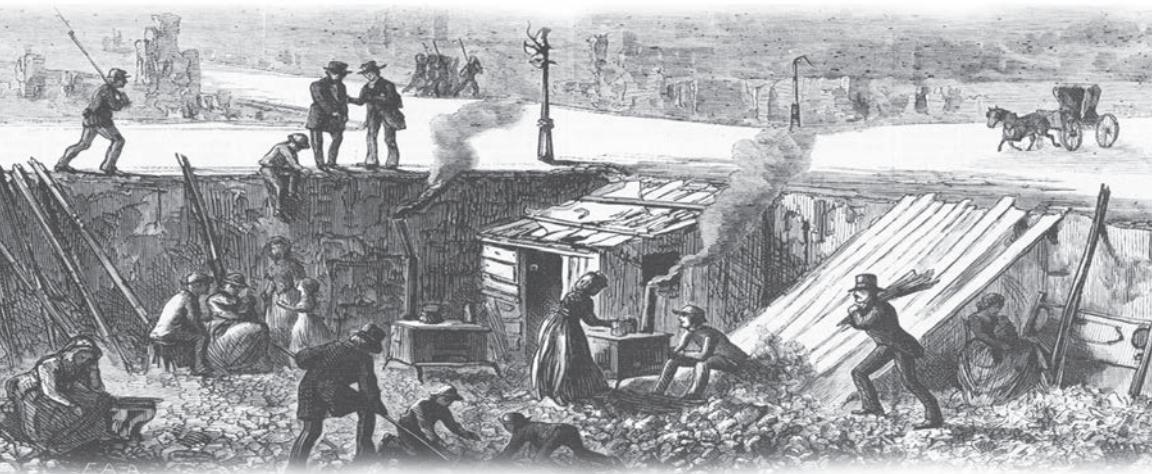


Shall We Not Revenge



D. M. PIRRONE

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PROLOGUE

July 14, 1861

Once, Frank Hanley had thought the worst that could happen to him was jail. Now he knew different. He struggled in the grip of the bully boys that held him, ignoring the burn in his shoulders from his arms twisted behind his back and the throbbing pain in his ribcage where they'd worked him over. From the upstairs room at Sean Doyle's lakeside saloon, where customers sometimes paid to take women, Pegeen's screams lanced through the night air. Each one cut Hanley like a knife, straight through to the bone.

"Calm yourself, boyo." Sean Doyle, the sharp lines of his foxlike face visible in the glow from a kerosene lamp, raised a glass toward Hanley. "You'll get her back when Billy's done with her. Well shut of any notions she's too high-and-mighty to whore for me when I tell her to."

"Damn you to hell!" The words came out in a low growl as Hanley bucked and twisted against his captors. Both were new to Doyle's employ, and he couldn't put names to their faces. Half drunk as he was on the whiskey Doyle had fed him, he couldn't budge them. One fellow—Hanley's own height but a good thirty pounds heavier—yanked his arm so hard, it felt like his shoulder might pop from its socket. The pain made him gasp and he sagged in the thugs' hold.

"I'm sorry about this, Frank. I really am." Doyle didn't sound it. He tilted his head back and sipped, the lamplight gleaming off his red hair. "But you've got to learn, the pair of you. When I say something's to be,

you *don't say no.*" He dragged out the last three words, making each one ring like a hammer blow.

A thud followed by a slap came from upstairs. Then Charming Billy Shaughnessy's rough voice. "You don't shut up, I'll do it for you." Pegeen's sobbing was muffled abruptly, as if Billy had clamped a hand over her mouth.

Terror and rage gave Hanley new strength. He lurched forward, throwing one bully boy off balance, and stomped on the man's foot. The thug yelped and loosened his grip. An elbow to the ribs broke his hold. Hanley heard a chair scrape across the floor and fought harder against the remaining thug, Pegeen's cries spurring him on. Then her voice choked off. The creak of bedsprings, hard and fast, filtered through the ceiling along with Billy's grunts. Panic shot through Hanley. *Got to win this now, before—*

A stunning blow caught him across the chops. He staggered, tasting blood. The thug he'd injured grabbed his free arm again and twisted it near to breaking. He clenched his jaw against a cry of pain and glared at Doyle, who stood in front of him.

