

**SYNOPSIS TO
DREAMS AND REALITIES
BASED ON A TRUE STORY BY JONATHAN L TRAPMAN**

When a local carabinieri discovers an empty skiff with a discarded revolver and note, floating on a storm strewn Lake Como in Italy does it lead to a terrifying trail uncovered years earlier in the New York City Library in 1928 by an English investigative journalist, Capt AH Trapman aka Toto?

A vast unpaid fortune owed his family for gold gifted to the Revolutionary cause and his dream this would lead to his very own Yellow Brick Road, turns into a reality revealing dark secrets, nightmare scenarios and hidden agendas impacting the world, imminently to be illustrated in the Crash of '29.

Will he decide there are bigger fish to trap and truths to expose than self-enrichment?

Does he become the fish or fisherman?

Will his findings ignite another spark of revolution or are forces ranged against him too powerful to reel in?

Unmasking their endgame places him and his explosive discoveries into the spotlight of a person of interest and Public Enemy No 1. His life in mortal danger he opts for exposure.

A race against time, hunted down by agents of the powerful, survival hinges on awaking from dreams and facing realities head on.

Jonathan L Trapman

Jonathan L. Trapman, author and photographer, has written since aged 9 and photographed professionally since aged 16. His first novel *The Bull* got fair marks at school marking him out as an author in need of improvement.

Defying early detractors his professional career as a photojournalist included working for some of the top titles in Fleet Street. Among them the London Times, Daily Express and a very short and boring stint with the Sun newspaper.

Exposed to the demands for half-truths and periodic propaganda demanded from photo/journalists in the '70s and 80s, he decided his soul was worth more than shekels earned from the news rooms of corporate media.

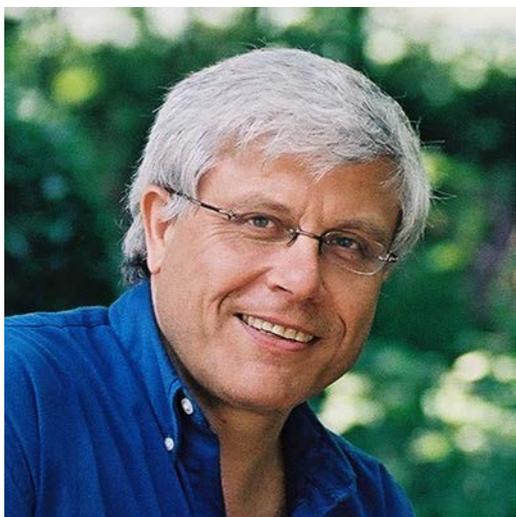
Marking his further career becoming one of the industry's foremost photographers he enjoyed getting to know the world, its peoples and a far wider vision of life on earth on others' behalf and at others' expense.

He has appeared on TV and radio including the BBC, France Inter and online radio. He has been invited to speak at creative and literary conferences across the globe.

Early 2012, in partnership with his wife, had him accomplish several translations of foreign writers. The most enduring, endearing and groundbreaking has been the first ever, in over 900 years, translation of 10th century Sufi founder and mystic saint **Hoja Ahmed Yassawi's** *Diwani Hikmet (Divine Wisdom)* poetry and sacred verse.

Currently he is authoring **The Freedom Cycle** an ambitious heptalogy (seven book) project, *Dreams and Realities* being the first. With the second volume, *Angel of Redemption*, due out early summer 2017 with the remainder set to roll out over the next few years.

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PRELUDE

The gathering storm turned the twilight on Lake Como gunmetal gray as lightning flashed, illuminating the regulars lined up along the Italian waterside bar. Its sharp light cut through the smoke-filled room as movement homewards beckoned for one of them.

A young waiter struggled outside to close down umbrellas no longer serving custom whilst hopelessly at the mercy of a wind whipping them to demonstrate the futility of human impudence against Nature's rule.

An impeccably dressed carabinieri lent against the bar, relishing a walk home, where he would cook his favorite dish, a pleasure reserved for his one day off. Before departing he threw down a final Cinzano, turned, adjusted his trench coat collar upwards and headed for the door.

"That boat outside is still drifting untethered," shouted a man entering, in a suit that had seen better days.

"Boat? What boat?" answered the Sicilian officer, adjusting the black cap neatly placed on his head.

The barman, aware of the lawman's imminent departure, hollered.

"You've got to be kidding. Didn't you notice it on the way in?"

