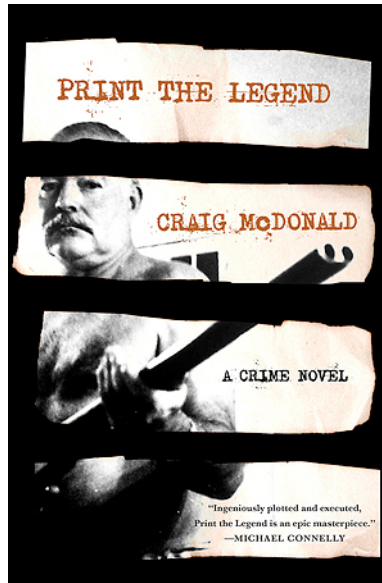

***PAULSON:
IDAHO, 1965***



“A paranoiac...like a poet, is born, not made.”

— Luis Buñel

THE FACE IN THE WINDOW

Hannah noticed herself walking with a slight limp. She cursed her wrenched ankle.

The extra weight of carrying Bridget made the pain worse.

She paused, looking for a bench —anywhere to sit for a minute. She saw the storefront stencil:

THE
ADAMS GALLERY

Hannah squinted against the glare of sun on glass and saw his name. Smiling, she brushed her hair back from her face and stepped inside the small storefront.

A slow day: Tom Adams was alone in the back, working on a canvas. He smiled, hesitated: "I know you...but I can't place you."

Hannah smiled back. "We met in the Ketchum Cemetery a while back...you were painting Hemingway's grave. You've got a great memory."

"Hardly. Just a thing for faces." He smiled back. "Wouldn't forget anyone who looks like you."

Hannah smiled. "How's work coming on the triptych?"

"Getting close."

"Thought you were a roamer," Hannah said. Her gaze roved the walls. "Now you're a retailer."

"Just fell for the place, hard. Can see why Hemingway did. 'Course, I haven't weathered an Idaho winter yet."

Hannah said, "You gave me a card that day in the cemetery. I passed it on to a friend. She'll maybe be calling you soon for a portrait...Mary Hemingway."

Tom smiled. “So I have *you* to thank for that. Thank you so much. I talked to Mary just a bit ago. We’ve closed the deal. She’s even letting me paint the place in the house where...well, you know.”

Hannah nodded. “That’s a challenge — making something of that place that matters. If it can be done, I’m sure you can do it.”

“I owe you so much — Hannah — isn’t it?” He leaned in close and looked at Bridget. “She’s beautiful, like her mother.” He hesitated. “How about I buy you two dinner?”

“You don’t owe me anything,” Hannah said.

“No, this isn’t some reciprocal thing...I want to buy you dinner, Hannah...you and—?”

“Bridget.”

“Beautiful. You and Bridget...I’ll take you both out.” He stuck out a finger and Bridget grasped it, tugged it toward her mouth. He smiled up at Hannah. “Does Bridget like French? Italian? Seafood?”

“I like all three...Bridget just likes me now.”

“Well, I’ve found my common ground with Bridget.”

Hannah shook her head. “Afraid we already have dinner plans.”

“A rival?”

Hannah thought about that, then said, “Afraid so. But thanks for asking. How’s business, Tom?” She gestured at his art lining the walls.

“Not terrible. The Hemingway stuff sells well...some of my stuff, too. I paint a lot of pictures to accent walls and match furniture. Those really pay the bills.”

Hannah nodded. “First rule of artistic survival: Make the crust.”

“Sums it up.” He hesitated. “Dear *God*.”

“What’s wrong?”

“Nothing...I’m probably wrong. But, well, there was a guy looking the through the window. Looking at you... *Staring* at you really. Kind of like he’s spying on you.”

Shivering, Hannah said, “I really should be going. Tom, would you — could you — call for a cab for me? And then could you maybe walk me to that cab?”

<http://www.craigmcdonaldbooks.com/legend.php>