"God, but you try my patience," Doyle said, wiping blood from one knuckle where Hanley's teeth had cut into it. "All I've done for you the past five years, and it's down to this."

Hanley spat blood at him. A wet, red gobbet landed on Doyle's white shirt.

"Ah, Frank." Doyle sounded regretful, though Hanley knew better now than to believe it. "You shouldn't have done that." Without warning, his fist slammed into Hanley's stomach. The bully boys' grip kept Hanley from doubling over and he fought not to heave up his guts. An uppercut to his jaw made his head ring. Dizzied, he would have fallen, if not for the thugs holding him up.

A shout from Billy, hard and triumphant. The rhythmic creaking ceased. Hanley choked down bile, tasted stale whiskey at the back of his throat. *Pegeen. God.* He could hear Billy getting off the bed, then his steps crossing the floor. The thud of his feet, as he descended the rickety stairs by the serving counter, struck Hanley's ear like a death knell.

Billy sauntered into view, one hand buttoning his fly. In the lamplight,

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Hanley made out scratches on his smirking face. One red line snaked from beneath an eye past his flattened lump of a nose. Through the horror inside him, Hanley felt a flicker of pride in his girl. Pegeen had damaged the son of a bitch, at least. Which was more than he'd done. A wave of shame washed over him, dizzying in its impact.

"Sweet piece you had there, Frank," Billy said. "You could've made plenty off her, you'd seen sense. Guess you're not so smart as our Sean always says you are, eh?"

Dazed and sickened as Hanley was, it took a moment for Billy's meaning to sink in. "You...God, you..."

"Ah Christ, Billy." Doyle threw him a disgusted look, grabbed his whiskey off the table, and threw it back in a gulp. "I'd wanted you to go that far, I'd have said."

Billy shrugged. "Had to shut her up. Don't know my own strength sometimes. Sorry, Sean."

Hanley lunged toward them both, heedless of the bully boys who still held him fast. Stabbing pain shot through his arms and chest. "Fucking bastards, I'll kill you, I'll kill you with my bare hands—"

Billy snickered. He rolled his broad shoulders and shifted into a fighter's stance with negligent ease. "Go ahead and try. You're beaten and you know it."

"Take off, Billy," Doyle said. "You and me, we'll settle up later."

For a moment, Billy's bravado deserted him. "Sure. Sure, Sean. Sorry again." He gave Hanley a final sneer, then walked out of the saloon into what was left of the night.

The fight went out of Hanley and he sagged in the bully boys' grasp. He had no strength left, no will to fight or curse or do anything except hang there as silence crawled by, his mind hurling itself against a blank wall of denial. Pegeen couldn't be dead. Thick-as-a-post Charming Billy, so stupid it was a wonder he knew day from night, he didn't know anything, not *any goddamned thing*...

Doyle nodded to his thugs. "Leave go of him. We're done."

The moment their grip slackened, Hanley tore away from them and raced for the stairs.



The room was near pitch-dark, scant moonlight seeping in around the makeshift curtain over the window. Hanley stumbled over a warped floorboard on his headlong rush toward the bed. Pegeen lay there, a huddled shape barely visible. She felt warm under his hands when he reached her. Relief shot through him as he pulled her up into his arms. “Pegeen? Sweetheart? I’m here, I won’t let them hurt you anymore...”

She was limp in his hold. Not a movement, not a sound. Not a breath.

He said her name again, shifted one hand to cradle her face. Her slack mouth felt swollen beneath his fingers. Heart pounding, he eased her back down on the mattress, then strode to the window. Heedless of the pain spiking through his ribs, he tore the curtain aside.

Moonlight flooded the room. Its pale gleam caught Pegeen’s eyes, open and staring upward. Unblinking.