The ill-suited man faced the policeman directly and glowered.

"Isn't this your department, Fantozzi, to solve mysteries around here?"

Fantozzi looked up grudgingly and replied.

"Tomorrow maybe, but tonight I've a date with spaghetti alla carbonara."

The barman shouted across the room.

"Aren't you in the slightest bit curious, Guido?"

Without turning, Guido blurted back.

"Loose boats are the boatman's problem," and skirted past the suit.

The man, facing the bar, addressed Fantozzi.

"Maybe in Palermo, but here we expect the carabinieri to do their job."

An awkward silence followed, quickly filled with the barman's attempt to lower the temperature.

"Go on Guido – just a quick look, keep everyone happy and then you're home."

He winked overtly at Fantozzi's questioner as Guido pulled the door open with unusual authority and twisted round to his interrogator's back and spat his response.

"In Palermo, sir, our boatmen tether their boats securely."

The door slammed shut behind him.

He made his way to the waterline, the wind whipping waves, spume spitting onto polished black shoes.

Retreating back a few paces he looked to left and right, making sure no one witnessed the pedantic process of taking each shoe and sock off in turn. Feet naked, trousers rolled up to avoid a soaking; he made his way gingerly towards the tossing skiff. Realizing he still wore his cap, he turned and threw it with precision over the shoes and socks behind him. Turning attention back to the craft in the water, he waded in.

The wind edged the boat closer. Confident of aim and balance, he raised both arms and lunged forward into the boat. The stiffening wind withdrew his target and Fantozzi fell headlong into the water. Spitting out cold, clear water, he scrambled towards its prow and clambered over.

Another flash illuminated the interior, revealing an Enfield revolver, lying on the bottom of the boat. He froze, looked left, right and left again catching the outlines of an empty wine bottle. Another longer flash exposed a handwritten note. As the boat bobbed up and down, he reached in, grabbed it and began to read.

A loud clap of thunder followed by peel over peel rolled across mountains and lake as stronger waves, indicated he could not expect to enjoy a quiet evening.

CHAPTER ONE

Leaning back in a rounded rosewood chair, one arm resting nonchalantly on the long oak table beside him, the correspondent was bugged by a niggling fact refusing to clarify. Having completed the work envisioned as his get out of penury ticket, he stared up at the gilded golden ceiling above. Its blue sky and cotton bud clouds teased his imagination transport itself beyond the raging storm lashing Arcadian steps outside leading to the New York Public Library he presently occupied. He struggled to stay present.

Ferret-like referencing, stitching and compiling of facts, compelling words, chapters and information had brought this definitive book on dogs to life. A rain-soaked April evening in 1928 became a potential prelude to a future free from the leaden weight of scraping by. It heralded a pursuit of happiness craved, for so long. Well over two years expended on this project, had enabled him to uncover family links to the Carolinas, which had expanded his knowledge of the family's past and encouraged him trace roots and origins. This parallel research developing his own family tree fitted comfortably into travels back and forth to Europe researching dogs and humans alike. Yet as he sat there something was missing, something so important he readily threw away the opportunity to daydream.

What was it, he asked himself. What have I missed in what's written and researched?

He read and reread the manuscript, scanning notes on the family; over and over perusing each paragraph. Time passed, so much so he forgot it altogether. All he knew for certain was the missing link lay in the family research.

That bugged him.

"Excuse me sir, I apologize for disturbing you but we are now closing."

The correspondent, deeply absorbed, did not register the senior librarian's voice. Raising his voice slightly the librarian tried again.

"Sir, we're closing and I must ask you to pack your things and leave."

He placed a gentle hand on the writer's shoulder who jumped, alarmed at the invasion.

"I beg you sir, we need to close, and may I ask you quickly collect your research and leave."

Brought into the present with a jolt, the man realized his absorption and obliviousness to the librarian.

"But I must find what's missing, I must, it's here somewhere – or more to the point it's not...."

"Sir, you can return tomorrow at seven when we open and continue. As a concession you may leave all these references in place and I shall personally see to it that nothing is disturbed."

The correspondent became agitated.

"It has to be here, it has to be..."

"I'm sure it is," the kindly librarian attempted soothing the troubled researcher's plight, "but have you not got family to go back to and spend the evening, take supper with?"

Like a bombshell, the researcher felt his mind explode realizing what was missing. He turned, stood up, took the shoulders of the head librarian in both hands, one on each, and shook them with joy.

