

Two novellas that take readers through two centuries on incredible journeys to find family. Paddy O'Shea endures heartbreak, war and finally peace in his quest to find his cousin. Ten abducted infants find the truth in adulthood where they are led to an unknown past.

**THE INCREDIBLE JOURNEY OF PADDY O'SHEA
and
THIRTY YEARS**

By Allan Drake

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*The
Incredible
Journey
of
Paddy O'Shea*



TWO NOVELLAS BY ALLAN DRAKE



THIRTY
YEARS

THE INCREDIBLE JOURNEY
OF
PADDY O'SHEA

ALLAN DRAKE



BookLocker
Saint Petersburg, Florida

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First Edition

CHAPTER ONE

In May 1862, eighteen-year-old Paddy O'Shea stood on the deck of an old sailing ship. In his hand he held a cloth bag containing the only possessions he owned. He was in awe of the sights and sounds of his new surroundings.

“Mr. Dorsur, prepare to get underway,” ordered the captain.

Paddy smiled and felt excitement when the crew scurried about the ship after the order was given to haul in the morning lines, set the sails and get under way. The anticipation of the journey was overwhelming as the unfurled sails fluttered in the light breeze that slowly moved the ship away from the dock and toward the open sea. As Paddy turned and looked toward land, a sadness came over him as Ireland slowly disappeared from view. He began to have second thoughts about his decision to travel to America, although his future in Ireland was bleak. In his hand, the young lad held a letter from his cousin in Boston that urged Paddy to join him in the land of plenty. His heart began to beat a little faster as a new chapter in his life started to unfold.

The Atlantic Ocean along with the increasing wind and white capped waves, rocked the ship, and brought on seasickness. It was a new unwanted experience for the young lad. Paddy slowly made his way to a bunk below deck in the hope of easing his queasiness. As Paddy laid on a wooden bed, the eerie creaking sounds of the

wooden hull straining against the wind and the waves made him nervous. The motion of the constantly rolling ship, day after day and the ever-increasing stench in the enclosed space did not improve his condition nor that of the other passengers. Paddy thought he was going to die before his condition improved three days later. Feeling well enough, he gathered himself and unsteadily ventured onto the deck.

He closed his eyes, leaned his head back, and breathed in the sweet smell of fresh air. He felt the warm sun dance across his face as the cool wind tossed his unkempt long red hair in every direction.

“Lad, I see you got your sea legs,” said an old, smiling deck hand while passing Paddy on his way to complete his assigned task.

Paddy slowly opened his eyes and looked at him. He didn’t understand what he meant and remained silent. He managed a slight smile hoping his queasy stomach would disappear.

“Lad, come here, I would like to have a word with you,” the captain yelled above the wind that filled the sails.

Paddy staggered along the constantly rolling deck holding onto anything he could to keep from falling. He approached the large man.

“What is your name young man?”

“Paddy O’Shea.” His heavy Irish brogue was barely above a whisper. The captain leaned in.

“How would you like to become a sailor? We are a little short-handed. It will help pay for your voyage.”

Paddy knew nothing about ships, and at this moment he wanted to know less. Paddy was hard working and a quick study.

He was willing to learn and the extra money certainly wouldn't hurt. The young lad thought about the offer as he slowly looked toward the ships rigging and the deck hands diligently working. He turned to the captain and thrust his hand toward him.

"Yes sir," he said as the two shook hands.

"Mr. Dorsur, take this lad and teach him the ropes."

"Paddy, my name is John Dorsur. I'm the chief boatswain in charge of the ship. I know how you feel, bear with me. I'll show you how to tie some rope knots today. Tomorrow, I'm sure you'll feel well enough to get started tying your own."

Paddy tossed and turned during the night and he found it hard to fall asleep. He catnapped on and off until sunrise. He was excited to learn a new trade and pay for the voyage. Starving, he had breakfast, his first food after being unable to hold down any for three days. He smiled as he stepped on deck, it was the second time he did since coming onboard.

"Are you ready lad?" Mr. Dorsur asked. Paddy nodded.

During the course of the voyage, Paddy quickly learned how to tie each knot and furl and unfurl the sails. He was very nervous the first time he had to climb the rope ladder to set the sails, but he came to love watching the vast ocean and the beautiful sunrises and sunsets. He was fascinated by his new world and when he was not on duty, he would spend hours on the yard arms, high above the deck, watching whales leaping high above the waves and dolphins following the ship. At night he would lay on the deck looking up at the stars that he had never really paid attention to in the past.

