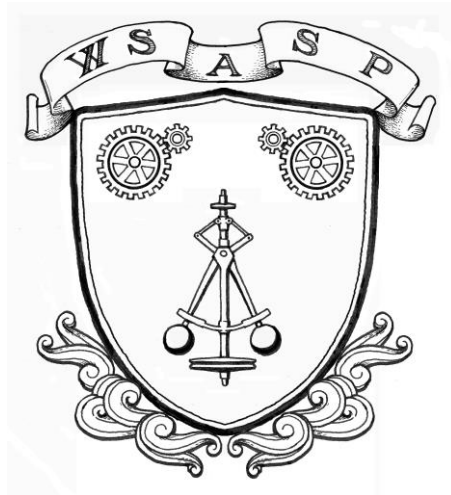


# Steam City Pirates

A Pat O'Malley Steampunk Mystery

JIM MUSGRAVE



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## Other works by Jim Musgrave

*Forevermore: A Pat O'Malley Historical Mystery*

*Disappearance at Mount Sinai: A Pat O'Malley Historical  
Mystery*

*Jane the Grabber: A Pat O'Malley Steampunk Mystery*

*The Digital Scribe: A Writer's Guide to Electronic Media*

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## Steam City Pirates

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## Introduction



When I decided to thrust my detective sleuth from the 1860s in New York City into the world of steampunk, I was being subconsciously prodded by authors like Albert Camus, Franz Kafka, Samuel Beckett, George Orwell and Aldous Huxley. Patrick James O'Malley, my hero, needed to be shaken to his roots. What better way is there for an author to give his main character some SciFi credibility than to use the steampunk genre?

After reading Beth Daniels' excellent book [Writing Steampunk](#), I was all fired up! I had been searching for such a genre of story-telling all my life. It had its literary roots in the world of the absurd as well as the science fiction classics of Jules Verne and H. G. Wells. In addition, the mysterious world of Edgar Allan Poe was the gothic inspiration for many steampunk tales. Daniels' book, along with the "world of

steampunk” on the many Facebook group pages, had me mesmerized with wonder at the possibilities of creating an entirely new world for my O’Malley to explore.

I had already written [three mysteries in the series](#), and each one of them seemed to point me in the direction I needed to go. It was as if I were being led by my own subconscious into the inevitable world of steampunk fiction.

In my first novel of the series, [Forevermore](#), I took on the death of Edgar Allan Poe and made it into a murder mystery. Pat O’Malley comes home from the Civil War and gets free rent at the Edgar Allan Poe Cottage in the Bronx. All he really has is his Congressional Medal of Honor, his past employment as Poe’s manuscript messenger, and a vague belief that he can solve mysteries. O’Malley wants to prove that his former boss, whom he respected and revered for his literary prowess, did not die in the gutter of Baltimore in 1849 as a drunken reprobate. No! Poe was being driven to drink by the need to be recognized in the icy literati circles of New York City, and O’Malley learns that these circles can lead to madness, murder and torture.

At the conclusion of *Forevermore*, O’Malley is seemingly empowered by the ghost of Poe. As I look back upon this transition, I can see it as being inspired by the gothic elements in all steampunk. What better inspiration for a sleuth to begin entering into the fantastic realm of science fiction than the Divine Edgar?

Therefore, my next mystery, [Disappearance at Mount Sinai](#), began to take on the flavor of steampunk. Why? Well, for one, the Jewish folklore of my wife crept into my subconscious, and up popped the characters of Arthur Daniel Mergenthaler and his son, Seth. They are at the crux of this second mystery, and I suppose O’Malley was being led into the steampunk world by them, even though O’Malley’s mind does not want to accept this absurd notion that *Mazikeen* are real. Who would?

Even in the 1860s, supernatural beings who are half-angel and half-human, who can shape-shift and disappear, were not easily accepted in the world of criminal investigation. O’Malley is able to solve his kidnapping mystery because he does believe, somewhat, in the reality of Seth’s “disappearing act,” but it would not be until my third mystery in the series, [Jane the Grabber](#), that the full force of Seth’s supernatural abilities would come to the fore.

Hester “Jane the Grabber” Haskins is an evil brothel Madame. She wants to take-over all of New York City’s prostitution businesses and turn them into “whoring dens” wherein she can control her girls by using drugs and sex. It is her supernatural ability that becomes key to O’Malley’s transition into the steampunk world. In addition, our sleuth also meets the full magnificence of little Seth as *Mazikeen*. Once this has occurred, O’Malley has fallen down the “rabbit hole,” and the fourth novel in the series has taken on a life of its own.

[Steam City Pirates](#) is a novel for steampunk fans. If any other readers wish to hop aboard, then so be it, but I wrote it for the psyche of the people who adore to revel in the world of genteel drama and science fiction. They enjoy this activity so much, in fact, that an entire cottage industry has sprouted up across America. Am I becoming a whore to this new phenomena? Yes, indeed I am!

What attracted me to this world was its understanding that the "outside" world should play by the rules of the Victorian Era. People must behave as if all things were possible and that the coming generations of industrialized “progress and greed” were a mistake. This is the world I attempted to create in *Steam*

*City Pirates*. These pirate inventors are not evil because they want to keep America frozen in the “Steam Power Era.”

They are perhaps “acting out” in evil ways, as O’Malley discovers right away, but he is pulled down into their world to be seduced by their leader, a steam-powered “computer man” from way in the future (2344 to be exact), who says his main goal is to prevent a future nuclear holocaust, which, he says, has already occurred! The only hope of Earth is to keep the technology in the steam age and to prevent any technology which remotely resembles computers to develop. Is there an absurd irony here? Oh, yes! Master Inquisitor Abraham Toky Manette, our Steam City Pirates leader, is a human computer—you did hear that—and O’Malley heard that.

My novels to come will have illustrations, an interactive web site, and music! Yes, one of the best songstresses of the macabre and her husband, [Valentine Wolfe](#), has agreed to write some original music for *Steam City Pirates*, and they will be included in the electronic book. What better way for the steampunk fan to get his or her “genre fix” than to enjoy both music and intellectual steampunk fun?

Also, my steampunk fans will help me create elements of creative genius, as they did in *Steam City Pirates*. All the “alien assassins” in my new novel were invented by steampunk fans (and will be given proper acknowledgement). Thus, fiction of this caliber has taken on a “community involvement” par excellence! There will also be interactive links placed within the novels (beginning in this one) where you can [click and go to the accompanying web site](#) to play games, answer quizzes for prizes, and learn more about the art and flavor of Detective Pat O’Malley’s new steampunk universes.

Therefore, my novels will pit O’Malley against a computer man who perhaps has a noble goal in mind, but his activities (such as using a steam-powered submarine to hijack merchant ships) are not acceptable to the Victorian culture that my detective must represent. However, O’Malley (and the reader?) is torn between his need to punish evil acts with his need to believe in something noble and greater than himself. In essence, O’Malley is a modern man trapped in a steampunk culture.

Just as my readers venture into the steampunk sub-culture to escape the stresses and insane power-grabbing of the Twenty-First Century, my sleuth, Detective Patrick James O’Malley, wants to metamorphose into his existential world of “cops and robbers” with Manette (a genteel computer man with a conscience).

In England, all the barristers have a special day when they raise a toast to all the criminals who keep their “law and order” business running. O’Malley, too, wants to toast his new adversary, even if he is from the future. As the World Scientific Advancement Society for Progress (Manette’s umbrella organization) says, “We must learn to use the technology of the future and fuse it with the wisdom of the past.”



