**HEMINGWAY’S TRUNK ©**

 A Mystery Novel

 by

 Gerald Arthur Winter

 **Spade and Marlowe, Shaken Not Stirred**

 Trailer

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tt4icxd-gKc&feature=youtube_gdata>

 This is a work of fiction. All names and characters

 are invented and used fictitiously. Accounts of Ernest

 Hemingway’s loss of his early writings are hearsay.

 All proposed accounts of what the great American

 author’s actual opinions may have been are imagined,

 fictitious, and in no way meant to portray his actual

 feelings or to declare anything he may have or may

 not have said about the alleged loss or anyone who

 may have taken part in their loss. The hypothesis

 that these manuscripts existed and could be found so

 long after they were written is meant to establish the

 intrinsic value they might have today.

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 Episode Ten

**CHAPTER 19 – THE SON ALSO RISES**

 I swam wherever flora patterns and reefs were casting shadows in the crystal

clear water to camouflage my underwater approach to Isla Premio a hundred yards

ahead. I’d learned from Theo that David Trask had a strict rule against feeding fish

from his island to give additional protection to his guests from sea predators. The

strong gate opened only in daylight to allow sea craft to enter within the protective

reef enclosing the island. All refuse was flown out, as was the contained toilet system

that left daily by helicopter, probably to send his garbage to lesser earthly creatures

than the rich and famous.

 The gate opened for the last party boat to enter as the sun set, leaving a crimson

glow in the sky where pink-tinted cumulous clouds looked like puffs of cotton candy. I

followed the yacht entering the open gate, but had to grab hold of the gate to pull myself

through against the yacht’s wake. I surfaced just inside the gate and used the high reef,

four feet above water level at high tide, to blend in.

 As the last boat docked, I heard whistles from lifeguards signaling bathers to

get out of the water. They called out to guests, telling them to use the many decorative

pools and fountains for their evening swimming pleasure. I watched young, topless

women in thongs as they squealed and frolicked in their playful exit from the lagoon

to the beach, pristine white and as soft as baby powder.

One girl tugged at another’s thong, trying to wrestle it off.

“Stop it, Karen!” the victim called out. “I’ll tell Davey, and he’ll send you back

to Marathon tonight.”

 “You and your Davey Shmavey, Lisa!”

 Both laughed and scampered off to the water slide at the largest pool.

Security guards in white shirts, shorts, and baseball caps stood posted at intervals

within protective booths around the reef. They carried holstered 9 mm pistols at their

hips, and automatic AR-15 rifles were mounted at each booth. The guards seemed to be

closing shop, heading toward the house as if they were no longer needed after the water

gate closed and the bathers left the lagoon.

 Instinct told me it was time for me to get out of the water, too. I submerged and

found my way to a tanning raft near the shore. I took off my flippers and hooked them

to a bolt under the raft’s platform where it was fastened to the floating barrels.

With the guards’ attention toward the attractive women, I stayed within the

shadows of palm trees and florid bushes with their heady scent. I removed my wet suit

and put on my sandals from my waterproof emergency pack containing Baby Ruth and

a few emergency essentials.

With a light cotton, tangerine-colored, short-sleeve shirt and khaki Bermuda

shorts, I fit in with the other guests at poolside. I put Baby Ruth in the breast pocket

of my shirt hanging casually outside my shorts. I turned my shirt collar up against the

rapidly cooling evening breeze.

 Fortunately, Sandy had used the gear before me and a pack of cigarettes with a

lighter remained from her last dive. With my gear concealed under a hibiscus bush, I

grabbed a plastic cup containing the remnants of a mojito with the dregs of a lime and

mint leaves redolent of rum. I closed my eyes as I inhaled the alcohol aroma then

ripped off two thirds of a cigarette. Cupping my hands so no one would see the flame,

I lit the remainder. The sound of the flint alerted a guard less attentive to the bevy of

beauties at poolside.

 “Who’s there?” he called out, flashing a beam in my face.

 I shielded my eyes from the glare. “Sorry,” I said, holding up the smoldering

cigarette butt. “I needed one last cigarette before coming up. Don’t want to infringe

on the no-smoking rules—inside.”