"My God, thank you sir, thank you."

The other man, stunned at the sudden gesture, the intimate action and complete ignorance of what induced it, allowed the elated man, still holding his shoulders, to continue.

"You see it was just that, you hit it on the head. You helped me find the missing piece."

Unaware of the shock the librarian now registered, Captain Albert Henry William Trapman, ex military, erstwhile foreign war correspondent for the London Telegraph, seeker after fortunes and dreamer of better things to come, let slip his hands from the librarian's shoulders and took the man's left hand in both of his and shook it vigorously.

"Thank you so much, sir, for letting slip the magic word family."

Funnily, I have no family in this great city with which I can share an evening meal. I have even less money to even purchase one, but all these are mere incidentals compared with the gift you've just given me and the knowledge my family from the deep south hold an important and missing piece of my puzzle."

The librarian remained stunned, perplexed and riveted to this extraordinary fellow who, before him, was as radiant as he was loud in these hallowed halls of silence. Under ordinary circumstances, such an outburst would never have been permitted. However the truth was that they were the only two left in the building, so he felt less impelled to quieten his visitor down. In confusion as much as shock, he switched off his automatic internal responder.

“You see it’s the family I’ve missed, it’s the family that’s the key and it’s my family I must pursue,” explained the effulgent researcher.

Letting slip the handshake, he beamed wildly at the books and shelves around him, lifting arms outstretched in grateful supplication to one and all. At the same time honoring the librarian and all the ghosts who had begun to drift into place as the living withdrew. Hastily gathering what seemed important, along with the finished manuscript he looked triumphantly to the heavens and gilded golden ceiling above.

“Thank God for dogs and family,” Captain Trapman cried.

The librarian remained stunned.

“Thank you for allowing this carnage to remain as is, sir and I’ll return at seven. For now I must allow you to close shop and be about your business.”

The librarian was not only bemused, mystified and thoroughly relieved as he watched the Englishman skip, like a child, out of sight but more importantly glad he could now close the doors and his evening on one of the strangest encounters he had witnessed in all his years in the New York Public Library.

He leaned over scanned the contents of research left with his photographic memory, remembering each piece and placement of the referenced detritus. He prided himself on attention to detail and was certain that in spite of the craziness he had just witnessed, he would honor his word that all would be exactly in place and ready for the Captain returning in the morning.

Noting it all he turned to go.

Across the library, Albert Trapman reappeared.

The librarian’s heart sunk.

“By the way, I never introduced myself, though we’ve spent so many months together across these tables. I’m Captain Albert Trapman and you are?”

“George Evans, Captain,” he mumbled.

“Excellent, George, excellent and please, call me Toto.”

George Evans, senior librarian at the New York Public Library had no time to query the man’s sobriquet. He did what he would automatically do in times of mental confusion. He took off his spectacles, looked at them quizzically and began cleaning the lenses with a finely pressed silk handkerchief. He noted he might ask that question at a later date.

Captain Trapman meanwhile disappeared into the raging storm outside.

CHAPTER TWO

A black-swathed sea of figures moved almost motionless with inner turmoil battling outward restraint.

A golden casket scythed through this ocean of grief, towards a candlelit trestle before the altar in the Anglican church. Nestled behind the metropolitan bustle describing London’s Knightsbridge Kensington borders, the church became a fitting place of somber ceremony for one of its own.

A chill November day in 1932 and a sharp shower became the backdrop for the grief within, where an elderly woman, her veil covering deeply lined and saddened features, self-consciously endeavored to check sobbing sadness, while a tenor launched divinely inspired resonance throughout the church, to accompany the playing out of a final adieu of a life lost before its time.

No one noticed the entrance of a tall, fleet-footed young man creep through the rear porch entrance, remove a rough tweed cap and seek the refuge of a back pew. Kneeling down, he silently paid his respects. The chasm of vacant pews between him and the tightly packed congregation up front described perfectly the divide between his own island of sorrow and the rest.

His thoughts raced across a landscape of shared memories, times together, the bond of brotherhood. The young man's aloneness swept into a receptacle of sorrow, vibrating deep within. His soul consumed by an otherworldly presence accepted an unknown force holding him, soothing him as an inner voice softly bid him still.

All is very, very well, it coaxed.