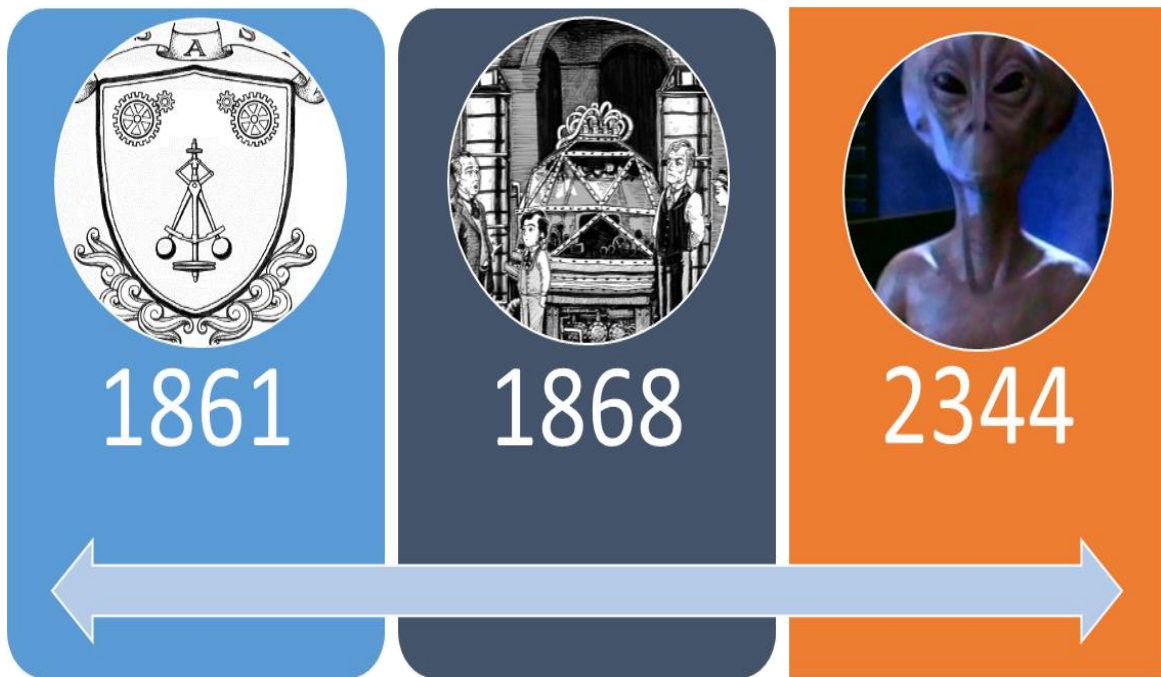
**Jim Musgrave, Author**

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[Enhanced version](#) of *Steam City Pirates* now available.



**1861: Steam City Pirates (The Society) is first established beneath Central Park, New York City.**

**1868: Pat O'Malley and his group begin their quest to stop the Steam City Pirates (The Society).**

**2344: The Network comes from another universe to save the Earth from nuclear annihilation.**



[Join in the pirate fun and play “Black Devilfish.”](#)

[Listen to the Best Steampunk Playlist as you read!](#)

## **Prologue: Wherein there is a Meeting between a Spanish Inventor and the Steam City Pirates**

*January, 1868, New York City*

Señor Narcis Monturiol i Estarriol was going to a meeting with Mayor John Hoffman at New York’s City Hall. He walked with a slight limp, and he held his cane out in front of his thin body, as he meandered down the crowded avenue called “Broadway.” His brown eyes were behind wire spectacles fixed upon the road ahead, his conservative brown frock coat and vest matched his bowler hat, and his side-whiskers blew in the breezes that were coming up the avenue. His short frame was enveloped with pedestrian traffic, and the wide expanse of the road was filled with noisy delivery wagons, hackneys and handsome cabs. It was quite a contrast to his home city of Figueres in Catalonia, where the fig trees lined the small road leading up to Sant Ferran Castle at the end of Pujada del Castell.

The Spanish inventor had been referred to the New York mayor by the United States Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles. Monturiol was in dire need of money for his steam-powered submarine, but the Secretary of the American Navy had said that the government was having a difficult time paying its bills after the War Between the States. Monturiol had received the same treatment from the Spanish Navy, and his last chance at getting the funds he needed was to talk to the man who represented the City of New York, John Hoffman.

As he walked up the marble steps, Monturiol noted the domed tower in the center of the columned entrance porticos on the roof and top of the steps, both capped by balustrades. This was no architecture he would ever use, as his submarine was quite oval-shaped, natural and sleekly designed to house his new engine. *These public buildings are built to expand the egos of men and not to save men’s lives*, he thought, as he pushed open the metal door with shining copper plates behind the brass handles and stepped inside the huge edifice.

As he limped into the Outer Ceremonial Room, adjacent to the Mayor’s office, he could hear his tapping cane echo up into the soaring rotunda. There was a grand marble stairway rising up to the second floor as if into heaven. Ten fluted Corinthian columns supported the coffered dome, and he knew the mayor would not be inside this grand room to greet him. He did have an appointment, but he was not the King of Spain, or other such dignitary, and he knew the only chance he had at acquiring the funds he needed was to prove to this Hoffman that his little craft would somehow serve some profitable venture for this city’s government.

Monturiol glanced up on the wall at some of the huge tapestries and paintings, one of which was the portrait of the man he had seen on the face of the United States ten-dollar bill he had used to pay for breakfast and for his hotel room. He did not know this man’s name, but he knew he probably had

something to do with making money. These Americans seemed to worship money and its accumulation in vast quantities.

Monturiol's hopes were high as he opened the small door to the Mayor's office, which was located in an insignificant space on the northeast corner of the first floor. Inside, he was greeted by a young man seated at a desk in front of the mayor's suite behind him. There was a single sofa next to the wall, with several newspapers on a table in front of it. The man wore a dark suit and cravat, and his hair was parted neatly down the middle. His clean-shaven face beamed up at Monturiol.

"Good morning, sir! May I help you?"

"I am here to see Mayor Hoffman. My name is Narcis Monturiol. I believe he expects me," he said.

"Why, yes, Mister Monturiol. The mayor wants you to go right in." The young man stood up and walked about five feet to the mayor's office door. He opened it, and stood there, waving his hand in a magnanimous gesture.

Mayor John Thompson Hoffman stood in front of his desk, and his right hand was outstretched, waiting for his visitor to take it. The mayor was about six inches taller than Monturiol, and his expensive blue suit, snow-white shirt and dark-silk, bowed tie made the inventor feel inconsequential. Hoffman's dark-brown hair was parted on the left, with curly plumes on both sides of his head and a long, full and distinguished mustache neatly adorning his upper lip.

The inventor grasped the mayor's large hand and let his own, much smaller hand, be propelled up and down like a standing well pump handle. "Señor Monturiol! Welcome to New York City! Please, have a seat. How have you been enjoying your visit to America? I'm afraid I've been busy gallivanting all over the state. We have our governor's election this year, and I am a candidate of the Democratic Party."

"I was told by Secretary Welles that you might need an invention that can explore the undersea for fish, lobsters, and oysters. My latest submersible is called *Ictineo II*. You might have read about my first craft, but she was powered by humans. This was not good enough for the depth we needed to explore, so I came up with an air independent engine for underwater navigation. Steam power cannot be used beneath the surface, so my chemical reaction of zinc, manganese dioxide and potassium chlorate can provide enough heat to power the steam engine, and the oxygen it releases can be used for breathing and lighting inside the submersible."

