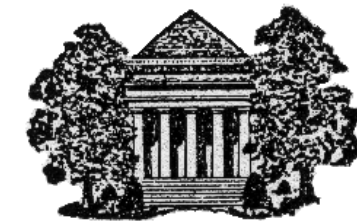


**Murder**  
in  
**Sugarbush Lodge**

“A Study In Brotherhood”

*By:*  
***Christopher Allan Knowles***



**The Temple Publishers**  
<http://TheTempleBooks.com>

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ISBN 1-59619-009-4

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## Dedication

To my own Celtic and Anglo-Saxon forefathers who settled and cultivated their Island homes, explored the rites, rituals, and teachings of an ancient culture and enriched them with their own, and gave us modern day Freemasonry. May all men, both sacred and profane, be informed and instructed by what they learned, now and forever more.

## *Chapter One*

*“ . . . The lamb has in all ages  
been deemed a emblem of innocence . . . ”*

Angus MacLeish was a shepherd. And, if the truth be told, shepherding was all he had ever wanted to do. The irony, then, would not have been lost on Angus to know that the chain of events he set in motion when he and his new bride emigrated from their native Scotland to America in 1895 would, some 50-odd years later, shake the very foundations of polite society from the farmlands outside of Montpelier in Vermont to the fashionable Manhattan suburbs of Greenwich, Connecticut and Scarsdale, New York.

Angus was the only son of Malcolm and Annie MacLeish. Born in 1860, he was raised on the family sheep farm nestled in the craggy foothills outside of Aberdeen in Northeastern Scotland. In the Fall, Winter and Spring he would join his father out in the fields with the flock every day after school. In the Summer, he got up with his father at dawn. After finishing the morning's chores and dining on an ample breakfast of fresh-baked bread, fresh-churned butter, honey and strong, hot tea, he and his father would take to the fields. As they passed out of sight over the crest of one of the ridgelines which divided the farm into so many parallel strips, Annie knew she would not see their faces again until the long shadows of this Summer afternoon gave way to the fog, and chill, which marked this Scottish Summer's evening.

Theirs was a good life, and they wanted for little. But, when Angus met Sarah, ten years his junior, in the Winter of 1892 he began to examine his life, and the options available to a man of thirty-two who was entertaining the notion of starting a family. Angus and Sarah decided that they would be married in the Spring of 1894 and, as had so many other young families from Scotland, Ireland and England, they resolved to seek their fortune in the New World.

While, in the present day, couples relocate at a moment's notice, in 1894 the separation of generations of a family was neither a decision, nor an undertaking, entered into lightly. First, Angus and Sarah had to tell Malcolm and Annie of their intentions. Annie had cried; Malcolm just shook his head slowly as he made his way to another room of the house to be left alone with his thoughts. Then, there were the logistics to be considered. Money had to be set aside. And correspondence had to be exchanged with "distant" cousins, both literally and figuratively, who had emigrated to America some years earlier.

As has seemingly been the case for centuries, when families emigrate to new countries, much less new continents, the prevailing tendency is to seek out a new home which is geographically and topographically, if not climatologically, similar to one's native land. So it was that Angus and Sarah came to choose as their new home the foothills of the Green Mountains in the Mad River valley of North central Vermont.

Nearly a year went by before the newlyweds were ready to embark upon their trans-Atlantic journey. And only months before they were to leave Sarah realized that she had become pregnant. But, by this time, nothing was going to deter them. The fourteenth of February, 1895, Valentines Day, was the date of the sailing of their ship to the United States and there was nothing, or no one, that could alter those plans.

On the ninth of February Angus and Sarah had said a long, last farewell to Malcolm and Annie at the main train terminal in Aberdeen. With all the earthly possessions they dare try to take with them, Angus and Sarah boarded the train which would carry them on the first leg of their journey. The route their train took carried them through the heart, and more than two-thirds the length, of "this sceptered isle" which was the home to England, Scotland

and Wales. In London they changed trains for the relatively short trip on to the Southern English seaport of Southampton.

When they arrived in Southampton they took a small hotel room within walking distance of the docks wherein they could wait out the last few days before they left the British Isles behind them forever. On the morning of February fourteenth they made their way, with the assistance of a small carriage, to the dockside. There they boarded one of the numerous nondescript ships which made up the bulk of the White Star Line's fleet. On the flowing tide at midday, Angus and Sarah gave one last, lingering look at the island which had been the only home they had ever known and held each other's hands tightly as it disappeared below the horizon in the East.

## *Chapter Two*

*“ . . . that I might travel in foreign countries,  
work and receive Master’s pay, the better to  
enable me to support myself and family . . . ”*

Upon their arrival in New York early the next week, Angus and Sarah slowly, but determinedly, made their way to Grand Central Terminal in midtown Manhattan. Early that evening they boarded the train which would take them to within fifty miles of their new home. Pulling out of the terminal that cold Winter's night, the train made its way through the Upper East Side and Harlem, across the Spuyten Duyvel swivel railroad bridge which connected the island of Manhattan with The Bronx on the mainland, and Westward to the trunk line which ran along the Eastern bank of the Hudson River all the way to the Canadian border.

Throughout the night the train passed through Riverdale and Croton-on-Hudson, Poughkeepsie and Rensselaer. Early the next morning the train pulled into Burlington, Vermont. Angus and Sarah were met at the station by one of Annie MacLeish's nieces and her husband who would take them on the last leg of their pilgrimage. They set out from Burlington and headed Southeast. Shortly after noon they made it through a pass in one of the ranges which make up the Green Mountains of Vermont and descended into what, they would later learn, was the Mad River valley. They rode on through the day, and shortly after Winter's early sunset they arrived at Robert and Rachel Reekie's home Southwest of Montpelier on the outer edges of the river valley. After traveling for over a week, Angus and Sarah had made it from the foothills above Aberdeen to this sheep farm three miles from the closest town of Waitsfield, Vermont.

Robert and Rachel were too exhausted after their day's round trip to Burlington to do anything but show their houseguests to their quarters for the night and then go to bed themselves. As for Angus and Sarah, one can only imagine the mixture of exhaustion and exhilaration which they must have been experiencing as they lay in bed that first cold February night in Vermont anticipating what the sunrise would bring.

When morning did break, Angus and Sarah were subjected, or treated, to an assault on their senses the likes of which they had never endured, and for which they could never have been prepared. When they stepped outside they saw a sky that was both bluer and brighter than that which they had ever seen so early in the morning through the fog and mist in which the Scottish seacoast was shrouded each day.

The only thing brighter than the sky was the fresh two-inch blanket of snow which Mother Nature had deposited on the Vermont countryside between ten and midnight the previous evening. And while the Mad River valley which lay spread before them, save the fresh coating of snow, resembled many along which their train had followed on the trip from Aberdeen to London, they were not prepared for the fact that the farmhouse in which they had slept the night before lay between two snow-capped 3,500 - 5,000 foot high mountain ranges. Indeed, they were so steep, and so high, that, in the glaring sun, the boundary between mountain peak and crystalline sky was often lost.

After bathing, dressing, and eating, it was time for Robert and Rachel to show Angus and Sarah the plot of land the money which they had sent from Scotland had bought. They all climbed aboard the wagon and rode down the hills and through the dairy farms which occupied the more level land that bordered the river until they reached the trail which followed the river along its Eastern bank. They turned left and followed the trail South until it passed

through a maroon-colored wooden covered bridge which bisected the small town of Waitsfield, North from South, and continued on South along the Western bank of the Mad River toward Warren, the next town along the river valley. When they had come to a spot on the river road roughly midway between Waitsfield and Warren, they found another rough trail which headed off nearly due West and took the turn.

There are some phenomena which are seemingly universal in the agricultural and livestock regions of the nation, whether it be the Willamette River valley in Oregon, the Niobrara River valley in Nebraska or the Mad River valley in Vermont. The flattest, and most arable, land immediately adjacent to the river itself is shared between the cultivating of crops and dairy farming. In the slightly less flat, and slightly less vegetated, regions of land which border the prime agricultural lands can be found the nation's cattle ranches. And when the terrain gets too steep, and the vegetation too sparse, for cattle, it is in those regions where you will find the nation's sheep farms.

It was in just such an area that Robert and Rachel found Angus and Sarah's ten-acre parcel of land. At the base of a mountain called Castlerock, where rock out-croppings and lichens shared the landscape with intermittent patches of grass and forest, Angus and Sarah would make their new home.

## *Chapter Three*

*“ . . . gathered together the men . . . ,  
 . . . gave them battle and put them to flight . . . ”*

Angus and Sarah did in Vermont what they had done for the previous two years in Scotland; raise sheep. There was a small one-room hut which they would, over the course of the next two Summers, build into a beautiful three-bedroom cabin. In September of 1895 their first, and only, child, Timothy, was born. He was the apple of his father's eye, and when the United States entered World War I (then called, simply, The World War), Timothy volunteered for the U.S. Army. He spent three long, but blessedly safe, years at Fort Dix in New Jersey as a procurement clerk. When the war came to an end he returned to his family's sheep farm in Vermont and his job as yet another in generations of shepherds. In the early 1910's he'd met Erin, a third cousin of Annie's on her father's side, and in 1918, with the war safely behind them, they wed.

Timothy and Erin had lived with his parents on their farmstead on the hills above the West bank of the Mad River between Waitsfield and Warren. In 1919 the first of their sons, Ian, had been born. Two years later Erin had given birth to Ian's younger brother, Allyn.

When, in 1929, the effects of the Great Depression found their way to rural Vermont, Timothy MacLeish called upon his military experience to analyze what it would take to keep the wool-growing farmers of the Mad River valley in business until the nation's economy rebounded. Between the wool-shearing seasons of 1930 and 1931, Timothy MacLeish took two steps which would carry the wool gatherers of North central Vermont through the depths of the Depression.

First, Timothy managed to bring together the sheep farmers of the Mad River valley, both friends and relatives, into a wool-gathering cooperative which would serve to sustain each shepherd through their individual lean periods by pooling their outputs, marketing them as a single commodity, and distributing their revenues proportionally to each of their contributions. Then, drawing upon his wartime experience as a procurement clerk, he entered into two contractual agreements which would allow the wool gatherers of the Mad River valley to weather the Great Depression. First, he had negotiated a contract with "L. L.", of L. L. Bean fame, in Freeport, Maine, to provide raw wool for their Hudson Bay "point" blankets, a staple of their inventory. Second, he had entered into a contract with the U.S. Government to supply wool for the U.S. Army's Winter-weight dress uniforms. While neither glamorous nor highly profitable, these two contracts allowed the cooperative to maintain fiscal viability throughout the 1930's.

Finally, as the administrator of the cooperative, he had had the opportunity to purchase some of the smaller sheep farms adjoining his. Many of his father's generation of sheep farmers were dying off; many younger families were seeking their fortunes in the large cities of New England. After a decade, he and his family owned nearly 500 acres of land distributed from the foothills above the Mad River to the base of Castlerock mountain clear to the peak on its Eastern slope.

During World War I Timothy had learned a lesson which stayed with him for the rest of his life. He had observed that the lot of an officer during wartime was far preferable to that of an enlisted man and, as a result, he had instilled in his two sons the value of a formal education beyond high school. Unfortunately, while the lesson was well learned, the Japanese Imperial Navy intervened on December 7, 1941, and neither Ian nor Allyn had a chance to put it into action.

Because Ian and Allyn had spent the majority of their lives negotiating the snow-covered Green Mountains of Vermont, when their country called they both volunteered for the U.S. Army's elite 10th Mountain Division headquartered not far away at Fort Drum in Watertown, New York. The 10th Mountain Division trained in Winter and arctic tactics and conditions. They had a series of ski huts in the snow-covered Rockies of Colorado where they played Winter-environment war games, and they became as adept in their art and environment as the UDT (Underwater Demolition Team) units, and their successors, the SEAL's (SEa, Air, and Land), had become in a marine environment. Both Ian and Allyn saw action in the European campaign but, just as their unit was being redeployed to the Pacific theatre, President Truman dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, bringing Japan to its knees and effectively ending the war.

Upon returning to Vermont following their discharge from the Army, both Ian and Allyn soon realized that they missed the camaraderie and fellowship born of a shared experience which the 10th Mountain Division had afforded them. As did so many other veterans after the war, they turned to the local Masonic Lodge to fill the void left by their leaving the service. In Ian and Allyn's case this meant joining Sugarbush Lodge #73 in Warren, just a few miles South of their farmstead on State Route 100. Sugarbush Lodge met in a suite of rooms on the second floor above the local hardware store, and because they met at times when the store was closed there was an outside staircase on the South side of the building which led to the door to the Lodge's reception room. Owing to the timing between their leaving the Army and their going off to school, they had plenty of time to take all three degrees - Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, and Master Mason - before the Fall semester of their freshman year.

