

*ACQUISITION*



*OF*

*DIGNITY*

*By Claude Garretson*



**Acquisition of Dignity** is a suspense novel about strategy, wealth, power, military confrontation, eternal friendship, love and deliverance. Six men who became friends during their youth at a military academy reunite after years of separation when they attend the funeral of a former loved one. They never imagined how that reunion would change their lives and set a trajectory that would shake the country and rattle the world. When they realize that one friend needs assistance with his business, they bring their diverse knowledge and military experience to his aid. With strategic discipline, they approach each business situation in a military manner, carefully planning each maneuver as if it was a War Game ultimately transforming a small technology firm into a multi-billion-dollar global military defense conglomerate that is one of the most powerful corporations in the world. Their success would be challenged when a simple gesture to use their capabilities and influence to investigate suspicious activities of a government agency in an old neighborhood would put them at war with their former employer and largest client – the U.S. government. In a fight for survival they are forced to reclaim their military experience in

combat, espionage, counter-intelligence, and test their bond.

When Giordan Hunt, the CEO follows through on a simple request from Acie his elderly childhood mentor, what he and his partners find out is shocking. They reveal a connection between the U.S. government including the President, a South American Drug cartel and a scientific research firm. While continuing to conquer the business world on the front lines, they utilize their resources and experience to execute covert operations. They set out to destroy drug transport vessels sailing along the Mexican and South American borders that are being escorted by the U.S. Navy which is not aware of the contraband onboard; and to expose the money laundering of drug money from Russia through an American research firm. When their actions become known they become targets for the government and the cartel. Their efforts are thwarted when Giordan's daughter is kidnapped by the cartel. When they realize the odds are not in their favor, they develop an unorthodox strategy of military operations and urban warfare, and assemble a team of renegades comprised of highly skilled former Navy and Marine Corps soldiers who left the service under unjust situations and former Drug Cartel lieutenants and hitmen with contracts on their life. This rare team of renegades, *codename R135* is utilized to take on the U.S. government and a dominant Cartel in a quest to destroy an international drug ring and uncover a high-level government conspiracy.



## **Chapter 6 – Pivot**



For the last five years Giordan and Moyette’s relationship was an emotional rollercoaster. Many times, she threatened to run away and he threatened to take her back to the social agencies. He helplessly watched her frantically try to adjust to her new surroundings, school, neighborhood, friends and lifestyle. Many times, he knew she wanted to cry but she would not break a tear in front of him. She watched him struggle with managing his business and trying to be a father. She knew many times when they were home that the stress had him at the point of crying but he wasn’t going to let her see him cry. They constantly fought one another. Each battle would bring them closer and they fought against that as well yet they were silently protective of one another. He, the protective, concerned father and she was the no nonsense guard that stood at his gate.

Moyette was now seventeen years old and was on her way to college. She was a mature, intelligent, business-minded, attractive young lady was focused and determined. Each passing year, she looked more like her mother.

She excelled in both academics and athletics which garnered her multiple scholarships to prominent universities and colleges. Her intellect and athleticism could be attributed to her parents but her persona was all hers. She decided to attend Spelman College in Atlanta and her father agreed. This gave her an opportunity to return home. He knew that even if he disagreed it would take longer to break her will than it would for her to graduate from college.

Giordan wanted her to follow in her mother’s footsteps and become a doctor but Moyette had other



plans for her future. The day she left for college they said little to each other.

The entire drive to Atlanta they constantly went back and forth changing the radio station to their preferred music. Occasionally one of them would try to start a conversation but each time it faded along with the highway scenery. They both struggled with the thought of passing the place of Cymonne’s fatal accident and said nothing when they approached the area. They arrived on campus and began getting Moyette settled.

“Would you like me to stay at a hotel here in Atlanta?” Giordan asks. His was aware of Moyette’s independent personality and expected her to decline his offer.

“No. You don’t have to. I’ll be okay.” Moyette declines the offer though she wanted him to stay close. Unbeknownst to her, Giordan had already reserved a room for the next couple of days.

“Remember to call me if you need anything.” Giordan passionately says.

“I will Dad. I am confident that I will be fine. You do the same!”

“I will.” Giordan responds while smiling at her.

“Dad, don’t let your business get the best of you.”

“I won’t.”

“You promise?”

“Yes, I promise.”

“Being here brings back memories of Mom talking about her college days. I remember her talking about how she admired the friendship these young men had from the Naval Academy. She would look at these pictures of guys in uniform and reminisce about how much fun they all had. Listening to her made me look forward to going to college. I realized after living with you that you were



one of those young men. You two had the same pictures! So, was she talking about you and your friends?”

“Yes.” Giordan responds.

“What happened?”

“What do you mean what happened?”

Moyette looks at him and her facial expression indicates that she knows that he is avoiding answering the question. “You know what I mean. What happened to your friendship? You never talk about them.”

“I talked to them at your...” Giordan stops in mid-sentenced.

“At Mom’s funeral?”

“Yes. We had a chance to talk. We spent some time together then and I’ve occasionally talked to them since then.”

“So, were you guys really the best of friends?” Moyette asks.

Giordan’s face lights up. “Best is an understatement. Cannot describe our connection. We were friends who then became fraternity brothers which strengthened our friendship. We did everything together. Yeah those were some unbelievable days.” Giordan says in an excited tone as he is remembering those days.

