

## VISIONS

On a winter day

I thank everyone who helped and assisted me, especially Dimitra Konstandopoulou for her financial support.

Christos Anagnostopoulos

## VISIONS

One winter day

For Teresa

# CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	7
THE FIRST STEPS IN LIFE.....	11
AMERICA AMERICA .....	15
MY ACQUAINTANCE WITH JOHN LENNON .....	24
THE FIRST VISION.....	30
RONALD REAGAN.....	37
GRACE KELLY .....	44
THE LAST JOURNEY .....	54

## INTRODUCTION

Once a good and likeable lady, a fortune teller by trade, told me that despite my up to now misfortunes I am lucky and that I will gain wealth and fame. Not an accurate prediction as I realized, since problems, troubles and a constant lack of money shadowed me from the day I was born. 'Wealth and fame', I can't say who doesn't want it, but they were never my first priorities. My persevered ideas and my stubbornness to let people know "my truth" destroyed any chances I had in life. But even today I still have not grown wiser, I continue impetuous.

I am not crazy even though many of my friends, my family, just about everyone I would say, would swear to the opposite. 'Mad as a hatter' they would say, some with compassion, others deridingly. But I am just fine and everything happened exactly as I say. With desire I decided to write my incident, just so it can be set on paper and whatever comes of it.

I was born on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October 1953 in Efira Amaliada, a town of the prefecture of Ilia, in western Peloponnesus. My parents, remarkable people, were farmers with seven children; we grew up poor. The poorness and deprivation, as for most post-war children, in the 1950s were the most discrete memory of my childhood. Despite the misery of my family as if by miracle we had a Singer radio in our home. I dare say that it was unexpected luck, for only the very rich had one and in our area only the Mayers had one. With that radio I would sit at night and listen to the Greek programs on the BBC. In my mind I traveled all over the world - a fantastic experience.

In the morning though I would wake up to face the depressing reality. Wet clothes, old ripped shoes, wrinkled exercise books sometimes without a pencil, these were my supplies for school. An old dilapidated building with the cold reaching everywhere, broken windows and cracks. What can a child learn there in the freezing cold, with wet feet and cold blue hands?

School was suffocating; it never won me over and after an incident I just stopped going. One frosty morning as I was on my way to school, sulky and murmuring as usual, I became an eye witness to an accident. The fisherman of our town, because of a split second of carelessness, fell into a ditch with his motorcycle. Afraid, I ran to see what happened. The man was bleeding - without a second thought I offered to help him.

"Oh, it's nothing serious just light flesh wounds" he assured me, so I continued on my way. That made me be late to school. As soon as my teacher saw me he called me into his office.

He had a strict and imposing look.

"I know why you're late, you have been stealing oranges and for that you must be punished." He was not wrong! Often that why I was late, hunger you see! But not this time. He would not listen to my side of the story. He took a long cane and started striking my palms with rage. I rebelled with his beating and accusations and as I ran home I swore never to return. My parents of course begged me to go back and at least finish primary school, but I was adamant. So I ended up quitting in grade five.

In 1966, at the age of fourteen, I started on my first long journey. I went to Athens where my two brothers were. I lived with them in the Metaksourgio on the corner of Germaniou and Pireas Avenue. After a tormenting marathon I found a job as a machinist helper, a job that was heavy and difficult for a fourteen year old boy. So a new odyssey of discovering a new job began. It was a very difficult period in Athens, especially for a child without any knowledge or experience in any profession.

It was August, the heat was unbearable, but I was up early, roaming the streets for work. One day, penniless as always, tired, hungry, almost dying of thirst, I was walking up to Stadiou Street. I was desperate. I could not go on. I went into a cake shop to ask for some water. The owner behind the bench looked at me and smiled.

"Welcome, you're late!"

"Late?" I was about to say, but my eyes and mind were stuck on the refrigerator in front of me that was stacked with cakes, fresh and mouth watering. I was fascinated. "Come on", he said laughing, "lets go upstairs so I can give you a piece of chocolate cake". I swallowed hard but I could not say a word. I followed him as if hypnotized. He gave the chocolate cake and a glass of water. I drank the water first in a large gulp and then dug into the cake.

"Sweet mother Mary" I said to myself "what taste is this that came from paradise?" My eyes watered. The cake shop owner smiled, waiting for me to finish, and then took five hundred drachmas from his wallet and gave it to me.

"Give this to your boss and tell him to send me the delivery tomorrow without delay." What delivery, what boss? I was about to ask, but I suddenly understood. He thought I was someone else. I was troubled. If I told him who I was, he would throw me out of the shop for sure, he would ask me to pay for the chocolate cake I ate. I shivered at the thought that he might even call the police. So I took the money and put it in my pocket.

"Ok, not to worry." Quickly, I went down the stairs, thanked him for the cake and left the store.

I wanted to get away from this situation, my desperation led me into something stupid. In a lonely yard in Filothei I saw a motorcycle. A crazy idea came to me; to just take it and leave for my home town. Without a second thought I walked calmly into the yard and hopped on the motorcycle. It was the summer of 1967, the heat was unbearable and I was that I scared that I might be caught. The wheels held strong up until Egio. There I thought of selling it for as much as it would fetch and continue my journey by train. I walked into a coffee shop so I could bargain. At one stage someone there saw that something suspicious was going on. He approached me.

"Why do you want to sell the bike, can I see the papers for it?" I was lost, I had no reply, everyone knew what was going on and they called the police. I begged them not to, but as they they had to do their duty, they sent the good news to my parents. Clearly upset and feeble, my mother came and picked me up. You can imagine what followed from that day forth. In my village it was difficult to find work; my father was furious and made me take care of the animals of the family. It was not the career I was dreaming of, but at least I was doing something and anyway, it was my punishment and I had to accept it.

One day my mother sent me to take some lunch to my father who was ploughing fields in Psili Rahi, a place quite far uphill from our town. There I would often leave the flock grazing and I would climb to the top of the mountain. I had found a large truck tire and I would roll it down the steep mountain; it rolled for about three hundred meters until it got to the bottom. Then I would climb down and carry it back up to the top, sweaty but not tired, again and again. It excited me seeing it roll again and again. I found it fascinating. I was breathless and sweaty in the burning heat until I got to were my father was. I would sit with him while he ate his lunch so I could relax a little. The two horses nearby also found the opportunity to repose for a while and lay in the field. Resting, I watched my father spit the pips from the olives he ate. I was not in a rush to leave, it was a quiet and beautiful mountain slope and the dulcet green colors around relaxed me. Not even the sheep that roamed close by bleated.

Suddenly out of nowhere, a large grey round object appeared in the sky. It floated above the flat land without moving. "How did it appear" I asked myself.

"What is that, an airplane?"

"No, son it's not an airplane, I have no idea what it is." I had heard on the radio about weird objects that some people had seen in the sky. They came from different planets, UFOs they called them. I realized it was probably one of those. We are not alone I thought, the world



is huge, enormous and I suddenly had the urge to see this other world, sure that there I would find the luck I was told I would have. I sat and looked at it stupidly and curiously to see what it would do, if it would come down, if anyone saw us, and if it would do us any harm. It seemed like hours went by. I wondered whether inside, there were any of those green people they talked about. I jumped up and started waiving my hands in the air.

"Hey!" I yelled and jumped. If someone had come down I swear to god I would have gone with him. I did not fear, not even for a second. My father angry and a little frightened grabbed me by the ear and pulled me behind a large rock. He did not let me look behind me, not even once.

After a while we went down to town. I was rubbing my ear for it still hurt but I was ecstatic from what I had seen. I then found the opportunity to have a peep but the object had disappeared. Afterwards, calmer, my father came to the conclusion that the event that showed that one day I would become someone important.

"It's obvious!" He would say again and again with admiration.

Unfortunately though he died longing to see me as he had dreamed.

## THE FIRST STEPS IN LIFE

I had decided I wanted to see the world, follow my luck. So for starters I returned to Athens, ready this time to do whatever I would find.

When I got there, because I liked motorbikes and grease, I searched for work at garages. I found a job as an assistant mechanic. All my unlucky days were forgotten within a split second, the world was mine and my future was to be rosy...for a while. Soon enough debts forced my employer to close the garage, which put me back on the streets looking for a job.

One night I was in Aghiou Konstantinou Street. There I saw a middle-aged couple trying to fix their car. Willing as always, I offered to help. It was an Opel and I managed to quickly repair the damage. The man thanked me and wanted to pay me for my services. I refused saying it was nothing. At that moment I felt an indescribable superiority, I had never felt that way before. The man insisted on paying me so I ended up with five hundred drachmas, a head-spinning sum for that time, which took me a long way! I continued roaming around Athens, begging for work.

One morning I decided to return again to my home town. Why? I had long spent the five hundred drachmas, so I walked to Kavalas Avenue and started hitch-hiking from there. By nightfall I was still there and it was very cold. I was thinking of going back when suddenly I saw an army jeep stopping. Shivering I approached the jeep. A commander of the army was sitting at the wheel.

"Are you heading towards Amaliada?" He looked likeable.

"No, son but I can give you a place to stay for the night if you wish, at my quarters in Megalo Pefko." I accepted at once, I had no better offers, I was also very hungry and so I quickly got into the jeep.

In the morning he called me to his office.

"How would you like to go as a volunteer foot-soldier at the work site MOMA in Patra?"

"I sure would." I was full of enthusiasm, my future again started to rise. He gave me a letter to give to a gentleman at MOMA, and his driver took me to the train station so I could leave for Patra. I was flooded with happiness and emotion for the concern that the commander showed. Unfortunately though my bad luck followed me there. Going to Patra was useless. MOMA was ready to close down, I couldn't even find the gentleman I was looking for. So with

dark and heavy thoughts I returned to my home town.

One night as we were sitting at the town square, we saw a mobile cinema truck. We helped the manager unload his equipment, since he had gone off to some errand. I had a brilliant idea to take his truck for a drive. After about three kilometers I decided to turn back. In town though they had realized what had happened and the policeman with some villager were looking for me. When they saw me they signaled me to stop. Not only I did not stop, but I started going faster. In my panic to get away I lost control and fell into a ditch that was quite deep. Luckily I had not a single scratch but the truck was a mess. I ended up in Efira jail. My parents begged and pleaded for my release, but I was charged. After that, everyone scowled at home and in town. Everyone called me vagrant, lazy and other flattering things. I made my father sign me into the navy so I could go to sea, and be a sailor. When all the essential forms had been completed, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of November 1969 and since I was hired by the company Lemos as a cleaner, I departed from Patra to Italy so I could embark one week later on Captain Giorgio's steamer.

The first harbor we stopped at was Kolobo and then Cape Town. Our first major stop was Singapore, where we were to stay for a few days. There a colleague, Stuart, suggested I buy tax free cigarettes and resell them secretly. I did not take long to decide to do it for the profit was not to be scorned. I bought four cartons. I felt very uneasy as I had not yet found a safe place to hide them and we were approaching Porto Kapatsi in Pakistan. Not wanting to end up in hand cuffs, I decided to get rid of them. A little while before the big step I locked myself in my cabin and one after the other I smoked as many cigarettes as I could. At least they won't all go to waste, I thought! I then opened the porthole and one by one I threw into the sea all the remaining cigarettes. With all that, I sunk my very few earnings and dreams of becoming quickly rich.