"How big is this ship? How can you see what's down under the water? How fast does she go?" Mayor Hoffman was clearly enthused. He bent forward in his chair, his elbows on the desk, and his face between his hands, as he watched the inventor pull out a rolled-up drawing of his craft that he then spread out upon the desk.

"She is 45 feet, 11 inches in length. The beam is six feet, seven inches across, and the height is nine feet, ten inches. She can do about four-and-one-half knots underwater and over eight on the surface. Not only can the two sailors see, they can also use my mechanical arms to retrieve objects from the ocean floor. This would greatly improve salvage efforts if you wish to use my craft for this profitable endeavor!" Monturiol smiled over at the mayor. He hoped this description would please him.

Mayor Hoffman frowned. "Only two people can drive this? I must be frank with you, Señor Monturiol. We already have hundreds of immigrant salvage divers that can retrieve what we need. Besides, most

of the money to be made is off the Florida coast. New York City has few ship wrecks. I really don't see any commercial advantages with your invention."

"I have cannons that can be used to deter pirates or other intruders! Your coast guard batteries surely could use such protection," Monturiol pleaded. "Mister Mayor, if you please. My invention can lead to the exploration of new sources of food for your people. I can also show you how to construct underwater cities powered by my anaerobic engines! My submersibles will transport settlers, and they could live and farm the seas for your industrialists! Did I tell you how I first imagined my *Ictineo*? I saw a coral diver who was trapped off the coast of Cadaqués and I watched him drown. I then knew I could..."

"Thank you, Señor, but I have heard enough. I'm afraid I must be off to my next political rally. If we develop an interest in your unique fish machine, then we shall be in touch." Mayor Hoffman stood up and walked over to the door. He held it for the older man until Monturiol finally moved, passing by the American, in a limping shuffle, through the doorway.

Outside, in the street, Monturiol did not know where to go next. He was checked out of his hotel, the Plaza, and the only option left for him was to go down to the embarkation pier to take his ship home to Spain. He would be meeting his creditors, and the outlook was not bright. This was his last chance at saving his life's work, and America had rejected him.

"Excuse me, but I was in the mayor's office just moments ago. He told me you have a submersible you are trying to raise funds to develop. Is this correct?" A tall, thin and awkward-looking gentleman in a black waistcoat and vest was standing beside the inventor. His head bobbed up and down as he spoke. He appeared to be almost mechanical. Monturiol had never met a human with such precise movements. His hands gestured in straight lines, and his head moved in segmented, jerky motions. His face was expressionless, and the mustache on his upper lip looked pasted on.

"Yes, I do. He told me there was no interest in my invention. Why have you approached me?" The inventor was curious, but he was also wary. His friends in Spain had warned him about all the confidence men in New York who daily attempted to trick foreign visitors, and Monturiol was not about to be fooled. That would be the worst indignity of all.

The man reached into his coat and pulled out a billfold. He opened it and then extracted a card. He thrust this card, in a very straight line, at the Spaniard. "Here," he said, "read this."

Monturiol took the card and squinted down at it: *Inquisitor Bat Egan Carry Who Represents the World Scientific Advancement Society for Progress.*

"I don't know of this organization. Are you affiliated with any academic institutions? Where are you located?" Monturiol handed the card back to the scientist.

"We would like to introduce you to our group. The funds are predicated upon how favorably our scientists view your inventions. If this is agreeable, then you can follow me." The tall mechanical man turned and began to walk briskly down Broadway.

The Spaniard knew he could not keep up, so he shouted over the din of traffic, "Wait! Can't you see that I have a cane? Please slow down!"

Thankfully, the tall man glanced back at the inventor and began to relax his pace. The two men, from above all the traffic and uproar of New York City, looked like two tiny dots moving along between the tall buildings and the variety of merchants and their pushcarts full of foods and wares. The odor of the pigs running and rooting up garbage, the horses whinnying as they pulled their hackneys and delivery carts, the feel of the bustling thousands of humans who collided with each other, like magnetic iron filings, sticking together momentarily, but they were all breaking away to plunge into their individually chosen destinies—whether they were heading to the church or to the madhouse—they all collided along the streets of congested traffic.

They walked into the huge park, and Monturiol followed closely behind Bat Carry. Who was this man? Where were they going? If the inventor had not been on his last legs, grasping at straws, afraid to return to the creditors in Spain, he would not be following this mechanically manic man. Up ahead, a tall statue of some American Civil War general appeared. There were other park strollers, and they all looked contented in the early evening glow of sundown.

The Spaniard stood behind the tall scientist as Bat Carry looked up at the statue. It seemed as if he were almost praying to this piece of granite memorabilia. Monturiol could hear the man taking deep breaths, and his head began to move in manic, segmented motions, up and down, from side-to-side, until there was a whooshing sound in front of him at the base of the statue, and steam came up from the grass. A metal door opened upon a coffin-like structure.

They both stared down into a chute-like, circular opening into the earth of Central Park. It was just wide enough for a human body. It also had within its metal confines two chairs with ornate sphinx heads crafted upon the armrests. It reminded the inventor of a chair from Egyptian mythology. However, the rest of the chute looked like advanced technical wizardry. The chairs were enveloped by a copper cocoon resting upon about two inches of steam! Air was hissing around this steam-powered cocoon run by some kind of mammoth steam engine running beneath the New York City Park!

A voice came from the cocoon: *Get in! Welcome, Señor Narcis Monturiol i Estarriol.*

Bat Carry moved behind the Spaniard and politely guided him into the front chair by his arm. Monturiol grunted as he bent his body down into the awkward position needed to get inside the copper cocoon. He kept his cane alongside his leg, and he gripped the sphinx heads with all his might. He could hear his guide slide upon the rear chair, and then their capsule lowered into the earth about three feet, and the metal top of their device closed over them, trapping them into what the panicked Spaniard believed was eternal darkness. His Catholic upbringing was acting upon his imagination, and he thought about Dante and his infernal punishment of humanity. Was he going down to this kind of Hell?

There was a monstrous rush of steam and then their capsule lurched forward, gaining speed, spinning down the pipeline like a bullet. Around and around, in looping circles they sped. Monturiol held onto the sphinxes and pushed his feet against the floor of the cocoon in an attempt to stay secure in his chair. The looping darts of the pneumatic engine's force gave him a feeling of doom. Was he being flushed into some kind of cesspool beneath New York? Was the panic in his stomach being caused by a poisonous gas exuding from the steam all around him?

At last, when Monturiol thought he would go mad from the spinning, they came to an abrupt stop upon bumpers made of thick, black rubber. Their little capsule opened upon a huge grotto of magnificent

proportions. There were gas lamps infused within the cave wall soil, and there were ribs of brass that ran in crisscrossing arcs overhead to support this gigantic room.



The cavern was about five hundred yards in circumference, and the Spaniard could see there were also offshoots of smaller tunnels which led out of this main room in earthen estuaries. Like the New York City Hall, this room seemed to be a greeting area of some kind. Unlike the government above-ground, which basically ignored him, the people who led this underground régime were all there to welcome him to their dominion.

Bat Carry climbed out of the capsule cocoon with his rigid motions until he stood on the floor of the cave. He then turned around and took the smaller inventor by his armpits and lifted him bodily from the chair and set him gently down until he, too, was standing upon terra firma, such as it was. Monturiol could feel a swaying beneath his feet, and it gave him the distinct impression he was not on firm footing. He imagined this cavern could even be constructed upon a steam bed of some manner or form, as the hissing white clouds came up from the floor of the cave in constant waves of wet and salty mist.

