

RoTN Chronicles  
The Case of the Kidnapped Kitten

Mika Huy

Adapted for print by helios123

**TOP SECRET**

More info about RoTN and its characters can be obtained at <http://www.realityonthenorm.info>

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## Publisher's Note

Recently, Mika Huy decided try her hand at novelising true crime (I'm told that this has been one of her childhood dreams). By a stroke of luck, I chanced upon a copy of her work at one of those online publishing platforms. Being one who never (ok, almost never) judges a book by its cover, I had a look at the manuscript.

I was pleasantly surprised to see that she indeed, does have the makings of a writer. I immediately got in touch with her and suggested that we improve the presentation a little and re-release it. She agreed to give it a try. We decided it would be best if I handled the various activities associated with online publishing, leaving her to focus fully on the writing part.

So here it is! The entire story, as written by Mika, complete and unabridged. I have made some corrections, added typesetting and formatting. A list of some of the reference material is also provided.

– *helios123*

## Author's Note

Most of us who have been in Max Griff's office have seen the photo of Hendersens' cat. Few of us have even wondered why it is there, alongside his prized dollar.

Recently, when I expressed to Max my intention to novelise true crime (as a hobby), he provided me his old journals. In these, he said, was documented the story behind Hendersens' cat. He said that there were some aspects had some about the whole affair, which were never fully understood.

The mention of some incidents made me remember some other (about to be incinerated) material I recently recovered during my secret investigation of a member of RoTN's scientific community. These, along with other supporting material, helped me to piece the complete picture. Through these, it becomes clear that there is more than what meets the eye. It also helps shed some light on other events in Reality's history.

I wanted this work to be a little different from conventional mystery stories, and hence I have decided to tell this story through a series of journal entries.

While I admit that such a style of story telling tends to lower clarity somewhat, it also provides the readers a unique opportunity to play detective. It demands a higher degree of involvement from the reader as compared to a conventional narrative. I urge my readers to read a little, try to form an idea about what might be happening, and then proceed. This makes for an enjoyable and fun experience (more so if done in a group).

Without further ado, here is the story as it happened. I have arranged the events chronologically, and slightly modified the original material in some places to ensure continuity in the narrative.

I hope you enjoy reading this as much as I have enjoyed writing it.

– *Mika Huy*

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# Prologue

Ed

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2001

Dear Diary,

Here we are, at the dawn of the new millennium. Oh! I'm so excited thinking of the things I've planned to do this year. As is my usual custom, I'll note down some of my New Year resolutions

1. Design and build a prototype for 'The Illuminator'
2. Secure funds for building 'The Illuminator'
3. More reading
4. More plans
5. More travel
6. And of course... maintaining a diary!

With that out of the way, let's note the things done so far...

The design for The Illuminator is already in the final stages and should be finished soon. As regards funding, I have some interested parties. I will approach them once the design is finalized.

As regards to travel and plans, I have something in mind, but it's still in the, well, planning stage. I'll write about it when the time is right.

Like last year, the sheer magnitude of work which lies before me makes me feel that the entire year may prove to be inadequate! But then again, there's no substitute for hard work and perseverance.

I guess that's all for today. I've some errands to run (no rest for the weary), so I must be off now.

But one thing's for sure. Call it intuition, or gut feeling, or an educated guess, or whatever, there's no denying that it's going to be an awesome start to the millennium!

Max Griff

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2001

I never thought I would ever be maintaining a diary. But here I am, writing these very lines in what is to be my journal.

I keep asking myself. Why? And honestly, I don't even fully know yet. Maybe because this is one of my New Year's resolutions. Maybe because I need to record my cases. Maybe because I need to improve my language skills. Or maybe because it is a cheap and effective way of giving vent to all the pent up rage and frustration.

I guess that's all I can manage today. One thing I know for sure, is that this journal will be a silent confidant to the thoughts going on in my mind, and a silent historian of my career.

## Week 1

Ed

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2001

Mission accomplished! I have finally devised a way to secure finances for building The Illuminator. It was definitely not my first choice, but desperate times call for desperate measures.