More worldly than their father in their view to the second half of the Twentieth Century, and more determined than ever to continue



their formal education, both applied to, and were accepted by, the University of Vermont in 1946 under the provisions of the GI Bill. Ian had resolved to study Accounting while Allyn would study Political Science. As the lessons their father had taught them motivated their performance, both graduated with honors and were accepted into graduate school.

Again, Ian took the pragmatic route and was accepted by the Columbia Business School in New York City while Allyn, always the idealist, decided to attend the Yale School of Forestry in New Haven, Connecticut. While Allyn was spending his Summer internships on Cape Cod at the Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole, Massachusetts, Ian spent his Summers as an intern to Benjamin Roth of Scarsdale, New York, the President and Chief Executive Officer of a closely-held Wall Street trading firm in New York City. His association with Roth exposed Ian to the "fast lane" of 1950's Manhattan, and some of those with whom he ended up spending time were the celebrities of the new entertainment medium of television. Because New York City was the locus of activity for its three-network universe, all of TV's luminaries worked within a several square block area of midtown Manhattan, and each of the networks was recruiting any "name" entertainer in the New York City metropolitan area.

One such entertainer was bandleader Tony Orsini who had made his name in East Coast supper clubs, as well as in the USO Clubs of New York and New Jersey and the RAF Service Clubs in England. He now resided in Greenwich, Connecticut, but made the daily trip into Manhattan on the Metro North Commuter Railroad's New Haven Line to keep his postwar career on track.

Because the stock market was still absorbing the pent up capital which had, a decade earlier, been consumed by the war effort, and because entertainers who had been expected to work for "scale" in support of that selfsame war effort could now name their price,

there was a surplus of cash seeking opportunities for investment. Ian, ever the opportunist and an aspiring "young Turk" of the investment community, was acutely aware of these investors in search of investments. One day the potential confluence of supply and demand came together for him in the commodity of 500 acres of Vermont mountainside.

Several variables had to fall into place at once for his plan to materialize. First, Benjamin Roth and Tony Orsini, along with their respective constituencies of venture capitalists, lucratively-paid entertainers, and their hangerson, would have to be convinced of the burgeoning postwar interest in, and demand for, ski resorts. Second, all the potential investors would have to be convinced that the affluent residents of New York City and its environs, Boston, and all points in between, would be willing to drive from five to seven hours to reach a stretch of skiable mountain off State Route 100 between Warren and Waitsfield, Vermont. And, third, Timothy MacLeish would have to be convinced to sell the 500 acres of Vermont mountainside which he had so lovingly nurtured for a generation as a sacred trust bestowed upon him by previous generations of English, Irish and Scottish sheep farmers.

## *Chapter Four*

*“ . . . arts and sciences,  
as well as Freemasonry, arose in the  
East, and have spread to the West. . . ”*

For the MacLeish family, the Spring of 1952 was filled with long-awaited elation and unanticipated depression. On the last Thursday morning in May, Timothy and Erin had boarded the train in Burlington for the trip to New York City for Ian's graduation. As they rode, Timothy reflected upon the fact that this train was following the same right-of-way along which his mother and father had ridden 57 years ago on their way from Scotland to Vermont. Angus MacLeish had died in the great influenza pandemic of 1918 which killed more people around the world than World War I in which he had served. Sarah MacLeish had died nearly twenty years later, in 1937, during the depths of the Great Depression. Thus, this return journey along the East bank of the Hudson River was bittersweet. But, for the two sons of a first-generation American sheep farmer to be receiving Master's degrees from two Ivy League schools within two weeks was an accomplishment of which both Timothy and Erin could be duly proud.

They arrived in New York City the evening before Ian MacLeish's graduation from Columbia Business School. After dinner in one of the city's midtown restaurants, they went back to their hotel room for a night's rest. Friday, on the Morningside Heights campus of Columbia University, with his parents in attendance, Ian received his Master of Science degree along with the rest of the Business School Class of 1952.

That afternoon, and for the next several days, Ian MacLeish would let off the steam he'd stored up over the past two years. Meanwhile, Timothy and Erin caught the New Haven Line train to New Haven

where they would spend the weekend. Three days later, on the first Monday in June, they attended the graduation exercises on the campus of Yale University where Allyn received his Master of Forestry degree. That afternoon he and his parents went out for lunch on the town. Allyn then returned to the campus for one last night in the dorm. His parents returned to their hotel for one last night.

Tuesday morning, bright and early, Timothy, Erin and Allyn boarded the New Haven Line train for the return trip into Grand Central Terminal in New York City. There they met up with Ian, who looked somewhat the worse for wear. They had lunch at The Oyster Bar and just barely made the last call for the train to Burlington. Arriving in the evening, they all spent the night in a local hotel before returning to the farm the next morning.

For the two boys the decompression of returning from New York City and New Haven to rural Vermont was both abrupt and somewhat disorienting. But in no time they were back in the swing of a Mad River valley Summer. They alternated days in the fields with their father while the other reacquainted himself with the residents of Waitsfield, Warren and the rest of the valley.

Another part of that reentry process was attending June's monthly meeting, or Regular Communication, of Sugarbush Lodge #73. Because a couple of the Brethren had had to drop out due to professional or family commitments, Ian and Allyn were asked to step into two of the offices appointed by the Master of the Lodge rather than voted on based upon the recommendation of the Nominating Committee. The appointed positions of Junior Steward through Senior Deacon are filled at the will and pleasure of the Master and, for the 1952 - 1953 Masonic year, the positions of Junior Deacon and Senior Deacon would now be filled by Allyn MacLeish and Ian MacLeish respectively.

The cause of the depression that Spring was the result of Timothy's annual physical examination. He hadn't felt significantly different when he went to see his local physician for this year's physical than he had the year before, but his doctor had detected some changes and sent Timothy to Heaton Hospital in Montpelier for chest x-rays. Timothy knew that Heaton Hospital had been established by Homer W. Heaton in 1895, the year he was born, and the fact that he and the hospital were both the same age amused him. He and his doctor, who was on the phone in his office in Waitsfield, got the results at the same time. What came back should have surprised no one, but somehow it always did. Timothy had developed lung cancer, in both lungs.

Timothy MacLeish was a pipe-smoker, as was his father, Angus, and his grandfather, Malcolm, before him. When you are tending your sheep in the chill of a Scottish morning, or cool of a Scottish evening, a pipe is a good companion. No one who has never smoked can ever know the warm sensation in one's chest and the remarkable clarity of one's thought which a long drag on a burning bowl of tobacco can create. Whether filled with something as mundane as Cherry Blend or as exotic as a custom mixture of imported, aromatic leaves, the sensation is the same, and as addictive.

Angus had learned the habit from his father, and had brought it with him to America. The pipe's effect was just as warming and just as addictive in the cool mountain air of Vermont. A generation after Malcolm taught Angus how to fill the bowl of his pipe, and to tamp down the leaves so that the tobacco would not burn too hot, or too fast, Angus had taught his only son, Timothy, the same lessons. And now, the sins of the father, and the grandfather, were being visited upon the son.

Timothy had chosen not to tell his sons, or his wife, of his diagnosis until after he had attended both of the boys' graduations

that Spring. He had told Erin one night in June as they lay in bed. He asked her not to tell Ian and Allyn. He chose to tell each of them separately, on consecutive afternoons, as they tended their flocks on their nearly 500 acres of Vermont mountainside. Ian received the news with a stoic demeanor; Allyn had cried.

The doctor had given Timothy MacLeish until Christmas to live; he'd made it a month longer until January 25th, the birthday of Scotland's greatest literary figure, Robert Burns. At his death he was buried in the family plot in a small cemetery adjacent to, but elevated just far enough above, the Mad River so as not to be disturbed by the water table or the periodic flooding that occurs when the Spring temperatures rise abruptly and the snow cover melts and runs down the mountains before the ice jams in the river itself have cleared.

## Chapter Five

*“ . . . and to contribute more liberally  
to the relief of a distressed Brother  
Master Mason, his widow and orphans. . . ”*

A will is a funny thing," said Nicholas London, Timothy MacLeish's attorney. Erin, Ian and Allyn MacLeish had assembled in Nick's office, actually his study off the main hallway on the first floor of his house on State Route 100 in Warren that second Monday in February.

"It is a document written by, or on behalf of, the living for the living. But it does not become effective until someone dies. It is a way for the deceased to continue to exert their influence upon the actions of their descendants, and the disposition of their goods, after they no longer have direct control," Nick said.

By any standard, Timothy MacLeish's will was a simple one. Its simplicity was a vestige of the patriarchal household in which he had grown up and the patriarchal society in which his father, Angus, and his grandfather, Malcolm, before him were born. Land, the root of all wealth, was owned and worked by the men of the family. Thus, the land was passed on from male heir to male heir. In the event that there were no masculine offspring in a given generation, the woman, or women, of that generation were deemed "caretakers" of the land, holding it "in trust", as it were, until the next male was born into the family.

Consequently, the five-hundred acres of Castlerock mountainside upon which Ian and Allyn continued to raise sheep were divided equally between the two sons, each receiving 250 acres; Ian the Northern half, from base to peak, and Allyn the Southern half. There was, however, a provision that, should one brother

predecease the other, the surviving brother would inherit the entire 500 acres. The revenues from all 500 acres were to be divided as follows; 50 percent to Erin and 25 percent each to Ian and Allyn. In addition, there was a clause which required Ian and Allyn, jointly and equally, to provide for their mother's shelter, food and clothing, all her wants and needs, until her death, should her 50 percent of the revenues prove inadequate to do so.

Erin would want for nothing, neither necessity nor luxury, for as long as she lived. Her two loving sons would have seen to it even if there had been no such provision in Timothy MacLeish's will. Unfortunately, the sibling relationship between Ian and Allyn, while mutually respectful, had grown considerably cooler over the last eight months. Ever since the brothers had learned of their father's impending death, Ian had begun to aggressively pursue the commercial potential of Castlerock while Allyn had sought to analyze the best practices of both animal husbandry and forestry with which to maximize the productivity of the sheep farm.

Starting the June before his father's death, Ian had convinced Timothy and Allyn to increase the farm's number of employees, thereby providing both Ian and Allyn more time to concentrate on fine tuning the management of the farm. Ian focused on the numbers; Allyn on the animals and plants. But Ian, unbeknownst to Timothy and Allyn, had begun a second, "cottage" industry within and around their little corner of Vermont.

## Chapter Six

*“Our ancient brethren usually  
assembled on high hills, or in deep vales. . .”*

Having received his Master's degree from Columbia Business School and returned to the Mad River valley in June of 1952, Ian was now strategically positioned to undertake the promotion of the development of Castlerock mountain as one of New England's first full-service ski resorts. No more would skiing mean driving for six hours to get to a mountain, skiing for four hours occasionally punctuated by a hot cup of coffee or cocoa at a wooden shack at the base of the ski lift, and then spending another six hours on the return trip home.

Ian's vision would revolutionize skiing in America. There would be tow lines for beginners, chair lifts to the head of the intermediate runs, and super quads to the peak of Castlerock with its black diamond and double black diamond runs. There would be a large base lodge with a cafeteria and pub, with an upscale restaurant in a separate building. Finally, rather than having to drive from, and back to, home all in one day, or even staying at a hotel or motel in Bennington, Burlington or Montpelier, the mountainside would be covered with lodging which would line the heart of the skiable trails and concentrate at the downhill terminus of those trails.

Benjamin Roth and Tony Orsini were two of Ian's first visitors. Whenever possible, Ian would schedule these visits when neither Timothy nor Allyn would be on the mountain. When this was not possible, he introduced his potential investors as friends from New York City who just happened to be passing through.

"Just passing through" was more than a little white lie. Getting to the expanse of land which Ian envisioned as the future Sugarbush ski resort required a considerable effort. The night before a prospective investor's visit, he or she would have to stay in Bennington, Burlington or Montpelier. To get there they would have to catch the train from Manhattan, or one of the stations along the Hudson River in Westchester County, to Burlington, or drive up the Taconic State Parkway and New York State Route 22 to Hoosick, and then across the Vermont border to Bennington at the Southern end of the Green Mountain National Forest.

The following morning they would be picked up by Ian, and driven to Castlerock. Depending upon their enthusiasm, and their stamina, they would make their way up the 3500-foot vertical rise to the peak of the mountain, or some percentage thereof. They would survey the panoramic view which future generations of skiers would gaze upon, and begin to mentally manipulate the numbers with their minds and their mental calculators, placing the decimal point and commas in obscene places among the numerals. This mountain was a license to print money. The lichens and firs provided an enticing foreground on a canvas whose principal color in Summer was green and in the Fall grayish-brown.

When the Vermont snows came in early October, the canvas was transformed as though from a counterfeit pastel Monet or dusky Van Gogh into a genuine Seurat. This was Vermont at its finest. No venture capitalist could say "No". No Wall Street investor could fail to see a naked mountain with the potential to be transformed into a snow-covered Eden where couples, spouses and families could reconnect in a pristine, Alpine environment which could be maintained in total isolation from the reality of the space and time in which they otherwise lived.