The man who walked toward them was speaking from some kind of magnetic coil that encircled his throat. He was about eight feet tall, and he wore the silken white Nemes of an ancient Egyptian Pharaoh. The pleats or folds were made of copper, however, and they seemed to be undulating like moving stairs. The band of the Nemes was bound tightly above his arching and thick eyebrows, tied at the back, and was reinforced with a strip of gold that hung down between the Nemes and the leader's forehead.

This creature's red eyes penetrated the Spaniard's liquid brown pools of humanity, and his voice was certainly a mechanically infused sound that vibrated the air around them like a magnetic force field. "We welcome you, Monturiol, to our dominion! All of your dreams can be realized, and we will make them come true. Watch what powers we possess."

The inventor's eyes were trying to take in all the different sensory stimuli and characters surrounding him, but they were so odd and so different that his mind had a difficult time comprehending them at all. It was as if their leader could magnetize Monturiol's brain just by speaking and riveting his attention away from all else.

If he concentrated, with all his power, he could gradually move his head away from the leader until he saw the person standing to the right of him. She was a woman dressed in conventional attire, and yet her pearl silk kimono had a black-and-white panda sewn upon it that looked enraged, biting into a bamboo stalk like a rabid mammal. She also had a man's black-silk top hat on her head, goggles on her eyes, and there was a copper clock built into the center of her bosom!

"She is Madame Jane the Grabber. She can travel into the future and provide us with inventors like yourself. We collect inventors like some people must collect weapons or sorcery. You are the most valuable commodity in the universe! Welcome to the World Scientific Advancement Society for Progress. My name is Inquisitor Abraham Toky Manette. I represent the fusion of the future with the wisdom of the past."

Monturiol's head turned to the left of Manette. There was an even larger man standing there. He wore a mask of bright green, and in it were spring coils of brass that fell down from his face. They moved all around his body like restless snakes, and his red suit was sparkling with some kind of rhinestones or glittering metal substance. Upon his trousers was a large codpiece that covered his privates. He also

wore a top hat, but in the center of this hat was the symbol of the *taijitu* or *yinyang*. The Spaniard knew that to be the ancient Taoist emblem of divine opposites.

“He is John Allen. We have adapted him with new technology. Father Allen is my enforcer and mystic high priest of physical ecstasy. Enough about us! Why have you come? Do you need to finance an invention? If you do, then you have certainly arrived at an opportune time.”

Even though he felt wary, the technical wizardry surrounding him gave Monturiol a sense of security. What better way was there for him to get out of debt? The world above had no use for his genius. Therefore, he decided to turn to this underworld society to see if he could obtain the funds he needed to see his visions come alive at last.

“I want to create undersea cities where humanity can forage and build a secure life. Farming this new world would provide the planet with a limitless bounty of food and medicinal sources. I can build a steam-powered submersible and, with the right assistance, I can develop an entire world beneath the ocean.” Monturiol felt relieved at having said it all. These were his visions for the future, and they were what kept him young and optimistic. He would, in fact, make a deal with the devil if he could make his dreams come true. If the devil’s domain were here on Earth, then perhaps these creatures were his emissaries. What the hell! Perhaps all of science had been working for the underworld all these years. Now he was joining them.

The giant inquisitor laughed! It was a vibrating, mechanical laugh that would haunt Monturiol’s dreams. “Bring out the balloon!”

From the far-end of the cavern a gigantic, floating craft came toward them. It was high in the air above them, and walking beneath it was a short man with long white mustaches, and he wore a formal suit of no fashion the Spaniard had ever seen. His captain’s cap was snow-white, his coat and trousers were black, and his collar was turned up. He was pulling the aircraft along as a boy would lead his dog, by a long metal leash that led in an arcing loop up to the balloon.

“This is Count Ferdinand Adolf August Heinrich Graf von Zeppelin. He is also an inventor, and together, you will create the underwater paradise of your dreams!”

The Count clicked his heels. “I first flew in one of the American Union Army’s balloons operated by John Steiner. I later renewed my interest, and this is the result. I was living in Germany, in 1888, and Miss Haskins here came to visit me from the past. I agreed to come back in time with her to create my craft for the Society! And now you, my friend, will work with us to form a new force for good on this planet. Life is so good, yah?”

“Force? What are we discussing here? I thought you were scientists. This looks like a craft for war,” said Monturiol.

The Grand Inquisitor Abraham Manette marched over to where the short inventor stood. He placed his long arm around the inventor’s thin shoulders and tilted his head down. Monturiol looked up and could see the brass coils around the big leader’s neck. When the voice came out of them, the Spaniard almost fell backward from their vibrating blast.

“Money is the root of all evil, and it is also the root of all invention. Our plan, you see, is to earn our fortunes in order to create your undersea world. Mister Monturiol, the forces above do not appreciate

your genius. All they understand is power and, yes, force. We plan to create a torpedo for your steam-powered submersible, and it will be infused with steam so that it will penetrate the hull of any ship those above have in their navies. Once one of these merchant ships has been sunk, the Count's airship will move in. We shall tell them via telegraph that unless they allow us to plunder the other ships with our balloon armada, they will all be sunk! See how ingenious we are?"

The mechanical voice was now booming in the little man's ear, and he pulled away in fear. "You want to kill people and steal their cargo? I can't have that. I am a man of peace. I belonged to a communist society in Spain, and we only want what's best for the common people!"

"How can you believe the common man can save us from all the greed and corruption going on above the earth? Did you not advise me that our hope lies beneath the sea? The only way you can get us beneath the sea in your paradise is to join us in procuring the funds we need to make your inventions real! Won't you join us? We can begin tomorrow with your designs. Let your mind go free! Become an inquisitor!"

The woman called Jane the Grabber spoke to him, and he turned toward her. Her eyes flashed, and the clock in her corset began to spin around and around as she told him, "I have been into your future, Señor Monturiol. If you do not change your life now, you will end up dying in poverty, penniless and alone. Don't you understand how the powers above can corrupt the future? Please, won't you join us?"

Monturiol made a decision. Without money, he could not go on. He was possibly entering Dante's Inferno, but at least he would have the money to see his dreams realized. What more can any mortal ask for? "Yes, I will do it! We will steal from the rich and give to the poor, correct? Like the British Robin Hood?"

"Of course! Your dreams will be realized and our Society will prosper! Let's go eat. A banquet is in order, and we shall feast upon the creatures from the sea!"

Music filled with brass instruments, drums and steam whistles began to vibrate the cavern. They all walked toward one of the other small caves, the one on the eastern side of the grand cavern, and as they passed into its confines, Monturiol could see the band. Seven men and four women played the music, and they all wore pirate attire.

"These are the Steam City Pirates! They will serenade us whilst we feast!" said Manette.

Bat Carry escorted Monturiol to his place at the long banquet table, pulling out the chair. The Spaniard sat down and saw that the table was filled with steaming bowls of clams, oysters, crabs, and lobsters. There were also heaping platters of bread, fresh from the oven, and a vast array of condiments. As he reached for one of the lobsters, the inventor envisioned himself sitting at a similar table beneath his undersea city. He would be named the first mayor of this city, and he would be praised for his generosity and special genius. The Steam City Pirates played on, and Monturiol dug into the flesh of the buttery lobster with a new-found passion. When Jane the Grabber looked over at him from across the table, he smiled at her, and she smiled back!

The new world beneath the City of New York was opening up to him, and Monturiol was ready to accept it. He hummed to himself as the steam-powered music infused his body with hope.