He recalled many walks both had taken across gorse-strewn headlands and silver strands of sand. Talks of ancestors escaping deprivation and poverty, seeking freedom and release in the promise, dreams and riches lying across the ocean. The times his companion shared tales of family whose journey took them half way across the world, supporting revolution and change.

Smokey Greene, riveted to the pew, felt himself part of something he cared little for, yet shared with his now departed friend. Twenty-three years separated them, now inconsequential within what seemed too brief a sum of years. Waving aside a torrent of unspoken questions tearing round his youthful head, Smokey did what he always did, left it to brew waiting for answers to appear in their own good time. If nothing else he was a patient soul, an essential quality for an emissary to come. Painful experience and hard-learned truths would be the scholarship he must experience on his journey to mystic sage.

For now, loss absorbed was shared with a tribe of unknown relatives, friends, compatriots and colleagues, all touched in their own way by the departed's eventful and unique existence.

Smokey silently thanked him for each moment of their time together. Vowing to be true to his memory, he swore to uphold his promise given.

As gratitude and love consumed sorrow, a subtle expansion and entrance of surprising joy entered. He took this moment as cue to withdraw as quietly as he had entered.

CHAPTER THREE

The storm lashing the streets of New York of an April night four years earlier had absolutely no effect on Toto's spirits. He was as high as a kite with exhilaration even prohibition could not bring down to earth. His enthusiasm drove him on as he crossed Bryant Park heading towards Broadway and West 44th. The park almost deserted save for a handful of passers by, invited intemperate weather and the wraiths of haunted souls frequenting this potter's field. Toto was having none of it. He may have felt the presence of the displaced, yet tonight's mission was to get to the Hotel Astor, hoping to cadge supper off one of his journalist buddies. Wrapped in a trusty mackintosh, he raised its collar against the weather and marched forward.

Rain pelted down unremittingly; incapable of diminishing the enthusiasm felt having finished his book. He was joyful for George, his friend and ally at the library, for giving him the key he believed would be far bigger, far more important than any downpour. Where it led at that precise moment remained a complete mystery. Appreciation for the librarian's kick-start to discover more with even greater impetus sheltered him from the stormiest external influences.

Present penury had for now been assuaged by intuition. If life had taught him anything, it was to trust that. Tonight was about hitting home runs.

From an early age it had been an experiential truth. It was responsible for his nickname, Toto.

His mind floated back to that sunny morning at Cavendish, the English country house in Suffolk, where he had spent his early years. A far cry from the stormy New York parkland he presently traipsed across, yet no less tangible than the cutting bite of the rain across his face.

He saw himself, the young four year old, in his bedroom on the first floor. Talking, as he so often did, to Toto, his invisible friend. That morning, while in deep discourse, his father, fresh home from another merchant business trip, hid himself on the landing outside the lad's bedroom, wishing to surprise his son. Aware of his father's game, he carried on as if oblivious.

His invisible Self assured Albert that as long as he always remembered their bond and its presence, the boy would never be alone. Albert's father – privy only to his son's side of the conversation – was shocked when the boy turned and spoke.

"Papa, you can come in now, he's gone away again."

His father William slowly crept into the room to witness the boy standing in the middle, in pajamas and a smile to warm the coldest heart.

All these years later Toto still felt the warmth and thrill of rushing into his father's arms. How he landed in a tumbledown sort of way into long legs. He was a giant of a father in all senses of the word.

"How is my young warrior then?" William asked, as he whisked Albert into strong arms.

The young lad looked piercingly into his father's eyes, enjoying the dizzy heights experienced by adults.

"Papa, you're home, tell me about the Indians and buccaneers again."

His father hugged him, realizing there was no escape from recounting oft told tales. Adult Toto remembered the pleasure his father took in retelling a rich repository of adventures the boy absorbed like a sponge. His adult self appreciated the imagination it cultivated and how it had helped direct him to land in New York City, albeit strapped for cash, yet using skills creatively and professionally as a journalist.

He chuckled to himself, in spite of the rain working hard to bring him back to the present remaining focused on the childhood memory.

"Firstly Albert, you've not introduced me to your friend."

Albert struggled in his father's arms, faking escape.

"Not so easy young man till we've been introduced."

William had often heard Albert in conversation with his invisible friend, always accepting this as part of the process growing up for a child.

"Papa, Toto's gone. He'll not be back yet."

"Toto?"

"Yes Toto, Papa."

"So where did this friend Toto come from, Albert?"