“Mr. O’Shea. You have takin’ well to your new profession. Plan on stayin’ a sailor?” Mr. Dorsur said while looking down at Paddy.

“No sir, me cousin is waitin’ for me in Boston.”

Time passed quickly and by the end of June, when the ship entered Boston Harbor, Paddy was a seasoned sailor. The passengers were elated and cheered when the ship docked. Their ordeal was over. Each new immigrant felt both excitement and fear as they disembarked the ship. The new sights and sounds overwhelmed them as they joined the hustle and bustle on the chaotic Boston dock. Soldiers marching in columns, and merchants hawking their wares put a smile the face of each newcomer as they stepped into an unknown future.

“Paddy, you’ve become a good sailor. I wish you would stay on,” the captain said.

Paddy stood on the deck with his bag. He gazed at the now furled sails and neatly coiled ropes before turning toward the captain.

“Thank you for making me a sailor, but me cousin is waitin’.”

Paddy shook the captain’s hand, left the ship and didn’t look back. He stopped several strangers and asked for directions to his cousin’s house. Paddy finally arrived at the white one-story clapboard house and gently knocked on the weather worn wooden door. An older woman quickly swung open the door, and yelled in a gruff English accent, “What do you want?” Paddy was a little stunned by the woman’s aggressive behavior. He stepped back from the woman, gathered his thoughts and looked the woman in the eyes before introducing himself.

“Me name is Paddy O'Shea. I came from Ireland to see me cousin. He sent a letter tellin' me he lived here.”

“The bloke left several months ago and headed out west to find land to farm.”

Paddy's heart sank as the woman abruptly slammed the door shut. He was now alone in a strange new land. His meager pay would only help him for a short time. He needed a job. Going back to sea was not an option, but it was the only real job he ever had beside tending sheep on the family farm. The streets in America were not paved with gold as he was told and his money ran out quickly. Work was not available to the new immigrant. He had to sleep in the street, steal and beg for food to survive anyway he could. Dirty and ragged, he was now like many other people prowling Boston's streets. A soldier approached and made him an offer he could hardly refuse.

THIRTY YEARS

ALLAN DRAKE

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First Edition

CHAPTER ONE

“When was the last time anyone checked on the babies?” asked Detective Ron Wells of the Tampa, Florida police department.

“A nurse is on duty at all times,” said the supervisor at the hospital.

“Who was on duty last night. We need to speak to them?” said Jeff White, Ron’s partner.

“Mrs. Peters, she is on her way back to the hospital. She was notified as soon as the discovery was made.

“Do you have a surveillance video we can view?” Jeff asked.

“I’ll have security make it available to you,” the supervisor said.

“When was the baby first discovered missing?” Ron asked while taking notes.

“After the shift change. We thought the infant was with the mother, Tania. When it was discovered the baby wasn’t with her, she became very hysterical after being told her daughter was missing. The doctor had to sedate her to calm her down. She is sleeping now.”

“Call us the minute she wakes up.”

“What about the father?” asked Detective White.

“We don’t know, none is listed on the birth certificate.”

“Has anyone been to the hospital to see her and the baby?”

“I believe her grandmother visited.”

The on-duty captain arrived and joined the investigation. He was quickly brought up to date by Ron and Jeff.

The two detectives and the captain looked toward a nurse who quickly approached them while they gathered evidence.

“I’m Mrs. Peters. I understand you want to speak to me.”

“Where were you last night when the infant was taken?” Ron asked.

She looked away for a moment before speaking. Teary eyed, she relayed her story.

“A nurse, who said she was new, offered me a coffee sometime before 2 a.m. The last thing I remember was talking to the her, feeling tired and sitting down at my desk. I woke up before the shift change a little embarrassed that I had fallen asleep. I guess I was still a little out of it when I checked the ward before leaving and didn’t notice the missing baby.

“Can you describe the woman?” Ron asked.

“She was a bit odd.”

“How so?”

“She was about my height and weight with long brown hair. She had a deep voice and she wasn’t very good looking. Something didn’t seem right but who am I to judge.”

“Can you remember anything else about her?”

Mrs. Peters looked distant while in deep thought. She shook her head before speaking.

“No, I can’t recall anything else, I’m sorry.”

“Thank you for your cooperation. If anything comes to mind, please contact us,” Jeff said. He handed her his card.

“Mrs. Peters. In my office now. We need to talk,” said her angry supervisor.