Hanley staggered back to the bed and sank down on its edge. Pegeen’s lips were puffy and bruised, her slender throat stippled with the marks of Billy’s hands. He pulled her upright again, cradled her lifeless body in his arms. *No. No. No.*

As if from a vast distance, the sounds of Doyle’s departure drifted up from below. The closing of the saloon door drew all Hanley’s grief and rage into a white-hot pinpoint.

Damn you to hell, Sean Doyle. God help me, I’ll send you there.

ONE

January 26, 1872

The darkness was nearly total, pierced only by the ever-burning pinprick of gold above the Ark. The stench of human waste and the rancid sweetness of blood blotted out the safe, familiar scents of the synagogue—new-cut pine, old beeswax, the faint smoky smell of the lamp oil. Rivka’s stomach heaved, but there was nothing left in it to bring up.

She pressed the crumpled prayer shawl to her nose and breathed deep. Her father’s scent, a blend of cherry tobacco and sun-dried grass, clung to the cloth. The blood smell also remained. She tasted it, thick and bitter, at the back of her throat.

For a time, she knew only the hoarse catch of her breathing and the rocking of her body. Cold crept through her bones from the hard floor where she sat. The clouds passed and moonlight returned. Thin, cold, as insubstantial as a wandering soul. She saw the pale blue of her nightdress, a narrow stripe of the wood beneath, the edge of the sticky dark pool under her father’s head. His face, looking up at her. Broken. Empty.

One hand crept out from the stained prayer shawl and closed his still-whole eye. The other eye was gone, socket and surrounding skull shattered by the force of the killing blow.

She tucked her hand back inside the wadded cloth and bound the clean portion around her fingers as she swallowed the burning in her

throat. She began to recite the Mourner's Kaddish, each syllable of the Hebrew falling from her mouth on a cloud of cold white air.



"Tell me how you found him," Frank Hanley said gently.

"It was very late." The girl—Rivka—hadn't moved from her spot on the floor, next to the obscene halo around the corpse's battered head. The sheet someone had laid over the body didn't completely cover the darkened blood. Rivka's face was turned away from it. Hanley watched her toying with a corner of the wadded white cloth she held.

"Rivkaleh, you should not be talking to him." The interruption came from Jacob Nathan, who'd brought Hanley here from the Lake Street police substation. He strode over and squatted by the girl, his heavy gray coat brushing the floor. "Go with Hannah now," he said, patting her cheek and then gesturing toward the door. A middle-aged woman in black stood there, concern written on her patient face. "See, she has been waiting for you."

"No." Rivka drew away from Nathan with a headshake. A hank of black hair slid out from under the kerchief she wore and brushed across the navy wool blanket someone had draped over her shoulders.

"Rivka—"

Hanley spoke up. "I need to hear what she has to say, Mr. Nathan."

Nathan shot him a disapproving look. "I can tell you—"

"You told me she found him. I need to hear it from her."

Nathan gave a sharp sigh and stood. He hovered near them in front of an empty bench. Similar benches of polished wood surrounded three sides of a low platform. A lectern stood near the front of it. Other details registered as Hanley glanced around the little temple—the body by the platform, a small table some distance away from it draped in a white runner cloth, a long white curtain near the back of the room that gleamed in the sunlight from the plain glass windows. In front of the curtain sat three silent men in heavy coats and skullcaps. Nathan had said they were here to tend to the dead, once Hanley was finished.

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He returned his attention to Rivka's face. Strong jaw, sharp cheekbones. Gray eyes shadowed by pain, with circles beneath them that shone like bruises. Their color emphasized her pallor. Hanley felt a flash of sympathy. She'd been here for hours, according to Nathan. All night, or a good part of it, alone with her father's dead body. He'd known soldiers during the War for the Union who faced a similar ordeal with less courage than this slip of a girl.

"Papa left before supper," she said. "He told me he might be gone some time and I shouldn't wait up. I went to bed a bit after nine. I woke much later. It was very cold and I got another blanket. I went to Papa's room to see if he wanted one, too. He was not there.