 “Could’ve been your last smoke,” the guard said, waving me toward poolside.

“You don’t ever want to be on the beach or in the lagoon at night.”

 “Why’s that?”

 “The Trask security system can be deadly.”

 “How so?”

 “I’m not at liberty to say,” he said, cocking his head and giving me the once

over. “May I see your invitation?”

 I dowsed the cigarette in the plastic cup and said, “Davey has mine. I came in

on the boat with his girlfriend . . . *Lisa*.”

 “Oh,” he said with a robotic stare.

 Then another guard called out to him, “All clear. Time to secure the beach and

lagoon!”

 The guard turned to me and said with a smile, “You got off the beach just in

time. Enjoy your stay.”

 I nodded and worked my way toward the pool where young Lisa stopped her

tipsy mode for a moment to look me over from where she stood under the fountain

spray parted by her neck and pounding her erecting nipples. I gave her my full atten-

tion for three seconds then turned away as if to say, *I’ll pass*.

I walked away from the pool and sat alone at a table near the bar. About two

hundred guests danced to a live reggae trio, lingered at the bar, and swam and made

out, in and alongside the variety pools and fountains.

 “Haven’t we met bef*aw*?” a croaky *Joisey* woman’s voice came from behind.

“Whatcha drinkin’?” she asked, ready to take my order as she stood in front of me in a

white thong bikini that accented her deep tan. Her musky scent wafted to me when she

shook her head of long blond hair and fluffed it with her hand.

Out of context, the familiar connection didn’t immediately register, so I shrugged

and ordered a sparkling water with lime. As she turned to leave, I saw the ornate tattoo at

the base of her spine and realized she was the same waitress who’d drugged my drink at

the Jersey shore when I was with Mona. As the tattoo of Italian script read: The snow was

melting, and the shit was starting showing.

When my drink came, I set it aside and gave the mafia princess a wink. She

smirked then looked over my shoulder. I turned around and saw Lisa dripping wet

with her arms folded across her bare breasts.

 “What’s your story?” she asked. “Are you staff, plain clothes security, or just

blind?”

 It was hard to look at anything else, but what seemed to be a rarity that night,

breast that were natural-born killers.

 “I’m a little nearsighted at the moment,” I said, humming in my mind an imagin-

ary Jimmy Buffet song—*Just Another day* *in Areolaville*. “Are you so hard-up for com-

pliments that you need me to praise your wonders of nature, *Lisa* ?”

 “How the hell do you know my name?” she asked, punching my shoulder, a

signal I’d come to know from women who’d been treated roughly, but not to their

detriment, rather to their crustacean evolution. They were hopelessly attracted to

bad boys who played rough.

Lisa was a hard case, a breed I recognized from the field. I forgave myself in

advance for anything I might have to do that night to get home free and put this little

darling deeper into the trench she’d already dug for herself.

 “Everyone knows who you are, Lisa—Davey’s favorite.”

 “You bet, but I still like to play. How about you?”

 Looking her straight in the eye, I saw they were bright blue and long-lashed,

but a little bloodshot from booze, and her nose was pink from coke snort. “I guess I’ve

been lookin’ for fun in all the wrong places.”

 “Aw, what a shame,” she mocked. “Come and tell Lisa all about it.” She wrapped

her arms around my head nestled in her cool, wet breasts.

 I baited her with, “Karen told me Davey has some Mexican gold for me tonight,

but the big guy hasn’t shown his face yet.”

 “Why don’t we both go see Davey together?” She shook her shoulders with a

shiver from the cooling night air.

 “I’m in.”

 “How did you say you knew my name?” she asked, leading me by the hand like

a dog on a leash.

 “Karen told me the hottest chick at tonight’s party was named Lisa . . . I just did

the math.”

 “What’s your name?” she asked with a smile as we headed inside the house.

 “Tommy.”

 “I like it,” she said, turning back toward me with an open-mouth kiss that tasted

like Easter candy when I was a kid, but something I should’ve given up for Lent. “I like

you, too. Do you like me, Tommy?”