After our long days on the ship, when we arrived, I wanted to go out and find a girl. Together with an Argentinean friend we went into the small town. We approached an old man and with the very little English I knew I told him what we wanted.

"Follow me." He led us out of town to a small forest full of muddy water. Indeed, in some small cabins seven girls lived there, all mouthwateringly beautiful or, at least, that's how they seemed to me!

Bad luck again though: before anything happened someone rushed in yelling: "The police are on there way." Everyone started running in panic. My friend and I were led by our

elderly guide through another road back to town so we could return to the ship. Apparently our bad luck followed us, for we fell in front of five well-built Indian police officers.

"What are you guys doing here, you drug dealers hey?" They started to search us and then they took everything we had. Money, watches, sunglasses and even our jackets. We then were taken to the police station and after the explanation we gave, they let us go. They kept our belongings though, only our jackets were returned.

"What about the rest of the things the officers took from us, won't they be returned to us?"

"Don't make things worse son with your false accusations" answered an officer. The image of being locked up in prison in a foreign country crossed my mind so I zipped it and left.

We returned to the ship tired and hungry and cursed our fate, but at last I had good news. The court trial that I awaited for the truck I stole had taken place and I was proven not guilty. They did not tell me the reason for that decision nor did I ask. Overexcited I sent my father money for the expenses and that matter was now over and done with.

That night we all gathered together on the deck, like we did oft to relieve our loneliness. The chief, captain Georgios, all the sailors, just about everyone was present. Singing, drinking beer and talking about our home country and families. At one point I got up and went to the stem. I liked watching the propeller and the froth it made in the sea. I held tightly onto the railing and bent forward trying to get a better look. Somehow, I lost my balance and I was hanging in the air with only my one hand holding tightly and desperately onto the railing with the propeller spinning menacingly below me. Not wanting to end up at the bottom of the ocean I gathered all my strength and started yelling for help. Two sailors ran at once and pulled me up onto the deck, just as my strength was about to give up on me. It took me a long time to find the courage to approach to the stern again, but never again alone.

Next stop was China and then Japan. I visited Okyo and Yokohamma. At last I was seeing the world, and I was crazily happy. Next in our voyage was North Korea where it was snowing and was bitterly cold. A sore tooth had been tormenting me for a while and I could not stand it anymore, so I decided to go to a dentist. The luxury left me speechless; it was mythical, like a palace. Of course I had never seen a palace, but that's what I imagined it like. Velvet, silk and hand-carved wood everywhere. Two crystal chandeliers hung from the roof illuminating the beautiful silk rug that covered the floor from wall to wall. I was too embarrassed to sit down but a lady in a white outfit insisted, so I sat on the corner of the couch carefully without touching

anything.

Traveling towards Europe on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 1970 I got my promotion to a stoker. My future was becoming peachier by the minute and often, in the bulwark, I would daydream of me in a captain's uniform. Those were my dreams!

In September I fell heavily ill. For many days I was in bed with a high fever and without a cure. The secretary of the ship who doubled as a doctor tried to help me. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of October 1970 we arrived in Alexandria, I was worn out from the fever, in bed covered in blankets and was not able to see this town that I so longed to. We continued for Piraeus where, out of concern, the crew sent me for tests and then to hospital. I was found to have a bad case of appendicitis and had to be operated on immediately.

When I got out of the hospital I went to my home town to recover. There after a while and since I was feeling better I bought a motorbike so I could get around and a wood cutting tool so I could make a small earning. But even here bad luck was after me. Not being careful for a split second I cut my leg quite deep just above the knee. A river of blood flowed and everyone freaked out. A fellow villager threw me on his donkey and after countless steep hills up and down we reached the hospital of Amaliada. Seeing me covered in blood and misery, a neighbor named Katina felt sorry for me, . Out of her bundle of savings she pulled out five hundred drachmas and put it in my pocket.

"For your expenses my child." I wept with emotion for I knew she was too poor, just like us. It took eight stitches to close the wound and it was a long time before I could work again.

## AMERICA AMERICA

On the 13<sup>th</sup> of December 1971, with the same company but a different ship, the Archon, filled with coal, I began another trip. First stop Venice and then Brazil. After that and though we were floating in the ocean I was told that we were going to New York. I then made a decision. Actually I was thinking about it for a while. I would stay in America. To this end, I had asked my father to write down all the name and addresses of people we knew there. So on the 29<sup>th</sup> of February 1972 we arrived at Staten Island. There without saying anything to anyone I left the ship and took a ferry to New York.

After many hardships I arrived to the closest address I had, an old lady, a distant relative. Things though did not go as I had expected. The old lady's daughter responded horribly to the idea of them having me in there home. She told me to get out and go back quickly to the ship. Good advice, as I would find out later on.

"Be a little patient, just until I find a job and I'll be out of here." I told her. I met a few people and with some help I found a job at a service station in Brooklyn. The smile bloomed on the lips of the old lady's daughter when I told her I would rid her of my presence.

It did not take me long to move to Astoria where, among my countrymen, I felt safe. I went to Greek churches, cafeterias and Greek movies, I felt like I was still living in Greece. I rented a nice house and worked at the service station, which gave me a good salary. I was a good and fast worker. I was sharp and my employer would say 'well done' and give me a pat on the back. I was fine. One day we heard from the Greek radio station Arthas that authorities had decided to capture and deport all illegal immigrants. Until then I received letters from Greece under the false name Giorgios Papadopoulos, so I was ok for a while. Soon though I had to get out of there. So with two friends of mine who shared the same problem we decided to go to Houston Texas. There I found a job at another service station in 445 north's Loop Western Houston, and at night I worked a few hours at a large hotel as a valet parker. The boss called me Agniou, saying I had the same surname as the Greek American vice president of the USA.

Life then started to smile at me, and at that stage I met Patricia. Our acquaintance was something of a match made in heaven; I fell in love with her at once. Brown hair, beautiful and smart, a woman with attitude. A friend of hers had brought her to the service station to meet me. I did not stall at all. The same afternoon I took her to my house and my bed. The love affair held

one month until her father, who thought differently, ordered me to marry his daughter. I did not need cajoling, so in October 1972, with strong emotions but not much fanfare, I married her. I was just seventeen, a year younger than Patricia and in Houston it was illegal for underage couples to marry, so our wedding took place at the town hall in Bern, another town of Texas. I wondered how my family would respond to me marrying a girl of another religion and not Greek, but who cares? Definitely not me! I knew they would not be thrilled with my news, so I decided not to tell them about my happy occasion yet. I would wait for a more suitable time; I wanted to mature a little more first.

So I now lived lawfully with my wife at 4102 Magnum street, apartment 49, a residence complex with a swimming pool, a large luxury for a village boy as myself...it was a one-bedroom apartment on the second floor, sunny and freshly painted, though the walls were as thin as paper, you could not even sneeze without hearing someone call 'bless you' from the next apartment. We had it furnished casually with a few things, but my dream was big and stylish.

For a while I played my role of a family man. Patricia was not very demanding and our life together was peaceful and nice. She cooked whatever she could as she could, which was just about nothing; we always ate out, but I needed nothing else, having her next to me was enough. I was happy! My colleagues would always tease me for my constant stupidly happy smile. Each day would go better than the last and I started to believe that my bad days were over. That's what I believed and I thanked the Lord for my good luck.

One day, as I was coming home from work I was involved in a serious car accident. I was in a coma. When I woke up after a few days I found myself at the Memorial hospital with horrifying back pains. I stayed in hospital for about three months. I was at home in a stage of recovery when the American authorities told me I had to return to Greece so I could secure my notorious visa. Patricia did not want to come with me even though I begged her. I tried to tempt her with promises of boat cruises around the Aegean Islands, but to no avail. I was forced to leave alone. Before I left I had noticed that she had gained a few kilos.

"Patricia, are you pregnant?"

"No, I just have gained a few kilos, it's nothing." I did not give it any more thought and left after a few days.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 1973 I was in Greece again. The first thing I did was to take care of the

paperwork for my visa at the American embassy and then I went to my home village awaiting its arrival. My back still hurt horribly so I decided to visit a doctor in Amaliada. I told him my medical history and after some X-rays, he explained the seriousness of my condition.

"You must be admitted to the orthopedic hospital in Athens Voulas as soon as possible." There I had a number of tests done for my spine. For six months, from May until September of 1973, I had to do TBC therapy and was in an orthopedic bed with horrific pains. Only the last twenty five days of my therapy I was able to move around.

I repeatedly wrote to my wife while I was in hospital and told her about my future plans when I would get out. I begged her to write to me but I never got a reply. I had lost every hope of communication with her until one day I received a letter. With anxiety and anticipation, I opened it. Inside was a picture of a baby and underneath a fraise that wrote 'Chris I gave birth to our daughter Teresa'. My joy could not be described. Full of emotions I sent her a letter wishing them both strength and health and that as soon as I finished my time in the army I would run back close to them. I dreamed about how my life was to continue -with my wife and daughter. Everything though proved useless for I never received an answer from her, no matter how many letters I wrote. Her traces had been lost.

When I recovered, at the end of 1973, I had to go to Kalamata to serve my time in the army. Because of my back problem, they sent me to the 401 army hospital and there after five months of aversion they gave me my release papers as unsuitable with a 15 form.

I stayed a while in Athens to work so I could make enough money for my return to America. So again I found a job as a parker at Berantserou Street. After many hardships, I managed to gather the money I needed and on the 9<sup>th</sup> of November 1973 with all my legal documents I left again for America, to find my wife, child and future.

I temporarily stayed in Boston at my mother's cousin, before I traveled to Houston, where I went straight to my father-in-law's house. There I found my wife's brother and begged him to tell me what was going on.

"She is not in Texas - my sister got a divorce and left with another man and don't you try to find her." She did not believe my reasons for staying longer than I had planned in Greece. I felt struck by lightning. All the dreams I had made and planned crashed within a matter of seconds. My first thought was to call the police. They said they would do whatever they could, but it was difficult for they had no idea were to start from, America is no small town.



Since I was in Houston, I asked to work at a friend's shop that I used to work in. He happily agreed. I told him my problems.

"Forget about this over and done with story, and try to fix up your life again." Yes I agreed, I could forget Patricia, but my child? As much as I begged, no one would tell me where she was. But I would wait.

Two years went by; in 1974 the police put my case in the filing cabinet and with that I decided to go back to New York. Before leaving Houston I sent a letter to Patricia's brother with my new address and the phone number of a friend just in case she decided to see me. Fifty six street, between Seventh Avenue and Broadway at an underground parking. My working hours were from early afternoon till midnight. The legendary singer James Brown left his car at that parking. It was a very nice job, I got used to it and everyone who left there cars there appreciated my fast services. Finally, some luck!

