

**January 10, 1930, 1:00 am**

The speedboat sliced through the icy waters of the Detroit River, the high-pitched whine of its engine piercing the early morning quiet. Up ahead, the lights of the River Rouge plant glowed so brightly it looked as if the sun were rising – hours ahead of time – from the north. Henry Ford's Model A was an even bigger hit than his Model T and, to meet demand, the plant ran twenty-four hours a day. Who had time for sleep, anyway? The world was at peace and the economy was booming and wages were so good every man on the line could afford to buy one of Ford's cars. That thing on Wall Street a few months ago? Herbert Hoover had assured a worried nation there was nothing to worry about. Detroit agreed, carried on and, in the seconds it took the president to utter his words of comfort, another Model A had rolled off the line.

About the only thing missing during these heady times was the chance to buy a drink. Moral Crusaders, along with no-nothings and anti-immigrants, had decided America could no longer handle its liquor. So ten years ago they turned off the spigot and the country went dry.

Or so the Crusaders thought.

At the wheel of the speedboat, a young man smiled. No, make that a smirk... the smirk of a young man who didn't just think he was the smartest guy in the room, but knew he was. More important, he had the balls to back it up. "Don't worry, Detroit," he said (half out loud, half to himself) "you won't be thirsty for long."

"What'd ya say?" came a voice from the stern, bathed in darkness.

He turned back in the direction of the voice. "Nothing, Moshe, I was just – " Wait. What was that?

"Harry? You say somethin'?"

"Quiet." Harry turned and looked desperately over Moshe's shoulder and saw it. A searchlight. And it was getting brighter. So the coppers had a speedboat, too. Yea, well, they didn't have what he had under the hood of this baby. Let's have some fun. He allowed himself another smirk as he grabbed the throttle and arrogantly pushed it forward. "Hang on," he yelled. The boat lurched forward and a wall of cold air rudely smacked their faces. They were moving so fast now the boat was like a water bug, barely skimming the surface of the water. Over the engine's urgent whine Harry heard, from the stern, "God damn it, it's cold, Harry."

He rolled his eyes and shook his head – no easy task with the frigid wind slamming him in the face. "Would you rather be cold or dead, Moshe?" Harry yelled.

"What did you say? I can't hear you."

Harry made a mental note. On the next trip, find someone with *beytsim*.

"They's gaining on us, Harry..."

Now he was angry. Was Moshe that stupid? No way could the cops catch him. There were four hundred

horses under the hood of their boat... sixteen cylinders tuned to perfection sitting inside a boat shaped like a bullet and moving just as fast. Harry turned to yell at him. His eyes widened. *Scheisse*. Moshe was right, they were catching up. He glanced down at the throttle and saw it was already pushed to its limit. His smirk was quickly replaced by a scowl as he tried to figure out how many crates of hooch they'd have to throw overboard to make the boat light enough to get away, but with enough on board he could still make a few bucks. From behind them a voice, amplified by a bullhorn, pierced the dark. It was so loud both Harry and Moshe could hear every word, clear as day, over the roar of their engine.

"It's no good Harry. Stop the boat now. Don't make this harder on yourself."

Harry? How the hell did the coppers know his name?

Then, another voice. Deeper. Gruffer. Angrier than the first. "You disappoint me Harry Aaronson..."

A chill which rivaled the January cold of the Detroit River shot up his spine. It wasn't the cops. He would have kept going if it were. Instead, he reached down and, resignedly, pulled the throttle towards him. The boat slowed to a stop. He reached for the key, turned off the motor, and the boat settled, helpless, in the river. From behind them, Harry heard the engine on his pursuer's boat throttle down. He exhaled, his warm breath forming a white cloud of vapor in front of his gloomy face. A floodlight suddenly burst to life, blinding him as it split the gloom with artificial daylight.

Now, as his boat silently and helplessly bobbed, he could almost hear the tears forming in Moshe's eyes. "Harry... why?"

From the other boat, behind the floodlight's glare, came the the gruff voice's mocking rejoinder.

"Yea, Harry, why?"