

The predator is free to kill again—  
and hour by hour, he draws closer...

# J.A. JANCE

## THE HORROR OF

## THE WINTER



**J.A. JANCE**

**HOUR OF  
THE  
HUNTER**

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**To Bill,  
who brought us "the Bone,"  
and to Diana Conway,  
wherever she is**

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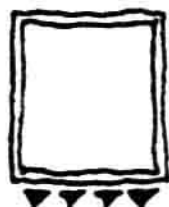
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# **HOUROF THE HUNTER**

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**It was a hot summer's evening in June 1968. As they settled into the bed of the pickup, the young people laughed and joked about the coming dance. None of them guessed that before the sun came up the next morning, Gina Antone would be dead—and that death, for her, would be a blessing . . .**



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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

**T**HE *PAPAGO LEGENDS* used in this book are retellings of the traditional oral tales of the *Tohono O'othham*, the Desert People. These are winter-telling tales, which must not be "told" during the summer when snakes and lizards are out, for if they hear the stories, *Wamad*, Snake, or *Hujud*, Lizard, may swallow the storyteller's luck and bring him harm. There is, however, no prohibition against them in written form.

This book is set in the 1970's, long before the tribal council renamed the reservation to reflect the people's traditional name of the Desert People. References to the Papago Reservation are historically correct, although today's maps will refer to the reservation located west of Tucson as the *Tohono O'othham* Nation.

Writing this book would not have been possible without being able to use the works of Dean and

## Acknowledgments

Lucille Saxton as reference material: *Legends and Lore of the Papago and Pima Indians* and *Papago & Pima to English Dictionary*, both first and second editions, all three of which were published by the University of Arizona Press.

I am also indebted to the inspired retellings of some of these stories by Harold Bell Wright in his invaluable and unfortunately exceedingly rare work *Long Ago Told* (New York: D. Appleton, 1929).

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Of the "committee" who helped me on this book, I'd like to especially acknowledge Dick Sawyer, Carol and Charles Mackey, and Dan and Agnes Russell for their timely, deadline-type assistance.

In addition, I would like to say thank you to the splendid and delightfully humorous *Tohono O'othham* themselves, who, during my five years of teaching on the reservation, made me feel both welcome and appreciated, even though I'm really, as Pauline once told me, "a member of another tribe."

**We are all hunters.**

—Clayton Savage in *A Less Than Noble Savage*,  
an unpublished manuscript  
by Andrew Philip Carlisle



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DETECTIVE J.P. BEAUMONT  
BE FAR BEHIND?...**

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## Prologue

**I**T IS SAID that after that I'itoi climbed the steps of arrows and went to Eagle Man's cave. The woman was sitting there with her baby. "I have come to kill Eagle Man," I'itoi told her.

"But you can't," said the woman. "He kills everyone."

"He will not kill me," said I'itoi, "because I have power. What time does he come home?"

"At noon."

"What does he do?"

"He eats."

"And after that?"

"He sleeps."

"And the baby?"

"He sleeps, too."

"Today, let it happen just that way," said I'itoi. "Let him come home and eat and go to sleep. Let the baby sleep with him with his head facing in the same direction."

"Where will you be?" asked the woman.

"I will turn myself into a fly and hide in that crack over there."

It happened just that way. I'itoi turned himself into a fly and hid in the crack. Eagle Man came home, ate his

meal, and lay down with the baby to sleep. The baby was so small it had not yet spoken, but now it did. "Papa, somebody came," the baby said.

"What did you say?" asked Eagle Man.

"Do not listen," said the woman. "You know the baby cannot talk."

"Papa," the baby said again. "Somebody came." But every time, the woman told Eagle Man not to listen. Finally, she sang a song so the baby would go to sleep.

When they were both sleeping, the fly came out of the crack and turned back into I'ittoi. He took a stone hatchet from his belt and chopped the baby's head off. Then he chopped Eagle Man's head off, too.

After I'ittoi killed Eagle Man, the woman took him to a corner of the cave where there was a huge pile of bones. These were the bones of the people Eagle Man had killed.

First I'ittoi woke up the people at the very top of the pile, the ones who had been dead for the shortest time. When they came back to life, their skin was a rich brown color. They were gentle and hardworking and laughed a lot.

