

Day 1 – Wednesday April 12th

The sound of birds cheerfully singing echoed off of the walls of the bedroom. Quiet snoring could be heard coming from the queen-sized bed in the center of the room during the moments in between chirps. Only the glow of a nearby streetlight brightened the room, Detective John Sullivan was sound asleep.

Loud ringing of the telephone snapped Detective Sullivan out of his dream. Through the darkness of his bedroom he knocked several things off of his night stand before finally reaching his cordless phone. It had rung four times before he answered.

“Hello,” he said in a deep sleep-filled voice.

“Sullivan, this is Reynolds, there has been another murder,” the voice said. This voice belonged to Inspector Sidney Reynolds. It was the third straight morning that he had awakened Detective Sullivan from his sleep with news of a murder in downtown New York.

“That’s three murders in three days,” Sullivan whispered, “great a fucking serial killer, good goddamn morning Inspector.”

“How soon can you be down here John?”

“Give me ten minutes to pull myself together, I will be there ASAP,” Sullivan moaned. He was already half out of his bed as he hung up the phone. He stretched a long ‘wake-me-up’ stretch and let out a scream “Aaaaaahhhhhhhh shit!” His feet hit the cold hardwood floor and he recoiled in shock. Detective Sullivan stood up, dressed only in his black boxer briefs, his body cut from stone, thanks to years of police training. He turned and looked back at his unmade bed, it seemed to be calling for him to come back, but he resisted. There was something very serious going on at the station.

Sullivan, barely awake, fell into his clothes he had worn the day before, sprayed a little cologne on his white undershirt, and stumbled out of his apartment, and into the darkened third floor hallway. While trying to finish buttoning his shirt he gripped the rail near the stairs tight, it was cold and the shock opened his blue eyes wide. He carefully made his way down the three flights of stairs and into the lobby of his Williamsburg apartment complex. Williamsburg was a suburb just east of New York City on the Long Island side. The freshly cleaned floors shone under the lobby’s lights. He pushed through the front door and onto the concrete walkway. The neighborhood was black; the street lights were still lit. The clocks had just been turned ahead so the sun did not rise until nearly 7:00, and by John Sullivan’s watch it was only 6:30.

The short walkway to the sidewalk was dotted with small lights to lead the way in the dark; John followed them toward the parking lot where his car was kept. The parking lot on the side of the building was not well lit and John often envisioned himself having to fight off an attacker in the dark one night, but it had not happened yet. He tried to always keep his car within view of the street, just in case. He unlocked his red Mustang convertible and slumped into the front seat. He let out a yawn and a quick shiver; it had been Spring for nearly a month yet unseasonably cold all week. There was even some frost on what little grass lay around the parking lot; it shone like blades of silver under the streetlights. John turned the key, the car struggled a bit.

“Come on you piece of shit,” he yelled at his car as he banged on the steering wheel. Sure he drove a Mustang, but it was three years old, not exactly old but it was starting to give

him troubles every now and then. On the second turn the car started up fine, he turned the heat on which normally did not fully kick in until he had nearly made it to work. Sullivan pulled out of the exit and headed toward the police station.

John's apartment was only a ten minute commute from the Williamsburg police department where he worked. He had only been working there since the first of the year, before that he had spent five years working in New Bedford, Massachusetts. John had become a sought after commodity when he helped capture a wanted killer the previous summer.

He had been featured prominently on television and in magazines with the key to the city after nailing the man callously nicknamed the "Bedford Baby Killer" even though only one of his nine victims, the first, was indeed a child. His family and co-workers knew it was only a matter of time before he was offered a higher profile job. John knew it too, he had always figured New Bedford was a stepping stone to bigger and better things, he dreamed of working in a large market city like New York or Washington D.C. He wanted to be the man to capture all of the "big fish" swimming in those cities, he had a relatively large ego, but also had a boatload of arrests made to warrant it. He tried his best to be respectful though thanks to his strong Irish family upbringing, but it wasn't always that easy.