But my bad luck was just on hold for a while. One afternoon, unbeknown to me three guys had hid in the parking. As soon as my shift was over I closed up and left. When they stole three luxury cars, my employer held me responsible and fired me.

I was gutted but still optimistic. Straight away I found another job as a carrier on the trains with another Greek. A job though that was tough and un-enjoyable and on top of that, paid poorly. So I decided to become a taxi driver. I got all papers ready, I got my taxi driver's license and in August 1974 I started working for Main taxis corporation at 41 Kreston Avenue in Queens. My first passenger wanted me to take him to Astoria. I felt lucky. At the start I had some difficulties with the roads but after six months everything had become a routine. I worked every taxi ride I could get, white, black, yellow, no distinctions.

Although I say it myself, I was an excellent driver! Once, when the brakes on the taxi froze, I reacted with such devilry calmness that I surprised myself. Not only did I save the two ladies in the back seat from certain death, but I also myself. At a very steep downhill I saw that the brakes would not respond. The taxi started going down fast as a whirlwind.

"What are you doing, why are you going so fast?" One of the ladies screamed.

"My brakes are not working madam." I tried to sound calm, but they both immediately started screaming, crossing themselves. Without panic at the next intersection I quickly turned the steering wheel to the left. There I knew that the road was uphill and it would decrease the

speed of the vehicle; that is exactly what happened. The two ladies got out of the taxi disheveled and still screaming, but as soon as they found their breath they started praising me and gave me one blessing after the other. I'm sure that even today, if they are alive, they light candles for me. When I told my boss of the incident he thought of what could have happened if I hadn't acted fast and he praised me further.

It was interesting though, being a taxi driver, fascinating I could say. It was a lonely job but every day was an adventure. I saw a lot of strange things. People being shot in front of my eyes or taking drugs in the taxi while I was taking them to their destination. The only thing I could do was be careful, for if someone was to be harmed in the taxi I would be the one responsible. Overall I looked out for myself, I knew the dangers and did not want anything to happen to me. Often, I remember my adventures and smile recollecting those days. Then though, it was not all laughs.

One night, at 4am, outside the train station, I waited patiently for a passenger when suddenly the back door of the taxi opened suddenly and an eccentric man got in.

"To Bronx." He said sharply. He gave me the address and closed the door with so much force that he made the whole taxi shake. I started the engine and took off. I took a look through the mirror. I saw a wild face, a plain freak, full of scars, with a beard and long untidy dark hair. The smell of his sweat and mustiness flooded the taxi. Evidently he had not bathed in years. Usually I would start a conversation with my passengers just to kill time, but this time I weighed the situation carefully and decided it was better to keep quiet, the guy didn't look like he was in the mood. When we got to our destination I stopped and turned around to him waiting for the four dollars of the taxi fare.

"Listen, I have no money, I'll pay you with bullets." My blood froze, "Mother Mary" I thought to myself, he's going to kill me; cold sweat ran all over my body.

"No, no my friend you didn't understand." His lips grinned, something like a smile. When he put his hand in his pocket I started to bid farewell to sweet life. He pulled out his hand and leaned towards me. In his hand he had four bullets.

"Take them."

"But I don't have a gun." I quivered.

"I've got one, maybe you would like to see it?" His smile disappeared within a second. I gathered myself up and took the bullets before he decided to implant them into my temple. I looked at them as if they were golden coins. I sighed in relief.

"Very nice, thank you". When the guy left I shoved them into my pocket. "What the

heck," I thought, "Our ancestors used to pay by exchanging various products". It was not the first time this kind of thing had occurred to me. One other day I was driving a taxi that was not entirely legal. I had to live with dignity, without having to resort to illegality, when I was stopped by two well dressed men. They wore hats and overcoats.

"Drive". Ordered one of the men.

"Where would you like me to take you sir?"

"Just drive." So that's what I did. I drove around Manhattan in circles for about ten minutes while they whispered and smoked marijuana in the back seat. When they asked me to stop, one of them gave me a small piece of folded paper.

"What's this?"

"Do you ever get high?"

"Sometimes, when ever I have any." I answered, just so I wouldn't offend there habits.

"Good, take it, inside is a little cocaine." He was cheerful and happy.

"I want money."

"Look, I am not in the mood to bargain or quarrel with you, its top stuff and costs a lot more than your taxi fare. Take a look." He smiled as he unfolded the paper and put a little to his left nostril. "Have some now." He said challenging me. "You said you do it sometimes, or were you mocking us?"

"Ok, I'll take it tomorrow because we Greeks never take drugs on Sundays, it's our religion." He looked at me a little dubiously.

"I don't believe you, but anyway." They opened the door and left.

Across the road I saw two police officers, one of them was writing out a car ticket for a car that had parked illegally.

"Hey you guys, you occupy your work time writing parking tickets for the dead and don't bother to see the real lawbreakers." When I finished I cursed myself for I remembered the taxi that had no license and the cocaine I had on me. I quickly opened the window, unfolded the paper discreetly and let the white powder fly in the wind. One of the police officers saw me though and before I managed to start the engine he had crossed the road and was standing beside me.

"This is not a taxi." He said when he saw my papers.

"I'm just trying to make a few dollars to live." I said begging.

"I'm going to have to write you a ticket." He took out his ticket book from his pocket while the other officer hurried close to him.

"Ok guys, I'm going for a coffee and you can stay and write me the ticket." I gave them

the keys and left, I didn't want to get into any further trouble. I returned, after twenty minutes. The officers had deflated my two front tires and taken my keys. "Now what do I do"? I thought. I called a Greek friend, who came and started the engine by connecting some wires behind the steering wheel. On the dashboard I had a small American flag, just for camouflage, friend of America they say. I took it with my left hand and with my right hand I set it on fire. I headed towards the closest gas station with deflated tires. It was my small revolution against the establishment.

"Shame about the cocaine" I thought, I wanted to try it just that one time. I had seen a lot of things involving drugs and I tried as hard as I could to avoid them, but I was also curious. I knew though the consequences, one thing led to another and one nice day you make your final one way trip. In Astoria Boulevard one night a girl I knew, who was a waitress at Nepton Diner where I ate sometimes, asked me to take her to Brooklyn, Jefferson Street. I had been before and I knew that in was the hangout of serious drug dealers. Frequently, you saw drugs being dealt on one side of the road and on the other you a teacher and a social worker giving speeches against the use of drugs. The girl sat in the back seat of my cab.

"Chris; don't look back please." I knew she was doing heroin. Ten minutes later I looked back - she had fallen into coma of misery. I stopped on the side of the road and got out; I went to the back seat and slapped her twice across the face with all my might. She found her scenes and looked at me stupidly.

"Listen, you have to finally do something, it's a shame for you to go to waste." I didn't wait for an answer; she would never give me one anyway. Day by day though she was dying in front of everyone and nobody could do anything to help her. That's the way it is, some people die suddenly and others slowly. I took her home and left her in the pity of a neighbor and in the pity of God.

Months later some other girl took her place at the restaurant. I did not need to ask what happened to the girl, but that day I left without eating, I went to the park across the road and sat on a bench. It was autumn and, one by one, the leaves were falling from the trees. Not to worry brother, I thought, we too are leaves on trees and our souls will also fall one day, just as the leaves do in autumn.

Everyone battled with what strength they had. I, a small wage-earner like millions of others, tried to make ends meet, honorably and legally. At least in America you had myriad chances of earning money differently. I'm no saint. Like then with the cigarettes m Kapatsi,

where I threw them into the sea. You have to have the talent to live illegally and the good God did not gift me with that talent. Not even for small frauds, something would always go wrong.

Once in Bronx I was waiting for car service for I had a flat battery. A black guy approached me, holding a plastic bag with four bottles of whiskey, a well known brand, sealed and legal.

"Give me fifteen dollars and they're yours." That's a great price; it was a chance for me to make a few bucks. I'd also drink some when I had the blues, something that did not happen that night for the whiskey was plain and simple tea, not even scented. Cruel life!

Although burglaries were common they always impressed me. One pale autumn morning a young man got quickly into the taxi, scared, troubled and in a horrible mess. In his hands he held a small safe.

"Where did you find that?"

"Man, I just robbed a Chinese food market, I just hope that when I break it open I'll find something in it, don't say anything to the police. I'll give you some."

"Keep it, I don't want anything, but if by any chance you rob the bank of America, then I want a share." I thought of the poor Chinese, who knows how much was in the safe and how long they worked for it, but I did not for a second think about calling the police. "We are all thieves" I thought, depending on what we can and can't do.

The wealthy steal tons and it's all cool, whereas the poor steal little and they're thieves and swindlers. I was robbed once, with a knife to my throat. With one hand full of dry blood he held my head and with the other he held a knife, large like an axe with a blade that shone.

"Take whatever you want." My soul started to fade. He took the twenty dollars I had in one pocket and searched all the rest.

"Damn! Is that all you have?"

"I just started work." I quivered as I spoke. He literally spat on me, opened the door and left. He lost though because in my sock I had hidden one hundred dollars, just to be on the safe side. A good colleague of mine had done emergency seminars for such situations. This was part of my everyday life.

In 1980, I met with a first cousin of mine who had a taxi company. I worked there as a taxi driver and as car mechanic for his taxis. At last everything was going well and I was satisfied.

Until the day where I made an acquaintance that would change or should I say stigmatize my life forever.

## MY ACQUAINTANCE WITH JOHN LENNON

One Sunday night, a man got into my taxi. I looked at him through my mirror; he was tall, skinny, well-dressed, wore small round glasses and held a bouquet of flowers. He seemed familiar.

"Dakota house please." Dakota house was a band of fancy apartments. "Are you Greek?"

"How did you realize?"

"Because your name is so long, I read it on the card in your taxi. I'd like to introduce myself, my name is John Lennon and I'm from England, I write music and philosophy, I played with the Beatles, I think you know me." I knew him alright! But as soon as I heard his name I felt my legs tremble and a strange fright covered me.

"I have traveled to Greece with my wife. I met the adorable Melina Merkouri, the famous Mikis Theodorakis and the excellent politician Andreas Papandreou.

I was impressed with his acquaintances, the great Greeks, and was glad their name were known overseas.

"I have read Greek history; I really do admire your patriotism and your heroism." He kept on telling me about his visit to Greece. He had visited a lot of places in Greece such as Athens; he had gone to the Acropolis and Plaka, Sparta, Tripoli and Patra.

"What is your opinion of Greek politics?"

"I believe that very soon Andreas Papandreou will become president and that his father was a loved and good person and an excellent scientist."

"What about Ronald Regan?"

"Personally I'm very fond of that cowboy, he'll win."

"Chris why did you leave Greece? Such a beautiful, good and peaceful place?"

"I was born into a poor family, I lived in misery and poverty. Circumstances forced me to become a sailor and when the ship got to Staten Island I left with my one and only hope, that of a better future. My father would always say to my mother, Chris will become great, don't be at all afraid for him, but so many years have passed and as you see I'm still a taxi driver."