As all legal means to secure funding have failed, I have decided to opt for illegal means. I have already identified the Achilles' heel of a very wealthy couple, which so happens to be their pet cat, named Fluffy.

The couple is expected to be in a town called Reality-on-The-Norm<sup>1</sup> in a few days time (to view some local surfing championship). Luckily, my good friend and fellow scientist Dee lives nearby, and has agreed to help me.

I have some experiments to do and some plans to plan, so I guess I'll stop here.

Ed

Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2001

I have successfully located the targets. In due course I will kidnap the object of their affection and demand a huge ransom. This will, of course, be used to fund the construction of The Illuminator. I am pretty sure the whole operation will proceed smoothly without a hitch.

The only regret I have is that an endeavour as magnificent as The Illuminator should have such nefarious beginnings.

## Agent 000

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February, 2001

At long last! A case of international repute! This will be one of the high points of my career. All the hard work over past three months will finally pay off, when I catch the criminals red-handed.

This requires some of the best people in my department. I'm glad that Headquarters has promised to assemble a team of the finest agents once I confirm the captive's location. I will send for them once I'm certain that the captive is here.

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<sup>1</sup>Often abbreviated as RoTN

Which brings me to the most important part of my investigation: locating the captive. I have to be very discreet, lest the enemy becomes suspicious. And if I am to be discreet, I should know all the lanes and alleys in town. So, this is my task for the present; familiarize myself with Reality and search for possible hiding places.

I need a disguise which allows me to roam around town without being noticed. I think it would be best to dress up like a hobo. It's perfect for moving unnoticed; I only need a suitable cover story (every good agent prepares one) in case someone asks me what I'm doing in Reality.

I must be off now, as time is of essence. Agent 000 over and out.

## Agent 000

Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2001

I tried to ask the local authorities to help me in my search. But they turned down my request. As a last resort, I tried to enlist the services of the local P. I., but even he seemed to regard me like a lunatic.

I guess I'm on my own on this one.

## Max Griff

Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2001

Little over a month into the new year and the only cases so far involve finding lost cats and dogs. The only case which looked promising was when the Town Weirdo came claiming some international conspiracy was afoot. But a little deeper investigation soon established that to be the handiwork of one of his alter egos<sup>2</sup>.

To make things worse, we have an inordinately high number of tourists this year who bring their pets along, and then manage to lose them. And for some reason, they think that it is better to hire a P. I. to find their pet instead of searching for it in the likely places. But beggars cannot be choosers, so I guess I'll have to just grin and bear it.

It seems all the bad guys in Reality have gone on vacation. I still have no proper clients, who actually have presented me with a real case, where I can actually charge them a big fat fee. Things are really looking bleak. I fear that my limited finances cannot bear the strain much longer.

I hope I get a case some time soon...

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<sup>2</sup>Reality's Town Weirdo suffers from a condition similar to multiple personality disorder, except that no one knows how many personalities there actually are (or when a new identity will manifest itself); some of these alter egos have played a pivotal role in Reality's history

## Week 2

Ed

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2001

Everything is going as per plan. I will soon have my bargaining chip and establish contact with the targets by tomorrow.

I am pretty sure, given the right kind of 'encouragement', these people will provide me with all the funding I need. The whole thing should get over in a couple of weeks.

Max Griff

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2001

At last! A glimmer of hope! It seems that my fortunes are finally beginning to change. Today morning, the Hendersens came to my office with what may develop into a case, and I hope that it does.

But I'm not making any sense, so let me start from the beginning. The Hendersens are one of the many tourists who are enjoying(?) their vacation in Reality. They have a pet kitten. This kitten is an extremely mischievous creature, constantly running around here and there getting into trouble. But I guess that's normal for a kitten. Anyway, to get to the point, this morning the Hendersens came to my office with a ransom note concerning their kidnapped kitten. The only problem, their kitten has not been kidnapped (yet).