"The kitchen clock struck, two times. I put on my boots and shawl and came over to the *shul*—the synagogue. I saw no light, but sometimes my father prays in the dark when he's troubled. He says the moon gives enough light to see, and what better candle to use than the Holy One's own?"

Her voice trembled on the last words and she huddled deeper into the blanket. "I came into the shul." Her grip tightened around the cloth bundle against her chest. "I should have brought a lantern, but kerosene is so dear...The moon shone through the clouds. I saw the curtains of the Ark, the shape of the *bimah*. The blood. And Papa. There." She jerked her head toward the low platform. "Thrown down by the *bimah*, like a sack of washing."

She closed her eyes. Anguish drew her upper body inward, curling around the bundle as if shielding it from some terrible threat. Hanley moved instinctively to steady her, then crushed the impulse. He had no business offering comfort here—to a strange young woman, a murder witness. She might be involved, for all he knew. He needed to listen and observe, without emotion clouding his judgment.

"I went to him," she said. "I saw—" A quick nod of her head toward the corpse. "The blood was on the *tallis*. On one edge. I wanted to save it. Keep it clean. So I lifted him and took it."

Her fingers worked against the crumpled white cloth. Silk? Hanley's mother would know at a glance. *Tal-ees*. Hebrew, he guessed. "What is that? What's it for?"

She didn't answer. Maybe she couldn't. "A prayer shawl," Nathan said. "He must have been praying when—" He broke off, as if speaking the rest of his thought might choke him.

A queasy pang made Hanley swallow hard. He'd seen his share of death, as a soldier and in the past six years patrolling Chicago's streets, but the idea of murdering a man at prayer shocked him. It seemed an especially brutal crime, one that shouldn't happen to a harmless old rabbi.

"The clouds came then," Rivka said. "The dark. And after them, Jacob." Her dulled gaze flicked to Nathan. "By then it was morning. Jacob and the *minyán* came and saw."

"Minion?"

"A gathering for prayer," Nathan said. "Ten men, sometimes more. We come early every morning, to pray with our rabbi, Rav Kelmansky..." He trailed off, eyes fixed on Rivka, burly arms wrapped around his chest, as if even his wool coat couldn't keep out the chill. He avoided looking at the dead man.

Hanley addressed his next question to Rivka. "Did you see anyone or hear anything before you came here last night?"

"No."

He waited, but she said nothing more. He thanked her gently, then straightened up and shook the kinks out of his long legs. "You had your prayer gathering—your *minyán*—yesterday morning, Mr. Nathan?"

"Yes."

"Did you see your rabbi afterward that day?"

Nathan took a moment to answer. "I saw him in the afternoon. We study together."

"Was that the last time you saw him alive?"

"Yes." The word came out shakily, as if it took all Nathan had to say it.

"When was that? Early afternoon or later?"

Nathan closed his eyes and pressed his fingers to them. "Mid-afternoon. I'm sorry, I cannot be more precise. To speak of my Rav—" He broke off and turned away.

"I know this is painful," Hanley said. "But the more you can tell me, the better chance I have of finding the murderer."

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Nathan's nod was barely noticeable. He'd likely be more helpful once the worst shock was past. A look at the body was Hanley's next step, but he didn't wish to add to these people's distress any more than he had to. It could cause problems later, when he'd need their trust. He moved to catch Nathan's eye and gestured toward the sheet. "May I...?"

"This is necessary?"

"Yes."

Nathan gestured to one of the men by the door, a lanky youth with eyeglasses and a scraggly beard. Together, they pulled the sheet back. The younger man returned to his seat.

Hanley thanked them and fished a small sketchbook and pencil from a pocket of his overcoat. His first clear look at the corpse made him suppress a shudder. It reminded him of bodies he'd seen on the battlefields—soldiers in blue and gray sprawled in the dirt, their heads half blown off by rifle balls.

He took a slow breath and began to draw the body. He heard Nathan walking toward the door, then voices. Nathan, the woman he'd called Hannah—his wife, Hanley guessed—and the others, talking quietly in a half-familiar tongue. Nathan sounded calmer now. Before long, the creak of the door told him someone had left. He glanced up and saw Nathan standing alone, watching him.