"Money comes slowly we can't become wealthy all of a sudden." He tried to encourage me. "Is your father still alive?"

"No, he died in 1973 from a heart attack. Often since then I ask myself why death exists and such remarkable people, like my father, go to waste. What's after death, is what the bible writes about paradise true? If yes then maybe my good father has a place there and is enjoying

everything he was deprived of all those years on earth. "Do you have parents Mr. Lennon?"

"No, they died when I was young." His expression was suddenly nostalgic.

"It's a shame they're not here to see what you've achieved and be proud and happy for you." I meant what I said; I always admired Lennon and not only his music.

He was quiet for a while and then continued the conversation.

"Who do you believe killed Alexandra Onasi? I heard that the plane did not crash due to a malfunction." I answered without hesitation.

"Jackie Onasi, for the mythical fortune that was inherited from Aristotle's father."

"But Jackie had her own money and a lot of it."

"Those are the rumors, that it was not an accident but a well-fixed job. What difference does it make if someone has money? The more you have the greedier you become."

"Are you married Chris?" I explained how things were and that now we were divorced. "I had once bought a large farm in Texas, but I sold it. I have two children. One with my first wife Cynthia, called Julian, and another with my second wife Yoko Ono, called Son. Yoko is a fine lady, often I would stay home with our son and she would go out for various jobs that needed to be done."

He talked to me about the music that the Beatles played and that there are a lot of people that still follow him.

"I'm sure that when I was young I danced to your songs."

"All the bands, the Rolling Stones, Black Sabbath are all friends with each other. The Beatles split up because of Paul McCartney; he wanted to be the leader and did not care much for the rest of us. I stayed here because I like this country. The rest of the band went back to England. I have problems everywhere though, because I talk too much. As they say, I never hold my tongue. Once in England a friend of mine warned me that the police were going to search my house for drugs. So I 'cleaned' the entire house out, but my efforts went to waste for they found marijuana in a drawer. Of course it was not mine, but whether it was a set-up or not I agreed to plead guilty just so I could clear Yoko from the charges. Yoko was pregnant then and caused her to miscarry".

Lennon stopped talking all of a sudden. I realized that talking about that incident was emotional for him. Months later I read somewhere that when he was informed by the doctors that the baby would not make it, he took a stethoscope with a microphone to the hospital and tapped his son's heartbeat as it slowly faded to a stop.

---



He did not continue the conversation so I decided to break the silence.

"I'm sorry for whatever happened but at least here in America you're fine."

"Nah, here too I have problems, our house is full of bugs. Do you know how many different people come to fix our telephones? We have never called them for services."

"They are all dirty and liars; human life has become a jungle, I'm thinking of going back to sea as a sailor."

"Aren't you scared that the ship might sink?"

"Here we are in bigger danger, they kill you for a dollar, don't you see what is going on?"

"It is true, in this world we are dominated by terrorism and corruption." He looked out of his window and noticed that there was no traffic and then looked at the speed monitor which showed that we were going remarkably slow for a road with no traffic.

"I'm going so slowly because I enjoy talking with you." He gave a little laugh.

"It doesn't matter, I'm in no rush."

I still could not believe that John Lennon accepted this conversation and continued talking with me. I had had other celebrities in my taxi, such as Jackie Onasi, but she usually sat as a mute and impatient. If you started a conversation she would look at you haughtily, she would not tire herself with an answer and if she did she would just give you a dry and cold yes or no.

I still had that weird presentiment about Lennon that I could not define.

"Remember Woodstock in 1969? Half a million people had gone to see singers like Santana and Hendrix. I was also there but I did not sing. I remember that it was raining heavily, but everyone continued partying on. It was fantastic, do you remember?"

"I had heard that when Hendrix was singing a lady gave birth and he told everyone there, 'this child will reach far in life.' Hendrix for me was perhaps the best guitarist. Often in concert he would play the guitar with his teeth." It's a shame he died from drugs I thought". What is your opinion for Elvis? I had heard a lot of people say that he is still alive, that his coffin was empty or that they had another body in it."

"No, unfortunately he is dead. You know Chris? I'm very happy tonight for I can be just a simple citizen." The uneasiness though that filled my mind would not stop. I believed that something bad was going to happen to Lennon but I could not understand what, what I was sure

of was that I was not going to let it happen in my taxi.

As I was thinking about that he was telling me about a time when he lived in India with his wife and they were hypnotized.

"We were able to survive without food and water for a week. Gandhi was prime minister at the time and when we met he offered me twenty million dollars to give where I thought best for the poor. An unforgettable experience that I certainly would like to repeat. I'd also like to go to Japan to see my father in law. He is the owner of a bank and a remarkable man."

Our conversation then turned to politics.

"My opinion is that one person should be the ruler for the whole world and each country should have a representative, something like America but at a world level. Maybe then things would become better for everyone." I tried to impress him with my philosophy but I don't think I did because he looked at me weirdly and then changed our conversation.

"I had gone to Russia with a few mates to celebrate Easter a while ago. It was very difficult then to get a visa and be allowed *in* the country. I have also gone to Monaco; I went alone there to Prince Renee who had married the actress Grace Kelly. The skyscraper with the beautiful design on Fifty Eighth Avenue, the Grace building, has her name. She was famous in America and a very good person. Contrariwise, her husband is not that good; when he addressed his servants he would scream and yell. He was obviously pressing as commander of Monaco because he had on his side the casinos of the area.

"Will you ever sing again for everyone?"

"In the summer I am going to hold a big concert in Central Park because I know the people would like it. Many will gather there and that makes me very happy. My theme will be the nuclear-chemical testing and the deaths they cause; I want only peace for everyone. The Vietnam War greatly harmed the entire planet. I'm not referring only to those who were killed during the war, but also to the harm the nuclear weapons caused to the air, the oceans and the earth, also the invasion of Turkey in Cyprus and all that followed has upset me. Many were killed pointlessly, others imprisoned and still missing, tortures and much else. How can anyone ignore this?"

"Yes, but with the Vietnam war it all started from America. Maybe they also interfered in Cyprus. Today you see everything depends on the big ruler of the planet!"

"The evil started I believe when President Kennedy was murdered. Then with precision another seven people were murdered so that the Kennedy files could be kept hidden. The same happened when they murdered Martin Luther King, on his balcony while giving a speech. And if it was only that, they have killed many, many more. They resent me because I say things exactly as they are. Maybe they're even a little scared of me."

In the background a train was passing, on the side there was a poster with a man in a suit, his finger pointing forwards. Underneath it wrote: "the CIA wants you." I giggled and joked.

"Look, he probably wants you." Without laughing and with a serious expression he answered.

"I know that, I wish I knew when they're going to capture me."

Lennon did not seem to be in a rush so I slowed down even more.

"Have you written any new songs?"

"Very soon my new record, Double Fantasy, will be released . That song will be with my wife Yoko."

"Nice title."

"Yes it is, I thought about it when I was with my wife and secretary for a vacation in Hawaii."

"Since were talking about your secretary have you ever accommodated her?" I laughed slyly.

"What are you saying Chris? Of course not. His answer was surely a protest against what I just asked.

"The Greek employers take them on their hips but most of the time not for work but to accommodate them."

"Very funny." He replied sarcastically and without laughing.

"Mr. Lennon, can I ask you a personal question?" I asked hesitantly.

"Whatever you want Chris, but stop calling me mister, just John please."

"You're very rich and famous, are you happy with your life?". He did not need to think the question over - he answered immediately.

"Yes I am, very much, but why did you ask such a thing?"

"No particular reason, just out of curiosity, maybe because I wanted to theologize you"

I hesitated about telling him about the presentiment I had, what will I tell him, that something bad was going to happen to him? I was no fortune-teller.

"Chris listen to me carefully, big trouble will arise in Europe. A large war will break loose in the Balkans and it will spread across the whole world. We will suffer large catastrophes. You will be here and you will see it all."

"What about you John, where will you be, won't you be here?" I was stunned.

"I'm not sure about me, but you surely will see it and you will remember me!"

As soon as he told me those words I felt that something was going definitely to happen to him and even he felt it.

We reached the front of the building, he paid me eight dollars and we wished each other health and that some day we may meet again.

"Goodnight Chris, it was great meeting and talking to you."

"Goodnight John and good luck in your dreams and ambitions."

Lennon opened the door and gazed into my eyes for a few seconds and then got out of the taxi. At that stage I felt ashamed for not telling him to be careful. I looked towards where he was heading but I did not see him. I started to leave but something stopped me and I turned back. I parked in front of the Dakota house; in front of me to the east I could see Central Park. It was past nine. I got out of the taxi. It was freezing cold in the end of November 1980.

## THE FIRST VISION

My mind could not overcome the sensation that something bad would soon happen to Lennon, I have to tell someone, but who, who will believe me? But I have to do something, I need help. Then my thought went to him. From a young age I went to church and believed in God. I prayed.

"God, I feel a crime is about to take place, is it true? Show me you exist and give me a sign, what do I have to do? I believe in you and your help show me the right way."

As I was saying those words and was looking up into the sky, a cold wind raised and it started spitting. As I was trying to understand what was going on something very strange happened.

Up above, there where I was standing, I saw a bright reddish light that came from a disk in the sky. Then I heard a noise, like a plane landing. That is the sign I was waiting for, I thought. The light then disappeared and the noise stopped.

Suddenly under the disk I saw a door open, in the shape of an eye, from that door, different colors started to come out, which shone towards me until they surrounded me. I looked towards the entrance of the lights. In front of the door I saw a small airplane pass by and then fly around the disk. "God what is that? Please don't play games, all I want is an answer for the feeling I have." The airplane passed for the third time in front of the disk.

"Chris." I said to myself. "It's as if it wants to tell you something." At that moment a spotlight from the side of the disk moved left and right as if it wanted me to follow it and then came towards me.

At once I felt as if my soul was parting my body. The light took me and lifted me to a lighted round window. I could not understand if it was a window of a ship or an airplane. The first man I saw there was the man that would harm Lennon. I don't know how but I was convinced. He wore glasses. Next to him sat another young man in black, black sunglasses with had his hands crossed. I recognized him, I had seen him on TV, and it was Dan Acroid. In the next window I saw the famous actors John Beluchi, Robert De Niro, Christopher Lee and Roy Snider, well know from the movie Jaws. A whole cast I thought, maybe they want to make a

movie.

But there were also others there. Daniel Manahan, a New York politician, Lou Lehman a candidate for prefecture of the same state who lost the election to Mario Cuomo. The last person I saw was a young man, John Mc Kain.

I turned back to the first window and found myself in front of the assassin. I started to observe him closely and then the aircraft shook for a second and his glasses fell from his face and I was able to see him more clearly. A plump face with a double chin, brown hair and blue eyes. For a second, his image seemed droll and I smiled. Straight away though I scolded myself for what was happening to me was not funny.