What's more interesting is that the note, which was left on their doorstep, has the usual "do not contact the authorities", "wait for further instructions" and other things normally found in a ransom note. A little investigation revealed that the author had taken great pains to conceal his/her identity. There was not a single fingerprint anywhere on the letter or envelope. Also, the message was burnt out on the paper, probably using a magnifying glass or some similar focussing device. The fact that no portion of the paper was burnt through clearly indicates the skill and patience of this wannabe kidnapper.

But what sort of a professional kidnapper mails a ransom note before the kidnapping? Mr. Hendersen also pointed out that the name wrongly spelled in the note. Is this another error in this comedy of errors?

I guess these things will come clearer in the coming days. For what it's worth, it indicates that Reality's Underworld is active. Hopefully some of their activities will culminate into a full blown case for me in the near future.

Agent 000

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> February, 2001

Aha! Spotted him at last!

My suspicions were right all along. I am on the right track. I had best write down my chain of logical reasoning before I forget it (Lately, my memory seems to be failing me. However, that is a mystery for a different time and place).

I reasoned that looking after the captive will require certain items, like food, for instance. There are only a few places<sup>3</sup> where these can be obtained. So I kept a watch on those places during the day (my disguise allows me to freely roam throughout the entire town). I spotted one of them (I'll call him A) buying some food (the captive prefers a specific brand of ready to eat food) at Grundy's market, and taking some milk from the farm. I then followed him, but he led me through a maze of streets and suddenly disappeared inside the graveyard<sup>4</sup> at the outskirts of Reality. I somehow managed to get inside (I am an expert lock picker), but he was nowhere to be seen. Surely there must be some secret passage in there somewhere!

## Max Griff

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2001

As expected, the Hendersens were unable to convince the authorities that their kitten's life may be in danger. Due to this, their kitten was kidnapped today (for real this time). They have hired me to find the kidnapper and recover their kitten. Finally! A real case!

But there is still something weird about this whole affair. First, there is the fact that the Hendersens are not very wealthy. They are the typical couple-next-door type of people, liked and respected by all. Then the kitten itself is not of any rare breed, so as to be valuable.

And more importantly, the sequence of events in which the kidnapping unfolded does raise some questions. Surely, any kidnapper who first delivers the ransom note and then does the actual deed cannot be called as intelligent. Yet the stealth and extent of planning displayed in the kidnapping indicates a professional. My best guess thus far is that this is the work of a team, one member being highly intelligent and skilled, and the other, not so much.

But is this really the case? Or is there something else? I guess that's exactly what I'm being paid to find out. Off to work then!

## Ed

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2001

These past couple of days have been very trying.

My worst fears came true! That fool Dufus made a grave mistake, probably damaging the whole plan beyond repair. I should have assigned the task to Rufus, but wishful thinking will get me

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<sup>3</sup>These will probably be the Yahtzeebrand store, Harvester, Grundy's Market and the Farm

<sup>4</sup>This is the airplane graveyard, and not the one near the church

nowhere. I have identified what needs to be done in order to rectify the error and have set the two of them to work. I know my damage control will not be without consequences, and now I have to think about ways of dealing with those.

I have to be more careful going forward. For all I know, this blunder by Dufus might have already attracted unnecessary attention. I should probably assign the less critical tasks to him from now on.

Other than that, it has been a good day. The experiments are going as planned, and the prototype is coming along smoothly. I should have the design finalized by next week.

## Max Griff

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2001

I examined the Hendersens' house and the area around it. The hedge near the house revealed some shoe prints, probably made from a pair of sneakers. Not much to identify the culprit. But it's a clear indication that someone was keeping a watch on them, waiting for the right moment.

A search of the nearby bushes yielded slightly better results. I found a crumpled receipt from Grundy's. The time stamp on it indicates the purchase was made on Monday, which included, among other things, cat food.

This clearly indicates that this is all a well thought out plan, if this receipt indeed was the kidnapper's. Just to be sure, I checked with all the people in the neighbourhood. No one owns a pet cat. So it's likely the kidnapper's after all.

A trip to Grundy's further strengthened my suspicions. Grundy remembered the person who had purchased the cat food, because he had asked specially to order a specific brand of cat food. He said that he might come again in a couple of days. I guess the best course of action is to tail him, so that I can decide whether this fellow has anything to do with the whole affair.

