

The One
A Keeno Crime Thriller Novel #3

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Sampling of Chapter 1

The Soo Locks

The ball of pale yellow slowly crested the horizon, pushing up against the omnipresent darkness. Light suffused the black of receding night, chasing away some of the frigid chill which choked the air.

Within minutes, the rising sun had cast a warm glow over the land, giving chase to the specters of night-time haunts; while offering meager solace against the relentless hand of a brutal Canadian winter which gripped the land in its icy fingers.

The giant cargo-ship made ready to emerge from the *Soo Locks* in Sault Ste. Marie, on the final leg of its voyage from South America to Duluth, Minnesota.

The Soo Locks, as they are colloquially referred to, were built on the American side of the twin city of Sault Ste. Marie, bordering both America and Canada. They dated back as far as 1855 when the first rendition was put into service. Today, the *Soo* permits over 10,000 ocean-going vessels to traverse the St. Marie River, which connects Lake Superior to the other lakes in the Great Lakes system, eventually leading out through the St. Lawrence Seaway into the maws of the waiting Atlantic.

Captain Tomson had every ounce of his attention focused on navigating his 763 foot-long-ship through the final portion of the narrow passageway, one which permitted only a matter of feet on either side of the towering monster. To someone standing on the nearby road, it would appear as if a fifteen-story building was magically sliding across the land. Despite that illusion, the breadth of his ship did not leave a lot of room for error; in fact, a minor mistake could easily send the multi-ton behemoth careening into the sides of the lock with disastrous results. Considering that his payload was valued at over twelve million dollars, not counting the value of the ship itself, it was a mistake that would surely cost him his career.

“Captain,” a voice distracted him through the speaker on the console in front of him.

“What is it?” he asked gruffly, watching as the bow of the ship slid past the outer edge of the lock.

“There’s a body down there.”

“What?!” his brows furrowed. “A body – where?”

“Sir, we’re dragging it on the port side; looks to be snagged on the bow thruster,” answered the deck hand.

“How do you know it’s a body?”

The ship hand, assigned to watch the port side of the ship as they navigated the passageway, continued to stare down at the gruesome sight of a female body, her arms and legs flailing like broken tree limbs in the water.

“It’s a body, sir, no doubt ‘bout it.”

Captain Tomson shook his head. He had seen a lot of bizarre things in his day, but dragging a body through the *Soo Locks*, that was a first. He glanced to the port side as a

crowd of custom's officials, security personnel and engineers gathered, pointing and clamoring at something in the water.

"Shit!" said Tomson, knowing that his arrival in Duluth was about to be delayed. It took only a matter of seconds before he got the call from the Port Master, ordering him to bring his ship to a dead stop.