



Author's Afterword
Hiram's Run

This is a work of fiction. All of the characters are fictional or fictionalized. The historical context is as accurate as possible. This is my chance to provide some true historical context and confess my sins of fictional license.

The novel was inspired by the true story of the kidnapping of a surgeon on 11/9/1936. He received a ransom note by the US Mail while being interviewed about his kidnapping by the police after his return home. There was an effort to find and arrest the ransom note writer, but the matter was dropped after he failed to show up. Thus, the manhunt portrayed in this novel is entirely fictional. But this was Chicago, where unlikely things happened in the 1930s.

The names used for the North Side Gang are fictional and are not based on any actual mobsters. The names of real mobsters or alleged mobsters are used but none of those people "appear" in the story and all the information about them is in the public domain. In other words, don't send Red to silence me. Dr. Carrington is fictional as are all the other doctors. Various characteristics of the medical personnel are based on my personal observations over the course of my medical career but do not represent any one person. I've met physicians who are near saints, and then there are a few like Carrington.

The Bonus Army Protests are long forgotten by most Americans. It was an important event, and a very embarrassing one for the United States of America as a whole. The treatment of World War I veterans was poor to horrible in the war's aftermath. The reaction to this partially led to innovations such as the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the GI Bill. To my perspective, there is no defense or justification for General MacArthur's or Lieutenant Colonel Patton's actions during the protests.

Lenny and his friends are pure fiction with no factual basis. However, European Jews were prevented from fleeing to the US during the 1930s because of government-set quotas and underlying anti-Semitism in American society and institutions. The German American Bund was formed in March of 1936 in support of the Nazi cause. Its origins began around 1933 and had a strong Chicago contingent. The organization fizzled in the early 1940's particularly after Germany declared war on the United States. I'd like to think there were people like Lenny helping sneak Jews into the United States during that era.

This novel is really about some of the core characteristics shown by the characters themselves: love, duty, honor, courage, and commitment. Bonds formed in battle are strong and often lifelong. This is true of the bonds between Ben, Alice, and Hiram, as well as Hiram's marine veteran friends. Leslie Wynn and Roscoe Boggs are pure fiction and do not represent their agencies or any real individuals. I realize that members of the FBI and Postal Inspection Service may take umbrage with my characters. My defense is: they made a great story, and this was Chicago, where corruption was a way of life in the era portrayed.