

Irregular History

By, AuthorJMH

Book 1
First Edition: June 2012

To Whomever May Be Reading This

PROLOGUE

Well, you probably won't believe my story when you hear it, but it's your choice if you would like to keep reading. If you think you're reading fiction, then you can keep thinking that, if you believe me, and know that what you're reading is true, you're the right person. In fact, fiction is good, but it's not the truth. If you're under the age of eight, then I recommend to pretend this is fiction, if you're eight or older, then you can picture this being real (I couldn't really picture any eight year olds picking up this journal, but who am I to talk). Before I continue, this story may sound ridiculous, but it's my true encounter. I've been piecing things together, and writing them down. It's not been easy for a kid like me. My parents were kidnapped, my tutor had no idea where I was, and I'm the one that knows the truth. Everything up to this point has been a whirlwind of things that I hoped to have never seen before.

In the following transcript I, James Henderson, will be telling you about my life and adventure over the past four days. The story brings me from the ancient palace of Tikal, where my parents were kidnapped, to discovering the mysteries of the Roanoke Colony, to a secret chamber in the Tower of London.

If you're worried that this is the kind of history that bores you to death, then don't worry because sometimes, fiction, nonfiction and history can inspire us to learn and do things we never imagined. If you trust me, then you'll know what to do and keep reading, because there will be no further warning after this point.

I guess it all started about 4 days ago, like I said, at the Tikal Temple (home of the Pre-Columbian Maya) where and when my parents were kidnapped.

TIKAL GUATEMALA: June 14th, 11:30 a.m.

Before I get ahead of myself, the name is James Henderson. I've been trying to lead a normal life for the past, oh, say eight years now, but it's not that easy. My parents are archeologists that travel the world searching for new items, treasures and an adventure.

My parents believe that a good education is important (look at where they are now) so I *would* be going to school, but my parents don't trust any of our relatives to look after me (long story), so after a long while of searching, they found me a tutor, Jorge (who we met when we were in Mexico about eight years ago), who has been teaching me ever since. He calls himself a tutor, not teacher because he's only about twenty-one years old, and I know most of this stuff anyway from reading (love to read), and research about where we're going next on business. The one good thing about never having a real class is that there's no one there to pick on you! So long story

short, I've never really led a normal *school* life.

I'm fourteen years old, and I'm pretty tall for my age. Why do these physical traits matter, you may ask yourself? Well, you'll find out down the road, or maybe not. Since this is my story, I decided to just describe myself for the heck of it.

Like I had said, my parents are Hannah and Zachary Henderson, famous archeologists. I don't really get where you go to school to dig up old stuff and use the right brush to make sure it doesn't fall apart, but hey, who am I to start asking questions. My parents seem slightly strange, like they're hiding something, but when you live with archeologists your whole life, it's better to just put your head down and go about your business than ask any real questions. The good thing is that since I'm their only kid, they feel bad for me and buy books and junk. I've been reading about Tikal for three weeks or so now especially with all of the apocalypse phenomena even though my parents worked with a German guy who correctly translated the glyphs, and found out that the world will NOT end), and was really excited to learn about it, but Jorge has a different system. Jorge likes to teach me about things that aren't involved with where we are when we're learning about them.

When we were in Barcelona, we were learning about Tokyo. When we were at Fort Knox, we were learning about South Africa, and well, you get my drift. If you don't, see a therapist.

Anyway, I'm trying to make this sound much more believable than it sounds, but problem is, my life is like it's own novel, which is why I write down my unbelievable childhood encounters in my journal, what you're reading now. So we are in Tikal, Guatemala for one week: the week of June 10th to June 17th, and while my parents are out at the temples, digging around, studying ancient culture, and I was stuck in a tent. I'd grown accustomed to hotel rooms, but sometimes we're so far away from civilization, like today, I have to stay in a large tent. Basics: No T.V., no Wi-Fi, and no X-Box. I'm not a video game person, or T.V., but my computer keeps up with the rest of the world, so I LIVE for my laptop. It's a pretty nice one too, and I love the fast processor (I even have learned a few tricks about it when I drifted away from Jorge and my parents in more modern places we've visited). Back to Jorge and his teaching, though.

Today Jorge was teaching me about the Rosetta stone, an Egyptian artifact from the town of Rosetta, Egypt. I had of course heard of the Rosetta stone before, I had even seen it three years ago at the British Museum.

Jorge talked about many artifacts from old cultures, but he said this one was by far the most important. Jorge talked with an accent, but it was barely noticeable now.

"The Rosetta Stone was discovered in what year?" Jorge asked.

"1801?" I guessed.

"Close. 1799. This is important, you'll need to know this one day," Jorge said. He usually acted like this, but I've noticed it even more recently since we got to Tikal. It was like something life threatening involving all these things he's taught me will be really important. Just like I said, my life is like a novel: Jorge acts weird; my parents act weird, nothing new.

"Why is this all of a sudden so important?" I asked.

"It's always been important!" he said. "You NEED to know this!"

"Why?"

"I can't tell you. It's just very important, and crucial to remember everything I've taught you."

"You're not gonna tell me I'm a wizard or something right?" I asked, jokingly. Jorge almost never raises his voice, but I could tell he was really spazzing out about the Rosetta stone, or this was somehow going to be important in the future.

"I'm serious!" Jorge said.

"I am too! Are you going to tell me I'm a wizard or not?" Hey, you gotta have some fun when your options are limited.

"No, I won't." Jorge never will, and I am not a wizard, this is not some kind of Harry Potter book (first of all, it's my journal, and it's being told in the first person, unlike Harry Potter), if anything, this is more like some kind of National Treasure book if we're gonna compare it to a movie).

The rest of my session with Jorge was a little bit weird; I mean Jorge has always been acting a little bit weird, like there was guilt he had been holding in for too long. Jorge, and my Dad each always carry around a black briefcase, like I said; does anyone else's parent do these things? Once, I went to look into my Dad's briefcase, but he caught me, just before open it and I couldn't use any of my electronics for a week.

Like I said, my Laptop, and iPod are the only things keeping me in touch with the rest of the

world, including my friend Remy that lives in England (we met when my family went to London three years ago). I would give up my iPod for an e-reader any day though, just because my parents don't believe in e-readers. They think that only traditional books give you knowledge, but they should tell that to all the textbooks Jorge makes me carry around in my backpack.

Anyway, all these boring little details that probably won't be important 'til like my 42nd, or 43rd entry, maybe even in another journal, but I'm just guessing. You're reading up to the minute story of my life, so I'll get to what happened next at some point.

I'm going to open that briefcase one day.

TIKAL GUATEMALA: June 14th, 6:30 p.m.

At about five I got the terrible news that would change me forever. A man walked over to me, and that's the first sign something suspicious was going on. He wore dark glasses and a full dress suit.

"Hola Señor," I said to him. "Qué necesitas?" If that were English, it would mean: Hello sir. What Do You Need? I spoke Spanish because it was the national language of Guatemala.

"Okay kid, I don't want to hear it. Do I look South American," he said. If I were a jerk I would reply yes, and almost did, but this guy looked like he meant business. His glasses made his face look even more ominous than it had to be. This guy was obviously not from anywhere in South America, and I was just joking to myself. I knew because he spoke silently and solemn English, and looked like an American Secret Service Agent.

"Uh, okay you speak English. Pardon me asking but, who the heck are you?" I asked.

"Agent Simmons. CIA Investigations; we've been monitoring suspicious activity down in South America, and I was sent here."

"Why monitor down here?"

"Long story, but the reason I'm here is that your parents have been reported missing."

"No they're not! They're outside one of the Temples!"

He shook his head.

"Last time they were seen, they were outside the main Temple, and that was the last time anyone saw them."

"Did anyone try calling their cell phones before the CIA got involved?"

"Their cell phones were found in their tent. We think that it would be best if you stay here until they're found."