I then realized that the aircraft was a hydroplane with four propellers, and most significantly it belonged to the National Transporter of America.

Then I said to myself. "God since you know what is going to happen and what they are going to do, why don't you do something to prevent it?" I regretted my words straight away. Who was I to tell God what to do?

At those thoughts within a split second I was again in my taxi, but the light was still there.

"It's a shame"; I thought to myself for this man is sitting quietly in his home and someone is getting ready to kill him. In front of me a couple was going by and whispering as they looked at me. Across from me I saw a shadow with its head bent down. I wondered whether who I saw was the sacrificer or the sacrifice. Next to him a second shadow appeared with glasses and it also had its head bent towards the ground. "What could this mean"? I thought and then I understood. This man will go outside Lennon's house and will kill him in front of everyone.

At that moment voices of anger echoed in my ears, voices and rock music. I didn't know where it came from.

Questions started mining through my mind "Why does this man, just like that, want to kill Lennon? Maybe it's got something to do with the mafia or drugs?" I could not imagine what I

was going to see soon.

While I was looking at the shadows, the light took me again for a second trip. I saw that we passed over forests and beaches, I felt cold but also warmth. I passed the frontiers and my guide was the light.

All of a sudden I found myself on the third floor of a building in front of a door. The door opened and I went through it quickly, so quickly I made the white curtains that hung from the window move.

Inside the room I saw some people standing in a large circle. Behind them on a table were five flags of different countries, America, Russia, Israel, Greece and Monaco. The conversation of the congress started and lasted about thirty minutes. When I got a chance, I counted the people there, they were thirty four. From what I understood from their expressions for I could not hear them, the dealings pleased the participants. But I could see and follow them and for some strange reason I knew what the theme of the discussion was.

On the wall there was a tiny inscription that read CIA. On an announcement board I saw something that I did not like at all, my name written on a list. But I could not do anything, I was an invisible visitor.

My gaze traveled around the circle of people, registering every physiognomy. Except for politicians and magistrates there were also some very well known actors there. I was able to recognize a lot of the people present in that room, such as the man that was talking, Steve Margaret. Next to him holding a large cigar was Prince Renee. I also spotted the magistrate Charlie and months later I managed to learn everyone's name in there. At one stage I felt one of them looking insistently towards me, as if he could see me. He saw me, I thought and all of a sudden I was next to the wall outside the room. I quickly returned to the room and realized that it was all over. I saw them lift their glasses and drink to their health. The time was 9:45 on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> of November 1980.

I saw all those people and I recognized them and I said to myself. "It's a shame that our very own government wants to kill Lennon." As I was trying to understand where I was, the light took me down to the bottom part of the building where a meeting was in order for the cowardly murder. The front of the building had a sign Federal Building and was located at

South West 216 South Bay California. A police with sheriffs and police men walked about. On the ground floor a police officer who must have been responsible for the meetings was roaming around. Outside on the street a black two-door Mercedes stopped so a lady in a short dress could pass.

Suddenly everything around me became green and I found myself back in my taxi. My trip was over. I thank God who considered me worthy to see and meet the people who planned this cowardly crime." I can warn Lennon so he can protect himself. What if I can't? then I will tell everyone so they can learn what's going on and if they don't believe me, I thought, I'll tell them, to phone God so he can tell them. But does God have a phone?". They will say "He does too and if someone really wants to, they will find it easily"

I put the taxi into gear and went to leave. As I reached the gates of the building where I left Lennon I saw the security guard very uneasy. He had seen me talking to Lennon and he said something that terrified me and took my breath away.

"A strange man was here a while ago on a motorbike and was asking various questions about Lennon."

"Can you describe him to me?" When he did I realized that his description fit perfectly to the man I had seen on the hydroplane.

I left in a horrible state because I knew that the time frame was getting smaller and I had to do something. I took two passengers to their destination and in my panic I described my whole story to a lady who advised me not to do anything and to mind my own business for I would end up in trouble. I didn't heed her opinion and I told the whole story again to another man, I asked him if he knew how I could contact Lennon. He didn't know.

When I finished work I felt the need to talk to someone, so I phoned to my home town for my mother. I talked with my sister in law instead, because my mother was not there. She sounded terrified hearing the whole story as I told her everything and she advised me to be very careful not to get into trouble.

At dawn on Monday the 1<sup>st</sup> of December as I was going to work, I found a cousin of mine and I told him what I was going and that I had to contact Lennon. He advised me to go back to New York, where I had left him and get information from there, for he did not know anything more than what I had told him. Unfortunately though, lost in my daily work I neglected doing



so.

Three days later on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December I was on Seventh Avenue and from there I decided to call information and ask for Lennon's personal number.

"Sorry sir, that number is private and I am not able to give it to you." The lady told me on the other end of the phone. I was furious and indignant.

"I want to warn him that someone is planning to kill him."

"Hold the line I'll give you his manager to talk to." I then again explained who I was and what I wanted and that the situation was very serious.

"I'm sorry sir I unfortunately cannot help you. When a number is private it is, as if it does not exist."

On Sunday the 6<sup>th</sup> of December I crossed the bridge towards Manhattan; in my taxi I had a lady that I was taking to the Sheraton hotel. I dropped her off there and before she closed the door a young man got into the back seat.

"Take me to Central Park West." When I saw him through the mirror I was shocked, I knew this man from somewhere, and I had seen him before. It was the man I had seen in the hydroplane, who was going to kill Lennon.

"Excuse me sir, can I ask you a question?" He ignored me but I insisted until he took out the cotton buds he had in his ears and answered abruptly.

"What do you want mister?"

"You're not from New York are you?"

"How do you know that?" he said indifferently.

"Because sir if you were from New York you would have taken a taxi from the row of taxis the hotel has and not from any other passing by."

"That's a very clever observation." Again he was indifferent.

"So where are you from?"

"I'm from Hawaii, you have probably heard of it." He was now full of irony.

"Yes, I have heard great things and that it's a very beautiful island. Actually yesterday I dropped off someone at the hotel who told me he had just returned from Hawaii and had the best impression of the island. "Why did you come to New York?"

"Business and pleasure." He answered sharply.

I tried to start a conversation with him about Lennon, but he did not say a word. Throughout the whole trip I constantly observed him searching himself. "He's probably trying

to find his money so he can pay me for the fare, 'I thought.

We reached Dakota house where he had told me to leave him, he got out of the taxi but I continued to follow him with my eyes. The young man went into the building and I and parked across the road, so I could follow him with safety. I was all the more certain that this man was planning something evil for Lennon. I did not see him come out; I had a job to do so I decided not to wait any longer.

On Tuesday afternoon 8<sup>th</sup> of December I took a couple from East Side and as I was passing in front of Dakota House I saw the same man waiting outside the building. "Oh man." I started talking to myself. "Are you waiting for Lennon to come down?" He was at the studio for a recording. "That ass, he's waiting for the kill!" With that I decided to leave my passengers and then go back, maybe I could make it just in time. I looked towards Central Park, the sun started to set and the sky was all the colours of the rainbow. It was a fantastic sunset, probably the best I have ever seen. I was certain the crime was going to happen tonight.

A taxi ride for downtown Village distracted me I worked that night up until about eleven o'clock. I heard on the radio of the murder of Lennon and the name of his assassin, Mark Chapman, which until then was unknown to me. I'm sure people were shocked, but I was not. Upset, I stopped on the side of the road so I could calm down and listen to the news.

He had hit Lennon coldly in front of his wife and security guard. The oxymoron was that before he murdered Lennon he had gotten an autograph from him. Lennon took a bullet from a thirty eight pistol in the chest and another four in his back. A police vehicle took him bleeding to the Roosevelt Hospital while the assassin stayed there until police arrested him. Lennon died at 11:35 on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December 1980.

All radio and TV stations spread the shocking news, but unfortunately only I knew the whole truth. I felt the need to go to the place where I had the vision at Dakota. There I saw about two hundred CIA men with lit candles demonstrating in front of the gates against organized crimes. What hypocrisy! I then went to the Roosevelt Hospital to learn more news.

As I reached there a lady got into my taxi that was obviously upset and asked me to take her to the general police station. When I heard her destination I looked at her through the mirror. She reminded me of someone even though she was wearing a hat. Then I remembered that I had

once taken her, Lennon and their son somewhere with my taxi. It was Yoko Ono.

"Disgrace and shame to the assassins of Lennon." I told her.

"Please, I don't want to discuss it." She said with great sorrow. Soon, we were in front of the building. The lady was still very upset and serious and with courage she said. "Driver I have no money to pay you, I have your name, give me your address so I can send you a cheque there." I got a bit angry at first.

"Why did you not tell me that from the start?"

"Please, at this moment I'm not well." I felt horrible for demanding an explanation from her so to make her feel better I told her that's its ok and that she does not owe me anything and not to worry about it. She most probably went to the police station to testify or something else. I stayed there for a while in case she came out quickly but time went by and I had to get to work. Everyone had a bad Christmas then, especially me since I was chocked with guilt.

It took me a long time to calm down, all that happened can not be easily forgotten. People in New York called me crazy for trying to get involved in such a serious matter that involved the political mafia. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of December, on its front page, the newspaper 'Post' had a photo of seven politicians of the Reagan government, whom I recognized from the secret meeting in the CIA offices.

In the start of 1981 I wrote a letter to Yoko Ono telling her what I had learned in detail, so I could in some way clear things up. It sent it straight to her, but unfortunately I never got an answer.

## RONALD REAGAN

As time went by, a sense that something else was going to happen grew ever stronger. I was melancholic, I lived with stress and my anger was lunatic for I could not do anything to uncover this fabrication. But in time I had gained self-control and kept my mouth shut waiting, for I don't know what.

My fears were soon confirmed. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of March at the Hilton hotel President Reagan suffered an attempted murder. The president took a rain of bullets from a twenty-two automatic, which in an act of self sacrifice were caught by an agent in his personal guard; he was saved, but the agent was paralyzed for the rest of his life. When I later saw the face of the assassin in the newspaper I nearly went crazy. It was the man who was at the CIA meeting four months ago, John Hinckley. I remember recognizing him easily, for his clothes had made an impression on me, he looked like a priest. The attempted assassin of the president was sentenced to only twenty years, because various excuses with different physiological expert opinions were proposed.

Time went by and I lived with the unbearable knowledge. I had lost my appetite for everything, even for my job, which was so precious for me.

In the 1982 I tried repeatedly to contact Yoko Ono, but without success. In fact on mother's day I spent twenty dollars on a bouquet of flowers and a note, but not even then did I get a reply. Most probably she did not want to communicate with me for she believed that what I wanted to tell her was nonsense. I confirmed that when a man from her office contacted the taxi company I worked for and demanded me to stop sending her letters and that she would contact me when she felt that it would be the right time. For the time she wished not to discuss the matter with anyone.

The feeling of pressure continued to pound me and sometimes the guilt would become unbearable and I would carry that around with me for I didn't do anything to help Lennon. It was a period in my life that even the thought of suicide passed through my mind.