He returned to his work. The body had fallen just in front of the platform. What had the girl called it? Bimah. A powerful blow had crushed the upper left side of the dead man's skull. He knelt for a closer view of the wound, detailing the shape and angle of the staved-in bone. Seeing it as lines and shadows helped the horror of it recede a little. The undamaged right eye was closed. The left hand bore a gold wedding ring, and the dead man's clothing appeared undisturbed. Closer inspection of the hands showed no defensive wounds. Hanley finished the last few lines, put his sketching materials away and began searching the dead man's pockets.

"Detective!" Nathan snapped. "Stop!"

Annoyed, Hanley took a moment to master himself and then looked over at Nathan. The man's distress, written on his weathered face, made

him soften his tone. “I need to know if a thief might have gone through your rabbi’s pockets already.”

Features pinched with distaste, Nathan slowly nodded.

Hanley resumed his search. He found only a crumpled cotton handkerchief. The victim’s trousers, coat and vest were fine wool, more expensive than Hanley’s own garments and little worn. Carefully, Hanley slid one arm beneath the dead man’s shoulders and turned the body sideways. The stiff, cold flesh shifted in a single motion from armpit to toes. No bending at the waist, nor the immense dead weight of a snoring drunkard. Rigor mortis, friend of corpse retrievers.

Behind him, Rivka made a small, pained sound. Hanley paused, then went on with his examination. He pulled the coat lapel out far enough to read the tailor’s mark inside—*Nathan and Zalman*. Then he lowered the corpse and unbuttoned the vest for a look at the shirt beneath. Plain cotton, it bore marks of darning and the collar had been turned at least once.

“You made this suit?” Hanley asked Nathan.

“I made all his suits. Good wool. My best work. What more should our rabbi...and my friend...deserve?”

“Worth something, then.” Especially in this harsh winter, with so many people desperate for a little warmth.

“I charge a fair price.” Nathan looked even more perturbed. He scratched under his flowing beard. “I would not cheat anyone—Rav Kelmansky least of all.”

“I didn’t suggest it.” Hanley kept his tone mild with an effort. He put his next question to Rivka, who was watching him now instead of the floor. “Did your father carry money, or a pocket watch?”

“A few coins. He sold his watch for food after the Fire.”

“Someone robbed him?” Nathan said. His eyes flicked to the dead man. “That could be. These are dangerous days.” He shifted his weight, as if restless.

Something was definitely bothering him. The mere fact of violent death, or more? Some knowledge of it, maybe. Or maybe he was simply afraid. Martial law had ended scarcely three months before and tensions

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still ran high among the desperate, burned-out thousands who called Chicago home. This small Jewish neighborhood appeared to be surviving all right, from what Hanley had seen on his way here. These days, that could make them a target.

He looked around, seeking hints that anything valuable might have been taken. It struck him for the first time how different this little pine-board temple was from his parish church, Saint Pat's. The room was a simple square, its unadorned walls the straw-yellow of new lumber. Where the altar should have been sat a tall cabinet with curtains instead of doors. The little table he'd seen earlier was empty of whatever might have stood on it. The only valuable thing he could see was a silver candelabra, lying some distance from the corpse.

Nearer by, a trail of thin, dark smudges led from the blood pool around the dead man's head toward the door, with what looked like a detour toward the table. "Was anything missing when you arrived this morning?" Hanley asked. "Any valuables or relics?"

Nathan shrugged. "A spice box, silver, about so big..." He held out one broad hand that measured a short distance between thumb and fingers. "And one menorah. Like that." He nodded toward the fallen candelabra. "There should be two of them. We have little worth stealing. Our Torah survived the Fire, thanks be to the Holy One."

"How much are they worth, would you guess?" The fallen candelabra looked sizable. If the stolen one was just like it, that much silver should fetch a decent sum. Enough to spend a few evenings gambling it away... or to house a family for a few weeks at least, someplace that didn't smell of old smoke, unwashed bodies, and yesterday's cabbage.