One by one Ian's investors lined up, said "This is what I've always wanted," and pledged an investment which could turn Ian's dreams into reality. Benjamin Roth's and Tony Orsini's friends had come through. Money was no longer of concern. Now the issue was the investment value of Castlerock mountain as a business venture.

## *Chapter Seven*

*“ . . . highly incensed at not being called to share in the rich spoils. . . ”*

Charles Dickens, the purportedly anti-Masonic author whose novels are replete with Masonic imagery and phrases from Masonic ritual, had said it first. For Ian MacLeish it was, indeed, both the best and worst of times. It was the "worst" because an eldest son never really recovers from the loss of his father. The father is the beacon of light in the darkest darkness of the night. Father and sons, when the relationship works, have a unique connection. Fathers, wanting to save their sons from making the same mistakes they did, offer advice. Sons listen to the advice, but reserve the right not to heed it.

It was the "best" of times because Ian would not have to break his father's sacred trust to previous generations of sheep farmers before his very eyes. Ian now felt free to do with his 250 acres of Castlerock mountainside whatever he wanted. But, without consulting Ian, his investors had changed the playing field on him.

Benjamin Roth of Scarsdale, New York, and Tony Orsini of Greenwich, Connecticut, were businessmen, not conservationists. True, a beautiful assortment of ski runs for all abilities could be built on 250 acres of land. And there was adequate groundwater in the aquifer beneath that land to feed the snowmaking apparatus which they would need to ensure October through March skiing, temperatures allowing. But while the skiing was the "draw", the lodges and the hotels were where the money would be made.

Picture, if you will, a 250-acre square parcel of land projected on the side of a mountain. Each side would measure roughly 3,300 feet, or five-eighths of a mile. With the exception of the top of the

square that is the ridge line, the left, right, and downhill sides of the square could support lodging, with the greatest concentration along the downhill side. Mountainside and trailside properties always brought a premium. Now add another 250-acre square parcel of land right next to it. The left- and right-hand sides, while twice as far apart, still only support the same amount of lodging. But the downhill side doubles in length, meaning the 500-acre rectangular plot, consolidated by Timothy MacLeish during the Great Depression and afterward, would support a third more lodging. Ski runs and ski lifts were fixed costs, and could be amortized over a number of years. But lodging was the investment that kept on paying. And 13,200 linear feet of land adjacent to the outer ski runs and their base would support 33% more accommodations than 9,900 could. It was, after all, just business.

What Roth, Orsini, and their fellow investors wanted was all 500 acres of the MacLeish property, not just Ian's 250. And the least Allyn could live with was to continue to raise sheep, in the tradition of his father and grandfather, on his own 250 acres, regardless of whatever decision Ian would make about his own land. They were, one could say, at an impasse. And, as if the stakes were not already high enough, Ian had received word from New York that it was all or nothing. If Ian couldn't deliver all 500 acres, his investors were prepared to go to Stowe, or Killington.

For nearly two weeks following the reading of the will, the disposition of the MacLeish land was the sole topic of discussion between the two brothers. "Don't you see?" said Ian one evening as they sat in front of the fireplace in Erin's home, "The money that you can make from selling your 250 acres is more than you'll realize from your sheep farming and wool gathering for the rest of your life! We'll be able to relocate Mother to a nicer house and you'll have enough money left over to start a new sheep farm, if you want, and you'll be able to buy more acres for the same money." Ian paused, waiting for Allyn to respond, but he said

nothing. Ian continued, "These people from New York are buying the land from us at ski resort prices when all we use it for is sheep farming." "If you recall," replied Allyn, "that's what grandpa Angus bought it for 58 years ago. It was an honourable life when he brought it with him from Aberdeen in 1895, and it's an honourable life today."

"Allyn," Ian shot back, "you're stuck in 1895; it's 1953. There's money to be made, big money. And it's just sitting there for the taking. I don't know about you, but I don't want to spend the rest of my life in this sleepy little 'burg'." "It was good enough for Angus, and good enough for Timothy. Before you went off to New York City it was good enough for you as well," said Allyn. "What happened to you down there? What seduced you away from all the values Dad taught us; the land, the animals, the environment?"

"Allyn, you're a farmer, and, if you don't take this opportunity, that's all you'll ever be; a farmer!" "Being a farmer's OK with me," Allyn said. "As long as I'm the best farmer I know how to be, I can live with that." "Well, I can't," said Ian, now visibly agitated, standing to pace in front of Allyn, with a plaintive tone in his voice. "Look, I didn't tell you this before, but Ben and Tony called earlier this week. They said it's all or nothing. If they don't get the whole 500 acres the deal's off. Don't rob me of this one chance I'll ever get to be rich," pleaded Ian. "Don't rob Dad's memory, in death, of the honour and dignity he tried so hard to retain in life. The land, the farm, the people who put their trust in him. That *was* Dad's life," said Allyn. "*And now, with him gone, my life is dedicated to upholding those principles which he maintained to his dying day.*"



## *Chapter Eight*

*“ . . .and fraught with vengeance. . .”*

**H**umans are creatures of habit, and Allyn MacLeish was more human than most. He clung to his habits with an almost obsessive fervency, but his habits had almost always served him well. In high school, on the day of a big test, he had always left the house at sunrise or, in the Winter, before to allow himself to become wide awake, grab a cup of coffee and an order of cinnamon toast at the bakery in town, and get to the campus long enough before school started that he knew that he was as intellectually and psychologically prepared for the test as was possible. In college, on the day before a big exam, he would go to the classroom at the same time as he would take the exam the next day, sit in the same seat in which he would sit the next day, and study for the exam.

Now he was out of school, but there were still some demands placed upon him for which he needed to prepare in a similar fashion. One of them was that of the duty of Junior Deacon of Sugarbush Lodge #73. To allow himself to develop the maximum self-confidence possible in preparation for his ritual and floorwork on Lodge night, he followed a routine similar to that he used in college. Sugarbush Lodge #73 met at 7:30 in the evening on the fourth Monday of the month, which always placed it between the 22nd and 28th, from September through June. The Lodge was dark in July and August. Consequently, the evening of Sunday, February 22nd, at 7:30 found Allyn MacLeish seated in the Junior Deacon's chair in the Lodge Room above Carnahan's Hardware Store. He had made himself a pot of coffee in the kitchen to combat the chill in the Lodge. In the time it would take for the heat to warm the room he would have been done with his rehearsal for the evening.

So there Allyn sat, the Official Cipher, or book of ritual, of The Grand Lodge of Vermont in one hand and a cup of hot coffee in the other. The ritual which the Junior Deacon had to memorize was nothing compared to the Senior Deacon's ten-minute, nonstop Middle Chamber Lecture, the Wardens' monitorial lectures, or the Obligations administered to the candidates by the Worshipful Master in the conferral of the three degrees, but Allyn wanted to get it right nonetheless. He sat there repeating his lines from the opening of the Lodge through the conferring of the Second, or Fellowcraft, Degree through the closing of the Lodge. Because of his shyness, he even forced himself to practice at full volume, as though the Lodge Room was full of his Brother Masons. And so it was that he never heard the sound of footsteps on the staircase outside the hardware store that snowy February evening.

Ian MacLeish had begun to work on Allyn to sell his land even before his investors made it a provision of the deal. Throughout the Summer, Fall, and into the Winter, he had tried to convince his brother that his lot in life would be forever enhanced if he would simply take the money and run. But, before their father's death in January, all of the discussions had been hypothetical. Now, with Timothy and his moral and ethical commitments no longer an issue, Ian had supposed Allyn to be free to make any decision which was in his own best interest. It had never occurred to him that, in death, the "ghost" of Timothy MacLeish would cast a longer shadow over the prospect of a 500-acre sale of Castlerock mountainside to his New York City syndicate of investors than the man himself would have in life.

As Ian ascended the stairs that night he was at his wits' end. In the four weeks since his father's death, Allyn had become more entrenched than ever in his resolve never to sell the land. What was it that Allyn had said when speaking of their father's convictions? He had spoken of those principles, which their father had maintained "to his dying day". And of his own dedication to uphold

those principles; also to "his dying day"? *How was it possible that Ian could have conceived of, contemplated, even envisioned, his own brother's "dying day"?*

But perspective, reason, rational thought, had now all become secondary to Ian's single-minded purpose of obtaining Allyn's 250 acres of Vermont land which, when combined with his own, would at once satisfy his investors' demands and his own avarice. And so it was that Ian reached the top of the stairs, slowly opened the door to the reception area, and entered Sugarbush Lodge #73. There are two ways of gaining entrance to every Lodge Room. One is the main doors through which the Brethren of the Lodge and visiting dignitaries pass; the other is by way of the Preparation Room.

The Preparation Room, as its name implies, is where a candidate is prepared before entering the Lodge Room. In it are stored the outfits, slipshods, cable-tows and hoodwinks which are part of the clothing which must be donned before a candidate may be deemed "duly and truly prepared". Ian made his way through the outer door of the Preparation Room and, in passing through, picked up a "cable-tow", coiled it, and stuffed it in the right-hand pocket of his dress wool overcoat.

A cable-tow is a length of cord, usually three-eighths to half inch three stranded rope with knots tied at either end. Depending upon the degree being conferred, their literal use and symbolic significance differ. But, in general, succeeding degrees literally involve more winds of the cable-tow around the candidate while symbolically they represent the fact that the "ties" of a Mason to the Fraternity become more binding upon him as he progresses through the three degrees. The cable-tow Ian had picked up was no more than five feet in length and, when coiled, did not call attention to itself because of the spacious outer pockets of his wool coat.

Even before he opened the door to the Lodge Room itself, Ian could hear Allyn's voice. When Allyn heard the door open it was necessary for him to stand to see over the Senior Warden's chair on its two-step platform to determine the identity of the person who had just joined him. When he saw it was only his brother he sat back down.

"What do you want?" Allyn asked somewhat contemptuously. "I came to ask, one last time, that you reconsider your decision not to sell your land." "That again?" retorted Allyn. "When will you accept the fact that the sale of my 250 acres is not an option for me? I feel honour bound by my loyalty to, and the legacy of, our father. I could no more sell that land for development than sell our family plot in the cemetery."

As Allyn finished his sentence he arose. Walking back toward the door to the Preparation Room, he turned off the lights in the main Lodge Room. Ian followed him and shut the inner and outer doors of the Preparation Room behind him. Allyn made his way to the kitchen, unplugged the coffee pot, and began to wash it and his coffee mug in the right-hand basin of the stainless steel double sink. Ian hung back.

"Don't you see?" asked Ian. "You and I and our future families, as well as the generations to follow, will be better off if we sell our land to Ben, Tony, and their friends." "It's the future generations, as well as their link to their own heritage, I'm thinking of," said Allyn. Ian began to slowly approach Allyn from behind. "But Allyn," said Ian, "you're talking about ancient history. I'm talking about the future. If you'd just reconsider . . ." With that his brother interrupted him. "Look, I'm gonna tell you *one last time*," said Allyn presciently, drawing the last breath he would ever take, "I will never sell my share of Castlerock . . ."

His last words seemed to trail off into nothingness. Ian, coming up from behind him, had withdrawn the cable-tow from his coat pocket, wrapped it around Allyn's neck and, in the fashion of a rope garrote, crossed it behind Allyn's neck and pulled the two ends so hard that the strands of the rope actually cut the inside of his fingers at the first knuckle as well as the outside of his forefingers. Allyn's body slumped over, his upper torso precariously balanced over the still-running sink, the two ends of the cable-tow draped in a crisscross formation across his back.

Ian, seeing what he had done, stepped back in horror. But then, gathering his wits about him, made his way to the door and turned off the light. He went outside, closed the door behind him, and descended the snow-covered stairs he'd climbed less than fifteen minutes earlier. He jumped into the driver's seat of his 1950 Pontiac Chieftain and drove off into the snowy Vermont night.

## *Chapter Nine*

*“ . . .the clouded canopy, or starry decked  
heaven, where all good Masons  
hope at last to arrive. . . ”*

The morning of February 23rd broke on a freshly-fallen two-inch snow in North central Vermont. It being the fourth Monday in February, it was the first day of school vacation week. And, as with all school vacation weeks in the Winter, it meant that Daniel Carnahan would be accompanied to work each morning by his son, Danny Jr.

When they arrived at the hardware store that morning they noticed that Allyn MacLeish's yellow 1950 Willys Jeep was parked in the lot adjacent to the store. In 1950's rural Vermont this prompted little notice because Carnahan's Hardware had one of the largest parking lots on Main Street and local residents frequently met at the lot, all getting into one car for a trip to Waitsfield, Montpelier or Burlington.