One afternoon I was sitting in the office gazing at the wall across from me. There I had hung photo copies from the photos of everyone who was at the CIA meeting and in the airplane,

as I had seen them in my vision. I thought about the airplane that I had come to America with, a Pan American. Suddenly I had a feeling that soon a Pan America airplane would crash, somewhere in California. I grabbed a piece of paper and started to write down what I was feeling. I then got up and went to the garage. There I saw George from Cyprus, the mechanic. I gave him the piece of paper and he read it, he looked at me suspiciously and gave it back to me.

"Leave us alone Chris." He said as he went back to work. A few days later the misfortune happened. A Pan America airplane crashed in Kearny of California with two hundred and twenty passengers. No one survived. When George heard of it, his eyes rolled over in disbelief, he started calling me the predictor and told everyone about my note.

In December of 1982 after many attempts I found the guard of Dakota house, gave him a twenty dollar tip and begged him to bring me in contact with someone from Lennon's office. After a long wait a young man, skinny with glasses came down to the reception and with a strict temper he asked me what I wanted from Yoko Ono.

"Please, I have to talk to Mrs. Lennon; I know well who killed her husband."

"A lot of people call and tell her various unfounded stories."

"I don't know what others tell her, but she must listen to me, I know the truth and unless she was involved then she has to see me." I continued with a threatening voice. "If I don't see her, I'll drive my taxi straight through this building."

"You do that and I'll make sure your get put behind bars for good."

"You tell her what I told you." I started to yell. "Tell her I'm the Greek taxi driver." I then repeated my threat and warned him that I would cause havoc otherwise. The young man who was named Ritchie in turn repeated his warning of putting me in jail.

I left indignantly crazy, determined for what my next crazy action would be.

It was Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> of December 1982. As I was leaving from the Dakota I saw a Porsche parked outside. I drove around the building and after some calculations to avoid hitting any pedestrians, I sped up and fell straight onto the parked porch. Straight away I backed up a few meters and hit the car for a second time. I stayed inside the Ford I drove; beside me yelling and roaring was the couple that owned the Porsche. A lot of people gathered around within seconds and of course it did not take long for the police to arrive. A police officer got out of his vehicle and cautiously approached me.

"What happened here? Please step out of your vehicle I assure you no one will harm you as long as you get out calmly with your hands in the air."

"I will not get out until the TV cameras get here, for I want everyone to hear something very important I have to say." I was determined.

After a lengthy discussion they agreed to call the TV crews. I had planned ahead and I was well dressed in a suit and tie and freshly shaven. I was sure that I was going to be on TV, so I wanted to be presentable. I got out of the taxi without losing my braveness and stood in front of the flashes and lights of the cameras and TV crews. I started to tell all the things I knew, I also showed proof from the post office I sent the letters to Yoko Ono. At that point the police officer close to me understood that the case was to do with J.L as they called John Lennon.

After all that the police officers calmly guided me far from the crowd and sat me in the police car, but we did not leave.

A moment later a police officer sat next to me in the car.

"Hi." He said in a conspiratorial tone. "Listen to me, you're Greek and I'm Italian, we are alike, we're birds of a feather and we will come to an understanding. Say you lost control of your vehicle and that your brakes did not respond. But tell me exactly what happened."

"Officer" I said with spite. "I'm sorry, but whatever I have to say, I will say in court, because I am also afraid for my life."

"We will take care of you, you should not be afraid." I did not believe a word he said. I repeated that I would speak only in court. He left without another word and shrugged his shoulders in disapproval.

I spent that night at the police station. The next morning I was found face to face with the judge Allen Frazee. The lawyer that the state had provided me with was a hairless gorilla of a man. I gave a detailed description to the judge of November 30<sup>th</sup> when I had taken John Lennon with my taxi and what happened from then on.

The judge asked me. "Have you ever been to see a psychiatrist?" He believed just like everyone else that I was a maniac with a hyperactive imagination.

"A while ago I went to a psychiatrist, but not for the reason you're thinking of, but because I wanted to be hypnotized so I could relive my vision. He accepted and I gave him a one hundred and fifty dollar advance. But a little before the procedure I changed my mind, for he insisted that my lawyer should be present throughout the procedure of the hypnotism. The

chances of something happening to me, like not recovering my senses passed through my mind. I had heard of those dangers and the thought that I could end up a fruit cake for the rest of my life brought chills down my spine."

After the event at the courts of New York, I was set free and late that night I went home to Astoria. The next day I was summoned to testify to a psychiatrist of the state court.

There they made me tell the whole story from the start in detail. An army of secretaries who held notes kept on interrupting and asked me to give them more details for most of what I was telling them. When I finished the narration of my vision, they reasoned with me.

"Careful, if what you have just told us is true, you will become very famous, but otherwise if it's just your imagination, you will end up in jail."

"I assure you that I saw everything that I just told you, it's the truth and not my imagination playing games, neither was I high on drugs as a lot of people think." I answered with assuredness. Suddenly one of them asked me something very strange.

"Have you ever thought of committing suicide?"

"Yes, and I also had thought of the way, but when I thought about it again I consider it stupid for I'd lose the chance to avenge all those evil people. If I died everything would have ended in vain and no one would have found out the truth."

A little before I left I asked if it was possible for me to leave a letter for President Reagan. The letter wrote:

Mr. President.

My name is Chris Anagnostopoulos. I am a Greek immigrant and I'm a taxi driver in New York. A while ago fate brought John Lennon into my taxi; I had the luck or maybe the curse to see a vision which made me understand who the people that murdered Lennon and also attempted to finish your life were. The CIA knows everything. Mr. President, be careful for the people in your government are dangerous and will try to hit you again. I would like, as proof that this letter was given to you, for you to say it on TV.

I was not stunned when Reagan never mentioned my letter I though I had done my duty.

I left - two and a half months later the decision from the court had still not been settled.

One day a lady named Lisa Melman, a very well known fortune teller with a lot of famous clients, actors and politicians, wanted to meet me, as her chauffeur had talked to her of me. We met at one of her friend's houses for dinner and there I told her about my experience that notorious night. She listened to me with extreme interest and that gave me courage; finally I had found someone who believed me.

"You are a very lucky and gifted person. You have a gift from God. Soon you will become rich and famous, and whenever you want you can come and find me in California, I will help you anyway I can." But she could not give me any advice on what to do.

About two months later, the court decision was finalized and I was discharged. Immediately I went to my lawyer and told him what he had to do. He hurried to court and told the judge that his client continues to believe that he knows of worldwide political conspiracies in the USA.

"So what do you want now?" The judge blew a heavy sigh.

"I don't want anything, only to search for evidence, so you can condemn the guilty, only that."

"Even if it's as you say, it's too late, where will we find evidence?"

"That's your job."

"Ok, ok." He turned to my lawyer.

"You're obliged to fill your client's head with a little brain, don't you think Mr. Defender?" My lawyer lowered his head as if he were a schoolboy in trouble and mumbled humiliated.

"Yes sir, my client repeatedly talks of foolish things and since he continues he should be admitted to a hospital for tests, for psychiatric valuation."

I agreed to take that risk so I could prove that I was not crazy and that I really did know people who were involved in suspicious activities.

They took me to the Racker island prison where I would stay for two months until I was to be moved to a psychiatric clinic. I remember the first night when I got a strong slap in the face from a guard because I dared to light a smoke when I was supposed to be sleeping. "All is well" I thought, "patience."

The next morning I woke up with bitterness in my mouth and it was not only from the cigarette. I went to the warden's office to complain about the treatment I had from the guard.

"This is not the Plaza hotel so you can do whatever you like, you must follow our rules."



On the radio that was playing in the office I heard a discussion about the suspicious murder of Lennon.

"May I sit and listen?" I asked the warden.

"You may." He replied with a bursting generosity.

I was not the only person who believed that Chapman was not the assassin of Lennon because he just felt like it, but that he was instructed by others, he was just a well winded robot who was brainwashed and programmed to become a terminator. As the announcer said, 'the murder was a conspiracy.' Reagan had just been elected, everyone knew what sort of a president he would become and only one person could get one million people down to the streets to demonstrate against him and that was Lennon.

When the security guard saw what had happened he screamed in rage at Chapman.

"Do you know what you have done?"

"I just shot Lennon." He was calm and added with a smile. "I didn't want his autograph, I wanted his life and I got both." Later he described how. "I had no feelings in my blood, there was no anger, there was nothing. Only a dead silence in my mind. Stagnation, cold silence, until it approached. It looked at me... It passed me and I heard it in my head, it said, 'do it do it, do it.' Again and again."

The announcer added what Lennon had once said. "If Yoko or I ever have anything happen to us, it won't be an accident." This means that he had suspected that someone wanted him out of the picture.

"Everyone believes that his murder was a conspiracy and they even say it on radio, so why do they call me crazy when I tell them that I know who is behind it all?"

As I heard it all I gained courage and believed that everything that I was going through was not for nothing and was not going to waste.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of March I was transferred to the psychiatric clinic in Queens. I got there at about eleven o'clock at night and they took me straight to a pitch-black room. Terror and sorrow squeezed my heart. From a room close by, I could hear the voice of a patient. I started to question myself and my situation, but Angela, a black nurse, continuously gave me coinage. She would say over and over again.

"You will get out of here, you don't have anything, it's just your mind playing games."

"People are playing with me." I corrected her. She was a kind religious lady and I felt for her as if she were my sister. Sometimes I would play games with her, just so I could hear her laugh. Once as I entered the men's room I just about fell on top of a black guy with a lady who were on the floor, both naked making love. They didn't even realize I was there. I went out and called Angela.

"Come and see something." I said to her calmly.

"Oh my god, oh my god!" She repeated over and over again when she saw the couple and covered her face with her palms.

Sometimes my cousin would come to visit me and every time I saw him I felt as if it was a celebration. He once gave me twenty dollars.

"It's forged, try and pass it on to someone." The same day I ordered pizza, something that was allowed, and I paid with the forged twenty dollar's. The delivery boy wanted to give me change, but the guilt was too heavy.

"Keep the change." Then I thought, 'am I or am I not crazy? I'm up to my neck in trouble and I'm looking for more! I swore to behave maturely until the results from the doctors were announced.

It was a soul-corrupting situation being there but finally time went by and in August I was released. The doctors judged me sane; I had not lost my marbles and the community would be safe with me. As soon as I got out I went back to work as a taxi driver at my cousin's company. But I felt like a fish out of water. I could not calm down; I wanted to put an end to all the things that were eating my mind away, until the second big hit came.

## GRACE KELLY

One night as I was sitting at home watching TV, I saw Prince Renee with his wife Grace Kelly and daughter Stephania entering a reception hall at an international gallery. Seeing that man who I had seen that night at the secret meeting of the CIA sent chills run down my spine, and a restlessness which slowly became fear. I knew that feeling, it was the same feeling I had that night I met John Lennon. But for some strange reason those fears grew heavier as I looked at Grace Kelly.