His first two and a half months had been relatively quiet, for New York City that is. That all changed about three weeks before when there was a report of two suspicious fires at two businesses downtown only a mile apart. There was little evidence linking the fires except for the fact that both were owned by Jewish families. He remembered the interviews with the owners; they both did not have any enemies they knew of. These people were not well known in the community, they did not have tons of money, so it was hard for local police to figure out a motive. The cops told the two families they would keep their files active, but they had no leads. It seemed as though the cases would fade into the background. Then a week later, there were three house fires in a largely Jewish neighborhood just outside of the city. Inspector Reynolds had said there was no doubt all three fires were arson, and all three were likely set by the same perpetrators. Luckily in all three cases nobody was killed, though the homes were total losses. As with the business fires the week before there were no leads, but with all five crimes having been against Jews the police started to think about hate crimes, and began looking at groups who would commit such acts. Background checks were performed and several known members of a local chapter of a hate group calling themselves the "White Americans" were brought in and questioned. Three members cooperated and answered all questions; they had no knowledge of any hate crimes recently committed by their group. The other member, Steven Roles, a high ranking member, was a little more belligerent. He was the stereotypical racist with a shaved head, pale-white skin and looking very gaunt. Clad in shabby leather pants and a sleeveless plaid shirt he sat, feet up on the sergeant's desk, smugly folding his arms as if he had somewhere more important to be.

"Mr. Roles," the Sergeant began, "do you have any knowledge of the rash of fires targeting Jewish homes and businesses?" Roles smiled and cracked his neck side to side in a disgusting fashion.

"Hey man we had nothin' to do with those fires," Roles smugly shouted, "but I am still happy those fuckin' bastards are gettin' their shit torched; it makes me smile." The Sergeant

shook his head angrily.

“So there’s no word on the street about someone else maybe,” the Sergeant continued, “I figured you might want to rat out someone who’s working on your turf.”

“Nah, killing Jews is fine by me whoever does it,” Roles responded after coughing up some phlegm in another stomach turning display, “but trust me, if I decide to get in on the act, you’ll know about it.” He stood up and pointing a finger in the Sergeant’s direction and asked if they were done. There was nothing to hold any of them, so of course they were free to go.

John remembered staring at Steven Roles long and hard as he walked past, he had always wondered what the thought processes were of these hate-criminals. In his neighborhood in Brockton, Massachusetts growing up he never knew of racism or prejudice. His friends came from all walks of life, all races, religions, and nationalities. As he got older he did notice that not everyone was as open-minded and tolerant as he was, that was probably what led him into the police force. John wanted to be there to help those in need; he vowed never to let anyone influence his beliefs.

Things were quiet after the “White Americans” had been questioned. Some cops figured they must have been the perps and the heat on them had caused them to lay low for a while. That all changed three nights before the current frosty cold morning with a homicide; it changed for John the following morning when he received the first wake-up call from Inspector Reynolds.

“John, it’s Inspector Reynolds,” he said, “we need you in here ASAP.”

“Why,” John sleepily replied, “what’s going on?”

“We’ve got a homicide on our hands.” Those words had got John out of bed and to the station fast. When he arrived there was a crowd of people in and around Inspector Reynolds’ office. John had to weave through them to get in the door, bumping and pushing as gently as he could. When he stepped in the Inspector was at his desk looking at photos that appeared to be of a crime scene. There were several black and white 8x10’s scattered across the desk, mostly of close ups of a face that John assumed was the victim. The Inspector had one in his hand at the moment that he seemed to be trying to get a grip on, staring at it like a ‘Magic Eye’ painting.

“What’s the word Inspector?” Reynolds barely moved his eyes from the photo.

“Do you speak German, Sullivan?” It seemed to be an odd question.

“Uh no, why?” He handed John the photo. It was of a phrase written in German on a wall at the crime scene. It said ‘Juden Müssen Sterben!’ Of course John had no idea what it meant. He shrugged his shoulders and tried to force himself to understand.

“That message,” Inspector Reynolds blurted out, “it’s written in the victim’s blood.” John looked again at the photo, he had to take the Inspector’s word for it since they were black and white shots. There were murders all the time in and around New York, John wondered why the Inspector needed him at the station so badly.

“Excuse me sir,” John asked, “but what makes this so important though that you called me down here?” Inspector Reynolds looked up at John then went searching through the pile of photos. He found the one he was looking for and handed it to John. The glossy paper caught the lights and made it hard for John to see at first, he had to move around in order to see it clearly. In the photo was the murder victim. It was very brutal, the man appeared to have had his head bashed in with some sort of blunt object, blood and brain matter was all around his body on the living room floor. John was shocked at the brutality, but it still didn’t tell him why it was a

special case.

