

The American Revolutionary spirit guides Concilium, a group fighting the corrupted two-party system. Cleaning the swamp is not just a slogan; it's their mission. But the Tworanny will not tolerate exposure and Concilium is attacked.

TWORANNY: The Two-Headed Tyrant

By Jose Nunez

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THE TWO-HEADED TYRANT

TWORANNY



J O S E N U N E Z

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crimes being committed: battery, criminal assault, conspiracy—he was sure there would be more than one assailant—maybe murder, or at least attempted murder...

His thinking was interrupted when two assailants lifted him and took him to a waiting black van. He thought, *If they are going to kill me, they are not going to kill me here*. He hoped to reunite with Novus in the van. Whatever the reason for this, Novus could explain that he had nothing to do with this; he was just an innocent bystander. Also, he was really hoping that they had not killed Novus. Maybe this is what happens to people who try to change things. Returning to his peaceful teaching job appeared more and more desirable by the minute.

They threw him into the van like a farmer throws a sack of potatoes into a truck, but at this point he couldn't feel any more pain. He did not see Novus in the van, but it was dark. He counted four attackers, all wearing black outfits head to toe, carrying military gear, including night-vision goggles. One of them put a needle in his thigh, which seemed unreal because he couldn't feel a thing—it was like he was watching a movie of his life—and then he lost consciousness.



Day 2

Cadel woke up in a windowless, locked room. Slowly regaining consciousness, he remembered the events from the night before. He felt surprisingly well, all considered; they probably had given him some painkillers. He checked his muscles, starting with the hands, following with the arms, legs, neck, and waist. Everything was working again, which improved his mood, but it soon turned into growing anger. *Who the hell are these bastards that kidnapped me?*

He was on a twin-bed mattress resting on the floor. The room was square, twenty-five by twenty-five feet, and a single light fixture with several light bulbs brightly illuminated the room with cold, blue light. He tried to open the door in the

room, but it was locked. A small vent on the right wall near the ceiling seemed to provide the necessary flow of air to keep the room cool in the hot September weather they had recently. On the right wall was a door to a small bathroom.

Another mattress was on the opposite side of the room and lying on it was a woman sleeping. Cadel guessed that she was another prisoner, so he approached her, hoping she knew why they had been kidnapped.

She was facing the wall. Cadel kneeled and tapped her gently on the shoulder. She did not respond, so he rocked her back and forth trying to wake her up. Still asleep. Cadel then put both hands on her arm and rocked her harder while he said, "Hello? Are you okay? Please wake up!"

The woman woke up, sat up on the bed, confused, and looked at him with a blank expression. Cadel saw a woman in her thirties, thin, of average height and above-average beauty. She was Latina, dark hair down to her shoulders, light brown eyes, large lips. She was wearing casual clothes, a blue blouse, jeans, and tennis shoes.

Without saying a word, the woman punched Cadel in the mouth, and fortunately for him she was weak. He fell back covering his mouth with both hands, and when he saw her coming towards him, he lifted his legs to a fetal position to protect from further damage. "Wait, wait, wait!" Cadel screamed.

"Why did you take me here? Who are you?" she screamed back while punching Cadel's legs.

"Stop hitting me! I did not take you anywhere."

She stopped punching but continued looking at him with anger.

"It looks like we're both prisoners. I just woke up and have no idea why they brought me here." Cadel sat up, but cautiously moved away from her, like someone moves away from a growling dog.

She wasn't completely ready to believe the stranger. "What's your name?"

"Cadel Alaska."

"I am Adriana Bravo. Your name sounds familiar. Have we met?"

"I don't think so. I would remember you."

"What happened to you?" Adriana said while putting her hands down.

"I went to dinner at my friend's house, a guy named Novus." When he mentioned Novus' name, Adriana's expression turned to despair, and she covered her mouth with both hands. "While we were having drinks, a bomb exploded and a bunch of guys dressed in black, armed to the teeth, came in and took me away."

"What happened to Novus?" she asked, worry obvious in her voice.

"I don't know. We got separated." He told her all he remembered. "And what happened to you?"

"I landed at Dulles airport. I was walking through the terminal and felt nauseous, so I sat down. My muscles were not responding, and I was going to pass out. Within a minute, three paramedics showed up, as if they were waiting for me to faint, put me on a stretcher, and gave me a shot to finish the job."

"Did they say anything to you?"