I left home in a bad state and I straight away ran to the Catholic Church that was across from me so I could pray.

"God, you gave me a gift, I can see things that no one else can, help me understand what will happen to the kind and polite Grace Kelly." I crossed myself and went home.

I lay on my bed. Suddenly I felt my body in mid-air and I found myself above a field. I saw a restaurant in a country side. At the entrance of the restaurant two men and two women were standing in a well-lit place. It was Grace Kelly, her daughter Stephania, Bob Hope and Jimmy Stuart. Grace and Stephania were in the midst of an intense dialogue. Suddenly I saw a black car approach with enormous speed; inside I heard voices, in the passenger seat was Grace and Stefania was driving. Speeding crazily, the black car went off the side of the road into a field and stopped when it hit a cement wall. The car was slightly damaged and both women were safe and unharmed.

Then I found myself at a hospital in front of the emergency room. A man with short brown hair, wearing a white doctor's coat was looking uneasily around as if he was waiting for something. I had a bad feeling. Another young man was standing next to him. Then suddenly I was in a palace. The entrance was decorated with flowers and a white coffin in a hearse was heading towards it.

I found my senses, body and soul; I was back in my space trying to understand what would happen. I got my answer after two days, when the media was floded with the news. Grace Kelly was dead. All television stations though, instead of showing the black car with minor damage they showed a heap of steel and Grace Kelly dead. 'How could I anticipate her death when I saw things differently?' I can't understand. Or maybe things happened the way I

saw them and Grace's death was a conspiracy. 'If it is as I say, what could I do to prevent it or at least find evidence so the guilty could be punished?' I got no answers from anyone, everyone thought I was crazy.

I was full of anger; everything seemed wrong and I would take it out on anyone who was in my way. I wanted to grab the people by their ears and say 'sit down and listen to me.' One night I was roaming about without a destination and was in deep thought. I felt something like a threat. I stopped at once and went back. A black dog was running quickly straight to me. His intentions were clear; he wanted to choke me with his teeth. Without knowing how, I screamed with peevishness so loudly that the dog stopped at once, stiff as a bone. He looked at me stunned with his ears stretched and his saliva running through his teeth. For a few seconds we poised each other, the dog then turned and ran towards the footpath across the street and stood next to a man who held a red leash. He looked at me with a sarcastic smile but when he saw the dog approaching him with his tongue hanging out his smile froze. He put the leash on the dog and left giving me strange looks.

In 1983, not being able to suffer anymore, I decided to return to Greece, hoping I could do something from there. But I arrived there in a difficult period, the only interest my family and friends had was to fight for survival, to live. A difficult, hard life, no one gave any heed to what I said, they had other concerns, so I decided to return to the U.S.A.

I again went for work at my cousin's taxi company. One day though, the FBI busted into the garage and arrested my cousin for the possession of drugs. He was sentenced to three years. My cousin's girlfriend who had no idea of how to operate a business held the reins of the company. After a while, the company went bankrupt and I again was out of work. Instead of thinking about work, I thought about the worldwide conspiracies and what I could do to uncover the assassins. For a long period I worked wherever I could, without stopping for a second sharing what I knew, trying to get everyone to learn the truth.

One night I was roaming around penniless and desperate, when at Astoria Boulevard, I saw a luxurious Mercedes parked outside a bar, its lights on and the engine running. It was deep red and the top was up. I still remember the number plate - TAV 1960. I always dreamed of a car like that. Without giving it any thought I got in and sped off. First I went to a service station to find a Cypriot friend of mine.

"Where did you find this car?" He whistled in admiration.

"I borrowed it; can you help me put the top down?" He looked at me suspiciously but made no further remark.

Proud that I finally had such a car, even if it was a 'loaner', I strolled around the known places and showed off, dressed in a suit, clothed in style. I even wore gold colored cufflinks that I had, I felt like another man. That car gave me prestige, without exaggeration. People though were not naive. A mechanic friend called the police and when he found out that it was stolen, he offered to buy it for five thousand dollars; he wanted to pull it apart and sell it for spare parts.

"Forget it!" It will be like cutting up my soul, I wanted to enjoy it for a while. I'd also feel a twinge of conscience.

"It belongs to the mafia, you'll be in trouble."

"How do you know?"

"From the color, only the mafia has that deep red color." But I would not hear a word.

One afternoon at the traffic lights, a lady in a car next to me called me.

"Your left tyre's bust." I stopped on the side of the road and opened the boot for the spare tyre. It was empty. I did not think of lifting up the cover to search deeper, something I greatly regretted later. As I had said before I had no brains and not even a drop of luck. I called a garage for help. It had only deflated and needed air, 'unfortunately' I said again. If it had blown I would have needed the spare tyre and everything would have turned out differently. I washed the car, changed the oil and filter and then parked it in a closed parking I had rented for obvious reasons.

One day a friend of mine called me to go upstate for the weekend, to a country house one of his friends had there. His name was George, and he was from Crete. I found out later that he was a dealer of drugs, guns and all else illegal. He was leading in a Volvo and I followed with the Mercedes, as I did not want to leave it behind. Before we left, the Cretan gave me one hundred dollars and a little dose of cocaine.

"Why are you giving me this?"

"Why not? I have more of it." What a good man I thought and put both items in my pocket.

Even before we reached the highway we were both already stoned. At one stage I saw him stop on the side of the road and get out of the car. I stopped to see what was going on. I saw him pull down his pants and turned there backside towards the passing cars. He also did other

shocking things that can't be said. I looked at him and rubbed my eyes in disbelief. Then the police came. They lay him on the ground and handcuffed him. They then turned to me.

"License and registration?" I had nothing, especially the registration papers. I started improvising.

"I'm a reporter from the Greek news and I have borrowed this car from work." Of course they did not believe me. They called the police station and from the look they gave me, I knew they had caught me red-handed. They started searching me and then the car. They first found the cocaine; pity I thought, there goes my second chance of trying it! They then opened the boot.

"It's empty." I said. They lifted the cover where the spare tire I was looking for was. Next to the spare tire, wedged was a small white package tied with string.

"What have we here?" He snatched the package and opened it. We were all stunned. It was full of money, one hundred dollar bills, brand new. After counting it they found it to be one million dollars. Even the television stations said I was a failure, born looser and other nice things, for I did not discover the money in the boot first. How was I to know that I was going about with such treasure? To cut a long story short, I also ended up in handcuffs.

That imprudence cost me two months of jail in the Orange County, in the top security wing, there were they had the biggest drug dealers. Practically raised in their arms, punishing me again and again the guards finally put me into my cell, I had not moved a foot on my own.

"Mother Mary, will I ever get out of here?" I mumbled as I saw the faces of those around me. Full of anger that they put me in that wing, I called the Greek newspaper *Proini* and asked them to come and write the truth, to help me. They came but were not allowed to see me.

"If I ever get out of here I'll show you all." I threatened them.

The days went by and I tried to show them good behavior. Jail is for brave, fearless men, and I was not, I wanted to get out. I had no visitors, not even regards from anyone, I had no money and the first days did not even feel like eating. A guard felt sorry for me and suggested I clean the space outside the cells - as a reward he would give me a packet of cigarettes. It was not a difficult job, twelve cells on my side, another twelve on the other side and the walkway between them.

"Thank you and if you need anything else just let me know." I told him as I enjoyed the first cigarette. My happiness though did not last long - another prisoner went into my cell and stole my cigarettes, and he even took the smoked butts. I put my anger aside, the people in there were all different from one another and I preferred to sleep quietly at night without fears and to hell with the smokes.

Soon enough, I had acquainted with everyone and I started my preaching and philosophies of life and of course about my visions and the worldwide conspiracies. I can say that most people listened to me ecstatic and that's what I wanted. For a while I was doing ok, but I wanted to leave, to be freed. It was hard for someone like me who was used to roaming the streets all day, I could never get used to isolation. Next to my cell was a 'couple' and I was sick and tired of hearing them flirt all day and all night in front of everyone without shame. Across from my cell, things were even worse; on a daily basis a young boy would inject himself with heroin.

"Even in here." I said and turned my head away from the scene. Another prisoner who was in for armed robbery would constantly ask me.

"What do you believe on the reversal of life?"

"I believe that at some stage my life will change, everything will be different and not miserable like now." What else could I answer? Once upon a time... fairytales. Who was I to destroy his hopes? I would give him hope.

"Yes that's the way it is, as you say." Deep inside I hoped that it was true. We were a crowd of tormented people, each one of us with our pain, problems and hopes.

I was finally out with restricted authority and a ten thousand dollar fine. My lawyer, a young and beautiful lady, warned me that if something was to happen again I would not get out with expulsion. My file was already fifty pages long. She advised me with abundant affection, to sit tight and behave, but who had the brains to listen to her? Not me, that's for sure.

When I got out, I stood a little still to breath in the air of my freedom and I then searched my pockets. Empty! I saw across the street a gardener mowing the lawn in the park. I had no other choice, I approached him, and I explained my situation and asked him for money. He gave me five dollars, because he was afraid and not because he felt sorry for me. With that money I managed to reach a Greek restaurant that was close by. I knew that my fellow countrymen would help me and I was not wrong.

I returned to New York. In that period a very upsetting family event came to shadow our lives. It was the death of my sister, who lived in Australia, of a stroke. She was only thirty six, it took me a long time to recover from the idea that she was gone, but up until today I have still not gotten over it.

At my village there were no jobs so I decided to leave for I did not want to be a burden on my parents. So after a one year's stay in Greece I returned again to New York where I got a job at a garage, Olympic car service, with a very low wage. The large spread of drugs and other crimes in that period left me speechless. Within a year, the damage was huge and everything was out of control.

I could not make ends meet with the low wage I was getting. In early 1989 I moved to Boston and got a job as a painter at a construction company. That change in a way helped me. My uneasiness and anger settled down and basically I was satisfied. There after a few months, another grief woke up inside me and tormented me. My daughter, who would now be sixteen and whom I had never met.

I finally managed with the help from the telephone company, to find a phone number, my ex father-in-law's. I called straight away.

"Where are you, you dirty Greek? You loser, you have a child, why have you forgotten that?" He was furious and yelled at me as soon as I told him who I was.

"It's not my fault, but your daughter's for running out on me and disappearing when I was in Greece for my visa."

"Your daughter is living with your mother in Houston Texas and you should at last go and meet her."

Without second thought and mixed emotions I left everything and the next day I took the train to Houston.

As soon as I got there I started looking for work, with empty pockets, not even money for a hotel room. But I could naught else. Luckily I landed a job at a service station straight away and I started searching for ways to come in contact with my daughter.

The first person I managed to talk to was my ex wife's brother. He informed me that Patricia found out that I had contacted her father and that I would be coming here and that she did not for any reason want me to see her or her daughter.

Very upset I went to work the next day, in a mood for nothing for I saw another big dream of mine turning into a nightmare.