## Max Griff

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> February, 2001

The weirdest of things happened today. Correction, two weird things.

As Grundy had predicted, the man came today to buy more cat food. Grundy used our secret signal to point him out to me. And he clearly was taking all the precautions to get rid of any followers. He first wandered aimlessly around town, pretending to shop for supplies. Occasionally, he would throw quick, furtive glances here and there to make sure no one was following him. I, being a seasoned P. I. was able to successfully tail him without raising his suspicions.

And that's when things started getting a little weird.

My suspect had stopped at the post office to drop off some letters. As he resumed his wandering in the town square, I noticed that the Town Weirdo was following him, at a discreet distance, with a skill that almost gave me an inferiority complex<sup>5</sup>. I decided to use this to my advantage, and kept myself a safe distance behind the Weirdo.

And then the guy entered the Airplane Graveyard. And that was where we lost track of him. I searched there for about three hours for a hidden door, but my efforts were in vain. It must be cleverly concealed somewhere in all that junk, if at all one exists. For all I know, the fellow could have hidden in some well concealed spot and waited for us to give up the chase and leave.

One thing, however, is certain. That fellow is surely involved in some sinister business. Maybe it could be related to the missing kitten. I must keep an eye on him.

## Agent 000

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> February, 2001

I saw A again today, carrying some wooden planks. I guess they were to make an enclosure of some kind in which they could keep the captive.

I saw him again today trying to buy some food at Yahtzeebrand (NOTE TO SELF: The clerk there has the power to drive anyone completely mad. Avoid him like the plague). Probably he didn't want to draw suspicion to himself by going to the same place repeatedly. Finally, he gave up, and sent his accomplice (hereafter referred to as B) to Grundy's instead. I followed him, keeping a safe distance. Like his colleague, he also mysteriously vanished somewhere inside the graveyard.

The one thing different today was that B purchased more food than what A had previously. Probably to minimize their 'shopping trips'. Another thing is that those two have been very cautious and suspicious of the passers-by these last couple of days. Do they think (or worse, know) that they are being watched? Has my cover been blown?

Now that I know their routine, I must start the next stage of my investigation: identify the location where the captive is being held. Onward to the graveyard!

## Week 3

### Ed

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2001

Finally, things are more or less back on track after last week's fiasco. I can now concentrate on my work again.

There's nothing more to add at present.

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<sup>5</sup>The Town Weirdo's alter egos always have a high degree of realism associated with them

## Max Griff

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2001

I think that the kitten is still here in Reality, as there are multiple things which indicate this

1. Very few people have seen Hendersens' kitten, and most of Reality will not recognize the it at first sight.
2. Reality is the kind of town where, with a minimum of efforts, you can disappear completely. *Out of the ordinary amounts to Normal here.* Also, there are a lot of tourists at present, making it easier for strangers to blend in. It is thus the perfect hiding place.
3. The authorities are busy with other matters and have put this case on the back-burner. This makes the Hendersens' and me (and probably the Weirdo) as the only people searching for the kitten. As such, there is very little reason for the kidnapers to leave Reality.

My instinct tells me that the chap I tailed last week is involved in this somehow. I have made some arrangements to track his movements inside the yard. If all goes well, I should have some leads soon.

## Agent 000

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2001

Success at last! I've finally managed to locate the secret exit from the graveyard. However, this is mostly due to the ingenious plan devised by that Griff fellow, who turned out smarter than I thought. Placing wet mud at different places throughout the yard and concealing it with a thin layer of sawdust was a simple and effective way of obtaining footprints.

I must act fast, for he is bound to come here later in the day. I have to find where this passageway leads to, for I think that the key to this mystery.

NOTE TO SELF: Record the results of investigation later.

## Max Griff

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2001

The plan worked!. I have finally found the secret passage in the Airplane graveyard. It is cleverly concealed inside an old plane fuselage and exits about a mile from the graveyard.

I want to follow the path and see where it leads right now, but my common sense tells me that I should make the necessary preparations beforehand. So I'll just make a quick note

of the things I may need: lock-picking kit, field glasses, camera, a crowbar (also doubles as a weapon), flash light.