"In money?" Nathan spoke the word with contempt. "I don't know. What is your hand worth? Or your eyes? How should we put a price on things that are priceless?"

"If someone came to rob us, they've done it." The taut anger in Rivka's voice startled Hanley. "Only at no profit to themselves." She began to shake. It took him a moment to realize she was laughing, a bitter sound with no mirth. "No profit. Only a life, only my father..." Her laughter turned to sobbing—a harsh, tearing sound, like the cry of a crow.

Hearing it made his throat hurt. He turned away, toward the bloody smudges. As he moved, he saw Nathan go to Rivka, lift her from the floor with one brawny arm and maneuver her toward the nearest bench, as easily as if she were a little child.

Hanley sketched the marks, then knelt and traced one. Thinner than his pinky finger, each mark had a curve at either end. Blood on the side of a shoe or boot-sole. He placed his own booted foot against one of the marks, lining up with where the toe should be. The heel curve reached to just behind his arch. Not too tall, whoever had walked out of here with a dead man's blood on his shoe.

He glanced at Nathan, who sat with Rivka—gone quiet now—huddled against his shoulder. The man likely wasn't more than five-foot-six. His boot soles were impossible to see. Hanley hadn't noticed blood anywhere on the uppers during their walk here from Lake Street—but he hadn't been looking then.

"You found something?" Nathan said.

"May I see your boots, please?"

"What for?"

"I need to see them."

"Why—"

"Onkl Jacob." Rivka's roughened voice stopped Nathan in mid-word. "*Ikh bet dikh.*"

Nathan looked at her, face drawn, then edged away and pulled off his boots. He held them out toward Hanley and dropped them. They hit the floor with a thunk. "Here. For whatever you expect them to tell you."

"Thank you." A close examination showed no blood. Only a little mud, dried clumps caught in front of the heel. Exactly what he'd expect if Nathan had been walking around any number of places yesterday afternoon, during the warm spell. *Warm* being a relative term in a Chicago winter.

He handed the boots back, then debated with himself over whether or not to demand Rivka's. The tracks led out the synagogue door, and she'd said she hadn't left the place since finding her father's body in the wee dark hours. It felt indecent to ask if he could check her boots for blood.

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But he didn't have the luxury of sensitivity. Especially on his first solo homicide case. If he botched it the commanding officer of the West Division would savage him—and promptly replace him with the commander's own protégé at Lake Street Station. Hanley's promotion had been touch and go as it was. Considering his background, it was a miracle he'd gotten the job.

He had to do everything right. Better than right, just to show the people who expected him to fail. "Miss Kelmansky? I'd like to see your boots as well, please."

"She has nothing to do with this." Nathan stood up, one boot still in hand. "Isn't it enough that you make her tell you the horror she found here? That she stayed all night with, so her father's soul would not go back to the Holy One alone? Leave her. She has suffered enough."

Rivka touched his arm. "*Onkel*."

The word—*uncle*? That was what it had sounded like—brought Nathan up short. He sat heavily on the bench, his back to her. She worked one-handed at her boots, all the while keeping her grip on the tallis.

Finally she rose and padded forward, boots held out toward Hanley. The motion dislodged the blanket, revealing a heavy shawl of chocolate-brown wool over a blue flannel nightdress. The fabric was worn enough to hint at the shape beneath, with just enough curves to spark Hanley's interest. He felt heat rise in his face and coughed to hide his embarrassment.

He took the boots, careful to avoid brushing her fingers, and examined them. No blood. No mud, either. He handed the boots back. She put them on, still one-handed, more hair falling around her face as she bent over. Her awkward movements displayed a ragged dignity that made him want to apologize. She looked exhausted. She must have managed to stand though sheer force of will.

He glanced around the room again, offering her what privacy he could. More blood spatters caught his eye, this time near a front corner of the platform, arcing away from the body in shrinking dots. A larger dark splotch and a smear pointed in the opposite direction, toward the menorah. It lay some distance from the body, as if it had rolled or been thrown.