Daniel Carnahan and Danny Jr. opened the store as usual, turning on the lights, and then turning up the heat. The subzero temperature outside meant that the snow would not be melting today. It also meant that the father and son would work in their parkas for the first hour of the business day. After about half an hour, Danny Jr. made his way through the stockroom behind the sales counter to the bathroom in the left-rear corner of the first floor. When he was finished he thought he could still hear water running in the pipes so he double-checked the faucets and jiggled the handle on the toilet. But still he heard water running. Coming back to the front of the store, he told his father. Daniel Carnahan gave his son the key to the Masonic Lodge upstairs, to which he as the landlord had access, and instructed Danny Jr. to check all the taps and toilets.

Danny Jr. snapped the front of his parka closed, took the keys, and went outside. Climbing the snow-covered staircase, he failed to take notice of the fact that there were still depressions in the snow made by footsteps the night before. Had he been attentive enough to recognize that there were two sets of footsteps ascending the staircase but only one set descending, he may have been prepared for the sight that greeted him when he opened the Lodge door.

There, still slumped over the edge of the sink, was the body of Allyn MacLeish. The color of his skin was bluish-gray, a sure sign to Danny Jr. that Mr. MacLeish was dead. It never even registered in his consciousness that the water in the sink was still running. He spun around and, taking the steps two at a time, ran to tell his father what he had found. They both went back upstairs and, after assuring himself that his son's observations were correct, he picked up the phone to call the Warren Police Department. As Chief Samuel Pierce bounded out of the Police Station, he shouted instructions to his dispatcher to call the Washington County Sheriff's office and the Vermont State Police barracks in Middlesex. Thus, Danny Jr.'s discovery had set in motion the single, most comprehensive murder investigation in Washington County history.

When the phone rang in the Sheriff's office in Montpelier, he instructed Deputy Sheriff Michael Brandon to respond immediately. Subsequently, when the phone rang in the Middlesex barracks, State Trooper James MacLellan hopped into his cruiser and headed South. Finally, the state police dispatcher, having sent Trooper MacLellan on his way, called Vermont State Police headquarters in Waterbury and requested the presence of Roderick "Rod" Beveridge, the head of the State Forensics Lab's Investigative Team, at Carnahan's Hardware in Warren. Over the course of the next 45 minutes Chief Pierce, Deputy Brandon, Trooper MacLellan and Rod Beveridge converged on the parking lot at the base of the staircase leading to Sugarbush Lodge #73. It

was evident that they were all there to begin their crime scene investigation. However, all but one of them had yet another common bond which would reveal itself as time went on.

## *Chapter Ten*

*“Brother Senior Warden, how should  
Masons meet? On the Level.”*

In order to understand the dynamics of the drama which would play itself out over the course of the next several weeks among these four men, as well as three others as yet to be introduced into the equation, three fundamental tenets of Freemasonry must be understood. The first is that all Masons meet "on the level". That is, regardless of their station in life, their income or their vocation, all Masons are equal in each other's eyes and in the treatment they afford one another.

Second, all Masons act "on the plumb". A plumb-line is used to true a vertical and, symbolically, it refers to rectitude of life. Said another way, Masons are measured by one another by the upstanding and forthright manner in which they treat their fellow man. And, finally, all Masons part "on the square".

Much as an honest business transaction is referred to as being a "square deal", so Masons refer to their taking leave of one another as parting "on the square". Information conferred upon one Mason by another inside the Lodge Room, or when represented to him as confidential, is to be held as inviolate by him as though it resided within the teller's own breast. Having promised to honour the sanctity of any statements made to him in confidence by another Mason, each member of the Fraternity is free to share their thoughts and feelings without fear that their confidences will be betrayed.

By the time the others arrived, Chief Pierce had cordoned off an area on the South side of Carnahan's Hardware which encompassed both the parking lot and the base of the stairs leading to the Lodge.

The only vehicle within the secured area was Allyn's Jeep. The next law enforcement officer to reach the crime scene was Trooper MacLellan who had made his way South down State Route 100 with his siren blaring and lights flashing. He pulled his cruiser up next to Pierce's patrol car, got out, and went over to the Chief's car where he hopped into the passenger seat. They would both take advantage of the vehicle's warmth until the remaining two members of their task force arrived.

The third to reach Warren was Deputy Washington County Sheriff Michael Brandon. And right behind him was Rod Beveridge from the State Police Forensics Lab. At this point there was no more postponing the inevitable. They all climbed out of their warm, dry vehicles and congregated at the base of the stairs. Although what he had expected to find should have been obvious to even the most amateur of sleuths, Beveridge closely inspected the footprints in the snow on the staircase. There were three fresh sets of prints. The first two were smaller than the others and were readily identifiable as Danny Jr.'s. He had gone up and down the staircase twice, once by himself and once with his father. The third, and last, fresh set of prints belonged to Daniel Carnahan who had gone up and down the stairs only once.

But now is when Rod's perusal of the scene progressed from observation to crime scene investigation. There were still the faintest traces of yet three other sets of footprints. Because the temperature since early the previous evening had been below zero, there was only the compaction of the snow which had taken place beneath each footstep, and the more recently fallen snow which had filled the depression each of those footsteps had left. Unfortunately, Daniel Carnahan and Danny Jr. had rendered the other sets of footprints useless from an "impression matching" point of view, but they were still clear enough to reveal that one pair of shoes, or galoshes, had gone up and, a short time later, come back down the stairs. The last set of impressions were made by a pair of hiking

boots which had only made a one-way trip. Those boots belonged to Allyn MacLeish.

What was Ian MacLeish's intention when he had climbed the stairs the previous evening? He had driven to the Lodge that night knowing that he would find his brother there practicing. He had seen his yellow Jeep when he pulled into the parking lot. Had he come to offer an intellectually persuasive argument? Or had he come to plead? Even Ian himself was unsure as he reached the bottom of the stairs. As he ascended the staircase his mood alternated, almost with each step, between cautious optimism and abject desperation. Rod Beveridge declared that the sole and heel impressions of the perpetrator, as well as the tire impressions of his car in the parking lot below, had been obscured beyond recognition by the weather and the traffic, both pedestrian and vehicular. There being no evidence to contaminate, the foursome climbed the stairs.

When they reached the landing at the top of the stairs they stopped. Beveridge closely observed the doorknob. Optimistically he began to dust for prints. There were two fresh, clean sets of prints on the outside doorknob, undoubtedly belonging to Daniel Carnahan and his son. The last set which had not been altogether lost to the elements were relatively fresh. Rod dusted them and made a permanent impression on adhesive tape for analysis back at the lab in Waterbury. During his examination he had come across some stray remnants of animal hide dyed gray in color. He took a sample, but held out little hope for a match.

Ian had come straight to the Lodge on Sunday evening upon his return from Scarsdale. Benjamin Roth, and Tony Orsini who had joined him, had given Ian an ultimatum. He would have to had completed all the real estate transactions necessary to accommodate the groundbreaking on a 500-acre ski resort by the time the Spring thaw came to the Mad River valley or they, and their syndicate of investors, would take their money elsewhere. So there he stood on

the staircase landing, still dressed in his wool herringbone tweed coat with the black velvet collar covering his blue wool Brooks Brothers suit, rubbers on his alligator shoes to protect them from the elements, and still wearing his gray suede leather gloves to keep his hands warm. He reached out and turned the knob on the unlocked door. As he entered the kitchen, the door closed behind him.

## *Chapter Eleven*

*“How act, Brother Junior Warden?  
On the Plumb.”*

As the four men walked through the door, three of them felt as though they had just entered an extremely familiar environment. That was because, as with many veterans, an inordinate number of members of the legal community, uniformed or not, were Masons. And all Lodges have four elements in common: a Lodge Room, Preparation Room, reception/dining room and kitchen. This being his home Lodge, Chief Samuel Pierce, Senior Warden of Sugarbush Lodge #73, was immediately oriented and, seeing the cable-tow around Allyn MacLeish's neck and draped across his back, headed straight for the Preparation Room where they were stored.

Deputy Sheriff Michael Brandon, Senior Deacon of Aurora Lodge #22 in Montpelier, and James MacLellan, a brother in Winooski Lodge #49 in Waterbury, made their way to the Lodge Room itself. This left Rod Beveridge alone in the kitchen with the body of Allyn MacLeish. Not wanting to waste any time, he walked over to the sink and, after dusting the tap handles for prints, finally turned off the water. From the abrasion marks around his neck, it was readily apparent that Allyn had been strangled to death although, owing to the cold temperature of the room and the semi-vertical position of the body, there was not the amount of bruising one might have expected to find. Next, Rod recorded the temperature of the body. This would help him establish the approximate time of death.

As Ian had walked across the kitchen toward the Preparation Room he'd removed his gloves and stuffed them in his left coat pocket. Opening the door, he had apparently already resolved to kill his brother, Allyn, if he couldn't change his mind, for he grabbed a



cable-tow off of one of the row of hooks on the wall and, coiling it as he walked, stuffed it into his right coat pocket. Entering the Lodge Room, he only stayed for a brief time before Allyn, and then he, made their way back through the Preparation Room to the kitchen, Ian closing the inner and outer doors behind them as he went.

Thus, the pattern of fingerprints Rod Beveridge would, ultimately, find was Allyn and Ian's prints on the outside of the outer and inner doors of the Preparation Room and neither of their prints on the inside of the inner and outer doors. It would appear, then, that one of them had entered the Preparation Room and Lodge Room followed, some time later (thirty seconds or thirty minutes; no one would ever know), by the other, who joined him in the Lodge Room. Eventually they exited the Lodge Room through the Preparation Room with one in the lead and the other closing the doors behind them.

After the final encounter at the kitchen sink, Ian had left in such a hurry that he was more anxious to get out of the Lodge than he was to keep his hands warm. Without bothering to put his gloves on until he was descending the staircase outside, Ian had grabbed the inside doorknob on the outside door, leaving the last of either brother's set of fingerprints for Rod Beveridge to find some seventeen hours later.

With all of the doorknobs inside the Lodge dusted for prints, and having bagged the cable-tow for analysis back at the Forensics Lab, Rod called the Washington County Coroner's Office in Montpelier to come and pick up Allyn MacLeish's body. While the four were waiting for the hearse to arrive, Rod dusted the inside doorknob of the outside door, identified three good sets of prints, and made impressions of each of them on adhesive tape. Finally, Ian MacLeish, who Chief Pierce had called as soon as he entered the Lodge, arrived to identify the body of his brother. Samuel Pierce

expressed his condolences to Ian, both as the Chief of Police and as a Brother Mason.

Having made the identification, Ian asked Chief Pierce what had happened. The Chief told Ian what he could.

Allyn had apparently let himself into the Lodge the previous evening using his key, made himself a pot of coffee, and then gone into the Lodge Room by way of the Preparation Room. Then someone had entered the Lodge through the unlocked door and taken a cable-tow from the Preparation Room. Finally, while Allyn was washing out the coffee pot and his coffee mug in preparation for leaving, he was approached from behind and strangled at the kitchen sink. He had been found by Daniel Carnahan, Jr. at approximately 9:37AM Monday morning while investigating the sound of running water seemingly coming from the Lodge. That was all Chief Pierce could tell Ian, for that was all he knew.

Just then the County Coroner's hearse arrived and Allyn's body was removed for transport to Montpelier. Deputy Brandon, Trooper MacLellan, and Rod Beveridge, their work here completed, also departed, leaving Samuel Pierce and Ian MacLeish alone. They wandered, somewhat aimlessly, throughout the Lodge. Sometimes just making small talk at times like this was all anyone could muster. "We'll find whoever did this to Allyn," Chief Pierce said to Ian. "I know you'll do your best," replied Ian. Passing through each door in the Lodge, they closed it behind them, as if closing, one by one, the chapters of Allyn MacLeish's life. As they prepared to go outside Samuel Pierce observed, "If your brother Allyn hadn't been here alone last night, he'd still be alive." "Well, Sam," said Ian, "he wasn't exactly here alone, was he? Anyway, Allyn was in the Lodge practicing his ritual and floorwork every Sunday evening before Lodge night." "That's odd," Samuel Pierce responded. "Everyone in the Lodge just assumed it came naturally to him. I

don't know of one Brother who would have ever guessed he'd be practicing. Not one.”

And with that Ian and Sam went outside, bundled themselves up against the subzero windchill of that fateful Vermont afternoon, and got into their respective cars. The Chief headed back to the police station; Ian headed home.

## *Chapter Twelve*

*“And part on the Square.”*

For Erin MacLeish time seemed to have stopped on Monday, February 23rd, but for the investigators that's when time had started. The weeks turned into months following the death of Allyn MacLeish, and still there were no viable leads. He had been buried the following Saturday with full military and Masonic honours in the family plot of the cemetery between Waitsfield and Warren overlooking the Mad River. Brother Brandon had come from Montpelier and Brother MacLellan from Middlesex. Indeed, Pierce, Brandon and MacLellan had made a pact that they would not rest 'til this case was closed. But saying it was one thing; doing it another.

