



A Novel

Dedication

Bruce Aaron Lewis Sr.

(1916 -1961)

Loving Father to Diane, Bruce, Christine, and Julius Lewis



The author and his dad

Special Thanks

Michael J. Barrington, retired Catholic missionary and parish priest,
author of *Take a Priest Like You*

Daniel Catone, MA, Catholic Theology,
Founder & CEO
Arimathea Investing

Mark R. Clifford, former U.S. Marine and police officer,
author of *The Typhoon Coast*

Alfred J. Garrotto, retired Catholic Priest,
author of *The Wisdom of Les Misérables Trilogy*

Deven Greene, author of the *Erica Rosen, M.D. Trilogy*
Lorenzo Medina, former civilian jailer, *Clackamas County Sheriff's Department*, Oregon

S.Q. Orpin,
author of the *Catwalk Series*

Ginny Rorby,
author of the international bestseller *Hurt Go Happy*

Quotes for Cover / Reviews

“This tale of tragedy, revenge, and redemption will pull on your heartstrings as you are kept in suspense.” — Deven Greene, author of the *Erica Rosen, M.D. Trilogy*

“A powerful portrayal of a cop turned priest and the eternal struggle to save his soul.”—Mark W. Clifford, 30-year police veteran, author of *Typhoon Coast*

“Well written, with an unusual premise sure to thrill and captivate readers...The true-to-life characters keep you on the edge of your seat to the last page.”—Michael J. Barrington, Ph.D., retired missionary Catholic Priest, author of *Take a Priest Like You*

Preface

If you discovered who murdered your father 50 years after the fact—and it is someone you know and admire—what would you do? Would you forgive and forget? Would you expose their crime, shaming them and their family? Or would you follow a more treacherous path? If you're a person of faith, you might seek guidance from your pastor, minister, imam, priest, or rabbi.

The Bible says:

"God tells us It is mine to avenge; I will repay. In due time their foot will slip; their day of disaster is near, and their doom rushes upon them."—Deuteronomy 32:35

Confucius says:

"He who seeks revenge digs two graves."

A man with a wounded heart says:

"God help their black soul. I'll see them in Hell."

Chapter 1

My memory of Dad, Dave Grayson, is like a mirror shattered on a cement floor. Pieces are everywhere—chunks here and shards there, most of them missing. There's not enough to complete an image of the man.

I know Dad was orphaned at age 8 when his mother died of breast cancer, and his father abandoned him and his older brother a few weeks later. He was the father of four—including a daughter from his first marriage—an alcoholic and dead at 40.

These facts tell me nothing about his vocal timbre or mannerisms or help me recall the sweet things he said when I was a kid. If I close my eyes and think hard, I can conjure his face and the ever-present smell of breath mints and Old Spice aftershave, but little else.

A few days past my twelfth birthday, Mom's best friend from high school, Barb, walked into my room and sat on the end of my bed. Without an "I'm sorry" to soften the news, she said, "Chuck, your father has passed away." She didn't mention he was murdered. Or explain why she was giving me the news rather than Mom. Perhaps the reality of widowhood at 29 with three children left her speechless. It took me a minute to process "passed away."

I first heard those words when my aunt Alice died. The moment I looked into her open coffin, I understood the meaning of death. She was an empty shell with my aunt's face. Her spirit was gone, with her ever-present smile, infectious laugh, and the aroma of fresh-baked bread and apple pies filling her home. Could that emptiness be Dad?

Barb frowned at my twisted expression, patted me on the head, and left the room. As soon as she closed the door, I threw myself face down on my bed, sobbing and pounding my pillow.

"Dad can't be dead," I screamed. "I saw him yesterday. We talked and hugged. And he kissed me. He can't be gone. He just can't be."