Moyette saw the same glow on her father’s face as she did on her mother’s face.

“Speaking of fraternities, make sure you keep your distance from the fraternities on nearby campuses! I’ve already put the word out in Atlanta that they are to look out for you and not touch you.” Giordan boasts.

“Oh dad! You know you don’t need to worry about me. I can take care of myself. You might want



to send word to your frat brothers to watch out for me.” Moyette says with sarcasm.

Giordan sighs and says, “You have a point there!”

“Dad,”

“Yes.”

“Why don’t you call your friends?”

“Why?” Giordan asks.

“Why not?”

“Why should I?”

“Why shouldn’t you?”

“I can go on all day. I don’t have to check in or find my way around this place.” Giordan says.

“I live here now so I have all day and night.” Moyette responds.

“Well why are you asking me to call them?”

“Maybe they will be able to help you with your business. You are overwhelmed with work. It doesn’t hurt to ask.” Moyette says in a concerning tone.

Giordan was astonished by her suggestion.

“Moyette you know you don’t need to worry about me. I can take care of myself.”

I know but the way mom talked about you guys, it would make me feel better if I knew there was someone around who cared about you as much as I do.” Moyette sincerely says.

Her words caused Giordan’s body to quiver as Moyette had never been that expressive about how she felt about him.

They stood still and looked at one another as they fought to restrain their emotions. The power of



their suppressed emotions overcame their willpower of restraint and their eyes began to fill with tears. Simultaneously, they wiped their eyes as if something was in them.

“Let me help you with your luggage.” Giordan says.

A young man in khakis and a white t-shirt with the word “LAMP” written across his chest runs up to them and states “Lampado Malamute from Psi Chapter, Morehouse College. I am here to assist you with your luggage.”

“No thank you, I got it.” Moyette responds knowing that she cannot carry everything.

“Please assist her with her bags.” Giordan responds as another young man identically dressed runs up to assist. Both young men noticed the purple and gold fraternity tags along with the military insignia on Giordan’s car and their entire body language changes like a recruit meeting their drill sergeant.

“Sir, Big Brother we will make sure she finds everything she needs.” One young man says.

“We will protect her from all fools and underserving vagrants.” The other young man says.

“Do those fools and undeserving vagrants include the two of you?” Giordan authoritatively asks.

The young men laugh but Giordan doesn’t break a smile.

“Yes, sir that includes us too.” One young man says.

“Assuming we were fools and vagrants but we are neither. Sir! Big Brother!” The other responds.

“Fair enough.” Giordan responds.

“The young men head to Giordan’s vehicle and grab all of Moyette’s luggage. She gives them her dorm building and room number and they march toward the instructed destination.

She looks at her free hands and then waves them both at her dad with a big grin. She runs over and hugs him again.



“Dad, I love you!”

“I love you too!”

This was the first time in the five years they said, “I love you” to each other.

“Remember to call your friends. Mom would want that for you.”

Giordan smiles and says, “I will.”

She turns around and runs to catch up with her luggage.

Giordan stands there and watches her run away. Moyette turns around one more time and waves with both hands to her dad. Giordan waves back. She gets ready to turn around to walk away but stops, turns back toward her dad and salutes him. Giordan returns the salute. Moyette turns around and walks into the dorm building with tears running down her face. She quickly wipes her tears as she approaches the two young men.

Giordan turns to get in his car as tears run down his face. This was the first time that had been apart since that confused day when she arrived at his door.

“You want your dad to call his old army buddies to keep him company? That’s so sweet.” One of the young men sarcastically says.

“First, he wasn’t in the army. Second, yes, I do! I don’t want him to be alone. He and his buddies are ex-Special Forces and I want to make sure someone is around to keep my dad from killing another one of our neighbors. I’m just glad that I don’t have to worry about him beating the shit out of anymore high school boys for talking to me without his permission. Oh god you have no idea what it is like to deal with a post-traumatic crazed parent. All I know is that if I don’t maintain a 4.whatever GPA he will be down here tearing me and the responsible teachers a new one. He’s



okay as long as nothing pisses him off. Trust me you don't want him down here again. So, I want to make sure he has someone around to keep him in check otherwise he may get bored and come down here fucking shit up.”

Startled by Moyette's explanation, both young men stumble over themselves and the luggage trying get to Moyette's room.

“Let me know if you need me to carry those bags.” Moyette says as she smiles to herself.

Moyette once again established her mark.

When Giordan returned home he took Moyette's advice and reached out to his friends.

*We cannot always see what's ahead of us or how things will work out but we can decide how we approach things.*

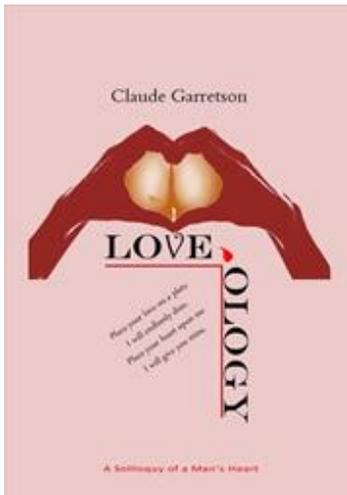


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