Da Corte then, again unexpectedly, leaves the restaurant with Filippo on "spy" business. During this time, Luca Ferri reveals to Sebastiani a CIA message that shows the psychotic American, Clifford T. Simms, intended to commit suicide and detonated the Basilica explosives before the perpetrators' planned time, causing the deaths of over eight-hundred people, including him. While discussing this, a mobster intrudes and aims his gun at Sebastiani. Filippo appears from nowhere and shoots the assailant dead. It was a setup planned by Da Corte after his mole in

the Rome mob learned of a plan to assassinate Sebastiani and finally frees him from further threats.

END OF SYNOPSIS

58 paragraphs, separately representing each major scene

Author's Curriculum Vitae

Sam Clinton was born in Southampton, England but has spent many years living in Austria with his second wife, Basia. He has spent most of his working life in software information development (technical writer, technical editor, information planner and documentation manager) for a large computer company and, later, as documentation consultant to large account clients through his own company.

Outside of computer-related work, he has edited scientific papers, for example, *Balanced Earth Satellite Orbits* by Dr Viktor Kudielka, and non-fiction in the book *Tony Vaccaro* by Dr Renée Gadsden, which is the true account of a World War II US military photographer. He has also edited PhD, Masters, and Bachelor dissertations for native English speakers and foreign-language students.

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