The Washington County Coroner's Office had declared the cause of death as asphyxiation; the cable-tow the probable murder weapon; and the time of death between 7:30 and 9:30PM on the evening of Sunday, February 22nd, 1953. Rod Beveridge had dutifully sent all the fingerprints off to Washington where they would, eventually, be compared by FBI analysts with those of known and suspected criminals, current and former military personnel, and civilians holding security clearances. One possible clue that surprised Beveridge had been some traces of blood he picked up with the fingerprints on the inside doorknob on the door leading from the Lodge to the staircase. The blood type was A-positive, the same as the victim's. But there were no signs that Allyn MacLeish had bled. And then there was the cable-tow.

When Rod Beveridge had analyzed it, he found blood about a foot and one-half in from the each end of the rope. It, too, was type A-positive. But what could Rod conclude from this? In the absence of any external bleeding by Allyn MacLeish, as confirmed by the

autopsy, the blood on the cable-tow must have come from the murderer. It is also reasonable to assume that the blood on the inside doorknob also came from the murderer. Because nothing of value had been stolen, either from the Lodge or from Allyn himself, one could assume that the murder of Allyn MacLeish was the perpetrator's sole purpose in entering the Lodge that night. But why would anyone have reason to believe that Allyn MacLeish would be found in Sugarbush Lodge #73 on a night when the Lodge was not meeting?

Because Erin MacLeish was getting on in years, Ian was handling all of the family's business. He had arranged the funeral for Allyn. He had seen to it that his mother's finances were in order. And, on Monday, March 9th, he had driven to Montpelier with a notarized copy of his father's will. Arriving at the Washington County Courthouse, he had parked his car in the lot outside and gone in to find the Register of Deeds office. He had stuck his head into one of the numerous offices on the ground floor and gotten directions. As it so happened, the Register of Deeds was on the same floor, and in the same hallway, as the Sheriff's office. Just as Ian passed the entrance to the Sheriff's office, on his way to the only other office past it on that hallway, Deputy Brandon emerged through the doorway. They acknowledged one another with a nod; nothing more.

When Ian got to the Register of Deeds office his objective was simple and straightforward; to get Allyn's 250 acres of land transferred into his name. Armed with Allyn's death certificate he'd obtained from the County Coroner the week before and his father's will, there was not even the need for discussion. His younger brother had predeceased him; the land was his. And, with the land now his, he was in a position to sell a 500-acre tract of Castlerock mountainside to Benjamin Roth, Tony Orsini, and their syndicate of investors.

Two weeks later, on March 23rd, Ian MacLeish, accompanied by attorney Nick London, made what he had expected to be his last trip to Montpelier regarding Sugarbush ski resort. Ben Roth, Tony Orsini, et al., had wired payment for Ian's 500 acres of land to his bank in Waitsfield on Friday, March 20th. With all of the appropriate paperwork in hand, and Nick along for any needed legal advice, Ian MacLeish once again entered the Register of Deeds office. By noon, ownership of the ten acres of land purchased by Angus and Sarah MacLeish in 1895 and the additional 490 acres of mountainside which Timothy MacLeish had consolidated between 1929 and 1953 had been transferred to Sugarbush Properties Limited Liability Partnership (LLP). Ben, Tony, and their investors, now owned 500 acres of prime Vermont skiing terrain and the adjacent land on which lucrative lodging would be built to accommodate all but the "day trippers".

Ian MacLeish had made provisions for Erin, his mother, to be relocated to a beautiful Victorian home just downstream on the Mad River on the outskirts of Waitsfield where she would be closer to all the amenities that a woman of advancing years would need. Ian, himself, had leased a fine home just down the hill from the land he'd sold so that he could help oversee the development of Sugarbush ski resort. Within months not Angus, not Timothy, neither Allyn, no, nor even Ian, would recognize the property now owned by Sugarbush Properties LLP as that upon which each of them had lived and tended sheep, and upon which three of them had grown up.

On Saturday, May 2nd, there was a symbolic groundbreaking at the base of Castlerock mountain. By the middle of the next week a construction shack had appeared, and earth movers and backhoes had cut a winding swath through a dense stand of trees to create an access road from State Route 100 to the terminus of what would be the half dozen principal ski runs at Sugarbush. And by the first day of Summer 1953 strips of land to the North and South of the

planned ski trails themselves had been denuded of all vegetation and the first surveyors, engineers, architects and concrete slabs for foundations had begun to appear. Thus, Ian's "dream", and Sugarbush Properties LLP's "license to print money", had begun to take shape.

## *Chapter Thirteen*

*“ . . . justice in good measure  
constitutes the real good man. . . ”*

As the development of Sugarbush swirled around Waitsfield, Warren, and the MacLeish family in the Summer of '53, the trail had gone cold in the investigation of the murder of one Allyn MacLeish. But Brothers Samuel Pierce, Michael Brandon, and James MacLellan had vowed that they would see that justice was served. To that end, they gathered weekly at a small coffee shop in Middlesex which was convenient to all three. As they sat around the table over three-egg omelets, stacks of griddle cakes, rashers of maple-flavored bacon, links of pork sausage, and pots of hot coffee, they meticulously reviewed what they knew, and what they wished they knew.

It was inevitable that the changing landscape between Warren and Waitsfield, both literally and figuratively, would become a topic of conversation. Who was it that was turning a pristine Vermont mountainside into a snow-covered amusement park? What, or who, was Sugarbush Properties LLP, and how could they have been so poised as to swoop down on this quiet stretch of Vermont's Green Mountains within weeks of Allyn MacLeish's death? Nick London was a Lodge Brother of Sam Pierce so, when Sam called to set up a time to talk with him, he was more than happy to accommodate him.

Because it was a matter of public record, Nick had no qualms sharing with Sam the provisions of Timothy MacLeish's will. The disposition of the revenues from the family's holdings was relatively standard, and was consistent with the state's own formula for the division of an estate for someone who died without leaving a will. But the division of the land was a different matter. The two

sons split it 50/50 with a provision that if one predeceased the other that the entire 500-acre tract of land became the property of the other. "So," Sam thought to himself, but did not say aloud, "by virtue of Allyn MacLeish's death Ian MacLeish gained sole and uncontested ownership of a good portion of the Eastern slope of Castlerock mountain; that same portion that was now held by Sugarbush Properties LLP."

At their next weekly breakfast meeting Sam Pierce shared this information with Michael Brandon and James MacLellan. This jogged Deputy Brandon's memory and he recounted the chance encounter with Ian MacLeish in the hallway outside the Sheriff's Office. Brandon had made a mental note of the fact that he had seen the late Allyn MacLeish's brother, Ian, on his way to the Register of Deeds office only five business days after his brother's funeral, and only ten business days after his death. It had struck him that this was hardly a decent interval of mourning between the night Allyn had taken his last breath and the legal disposition of his land holdings. He told the others that he would walk down the hall to the Register of Deeds office just to confirm his recollection when he got back to Montpelier.

By about 10:00AM Deputy Brandon had returned to his office and, after checking in to pick up his messages, he went to the Register of Deeds office to confirm the date he'd seen Ian MacLeish. All transactions were recorded by map and lot number. East of the Mississippi land was described using the old "metes and bounds" method brought over from England in colonial times. The "section, township and range" method was utilized in the West where land tended to be divided into 36-square mile "townships" made up of 36 one-square mile "sections", and then further divided into "quarter-sections", "quarters of quarter-sections", etc., down to 43,560 square foot acres.

First they found the 10-acre farmstead purchased by Angus MacLeish in 1895. From there they followed the growth of the holdings as Timothy MacLeish had purchased the surrounding 490 acres. Then, in early February of 1953 the land had been subdivided, the Northern 250 acres going to Ian, the Southern 250 acres to Allyn. But on March 9th, ten business days after Allyn had died, Ian had his brother's 250 acres transferred into his own name. What could have possibly been the hurry? Deputy Brandon had confirmed his recollection of the date of the transaction. But there was one last transaction whose date caught his eye. Only ten more business days had elapsed before Ian MacLeish had sold the entire 500 acres to Sugarbush Properties LLP, a limited liability partnership with the address of a post office box in Westchester County, New York. Who were these people, and how had they managed to purchase a 500-acre tract of land which, to the best of his knowledge, had never even been placed on the market?

Now Deputy Sheriff Michael Brandon's curiosity was piqued. He left the Register of Deeds office and, having walked back down the hallway to the central staircase, took the stairs up to the Washington County District Attorney's office. He went looking for DA Robert "Robby" Robertson and found him in one of the endless aisles of file cabinets which contained nearly a century's worth of district court cases. Brandon had occasionally collaborated with Robertson on cases, but he knew him far better as the Master of Aurora Lodge #22 where Brandon was himself the Senior Deacon. "Robby," said Michael, "can we step into your office?" "Sure, just let me make sure this cabinet's locked before we go."

After they reached Robby's office and went inside, Michael closed the door behind him. "Robby, I need your help. You remember back in February when Allyn MacLeish, the Junior Deacon of Sugarbush Lodge, was found murdered in the Lodge in Warren by the son of the landlord?" "Who doesn't?" replied Robby. "It's not every day there's a murder in Washington County, and there's never

been one in a Masonic Lodge." "Well, Robby, I've got a bad feeling about this one. His older brother's also a Mason, Senior Deacon in fact, but this guy's been a regular customer down at the Register of Deeds office since his brother's death. First, he took ownership of his brother's land, in accordance with their father's will. There's nothing unusual about that, other than the fact that he did it two weeks after his brother's murder. And then, just two more weeks later, without the land having ever been put up for sale he sold his land *and* his brother's land to something called Sugarbush Properties LLP, a group registered in Westchester County, New York. I want you to use your influence, ask for professional courtesy, whatever it takes to get a list of the parties who make up that partnership."

"Michael," said Robby, "I've been listening very carefully to every word you've said, and while it's clear there's been a murder, it's equally clear to me that all of the brother's real estate transactions have been perfectly legal." "That's just the point, Robby. This guy Ian's no fool. He's got a Bachelor's in accounting from Vermont and a Master's in business from Columbia. You can't just get those in a cereal box or send off to Battle Creek for them. He knows his stuff. But for a man who's lost his father and brother within a month this past Winter, he's acting more like a real estate developer than a grieving surviving son and brother."

"I'll see what I can find out," Robby said. "A couple of years back there was a conference for District Attorneys and Assistant District Attorneys down at The Waldorf in New York City. I met an Assistant District Attorney, Judy Cohen, from Westchester while I was there. I don't know if she'll even remember me, but ADA's are appointed while DA's are elected. Therefore, they tend to be slightly less gun shy when it comes to asking the delicate questions because they're not as susceptible to the political whims of the voters." "Anything you can do would be appreciated, Robby. Anything at all."

## Chapter Fourteen

*"fortitude is that noble and steady  
purpose of mind. . ."*

The first thing the next morning, Robby Robertson was on the phone to New York. Having gotten the number in White Plains of the Westchester County District Attorney's office from "information", he called the main number and asked for ADA Judy Cohen. To his surprise she was on the line in less than thirty seconds. "Judy," Robby said, "this is DA Robert Robertson in Montpelier. I don't know if you remember me from the conference at The Waldorf a couple of years ago, but I have a favour to ask."

"Sure I do," said Judy. "We'd all love to live and work in a place where a single murder is the biggest crime of the last decade." "Well," said Robby, "we're trying to keep it that way. That's why I called." "How can a Westchester County ADA help preserve the quality of life in Vermont?" asked Judy. "We've had some 'unusual', that's not to say 'criminal', real estate transactions taking place up here this Spring, and one of the parties is a partnership, registered in New York, with a Westchester County mailing address. I could submit a formal request to the Secretary of State's office in Albany, but that would take forever. Could you just go through whatever local documents you've got in your office and get me a list of the partners of Sugarbush Properties LLP? Their mailing address is P.O. Box 120, Scarsdale, New York." "I'll see what I can do," responded Judy. "But if anyone asks, this conversation never took place." "What conversation?" joked Robby. With that they both laughed and hung up.

By the end of the week Judy Cohen called back and read off a list of names. Robby dutifully wrote them down. "Is there anything I should know about any of these characters?" asked Robby. "There's

a few with big time money, and a few from the local entertainment scene, but nothing to get alarmed about," said Judy. "That's all I wanted to know," replied Robby. "Thanks, Judy," he said. "You owe me a bottle of genuine Vermont maple syrup," Judy said. "You're on." And, with that, they hung up.

Robby put the list of names in an envelope, addressed it to "Deputy Brandon", and took it downstairs to the Sheriff's Office. The next time Michael was in he picked up the list, read it, and put it away for safekeeping. He also called Robby and thanked him for his efforts on his behalf. At the next weekly breakfast he told the other two about the last Castlerock property transaction. Looks were exchanged all around, and nobody liked the feeling they were getting.

Here we had the two sons of a first-generation American sheep farmer whose father died on January 25th. He left 500 acres of mountainside real estate to his two sons; 250 to each. A month later one son is murdered. The other son takes ownership of his land two weeks later, and two weeks after that he sells all 500 acres to a group of investors from the New York City metropolitan area that no one has ever heard of before.