"No. It looked like a military drill. Everything was quick and precise. It all took less than a minute." Adriana pointed with her eyes to a ceiling surveillance camera. "We are being watched." She tried to open the door one more time, pulling hard from the handle. "Open the door! Let us out!" But nobody came. "I guess I can tell you what they already know, whoever they are."

Adriana sat next to Cadel on his mattress. “I was married to Novus. We’re still friends and I was coming to DC for the weekend. He said that he had a little job for me. I am an accountant and financial advisor and I’ve been doing some contract work.”

“I did some consulting for him too. In fact, I was at his house yesterday to discuss some of the research I did for him for a book that he wrote,” Cadel said.

Adriana knew the work and that Novus appreciated Cadel. She refrained from saying anything so whoever was listening wouldn’t think that Cadel was involved in Concilium. Probably Novus was trying to recruit Cadel when he was kidnapped. “Novus is critical of the current political system. I am guessing that he upset some powerful asshole and that is why we’re here.” Adriana buried her head between her legs. “Are they going to kill us?”

Cadel softly tapped her on the shoulder, trying to console her. “I don’t think we should panic yet. If they wanted us dead, they wouldn’t have brought us here.”

“Shouldn’t Novus be here with us? Maybe they killed him?”

Cadel tried to sound reassuring. “He is probably in another room not far from here. Maybe, he’s being interrogated and we’re next.”

Cadel’s prediction appeared correct, as two minutes later the door opened, and three men came in. They were muscular, looking like soldiers dressed in civilian clothes. The leader wore a black suit and a black tie. “Hello. My name is Greg Silverman. You’re here because of a serious threat to national security.”

Adriana charged towards the door, but the two men held her back. She started punching, kicking, screaming, and they threw her on the mattress.

“Please behave, or I will Taser you again,” Silverman said. He smiled and continued, “I am hoping that this is all a mistake and if you cooperate with us, we can clear any misunderstandings and you’ll be free to go.” Silverman was

thirty-five, six-foot-four, Nordic appearance, handsome with short blond hair and broad shoulders. A two-inch scar on the right side of his face, near the jawline, gave him the tough look of a soldier of many battles.

Adriana and Cadel spoke at the same time. She said, "Where is Novus?" and he said, "Under which authority are we being retained?"

"Whoa! One thing at a time. We'll have plenty of time to clear everything up. Novus is okay. Don't worry about him. He is cooperating with us right now and I am sure that you will see him soon, if you cooperate with us also, of course!"

Adriana felt a bit of relief. Silverman was lying—Novus would never cooperate with kidnappers—but she wanted to believe the part about he being okay.

"Are we under arrest?" Cadel insisted.

"No. You are just temporarily detained, although it will get worse if you end up being a threat to national security."

"I want a lawyer," Cadel said. He wanted to check if these people were really in law enforcement.

"Oh! You don't need a lawyer; you are a lawyer, Mr. Alaska. You're not really in trouble unless you've done something wrong. It's all probably some misunderstanding that we need to clear up."

"I have a constitutional right to a lawyer, and I demand that you free us. Produce a warrant for our arrest or let me call my attorney."

Silverman got serious, put his face two inches from Cadel's face. "This is not the time to be a smartass. A serious threat to national security has been uncovered and you are our main suspects. We are running background checks on you, and if you are innocent, there is nothing to worry about."

"You are a fraud. The authority in my country protects people's rights," Adriana said.

“Make yourselves comfortable. Food is coming soon. Eat, get your energy back, and we’ll talk later.” The three men left and locked the door behind them.



Silverman drove to the house of his employer, George King IV, in McLean, North Virginia, not far from the headquarters of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), a twenty-minute drive from Congress. The area was scattered with expensive homes for congresspeople, lobbyists, diplomats, and executives doing business with the federal government.

George King the Fourth was part of a dynasty of lawyers going all the way back to the birth of the nation. George King the First had amassed a fortune as a railroad lawyer, and according to some historians, he became rich by ripping off small farmers and landowners, who paid handsome fees to get the train going through their towns. But most times, only a few would see the railroads pay good money to build the rails on their lands.

Later, George King II and III made their money on Wall Street. Their fortunes constantly grew as they became masters at getting rich using other people’s money. The debacle of 1929 didn’t affect them much, as they would only risk client’s money. In fact, they came out of the 1929 crash in great form, as they scooped up property after property at bargain prices.