“You wanna know why you’re here? That man in the photo, his name is Adam Goldsmith, a local restaurant owner. Goldsmith, he’s Jewish. Whoever had been setting those fires has stepped up their attacks.” John felt chills up his spine, he had thought the fires were the end of the crime spree, but this murder made anything possible. At that moment a young college student who worked at the station as an intern knocked on the office door.

“Inspector,” the student began meekly, “I’m sorry to interrupt, but I thought this was important.”

“What is it kid,” Reynolds replied loudly, “we’ve got a lot going on.” He stepped into the Inspector’s office with his head down seemingly intimidated by the two officers.

“Uh it has to do with this murder,” the student continued in a voice barely above a whisper. The Inspector rolled his eyes with impatience.

“Yeah, what’s up?” He spoke sarcastically feigning interest.

“I have taken German in college,” the student professed, “that message on the wall, ‘Juden Müssen Sterben,’ it means ‘Jews must die.’” Both Sullivan and the Inspector looked at each other with a look of confusion and worry; they were now both taking this intern very seriously. They deduced that if this killer or killers had taken the time to write a message like this that probably meant that these crimes were not over. Still they were not sure if they should send out a warning to anyone Jewish to beware of anyone suspicious after dark. They did not want to cause a panic, so they decided to go over the evidence again and see if there was any direction it pointed them. The intern backed out of the Inspector’s office and the two men began to pour through the photos and reports on his desk. The evidence led nowhere, no forced entry, no fingerprints, and most of all no witnesses. It was a big gamble that the police took in not putting out any sort of bulletin that night, and it would cost them not too long after.

It seemed to be déjà vu all over the next morning for John Sullivan. Early in the dark morning the phone rang, Inspector Reynolds was on the line, there had been another murder. His voice sounded far less shocked than it had the previous morning. In much the same fashion John stumbled into the station, pushed his way through some people and into the Inspector’s office. He was at his desk and there were a few photos in front of him again.

“Do we know for sure that this is the same killer?” John broke the silence and cut right to the chase. He wasn’t sure what answer he hoped for more, different killer, or serial killer.

“I’m pretty sure it’s the same guy,” the Inspector answered in a tired and weary voice, “all the signs point to it.” He passed a photo similar to the one from the day before over to John. In the photo there was another message written on a wall at the crime scene. This one was the German word ‘Ausrottung.’

“Have you figured out what it means?” The Inspector only nodded once affirmatively.

“Yeah the college boy just let me know,” he said, “‘Ausrottung’ means ‘extermination.’”

“Look Inspector,” John said firmly, “I think we need to put out some kind of warning, before this gets out of hand!” The Inspector shot him an angry look.

“Shit man, this is already way out of hand! We’ve got five cases of arson, and now two murders, and not even a shred of evidence to point us to a suspect.” He let out a deep breath after his long-winded answer.

“What about those bastards in that ‘White Americans’ group, get their asses back in here.” The Inspector shook his head.

"It's not them," he stated.

"What? How can you be sure?" John threw his hands up.

"Because we got that piece of shit Roles and another of his boys last night for a home invasion," Reynolds angrily shot back, "they're sitting downstairs in a cell right now." John fell silent; the activity from the main lobby could be heard through the Inspector's closed door.

"Well, what can we do?" John waited for some sort of answer.

"I'm gonna send out extra squad cars to patrol largely Jewish areas in this district," the Inspector replied softly, "maybe this guy will screw up before he strikes again." He leaned back in his chair, it squeaked a bit under his ample frame. They were in between a rock and a hard place, they knew they had to do more to protect the people, but they weren't sure what.

John had a long day working, his mind was not on his regular work, it seemed as if he was floating in some sort of a dream world for most of the day and into the evening. All he kept thinking of was this mystery killer.

'How many people will die before this guy messes up? If he does mess up,' he thought to himself during one moment of lucidity behind his bulky brown desk. He did not sleep well that second night, as if having visions of the future John even thought about setting his alarm for when the Inspector had been calling. Sadly he figured the killer would strike again, and he was right.