 “More and more every minute,” I said, as she led me past two guards, who

didn’t even blink as we headed upstairs on a winding open staircase, hopefully to find

*Mr. Sandman* alias Davey Jones, who wanted me dead now that he had all of the pages

to the rare Hemingway manuscript, fake or not.

 At the top of the stairs was a long corridor with an oriental carpet, its value

like its length was out of sight. Suites on both sides of the corridor provided views of

sunrises to the right and sunsets to the left. I stopped counting the rooms by twos,

when I got to a hundred.

With another hundred feet to go, the suites became bigger until we came to a

double door with gold doorknobs and etched glass with the well-known Trask letter *T*

in ornate script etched on each door. Rather than where the buck stopped, this was

where the billions of bucks began—at *El Daveed’s* private quarters.

 “Don’t you just love this place?” Lisa said with a shiver from the AC that perked

her finer points as she rapped her knuckles gently against the real estate pundit’s portal.

 “Beats a sharp stick in the eye,” I said as the door opened and a security guard,

despite his threatening posture and giving me an optical scan, still focused one eye on

Lisa’s carnal accoutrements.

 “Tommy’s with me, Al,” she said with familiarity to the guard, who must have

had access to the perks of Isla Premio on his off hours.

 Al relaxed, probably counting the minutes till his next break, and nodded as we

passed through an oval foyer with a skylight above and a fountain in the center. Bloom-

ing, sweet-scented tropical plants adorned the foyer along the light wooden panels of

the walls where paintings, if genuine, were rare and expensive from Gaugin’s primitive

south seas women to Van Gogh’s irises, and Degas’ ballerinas.

The next door, directly behind the foyer, opened automatically, no doubt among

the spoils of Trask’s urban real estate empire from those who did his bidding. The

bubbling hiss of the fountain faded into serenity as we entered a private-party room

with a circular wet bar at the center and an aquarium surrounding the entire room. The

party room was empty and dimly lit, except for the bright aquarium.

 “Not much going on here tonight, Lisa.”

 “We don’t get to come in here much,” she said. “Only when Mr. Trask is absent

. . . and even then, only rarely.”

 I tried to assess what she was saying, but my train of thought was derailed when I

saw Hume Baskins, Sr., the son I’d met at the funeral, and the same who, at his Croton-

On-Hudson home, had put an end to Tony Imperato’s nasty ways with several bullets. He

looked frayed around the edges, and he nodded to me with a smirk.

 He shrugged over his shoulder to others in the next room. “I guess you figured

right,” he said to someone. “Larkin showed up after all. I can’t imagine how he ever got in?”

Since his questioning by Chief Sloan about his shooting an intruder, the literary

agent’s personality had changed—Jekyll to Hyde. I wondered if he might be involved,

even with his father’s death, just for the money. His once classy home was in great

disrepair, so necessity may have given birth to invention regarding the old manuscripts.

 Lisa turned to me with a grin then said to someone with his back to Baskins and

seated in a high-backed easy chair, “He’s all yours . . . a piece of cake.”

 I was surprised that there was so much more to Lisa than what had already met

 my eye, but was sorry that discovering her unsuspected depth was now at my expense.

The top of the man’s head was six inches above the high-backed chair, which

led me to suspect who he was, and confirmed when I saw the outstretched foot wrapped

in bandages where I’d shot Davey Jones fleeing to a helicopter. He waved his hand for

me to come where he could see me.

 When I came around to face him, Mr. Sandman appeared to be under the weather,

perhaps from prescribed, or otherwise obtained, pain killers that might be conflicting with

his usual drug intake. His face was ghostly white and his eyes sunken with dark circles

around them. His jagged-toothed grin reminded me of a T-Rex, especially when saliva

dripped from his sharp incisors to his chin stubble.

 “You’ve caused me great pain, Larkin,” he growled hoarsely. “You’ll have to pay

for it. There’s no way out for you from here—you’re done.”

 “I delivered the last page of the manuscript and you don’t even say thanks?” I

taunted him.

 His eyes rolled back for a moment showing only whites then he grimaced, the

best he could do for a smile. “I’m going to enjoy watching you squeal, Larkin. You’ve

been a pain in my ass far too long.”