## **Chapter 1: Wherein Our Heroes Experience a New Crime, a New Detective, and a New Office**

We were now facing a new enemy. As a result, I knew it would be best to move into a more protected location for my office. Jane the Grabber Haskins, the evil brothel Madame, had disappeared into thin air. We also had a person who could disappear, and he was walking downtown with me. Seth Mergenthaler, the little *mazikeen*, was our secret weapon. Not only could he become invisible, the eight-year-old could also foretell the future, change into the shapes of other humans and animals, and fly, as he was half-angel and half-human.

My departed mother back in Kilkenny was a believer in angels. She always told me I had a guardian angel who was assigned by God to watch over me. I never really believed her until I was in combat during the Civil War. I never told this to General Billy Sherman, the man who nominated me for the Congressional Medal of Honor, but when I jumped between the General and that speeding Rebel bullet, I had not made a conscious decision to be brave. Truth be told, I was pushed by this invisible angel. I felt his big hands on my back, and then I became airborne. Everything that happened to me after that moment can be called "divine providence," I suppose, although it goes against every fiber of my Irish stubbornness to believe such superstition, I am an angel believer also.

My new job as a detective in New York City must now include this boy as my assistant. I looked down at Seth's small form. He was wearing a little gray suit coat and white shirt with tie, and his knee pants were moving like tiny pistons as he kept up with my brisk pace. The paradoxical reality of Seth was that one moment he could be this little boy, as he was now, his eyes sparkling and taking in everything around him. The next moment, he could be the voice of an educated adult who could converse with me about any subject known to modern science.

"The pirates are coming," Seth said.

I looked down at the boy, and he looked up at me. We exchanged frowns.

"Pirates? You mean, you want to play pirates?" I wanted to know if I were addressing the child Seth or the adult Seth.

We stopped, and I watched the boy's face take on a mesmerizing, squinted affectation.

"No, the real pirates. I can see them boarding ships and stealing things."

"Where are they? What do they look like?"

"I can't say where they are. However, it is out in the water. My future vision is like looking through a spyglass. I can see only one small circle picture at a time. These pirates are not normal. I can see they are dropping out of the sky! The men on the ship are frightened, and they let the pirates take the

money and the crates of supplies. The pirates go back up into the sky inside moving boxes attached to a pulley. The boxes carry the pirates and the stolen cargo up into a big balloon that hovers directly above the ship!" Seth's eyes were transfixed as he stared off into space.

I had previously worked with Seth and his magical abilities in the Jane the Grabber case. Just when I was at my wit's end by what was happening at the Sisters' Row Hotel, Seth showed me how he could take on the physical personification of another child—a ten-year-old girl named Cassie—and my entire sleuthing career had taken a dramatic shift from that moment until this. However, this was the first time I had experienced my small partner's ability to look into the future, just as I was still waiting to see him use the invisible wings he supposedly had affixed to his narrow shoulders. If I had not seen this lad change from a young girl into his present shape and back again, with my own eyes, I would not have solved the Jane the Grabber case, and the love of my life, Miss Rebecca Charming Jones, would possibly be out of her business as a brothel madame in the Theater District of New York City.

If this were how my cases begin now, I was going to have to change my method of discovery. What was I going to do to find clues about a crime that had not yet been committed? In the first place, I was an Army man, and I had no experience with naval matters. Secondly, the fact that Seth reported that these pirates would be using an air balloon to abscond with their booty was not only impractical but it was also beyond my comprehension.

"As soon as we get to the office, I shall address your prognostications, Seth. Until then, if you have any more relevant visions, please retain them until we reach our destination," I said, squeezing the boy's hand as I began to walk.

"Yes sir, Mister O'Malley. I just thought you might want to know about it. If you had asked me earlier about the men who kidnapped my father, then you might have avoided a lot of effort," he pointed out, and there was a hint of rancor in his high-pitched voice.

He was correct. I had not believed the lad when he told me he was invisible inside the hospital room of Mount Sinai when his father was taken, so I never asked him about what he had seen. I was not going to make that mistake again, as young Seth Mergenthaler was now my only real connection with a person who had the same kind of powers I had to now confront.

We had searched all over New York City to find a place where we felt comfortable. Our little group was confronting a force that had proven to be both cunning and diabolical. They could travel through time, and their powers at mind control through the use of drugs and other methods had been an especially difficult adversarial problem in my pursuit of Jane the Grabber. We knew we needed a place that would not be suspected easily, and it was Becky who had come up with the idea to move our location to a Gothic structure that Bessie Mergenthaler said would protect us from the evil eye. Temple Emanu-El was located on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 43<sup>rd</sup> Street on the Upper East Side in what was known as *Kleindeutschland*, or "Little Germany."

As we made our meandering way through the city's pedestrian traffic, I kept thinking about how Bessie Mergenthaler had reacted when she first realized that her son Seth was a supernatural being. Before that moment, she had been an educated and liberal Feminist and suffragette. She is the Administrator of Mount Sinai Hospital, and her entire life had encompassed a logical, scientific outlook. When her

husband, Arthur, was kidnapped from that same hospital in December of '67, she did not believe in his eccentric statement that he and his son were *mazikeen* and that she was a daughter of Lilith.

I saw Doctor Mergenthaler die in Collierville, Tennessee, so I also had no reason to believe his claim of being a half-angel, half-human *mazikeen*. Now, however, ever since Seth's transformation inside the Sisters' Row Hotel room, every person in our little detective group listens to what he says with much more respect, and this includes his mother, Bessie. Although, as his mother, she is still a disciplinarian to him when he is behaving in his "little boy" role. When he changes into his *mazikeen* or supernaturally adult self, it is I who has been given the supervisory job of watching out for him.

As we walked up 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue toward Temple Emanu-El, I remembered Bessie telling me that in the two decades between 1835 and 1855 around 250,000 European Jews immigrated into the United States, many of them settling on the Lower East Side and the tiny congregation that first established this temple on a second floor rented loft in 1845 had certainly exploded into a temple that resembled something out of an Arab's dream and not a Jewish synagogue.

Only seven blocks north the grand white marble spires of St. Patrick's Cathedral were being built, and ten blocks to the south the brownstone mansions of William and John Jacob Astor demonstrated that high society was making its presence felt. In Five Points, where I came from, this area might as well have been called "heaven."



If this temple meant to rival the soaring Gothic structure of St. Patrick's, it succeeded. Bessie told me that the architects, Henry Fernbach and Leopold Eidlitz, had worked together in designing the structure. Fernbach was the first Jewish architect in the United States and had been here only 12 years when he received the commission from the congregation to build the temple. The architects and congregation leaders decided upon using a Moorish motif, which reflected the pre-Inquisition period when Jews enjoyed relative freedom in Spain. It also allowed them to compete with the soaring Gothic pinnacles of St. Patrick's.

As Seth and I climbed the marble steps leading into the building, the several shades of brick and "Ohio and Newark stone" greeted us on the front and on the two Minaret-type towers that soared 140 feet skyward. There were five arched doorways that were repeated just above in smaller versions. Stained and painted glass sparkled in the sunlight and tiled red roofs at various heights blended to form an Arabian fantasy of these German Reform Jews and were certainly not an understated Jewish orthodox design.

As I opened the door and we stepped through into the main vestibule, the giant oak door whooshed back in place, and we both stood there for a moment and took in the view. Above us, the soaring space

rose at least five stories up, with supporting pillars that looked to be over 60 feet tall. Moorish arches were carved and stenciled, and every inch of ceiling and walls was decorated with a variety of mathematical shapes. Both Muslims and Jews were not allowed to depict the human form, as they believed our bodies to be holy and made by God. Instead, the interior showed a dense pattern of stars, crescents, crosses, hexagons and octagons. Of course, both German Jews and the Moors loved mathematics, and the inside of the Emanu-El reflected this love with a great passion.