"I like you very much," I'ittoi said. "You will be Tohono O'othham, my Desert People, and live here close to my mountains forever."

The next people on the pile had been dead a while longer. When they woke up, they weren't quite so industrious, and they were a little quarrelsome.

"You're all right," I'ittoi said. "You can live near me, but not too near. You will be the Pima, Akimel O'othham, and live by the river."

When the next people woke up, they were lazy and they fought a lot among themselves.

"You will be Ohb, the Apaches," I'ittoi said. "You will be the enemy and live far from here in the mountains across my desert."

The bones at the bottom of the pile had been dead for such a long time that when they came back to life, their skin had turned white.

*"I don't like you at all," I'ittoi said to them. "You will be Mil-gahn, the whites. I will give you something with which to write, then I want you to go far away from me across the ocean and stay there."*

*And that, nawoj, my friend, is the story of I'ittoi and Eagle Man.*

The Indian girl staggered slightly as she sidled up to the pickup. "Mr. Ladd, are you going to the dance?"

Gary Ladd finished pumping gas into his pickup. He recognized Gina Antone, a young Papago who lived in Topawa, a village on the reservation that also housed the Teachers' Compound where he lived with his wife.

"Hi, Gina," he returned. "My friend and I thought we'd stop by for a while."

"Our truck broke down," Gina continued. She was slender and attractive and more than a little drunk. "Could you give us a ride? We've got some beer."

"Sure," Gary Ladd told her. "No problem." He hurried into the trading post to pay for the gas while a laughing group of young Papagos piled cheerfully into the back of the truck.

It was early on a hot summer's evening in June of 1968. As they settled into the bed of the pickup, the young people laughed and joked about the coming dance. None of them guessed that before the sun came up the next morning, Gina Antone would be dead, and that death, for her, would be a blessing.

The woman sat in the detective's car. He had left the engine running, so the air-conditioning stayed on. The interior of the car remained cool, even on this overheated June night. The woman listened curiously to the crackling transmissions on the police radio, but she mostly didn't understand what the voices were saying. She didn't want to understand.

Instead of getting out of the car, she sat and listened and watched. She saw the parade of flashing lights as

the ambulances arrived. After that, she didn't want to see anymore. She turned away and focused instead on the luminescent hands of the clock on the dashboard as they moved from 8:00 to 8:10, from 8:10 to 8:15.

The detective hurried back to the car. "He's calling for you," the man said gruffly. "Do you want to go to him?"

"No," she said quickly. "No, thank you. I'd rather stay here, if you don't mind."



# 1

**T**HE ROOM WAS square and hot, and so was the man sitting at the gray-green metallic desk. Sweat poured off his jowls and trickled down the inside of his shirt. Finally, Assistant Superintendent Ron Mallory yanked open his collar and loosened his tie. God, it was hot—too hot to work, too hot to think.

Through his narrow window, Mallory gazed off across the green expanse of cotton fields that surrounded the Arizona State Prison at Florence. It was June, and irrigated cotton thrived beneath a hazy desert sky with its blistering noontime sun. Maybe cotton could grow in this ungodly heat, but people couldn't.

Ron Mallory hated his barren yellow office with its view of razor ribbon-topped fences punctuated with guard towers. The view wasn't much, but having an office at all, particularly one with a window, was a vast improvement over working the floor in one of the units. Mallory didn't complain, but all the while, he busily plotted his own escape.

Assistant Superintendent Mallory had no intention of working in Corrections forever. It was Friday. Maybe sometime this weekend he'd find some time away from

Arlene and the kids to work on his book. There was a wall in Chapter 11, some kind of story-structure problem that made it impossible to move forward.

He took another swipe at his forehead with a damp paper towel and waited for a guard to bring Andrew Carlisle into his office.

"Damn legislature," he told a fly that sauntered lazily across the stacks of file folders on his desk. Why couldn't those idiots down in Phoenix find money enough to fix the prison's damn refrigeration units? The air-conditioning always went on the fritz the minute the temperature climbed above 110.

Buildings in the capitol complex in Phoenix were plenty cool. He'd damn near frozen his ass off when he'd gone there as part of the official delegation begging the legislative committee for more prison money. They'd as good as said it didn't matter if it got hot for the prisoners. After all, "Prisoners were *supposed* to be punished, weren't they?" "What about the guards?" Warden Franklin had countered. "What about the other people who work there?" "What about them?" the committee had said. They didn't give a shit about the worker bees. Nobody did.