John walked into the station much the same as he had the past two mornings. On the third morning though there was no crowd of people, in fact the station was rather quiet. He cracked the Inspector's office door and knocked.

"Come in John, sit down," the Inspector said in between sips of some steaming hot coffee. John took a seat in front of the desk on one of the poorly padded wooden chairs. He noticed there were no photos today, and the Inspector was dressed in his heavy police jacket.

"Uh, so what's the plan?"

"We're going on a field trip today," the Inspector said with a smile, "to the latest crime scene ourselves. I want to see if I can find something that maybe the usual crime scene investigators are missing." John had to borrow another jacket as he had left his apartment in such a hurry that he only grabbed a light windbreaker. The two men hustled out of the station bringing along one of the Inspector's closest friends and partners, Sergeant Richard Littleton. Littleton would be mostly in charge of photography, he sat in the front seat with his digital camera in a big black case on the floor in front of him. The Sarge was a heavy set man, bordering on obese. His large frame had buckled the passenger side of the car when he had sat down. They took one of the unmarked cars so as not to draw too much attention on their way to the crime scene.

John didn't speak much on the drive, he was preparing himself mentally for what he was about to see. Judging by the photos of the previous two victims, the killer had a very vicious and sadistic rage toward his prey. The newest victim lived in an apartment complex on the Lower East Side, once the largest Jewish neighborhood in the New York area but not so much anymore. The drive from the station to the crime scene was uneventful; the traffic was minimal as it was still before 8:00 am. The sun was bright in the sky and John had wished he brought his sunglasses with him from his Mustang's glove compartment. The Inspector had been in touch with the crime scene investigators and made them promise to not disturb the area until they had a chance to see it for themselves. As they got close to the site a few unmarked cars were already

there, they had set up a few barricades to keep curious crowds out of the building. The three men flashed their badges and proceeded to enter the building. They slowly climbed four flights of stairs to the fifth floor where the victim had lived.

Apartment 5-C was taped off with the door wide open. Even from the hallway you could see the signs of a struggle evident on the floor. Papers were scattered, a chair lay broken in pieces, most likely used as a weapon in the crime.

“Okay you guys stay behind me to start,” Inspector Reynolds requested, “so we don’t disturb something before we note it and photograph it.” The three of them tore the tape from across the door frame and took a few steps into the living room. Sgt. Littleton turned on his digital camera and began to snap photos of anything and everything. There was a smell in the air, as if something had been cooking at the time of the murder and it was left burning. John stepped into the kitchen; it wasn’t more than a stove, fridge, cabinets, and about three feet of floor space. There was a pan in the sink, inside it was some sort of canned soup, this was the smell. It appeared that the killer had taken the time to turn off the stove and even remove the burning food. John thought to himself that this killer wanted his handiwork to be seen, because if he had left the food burning eventually it would have caused a fire that would have severely damaged the apartment. Sgt. Littleton was right behind John snapping photos of the sink and stove, the clicking was almost rhythmic in John’s ears. Inspector Reynolds had gone into the bedroom, here he found the victim. He called to the other two men to join him.

“Hey guys,” he shouted from the bedroom, “I found our victim.” Lying on the floor at the foot of a twin bed face down was the body of a middle-aged man. He was in a pool of clotting blood, but it appeared as though his wounds would not have been enough to kill him.

“Hey check this out,” John said. He had been checking the closet and night stand area and found a used syringe wrapped in a paper towel. It was carefully wrapped but hardly hidden from view.

“Don’t touch it,” the Inspector yelled, “the lab guys will have to take it and test to see what was in it. Hey Rick, while you’ve got the camera handy, how ‘bout taking a picture of the wall there.” The Inspector was pointing at another German message scribbled in blood on the wall. This one said ‘Es beginnt wieder.’ John wrote it down on a small pad of paper he had purchased, normally it was forgotten in his car but John grabbed it on his way into the station this morning. He figured the college boy at the station would help them translate the message later.