Settling down on the floor, he looked his son in the eye and asked again.

"So where did this friend Toto come from, Albert?"

"He's me."

"You?" William replied, with some consternation.

"Toto says that," the boy replied.

"Toto says what, that he's you?"

"Yes, he's my friend."

Intrigued at the boy's precociousness, his father continued.

"Is this a real friend or just one of your imaginary ones?"

"Real, of course. None are imaginary," Albert responded slightly hurt at the insinuation.

"So can I meet him, Albert?"

"No, he's gone."

"So we'll never meet him, your mother and I."

Adult Toto remembered the concern he felt at this question and how he had paused long and hard searching for a suitable way to describe the conundrum. As a child it had been so clear yet for adults so mysterious. All these years later he still felt proud of his reply.

"He's me, so you've met him."

His father was staggered at his son's logical jump. A process, he considered, way beyond tender years. Nonetheless he entertained the boy's imagination.

"So perhaps we should be calling you Toto then."

"Can do."

"Are you saying Albert you'd like to be called Toto from now on?"

"Can do," the child repeated again.

His father was nonplussed. Wishing to ease his incredulity the boy added.

"Mama knows Toto."

"Mama has met him has she?"

"Yes," mother Eliza confirmed, timing her entrance to perfection.

"So he's introduced you to Toto then?"

"Well not exactly, he's just gone away according to Albert," her husband replied, greatly confused.

Eliza's exquisite knack at extricating her husband from the masculine mire of incomprehension was what adult Toto had adored about her, alongside her ability to resolve the irresolvable. He always felt it would have stood her in good stead for the diplomatic corps.

"Why don't we call Albert Toto from now on. That makes Toto happy, Albert happy and you and I can go downstairs and take breakfast."

With that wisdom and diplomacy, from that day on everyone in his family and those considered a close friend called Albert Trapman, Toto.

Even today in his fifties, Toto recognized his intuitive self as the very same Toto of his youth. Never parted, always there, despite so many years forgetful of this constant companionship. Another thing he had utterly forgotten was the gas lamp designating the edge of this side of Bryant Park and the beginning of Sixth Avenue. Not even a refined intuition would have prevented the painful meeting of skull and metal. If nothing else it brought Toto back into the present swiftly yet more painfully than he would have wished.

"Bugger, what the..." he cried out to a deserted space of darkness littered with encroaching street lighting, swiftly cupping head in hands, unaware of the exact nature his inattention had procured.

"Look where you're going, mister," cried an unsympathetic voice from the gloom.

His foolishness felt compounded just long enough for the rain to become irritating. He marched briskly off to the Astor and a free meal.

Rounding the corner to the hotel, the opportunity of a free meal presented itself stepping out of a sleek Rolls-Royce Phantom accompanied by an editorial counterpart from the New York Times he knew well. Adolph Ochs, renowned publisher of what was now considered one of the best and most respected newspapers in the country, shuffled toward the entrance,

followed by Jerry Graves, his file editor.

Toto manufactured the accident.

Swiftly adjusting his wet dog look with help from one of the hotel's windows, he dispensed mackintosh onto his arm and bumped lightly into Graves.

"Most terribly sorry," Toto began.

The commotion had Ochs turn, immediately recognizing its cause.

"The British may rule the waves but their navigation leaves much to be desired, especially from an Army man" he chortled.

In spite of his seventy years, the magnate still retained the sense of humor Toto always relished. Graves immediately ceded to his boss's welcome of the encounter and brushed himself down, patting Toto on the shoulder.

"Good to bump into you," he exclaimed with unnatural irony.

All three entered the hotel, Toto sweeping in on their coat tails.

"Albert, what a pleasure and since we're in casual mode I insist you join us in The Grill Room for supper."

Fait accompli, thought Toto, accepting the invite. Ochs kept the conversation going.

"About that slim volume of yours. Is it ready to be featured in our review?"

Toto, eager to share events, diplomatically suggested he bring them up to speed at the table.

Three quarter way through the meal, with Toto sharing the completion of his book and delivering his take on the supernatural qualities he found dogs possessed, his peripheral vision caught a familiar face making its way along the center aisle. He focused on his tale, as the others craned their necks to catch his dramatic delivery.

"You see I believe a dog is able to sense those who carry bad character and those who are friendly, when it comes to us humans. We all get vetted through some sense or other when meeting these highly intelligent beings."