"Well where did they go?" I asked.

"Son, do you understand the term 'missing'?" he asked. I hope that this guy realized I was fourteen, not five. I wondered why the CIA was called in, because CIA means Central Intelligence Agency, so if anything, the FBI should get involved (they're the Federal Bureau of Investigation).

"I'm sorry *officer*," I said sarcastically. "I meant do you have any ideas about where they might have went?"

"Me personally? They either ran into the woods to find an artifact or got booby-trapped in this old dump."

"Thanks sir, that's nice." Despite that last comment, I knew that the U.S. police probably had this situation under control. I did wonder though if this had anything to do with Jorge lecturing me earlier about the significance of things.

I snuck over to my parent's tent, and didn't see the black briefcase (as I'd come to call it) anywhere in sight. I'd read a book before, where the briefcase held all the father's magic tools, and it was important for the kid to find it.

I looked around the tent, which seemed pretty big as I went into it. I looked outside, at one of the corners near the woods. The outside was lit dimly, and I saw trees rusting and wind crackling through the June air. It was getting kind of cold,

which I found ironic, since we're close to the equator.

I swear I heard something rustling out there, but didn't see anything. I went back into the tent, and looked under the small cot my dad had slept in the past few days. I turned it over, and sure enough was the gleaming, sleek, black briefcase that was hidden under the cot.

I opened up the briefcase and saw a single manila folder inside. I opened it up and there were a few papers in there including one with a picture of me, my passport, and some other papers.

I opened up a handwritten note that looked like my mom's handwriting.

To My Son James,

If you are reading this note, then you know that we have probably been abducted, or 'missing' as the CIA will call it. You must know that all of your sessions with Jorge are, were and always will be direly important. You don't have to find us, and if I were a responsible mother I'd tell you not to, but they'll be coming for you next. Attached are two plane tickets to London for the day after you read this, they are able to be renewed for anytime we move to a new location.

I hope by now Jorge has taught you about the Rosetta stone because it will be one of the most important clues in this hunt. Find it and use the key on it. To deactivate all the wrong doings of what has happened, to find us and to save yourself, you must first go to the British Museum and then unlock the secret of the Rosetta stone. Only if you find a hidden treasure, will save everyone. This quest will take you many different places around the world, and the world and the people in it are scary, but that which does not kill you makes you stronger. If you can solve what was left for one person to find, then these people will be stopped.

You'll need the key we've stowed in this file, and you will need to get around well enough. This will be dangerous, and scary, but we think you can handle it.

Good Luck.

Mom

TIKAL GUATEMALA: June 14th, 9:01 p.m.

I felt everything get dark and ominous around me. My parents were obviously in danger. I need to help them.

Wait a second, wait a second! I'm just a kid, what can I do?!

No, no I need to use this plane ticket and get to London pronto. I wondered who had taken them, and if I should show this letter to the police. I decided not to. The CIA were snooping around some other foreign country and all of a sudden show up and say my parents are missing? What is this, some kind of Spy Kids remake?

"Oh!" I said out loud. "Oh I get it! I'm being punk'd, aren't I? Okay Kutcher, joke's up! I knew it all along!!!" Nothing was happening. This had to be a prank. Or maybe my parents were really in danger and really needed help being saved.

I looked around the briefcase another second and waited for my parents to walk through the door or for someone to say that they made friends with some locals went to grab a quick bite to eat, and left their cell phones in their tent.

But that never happened.

I saw that key that Mom was talking about. It was old copper and had an H on the circular part at the top. I held it tightly and saw the thick-layered design of it. This must be important, I thought.

I rummaged through the bag to see what other goodies I could find inside. I saw a small little device that looked like a barber razor, but only had a big button in the middle. There was a charging adapter on the bottom, and an on/off switch on the side. Could this be what I thought it was? I'd only seen these things on T.V. and in movies before, never in real life!

The name was written across the other side: Tase'o'matic. I couldn't believe I was holding a fully charged police weapon, I mean how could this thing get through

security?

I decided to keep this on me, because that note really frazzled me. If there's one emotion to be used to describe me, it's scared.

Scared, scared, scared.

I guess being scared is just being over cautious, but being over cautious is also being scared. I can tell that note really frazzled me.

Could there be anything else hidden in the Henderson Parents Bag of Wonders? Let's check and see!

I only found one other thing: a cell phone. Mom and Dad never let me have a cell phone before, and I'm pretty much sure that I'm the only fourteen year old in America (that is when we're *in* America) without a phone, and I hate to sound like a spoiled girl (especially since I'm writing like a guy), but it kind of bugged me for a little bit, but my laptop is just as good.

I looked outside quickly, and didn't see anything. The sun had completely set now, and there were tiki sticks lighted with flames that kept the grounds bright for archeologist.

I worried about my parents; I mean they could be in Guatemala City, or the deep woods, or even halfway to London by now! What did they need me to find anyway? If there is one thing for sure, it's that whoever took them is probably after this thing too.

I decided to keep the Taser in my pocket and I put the key in my sock, just in case. I put the files underneath my shirt, and took the briefcase with me.

I quickly snuck over to my tent, and saw a lantern in there that I lit had gone out. Never a good sign. I pulled out a match and ran over quickly to the lamp, and lit it. There was no one in the tent, but I'm pretty sure there had been.

I pulled out that cell phone from the briefcase, and tried to think of Remy's number. I punched it into the phone, and the phone rang... rang... rang... There was a shwoosh like sound, and I heard his voice.

"You got Remy."

"Remy, it's me James. Listen, I'm coming to England for a few days, is it alright if you help me out with a few things?"

"Will it involve borrowing money from me?"

"Nope, but you need to pick me up from, uh, give me a sec." I pulled out my plane ticket that had today's date and the time eight o'clock stamped across the front. "Can you pick me up from Heathrow at say four a.m.?"

"Four a.m.?"

"Is there a problem?"

"Uh, no it's just I was wondering, why just you?" Remy had become very vigilant since he got into computers. All his time with computers, and video chatting people, he had lost his British accent, and now talks just like me.

"Well, it's kind of a long story. It looks like my parents have been kidnapped."

"Kidnapped?" He let the two syllable work sink in for a second or two before realizing what to do, I'm guessing at least. "Okay, I'm sending my family's jet right away! Where are you?"

"Tikal Guatemala."

"Hey, I'm not really surprised, it's like losing a kid in a toy store at Christmas."

"Uh, toy stores aren't that big, really? Right?"

"Oh shut up! Okay, let me find a satellite feed, telling me where you... Found it!!! Okay, I have your Latitude Longitude, and there's a clearing about one mile west of there. The jet will meet you there in one hour."

"One hour?"

"Yeah, since my parents are rich, they not only have a private jet, but they also don't need to check air traffic, and can kinda just floor it there."

"Huh, it's a good thing I called you then. I'll be waiting there."

"Remy out."

TIKAL GUATEMALA/REMY'S PLANE RIDE June 15th: About 10:00 p.m. G.M.T

Escaping the U.S. government is not an easy job for a fourteen year old. When

I got off the phone with Remy, I found an app on my parent's phone that had a globe, and the words 'GOOGLE EARTH' written across the bottom. I opened up the application, and zoomed in on Tikal. I quickly moved the image over a few slides and found the small clearing. I packed up some of my essentials in a bag, and then left. I followed the trail of lanterns that had been set up when we arrived all the way to the route we came from. I turned to my right side and saw another dark, ominous path that probably led to the clearing.

Now don't get me wrong, but I'm pretty sure that three fourths of the murders that go on happen at night, so some kid that has brief, but almost no martial arts knowledge and lots of valuables in his bag is likely to get jumped, drugged, or killed walking down a path like this.

But I did it anyway.