He picked it up. The frigid air had chilled the metal. Six arms curved outward, three on each side, from a central column. The column base was streaked with blood and matted hair. The menorah felt heavier than the truncheon he'd once carried on his hip. To hold it comfortably required two hands.

"Is that how they—" Nathan broke off, staring at the menorah.

"They"? You have some idea who—"

"No." Nathan rubbed his arms as if for warmth. "I am...this is... upsetting. I spoke without thought. Forgive me."

The words to form a sensible question wouldn't come. *Later*, Hanley thought. Jacob Nathan wasn't going anywhere.

He went to the corpse and held the menorah base next to the shattered portion of skull. A good fit, it looked like. Will Rushton, the police surgeon at the city morgue, could tell him for sure. He set the menorah down. When he sent more men to retrieve the corpse, he'd tell them to take this, too. Rushton and the coroner would want a look at it.

He knelt by the first blood droplet and fished out his pencil and some string. He set one end of the string at the edge of the droplet, stretched it across and then held the string down at the other edge while he marked the spot where they met. He did the same with the rest of the droplets and the larger blood splotch. The droplets were getting smaller the farther they'd landed from the corpse. Spatter from the killing blow, he guessed. Rushton could confirm that, too.

The sound of the door made him look up. The young man with the eyeglasses came in and went over to Nathan, who had gone back to Rivka and was standing with a hand on her shoulder. She leaned against him. The two men spoke briefly, then the younger one resumed his seat on the bench.

"You are finished with us now?" Nathan asked.

"Almost. Who's that you were talking to, and what about?"

"Moishe Zalman. My assistant. We were discussing arrangements for our dead."

Hanley thanked him and let them go. Nathan and Rivka left the synagogue together, but Zalman stayed behind. Maybe something to

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do with tending to the body, Hanley thought, though it seemed odd that he just sat there.

On his way outside, Hanley spoke to the patrolman waiting by the door. Square-built and sandy-haired, Rolf Schmidt was a competent officer, despite being only two years on the force. This Market Street neighborhood was part of his beat. “I’ll send more patrolmen to help with the body,” Hanley told him. “Tell these people they can have it back after the coroner’s finished.”

Schmidt nodded. Hanley strode into the thin sunlight and took a deep breath. The cold, fresh air banished the smells of death. A taste of smoke lingered, a reminder of the October fire. Almost four months after the Great Conflagration, as the newspapers called it, its traces still stained every breeze in Chicago’s burned-out district. At least it wasn’t ash any longer. Most of that had long since been washed to earth by rain and snow, turning the ever-present mud beneath the streets and sidewalks into a gritty mess that stuck to everything it touched.

He gazed across the muddy yard between the synagogue and the scattering of frame buildings opposite. Like the temple, their clapboards looked barely weathered. Through gaps where houses and shops had once stood, he could see passing traffic—horsecars, peddlers’ wagons, carts and drays of every size. The empty lots, their blackened earth dotted with dirty snow crust, drew the eye like missing fingers. Before October eighth, they’d been greengrocers, dry-goods stores, saloons, homes. Parts of a city that had lived and breathed. Now they were gone. Some might never be rebuilt. Either way, Chicago would never be the same.

He blew on his fingers to warm them, then glanced down at the churned-up mud by the boardwalk that spanned the yard. A patch of tiny ridges caught his attention. He knelt for a closer look. Frozen by the overnight temperature drop, the stiffened muck formed a footprint, large and deep, with a thick heel and a wide, flat sole. Grains of snow furred the tops of each ridge. The print’s position suggested a missed step off the boardwalk, heading away from the synagogue.

Carefully, Hanley brushed the snow away. Beneath it, he saw a swirl

of tiny lines too small to make out. He sketched the footprint as best he could with stiffening fingers. The print took shape, dark pencil lines forming a pattern. A boot sole, a man's from the size. Jacob Nathan had muddy boots, he recalled, and apparently no chance to clean them yet. Hanley, like most people, cleaned his boots every night.

He closed the sketchbook, taking care not to smudge the drawing. Then he turned up his coat collar and set off toward the station. Sergeant Moore would want his report.