While I was working and lost in heavy dark thoughts I saw a familiar figure looking at



me from the footpath across the street. It was Patricia. How could I forget her? I had spent the happiest period of my life with her. Beside her was a beautiful girl, about seventeen, who must have been my daughter. I stood there stunned, mute, unable to make a move. My daughter Teresa, who for so many years I was not able to meet, was as if she had this sacred existence, she passed in front of me and I was in awe, I could not even utter a word, as if an invisible hand was holding me.

Patricia found out from her sister that I worked there, but she did not want to talk to me. She just wanted me to see my daughter, and with her silence to punish me for my far and long stay in Greece, as she never believed all those things that I wrote to her in my letters. How could she believe that I would abandon her and my child? It was obvious that she had never said anything to Teresa, who the more I looked at the more I saw our likeness.

I stood there watching them leave further away from me and I was not able to make a move. At that stage it was enough that I had seen her and that finally I could think of her face and form. In the many things I deplored in life, this was the most important for me.

The next day I went to work, lost in thought and in a lonesome mood. I was then called into the office for someone was asking for me on the telephone. I went thinking that they were joking around for I had no one there to call me.

When I realized who it was I nearly dropped the phone. It was my daughter. Her mother had finally told her that I was in town to see her, and where I worked and she called me.

"Why did things happen like this, why did you leave before even meeting me, without even a word all these years?"

"Your mother was the one who left, not me. I went to Greece to renew my visa and when I returned she had disappeared with you. The only thing I care about now is to see you and try and replace and live all the time we have lost together."

"You can't replace those years, it's too difficult, my mother does not let me go out of the house, she is afraid we might meet. It's difficult even for just one meeting."

A lot of months went by. I waited patiently that some change would take place and that I could meet my daughter, even if it was just once. I knew that I could claim my rights if I went to the police. But did I not want to agitate my daughter's life; I knew well that I was also at fault. I waited and hoped that she would contact me again. I did not know her phone number or address anyway, and whenever I went to her sister's house she would close the door in my face.

Things got very difficult for me at work and I was forced to leave, without accomplishing what I had come to do. Once again my hopes were scattered, another unaccomplished dream. At least I knew that my daughter was well and that she thought of me sometimes.

Here I am again in New York, the city I adored and hated so much. The city where tormented people lived each day, trying to reach the American dream and never finding it. A city imposingly cruel and difficult to describe.

I was again without money and work. So I agreed to drive a car for a suspicious group of people, they wanted me to take them somewhere, I didn't know where. I didn't ask and I didn't know that the car was stolen. Another tangled situation I got into. We were caught by the police and because the driver is the one who pays for everything I was again found in court. The others were set free.

My court case took place at the Jamaican Queens court house. At the end of the case the judge said to me:

"Mr. Anagnostopoulos, I heard that you are going around saying that you know of great truths!"

"Yes it's true, but no one wants to hear or believe me."

"You are at an age where you should know better and be more careful with the people you choose to be around with, and with what you say and do. You have bothered the authorities a number of times in the past and for that reason I sentence you to one year's imprisonment!" The lawyer the state provided me with most probably thought that I was a lost case and did not do much to defend me. I think he also felt relieved that I was going to jail.

These things were better than I expected. The officers were good men and my cellmates took care of me. I found kindness and my mouth would not stop. In fact a lot of the men in there would say that I should enroll as a candidate for president of the United States.

In jail I did not rest idle. Luckily, there was a large library. There I found all the lists of murderer's names. I sent sixteen letters to various organizations such as the FBI, the prefecture of Texas, ABC, state service of information offices of Greece and other governmental offices that I thought should know that truth. I got no reply.

One day, a guard told me that he heard my name being mentioned in the warden's office, but did not know why. It did not take long for me to find out. I was eight months in jail and a new trial was to be held for my expulsion from America, for criticizing and for the accusations I made towards the government. It seemed that what I said bothered some people so much that they decided to get rid of me.

They took me to Varik Street where the court trial was to be held. I was given a new lawyer from the state and I understood from the first look he gave me that he wanted this trial over and done with as soon as possible. After a very short conference, the predetermined decision was announced and on the 29<sup>th</sup> of August 1992 with a shattered spirit and full of rage I left for Greece on a TWA flight. A little before I left the court room after I heard the decision I turned and said to them.

"One day when everything will come to light, you will send to Greece that air force one to come and bring me back. You will beg me, but I will not do you the favor."

So I was back in Athens. I was in a mess. Luckily an old friend found me a job as a taxi driver. I lived in Athens up until 1995 when I went back to my home village. All those years I had not stopped spreading 'the truths' I knew and that tormented me for so many years. I even went to the television talk show that Malvina Karali held who we later unfairly lost, as well as to Antenna at the morning show of Georgios Papadakis.

The years went by. I had not forgotten my goal, even though I knew that I was alone. No one believed me. The facts were carved in my mind and my goal was that as long as I lived, I'd keep on trying. Too much water had flowed under the bridge and somewhere I tried to come to an agreement with my logic, that told me to stop fighting, those I was chasing were too high up, I could not reach them and it was time to start looking a little after myself. I was too old to chase chimeras. The antidote though was the voice of my heart that yelled furiously that I should not leave things as they were. Since God had revealed this truth to me I had to let everyone know about it, up until my death. He chose me to save Lennon, but I did not manage it and the guilt was torturing me.

All this time I tried financially to make ends meet working any job I could find. Sometimes as a taxi driver or a factory worker, nothing steady.

A new event came to shock me but also to help me make a decision on what I had to do.

It was a hot August morning of the year 2000. I was watching TV and the presenter of the show informed all viewers that a very famous Hollywood actor had just arrived in Greece. I continued watching out of curiosity. A lot of years had passed but with his appearance I froze at once. I recognized him straight away. I had clearly seen him that night of November at the CIA meeting where the organization of Lennon's death had taken place. It was the honorable to all Robert Von, escorted distinctly by CIA people . The last words of the presenter made me decide. She announced the eminent arrival of the former president of the USA, George Bush.

I had to do something. I went straight to a lawyer in Amaliada where I dictated a letter for the prime minister so he could send it to the state information service. Three days went by and I waited for someone to come in contact with me. It was useless.

One afternoon I was returning from work, and even though it was a long time since I had sent the letter the mayor was waiting for me. He informed me that two men from the state information service had come to the village and were asking for me and that soon they would contact me again. But they never did and later on I found out that it was because everyone they asked about me told the agents that the person they were looking for, me, was crazy and insane, that they were wasting their time.

---

## THE LAST JOURNEY

The months that followed I lived with a big problem. A deep anxiety squeezed my heart and would not let me calm down. I knew something bad was going to happen but I could not figure out what. It was not long before I found out. On the 11<sup>th</sup> of September I woke up full of energy for I did not close my eyes at all that night. I stayed inside and the feeling that something bad was to happen worsened. That afternoon I heard the news of the twin towers of New York. I then thought of what I had said, a little before my expulsion from America; 'don't be surprised if you ever see the Empire state building do summersaults and then collapse.' I was not right about the building though. I believed that it was not the terrorists of any Bin Laden; the hit was inspired and performed by the CIA. I tried to get in contact by phone with all the TV stations so I could give them information. But no one was interested.

Time went by and I still could not calm down. The alarm lights had once again shone in my mind and I had to do something. All my old doubts had disappeared. I felt the need to return to America. But how? I was banned and not welcome from that country. So I decided to go somewhere very close. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 2002 I traveled to Montreal, Canada.

There I started a new round of efforts. The first thing I did was phone the FBI because I heard on the TV that the immigration office was looking for a Greek who had been banned years ago from America. The agent I spoke to told me to send any information I had to the FBI Federal Plaza 26. That's what I did; once again I sent the list with the names and a letter explaining everything.

I had got a job at a restaurant so I could make a few bucks to live. One afternoon when I was working, a tall, dark guy entered the restaurant. I had never seen him before. He greeted everyone, but when he looked at me, I saw a strange look in his eyes. Under his jacket he wore an FBI jumper. In brief, he had come to see who I was, to identify my face. That 'identification' continued three times a week until I left my job there.

One night I was sitting and listening to the news on the TV gulping one glass of whiskey after another. I had a very tiring day and I was trying to relax a little before going to bed. A police officer on TV was showing a photo of a young child named Christopher. He sold newspapers on the street, had been missing for two days he had not shown any signs of life. The

police searched around his neighborhood. The parents, stricken by grief, were crying silently and begged for whoever knew anything at all to call. Without realizing how, I picked up the phone and called the police.

"The child is two streets further down from the place he worked, search and you will find him." I quickly put the receiver down before they started asking who I was and how I knew of his whereabouts. The child was found where I told them, murdered and thrown below some garbage, bins, surrounded by mice and cockroaches. I swore to never watch TV again.

My six months' permit to stay in Canada expired and I had to leave. I made a last effort and called the FBI again. They said that they had my identification data and that if they needed me they would contact me.

Seeing their indifference once again I sat the whole night and thought of everything that had happened, but I could still not clear my mind. By morning I had made my decision. No more efforts and no more words. It was time for me to put my life in order, instead of running about and chasing unreachable dreams. Whether you believe them or not, that's the way it is. I had demanded them to accept something that not even I understood fully. For everyone it sounded crazy and my only witness was God, but he did what he did and then left me alone without any other help.

I found a phonebook and after many hours of effort and help of a very polite telephone assistant I managed to find the phone number I was looking for.

The woman's voice on the other end of the line assured me that it was Patricia's grandmother. I crossed myself and silently thanked God.

"It's me Chris, Patricia's ex husband." I waited patiently for her to stop cursing and bad mouthing me before I continued talking. I knew deep down that she was fond of me, whatever she believed about me. Her swearing would not stop but as soon as I managed to get my daughter Teresa's phone number I thanked her and slowly hung up the phone. I took a few deep breaths to build up courage and I then dialed the number.

As if Teresa was waiting for my call, she answered straight away. With a lump in my throat I finally managed to speak.

"Teresa, it's me your father Chris". Her reaction filled me with joy and happiness.

"Finally you found me, I too was looking for you but I had no idea where to start from."

Her questions were never-ending.

"Give me your address so I can write to you and I'll give you mine in Greece." I felt like I had been reborn. I promised myself that from then on I would try to make things work with my child, i had been deprived from her and she from me for too long. I at least owed her an explanation.

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of august 2002 I returned to my home village were I still live until now. I worked as a taxi driver again and I'm trying to make ends meet and compromise with my life, the future and the past. With Teresa we keep in contact on a weekly basis by telephone and with letters, we exchange photos, life experiences and frequent promises that we will meet some day face to face. She is a good and beautiful girl and I'm very proud of her. I did something right in my life I always think and that helps me take my next step.

My only dream now is to gather enough money so I can bring my daughter to Greece to finally see her. As for the worldwide conspiracies and scheming, I've left it to those qualified and if ever the good Lord wants to involve me in illegal adventures, then I get down on my knees and pray, begging for him to choose someone else. I don't want any more trouble, no more adventures, just a peaceful life without fanfare. That's what I say, but let's see...