"Certainly need my own dog to sift unreliable sources across the news desk," quipped Graves.

"You'd need a wolfhound," Ochs responded without a pause, then chided.

"Jerry, let Captain Trapman finish this fascinating insight, please."

Picking up his thread, Toto caught the approaching figure closing in. He paused, looked up, as the elderly stranger wearily reached their table.

Toto's suspicions confirmed, he stood up abruptly and extended his hand. The others turned round.

The stranger ignored the hand, while the others immediately recognized his identity.

“Nikola, Toto,” the researcher greeted.

“You think I’ve lost my marbles? You of all people should know I never touch the unwashed, never know where it’s been, so drop that hand,” Nikola Tesla brusquely corrected the researcher.

He swiftly scanned the rest of the table.

“So what, you now scheming with scribbling wolves?”

Toto trying hard to cover the inventor’s directness made his introduction.

“Gentlemen, I introduce the great Nikola Tesla.”

The others, hands well out of sight raised themselves slightly from their chairs.

“Good evening,” they both chirped in unison.

Ochs assured Toto the visitor was a well-known quantity.

Tesla gave them glancing acknowledgement and directed himself at Toto.

“These news hounds continue to under-report my genius.”

Graves shifted uncomfortably in his chair as Ochs, perfectly used to this behavior from the inventor stood.

“Mister Tesla, I am well aware of both your inventions and idiosyncrasies and congratulate you on the former. Would you care to join us?”

“Dine with those supporting my enemies. Thank you but never.”

“Please Nikola, do join us,” Toto implored.

“You know me better than that. I’ll leave you to keep these hounds under control. You know much about the breed.”

Toto laughed nervously, more out of embarrassment for Tesla’s huge foot he felt had been placed in the way of potential support, than his own embarrassment.

“At least your man Van Anda had passion for the sciences and a kind pen towards my work, while you lick the boots of plutocrats who make sure my truths never truly get reported,” Tesla rebuked the newspaper magnet and editor.

At that moment a waitress arrived at the table and addressed Tesla.

“Can I serve you sir, or are you with these gentlemen?”

Tesla turned letting his bad temper land on the unsuspecting employee.

“Yes, you can – go home and feed your brats.”

The reply hit her hard. She struggled visibly to hold back tears retreating swiftly. They all felt it. Tesla remained oblivious to it, including his manner.

“This place is infested with vultures and cockroaches. Two have just tried stealing my latest patent over dinner and you press hounds support their criminality. Toto, visit me. I’m off.”

Tesla stormed towards the exit.

The researcher turned towards his fellow diners beginning an apology.

“No need Captain. The fellow has a reputation to uphold. Remember, we’re press and that comes dressed automatically with a hard nose!” Ochs laughed heartily and Toto responded, excusing himself at the same time.

Graves turned to his boss.

“Do you suppose we’ve a poodle in the Captain?”

On the street outside Toto caught up with Tesla, by now getting a good soaking as the rain poured down. The researcher opened his umbrella shielding the inventor from the downpour.

“Why were you so bad tempered back there, I’ve never seen you so furious.”

“They’re all sluts to the whores of banking and wealth. None of them have an idea how energy works, how the very fabric of the universe pours through each crevice of time and space,” the inventor spluttered, deeply hurt.

“You need these guys on your side Nikola, you need the American people to know your true worth. Why go out of your way to aggravate them?”

“On my side?” Tesla shot back. “Just like those two trying to rip off my patents over a trout and vegetables?”

“I’d no idea. How was I to know?”

“There’s much you don’t know, dear friend. That will be your downfall. The rats infesting this ship have too much invested in it to jump.”

Tesla felt himself shrink under the endless battering he had endured. Toto targeted reassurance.

“There’s money here. Investment capital, we can find it together,” he pleaded.

Tesla looked at him, at his incessant hope and forced an honest smile.

“Your father was a good man, kind, as you are. He connected me with good support. When we three met those years ago things were different. Today greed, selfish interest and the rape of Earth’s natural resources have changed all that.”

“Show them another way with your...”

“What use are eyes to blind minds and oil barons with no desire to comprehend free energy?”

“Carnegie, Rockefeller, Morgan, Vanderbilt, Warburg. They crow about philanthropy,” Toto urged.

