

SIDNEY SHELDON

MEMORIES OF MIDNIGHT



WARNER BOOKS



THE WORLD'S MASTER STORYTELLER—
OVER 300 MILLION BOOKS IN PRINT

SIDNEY SHELDON

MEMORIES OF MIDNIGHT

In *The Other Side of Midnight*, they played the ultimate game of love, lust, and death. Now, in MEMORIES OF MIDNIGHT, the survivors meet to play one last time.... Shadowed by tragedy and burdened by amnesia, a beautiful woman desperately tries to return to reality. She is Catherine Douglas, destined to once again challenge the cruel, charismatic power of Constantin Demiris, the Greek shipping tycoon who murdered her husband. Now, in the glittering capitals and carefree playgrounds of postwar Europe, Demiris sets his deadly sights on Catherine—and the single, treacherous secret whose shattering truth is known to her alone.

"Hypnotic... the master of the plot twister has done it once again." —*Baltimore Sun*

\$7.99 US / \$10.99 CAN.

ISBN 0-446-35467-8



MEMORIES OF MIDNIGHT

**SIDNEY
SHELDON**



WARNER BOOKS

A Time Warner Company

If you purchase this book without a cover you should be aware that this book may have been stolen property and reported as "unsold and destroyed" to the publisher. In such case neither the author nor the publisher has received any payment for this "stripped book."

WARNER BOOKS EDITION

**Copyright © 1990 by Sheldon Literary Trust
All rights reserved.**

**This Warner Books Edition is published by arrangement with
William Morrow and Company, Inc., 105 Madison Avenue,
New York, N.Y. 10016.**

Cover illustration by Stanislaw Fernandes

**Warner Books, Inc.
1271 Avenue of the Americas
New York, N.Y. 10020**

**Visit our Web site at
www.warnerbooks.com**

 A Time Warner Company

Printed in the United States of America

First International Paperback Printing: March, 1991

First Warner Books Printing: October, 1991

20 19 18 17

COME ALIVE TO MEMORIES OF MIDNIGHT

CONSTANTIN DEMIRIS. A billionaire with more power than most heads of state, he defied the rules of ordinary men in the elaborate games of sex and death he masterminded.

TONY RIZZOLI. He sealed a ruthless pact that gave him undreamed-of mastery over men and women—for one all too brief moment.

MELINA DEMIRIS. She set out to destroy the man who had loved her once—to save the one man who would never betray her.

CATHERINE DOUGLAS. A survivor of deadly erotic machinations that left no witnesses but herself, she learned to live again—overcoming odds that threatened to destroy her and all she dared to love.

~~~~~

**"A DANDY SEQUEL!"
—*New York Daily News***

**Please turn this page for more raves
for Sidney Sheldon and
*Memories of Midnight***

~~~~~

**"Mr. Sheldon has done it once again—
but this time he's more suspenseful than
ever . . . should come with a warning label:**

**Do not begin reading if you have other
obligations. Addiction is highly possible.
Reader may sacrifice long-term relationships
and daily duties . . . Sheldon hypnotizes the
reader as he brings distinctive characters
alive. He takes you by the scruff of the neck
and defies you to put down the book."**

—*Baltimore Sun*

XXXXXXXXXXXX

**"A master storyteller at the top of his
game."**

—*USA Today*

XXXXXXXXXXXX

**"Flat-out suspense . . .
A loop-the-loop narrative."**

—*Kirkus Reviews*

XXXXXXXXXXXX

**"When you want a novel you simply cannot
put down, go to Sheldon."**

—*New York Daily News*

XXXXXXXXXXXX

**"His light, adventurous touch works . . .
superb!"**

—*Tulsa World*

XXXXXXXXXXXX

"Sheldon is a master storyteller."

—Pittsburgh Press



"The ingenious author's newest novel is a masterpiece of strategy . . . an exciting novel from square one to the stunning conclusion. Sidney Sheldon proves once again he is master of the fictional game."

—Times Record News (Texas)



"An intense and vivid tale that will put Sheldon back on top of the bestseller lists for a long time. His incredible mastery of human emotions and ability to thrust those feelings home will have readers cheering."

—Ocala Star-Banner (Florida)



"The compelling portrayal of a resourceful woman in the hands of an enemy she doesn't suspect . . . and may unwittingly come to love. Here is Sidney Sheldon at his finest."

—The Literary Guild Magazine



"Memories is sweet Sheldon."