 “Hell, we only met last Sunday, and you want to call it quits in less than a week?”

I continued my bravado, which seemed to be my last card. “We’ve hardly had a chance

to get to know each other.” I glanced over to my right and saw a bearded young man

about thirty busy on the keys to a laptop. “Writing home to Mom?” I asked.

 I noticed a defensive look in his expression, when he replied, “My mom’s been

dead for twenty-five years,” he said. “What business is it of yours?”

I noticed that through his beard, the young man resembled his father and grand-

father.

 “Don’t you even miss your dog, sonny-boy?” I asked.

 “My dog?” he said, standing up and turning toward me. “My dog is with my

grandfather. What’s it to you?”

 “Zelda smelled like last week’s salmon left out in the sun when I last saw her—

rather *him*—covered in bluebottle flies a few days ago.”

 He came at me with confusion and said to his father, “What’s he talking about?

What happened to Zelda?”

 “Never mind, son.” His father glared at me. “Zelda was very old and in a lot of

pain, much like Grandpa, so we had to put the old dog to sleep.”

 “Davey had your grandfather put to sleep, too.” I said.

 “What?” the young man came at Davey, but his father grabbed hold of him.

 “I told you, son, this man wants to hurt you and keep you from becoming a great

editor like Grandpa was,” his father said. “He wants to steal Davey’s manuscript that

you’ve edited and I’m representing. I told you from the start that some people would do

anything to stop us. Even kill Grandpa.”

 I turned toward Davey with disbelief. “Am I hearing right?” I asked, then turned

back to the son. “You think this snake wrote that manuscript?”

 The young man turned to me innocently. “Who else would’ve written it?” He

shrugged. “Are you claiming to have written it? Are you saying someone stole this

novel from you?”

 “You really don’t know, do you?” I said.

 I realized that, despite the younger Hume’s editing skills, their charade was

dependent on his naiveté created by a single, indulgent parent and a demanding

grandfather.

 “Is there any truth to what he’s saying, Dad? You introduced me to Davey as

the author. Why would I question that if it came from you? You said Grandpa would

be proud that I’d acquired such an original work from an unknown author with such

great potential. Grandpa would be thrilled, just like in the old days. I’d get a promotion;

you’d make your agent’s commission; and Davey would be hailed as the great American

author of the twenty-first century.”

 “Should I make some popcorn for the kid before the next cartoon?” I quipped.

 “I told you not to talk about it in front of anyone until publication day,” his

father cautioned. “Least of all him.” He nodded toward me. “He wants to invent

stories about Davey just to discredited him and hurt our book sales.”

 “No one’s going to leave this island till publication, so it won’t matter,”

Davey said with a glare at me.

 I stared back. “Where does *Bessie* fit into this equation?”

 Davey nodded. “What’s a nice girl like her doing with a rotten apple like me,

right?” He stood up and towered over me. “Maybe size does count after all,” he said,

hitting me with a downward right hand punch that twisted my head around and made

me forget all about my past wounds as my jaw throbbed and quickly swelled.

 Davey turned toward the younger Baskins, who took a step back in fear.

“You should be finished with your final edit by now,” Davey said.

 “I can e-mail it to production, and we can go to print in a matter of days,”

the younger Baskins said, apparently shaken by Davey’s brut presence.

 “Not good enough.” Davey turned to the father. “We’ve got the bucks to push

the deadline up to Sunday. Do it!”

 “He’s right, son. We’ve got the whole advertising and promotion campaign in

place. We’ll have the bestselling book on the beach for the rest of the summer.”

 Unsure of himself and obviously accustomed to doing whatever he was told

by his father, the young editor sent the finished script to production with the touch of

a finger.

 The father turned to Davey and gestured toward me as he asked, “What are you

going to do with him?”

 “He’s about to run into a serious security breech—a deadly one.”

 After many spinning images from my sock in the jaw, Davey’s looming figure

came into single focus as he lifted me to my feet.

 “What part did Bessie play in this?” I asked.

 “If it makes you feel any better,” he said, “she was just providing the way for me

to get the manuscript away from my father.”