The woodwork was of black walnut and white oak, and the seats were upholstered in the best manner, the aisles richly carpeted in reds and blues, and floors of the portico and vestibule were tessellated in mosaic tiles. Seth, holding my hand, looked up at me and pointed with his other hand at a seat near the wall. "That's where I sit," he said. "The organ has 4,500 pipes!" he said, pointing above us at the giant polychromed and gilded cylinders that stretched the entire length of the choir gallery.

Since it was a Sunday, there were no worshippers present, just a few visitors who, like us, were admiring the magnificent architecture. I led Seth down the stairs into the basement. This was where there was a lecture room and the Sabbath school rooms that could accommodate 400 to 500 children. Seth knew these rooms well, as he attended with his mother every weekday after school. Seth was learning Hebrew, although as this was a Reform temple, he was not going to have a *bar mitzvah*. We were to meet Rabbi Doctor Samuel Adler, the head of the temple and one of the great philosophical and theological leaders of the Reform Movement in Germany.

We met a Missus Schwartz, who greeted us from her desk in front of Doctor Adler's office. She introduced herself and immediately got up and went to a small table in the corner and picked up a bowl filled with some kind of treats. She brought them over to Seth, and the boy covered his eyes with his left hand and dipped into the bowl with his right.

"We play this game whenever Seth visits. I told him if he can pick out the piece of chocolate without looking, then I'll let him take two more. Most of the pieces are horehound, and the children don't like them," she said.

As luck would have it, Seth selected the chocolate. True to her word, Missus Schwartz let the lad choose two more. Soon, Seth resembled a chipmunk with both of his cheeks bulging.

"Doctor Adler is expecting you, Mister O'Malley. You may go right in," she said, and she walked to the door and opened it for us.

Doctor Adler was standing before a chart on an easel next to his desk. On this chart was the image of a hand, and in the palm of this hand was an eye. Bessie had explained to me that this was what the Jews and other supernatural believers believed to be a symbol of a *hamsa*, which is used to protect you from a curse that can be placed upon you so you will have bad luck.

In fact, Bessie told me that she had given Seth a silver *hamsa* medallion to wear around his neck. She believed he had been cursed because he had joined me as my assistant, and this was a way to keep him safe. There were also other writings on the chart, but they were in German and Hebrew, so I did not understand what they said. I must admit, I did not expect to see this in the office of such a scientific and unsuperstitious gentleman as Doctor Adler.

“This is the symbol of the *Ayin-horeh* or evil eye. Many members of my congregation, including the educated such as Missus Mergenthaler, believe this is real. The Talmud mentions it many times, but it also stipulates that it is only effective if one believes in it. This, indeed, is at the root of all differences between science and religion, is it not?”

I nodded my head in agreement. I was not about to engage the rabbi in any argument at this point. We needed to rent his room, and he was in charge.

Doctor Adler was clean-shaven and handsome, wearing a black frock coat, white shirtsleeves and cravat. His eyesight must have been keen, as he wore no spectacles, and his grip was firm as I shook his hand. “Welcome, Mister O’Malley! Missus Mergenthaler was correct. You are a big man. And this little man I know well. *Shalom*, Seth.”

“*Shalom*, Doctor,” Seth said, working the final pieces of chocolate between his jaws and sitting down on a wooden chair that had a cushion on it. It must have been for the children who came to visit the Rabbi when they were naughty, because Seth glanced around the room as he sat there as if he expected an adult to begin lecturing him.

We were in for a lecture, but this was a lecture I was not prepared for, and as the doctor spoke, I understood that we now had one more member of our unique band of believers, as Bessie must have entrusted him with the knowledge that I wanted to keep secret for the safety of our members.

“We Jews are not a prideful people because we fear this dark force that cannot be controlled by our actions or by our scientific tools. My congregants often believe that these hidden forces will take away a new job, their good looks and talents, or perhaps just prevent happy things from coming their way. A random compliment, someone showing off her new baby—all of these acts of pride will reflexively bring on mutterings of ‘*Keyn’e horeh!*’—no evil eye—followed by cries of ‘A-willee, a-willee!’ This is not voodoo, Mister O’Malley. This is what is believed.”

“I understand, Doctor. My people also have many superstitions. Gold at the end of the rainbow. Leprechauns and little people living in the clover. But what we experienced recently does not relate to superstition. Have you seen this boy change into other people?” I pointed to Seth, and he smiled up at us like a mouse in a cheese factory.

“Indeed I have! His mother gave me a private exhibition in my office. I was witness to my dog, Jonah, becoming the first canine to discuss the theoretical probability of using *mazikeen* to make the Noah’s Ark story a very probable adventure. I know what Seth is, Mister O’Malley,” he said, smiling down at the boy, “and I also know what you are facing in the way of *Ayin-horeh*. In fact, I knew about Seth long before you became aware of his abilities.”

I was flabbergasted! No wonder Bessie had turned to Doctor Adler. He had already been privy to the young boy’s miraculous powers, and now he was becoming part of our inner group.

“That is quite surprising. Bessie never told me about such things. In fact, she never expressed the slightest belief that her son was magical,” I said. Indeed, my previous cases could have been quite different had I known about the boy and his abilities.

Doctor Adler walked over to where Seth was seated and placed his hands gently on the boy's shoulders. "I have known about Seth before this temple was built. In fact, it is our little secret that we built this temple in the Moorish tradition because of Seth's powers and his need to be protected."

I stumbled over to one of the big leather cushioned chairs and collapsed into it. I did not know quite what to believe. Was I being drawn into some supernatural cult that could possibly get me into more danger than what I had faced with Jane the Grabber, the World Eugenics Collective and Joshua Reynolds the serial killer?

"Don't be afraid, Mister O'Malley. I understand your trepidation. When I became aware of Seth and the entire Mergenthaler family, I was just as perplexed as you must be now. We Jews are not a superstitious people. In fact, I have not shared any of this knowledge with any person in my congregation. You can be secure in the fact that I am here to offer you refuge and protection from these evil forces you must combat. I don't know if I can be any more direct. We are here to be your sanctuary." Doctor Adler smiled over at me, and I felt somewhat comforted, although I was still wary.

