



Clarion Review

Mystery

The Hunt for Valhalla

Nikolas Falcon

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Four Stars (out of Five)

Dr. Matthew Hensley CEO of a hot medical research company has decided to skip the Man of the Year ceremony being held in his honor. Matt “a misfit ... a nonconformist a gambler and a renegade” would rather be having fun. A three-day weekend has begun and he has the urge to fly down to his fully-equipped sixty-five foot yacht in the Bahamas with his sexy “less than half his age” mistress Lisa for a bit of scuba diving fishing and boating. Matt blackmails his “formal wife” Kerry into accepting the award in his name then defies a tropical storm to get to the Caribbean. As his jet pilot his yacht captain and his lover are all aware it’s just another day in the life of Matt Hensley. Tomorrow he will show off the small island he recently purchased with its stand of Caribbean pines and a house built by the same German contractor who remodeled several of Saddam Hussein’s palaces. Soon he will christen *Valhalla* a Rybovich yacht that compares favorably in the words of one Bahamian witness to Lisa herself: “Dee girl was prêt-ty but dat beeg custom Rybo? She was truly beautiful.”

Matt is secretly shifting corporate funds to his new company DMH which is investigating “the Bridge” a process for accelerating cell growth and manipulating genes that would “engineer diseases to extinction” and thus threaten the health care hierarchy in the United States. But the Bridge is in jeopardy and *Valhalla* carrying Matt Lisa and the boat’s captain Paul Sanders has turned up missing somewhere in the Bahamas. The FBI SEC and IRS are looking for them as also are a trio of mob thugs led by Matt’s wife’s nephew. Fortunately a clandestine crime-fighting organization has asked its crafty veteran investigator Harley Proffit to find out if the trio is still alive and if so to bring them to safety. Harley in need of a boat enlists the aid of Patti Shack who owns the yacht *Four Play*. And Patti who also owns a blues bar in Key West brings along one of her bartenders a burly ex-con named Bobby Blue.

In this rollicking action/suspense novel his second Nikolas Falcon writes about people who like Matt Hensley live with gusto. They don’t wear suits or dresses. They like a stiff

drink—Matt likes his Glenfiddich and Harley knows his single malt Scotches too. They have an ear for music—Patti sings a heartbreaking rendition of Conway Twitty's *It's Only Make Believe* for her bar patrons and Harley goes to a *Garden Party* that reincarnates the old Rick Nelson hit for him. They also like the opposite sex —the attraction between Paul and Lisa is literally electrifying. They are passionate about boating and the waters of the Florida Keys and the Bahamas. And just when it seems like they are dead in the water they somehow come up for air.