 “*Your* father?” I asked. “Who’s your father, Dr. McCullough?”

 I tried to imagine the five-foot-five scholar as the sire for this brute, but that

piece of the puzzle wouldn’t fit.

For the first time, I saw a genuine expression of glee on Davey’s face as he

laughed like a braying mule. “Dr. McCullough? That’s good, Larkin. Here I thought

you were a decent shamus, but you don’t know shit.”

 The older Baskins laughed at my expense as well, but his son seemed as con-

fused as I was and continued to shy away from Davey’s looming figure.

 “I could tell ya, Larkin, but then I’d have to kill ya . . . but I’m gonna kill ya

anyway, so I’ll tell ya. I’m David Trask . . . *Junior.*

**CHAPTER 20: MR. SALTY**

 My mind spun when Davey revealed the truth of his birthright at the head of

David Trask’s line of beneficiaries—David Trask, Jr.

“Dad didn’t want anybody to know about me, his ill-fated offspring from his

first marriage when he went off to Viet Nam and left me and Mom with squat. When

he made millions and remarried, I reared my ugly head as a reminder of his cold heart.

It’s been payback from me to Dad ever since.”

 “He knows what you’re doing?” I asked.

 “No, but he’ll do anything to keep me afloat so I won’t go public. We used Bessie

to convince him the manuscripts could be fakes. We’ll just let those two spin their wheels

to see which one out deals the other. Meantime, he believes his bad-boy firstborn has finally

made a name for himself on his own—as a writer. He’s never made the connection between

the two, my novel and Hemingway’s manuscripts. He thinks I’m throwing a celebration here

tonight for the coming release of my book. That’s why he gave me free run of Isla Premio

this weekend—payback for everything he never did for me when I was a kid.”

 “Your father’s shrewd,” I said. “He’s bound to put it all together eventually.”

 “It won’t matter, even if he finds out from someone else what I’ve done. But that

won’t be you. Dad will back me, cover my butt, do whatever it takes to preserve the precious

Trask name. My new fame and fortune will get me out of his hair and off his payroll with my

independence.”

 “What about Dr. McCullough?”

 “My father didn’t invite Dr. McCullough to the Trask Arms topping out party

—I did. He assumed the call came from Dad. We had to get rid of him before he could

give his opinion about the manuscripts to my father.”

 “Then they are genuine?”

 “That’s an unsolved mystery you’ll be taking to your grave.”

 “You killed Dr. McCullough?”

 “No . . . why get my hands dirty when easy street is within my hand’s reach.”

 “Then who pushed him off the roof?”

 “He wasn’t pushed off the roof,” he said, confusing me for a moment before it

became clear.

 “Many times when I’ve heard references to Mr. Trask, or David Trask, security

guards were referring to you, because your father let’s you come and go as you please.

You invited Dr. McCullough, and when you got the information you needed from him,

you got rid of him.

 Davey grinned.

“You had access to the roof with one of Trask Enterprises’ helicopters. You asked

Dr. McCullough to wait until everyone else left and told him you would take him home

in your helicopter. He waited as you instructed, but you didn’t throw him off the roof, but

from the helicopter as you were leaving.”

 “I didn’t have to throw him out, Larkin.”

 “You had Tony with you to do it.”

 “Maybe.”

 “Then Tony became expendable, too,” I said turning, toward the older Baskins.

“Tony wanted a bigger slice of the pie, so you made it look like self-defense—an intruder

in your home, a convicted felon, armed and breaking parole and with no known connec-

tion to you—an armed robbery gone bad in a wealthy neighborhood.”

 “I’ve never fired a gun in my life,” the older Baskins said with a grin. “I’m

opposed to violence,” he assured his son. “This man is talking gibberish.”

 “From the shabby look of your home,” I said to the father, “this financial

windfall from a bestselling book will keep the wolf from your door.”

 “Well put, Larkin. Just as simple as that,” Davey flashed his jagged teeth.

 “Not so simple,” I said. “I may not have known that David Trask had a son

from a first marriage and you kept out of the public eye, but I have a connection with

an old friend of your father’s, who knew about his Vietnam War injury.”