King IV was the majority shareholder and president of one of the biggest trading houses on Wall Street, Brahman Bull Financial & Investment, and was also the president of American Barterer, an exclusive, secretive association of the most influential people on Wall Street. Like his ancestors, he had considerably grown the family fortune, owning a myriad of businesses in multiple economic sectors.

The 18,000-square-foot house was between George Washington Memorial Parkway and the Potomac River, had a tennis court, a recreational building—with a thirty-yard indoor

pool, gym, and bowling alley—, a parking lot, and a big esplanade in front with a large fountain. Behind the house, by the river, there were stables with horses, a small track, and a one-thousand-square-foot house for the caretakers.

A butler lead Silverman through the magnificent entrance— Italian marble floors, a round staircase with detailed wood engravings, and ceilings that seemed to reach all the way up to the sky. After walking through a long hall, the butler opened the door of the library with fourteen-foot-tall bookshelves on all four walls.

“Hello,” King said. He had fair skin, almost ghostly white, thin white hair, tall. For a fifty-five-year-old man, women would say that he was attractive, always formally dressed as if he’d been born wearing a suit and tie. He exuded the air of superiority of someone used to giving orders and imposing his will. “How’s your operation to get rid of these Concilium charlatans?”

“Excellent. We captured their leader, his wife, and another charlatan that was at his house.”

“Good. This should be easy as they are a bunch of blabbermouth hippies. Wrap it up quickly.”

“Yes, sir. We’re letting them cook right now and they’ll soon be singing like canaries. As you asked, Novus is kept in a separate location.”

“Good. Once you get the information, dispose of him. We’ll decide on the others later.” King paused and then asked, “What’s next?...Wait, I rather not know of the operational plans. Just be quick and decisive; don’t want to string this along.” Then he continued, more like talking to himself, “Yes, they have been flying freely under the radar, but we have identified them as a nuisance and taking steps to eradicate them, or at least make them work within the confinements of the law. We don’t need stupid anarchists trying to tell the government of the United States how to do its business.”

“No, sir.”

King continued, “The United States is the most powerful country in the world today. We’ve seen how other mighty empires have fallen. The reason is always the same: People become complacent, want to live in great comfort, and lose their willingness to fight for their country and the values that the nation represents. Generations following the great men that created these empires became soft and selfish. I won’t let that happen!”

Silverman wasn’t sure on what to say; it seemed like King was justifying his actions to him, but Silverman did not care—all he care about was getting paid and getting paid well.

King gave a dismissive wave and Silverman left.

Recently, King had obtained a copy of Novus’ *Commonsencical*, that included a *Bill of Duties* to limit the power of government officials. He had people from both parties in his pocket, and a more transparent government would make his businesses more difficult to prosper, although in the end, he would always get his way. But he didn’t want the extra bother. He got so mad at the nonsense of the *Bill of Duties* that he hired Silverman to solve the problem. A small action now would save a lot of headaches in the future.



Silverman drove north fifty minutes to an isolated farm in Sunshine, Maryland. An old, remote, run-down office building sat between a small forest on the right and rocky hills on the left. The building, painted for the last time in the '60s, had boarded windows in the upper floor and missing wall tiles. It hadn’t been used as an office for more than ten years, but it had steel doors, safety windows, and state-of-the art security that seemed out of place for the abandoned building.

Novus was also kept in a windowless room. Silverman entered accompanied by two men. “Hello, Mr. Newman...or you prefer I call you Novus?”

“You can call me a lawyer,” Novus replied. “I demand that you let me free immediately!”

Silverman recited the same lines he’d fed Adriana and Cadel, but Novus would not hear any of it. “This is an illegal seizure. I am an American, and I want a lawyer.”

Silverman was losing his patience but kept going. Novus interrupted again and Silverman punched him in the mouth, causing Novus to fall back on the bed. After a few seconds to get over the initial wave of pain Novus said, “You are not acting under the color of authority—you are nothing but thugs! You will get nothing out of me.”

Silverman looked at the two men, gave a shake of the head towards Novus, and they punched and kicked Novus. The beating was controlled, no vital organs—they needed Novus alive. But it did not feel like a controlled beating to Novus—he was in pain, near losing consciousness.

“You’ll tell us what we need to know, Mr. Novus. It is up to you to decide how much pain you need to suffer before you do. I’ll let you think about it for a while.”