“Philanthropy for them is self serving. The inventor is merely another cow to be milked. To spend useless hours bemoaning these truths only diverts me from the absolute necessity to harness all I channel. I must pass this to those coming after. Why waste precious time with back biting bankers, backers and vested interests. They’ll never know the thrill coursing through the human heart as the inventor’s creation rises from the ether, unfolding form and life. Such emotions make a man forget food, sleep, friends, love, everything. That’s why I leave funding up to George Scherff and Robert Johnson.”

“I remember Johnson but George, I’ve not met.”

The two of them had arrived at a junction. The umbrella having done its job and the rain stopped, Toto closed it. Hardly a soul was visible on the sidewalk.

Tesla turned to Toto.

“Then come round to my laboratory and be introduced. It’s just around the corner from the library.”

“I will do,” he reassured the inventor.

“One more thing,” the old man cut in. “Gold’s not in dollars or bars, it’s not in the glory of power, these things mere selfish acquisitions of men seeing riches for themselves, blind to the needs and dispossession of their fellow man. They’re the curse on humanity, leeches of all that’s wonderful, glorious and magnificent about the human in the search for self.”

Toto pondered his friend’s words as Tesla parted and crossed the street. Stopping suddenly midway, he turned and shouted back to Toto.

“Remember, progress can only start in the mind, not the laboratory.”

A passing carriage cut him from view as Toto was left scratching his head. Looking back to find Tesla, he was confronted by an empty street.

He shrugged and made for home.

CHAPTER FOUR

A commotion in the street below awoke Toto from a deep sleep. Collecting his papers he was back at the Library minutes before its doors opened.

As good as his word Toto’s new friend George Evans had allowed the papers left strewn over the table on the far corner of the Main Reading Room, to be undisturbed.

He settled down to paw through notes and copious references. Despite every note and penciled diagrammatic, he knew precisely where to start.

With the help of one of the staff he began looking through files on Southern families he knew were direct descendants of William and Eliza, his mother and father. He specifically searched references to his forebear John Moore. Perhaps it was something to do with the wealth this man had accumulated, more specifically, that Moore’s father had accrued that helped focus Toto’s research.

Might some good fortune trickle down through the ages and land me in clover? he wondered.

He wished.

John Moore’s father had arrived in the Carolinas in 1699 and with considerable wealth. He had purchased over 3,000 acres of plantation, turning it to cotton and sugar cane, a crop with which his

brother had made a fortune in Barbados. Having lost his first wife Margaret, Moore remarried Rachel, who bore him a son, John on July 4th, 1726.

As Toto looked at all the papers alluding to this young John Moore it became apparent the man was highly skilled and becoming wealthier by the day, marking himself truly to be his father's son. He noted wryly the date of birth, the fourth of July, merely because of its import in the national psyche. Through shrewd deals, climbing the social ladder, clever negotiations and contacts, by 1775 the now resourceful Moore had become a member of the Provisional Congress in Charleston. This all enthralled Toto. That they were of similar age, separated by centuries, made him warm to the congressman. Out of the blue he asked the assistant whether records of wills of congressional members of other states were held there in the library.

The assistant hurried off to scroll through private files, not normally available to the general public. On his return he informed Toto there were such records.

Together they scoured the retrieved files. As he turned the page, the assistant's eye caught a side entry on a copy of Moore's will.

"What's that?" Toto asked.

"It's a reference to the Library of Congress in Washington, which seems a bit strange."

"Why so?"

"Because normally this detail would be held locally."

Toto was intrigued.

"Especially in light of being the will of an ordinary, though rich, citizen of the South. Why do you think they'd annotate the will as it's strange a copy of his will would be here in the North, even though he was a member of the Carolina Congress?"

"Precisely because he was a Congressional member, sir, as I said," the clerk replied courteously. The young clerk, assiduously polite and as modestly dressed as his meager wages ensured, took a well-used kerchief from his jacket pocket and wiped his brow. The woolen brown jacket, worn elbows and scuffed collar, had the air of a hand-me-down from a family member no longer in need. Conscious of its provenance and with the awkwardness of someone dressing more from necessity than effect, he answered Toto.

"I'm not experienced in these things but a similar anomaly a few months back turned out to be governmental, filed under matters of state in the Library."

"That's definitely caught my interest. Perhaps being a member of Congress, state-wise, meant he was tied to national government affairs."

"That would be strange even if it was the case as it was rare even then. We're looking at the gentleman's last will and testament, which is more curious. Why would documentation associated to this Mister Moore be annotated to his will and found also in National archives?"