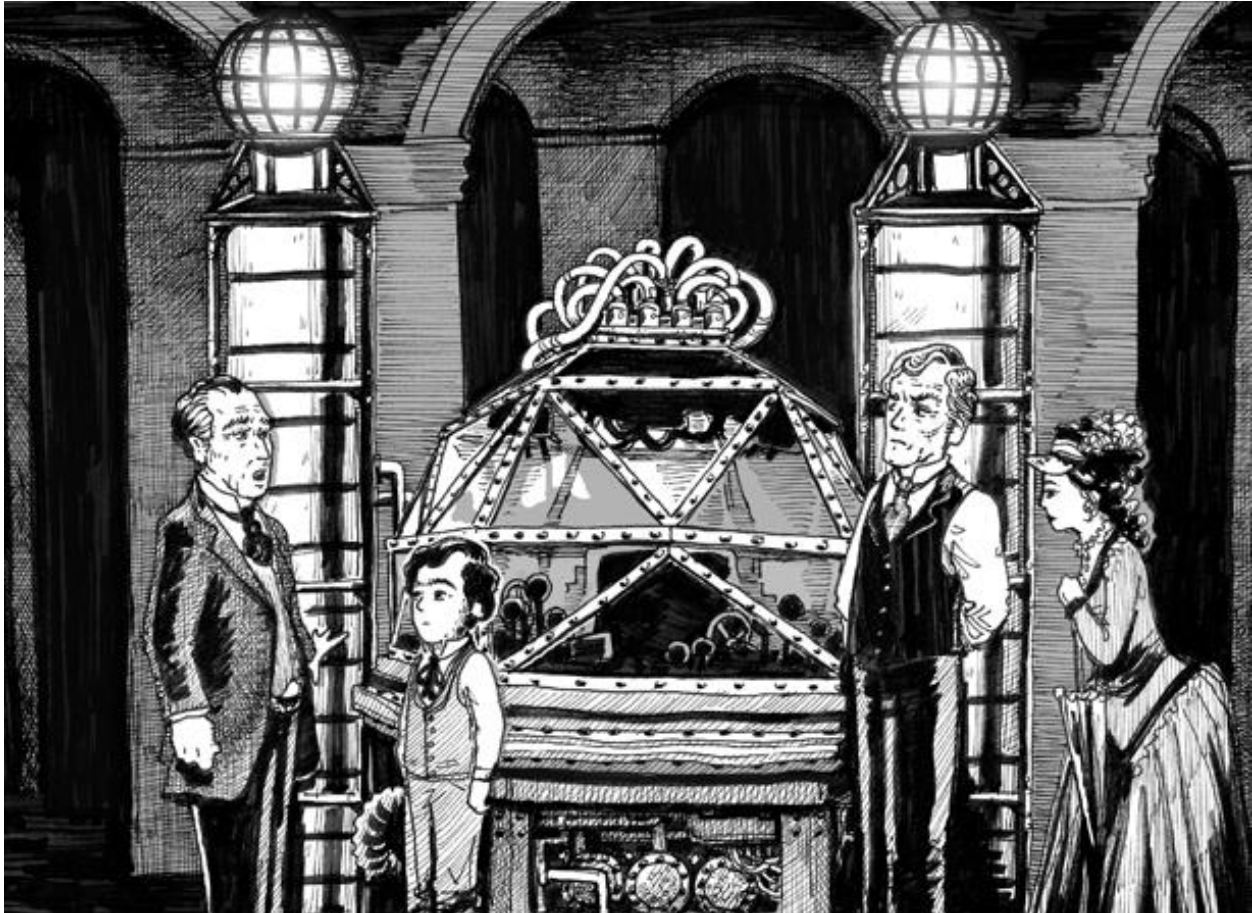
"Where is our sanctuary?" I managed to say.

"Please! Come with me, and I'll show you," the doctor said, walking briskly over to the door.

Seth and I followed him down the hallway until he came to a large Persian rug on the floor. He pushed on one of the wall panels in a succession of what I supposed were coded taps, and the rug became airborne! It hovered in the air and then, with a pass of Doctor Adler's hand, it moved to the side to expose a large trap door etched inside the hallway floor. He again tapped on the door in a coded number of taps, and the door moved open like a hidden panel. Beneath it, there were stairs going down into the darkness below.

"Come down with me. I want to show you your new offices, Detective O'Malley. We have spent many years perfecting this enclosure to serve the purpose it will now be serving. We are quite proud of it, although most of our congregation, I am sad to say, do not know it exists."

As we followed Doctor Adler downstairs, I kept thinking about what he had said about the evil eye. If this new office of mine was going to protect me from bad luck, then what was in it for Doctor Adler? Certainly he must have an ulterior motive. I never knew any man of the cloth who did not know how to manipulate his "faith" into some kind of conniving method to grease his own tabernacle.



When we reached the bottom of the stairs, Doctor Adler placed his hand on the wall and light immediately flooded the room. This sanctuary was about 100 yards long and 200 yards wide. It extended the length of the temple's basement, and the gas lanterns seemed to be arranged so they were ignited in a series, similar to the way stage lights were lit inside one of the big theaters downtown. This room was covered with copper on the walls, and inside in the center of the room was a long table filled with all sorts of lab equipment. Magnets, microscopes, flasks, beakers filled with many kinds of chemicals, test tubes and a chart of the elements, were all laid out neatly on top of the table.

In addition, there were many devices I had never seen before. The doctor walked over to one of these inventions and placed his hand upon it. It looked like a circular device that could hold something in several holes that were located around the periphery. To demonstrate, the doctor walked over to the table and picked up three test tubes filled with liquid and were capped with corks. He brought them over to this device and placed each tube inside one of the holes. He then pushed a button and the device began to spin the tubes rapidly around and around until they were spinning so fast they were a blur of glass and liquid.

"This is a centrifuge. Seth was able to see this invention in the future, and we copied it. This runs with an electro-magnetic generator. We can use it to mix drugs and chemicals to develop all kinds of elixirs and medicines that Mount Sinai is now using. We also want to find other inventions and mixtures we can use to cure diseases and other maladies. Seth has told us there are cures in the future that we can bring back to put to our use. But first, we need to find out how these cures are made and what tools we



need to create to develop them.” Doctor Adler stopped the electric spinning and walked over to another device that was standing along the wall.

“This is our time machine,” he said, matter-of-factly. “Seth was able to see it being used far in the future, and we were able to create it. It was quite easy to create, as I believe things must have become simpler as technology advanced over the years. Look. All one need do is step between the beams of light transmitted by these magnetic force field amplifiers. I can see you are excited. Your rival, Miss Hester Jane Haskins, has this ability as well, does she not?” Doctor Adler smiled.

I believe Doctor Adler mistook my shaking in fear for excitement.

“Yes. She disappeared. The police destroyed her killing machine, but she demonstrated how she was able to travel in time to bring back the inventor of this device which was murdering poor orphans for profit. I would, indeed, like to see how this machine of yours works,” I said, and I moved over to put my hand on one of the magnetic transmitters. “When could we try it?”

The device had two tall columns of metal facing each other. Each one had a globe at the top. Connecting the two pillars was a large crystal capsule with a set of levers on a panel inside the capsular container. Doctor Adler placed his right hand on one of the columns. “My father always told me that necessity is the mother of invention, so I suppose we should first have an immediate need to use this machine. Inside each of these columns is the magnetic force field amplification system. Seth observed how these were assembled, and we were able to duplicate the process. The key was the circulating of light beams between the amplifiers by using gamma and magnetic fields to warp time.”

“My mother always told me to believe in guardian angels, and now I have an angel to guard,” I said. “In fact, it would seem I will be solving cases in quite a different manner now that Seth is my assistant. On our way over here, Seth related a crime in the future that will be committed by pirates in a flying balloon. We have no clue as to how these air balloons are being used and what weapons they might have to force a merchant ship into submission. I can only apply my detective analysis to what I know now and in the past. Seth’s vision into the future is limited by its scope, as you probably must know. The boy gives me just enough to begin compiling theories. If this time machine could get us into the future with some degree of control, then we might be able to ascertain a much better degree of discovery to use in our case.”

“Yes, I understand,” said Doctor Adler. “The fact of the matter is that I don’t know how this machine works, and only Seth really understands its design. Your antagonists seem to have a much more developed method of visiting the future. You said Jane Haskins brought somebody with her to design a death machine?”