These guys were all smart cops and, as Dylan (Bob, not Thomas) would say a decade later at the Newport Folk Festival, "you don't need a weather man to know which way the wind blows." But speculation, while entertaining, is one thing; making a criminal case yet another. Nonetheless, they tried it on for size.

Ian MacLeish was a graduate of the Columbia Business School. In his years there he must have made acquaintances in the New York City business community; even done a Summer internship with some of them. In the Summer of 1952 he returns to Vermont after school, but is frustrated that his father and brother are committed to the respectable, but not spectacular, income and lifestyle of

sheep farmers. When, in January of 1953, his father dies, each son is left 250 acres of Castlerock mountain with the provision that if one brother predeceases the other the surviving brother gets the remaining 250 acres. A month later one brother, the one with the Master's degree from the Columbia Business School, sells all 500 acres to a group of investors from New York City who are turning it into a ski resort.

It would have made for a good mystery novel, but in a court of law you needed proof. And proof is the one thing they were short on. As the three were mulling all this over, Sam Pierce had remembered something from a conversation three months earlier; a conversation that took place at the crime scene, the day following the murder, with the brother of the victim. Ian had offered that his brother was in the Lodge every Sunday evening before a Lodge night. Sam, himself, had observed that not one other Brother in the Lodge would have guessed Allyn even needed to practice. So Ian was the only one Sam could think of who would have had any reason to think Allyn was in the Lodge that night. And Ian was the only person whose capital assets would have doubled if Allyn were dead. Things were *not* looking good for Ian. Moreover, Ian undoubtedly had friends in the business community in New York City; maybe even potential investors in a Vermont ski resort.

So now Sam Pierce, Michael Brandon and James MacLellan had the conjectural framework of a capital crime. But they needed facts to flesh it out. In addition to Robby Robertson, the threesome had yet another ally upon whom they had not yet called. Thomas Loveland was the senior judge of the Washington County District Court. Thomas Loveland was also a Past Master of Aurora Lodge #22 in Montpelier. If they needed help in this investigation in order to make their case, they all knew they could count on him. All three were eager to get to the finish line, but their impatience had the potential of undermining their thoroughness.

Rod Beveridge from the state Forensics Lab had told them that the blood found on the murder weapon, the cable-tow, was type A-positive. Also, the blood on the inside doorknob of the Lodge itself was A-positive. Finally, Allyn MacLeish's blood type was A-positive, but he had not bled during the commission of his own murder. Now, being brothers, there was a more than random statistical chance that Ian MacLeish was *also* A-positive. But they needed proof. It would have been easy enough to get Judge Loveland to issue a court order to compel Ian to submit to a blood test, but Ian MacLeish had no idea he was even a suspect in his brother's murder and the three officers had no desire to tip him off at this stage of the investigation. As an alternative, Judge Loveland did issue a court order to the U.S. Department of Defense's National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, Missouri, to release the summary of Ian MacLeish's induction physical for his enlistment in the Army which would include his blood type. It was more time-consuming but would ensure that it stayed below Ian's radar screen.

Additionally, Judge Loveland issued a second court order, this one to Vermont Bell, the telephone company which served the long distance needs of the entire state, for the long distance telephone records for the last year from the MacLeish house. The hope was that the telephone numbers of one or more of the people whose names appeared on the list of partners in Sugarbush Properties LLP which Judy Cohen had provided Robby Robertson would also appear on the MacLeish's home telephone bills.

So they sat at their regular table, weekly breakfast after weekly breakfast, waiting for the responses to the two court orders which would begin to make a case against Ian MacLeish for the murder of his brother, Allyn. And then there were the fingerprints Rod Beveridge had sent off to Washington. *If* Ian's blood proved to be A-positive, it only maintained the possibility that he was the murderer. If he was not A-positive, he was as good as innocent. *If*

one set of fingerprints on the Preparation Room's inner and outer doors, as well as on the inside doorknob of the door leading to the staircase, proved to be Ian's, then that placed him in the Lodge on the night of, or no more than a few nights before, the murder of Allyn MacLeish. Ironically, it was the mundane long distance phone records from Vermont Bell which would trump the blood and fingerprint evidence and establish a definitive link between the MacLeish family and one or more of the partners of Sugarbush Properties LLP.



## *Chapter Fifteen*

*“ . . .there is nothing freer than  
chalk, which the slightest touch  
leaves a trace behind. . .”*

The first evidence to come back were the long distance phone records from the MacLeish household. Starting in the second week of June, 1952, the week Ian returned home from school, there began a series of weekly phone calls to Benjamin Roth's home in Scarsdale. These were accompanied by slightly less frequent calls to Tony Orsini's home in Greenwich. In September the frequency of the calls dropped off, but they started up again at a feverish pace around Christmas. And, following Timothy MacLeish's death on January 25th, the frequency of the phone calls increased to almost daily. This continued unabated in the month between Timothy and Allyn's deaths.

Most notable among all of the calls was a 97-minute call from the MacLeish household to Benjamin Roth which commenced at 11:11PM on Sunday, February 22nd, the evening of Allyn MacLeish's murder, and did not terminate until 12:48AM on the morning of Monday, February 23rd, the day Allyn MacLeish's body was discovered in Sugarbush Lodge #73. Had Ian, for Allyn was now dead and Erin was always in bed by nine, called Ben to wish him a late happy Washington's Birthday, or could it have been that he called to tell him that there were now no longer any barriers between Sugarbush Properties LLP and their purchase of 500 acres of Castlerock mountainside?

Several days later the correspondence came back from St. Louis. U.S. Army records confirmed that Ian MacLeish, as with his brother, Allyn, had type A-positive blood. That meant that the blood stains left on the cable-tow, as well as the flecks of blood

picked up on the inside doorknob on the door leading from the Lodge to the staircase, *could* have come from Ian MacLeish. So far all the evidence was strictly circumstantial. The phone records showed a number of phone calls made to, among others, Benjamin Roth and Tony Orsini in the New York City area with a crescendo culminating in the death of Allyn MacLeish. After that there were only three more calls to New York. In all probability one to notify Roth that Allyn's land had been transferred to Ian's name; one to acknowledge that Sugarbush Properties LLP's deposit had been received in Ian's bank account; and one to confirm the transfer of land from Ian MacLeish to Sugarbush Properties LLP.

Finally, in mid-July, the fingerprint analysis came back from the FBI in Washington. Rod Beveridge had picked up four sets of fingerprints on the outside of the door to the Lodge, three on the inside of that door, and two on the outer and inner doors of the Preparation Room. He'd been able to identify two sets on his own by direct comparison. Daniel Carnahan and Danny Jr.'s fingerprints had been found on the outside and inside of the Lodge door. The other two sets on the outside of the Lodge door belonged to Allyn and Ian MacLeish. The two sets on the doors of the Preparation Room belonged to Allyn and Ian. The last set, the third set on the inside of the Lodge door, had been left by Ian MacLeish when he let himself out of the Lodge; after he'd murdered his brother, and before he'd put his gray suede leather gloves back on?

With District Attorney Robert "Robby" Robertson there for support, Chief Samuel Pierce, Deputy Sheriff Michael Brandon, and Trooper James MacLellan met with District Court Judge Thomas Loveland to present their evidence. Though all circumstantial, Judge Loveland believed there was a preponderance of evidence, and summoned the Grand Jury impaneled at the beginning of the Summer, to convene on Wednesday morning to hear the evidence on a capital crime. The Grand Jury hearing began at 9:00AM. With Judge Loveland presiding, Robby Robertson,

with testimony from Sam Pierce, Michael Brandon and James MacLellan, presented his evidence. After fifteen minutes of deliberation, at 10:45AM, the Grand Jury brought back an indictment against Ian MacLeish on one count of first degree murder.

A warrant was issued for Ian's arrest and Deputy Brandon, accompanied by Chief Pierce and Trooper MacLellan, were dispatched to his house to take him into custody. When they arrived, Ian was not there. They made their way over to the nearby construction area and found Ian's Pontiac Chieftain parked outside the construction shack. Going inside, they found Ian in conversation with the foreman. "Ian MacLeish," said Deputy Brandon, "you are under arrest for the murder of your brother, Allyn MacLeish." One might have expected an outburst, or an attempt to flee, from a man just placed under arrest for a crime whose punishment was death in the gas chamber. But Ian had taken the news with the same stoic demeanor as he'd displayed when he learned of his father's terminal illness.

## *Chapter Sixteen*

*“There is nothing more fervent than charcoal, to which, when well ignited the most obdurate metal yields.”*

A pretrial hearing was scheduled for Monday, July 27th, to hear any motions from either the prosecution or the defense. Robby Robertson would be prosecuting the case himself. But the lawyer for the defense was a mystery to everyone in Montpelier. His name was David Rubenstein, and his legal residence was Larchmont, New York. He was a graduate of Dartmouth College and Harvard School of Law, and licensed to practice in all the New England states. He had shown up at the office of the Clerk of the District Court in Montpelier on the afternoon of Friday, July 17th, just 48 hours after Ian MacLeish's arrest. He presented his credentials to the clerk, was made the attorney of record for Ian MacLeish, and asked to see his client. Over the course of the next nine days he had spent all or part of four of them with Ian at the Washington County Jail.

Shortly after Ian's arrest on July 15th, Judge Loveland had issued a search warrant for Ian MacLeish's house. While the Sheriff's Deputies were executing the warrant they'd picked up some clothes from Ian's bedroom for him to wear. Searching them as they went, they'd even grabbed a lightweight suit, dress shirt, tie and dress shoes. So when Ian MacLeish and David Rubenstein entered Judge Loveland's courtroom at 9:00AM on the morning of Monday, July 27th, Ian looked more as though he'd just stepped off the train in Burlington on one of his trips home while attending Columbia than having been just brought in by two Sheriff's Deputies from the Washington County Jail.

If Ian MacLeish was a shrewd businessman, David Rubenstein was an even shrewder lawyer. He'd gone over every piece of evidence and reviewed the prosecution's list of witnesses with Ian. There were no eyewitnesses to the crime; the murder weapon could not be incontrovertibly linked to the defendant; and all the evidence and testimony would only make it *possible* for Ian to have committed the murder. Even Judge Loveland had acknowledged, when he'd issued the arrest warrant, that the "*preponderance*" of evidence pointed to Ian MacLeish as his brother's murderer. But in a court of law, for a conviction of a capital crime, the burden of proof levied on the prosecution was to prove the defendant's guilt "beyond a reasonable doubt."

When all of the parties to the hearing were in their appointed places the judge entered the courtroom. He first entertained any motions from the prosecution. Robby Robertson had none. Judge Loveland then asked the defense if they wished to make any motions. David Rubenstein's first motion was for a dismissal of all charges on the grounds that all of the evidence was circumstantial and, in the aggregate, was inadequate to prove a first degree murder charge. The judge dismissed this first motion out of hand. Rubenstein's second motion was for a change of venue. He argued that the population, and thus the jury pool, in Washington County was so small that his client could not get a fair trial. Robby's response was both sincere and straightforward. "Your Honour," he began, "the accused and the victim were brothers. They were both born and reared in Washington County, attended the same elementary school and high school. They both served in the U.S. Army's 10th Mountain Division with distinction in World War II. They attended the University of Vermont in Burlington together, both graduating in 1950. They both held Master's degrees from Ivy League colleges, and were, until Allyn's death, both well respected members of their community. Whether you ask their third grade teacher or the proprietor of Warren Harness & Feed, you'd get the same answer; they were both equally liked."

"Mr. Rubenstein," said Judge Loveland, "the victim and the accused were both pillars of the community. They were both members of the same church congregation and same fraternal organization. We aren't looking at two men who, before the commission of this crime, were hero and villain. We don't have a situation of two men divided by social status or wealth. They were business partners, both before and after their father's death. I find no compelling reason to change the site of this trial, so I am denying your motion. Further, I am setting the date of this trial for the first Monday in September." With this the bailiff approached the judge, whispered something in his ear, and returned to his appointed position in the courtroom. "My colleague," the judge began again, "has just informed me that September 7th, the first Monday in September, is Labor Day. We will then commence the murder trial of Ian MacLeish at 9:00AM on the morning of Monday, September 14th. Court is adjourned." And with that the prosecution and the defense were given seven weeks to prepare their respective cases.

Ian MacLeish was returned to his cell in the jail. David Rubenstein returned to his hotel. And Robby Robertson returned to his office. Taking off his coat, he sat down at his desk, picked up the phone, and called his newfound friend, Judy Cohen. "Judy, it's Robby again," he began. "To what do I owe the honour of this call?" asked Judy. "I've got a mystery, and I've got a hunch, but I need your help to confirm it." "What do I need to do this time?" Judy asked again. "Well, I told you that we had a murder up here in February. A week and a half ago we picked up the victim's brother on a charge of first degree murder. Within 48 hours of his arrest he had his own lawyer. Not a public defender, and not his family's attorney Nick London, but a guy from down your way in Larchmont, New York. And the funny thing is, the defendant never made his one phone call." Now Judy's curiosity was getting the better of her. "Have you ever heard of an attorney by the name of David Rubenstein?" Robby asked.

