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## Time

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*Darrell Collins*

## TIME

*Wendy Pierobon*

As I sit and hold his heavy, solid gold, intricately engraved pocket watch, my mind wanders trying to imagine the character of Guiseppe Barone.

My mind's eye can see a very tall man, in his mid-sixties waiting just outside the revolving door of an old bank building. He nervously glances at his watch as he impatiently waits.

It's a brisk winter day in Chicago. The sun casts a bright reflection off his silver hair as he tips his black fedora in greeting to a familiar face that passes his way. He shoves his hands deep into the pockets of his cashmere overcoat to shield his fair northern Italian skin from the snapping wind. As he hunches his broad shoulders to his jawline, he turns his back to the street to block the sharp wind from stinging his ice-blue eyes.



He glances up at the bank clock as he tunnels through his overcoat to his vest pocket. The watch is attached to a long, slender gold chain that fastens to the middle button of his navy blue vest. The chain acts as a fishing line as it reels the watch from his pocket. A small button that releases the cover guarding the face is located at the top of the gold case. Once this button is pressed, the cover springs open and displays the elegant face of the timepiece. The numbers are indicated by small strokes located at quarter intervals. A minute hand slowly ticks away precious time. He compares the two times to confirm that he is not late. Before he returns the watch to his vest pocket, he flips it over to read the inscription. His finger slowly traces the engraved numbers that note the year he retired from his engineering position with a small firm located in the Loop.

The Chicago wind lulls to a breeze; he turns and continues his vigil. He begins to pace back and forth in front of the bank, constantly aware of the time.

Finally, he hears the familiar call of the delivery truck horn. As he looks down State Street, he spots the long, army-green, flat roof of the old wagon as it slowly makes its way over the bridge in the early morning traffic. As the vehicle nears the bank building, the company logo can be clearly seen on the driver's door — *The Chicago Daily News*. The truck grinds to a halt in front of the newspaper stand next to the bank. The driver jumps out and races around to the open tailgate of the 1930 Ford delivery wagon. He reaches inside, grabs the morning paper, and throws it to the waiting paperboy. The box-shaped vehicle is loaded to the ceiling with papers, papers that are late for delivery.

Guiseppe glances one final time at his watch and grunts before returning it to his pocket. He picks up the paper, digs into his hip pocket for a coin, pays the paperboy, and quickly turns to the Help Wanted page. He anxiously scans the ads until he finds precisely what it is he needs. As he surveys the available positions, his hand finds its way to the gold watch. A smile curves his lips as he remembers the retirement party the week before. He seems wryly amused at the thought that he had worked his whole life in preparation for this moment only to discover that he is not ready for the unstructured lifestyle of the retired. A lifestyle where there is no need for his heavy, solid gold, intricately engraved pocket watch.