I practically ran down the path and through the woods and nearly tripped over a log, branch and more. I had to unfortunately wait another minute outside the clearing when I finally arrived, but it was worth it. I watched the enormous humming noise emerge somewhere in the distance, and then come over the enormous clearing.

The jet, just large enough to settle down lightly, landed, and I saw a door open, and stairs pop out from the side. Behind the door, was him: Remy Williamsburg.

"Hey, James?" he called. He was really loud over the jet propeller, and could barely be heard, but I understood him anyway. I nodded up and down many times, and then he motioned his hand to make us come towards him.

I ran out farther and farther into the clearing and finally made it to the small stairs that led up to the plane. I ran up them and looked over the last of the Temples, and the boarded the plane.

"Hey James, how are you?" he asked me.

"Hey Remy, I'm doing all right. I guess you should read this," I said, pulling off my pack and the files.

"Hey, let's get inside!" he said. We entered the plane, and we saw there were a few seats on the plane and a nice table. There were two flight attendants on either end of the plane, and the plane overall looked pretty nice. Remy's family, like he said, did have some money left over cause his dad is an oil tycoon and his mom owns an international hair cosmetics policy. Remy has an older sister who has already moved out, and not many people to talk to his age.

We each took a seat on a couch.

"Where are your parents?" I asked him. "I'm sure your dad wouldn't appreciate you borrowing his private jet and taking it for a joy ride."

"My sister is out of town with her boyfriend, Mom is in Paris for her company and Dad is currently selling every citizen of California Williamsburg Oil Co. Oil. They left me home, and said in an emergency to take the jet, which I did."

"So you're family is out of the country, and they didn't take the jet?"

"Uh, they took the other two jets we have, and yeah they're gone for another week."

"Perfect. You're good with computers, right?" I asked him. It was kind of a rhetorical question, but I had to ask anyway."

He laughed for a few seconds.

"Oh please! You crack me up James!" he laughed for another second. "I'm so good, I can tell you what will be on Fox New tomorrow night!"

I wasn't laughing, and he stopped a second later.

"I need to break in the British Museum.

"Hah!" he laughed. "Now I *know* what will be on Fox News tomorrow night." He held up a small twig from a centerpiece and dictated into it, like a reporter. "Right now, I am outside the British Museum where last night, two deranged boys attempted to break into the British Museum and steal something valuable! The boys have been put in a rehabilitation hospital for a few years, and will then spend most of their lives in prison! More at eleven! Are you crazy? It's impossible!!!"

"No it's not! It's been done!"

"No it hasn't!"

"You're right, and if it has, then no one could just walk away!"

"So can it be done?"

"Considering your best friend has the knowledge of three M.I.T. students and then some more, then yeah, it could be done, but it'll be tricky. What exactly are you looking for?" None of the flight attendants were in the room, but I had to be careful what I told Remy. Sure he can be trusted, but will he help me all the way?

"Uh, I need to see the Rosetta stone really up close for a few minutes..."
"The Rosetta Stone! Really?! You couldn't have just looked up close at some Greek dish no one cares about, no! The top tourist attraction in all of Britain!"
"Remy! Can it be done?"
"Oh of course it can," he said. Remy was really calm now. "I've hacked their security system a few times, but I didn't want to give it away just yet."
"So that's a yes?"
"Yeah, but only for a few minutes."
"Perfect."
"We're almost there, so let's get going, so I can get started."

THE BRITISH MUSEUM June 15th: Roughly 6:30 a.m. B.S.T.

When the limo pulled us up to the large gates outside the British Museum it was still dark. I wasn't used to the time change, since it should really only be 10:30 at night Tikal Time. I was really tired, but thought about my parents in danger and how they needed my help. Remy had booted up his laptop when the limo picked us up, and he almost immediately found the British Museum's system.

Remy has this kind of hacking network, so any security in England will pop up on his 'LIST' as he calls it, and he can easily just go onto it.

Some are more difficult than others.

The British Museum's was the hardest.

Remy had gone onto his Dell Inspiron, and started up his hacking app (Hack a Mac for Dell), and easily found the Museum's network. He had to enter in a username, password, Museum Security codes and more. I didn't really pay attention because I was reexamining my Mom's note. She said I'd need the key, but what for? I packed up my pocket with the Taser, I kept the key in my hand, and I put the cell phone in my other pocket. I would have left the Taser, but I figured that this place had night guards, and wanted to be extra prepared.

On another account, I wondered if Jorge or that Agent Simmons creep had realized I was gone. Jorge: probably, Simmons: no.

Remy had booted down security in enough time for us to get to the large door and pick the lock. This place probably had night guards, so I kept the Taser ready. We walked right into the place and saw it's huge length.

"Okay, you find the security system for and deactivate it. I can make a small hole in the glass and find what I need to do."

"Okay, let me find the security room, and if there's trouble, I'll call you via walkie talkie. In the meantime, head up to the roof."

"Roger."

I walked up the long turning staircase up towards the roof, and into another small, squared off room. I would have liked to look at the stone before actually breaking into it, but time is time. I went through the squared of room and through another door, and onto the huge mass of a roof. The roof had glass panels above some of the museum, and I noticed one right near the stone.

I walked down, over and across, waiting for the call from Remy. I leaned down and saw a large glass tablet in the area, obviously the stone containment case.

I loosened the small glass, and made the window go through and under, but thankfully didn't break it. There was static from my walkie-talkie.

"James, the system is down, repeat, the system is down. You have three minutes to figure out what you need to do and then to get out of there. Over."

I saw a cement like pole near the glass and tied a secure knot to it. My rope had one end attached to my rock climbing harness, and the other to the pole. I slid through the glass piece, and down fast.

Wind brushed through my hair as I dove down, down, and down to the tablet and glass. I stopped right before I hit the tablet, and didn't receive any message from Remy.

I took out the copper key with the bladed edge, and cut a hole through the top. It was about as wide around as a baseball, and large enough for me to stick my hand into. My parents would enjoy me taking an interest in ancient cultures if they hadn't been kidnapped.

I leaned down even farther and saw a jagged little mark, like it had been drawn in there, and noticed something about its shape.

It was the same shape as the end of the key.

I stuck the end of the key into the stone and saw it make a perfectly curved line down the other end, and it opened up. This didn't seem right. I touched the stone, and it felt colder than ice. I opened it up, to see words sprawled across the inside, but not just any words: English Words.

There was static from my walkie-talkie.

"Get out of there! Repeat get out of there! A guard is coming to check the area! Get out. Over."

I couldn't leave now. I saw the words: Across the sea, to the first, lot forty-three is where your answers may be.

What could that mean? There was no time to ask, I had to get out of here.

I held down the button to speak into my walkie-talkie, and heard a small noise.

"Hey Remy, tell your family's helicopter to meet us on top of the Museum in ten minutes. Over."

"Roger."

I saw the night guard right in front of the hall leading into the Egyptian artifacts. "Hey! Security!" I detached the other rope on my harness, and I was shot upward towards the glass, with the key and walkie-talkie in hand. I went up through the glass display and heard a buzzing noise not too far away.

"Remy," I talked into the microphone, "where are you? Security is coming your way!"

"I know," said a voice from a door almost right behind me. Remy apparently found another door and left from the security room to the roof.

"When's it getting here?" I asked.

"In a minute! Don't rush!"

"Don't rush?" I asked. "We're probably right now the most wanted children in Britain! The police are on their way!"

"Okay, you rush. Where to next? Big Ben or something?"

"Uh I was thinking more like Virginia. Jamestown? Maybe Roanoke Island?"

"Well what did you ---," he was cut off by a huge humming above them, and a rope that had been thrown down from the helicopter. There was a man in the helicopter, who looked in his thirties, and was obviously the pilot.

"Get in!" he yelled. Remy shimmied up the rope and into the helicopter. I climbed, hand first, then next hand up, next hand, next hand and so forth, until I finally reached the open door. I watched police beginning to arrive at the British Museum's front gates, and the helicopter took off from London over the Thames and more of the city.