With that, Judy nearly dropped the phone. "Say again," she said. "The guy's name is David Rubenstein." "Robby," Judy exclaimed, "David Rubenstein is the highest profile criminal lawyer in Westchester and Fairfield counties combined! And you say he just showed up one day without even being called by this defendant of yours?" "That's right. He showed up at the office of the Clerk of the District Court, presented his credentials, and said that he was the attorney of record for Ian MacLeish. And all this happened within 48 hours of MacLeish's arrest." "You know, Robby," said Judy, interrupting, "I don't know what you guys up there have gotten yourselves into, but whatever it is, it's big!"

"Judy, I need another favour. I want a list of Rubenstein's clients. Have someone go through the records for the past five years and see who he's represented, criminal *and* civil. And not only in Westchester County, New York, but Fairfield County, Connecticut, as well." "Robby," Judy said, "do you have *any* idea how much work that would be?" "Look," said Robby, "I'm getting a feeling we're only looking at the tip of the iceberg. The defendant's phone records show a pattern of calls to Benjamin Roth in Scarsdale and Tony Orsini in Greenwich with increasing activity up until his brother's murder. And we know Roth and Orsini are two of the principals in the partnership that bought 500 acres of land from the defendant four weeks *after* his brother's murder, 250 of which he didn't own *before* the murder. I think it's time we started connecting some of the dots."

## Chapter Seventeen

*"There is nothing more zealous than clay,  
or our mother earth, . . . as from it we came,  
so unto it must we all return."*

There were sixty-one days between the day Ian MacLeish was arrested for first degree murder, July 15th, and the day he would enter the courtroom on trial for his life, September 14th. During those sixty-one days, five men, Robby Robertson, James MacLellan, Michael Brandon, Sam Pierce and Rod Beveridge, became a cohesive unit. They met at least three days a week for those nine weeks, and each time they did so their tasks were twofold: to add to the evidence which would help convict the murderer of Allyn MacLeish and to challenge one another's testimony to ensure that it was as steadfast as it could be made.

Robby, James, Michael and Sam were Masons. And as such, and because of their fraternal bond, the depth and intensity of their commitment to bring Allyn MacLeish's murderer to justice was becoming part of their personality, their character, their very belief system. But then there was Rod Beveridge. The other four could have easily made him, or made him feel, the odd man out as a non-Mason. But they did the exact opposite. His findings and his testimony were as integral to making their case as was the work of any of the others. Because justice was the objective, and the finding of the killer of a Brother Mason a sacred trust, Rod Beveridge had been taken into the other four's inner circle where every thought, speculation and confidence which did not violate their fraternal obligations was shared in the interest of building a stronger case.

When the 14th of September came around, and Judge Thomas Loveland's courtroom began to fill up as the nine o'clock hour approached, locals from Warren and Waitsfield, as well as the

usual courtroom observers from Montpelier, assembled in the gallery. Behind the prosecution's table and Robby Robertson sat James MacLellan, Michael Brandon, Sam Pierce and Rod Beveridge. Behind the defense's table, David Rubenstein and Ian MacLeish, sat Erin MacLeish. The impartial observers were distributed as space would allow.

The first task at hand was jury selection. Robby Robertson's pleading at the pretrial hearing was proven to be the case. To a man, and woman, each potential juror had testified that they would be able to impartially evaluate the evidence and render a just decision. Unlike today, when both the prosecution's and defendant's attorneys not only exhaust their peremptory challenges but overreach in their attempts to have jurors dismissed for cause, eighteen potential jurors were interviewed and eighteen jurors were impaneled, twelve primary jurors and six alternates. By Wednesday morning, September 16th, the trial was underway.

The jury was sworn in and seated. The indictment was read, and the prosecution then proceeded to present their case. Sam Pierce, Michael Brandon and James MacLellan took the stand over the next three days. On Friday at 4:00PM Judge Loveland adjourned court for the week with the standard admonition to the jury `c o n c e r n i n g   d i s c u s s i n g   t h e   c a s e   w i t h` anyone and reading, listening to, or watching press coverage related to the trial.

That weekend the prosecution, defense, jurors and judge all attended to their daily chores which had gone unattended to for the past week. The weather had turned rainy, and cold, but the chores, both inside and out, could not wait. While they all returned to the courtroom on Monday morning tired and drained, the prevailing level of tension was perceptibly decreased. Rod Beveridge was the last of the prosecution's witnesses.

Rod Beveridge of the Vermont State Police's Forensics Laboratory was a consummate scientist, and the results of his forensic investigation of the crime scene were beyond dispute. But the content of his findings were dry science and his delivery was far from spellbinding.

Throughout the week Judge Loveland's health had seemed to be deteriorating, but he was intent upon bringing this trial to a dignified and timely conclusion. Nonetheless, he was a good fifteen years older than any of the attorneys, witnesses, jurors or defendant in his courtroom. The defense began its case on Tuesday morning; a case which consisted of a revisiting of each element of the prosecution's case followed by the defense's refutation of that evidence as circumstantial, proving only that Ian MacLeish *could have* been the murderer of Allyn MacLeish, but not that he was the only person who could have been, or was, the murderer.

Robby Robertson was nothing if not a realist. He'd presented the best prosecution he knew how to present. But it was, after all, purely circumstantial. And David Rubenstein took every opportunity to point out the equivocal nature of every element of the prosecution's evidence and testimony. Robby Robertson was watching his prosecution slip away, and with it the conviction of the murderer of a Brother Mason.

And then divine providence intervened. Providence is an inexact force. Unlike gravity, you can never detect that it's at work. And it's never possible to know whether it's going to work for you or against you. But it's *always* at work. Today providence smiled on Robby Robertson, though it wasn't evident at the moment it intervened. He didn't know why, and he'd never know how, but just as he'd begun to reconcile himself to the feeling that his prosecution of Ian MacLeish was beginning to elude his grasp, Judge Thomas Loveland collapsed on the bench and was transported to nearby Heaton Hospital by ambulance on

Wednesday afternoon. Because he'd been the presiding judge on the case since the pretrial hearing, his colleagues were more inclined to grant a continuance in the case than to turn it over to a judge unfamiliar with the details thereof. And so the case was continued pending the recovery of Judge Loveland.

The judge had succumbed to pneumonia, a result of a cold snap and an intrusive invasion of damp weather. It would take Judge Loveland at least a couple of weeks to recover, and by then it would be mid-October. Always one to look for any psychological edge, and ever wanting to appear the successful businessman he'd always sought to become, Ian MacLeish asked the Sheriff's Deputies if they'd go by his house and pick up a heavier weight suit for him to wear to court. And, with it, a dress coat. So the Sheriff's Deputies obligingly went by Ian's house between Warren and Waitsfield and picked out a blue wool dress suit and wool dress overcoat. As they had done previously when picking up clothing for the prisoner, they went through all of the pockets of the suit and found nothing. But, when Deputy Brandon slid his hand into the right-hand pocket of Ian's Chesterfield coat, he came out with three slips of paper, each one *stained with blood*.

## Chapter Eighteen

*"Whosoever sheddeth man's blood,  
by man shall his blood be shed."*

Metro-North Railroad's customer receipts and tickets are very informative documents, and even more so when there are three of them, all issued on the same day, and all bloodstained. As it turned out, Ian MacLeish had boarded an inbound Harlem Line train to Grand Central Terminal (GCT) from a station in "Zone 4", consisting of North White Plains, White Plains, Hartsdale and Scarsdale, on the afternoon of Saturday, February 21st. The customer receipt differed from a ticket which would have been purchased in the station. He had bought the ticket on the train because the station's ticket counter closed at noon. Therefore, one could deduce that he had departed Westchester County for Manhattan after noon.

Upon arriving at Grand Central Terminal, he had bought a round-trip ticket to "Zone 15" on the New Haven Line, made up of Greenwich, Cos Cob, Riverside and Old Greenwich. Weekend departures from GCT on the New Haven Line were hourly, on the hour, on Saturday afternoons. Having used the outbound portion of the "GCT to Zone 15" ticket, he used the return portion later that same day. This could be determined by the fact that the third piece of paper in the coat pocket was a one-way ticket on the Harlem Line returning to "Zone 4", still on Saturday, February 21st.

When Robby Robertson called Judy Cohen to tell her of this newfound evidence, she volunteered to pay a visit to one of Ian MacLeish's phone pals, Benjamin Roth, to see if he could help flesh out Ian's day for her. Judy Cohen had a friend, Andrew "Andy" Jackson, who was her opposite number at the Fairfield County, Connecticut, District Attorney's office in Stamford. She

called him and told him everything she knew about the case. What she needed from him was a statement from Tony Orsini stating if, when, why, and for how long, Tony had met with Ian MacLeish on Saturday, February 21st.

On the morning of Friday, October 2nd, Judy headed South out of White Plains on the Bronx River Parkway to Benjamin Roth's house in Scarsdale while Andy Jackson drove West out of Stamford on Boston Post Road toward his destination of Tony Orsini's home in Greenwich. Judy and Andy had agreed on a game plan. A business associate of Ben Roth and Tony Orsini was on trial for murder; a murder which could well be related to a land deal to which both Ben and Tony, by way of their membership in Sugarbush Properties LLP, were parties. If it could be shown that Ian, while acting as an agent for Ben and/or Tony, had murdered Allyn MacLeish, they were both subject to indictment on a charge of conspiracy to commit murder. Judy and Andy had every reason to believe that under such a potential threat, hypothetical though it may have been, Ben Roth and Tony Orsini would gladly disclose the full extent of their *legal* dealings with Ian MacLeish to avoid any possible speculation on the part of their respective ADA's as to possible *illegal* dealings they may have had with him.

As Ben Roth told the story, Ian MacLeish had driven down from his home in Vermont to spend the weekend with him on the evening of Friday, February 20th. He'd arrived near midnight and, after a brief nightcap, headed off to bed. The next morning, over breakfast and on into lunch, Ben and Ian had spoken of the real estate transaction which would turn Castlerock mountain from a sheep farm into a ski resort. That afternoon Ian had walked to the Scarsdale train station to keep an appointment with Tony Orsini in Greenwich. He'd returned just before 11:00PM on Saturday night. In the morning they'd gone to Winged Foot Golf Club in Mamaroneck for Sunday brunch. From there Ben had gone home while Ian had gotten on the Bronx River Parkway and taken it up

through the Hawthorne "circle" where it joined the Taconic State Parkway. From there it was pretty much of a "straight shot" all the way up to Warren, and Sugarbush Lodge.

Tony Orsini, as Ben Roth, was well motivated to tell ADA Andy Jackson the whole story and, in the process, exonerate himself. Ian MacLeish had arrived in Greenwich by train from New York City at about 4:50PM. Stepping outside the train station, he'd gotten into a taxi from the cab stand on Railroad Avenue. Following the street East, the taxi took the first right onto Steamboat Road for the short ride to Indian Harbor Yacht Club. Tony had met Ian there and, over dinner, they had talked, among other things, about the need for the real estate transaction to include the full 500-acre tract of land. Just after 8:00PM Tony had dropped Ian off at the Greenwich train station.

Monday evening Judy met Andy for drinks at a hotel bar in Stamford and they compared notes, as they imagined Ben and Tony had done earlier. The two stories were seamless, and both implicated Ian while leaving Ben and Tony in the clear. They agreed that Judy would call Robby on Tuesday morning and tell him what they'd found out. When Judy got to the office the next day the results of an exhaustive search of Westchester and Fairfield county court records were sitting on her desk. Two cases jumped out at her. In November of 1949, before Benjamin Roth had ever met Ian MacLeish, attorney David Rubenstein had defended Roth, successfully, in an insider trading scandal. And less than a year later, in October of 1950, Rubenstein had defended Orsini on an assault and battery charge filed against him by a backup singer in his band with whom Orsini had been having an affair and who he had slapped around backstage just a little too hard after a show one evening at Glen Island Casino in New Rochelle.

When Judy called Robby Robertson at his office in Montpelier and told him everything she and Andy Jackson had learned from Roth,



Orsini, and a search of the court records, he was elated. But Robby hadn't been letting any grass grow under his feet either. He had gone back and interviewed the foreman of the Sugarbush development project. Under only the most minimal duress he'd admitted to picking up the phone and calling Benjamin Roth as soon as Ian had been led out of the construction shack in handcuffs on July 15th. Because Roth was in a cooperative, and self-serving, mood, it wouldn't take much to get him to admit that he'd sent David Rubenstein to Montpelier the next day.

Finally, they decided, and Andy Jackson later concurred, that, if only for the dramatic effect, they would "invite" Benjamin Roth and Tony Orsini for a one-night "vacation" in Montpelier to testify to everything they'd already admitted at the trial of Ian MacLeish in exchange for immunity from prosecution in the matter of the death of Allyn MacLeish. They both readily agreed.