—Akron Beacon Journal



The Incomparable Sidney Sheldon

Best known today for his exciting blockbuster novels, Sidney Sheldon is the author of *Tell Me Your Dreams*, *The Best Laid Plans*, *Morning, Noon & Night*, *Nothing Lasts Forever*, *The Stars Shine Down*, *The Doomsday Conspiracy*, *Memories of Midnight*, *The Sands of Time*, *Windmills of the Gods*, *If Tomorrow Comes*, *Master of the Game*, *Rage of Angels*, *Bloodline*, *A Stranger in the Mirror*, and *The Other Side of Midnight*. Almost all have been number-one international bestsellers. His first book, *The Naked Face*, was acclaimed by the *New York Times* as "the best first mystery of the year" and received an Edgar Award. Most of his novels have become major feature films or TV miniseries. He is in the *Guinness Book of Records* as the most translated author in the world with more than 280 million copies of his books in print in 105 countries.

Before he became a novelist, Sidney Sheldon had already won a Tony Award for Broadway's *Redhead* and an Academy Award for *The Bachelor and the Bobby Soxer*. He has written the screenplays for twenty-three motion pictures, including *Easter Parade* (with Judy Garland) and *Annie Get Your Gun*. In addition, he penned six other Broadway hits and created three long-running television series, including *Hart to Hart* and *I Dream of Jeannie*, which he also produced. A writer who has delighted millions with his award-winning plays, movies, novels, and television shows, Sidney Sheldon reigns as one of the most popular storytellers of all time.

To learn more about this book and author, visit www.sidneysheldon.com.

ATTENTION: SCHOOLS AND CORPORATIONS
WARNER books are available at quantity discounts with bulk purchase for educational, business, or sales promotional use. For information, please write to: SPECIAL SALES DEPARTMENT, WARNER BOOKS, 1271 AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS, NEW YORK, N.Y.

Prologue

Kowloon—May 1949

“ I must look like an accident. Can you arrange that?”

It was an insult. He could feel the anger rising in him. That was a question you asked some amateur you picked up from the streets. He was tempted to reply with sarcasm: *Oh, yes, I think I can manage that. Would you prefer an accident indoors? I can arrange for her to break her neck falling down a flight of stairs. The dancer in Marseilles. Or she could get drunk and drown in her bath. The heiress in Gstaad. She could take an overdose of heroin. He had disposed of three that way. Or, she could fall asleep in bed with a lighted cigarette. The Swedish detective at L'Hôtel on the Left Bank in Paris. Or perhaps you would prefer something outdoors? I can arrange a traffic accident, a plane crash, or a disappearance at sea.*

But he said none of those things, for in truth he was

afraid of the man seated across from him. He had heard too many chilling stories about him, and he had reason to believe them.

So all he said was, "Yes, sir, I can arrange an accident. No one will ever know." Even as he said the words, the thought struck him: *He knows that I'll know.* He waited.

They were on the second floor of a building in the walled city of Kowloon that had been built in 1840 by a group of Chinese to protect themselves from the British barbarians. The walls had been torn down in the Second World War, but there were other walls that kept outsiders away: Gangs of cutthroats and drug addicts and rapists roaming through the rabbit warren of crooked, narrow streets and dark stairways leading into gloom. Tourists were warned to stay away, and not even the police would venture inside past Tung Tau Tsuen Street, on the outskirts. He could hear the street noises outside the window, and the shrill and raucous polyglot of languages that belonged to the residents of the walled city.

The man was studying him with cold, obsidian eyes. Finally, he spoke: "Very well. I will leave the method to you."

"Yes, sir. Is the target here in Kowloon?"

"London. Her name is Catherine. Catherine Alexander."

A limousine, followed by a second car with two armed bodyguards, drove the man to the Blue House on Lascar Row, in the Tsim Sha Tsui area. The Blue House was open to special patrons only. Heads of state visited there, and movie stars, and presidents of corporations. The management prided itself on discretion. Half a dozen years

earlier, one of the young girls who worked there had discussed her customers with a newspaperman, and she was found the next morning in Aberdeen Harbor with her tongue cut out. Everything was for sale in the Blue House: virgins, boys, lesbians who satisfied themselves without the "jade stalks" of men, and animals. It was the only place he knew of where the tenth-century art of Ishinpo was still practiced. The Blue House was a cornucopia of forbidden pleasures.

The man had ordered the twins this time. They were an exquisitely matched pair with beautiful features, incredible bodies, and no inhibitions. He remembered the last time he had been there . . . the metal stool with no bottom and their soft caressing tongues and fingers, and the tub filled with fragrant warm water that overflowed onto the tiled floor and their hot mouths plundering his body. He felt the beginning of an erection.

"We're here, sir."

Three hours later, when he had finished with them, sated and content, the man ordered the limousine to head for Mody Road. He looked out the window of the limousine at the sparkling lights of the city that never slept. The Chinese had named it Gau-lung—nine dragons—and he imagined them lurking in the mountains above the city, ready to come down and destroy the weak and the unwary. He was neither.

They reached Mody Road.

The Taoist priest waiting for him looked like a figure from an ancient parchment, with a classic faded Oriental robe and a long, wispy white beard.

"Jou sahn."

"Jou sahn."

"Gei do chin?"