After a while, we couldn't even see it anymore.

We went farther and farther out into England, and I got more and more tired. I couldn't help but think that it would be about eleven o'clock in Tikal.

"James!" Remy said. "Where are we going?"

"Uh, Roanoke Island. Take us to the Fort Raleigh Historic Site please!"

"Will do kid!" the pilot shouted. "We should get there in a few hours! It's the middle of the night, you kids should be asleep, why the hurry?"

"Uh, let's just say we need to get there, but take your time!" I said.

"Why's that?" Remy asked me. "Shouldn't we get there as soon as possible?"

"Well, the park isn't open at midnight, so we'll have to wait a while until we get there. We need to blend in, and only do what's necessary," I continued. "By tomorrow morning, we'll be on the FBI's Most Wanted. Let's just get some sleep." Remy was silent after that. We were both strapped to our seats, and felt a strong breeze coming in. I drifted out to sleep, realizing how tired I really was.

REMY'S HELICOPTER RIDE 1 June 15th, 9:01 a.m. E.S.T.

I had a strange dream. I was thinking about what was going on with everything, my parents, the break-in, and where we were heading now. My dream showed me something strange, that I felt like I wasn't supposed to know.

I was in a thick forest, and I walked up a small hill and saw small little stones with engravings on it. I couldn't make out what they said, but I realized that whatever this place was, I knew it from somewhere.

It had to be a graveyard.

"James! James!"

What? What was going on?

"James!" It was Remy calling me. I woke up, feeling sleepy and realizing it was already light out. I saw the ocean still below us, and knew we were still flying.

"Hey, uh Remy, what time is it?" I asked him. Due to different time zones, I always need to stay on top of the time, and so I don't get too out of whack.

"It's like 8:30 or something, and we're almost there."

"How long has it taken?" I asked. If we left at say 6:30 a.m. BST and lost five hours in the process, which would be 1:00 a.m. and then traveled for seven hours? Yeah that sounds about right.

"Oh, only a few hours," Remy said. "It's good for us to catch up on our sleep. So what did this clue say?" Remy had read my mother's note, and knew there would be a variation of clues in this quest, and not only would it lead us to different places, but we'd be searching for the next clue at the same time.

I noticed Remy's chest looked thicker, like he probably put on a second layer of clothing, considering how cold it was.

"Why's your chest all thick?" I asked him.

"Oh, I got cold. Put

"It said 'Across the sea to the first, lot forty three is where your answers may be'. What do you think that means?"

"Well, James. You figured out the 'first' part, meaning the first colony, but I need to figure out what lot forty-three means. How would some colonists from 1584---"

"1586 actually."

"1586, sorry! How would they get to carve something like the Rosetta stone? Didn't it come from Egypt like B.C.?"

"Yeah, well maybe the colonists found the stone and this kind of treasure and gave a hint through the stone. The stone wasn't found until 1799 in Rashid Egypt. Enough time for John White to return it in his three year return to Europe."

"But doesn't the stone weigh, like two thousand pounds?"

"Maybe a few guys had to help him carry it to the boat? I'm just guessing here, but whatever is going on here, Roanoke is involved, the Stone is involved, and somehow, the people who know the truth have kidnapped my parents."

"Well, where is this leading us? All I can see is back in time."

"Well, we know if the Stone was really taken from Rashid a.k.a. Rosetta, Egypt by John White on his way to Roanoke, then was taken back on his three year break from the colony, then something must've been happening in either Roanoke or London at the time."

"Could you imagine over one hundred people just disappearing out of the blue? It's just not right."

"You're not wrong there. But why there? It seems like everything in this quest is a mystery, like even the locations! What is happening to these places?"

"Beats me. Hey! We're here!"

I saw a huge landmass below me, and it looked like a bunch of trees and forests. I kept forgetting what state Roanoke was in, either Virginia or North Carolina, but it was much more beautiful than anywhere else in cities.

I saw a few buildings down below, and realized it must be Fort Raleigh National Historic Site: a.k.a. Roanoke Island. The island was small, but large enough. I couldn't believe that the first English settled colonists in the world were here over 430 years ago.

"What airport should we go to? We need to pass customs." Remy said to me.

"Too risky! We can't go through customs they'll recognize us! Tell the pilot to bring us down right here and you'll give him a raise."

"Hey Harry!" Remy motioned to the pilot. "Throw down the rope and be back in

an hour! Stay around though and we'll throw another five hundred into your salary!"

"Will do mate!" Harry, the apparent helicopter pilot, said. He attached the rope to a small clip on the side of the helicopter. "See you guys in an hour! I'll be touring Virginia!"

"See," I said to him. "I know how to talk to people."

"I'll head down first," Remy said. "Let's take a tour of the island, and see if we can figure out what 'forty-three' means." I nodded back to him in agreement.

Remy grabbed onto the rope and slid down. He was gone in a heartbeat.

I grabbed the rope, and saw the huge height mass from up above. There was a small building and a few others off of that one, but I could tell that it was the main building.

I held the rope tightly, and jumped. It was just like the British Museum, plummeting to the bottom, but then I felt it. A rope burn was stinging my hand, so I let go of the rope by accident. I was falling away from the rope and tried to grab on. I couldn't reach it, but kept trying.

Yes! I clutched the rope in my hand and felt the wind stop around me. I shimmed down slowly until I was close to the tree line, and jumped down to the ground, onto a sharp rock.

Ouch!!! I hit my leg on the rock and it was sliced open! There was blood oozing from my leg. It hurt so much, and I saw it getting worse and worse.

It didn't matter now, because we were one step closer to finding my parents.

ROANOKE ISLAND June 15th: 9:37 a.m.

When Remy and I hiked up towards the buildings, we saw few cars there, and saw people walking into the main building, that seemed much newer than other historic sites. We entered through some wooden push through door, and saw a front desk with a brief line up to it.

I realized that most kids are out of school by June 15th and were probably going away on vacations at this point. I had to consider that we didn't have any parents with us either, and wondered whether or not the guy would let us on a tour or not.

We got in line.

"Hey," I whispered to Remy.

"What?"

"Give me \$20 in cash, now!"

"Alright, alright." Remy pulled out his wallet to reveal many one dollar bills, twenty dollar bills and other bills that I didn't think even existed anymore. He handed me the cash, and rolled up, it looked like a large amount of money.

"Next!" the guy at the front desk called. That was us.

"Uh, hi," I said. "Two tickets for the tour."

"Aren't you kids a little young to not have a parent with you?" he asked.

"Oh, well I don't know," I said. "Maybe this large amount of cash can answer your question?"

"Yes it can!" he leaped. I handed him the money and he handed me two tickets. Just like I said, I know how to deal with people.

"Wow!" Remy said. "How's you know that would work?"

"I speak English, Spanish, French, German, Russian, and even Latin, but everyone know that the universal language is money."

We went over towards another group of people taking pictures of the outside, and marveling at the nature.

A man dressed like a park ranger came over towards our group.

"Hello!" the man said. "My name is Ranger Jeffries and I will be your tour guide across this beautiful park today! If you could follow me outside, that would be wonderful!"

We followed the ranger and everyone else through the park, but Remy and I fell behind with this girl. She was about the same height as me, had blackish-brown hair and red glasses.

I tried to whisper to Remy about our plan, but I couldn't help but worry that this girl was listening in.

"Okay, I need to find the clue, and in the middle of the woods, it's probably dangerous, so I'd rather you don't come with. Alright?"

"Yeah, I guess that's fine. If anything goes wrong I'll shout to you."

"Uh, what are you guys talking about?" the girl asked us. "It sounds like you're in quite the pickle!"

"It's a long story," I said to her. "Do you know you're way around the island?"

"Like the back of my hand. I'm Maggie by the way."