## Chapter Nineteen

*"Justice is that standard  
or boundary of right, which enables us  
to render unto every man his just due."*

Robby Robertson was taking no chances; he was playing this one by the book. He knew that there were no "Perry Mason moments" in well-earned convictions. First degree murder convictions were built from the ground up on good evidence, competent testimony, and well-prepared attorneys. So, when the Sheriff's Deputies had found the three strips of bloodstained paper, he had shared that information with David Rubenstein. And when Benjamin Roth and Tony Orsini agreed to testify, he dutifully added their names to the witness list and shared that information with the defense.

When court reconvened on Monday, October 12th, Judge Loveland was back on the bench and all the players were, once again, in their appointed places. The defense picked up their case where they had left off two and one-half weeks earlier. But, now, the prosecution, and the judge, *knew* that David Rubenstein was there at the behest of Benjamin Roth, an investor in a partnership to which Ian MacLeish had been so anxious to sell his, *and his brother's*, piece of the mountainside on Castlerock. By mid-afternoon on Monday, the defense rested. The prosecution then moved to have three new pieces of evidence, as well as the additional testimony of two existing and two new witnesses, admitted. Judge Loveland so ordered but, owing to the lateness of the hour, court was adjourned until the following morning at 9:00 AM.

Ian MacLeish had been informed by his attorney the previous Wednesday that Benjamin Roth and Tony Orsini had been added to the prosecution's witness list, but he was still not prepared for the

sight of them sitting behind the prosecution table with Pierce, Brandon, MacLellan and Beveridge when he walked into the courtroom on Tuesday morning. First, Robby Robertson introduced the three bloodstained slips of paper into evidence. The papers had been stained when Ian MacLeish, as he was descending the stairs outside Sugarbush Lodge, shoved his bare, bleeding hands deeply into the pockets of his dress coat to shelter them against the subzero windchill of that cold, snowy Vermont night in February. Robertson called Deputy Brandon to the stand to relate the circumstances under which they had been found. He then recalled Rod Beveridge to the stand to identify the stains as Type-A blood, the same type as Ian MacLeish's.

And then it was time for the high drama. The prosecution called Benjamin Roth. Turning toward the witness stand, Robertson said, "Will you please state your name for the record." "Benjamin Roth," responded the witness. "Mr. Roth, are you acquainted with the defendant?" "I am," said Roth. "How long have you known the defendant?" "Since the Fall of 1950." "And how is it that you came to know the defendant?" asked Robby. "I am a major contributor to the Columbia Business School and, as such, take great interest in the work and progress of their students. Several of Ian's, Mr. MacLeish's, professors had called his work to my attention."

"And did you come to know Mr. MacLeish's work better?" "I did," said Ben. "In the Summer of 1951, between his first and second years at graduate school, Mr. MacLeish came to work for me as an intern." "And what kind of business are you in, Mr. Roth?" "I am the chief executive of a closely-held Wall Street trading firm." "And when you say 'closely-held', what exactly do you mean?" "That the majority of shares of the firm are owned by myself and a handful of principal investors." "And what sort of work did Mr. MacLeish do for you?" "Research." "On what?" "On firms in which we were considering investing."

"Mr. Roth, during the tenure of Mr. MacLeish's employment did you develop an opinion of this young man?"

"I did." "And what was that opinion?" asked Robertson. "One of an extremely ambitious young man, but perhaps too ambitious for his intellect and his lack of experience." "Would it be safe to say that Mr. MacLeish was the kind of young man who would have taken shortcuts to reach his ultimate goals if the opportunity arose?" "Objection, your Honour," shouted David Rubenstein. "Calls for a conclusion on the part of the witness." "Sustained," said Judge Loveland. "Move on."

"When Mr. MacLeish was in your employ, did he ever come to you with ideas about investments?" asked the prosecution. "Only one," replied Roth. "Would you please tell us about it?" "Ian was in the 10th Mountain Division during the war. He'd been skiing since he was a kid growing up in Vermont, and he said he 'knew' that skiing was going to become a popular pastime for the affluent families in America in the postwar era." "And how, if you don't mind telling us, did he envision that trend affecting you, or him?" "He said that his father owned 500 acres of land in Vermont which was ideal for development as a ski resort with both ski trails and lodging." "And did he think that his father would be inclined to sell his land for a ski resort?" "No, he didn't." "So, how then, Mr. Roth, did he envision all of this being of any interest to you?" "He told me he would work on his father and brother." "Is that his father, the late Timothy MacLeish, and the murder victim, Allyn MacLeish?" "Yes."

"Over the next eighteen months or so did Ian MacLeish stay in touch with you?" "Yes." "How?" "Mostly by phone." "And, over this period of time, how did Mr. MacLeish seem to you?" "He was becoming increasingly frustrated at his father and brother's unwillingness to sell the land for development." "And during that period of time did Mr. MacLeish have a potential buyer for that

land?" "Yes." "And who might that have been?" Ben Roth coughed, and then continued. "I formed a small group of investors who were interested in developing a ski resort on the 500 acres of MacLeish land." "Did this group have a name?" "Yes; Sugarbush Properties LLP, limited liability partnership."

"And was this partnership registered with the Secretary of State's office in New York?" "Yes." "And who, if I might ask, prepared and filed those registration papers, Mr. Roth?" "Objection," blurted out Ian MacLeish's attorney. "On what grounds?" asked Judge Loveland. "Relevance, your Honour." "If your Honour will permit the prosecution a little leeway," responded Robertson, "I do believe that the relevance will become clear." "You may continue, Mr. Robertson, but with 'caution'." "Thank you, your Honour. Proceed, Mr. Roth," said Robby. "David Rubenstein," said Roth. "David Rubenstein, the attorney for the defense?" "Yes," said Ben.

And from that point on things just went from bad to worse. With each new revelation in the testimony, Ian MacLeish could feel the figurative "noose", his very own cable-tow, tightening around his neck. First Ben, then Tony, told of the increased pressure they had brought to bear upon Ian to get his father, and then his brother, to sell the land. Moreover, they acknowledged that, as investors, they now wanted to buy all 500 acres of MacLeish land, not just Ian's 250. They'd even threatened to take their investment dollars to Stowe or Killington if Ian didn't come through in the Spring of '53.

They told of Ian's trip to Scarsdale and Greenwich on the weekend of February 21st and 22nd in a last ditch effort to salvage the deal. It explained the Metro-North Railroad customer receipt and tickets in Ian MacLeish's dress coat. And, finally, Benjamin Roth had recounted the content of that 97-minute phone call from Ian late on the evening of February 22nd. And then, blessedly, it was over. Ian MacLeish never took the stand in his own defense. David Rubenstein didn't even bother to cross-examine Ben or Tony. *The*

*scales of justice had just shifted from a preponderance of the circumstantial evidence to guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.*

No one would ever know on what step of the outside staircase at Sugarbush Lodge had Ian decided to murder his brother, or hadn't he done so until he picked up the cable-tow on his way through the Preparation Room on his way to the Lodge Room? Everyone in the courtroom that day seemed to know, instinctively, that Ian MacLeish had murdered his brother, Allyn, and it took the jury less than three hours to return their "guilty" verdict on the single count of murder in the first degree. Ian MacLeish was remanded into the custody of the Vermont state Department of Corrections, there to await sentencing.

The sentencing phase of the trial was perfunctory; the sentence was death in the state's gas chamber, colloquially known as the "green room". At dawn on a snowy morning in February of 1955, having exhausted all of his appeal rights, Ian MacLeish was led down the corridor of the state penitentiary from his cell on death row to the room housing the sickly pale green, domed enclosure, the gas chamber. He was strapped to the chair at his upper and lower forearms, legs, and chest, by means of heavy leather restraints with metal buckles. The doctor attached the mechanical stethoscope and the electronic heart monitor to MacLeish's chest. The doctor, the warden and his deputies left the chamber and sealed the door. The defendant was asked, by way of a microphone-and-speaker system, if he had any last words. He never even acknowledged the question. And, with that, the sodium cyanide pellets suspended beneath the chair were released into the bucket of warm dilute sulfuric acid below. The wisps of hydrogen cyanide gas began to rise from beneath the chair; in less than five minutes it was over. Ian MacLeish had never spoken a word.

## *Chapter Twenty*

*“ . . .that All-seeing Eye. . .  
pervades the inmost recesses of the  
human heart, and will reward us  
according to our merits. . . ”*

The notice of the February Regular Communication, or monthly meeting, of Sugarbush Lodge #73 contained the usual lists of Brothers who were born, raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason, or departed this world in any month of February. These lists were chronological rather than alphabetical, so their names were separated by the names of three Brothers who departed this life in February of 1954. Nonetheless, there were the names of Allyn MacLeish and Ian MacLeish in the same list, in the same notice. To a man, not one Brother failed to take notice of the fact.

Life had changed significantly for the year-round residents of Warren and Waitsfield. By February of 1955 the ski trails of Sugarbush had been carved out of the forested mountainside beneath Lincoln, Castlerock and North Lynx peaks. The ski lifts had been constructed, and the lodgings two-thirds completed. There were even "ski in, ski out" accommodations adjacent to the North of the "Out to Lunch" trail and to the South of "Lower Snowball" and "Racer's Edge". As the profitability of dairy farming, cattle ranching and sheep farming had been on the wane, the ascension of skiing as New England's premier Winter family activity had filled the region's economic void.

And then there was the question of the real estate transactions which had created Sugarbush, and the ownership thereof. It wasn't until nearly a quarter of a century later that the New York state assembly would pass the "Son of Sam" law, wherein it was *explicitly* stated that a convicted criminal could not benefit from the

commission of a crime. But, even in 1953, it was evident that the monies paid by Sugarbush Properties LLP to Ian MacLeish for his land, or for the land he'd "inherited" from his brother, Allyn, after his death, could not remain Ian's. For one thing, Ian had murdered Allyn, so the money paid for that 250 acres would go to Allyn's family. And, upon Ian's execution, the money paid for *his* 250 acres would also go to his family. But Ian and Allyn had gone to war, gone to school, and gone into business. They'd never taken the time to start families of their own; their only family was their mother, Erin.

From her modest Victorian home on the outskirts of Waitsfield, Erin MacLeish sought the advice of the best financial counselors she could find. They had asked her what she wanted to do with her money and she'd told them that, in the spirit of her late husband, Timothy, she wanted to honour the heritage of the land which was now Sugarbush. She was unable to turn back the hands of time to 1953, before construction had started, but she could do the next best thing. She took the monies paid to Ian for the 500 acres of MacLeish land and purchased a controlling interest and, with it, a seat on the board of directors of Sugarbush LLP. From her position of power she was able to leverage her influence to ensure that Sugarbush ski resort would be developed as a family-friendly and environmentally sound venture. Whenever choices had to be made between maximizing profits or preserving the culture, history, and way of life of the Mad River valley, Erin always voted with her heart.

But Erin MacLeish was getting too old to have either the ability or the inclination to be involved in the day-to-day operation of this multi-million dollar enterprise. But she did have at least one more brilliant idea in that gray-haired head of hers. When Ian and Allyn had returned to Warren after school, they'd each come back with a new way of looking at the MacLeish sheep farm. Ian was oriented toward generating more revenue; Allyn to more enlightened

methods of animal husbandry and less environmentally intrusive ways of developing the farm.

In retrospect, Erin MacLeish decided that Allyn's approach was the one which would have best honoured the legacy of his father, Timothy, grandfather, Angus, great grandfather, Malcolm, and Scottish sheep farmers from bygone centuries. And she'd determined that graduate school had fostered and encouraged those traits in Allyn. And so it was that Erin MacLeish turned over her controlling interest in Sugarbush Properties LLP, "in trust and in perpetuity", to the Board of Trustees of Yale University, contingent upon their required consultation with, and deference to, the faculty of the world-renowned School of Forestry. And that is why, some fifty years later, all of the literature for Sugarbush proudly proclaims their collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service, the State of Vermont, and the Green Mountain National Forest, and their dedication to "preserving the beauty and heritage of New England." And should one ever find them self at the intersection of Jester, Birdland and Valley House Traverse below Sugarbush's Lincoln Peak, they can always stop at Allyn's Lodge, a final tribute to a second-generation American sheep farmer, for a hot drink in front of its floor-to-ceiling fieldstone fireplace.

In conclusion, Sugarbush is in good hands, Erin MacLeish is finally at peace, and Allyn MacLeish resides with the Supreme Architect of the Universe. And all the Masons involved with the MacLeish case came to learn two lessons. First, that blood, while creating a familial and consanguineous tie, does not, by definition, create Brotherhood. And, second, that the tenets of Friendship, Morality, and Brotherly Love, when fostered among Masons in accordance with their several Obligations, create bonds of Brotherhood which can never be severed; *not even in death*.

**So mote it be.**