"Yat-chihn."

"Jou."

The priest closed his eyes in a silent prayer and began to shake the *chim*, the wooden cup filled with numbered prayer sticks. A stick fell out and the shaking ceased. In the silence, the Taoist priest consulted his chart and turned to his visitor. He spoke in halting English. "The gods say you will soon be rid of dangerous enemy."

The man felt a pleasant jolt of surprise. He was too intelligent not to realize that the ancient art of *chim* was merely a superstition. And he was too intelligent to ignore it. Besides, there was another good-luck omen. Today was Agios Constantinous Day, his birthday.

"The gods have blessed you with good *fung shui*."

"Do jeh."

"Hou wah."

Five minutes later, he was in the limousine, on his way to Kai Tak, the Hong Kong airport, where his private plane was waiting to take him back to Athens.

Chapter One

Ioannina, Greece—July 1948

SHE woke up screaming every night and it was always the same dream. She was in the middle of a lake in a fierce storm and a man and a woman were forcing her head under the icy waters, drowning her. She awakened each time panicky, gasping for breath, soaked with perspiration.

She had no idea who she was and she had no memory of the past. She spoke English—but she did not know what country she was from or how she had come to be in Greece, in the small Carmelite convent that sheltered her.

As time went by, there were tantalizing flashes of

memory, glimpses of vague, ephemeral images that came and went too quickly for her to grasp them, to hold them and examine them. They came at unexpected moments, catching her off guard and filling her with confusion.

In the beginning, she had asked questions. The Carmelite nuns were kind and understanding, but theirs was an order of silence, and the only one permitted to speak was Sister Theresa, the elderly and frail Mother Superior.

"Do you know who I am?"

"No, my child," Sister Theresa said.

"How did I get to this place?"

"At the foot of these mountains is a village called Ioannina. You were in a small boat in the lake during a storm last year. The boat sank, but by the grace of God, two of our sisters saw you and rescued you. They brought you here."

"But . . . where did I come from before that?"

"I'm sorry, child. I do not know."

She could not be satisfied with that. "Hasn't anyone inquired about me? Hasn't anyone tried to find me?"

Sister Theresa shook her head. "No one."

She wanted to scream with frustration. She tried again. "The newspapers . . . they must have had a story about my being missing."

"As you know, we are permitted no communication with the outside world. We must accept God's will, child. We must thank Him for all His mercies. You are alive."

And that was as far as she was able to get. In the beginning, she had been too ill to be concerned about herself, but slowly, as the months went by, she had regained her strength and her health.

When she was strong enough to move about, she spent

her days tending the colorful gardens in the grounds of the convent, in the incandescent light that bathed Greece in a celestial glow, with the soft winds carrying the pungent aroma of lemons and vines.

The atmosphere was serene and calm, and yet she could find no peace. *I'm lost*, she thought, *and no one cares. Why? Have I done something evil? Who am I? Who am I? Who am I?*

The images continued to come, unbidden. One morning she awakened suddenly with a vision of herself in a room with a naked man undressing her. Was it a dream? Or was it something that had happened in her past? Who was the man? Was it someone she had married? Did she have a husband? She wore no wedding ring. In fact, she had no possessions other than the black Order of the Carmelite habit that Sister Theresa had given her and a pin, a small golden bird with ruby eyes and outstretched wings.

She was anonymous, a stranger living among strangers. There was no one to help her, no psychiatrist to tell her that her mind had been so traumatized, it could stay sane only by shutting out the terrible past.

And the images kept coming, faster and faster. It was as though her mind had suddenly turned into a giant jigsaw puzzle, with odd pieces tumbling into place. But the pieces made no sense. She had a vision of a huge studio filled with men in army uniform. They seemed to be making a motion picture. *Was I an actress?* No, she seemed to be in charge. *But in charge of what?*

A soldier handed her a bouquet of flowers. *You'll have to pay for these yourself*, he laughed.

Two nights later, she had a dream about the same man.

She was saying good-bye to him at the airport, and she woke up sobbing because she was losing him.

There was no more peace for her after that. These were not mere dreams. They were pieces of her life, her past. *I must find out who I was. Who I am.*

And unexpectedly, in the middle of the night, without warning, a name was dredged up out of her subconscious. *Catherine. My name is Catherine Alexander.*

Chapter Two

Athens, Greece

THE empire of Constantin Demiris could not be located on any map, yet he was the ruler of a fiefdom larger and more powerful than many countries. He was one of the two or three wealthiest men in the world and his influence was incalculable. He had no title or official position, but he regularly bought and sold prime ministers, cardinals, ambassadors, and kings. Demiris's tentacles were everywhere, woven through the woof and warp of dozens of countries. He was a charismatic man, with a brilliantly incisive mind, physically striking, well above medium height, with a barrel chest and broad shoulders. His complexion was swarthy and