"Okay, Maggie," I continued, "is there a small hill near here? I need to find it."

"Yeah right over there in the restricted forest area. I haven't seen what's on the top of it though."

"Perfect. We really appreciate you're help. Remy, while I'm gone, tell Maggie what's going on, she could help us out a lot."

With that, I crossed the line, and ran into the forest.

ROANOKE ISLAND June 15th: 10:32 a.m.

I felt like I had been in a bad dream that easily became a nightmare. I ran up closer and closer, and saw a small hill that was just like the one from my dream. I knew that I would see the small stones that were like graves.

I ran up the small hill and saw many, many stones. They were arranged in about 11 rows and 10 columns. They were obviously arranged like some kind of graveyard.

What could this 'lot forty-three' mean in comparison to the graveyard.

I looked around the graveyard seeing some familiar names. I dug around, and saw a number scratched in deep to the small stone: 43.

The name written across it: 'Virginia Dare'.

I'm going to sound like Remy here for a second, but why couldn't it be someone that the world didn't know about?!?! Of course! Internationally known first English child born in America!

It read '1587 – 1603'. She died at only sixteen? Sad. I knew this was the real stuff. I edged the key inside the stone and lifted it up really hard. The rock slid upwards, and there were some pieces of papyrus.

Papyrus was the ancient Egyptian writing paper, so that means that I was right about everything! The stone, the grave, the colony and everything were connected!

I saw a small sliver of a piece, that was obviously the clue, and another larger piece that was written all over. This paper would tell me the fate of the missing colony.

I slid sliver into my sock, and folded the larger piece to read for later, and slid it underneath my shirt.

"JAMES!!!!!" I heard him yell. Remy had screamed from not too far away.

"REMY!!!" I screamed. I ran deep and deeper into the woods and saw a clearing. I was in a bog, or rather a creek, next to the creek.

I ran into the clearing.

"Remy?" I asked. I saw some men step out into the clearing. One of which, who had darker skin, was holding Remy by the neck.

I drew farther and farther away from them, knowing that these were the people that kidnapped my parents.

"Kid!" the one holding Remy yelled. "Now, you're my hope of finding this lost

treasure, so no matter how much I want to shoot you, I can't. Also, you better be careful of that cliff behind you."

He threw Remy down on the ground, and Remy scurried over to me.

"Now, I'm Lefty kid," he said. "Now James, where is the clue?"

"Don't give it to him James!" Remy yelled.

Everything happened at once. Remy yelled, and then I saw the goon to the right of Lefty shoot his gun right at Remy's heart. The second it was about to strike him, I was thrown behind Remy, by Remy himself, and I fell down the small cliff.

I have been rock climbing a lot, and I could climb myself.

I grabbed onto a small ledge near the top and knew I had to climb back up. If there was any hope of helping Remy, then I needed to help him.

As I climbed as fast as I could, I couldn't help but think that my only real friend, who was my only chance of helping my parents, could be dead.

Ah hah! I reached the top and climbed back over.

Remy lie there as dead as a rat.

I felt tears coming, as I saw the non-living eyes of Remy Williamsburg, so far from home, and saw desperate to help me, just staring at the sun.

"Psst!" I heard a whisper. "James! Are they gone?"

"Remy?!" I exclaimed silently, seeing him move around. "I thought you were dead!"

Remy opened up the buttons on his shirt, and revealed an old form of white material.

"Kavlar?" I asked. Remy nodded silently. "Bulletproof vest!" I remembered how I noticed upon waking up on the helicopter that Remy's chest looked thicker.

"It was the only jacket on the copter!" Remy said. "Good thing I forgot to take it off."

"Listen, Remy, let me know when you decided to held death as close as it could be, I seriously don't want another close call!"

"Okay, but now they're satisfied, and won't come after us again."

"We need to get going!" I said. "I have the clue, so let's grab Maggie and hop on the copter."

REMY'S HELICOPTER RIDE 2 June 15th: 10:34 p.m.

The pilot stopped the helicopter near a field, so we could all climb on.

"Where to?" Remy asked.

"I don't know," I said. "Let me look at the clue. I pulled the tiny sprawl of paper out of my pocket. "*Under this fate, a culture lost, the two way power reveals the cost*."

"Cost being treasure," Maggie said, as we boarded the helicopter. The propellers being humming as we got off the ground. "Now, does treasure mean, like, gold?"

"Probably," I said.

"Like, as in enough to bail you guys out of jail?" she asked.

"Yeah, enough to get out of prison," Remy said. "Now, I say we go to Newfoundland. The Vikings were supposedly there, and there culture was lost under the fate of snow."

"No way!" I said. "If we don't stay in anywhere too long, then maybe it's back in Europe, or Asia? What about Pompeii?"

"You know who we could ask?" Maggie asked. "I live with my grandmother in Virginia, right near D.C. WE could always go to her. She's really good with history."

"Sounds cool with me," Remy said, "but I'm telling you Newfoundland is the answer, this is only gonna make you look stupid! Hey, Pilot, bring us to D.C.!"

"Will do!"

Maggie and Remy fell asleep. I knew that this was my opportunity. I felt under my shirt and pulled out the long piece of papyrus. I've translated some Old English tom Normal English.

To Who it May Concern...

John White

I got really shocked, and almost scared after reading John White's note, considering I was so close to seeing something truly scary. I've been scared since last night, but this scared me even more. This note had absolutely nothing with this treasure, but it did tell me something even more interesting: the fate of the lost colony.

I read through the note several times, and finally decided that this information in the wrong hands could be very dangerous.

"Hey Kid!" the pilot shouted to me. "We're almost there! I'll let you guys out in a minute! Better wake up your friends!"

"Okay thanks! But, thanks first of all for everything, and you wouldn't happen to have a match would you?" I know that this information could change the world, I knew every word, but it must be destroyed.

I took out the cell phone, and took a picture.

"Sorry kid, I don't! But if you go into the small compartment behind you, there's a lighter!"

I reached behind me, and pulled out the small lighter, and touched the flickering flame to the corner of the papyrus, and the fire quickly spread across the border from one edge to another, and finally through the paper.

The history of Roanoke Island was in my hands (both literary and spiritually). This paper, with information every historian wants to know is melting away.

When there were only black scraps left, I threw the papyrus that was now not burning any more over the open door of the helicopter, and onto a small field.

I woke up Maggie and Remy and asked Maggie where her grandmother lived. Strangely enough, this particularly field was right near Maggie's street. We landed, and got out of the helicopter, and told the pilot to stay around here, and to maybe even to just stay on the field.

Remy, Maggie and I walked down the field, to a few trees, and across the street. We walked down the street for a few minutes.

I held the clue and the other papers, if needed, in my hand.

"We're here!" Maggie said, in front of a small, simple, but beautiful house. There was an elderly lady working out in the yard, watering some plants, and putting down soil.

"Grandma!" Maggie said. "I'm home!"

"Maggie! Dear, you weren't supposed to be home for a few more days, is everything okay?" Mrs. Sharp spoke in a soft, but sweet, voice, that was distinctively to people her age.

"Oh, something came up with some of friends, I'll just be with them back at the Site for a few days." Maggie felt guilty lying to her grandmother, but we came clean with Mrs. Sharp eventually.

"We could actually use your advice Mrs. Sharp," I said.

WASHINGTON D.C. June 15th: 11:19 a.m.

"Hmm. A treasure map?" Mrs. Sharp asked. Maggie's grandmother invited us in for tea and cookies. The house was small and very cool (it was summer after all). One more very distinctive thing about the house was that there were tons of books.

History books, science books, fiction books, old books and so many more. There was a lot of space in the house taken up by all of the books.

"Yes, Mrs. Sharp, a treasure map, and we would appreciate it if you helped us out with our next clue. Would you help us?"