Novus sadly realized that Silverman was right. He had a low threshold for pain and knew that he would spill his guts sooner or later. He would tell them a bunch of lies to buy time for the people of Concilium, but they’d know they were lies. The safety mechanisms put in place for the organization would help protect most of them, but some of the leaders may also pay a heavy price for fighting the Tworanny.

He had a glimmer of hope that Concilium would find and rescue him, but he knew that they never prepared for military action. They were a peaceful organization, utilizing peaceful means. But who knows, maybe they could buy his freedom.

He wondered how it got to this situation, blaming himself for not seeing it coming. Sure, he had taken some precautions, but after the latest Tworanny scandals they uncovered, he should have known that they would be coming for him. *I’m*

such a stupid, arrogant idiot, thinking that I'm so smart, yet I let these thuds put me in this situation.

His mind also wondered about his son, Mel, five years old. The thought of leaving him without a father was unbearable. That hurt the most. He knew that Adriana would take good care of him, but that wasn't consolation enough. Then he worried about her. *What if they go after her also? I should have never made her part of Concilium.* He missed her and thinking of all the awful things he did to her made him feel even worse. He promised that if he ever got out, he'd make up for his past mistakes.



Day -450

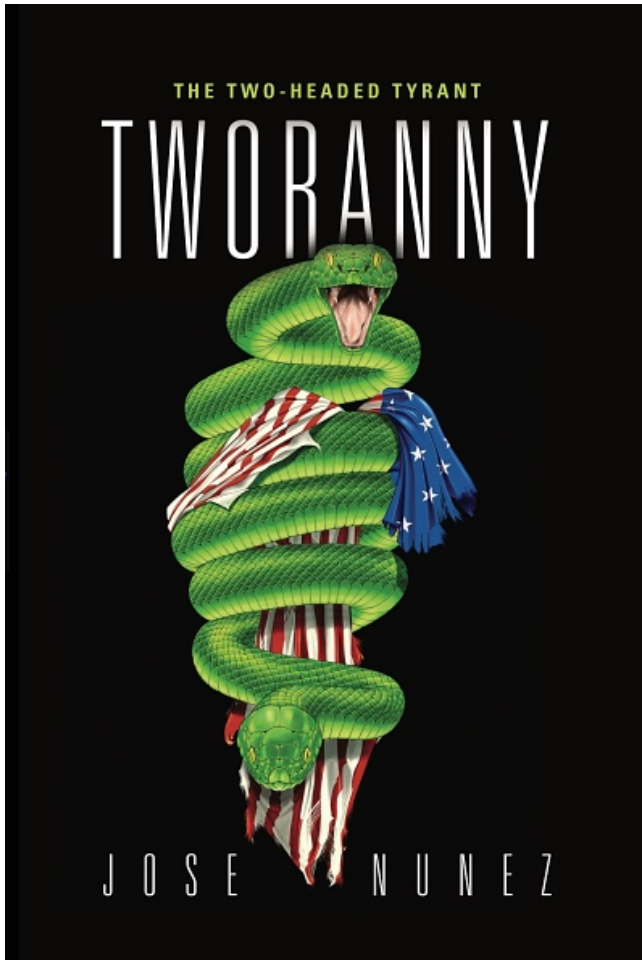
A year and a half earlier, at the same time Cadel was having trouble with the California bar, Sara Jasmin was waiting on Marco Moreno and Steve Waters, two federal representatives from the state of Florida. Although from different parties, they were getting along well, especially after two hours of drinking at the Sunset Bar on the top floor of the Bellamar Hotel in Sarasota.

Sara—a thin twenty-five-year-old black woman with short hair, pleasant face, cheerful attitude, and an independent spirit—grew up with little, and had a weakness for rich and powerful men. Whenever she dated a rich guy, she felt like some of their power and wealth rubbed on her, rising above the poverty she had endured for years. Her father was a long-haul trucker, spending most of his time on the road while Mom stayed home taking care of Sara and her older brother. They had enough to enjoy a happy childhood, but things worsened when her dad had an accident on an icy Montana road, losing the right leg below the knee and suffering from chronic headaches afterwards.

He was a decent father before the accident, not engaged in their upbringing but willing to play and do other activities with

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jose Nunez is an enthusiast of the Constitution, a patent attorney living in California, and a believer that we can do better.



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