

The hotel was intentionally difficult to find, identifiable only by its red awning and bronze plaque, *The Harborage, Private*. It was an upscale British boutique affair with a discreet doorman who lurked behind the blackened glass façade until his services were required. A cab drew to a stop at the curb and a young man stumbled out into the bright sunlight without tipping the driver. Tipping rarely occurred to him and his tendency for wearing cheap, artistically torn blue jeans with a simple red t-shirt seldom caused anyone to expect one. *Damn that sun*, was the only thought occupying his mind.

Even in the dark wrap-around sunglasses the sunlight caused the young man's eyes to sting. He stretched his sleeve downward as far as he could to cover his nearly transparent skin, its pallor a symptom of his propensity to break out in hives and itchy blisters every time he spent more than a few minutes in the sun.