

It only took Dave five minutes to walk from the station house at Third and Delancey, but the August heat took its toll. His collar and hatband were soaked through with sweat when he arrived at Deutsch's shop.

"Mayor Smith told me to come and talk to you about how I can help with the election," Dave said. He looked over his shoulder to make sure nobody saw him go in.

"Yes. Yes. Good. Come in, Lieutenant," Ike Deutsch replied. The butcher wiped his palms and the backs of his hands on his blood-splattered apron, and they shook hands. He locked the door to the shop and flipped the "Open" sign to "Closed" after Dave entered. "Let's go to the back where we can talk in private." As he pulled his apron off over his head, he added, "You never know who's peeking through the glass."

Dave removed his cap and followed the butcher. They walked past the dead chickens hung by their ankles, beneath the fragrant sausages hanging overhead, past the glass case of roasts and chops on the left with the big roll of brown paper and large spool of twine on top. The sawdust on the floor puffed up with each step as they snaked between the carcasses hanging on heavy iron hooks, past the bloodied butcher blocks strewn with dangerous-looking implements, until at last they entered a small, dank room off to the right.

"I call this my office. Not much, I know—but it gives me some privacy." Deutsch closed the door, threw the apron into the bin to his left, and pointing to a stool in the corner, said, "Sit, please, sit."

Dave settled onto the stool.

Ike Deutsch plopped himself down on the chair behind a rickety wooden table serving as his desk. He whisked aside a pile of stained bills and receipts and simultaneously pulled the dirty ashtray from the side of the table to himself. He lit a fat cigar and tossed the charred matchstick into the ashtray "So, Lieutenant, I think we're about to become partners in an exciting adventure."

Dave tried not to choke. He wasn't sure if it was being closeted with the cigar smoke or the thought of politics again gripping his life.