"Of course, why not." I handed her the small piece of papyrus.

"Hmm. Well, did you suggest Pompeii?" she asked.

"See!" I said, pointing to Remy. "Why exactly is it Pompeii though, Mrs. Sharp?"

"Well, there's an old story that only certain people know about that have carefully studied Roman Emperors. Titus Caesar, the emperor of Rome during the eruption of Mount Vesuvius."

I sipped my tea, now I was interested.

"Please elaborate Mrs. Sharp," Remy said.

"Well, few know that Caesar Titus was actually a part of the supposed Hecations. Hecate was the Greek god of magic, and some people, including Romans, went beyond their beliefs to worship this Greek god of magic. They believed that Hecate had bestowed power in them to create riches beyond anyone's beliefs. Some do believe though that this treasure had already been created, and that only the power bestowed in them could open the chamber to it."

Maggie nodded and seemed to understand.

"Um, I'm somewhat confused Mrs. Sharp," Remy said. "How does their power open the chamber? There's no such thing as magic. And anyway, why would a Roman be worshipping a *Greek* go?"

"True, but as the story goes, Titus was one of the three elders leading the Hecation council, and he split his power two ways, into two wands if you will. These wands open the treasure, and were so valuable to die for. Some people say a jealous Hecation member wanted him out, and poisoned him and he died. Titus's wands were never found, so this treasure is still in the open."

"You believe in this treasure?" I asked.

"I don't see why not to. Facts seem reasonable, and Pompeii may even contain the clue to this treasure, and Titus's wands, considering he visited Pompeii just before the eruption."

"Thank you so much Mrs. Sharp!" I said, standing up and moving towards Mrs. Sharp. I shook her hand and motioned towards Remy and Maggie that we need to go.

"Let me know where this trail leads," she said.

"We'd ask you to come, but we don't want you hurt," Remy said. "We best be on our way!"

REMY'S HELICOPTER RIDE 3 June 15th: 7:39 a.m. CEST Time

We all slept on the long ride. I basically tried to adjust already to the Naples Time Zone, which was six hours ahead. We have to stop in London for fuel, so the trip will be a little while longer, and we have to discuss our plans for the day.

My dreams take me back to other times, like this one did. I'm sure at school, there's at least one teacher you don't like. If I ever had more than one teacher, I'd dislike another one's teaching styles. One teacher Maggie told me about is one that tells her about getting in touch with the past, which is kind of strange in my opinion, but I really felt in touch with the past during this dream.

I was on a somewhat gravel road that lead down to a city that had to be Pompeii. I saw the gravel road lead down to many houses and one of which seemed older than the others.

I ran, and down the path to the old house and saw a gleaming block on the floor. I was being pulled away from the house and saw exactly where it was.

"James Get Up!" Remy shouted.

"What?" I said. "Are we there?"

"Just about," Maggie said. "It's the morning Naples Time, almost eight a.m. Enough time for us to scope around the area before anyone else."

"Good plan."

"Hey Harry, stay literally right here and we'll be back in a half hour!" Remy said.

"Will do!" Harry said. With that, we attached the rope, and climbed downwards toward a now stone road, that resembled the gravel one from my dream a lot. My dreams have helped me this far, let's give it a shot.

CITY OF POMPEII June 16th: 8:00 a.m.

We followed the stone path down to a variation of houses beyond a small common.

"Which one James?" Remy asked.

"Uh, probably that one!" I said, pointing to a nearly destroyed house.
"And what are we looking for? I wish we could stay and sight see! I've never even been outside the country before!" Maggie asked.

"Um, floorboard?" I suggested. "Probably a trap door."

"Wow, you're dreams are saving our butts!" Remy added. We saw that this house had a small window and was open to the public. We went in and saw what was probably in any house: petrified people, petrified animals, petrified house implements and a petrified house. I felt around the floor.

There was nothing too misleading here, but I felt one small board. These houses of course had been ash-ed over, but I could tell that whether it was gravel, or clay beneath the ash, it opened up.

This square board was loose.

"Hey guys, give me a hand!" I called. Remy and Maggie came over and we all tugged, and pulled the ash loose. Underneath was a clay slab in the shape of a square.

"Ah!" I pulled too tightly on it and fell backwards, my leg aching since yesterday morning's cut injury.

I looked underneath and there was a small little passageway about big enough for hand to fit in. I felt a tickle on it. A spider crawling up my arm.

I quickly and quietly let him crawl onto my other hand, and set him down on the floor.

I fit my hand down in the small hole, and felt a wood block. I pulled it up, and it was no kid's job, because the wood was heavy. I also felt around, now sticking my entire arm in the small hole, I found a curled up piece of paper, bigger than the last, same as the clue:

Back in Time, three times you've leaped. Now back in time is where the treasure keep. The oldest structure still around to my day, the basement in the torturous Tower lights the way...

"What was around in his day that's still around in our day?" Maggie asked.

"Where did John White live?" Remy asked.

"London," she replied. "So?"

"The torturous Tower, tower capitalized means..."

"The Tower of London," I completed. "This the end. I think that when we find some secret vault in the Tower of London, we stick this in for entry, we get back my parents, and out of this mess!"

"Good," said a mysteriously familiar and ominous voice through the window. It was Lefty. Remy and I informed Maggie of our encounter with Lefty and the others in the bog back at Roanoke, but she hadn't truly seen him. "We'll bring your parents to the basement, and meet us there. We won't have any assaults this time, but be sure to get there as quick as possible."

Lefty walked away from the window with a quick nod of his fedora hat.

FINAL HELICOPTER RIDE June 16th: 9:17 a.m.

When we finally got back to the helicopter, people that had been let in to the site were very suspicious. It's not every day a helicopter is above an International Historic Park.

We let Maggie on the short rope, and then Remy and then I shimmied up and got on, pulling in the rope behind me. Some people pulled out their cameras and took pictures as the helicopter took off, out of sight. We waved to some of the people,

making a joke or an insult depending on point of view.

"Hey kids!" the pilot said. "We're almost out of gas! Where we going? I might be able to make it to Lyon or even Paris, we'll be lucky anywhere beyond that!"

"No, no, no!" I said. "We've gotta make it back to London! Can we make it there?"

"We'll be lucky!" he said, "but I can try. This is your third time in London! Is it your last time so I can get some sleep?"

"It actually is!" Remy said. "Thanks for helping us out so much! We won't disturb you any more!"

"How is it they keep finding us?" Maggie asked. "I mean this Lefty guy does look like he'll follow you home from school, but not this far!"

"Could he have planted a tracking device in our bags?" I asked. It seemed anything has become possible over these past three days.

"James, could I see your cell phone?" Remy asked.

"Uh sure, why?" I asked. I pulled it out of the bag and tossed it to the seat across from me, where Remy sat.

"What is it by?" he asked.

"Uh, it doesn't say."

"Exactly!" he exclaimed. Remy pulled out some tweezers out of his pocket. He edged the sharp end into the center of the phone to reveal many chips, circuits and a beeping kind of ball shaped chip that was beeping with a red light flickering.

"This is what we call," Remy said, "in the professional tech business: a bug! They're listening to our conversations. This one has pretty good audio, and it's totally next generation. The probably knew and know everything that we've said."

"But my parents wouldn't purposely put a rigged cell phone in that brief case, unless they're listening to us," I said. "It doesn't add up!"

"Maybe someone in Tikal slipped it in the phone?" Remy said. "Even Jorge, or the people that took your parents."

"They might even have rigged the phone first, and then put it in the case themselves," Maggie added.

"Any way it goes, it doesn't add up," I said. "Now that we're close to the end, how are we supposed to turn these people in if we find this treasure?"

"Well, your parents knew everything thus far, so maybe once the treasure is found then these people will stop and take some money?"

"So it's a ransom," I said. "How will this slab come in though?" I pulled out the wood.