After putting the paper back in his pocket John bent down and picked up a black object off of the floor. It was the man’s wallet next to the night stand; inside of it he found photos of a young girl, probably his daughter. She looked like a teenager with light brown hair, and freckles. He turned it over; written in blue ink was “Jenny, age 17, 1999.” John then found the man’s driver’s license; his name was David Cohen, 48 years old, in his bad license photo he had receding brown hair and brown eyes. Unfortunately now his skin had a pale yellowish tint to it. John felt sadness for this man, his eyes moved back and forth from the license photo to the body on the floor, being this close to the crime affected him more than if he had only seen the photos at the station. He could only shake his head and walk back out into the hallway.

He stood with his back against the wall, peering left and right down the poorly lit hallway. He couldn’t help but wonder what kind of person this was that could kill someone so brutally and with such bravado that he would leave all sorts of evidence lying around. John had always been told by family, and fellow co-workers that he had too much of a conscience, that he

let things get to him much more than he should. His father especially had told him that he needed to become desensitized to the horrors of police work, that it was the only way for him to be successful. Still it was this same quality that had allowed him to catch the 'Bedford Baby Killer' and make him a much respected name in the state of Massachusetts. The killer had sent numerous threatening letters to the New Bedford police warning them to scale back their efforts to capture him or the killings would increase in number and brutality. His refusal to stop searching for the sake of the victims and their families was what eventually led him to the door of the killer. Even the killer himself had marveled at the young detective's will and determination. When he was cuffed and taken from his home the man did not even struggle, he only asked to see the man who was so unwavering and strong-willed that he could not be shaken. John remembered raising his hand and smiling as the man passed him on the way to the waiting cruiser. It was the greatest moment of his life up to that point.

About ten minutes had passed with John alone with his thoughts in the hallway, he could hear the Inspector and Sgt. Littleton talking and making their way around the rest of the apartment trying to find any other items of interest. The Inspector's voice was of normal volume while the Sarge naturally had a booming jovial voice which made him perfect for Santa Claus at the yearly Christmas party. John heard the sounds of people coming up the stairs, it was the evidence team, three men and a woman each with their own small bag of equipment for testing and collective the evidence at the scene. They had been detained long enough and now needed to do their jobs. One of the men approached John as the team stopped in front of the door to apartment 5-C.

"What's it like in there?," the investigator questioned as he put on a pair of white latex gloves.

"One male, mid-40's, dead in the back bedroom," John replied frankly, "blunt trauma to the head, and one used syringe found in the closet. I put it on the night stand."

"Which killed him?"

"We won't know until you guys run some tests on that syringe," John assumed, "that'll probably determine where we go from here."

"Okay guy thanks for keeping the place warm for us," the investigator answered, "we'll get back to you at the station with anything of interest." The man waved his other team members inside behind him.

"Have fun," John called after him, "and tell the Inspector and Sergeant to stop playing with each other and get moving, I'll be waiting in the cah." Despite being born and raised in Brockton, John had only a small 'Boston Accent;' on a few occasions it would come out and car would come out as 'cah.' During his first few weeks on the job it became a source of humor at the station, the longtime cops would often ask him to say something with his 'Boston Accent' for laughs. He would reply with the standard 'Pahked my cah in Hahvahd Yahd.'

A few seconds after the crime scene crew went in the Inspector and Sgt. Littleton emerged.

"Playing with each other huh? You can walk your ass back to the station man!" He smiled and gave John a hard slap on the back which made him wince.

"Did you find anything else interesting in there?," John inquired. The Inspector stopped

walking and put his hands on his hips.

“It seems like there was no forced entry again,” he said puzzled, “it’s like the killer knocks on the door and the victims just let him in. Maybe he’s posing as someone less threatening. Are there any witnesses in the building?”

“Probably not,” John acknowledged, “the man living next door is 87 years old with severe hearing loss. He’s on assisted living, but his nurse’s aide usually leaves by 9:00 pm. She’s over there right now if you want to talk to her.”

“Nah that’s not needed,” he replied, “but see if you can get her name and the old man’s name. We may need to get statements from them later.” John agreed. Inspector Reynolds and Sgt. Littleton left for the car while John knocked on the door. Momentarily John had visions of his younger days where he would fantasize about a beautiful nurse giving him sponge baths and other ‘treatments.’ He imagined the door opening with a bright light and fog pouring from the room, a gorgeous woman standing in her very small nurse’s outfit begging him to let her take care of him. When the door opened his hopes were dashed, the nurse was heavy-set, and at least 50 years old, the sponge bath idea faded fast. John came out to the car no more than five minutes after the Inspector and the Sarge. He closed the door and put his head down in embarrassment. They both asked him how she looked once he got in.