 “So?” the older Baskins shrugged and looked to Davey for any reason they

should be concerned.

 Davey snorted a laugh then shook his head. “Shame on the shamus, but I guess

you’re smarter than I thought.”

 “What do you mean?”

 The older Baskins looked from one of us to the other.

 I nodded. “You couldn’t have pulled this off alone . . . and it wasn’t Bessie.

Not at all. She was just a means to an end, a way to stir the pot and camouflage what

was really going on.”

 “What does he mean?” Baskins Senior demanded.

 “You were the only one who could give her what she needed, her ace in the hole,”

I said. “Is she here now?”

 Davey shook his head. “Got to protect the little darlin’.”

“Then she’s cutting you in for a percentage of your father’s legacy?”

 “Why not,” Davey nodded. “It’ll be *my* kid.”

 “The bloodline, the DNA, everything gels,” I said. “But does your father know

Sophia’s having *your* baby?”

 “He’ll never find out because you’re the only one to put it together and you’re

not leaving here—alive. You’ll soon find Isla Premio all consuming.

 I shrugged off Davey’s threats. “Are you aware that Bessie has a typewriter that

was in the steamer trunk she brought back from France? She has it in a safe place. It also

has a preface page that will link it to the manuscript you’re fraudulently peddling as your

own.”

 The younger Baskins spoke up. “This could get me into a lot of trouble with my

publisher if I’ve acquired a manuscript under false pretenses. That’s fraud.”

 “Get him away from me before I have to smack him around,” Davey said.

 “But Dad,” the younger tried to speak up, but his father pushed him out of the

room.

 I looked Davey in the eye and said,” Those two, father and son, will have to

die, too, right?”

 “Sooner rather than later, as I see it,” Davey smirked.

“What happened to the original manuscripts?”

“Shredded and burned—just to be sure,” he said, which made me believe the

manuscripts were authentic. “But now, it’s time for some fun.”

 “Not with your play pal Lisa again,” I said. “Now that would be a way to die

with a smile on my face.”

 Davey walked to a panel in the wall and took a remote from a drawer in the side

table. When he pressed the remote, the panel slid sideways revealing another aquarium.

 “Here’s the last smile you’re ever gonna see, Larkin.”

 He slid open the panel, revealing a prehistoric-looking nightmare of a grin making

Davey’s jagged teeth look like a welcomed kiss.

 “Meet *Mr. Salty*,” he said, rapping his knuckles against the glass, which made

the creature snap its jaws. “His two lesser friends are guarding the lagoon tonight—

*Sam* and *Son of Sam*—killers both, but sweethearts compares to this big boy.”

 I felt a trickle of sweat drip from my left temple and across my cheek, still

throbbing from Davey’s punch.

 “Sam’s a Nile crocodile, and Son of Sam is a little smaller than Sam’s fifteen

feet, but he makes up for it with his ferocity. Son of Sam is an Amazon River caiman—

nasty when he’s hungry.”

 “So Mr. Salty, I suspect, is an Australian saltwater crocodile,” I said, my stomach

churning at the sight of the jaws separated by the safety-glass.

 “Close, but a little more primitive—from the swamps of Borneo. We can’t put

Mr. Salty out there with the other two—he’d eat them both. He hasn’t had much to eat

in a while. That’s why he’s snapping at the glass—dinnertime.”

Davey turned on an intercom.

“Lure the little guys back into the aquarium,” Davey told security. “I’ve got

some chum ready for the big guy.”

 I backed away from him defensively. “What’s Daddy gonna say about this?

Why isn’t he here like the media said he was?”

 “My bomb in Manhattan shook him up, so he asked me to come here to steer

the media away from him, since I was already throwing my celebration party. He wanted

to stand by Sophia in her delicate condition. I buzzed the media in Dad’s private jet and

chopper to make them believe he’s here, but no one gets past the gate unless invited,

especially paparazzi .”

 “Till now,” I flaunted.

 “Welcome to Shangri-La, Larkin. Ya may have gotten in, but you’re never

gettin’ out.”

  **(To be continued in the next issue)**