"Hey Harry!" Remy called up to the pilot. "Do you have a pocket knife we could use? My family can give it back to you!"

"Sure! Right next to that lighter you lot used earlier!"

"Lighter? We didn't use a ---"

"Whatever," I said. I thought about the Roanoke colonists, the singed paper on the field in D.C., John White's discovery, my parents who would want to know everything (I couldn't tell them about the colonists though), and myself: the only person that will ever know about the lost fate of the colony.

"I know where it is. I pulled out a small pocketknife out of the compartment of which the lighter was in, and held the knife in my pocket, along with the Taser.

"We're desperate for fuel!" the pilot shouted. "We need to land soon!"

"Where are we?" Maggie asked.

"Over the Thames! You all can parachute out!" he called.

"What?" Maggie shouted. "I've never been parachuting before!"

"I bet you've never been to London before either!" Remy called.

"No I haven't," she said. "I'd love to go sightseeing and ---"

"Maggie!" I shouted, as we all strapped on our parachutes, looking right near the Tower of London, "if we make it out of this all alive, Remy and I will take you sightseeing here in London all day!"

"Jump!" the pilot shouted.

"Thank you!" I called. Without further instruction, I jumped out of the helicopter.

TOWER OF LONDON June 16th: 9:09 a.m. BST

I was falling extremely fast. I didn't look up (but I did look down), and I didn't

hesitate to engage the parachute. I pulled a red wire, that slid off, and felt as if I was being pulled upwards, and I was drifting straight down.

"HEAD TOWARDS THE TOWER!!!" Remy shouted. Being the last one out, he had to shout for us to lightly hear him. We all saw the castle like structure that Maggie and I had only seen via Google Earth before. We drifted towards a bridge next to the Tower, which is used to sell the passes and what not.

"I HAVE PASSES!" Remy called. "HEAD TOWARDS THE TOWER TOP!!!"

As my parachute disengaged, I was almost to the top of one Tower in the massive structure. I saw that no one was on the Tower top, but people began looking, pointing, and taking pictures (like Pompeii and Roanoke, tourists are tourists, especially in the summer).

I fell onto the top of what seemed to be the White Tower, which was supposedly used for torturing from the twelfth century onwards.

Remy fell right near me, and Maggie close to him.

"Let's go!" I yelled. I held my backpack closely. It had definitely filled up over the past few days. It contained all the clues, the wood block, the pocketknife, my laptop (which was probably getting scratched) and a few Powerbars that we had been eating on the helicopter rides.

We ran from the top of one of the White Tower's tower to a small, wood trapdoor that had stairs leading down. Maggie went down first, then Remy, then me. We followed each other down the winding stairs until we saw light at the bottom of the spiral staircase.

There was a rope that kept people from entering, which Maggie quickly untangled, and detached.

Underneath, was another staircase of steps. We passed over the rope and followed down the stairs.

"Hey!" a man dressed like security called. "You children can't go down there!" He pressed a walkie-talkie near his shoulder, and a beep followed. "Security, we have an altercation at Section Twelve!"

We heard the man calling after us, but followed down the stairs faster, quicker and thoroughly, until there were no more steps to go down.

When we came to the end, there was a small room in which was covered by cement, where no one could hear you scream.

"Torture chamber I'm guessing?" Maggie asked.

"Used to be," was Remy's reply. "They moved a bunch of the stuff around so people could see it. They don't let people down here because there's nothing to see except for stickiness and humidity."

"Is there a secret door?" Maggie asked. "There has to be! This is it, the torturous Tower white was talking about! James?"

"I'm stumped!" I said, feeling around. I did feel one thing: a smooth curve in the ancient cement like structure. There was tiny, almost illegible cursive handwriting that read: PRECIOUS. I felt the wall again, and knocked on it this time. THOMP THOMP THOMP! I expected THAMP, or two, but I got a THOMP, which means the wall is hollow.

"Hey guys I found it!" I said. "Come over here and push this wall in!"

Maggie read the handwriting.

"Precious?" she asked.

"It's how my English ancestors said treasure," Remy inquired, pushing the wall in. "It's not working! James, I think for the first time you were wrong."

"And I think we're out of time," I said.

"And I think we're over thinking this," Maggie said. "My grandmother says that hardest questions have the simplest solutions." Maggie tapped on the wall, and went down to the letters, almost squatting.

She felt them once more.

Using her index finger, she pushed in the 'P' and it inserted into the wall. We watched astounded. She pushed in the 'R' without hesitation, then the 'E'.

"C, I, O, U, S," she said, as she pushed in the letters. The wall opened up a small crack. We heard rumbling come from the spiral staircase, no doubt the Bobbies (a.k.a. British Police) or Interpol (International Police), or both.

"Let's get in!" Remy whispered. "It's probably big enough for us to squeeze into!"

I pushed the wall open farther, enough so that we all entered into and saw small torches lit by flames, and an ancient wooden staircase.

I pushed the wall shut, creating a clicking noise, and saw the backwards imprints

of 'Precious' push back out of the wall.

"We have to go down there?" Remy asked.

"Hey you know they say," I said. "The first step in faith, is taking step number one; even when you can't see the whole staircase."

Maggie grabbed onto my wrist tightly.

"Even when you can't see the whole staircase," she whispered. She was referring to this staircase in fact.

TOWER OF LONDON June 16th: 9:46 a.m.

When we reached the bottom of the staircase, there was another entrance hall, in the form of a door, but without one actually in it. There was a basement, under a basement, under a basement.

We followed it in, and saw one more wall, this one with a seemed slot in it. It looked like a 'Y' shaped stick, but we had no such thing with us.

"What do we do now?" Remy asked.

"Wait for our guests?" I suggested. "And we can carve the thing out to form a Y."

"The first won't be necessary," said a grimly, now unsurprisingly familiar voice of the man who's name was Lefty. He passed through the way with no door, along with some other cronies, shrouded beneath sunglasses, trench coats and fedoras.

One of them held two, badly beat people in his arms, releasing, and then throwing them against the ground. These two were obviously my parents. My dad's long black hair was dirty and musty, and my mom's blond hair was covered by dirt. Both of their respective clothing had mud and grease smeared on it, and made me wonder what I looked like, after not showering, changing clothes or eating a proper meal in three days.

"We may be bad, but we did have a deal," the guy holding them said. My parents hands were tied with rope, but they scurried over to me.

"Honey!" my mom said, "are you all right?"

"I'm fine Mom!"

"You have been so brave!" my dad said.

"Thanks, but right now, you guys stay calm, and we have a deal to settle with these jokers," I said.

"Open the vault if you will?" Lefty said.

I took out the knife and the wood chunk, and tried to edge the knife into a 'Y' shaped pencil marking on the top of the chunk.

"It won't carve out!" I said. I actually wasn't lying, since I knew these guys would kill all of us (except for Remy, who was still wearing his bulletproof vest), I made sure to keep them happy.

"Give me that!" another one said. His voice was, too, familiar, and he took the knife and tried to jam it into the box, but it wouldn't work.

"Wait!" I said. I noticed a small crook mark on the side. He handed me the knife and I edged the knife into the side, peeling open the other side, and cracked open the chunk like a case.

"It's like a shoe box!" Remy said. "I opened it up and saw a twig, in the shape of a 'Y' that looked like it had been perfectly preserved in the freezing box, under the very cold dirt for these past two thousand years.

I took out the stick very carefully, and placed it inside the container on the vault. If this was a treasure movie, the exciting music would start playing because there was no stopping us now.

The stick fell down the container, which appeared to be a chute, and a small wheel that none of us had noticed before, clicked on the other end of the wall. I spun the wheel, and it clicked again.

"A little help?" I asked. Two of the estimated five cronies came over and pulled the wheel until it opened up, and wall came outwards, to reveal a whole room filled with coins, chests, and necklaces, gleaming bracelets and more.