“Did ya get her name?,” Reynolds asked with a smirk.

“Yeah Sheila Edwards,” John responded quietly, “and the old man is Terrence Post; neither saw or heard anything. She said she left right after 9 and the old man was already asleep.”

“So did she take you in the bathroom,” the Sarge asked with a boyish giggle, “and check your temperature?” John frowned and gave a horrified shiver.

“No, but she did ask who that cute couple was leaving the apartment,” he sarcastically replied, “she said they looked so in love.”

“Shit man,” the Inspector shouted in anguish, “if I was gonna go gay I would hope I could do better than his fat ass!” This offended the Sarge who put both of his hands over his expansive belly.

“Hey damn it I don’t have time to exercise like I used to!,” he cried. John and the Inspector looked at each other surprised and broke out in loud laughter.

“Christ Rick I should get you a dress and some lipstick,” Reynolds contended with a bewildered look. He stared at the Sarge while starting his car shaking his head to keep the joke running. They did a u-turn in the street and headed back to Williamsburg.

Upon arrival at the station John sought out the college boy who had been so good at translating the last two German messages from the killer. He found him working on a paper jam at the copy machine, very important work.

“Hey kid,” John said after clearing his throat, “sorry to bother you but I got another message for you to translate for me, forget that stuff and come over to my desk.” The kid got up and practically ran over to help. They both sat down and John produced the paper with the German phrase from the crime scene on it. The kid looked at it for a moment, put it on the desk and slid it over to John like he was getting cards in a game of Blackjack.

“It begins again,” the kid said in a hushed tone.

“What?”

“That’s what ‘Es beginnt wieder’ means,” the kid answered louder, “It begins again.”

John wrote the translation down underneath the German phrase, folded the paper and put it in his pocket. John smiled with satisfaction.

"Thanks kid," he said, "hey what is your name anyway?"

"My name is Chris, Chris Michaels."

"Thanks Chris, I appreciate it." Chris got up and headed back toward the paper jam while John focused his attention on the three separate messages. "Jews must die," "Extermination," and now "It begins again," they were very sinister sounding. John decided it would be best to let the people in the city know what was going on, so at least those in danger could take the proper measures for their safety. He got up and went into the Inspector's office. He was thumbing through the new photos that had been taken by the Sarge at the crime scene that morning.

"Hey Inspector, I think we have to put out a statement to the media," John said confidently, "let the people know what's up so they can protect themselves."

"Yeah you're right," Reynolds responded with a sad look on his face, "I just wish we had some kind of description or any witnesses. People will be looking for this person everywhere, anyone that knocks on a Jewish person's door after 10 will be thought of as a suspect. We have to say just enough nothing more."

"I'll call the Times and a couple of the TV outlets, and set up a press conference for you at, say, 3:00?" John pulled out his small notebook again and started noting who he would contact.

"Yeah, fine," the Inspector conceded, "hey any idea of when those crime scene folks will have the test results on that syringe?"

"Nah, I'll call down to the lab and see. I am also going to call the daughter of the victim today and let her know. Oh yeah and the kid told me what that message was on the wall today."

"Yeah?"

"Uh-huh, it says 'It begins again.'" The Inspector furrowed his brow while recalling the other two messages, trying to piece them together.

"What do you think it all means?"

"This person obviously hates Jews," John replied stating the obvious, "so any warning we put out should mention that first. Besides that, I am still working on it." John shut the Inspector's door behind him as he walked out. He pulled out his Rolodex from his top desk drawer and wrote down a few more phone numbers of media outlets. He then grabbed the phone book to look up Jennifer Cohen, the daughter of David, the man murdered that day. There were many Cohen's listed in the metro area, so he decided to use his police privileges and go through the public records to find her. He remembered the photo from the man's wallet, in it 'Jenny' was 17 in 1999, so that meant she'd probably be 24 now. John decided he had better contact her before this press conference, surely after that info about the victims would leak out.

After calling the four Jennifer Cohen's listed for the metro area and even a couple of the J Cohen's, John decided to use his police privileges and check the police databases and public records sites on the internet. His search was very successful, finding a Jennifer Cohen of matching age in a Connecticut town called Naugatuck located about an hour from the city. He got the number and called her.