"Perhaps..." Toto began.

The assistant broke in and repeated.

"Perhaps if it had monetary implications attached to it pertaining a national issue."

"Of course, you're on the money there," Toto answered. "It'd mean there was an interest to his surviving relatives he wanted taken into consideration, perhaps."

Toto began to get excited. Could this be the missing piece he had felt was not present the night before? Was this perhaps part of a legacy money trail to hidden riches?

He had an idea.

"Is it possible seeing if this annotation helps us further?" he asked the assistant, pointing to a numbered reference.

The other mused.

"It may give us a clue. Let me check with Mister Evans."

Yes, thought Toto, *George Evans his new friend was sure to know.*

Before too long the young assistant came scurrying back in as silent a manner as to not break the library's sacred silence code. Toto chuckled to himself as he saw the librarian as excited as he was in discovering the outcome. Breathless, from restraint, he leaned over Toto to deliver the verdict in a conspiratorial whisper.

"It seems the annotation refers quite correctly to state matters whose reference denotes it being recorded in the Library of Congress. It does also mean, due to the alphanumeric string, the period in question would have been 1778 or 1779 and filed under loans."

"Fascinating," Toto responded as he struggled to contain his rising heartbeat.

More than fascinating but keep cool, he told himself.

"The bad news is," the librarian added.

Toto focused entirely on the next words he was to utter.

"The bad news is you're going to have to go to Washington to see the detailed entries there."

If that was the bad news then roll on the good news, he thought.

"I'll go straight away," he informed the assistant and without further ado and a lucky break at Penn Station he was on his way to the capital before lunch.

The Library of Congress had always been a magnificent piece of architecture for him and Toto was no stranger to its hallowed halls and contents. Another visit there he considered a pleasure more than a burden of duty. The fact it could hold family secrets up to now under wraps, was all the more reason for hightailing it over to Washington.

Armed with the references, he was escorted to the basement and encountered aisle upon aisle of stored archives. He stood waiting for the steward to retrieve two large ledgers that arrived and were duly opened.

Impatient, he watched as each page was folded back until the relevant page was reached. It revealed statutes on a War Loans ledger issued and entered on the order of General George Washington on behalf of the Continental Independent Army. The assistant read it aloud:

A loan in the amounts of cash and other loans, to the amount of fourteen thousand pounds in gold deposited on the days of February seventeenth, March third, July twenty first and September eleventh in the year seventeen hundred and seventy eight by John Moore II of Moorelands and St. Thomas Parish in the State of South Carolina. Subsequently issued through indents said loans herein specified are by order of Congress, to be considered war loans and repaid with interest until so settled, at six percent per annum...

Some notes pertaining to Revolutionary claims were also found but Toto knew he had what he came for.

He calculated that – one, there was decent money owed the Moore family; two, he felt his fortunes changing before his very eyes and thirdly, it was incumbent on him to track down and realize these 'Moore Millions' awaiting him from his philanthropic forebear.

His whole life had been worth every cent of failure, dead end, calamity, pitfall and disastrous relationship he had journeyed. The bitter pill of divorce from Isabella, his Italian wife, who birthed his estranged son Adrian, sweetened.

His mind raced ahead, calculating with utterly insufficient information, the effect of such a windfall. To his credit he checked his mental engine and turned to the library clerk.

"This entry implies a considerable amount to be due to whoever made claim on this IOU, would it not?"

"I'm badly qualified to ascertain that. However notes here do allude to there being reference of this in both the House of Representatives Library and in the House Manuscripts Library in the Capitol itself. To my knowledge it means a qualified authenticity to this claim has been lodged."

"In your opinion, for someone to proceed further would it be best to approach Congress itself?"

"Yes sir, that's an appropriate step to initiate, however the originals are lodged in Charleston, therefore best get hold of those from the Loan Division of the State of South Carolina. This seal copied here dates them as November 15, 1829."

Having instructed copies be sent to him at the Alpha Delta Club in New York, Toto knew Charleston to be the next stop. Toto became a man on a mission. That mission he saw as resolving, in as short order as possible, any poor economic state he presently was forced to cultivate.

He made his way back to the metropolis determined to pay his nephew Willy a long overdue visit.

Wilhelm von Meister, elder son of Toto's sister Leila, was soon to become an important cog in a wheel of fortune Toto saw turning to his advantage.

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