I also noticed a folder like document at the top of one coin pile.

Many of the men scattered around, filling up their pockets with as much treasure as they could carry. Dad went over to Lefty and grabbed him by the neck (a risky move) and pulled off his fedora to reveal a bald-head, and his sunglasses to reveal to

eyes of gleaming green, unmistakably the recognizable face of Dr. Caroth PhD. Caroth worked with my parents many years ago, and whom I had forgotten until now, was ambidextrous, meaning he can write with both his hands.

Remy and my mom tackled three of the other goons in one blow, and pulled off their hats and glasses to reveal some other guys I hadn't seen before, and one more that me and Maggie attacked at just about the same time as the others.

This guy (who was the one that tried the knife jamming) was none other than CIA Agent Simmons.

"That's why my phone had a bug in it!" I said.

"Oh good, you got the stuff we left you!" Dad said, trying to punch Caroth out.

"Throw me the Taser!"

"Sure, in a sec!" I said. I released Taser from my pocket, and engaged it right underneath the chin of Simmons. I tossed my Dad the Taser, and he was about to tase Caroth, when Caroth punched his cheekbone, and he dragged Simmons out of the vault.

"It's funny how we just seem to disappear," Caroth said. "We won't come after you again, now that we're loaded, but watch your backs."

The others scrambled up to their feet, and ran off, closing the vault behind us.

TOWER OF LONDON June 16th: 10:09 a.m.

"How do we get out now?" Remy asked.

"Don't worry," Maggie said, "I have a hair pin."

"And, if that doesn't work, then there's always another way out of these puzzles," Dad added.

"The people who built the Tower and these passages locked the doors from the inside, and built another way out," Mom added.

I pulled out that folder, and my parents took my cell phone, and decided to make some calls to Interpol, FBI, MI6, and the bobbies, among others.

The police would arrive shortly, to call in some experts for the treasure, but would solve other things. We'll probably get a portion of the money, and me, Remy and Maggie will be bailed out of prison.

While my parents called, the three of us found ourselves at the back of the chamber piled to the roof with money. I pulled out many longer pieces of papyrus, and noticed that they were in White's handwriting.

I read them aloud.

"Congratulations, if you are finding yourself in this chamber. You have proven yourself worthy of knowing the past cultures of our planet and society. I, John White, feel that I am to explain this treasure into a little bit more detail. Throughout the past two thousand years, a Keeper has placed over this treasure, to ensure it's safety, and I feel that, unlike M. Polo, we should hide this treasure where it was meant to be four hundred years ago. When gold was first burned down to currency, it was used as riches of many lands, ranging from home of the pyramids, where this treasure first hid for centuries, and centuries on end, to other empires, where the key to this treasure hid. Titus Vespasian made plans of this treasure's fate, and ensured a secret passage be built to hide it. When William the Conqueror, our previous king, found V's plans in 1076 A.D., he followed out this plan, and finished it in twenty years, moving the treasure and hiding it here, where you stand. I have been piecing clues through treasures that will be discovered beyond my life time, such as the stone of many languages. You who found this treasure, is the new Keeper. I was the last, now is you. John White.' Now is me?" I said. "I'm the Keeper? I'm the Keeper. I'll make sure this thing is safe, and leave new trails before the end of my life."

With that, the bobbies had arrived, and we were free.

CITY OF WESTMINSTER June 16th: 1:57 p.m.

Basically, after everything was cleared up, my bail was paid, and my parents and I talked for a little bit. They asked me what I really wanted to do, and I figured out basically what I wanted: a normal life of a kid.

Remy's parents are sending him to an American Boarding School in D.C. (believe it or not, the same one Maggie and three of my cousins go to), so I decided that that's what I want to do.

My parents will talk to my Uncle Martin and Aunt Rose to let me go to that school, using some of the profit we got to keep of the treasure. I also made sure to put all of the most valuable treasures from the collection into another secret room that I found in the notes. I'll move it at some point, but there were a few things I was keeping from my parents.

The first, being the Roanoke note, which I'm confident I'll never share with anyone, and the 'Keeper' business. Keeping secrets from my parents kind of hurts me, but I'll have to make tough choices, and this is for the safety of the world.

"So what are you going to do now?" Mom asked me.

"Well," I said. "I promised Maggie that Remy and me will take her sightseeing when everything clears up, so can I?"

"Have you ever had to ask permission before? Have fun."

EPILOGUE

I'm on the plane now, headed for Los Angeles. I'll be there for five weeks or so with Uncle Martin and Aunt Rose before I head to D.C. for school.

I wrote most of this on the ride, actually, and we're almost to L.A., as I'm told it's called.

I think I'm finally ready for a normal life.

The only thing I am worried about, is Roanoke. I'll have to go back again when I get to D.C. I can't tell you what was there. I trust my journal, but what I don't trust is this disturbingly scary information that I had to burn to make sure no one could find.

I'm the only one that knows, and I'm the only one that will ever know.

I'm the Keeper of many things now, and the treasure, and these secrets are one of them.

One thing I'm certain: the Roanoke information will haunt me forever and I don't need anyone else scarred by it. Unlike the treasure, it will never be passed down.

A FINAL NOTE

There was of course, one other thing I had found in my bag of things. There was a note written on a piece of printer paper that was folded in half. It read:
In one month, expect a call from this #: 3454. The Director.

I couldn't help but wonder what that could mean, but figured that it would be something unimportant. I had no idea how wrong I would be.

A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

An extraordinary claim needs extraordinary evidence. I had never before heard a truer statement. In writing this novel, fact was merged with fiction, but several accounts were correct. Caesar Titus Vespasian was in fact emperor during the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in 79 A.D, but I can confirm there isn't, nor has there ever been (as far as I'm aware) a group called the Hecations (During writing this, the kidnapers, including Caroth and Simmons, would be modern day Hecations). John White was in fact Governor of Roanoke in 1587, and did return to England for three years. What was he doing there other than getting supplies, no one knew.

The colony of Roanoke was never found, and did mysteriously disappear, leaving only the word 'CROATOAN' carved in a post. Whatever James Henderson found, he was too scared by it to show us, or perhaps he knew the world wasn't ready for it yet.

I have not been to Fort Raleigh National Historic Site, as I have not been to Pompeii. I have not visited Tikal, Guatemala or Washington D.C. I *have* seen the British Museum and the Tower of London. There is no glass panel on the roof above the Rosetta Stone, but whether or not there are stairs leading up to a room with entrance the enormous roof, I don't know.

There are, I can confirm, spiral staircase leading from the top of the White Tower to a main floor, and then another set of stairs. Where they lead to is beyond my knowledge.

The point of my note being, that this story is so close to the truth, it can be imagined as being almost real. At the beginning of this, James Henderson gave you a perspective of fiction versus nonfiction, and told you his story was real.

This story could be called 'Irregular History' because it has the truth being corrupted, or it could be called Irregular History because of the irregular-ness in this story, whereas the truth is so much closer than we thing.

It could be right under our noses.

Whether or not we'd like to find that truth is up to you.

But remember the not-so-famous saying: Sometime's the Truth is Even More Disturbing Than Fiction; We Just Don't Know What It Is.

Pearls of Wisdom

"Impossible is a word found only in the dictionary of fools."
—Napoleon Bonaparte

"Courage is the magic that makes dreams come true."
—Ralph Waldo Emerson

"It's only impossible until it's done."
—Nelson Mandela

*"Go to the edge of the cliff and jump off. You'll gain your wings on the way
down."*
—Ray Bradbury

"It is hard to fail, but it is worse to never have tried to succeed."
—Theodore Roosevelt

"A lot of times, communication is about what's not being said."
—Anonymous

"Never Confuse a single defeat with a final defeat."
F. Scott Fitzgerald

"Real history is written in between the lines."
—John M. Hayeck