Forensics arrived and pictures were taken. The crib, her coffee cup, stairwell and doors were dusted for finger prints, and everyone was finally interviewed. The detectives viewed the security video again, this time with their captain. Security gave a printed picture of the suspect to Ron. The video showed that at 2 a.m., a woman in a nurse’s uniform entered the nursery, wrapped the baby in a blanket and quickly left. The suspect carried the baby down the back stairwell and out into a dimly lit parking lot, where she drove away in a dark four door sedan. At a dead end, they discussed the case on the way back to headquarters. Upon their arrival, they were informed that a dark four door sedan was found abandoned and had been reported stolen the day before.

“Ron, I recall that another baby was abducted in Jacksonville last week. I wonder if there could be a connection. I think we need a road-trip.” Ron nodded in agreement.

“We can leave tomorrow morning but we have to talk to the chief first,” Jeff said.

Ron kept mulling over the case and found it hard to fall asleep. He tossed and turned all night until the morning sun signaled it was time to finally get out of bed and on the road. The question he kept asking himself over and over was, why?

The ride from Tampa to Jacksonville, Florida, gave Ron and Jeff plenty of time to discuss the case. They had high hopes that a connection could be made, and the dots would connect. Only time would tell. Heading north on 75, Ron, tired from a lack of sleep, looked at the road ahead where the white lines were becoming a blur. He rubbed his eyes and turned on the radio. Jeff told him to pull over, he was driving.

“Jeff, call the hospital, they never got back to us about the interview with the mother of the missing baby. Also, call the chief and have someone inquire statewide about missing babies, not only from hospitals, but from anywhere.”

Jeff gave Ron a curious look, then made the call. The hospital said the mother was discharged and gave Jeff her address and cell number. Their chief in Tampa said he would have the request sent to Police and Sheriff’s departments statewide.

“Keep me informed, I think you maybe on to something,” the chief said.

Ron stopped at a rest area where he slid into the passenger seat, and closed his eyes. He was out before the car reentered the highway.

Jeff called the Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office to inform them of their investigation and impending visit for information. Lieutenant James said he would gather all the case documents by the time they arrive.

Jacksonville loomed large as they exited route 10 and parked near the front entrance of the Sheriff’s Office. Dark rain clouds released a torrid downpour as the men raced to the front door. Soaking wet, they looked at each and laughed at their predicament before entering the building.

“Can I help you?” asked the desk sergeant.

“I’m Detective Ron Wells and this is my partner Jeff White from Tampa P.D. We are here to see Lieutenant James.

“Welcome to Jacksonville,” the lieutenant said as he approached and extended his hand to shake. You look a little wet, please follow me,” he said with a little chuckle.

“How was the ride?”

“Long, but we hope it is going to be worth it,” Ron said.

The lieutenant kept staring at Ron and Jeff after entering his office. He had a feeling he had met them before. He handed the detectives a cardboard box containing the case file and evidence of the missing infant. Ron and Jeff looked at the evidence that was collected and read the interviews that were conducted. It raised their eyebrows. It was eerily similar to the one in Tampa.

“Lieutenant. A woman entered the hospital dressed as a nurse. The abduction happened the same way in Tampa. The parents are local, can you join us for an interview?”

“You have all the information here. Is another interview necessary?”

“Something might have been missed, you never know.” Ron said.

“I’ll call them to get permission, they have been through enough already,” The lieutenant said.

Then it hit him. “The both of you were detectives at Florida Law Enforcement. If I recall, you were involved in something called Blue Water. The governor and some of his staff went to jail, big story.”

“That was a long time ago,” Ron said, Jeff nodded.

“We wanted a more stable life and be home at night. We were on the road and away from home way too often. Jeff and I decided enough was enough, we left FLE, moved back to Tampa and rejoined Tampa P.D.” Ron said.

“What ever happened with that woman detective?”

“Amy Phillips, our old boss, she lives in Tallahassee and still works for FLE,” Ron said.

Teresa Broadwell was hesitant at first, but said yes to the interview.

The detectives shook their heads when they arrived at a rundown house with chipping and peeling white paint and rotting wood on the front porch. Parked in front was an old, dented four door sedan with bald tires. Several ill-dressed small children ran around the house chasing each other playing tag. The detectives approached the front door and knocked. A 20 something, over-weight and unkempt woman opened the door.

“Y’all must be the detectives who called. Come in and sit down.”

The living room was dirty and the torn furniture had seen better days. A musty odor filled the room.

They quickly looked around and decided to remain standing.