Irritably, Mallory slapped at the fly, but it eluded him and flew over to the window just as Mendez, Mallory's assistant, knocked on the door and put his head inside the sweltering office. "Carlisle's here," Mendez said.

"Good. Send him in." Ron Mallory mopped his brow, knowing it wouldn't do any good. His face would be sopped with sweat again within moments. God, it was hot!

Ron Mallory had conducted hundreds of prerelease interviews in the time he'd held the job. There was a standard protocol. Where are you going to stay? What kind of work do you have lined up? But this wouldn't be a standard interview, because Andrew Carlisle wasn't a standard prisoner.

As soon as the guard led Andrew Carlisle into the room, Mallory noticed that even in this terrible heat the man wasn't sweating. Guys who didn't sweat usually pissed

Ron Mallory off, but he liked Andrew Carlisle.

"Is this when I get the 'go-and-sin-no-more' talk?" the prisoner asked good-humoredly.

Carlisle eased himself into a chair in front of Mallory's desk without waiting for either an order or an invitation. Between assistant superintendent and prisoner, there existed a camaraderie, an easy give-and-take, enjoyed by no other inmate in the Arizona State Prison.

Ron Mallory appreciated Andrew Carlisle. Intellectually, he was several cuts above the other prisoners. Carlisle conversed about politics, religion, philosophy, and current events with equal facility and enthusiasm. Under the guise of working together as inmate clerk and warden, the two men had carried on six years' worth of wide-ranging discussions, exchanges that made Assistant Superintendent Mallory feel almost scholarly.

"That's right," Mallory responded with a chuckle. "'Go and sin no more.' Couldn't have said it better myself. I'm sorry to see you go, though, Carlisle. Once you're gone, who's going to keep this office in order, and who'll help me finish my book? How about screwing up and coming back for a return engagement?"

"I won't screw up," Carlisle declared.

Mallory nodded seriously. "I'm sure you won't, Carlisle. You've more than paid your debt to society. As far as I'm concerned, you never should have been here in the first place. Don't quote me, but if every poor bastard who ever killed or fucked a drunken Indian got sent up here, we'd be more overcrowded than we already are. That judge in Tucson just got a hard-on for you. The important thing now is for you to put it all behind you and get on with your life. What are you going to do?"

Andrew Carlisle shrugged. "I don't know exactly. I doubt the university will take me back. Ex-cons don't quite meet the hiring and tenure guidelines."

"It's a damn shame, if you ask me," Mallory said. "You're one hell of a teacher. Look at what you've done for me. Here I am on Chapter Eleven and counting. I'm



going to finish this damn book, dedicate it to you, and buy my way out of this hellhole of a dead-end job, and you're the one making it possible."

Carlisle smiled indulgently, waiting in silence while Mallory studied the contents of the file folder in front of him. "Says here you plan to go back to Tucson. That right?"

Andrew Carlisle nodded. "I'll hole up in some cheapo apartment, maybe down in the barrio somewhere."

"And do what?"

"Work. I've got a book or two of my own to write."

For most "two-for-one, early-release prisoners," the word *work* should have included an employer's name, address, and telephone number, but Mallory regarded Carlisle as an exceptional prisoner. In his case, exceptions had been made.

"What will you live on in the meantime?"

"I still have some money left from when they sold off my house to pay attorneys' fees. As long as I don't live too high on the hog, I can survive until the first advance comes in."

Ron Mallory nodded his approval. "Good plan," he said. "Hell of a plan. You'll make a fortune."

"I hope so," Andrew Carlisle replied.

Mallory pulled a small rectangular piece of shiny paper from the folder and passed it across the desk. "Here's your bus ticket to Tucson," he said. "The guard will take you to collect your personal effects and whatever money is in your account. Now get the hell out of here and knock 'em dead."

Carlisle accepted Mallory's abrupt dismissal with good grace. "I'll do that," he said, pocketing the ticket and then reaching back across the desk to give Ron's pudgy hand a firm shake. "And you keep on writing."

"I will," Mallory responded fervently. "Count on it."

Carlisle smiled to himself as he left Mallory's office. Mendez, sitting at his desk in the outer office, noticed the smile and assumed it had something to do with his release,