"Hello?," answered a friendly sounding voice.

"Hello," John said, "is this Ms. Jennifer Cohen?"

"Yes it is," Jen responded, "who is this?"

"My name is John Sullivan," he said getting to the point, "I am a detective with the NYPD out of Williamsburg. It's about your father, David Cohen."

"What's wrong with Dad?" John heard the friendliness disappear from the voice, immediately replaced with a trembling anticipation. He paused perhaps a little too long, not sure how to say what he had to say.

"He's dead ma'am. Uh we found him in his apartment this morning," John paused again, "he was murdered." Jennifer gasped and John could hear her begin to cry. He had only called a family one time to tell them a family member had been murdered; he hated the feeling of helplessness he felt as they fell apart on the line.

"We'd like you to come down to the station if possible," John gently asked, "so we can get some information and maybe a statement from you, if that would be possible."

"What? Information? My father was murdered," Jen's voice grew angrier with each passing word, "can I have some time to digest that before I get interrogated officer!?"

"Um, actually it's Detective," John retorted feeling sheepish the instant the words escaped his lips.

"Fine," Jen snapped back, "Detective, whatever you want to call yourself." John did not want to be combative, he took a deep breath and tried to put himself in Jen's shoes.

"Gosh I'm sorry ma'am, I didn't mean it to come out so heartless. Your father was the latest victim of a serial killer, it's kind of got everyone stressed."

"You're stressed? I think I am the one who should be stressed, you think?" The conversation was going downhill, John decided to let her be and try again maybe the next day.

"I'm sorry to have bothered you," John said sounding deflated, "if you change your mind about coming to the station I can give you the number here." There was a long silence on the line.

"Okay, give me your address," Jen said surprising John, "I can be there in two hours, if that's okay?"

"Yeah, yeah," John answered with a little too much happiness, "if you have a pen and paper I'll give you directions." John gave her the info and hung up. He felt that he had handled that conversation badly, but he didn't have time to worry, he had to phone the Williamsburg branch of the NYPD crime lab and get the results of the chemicals in the syringe from the apartment this morning. He called and asked for Detective Ashley Rose, she was the head lab technician.

"Hello NYPD crime lab," Ashley said upon answering. John knew her voice right away, plus he knew she never trusted anyone answering 'her phone' as she called it. A small portable was often stuffed into her lab coat.

"Hey Ashley, it's John Sullivan. I was wondering if you guys had any test results from the syringe we sent down from the Cohen crime scene down on the Lower East Side today?" He could hear shuffling of papers and a few grunts from Ashley.

"Hold on, I am not sure where I put the results. I remember there was something about them that was weird. Ah here we go, the results came back positive for two substances, sodium cyanide and hydrochloric acid." John raised an eyebrow at the results, he had thought it might be some sort of illegal drug like heroin.

"That's an odd combination for sure, what was it about them that you wanted to tell me?"

"Well with this killer seeming to be going after only Jews I started checking come of

those scumbag Neo-Nazi websites and get this,” she paused for an effect, “by themselves those two substances are bad enough, but during the Holocaust they were routinely mixed together to form hydrogen cyanide.” John did not understand the connection.

“Yeah? What does that have to do with this killer?”

“Well that chemical combination was used to exterminate Jews in these camps. This guy, whoever he is, has been doing his research. All the German messages, now using a chemical mix the Nazi’s used during the Holocaust. I think he’s more than just some whack job.”

“I’ve had that same feeling,” John stated, “but there are so many Jews in the metro area that it’s difficult to predict where he might strike next. Right now we’re at his mercy; all we can do is get the word on the streets.” John shook his head at his own choice of words, he sounded like a bad movie cliché.

“Good luck John,” Ashley said hurriedly, “I’ll have these results sent over to the station as soon as I can. If you need anything else just let me know, I’ll put the boots to these guys over here, ha ha ha!”

“Yeah Ash, I have a feeling I’ll be seeing you sooner than later, bye.” After hanging up John sat at his desk, resting his head on his hands. He stared a hole in his large desktop calendar allowing himself to drift into thought, wondering what the next piece of the puzzle was going to be.