“I’m Lieutenant James and this is Detectives Ron Well and Jeff White from Tampa Police Department. They would like to ask you some questions about the disappearance of your infant son.”

Teresa looked down and remained silent for several minutes as tears welled in her eyes.

“What do y’all want to know?”

“Do you recognize the woman in this photo?” Ron asked.

She held the photo in her shaking hands and studied it.

“No, never seen her before.”

“Do you know of any reason why anyone would take your son?” Ron asked.

“I’ve been askin’ the same question, don’t have an answer,” Teresa said with tears now streaming down her face. She looked away for a moment and dried her eyes.

“How many children do you have? Ron hesitantly asked.

“Four. The baby would have been five.” Mrs. Broadwell’s voice cracked when she answered.

She wiped her eyes again and looked at the detectives with hope that they had an answer to where her baby was.

“One last question. Where does your husband work?”

“Does odd jobs when he can. We don’t have nothin’. Why did they take my baby?”

The lieutenant looked at the two detectives. They knew what was on his mind. This interview was over. She has had enough.

“We are sorry for your loss and to have bothered you. Thank you for your cooperation. We are doing everything possible to find your son. Her is my card, if you think of anything else, even the smallest detail, please call me,” Ron said before the trio departed.

After reading all the reports and talking briefly with the mother, nothing more needed to be asked of this poor woman.

“Lieutenant, thank you for your cooperation. If we uncover any additional information, we will pass it along to you,” Ron said.

“I hope your trip wasn’t a waste of time?”

“No, a picture may be emerging. Again, thank you for your assistance lieutenant.”

A hand-shake in the parking lot ended the quick meeting. The start of the ride home was interrupted by a call from their police chief.

“We received a call from the Sheriff in Bella Grande, they had an infant abduction about 2 weeks ago that sounds very similar to your case. I told them you would pay them a visit.”

“Thanks chief, we are on our way.”

“Ron, Bella Grande is a long way, do you really want to drive that far today?”

Ron shook his head after looking at his GPS which indicated their destination was over 300 miles away.

“How about stopping south of Daytona and stay the night?” Ron said.

“I don’t know about you, but I’m getting hungry,” Jeff said.

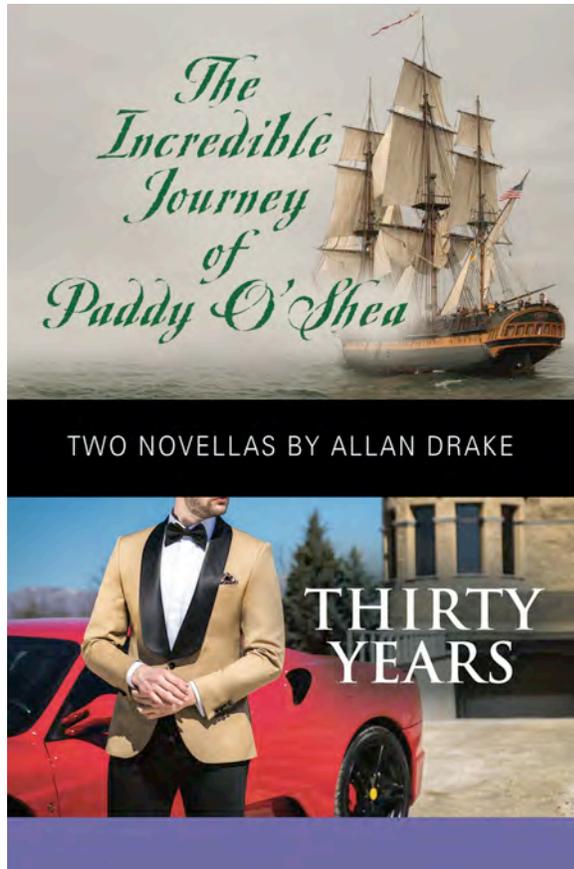
“How about stopping in St. Augustine. It’s on our way. I know a nice restaurant for dinner near the beach, besides a little site seeing wouldn’t hurt,” Ron suggested.

“Hell, what the chief doesn’t know won’t hurt him, besides the case isn’t going anywhere,” Jeff answered.

A short ride to the historic city put a smile on their faces. They had an early light lunch, toured the historic Spanish fort, Castillo

De San Marco and rode a trolley through town and learned about the history of St. Augustine. Late afternoon, Ron drove to a quaint restaurant and they entered. Beers and dinner topped off a great day.

Jeff drove south where a room was held at a hotel south of Daytona. A Monday night football game ended a long day.



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