“That’s correct. She must have a time travel device that allows her to bring another person back with her. My guess is that what Seth saw alludes to a new criminal conspiracy, and these adversaries of ours are once again using inventors from the future to design devices they can apply in the 1860s, when our technology does not possess the advanced features to counter theirs. The only clue I have now is the use of balloons. I do know that General McClellan used balloons in the war to spy on the Rebels and provide directions for our artillery to accurately shell the enemy. Thaddeus Lowe was the name of the gentleman who headed the balloon corps, and I can visit him to see what has since been evolving in our government’s research into using balloons for warfare.”

“Excellent idea! In the meantime, I will work with Seth on our own time machine. Perhaps we can discover exactly how it functions and to what use we can put it in order to advance our cause.” Doctor Adler placed his arm around the boy’s shoulders.

“Can I go up in the balloon?” Seth asked.

I looked down at the boy and smiled. “I’ll ask Mister Lowe. We need you to keep looking out for developments in the future with these pirates you saw. Can you do that for us?”

“Of course! These visions come to me. I don’t look for them,” Seth pointed out.

“That has always been the way with Jews,” said Rabbi Adler. “We are called by the Creator to go forth and accomplish His will. We are always reluctant heroes. We shall work to piece this puzzle together because we have been called to do so.”

“I also want to visit my other friends. Missus Mergenthaler, Rebecca Charming Jones, and Walter McKenzie and his men have all become part of this supernatural adventure. We can still use the same analytical skills to solve problems, but this new challenge will require the best from everyone in our group. On behalf of our group, I want to welcome you, Doctor,” I said, walking over to him and once again shaking his hand.

Doctor Adler said, “Do you mind if I show you something I created in honor of your new presence inside our temple? I want to hang it upon our wall to symbolize our struggle.”

The rabbi walked over to a wooden chest and opened the top. He bent down and pulled out a large tapestry and brought it over to the wall near the laboratory section of the cavernous room. “Mister O’Malley, would you mind holding this against the wall while I hammer it into place?”

I walked over to where he stood and took the left side of the square tapestry. It was made of blue wool, and it had gold silk sewn on the top of it with what looked like letters of some kind. I held the half up to the wall. “Here?” I said, ready to move it if it did not look to be in the proper place.

“One more inch to the right and up about another two inches,” said Doctor Adler, standing in front of the tapestry holding his hammer and nails.

I moved it accordingly until he said, “There!” The rabbi walked over, reached up, and hammered the first nail into the corner of what now appeared to be a flag or pennant of some sort. He then moved down to the lower left corner and hammered the second nail into the wall.

I picked up the other side of the cloth and carried it over until it was ready to be hammered against the wall.

“Up one inch!” Doctor Adler instructed me.

I moved it up. He came over and hammered in the final two corners.

We both moved back to look at the final result. The Hebrew letters for what was to be our symbol of victory over evil looked like this:

# מִיכָאֵל

"It's quite striking. What does it mean?" I asked.

"It is Hebrew, and it means 'who is like God?' In English, it is the name Michael. In Jewish, Christian and Islamic teachings, he is an archangel, one of the highest angels, who is a messenger and warrior for the Supreme Being."

"Oh, yes! We call him Saint Michael the Archangel. He's supposed to fight the devil at the end of the world, correct?" I asked.

"Correct. Michael is mentioned three times in the Book of Daniel, one as 'the great prince who stands up for the children of your people.' The idea that Michael was the advocate of the Jews became very popular in our culture even though there was a rabbinical prohibition against appealing to angels as intermediaries between God and His people. It is similar to the evil eye, is it not? Michael is the supreme protector against the evil eye, one might say," said Doctor Adler.

"In Catholic school, the nuns taught us that in the Book of Revelation Michael will lead God's armies against Satan's forces and defeat him during a war in heaven," I said, remembering the times that the nun would admonish me when I did not remember a lesson from Catechism.

"Quite right. In fact, Christian sanctuaries to Michael appeared in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, when he was first seen as a healing angel, during plagues, and then over time as a protector and leader of the army of God against the forces of evil. By the 6<sup>th</sup> century, devotions to Archangel Michael were widespread both in the Eastern and Western Churches," Doctor Adler said.

"I can see why you chose him to be our protector," I said. "Do you think we are facing the satanic forces of evil?"

"The rabbis declared that Michael entered upon his role of defender at the time of the biblical patriarchs. Thus, according to Rabbi Eliezer ben Jacob, it was Michael who rescued Abraham from the furnace into which he had been thrown by Nimrod. It was Michael, the 'one that had escaped' who told Abraham that Lot had been taken captive and who protected Sarah from being defiled by Abimelech. Michael announced to Sarah that she would bear a son and he rescued Lot at the destruction of Sodom," said Rabbi Adler.

"Those are plenty of good deeds," I said.

It was Seth's turn to show his knowledge about this divine protector. "Michael protected Isaac when his father Abraham was going to sacrifice him. He put a ram in his place to be killed. And he also saved Jacob in his mother's womb when Samael, the evil one, was going to kill him. It was Michael who

wrestled with Jacob and later blessed him.” Seth smiled, “Of course, Michael is a completely divine angel, and I am only one-half of what he is. He cannot really die the way I must.”

“Let’s not talk about such things, Seth. You are our little angel,” I said. “Thank you very much, Doctor Adler, for this symbolic gesture. I hope we can live up to the image that Michael represents.”

As if on cue, our angel began to stare off into space again in his transfixed way. It was exactly the same as when he had seen the vision from the future about the pirates and the air balloon. Seth’s diaphragm began to expand and contract, and his eyes grew wide with horror.

“What is it, Seth? What do you see?” I walked over to the boy and picked him up. He was breathing rapidly, and his eyes were fluttering. I took him over to one of the padded chairs and set him down inside the cushion.

Doctor Adler came over and placed the boy’s wrist between his fingers to feel his pulse. “His heart is racing. I hope he doesn’t lose consciousness.”

Seth shouted, “Watch out! It’s coming toward you!”

His eyes began to water, and he sat up straight in the chair as if he had accepted some horrible fact of life. His face took on a very adult aspect, and his brow furrowed in concentration. His brown eyes penetrated mine with a stark seriousness that he had only one other time before. We had just left the theater after seeing the play *The Black Crook* on Broadway. Seth related to us about what a *mazikeen* was and that there were also evil *mazikeen* who could “burn down your houses and rip the flesh from your bones!”

This time, Seth was speaking about something he saw through his telescopic future vision. “It was a gigantic fish, I thought at first, but it had no scales or fins. It was certainly not kosher!” he giggled, and Doctor Adler smiled and wiped the boy’s perspiring brow with a handkerchief.

“This mechanical whale was beneath the waves, and it gave birth to another, much smaller fish. This fish shot out of the mother and sped through the water faster than a shark attacking a seal. It looked cold, black and hard, and I knew it was going to explode when it reached the ship. That’s why I screamed. Then, it all became dark again. I don’t know what happened after that.”

“That’s all right, my boy, you have seen enough for one day,” said Doctor Adler.

“Yes, I want to take you back to your mother,” I said, and I lifted Seth to his feet. He stood straight, and he seemed to be in good shape once again. There was a sparkle in his eyes, and color had returned to his face.

“Thank you again, Doctor Adler. I will be moving in here tomorrow, if you don’t mind. I look forward to working with you,” I said, and I shook the rabbi’s hand for the final time.

As we walked up the stairs to return to the basement of Temple Emanu-El, I turned around and asked Doctor Adler, “By the way, Doctor, what does “Emanu-El mean?”

Doctor Adler smiled up at me. “It means ‘God is with us,’” he said.

I returned his smile, “Let’s hope He is,” I admitted, as we stepped into the light of Doctor Adler’s office to the awaiting smile of Missus Schwartz.—