I will start at first light tomorrow. The hunt has begun!

## Agent 000

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2001

I have located the secret hiding place of the kidnappers. It is a big mansion on the outskirts of town. I saw B and the captive in the mansion grounds. They spent exactly half an hour outside, before going in. Clearly they have a routine and they stick to it.

I have to identify this routine as soon as possible, if I have to have any chance of extracting the captive, before it is too late. I will have to stake this place out for the next few days. I guess the nearby woods are going to be my temporary residence till this is over.

I must inform Headquarters about this latest development. Maybe they can arrange for some backup.

## Max Griff

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2001

First day of the stakeout. I saw the suspect there, and I heard a cat meowing on the grounds. But I could not get a visual. But that should change soon.

I have already scouted the mansion grounds and found a few good vantage points which will keep me well concealed in the shrubbery and provide me a clear enough view of the place. If all goes well, I will know whether this fellow is really the culprit in a few days time.

## Ed

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2001

Things are going from bad to worse these past couple of days. First, there was a glitch in the ANN<sup>6</sup> of The Illuminator, then there was that problem with the gyroscopic balancer, and now there are these fellows keeping a watch on us.

Dee tells me that the vagrant can be safely ignored; it is the detective we should be wary of. Dee is still getting some redesign done and does not want to attract undue attention to his labs, and has hence instructed to leave them be for the time being. But that does not bode well for me as it jeopardizes my whole scheme.

But simply worrying will get me nowhere. I need a backup plan. I have a few ideas, but they need to be analysed thoroughly. I have to act fast, for if what Dee said is right, then it is only a matter of days before the detective pieces the whole thing together.

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<sup>6</sup>Artificial Neural Network

As the saying goes, hope for the best, but plan for the worst!

## Agent 000

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2001

The big mansion seemed to be abuzz with activity today. A and B were seen going to town on multiple occasions throughout the day. It seems to me that some new plan is being set in motion. Probably a ransom demand? Or a relocation?

I am running out of time now. I have to act fast, before they leave this town. Headquarters has already informed me that they do not have any free agents to send to my help, so I should try and see whether some local assistance can be acquired.

I think I will start with this P. I. fellow, as he probably is the only one who may be willing to help me. True, he was sceptical of my theory in the past, but clearly today is a different time and place.

## Max Griff

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2001

That Weirdo again! Why can't he just leave me alone! The fool came around my lookout spot today to ask for assistance in solving a case of 'International repute'. A little cross-examination revealed this 'conspiracy of global proportions' to be the search for the missing feline. How he came to know of this stolen kitten, is a different mystery altogether.

However, I cannot let him jeopardize the investigation in any way, for my clients (and their fees) are something I cannot afford to lose at present. I must quickly collect some evidence before it is too late. Good thing I've brought my camera along. I should try if I can get a good shot from the other vantage points. One picture should be sufficient enough to convince the authorities.

I have also observed that there is some renovation going on in the mansion. Probably some remodelling being carried out by the new owner, some kind of boffin, I think. This is probably the reason why the suspect is holed up in the outhouse.

## Ed

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2001

There is no time to loose. I have to put my (well Dee's actually) plan in action right away. The damage has already been by Dupus, and now I must sacrifice him to protect the larger, more important plans. It took some effort but Rufus and I finally managed to convince him for the next step of the plan. It was, after all, his mistake that started this chain of events.

So, accordingly, Dufus will take the kitten to the old Boot Factory<sup>7</sup>. This will drive away the two spies away from here, allowing me to move the more costlier assets elsewhere.

Things must move like clockwork from here on, else creation of The Illuminator will be jeopardized. And that is something I have to avoid at all costs...

## Week 4

### Max Griff

Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2001

This is turning out to be easier than I expected. I have photographic evidence of the kidnapper taking Hendersens' kitten to the Boot Depository. Now all that is left to do is show it to the authorities, get the chap arrested and get my fee. I have to act fast, lest the Weirdo throws a spanner in the works.

One small thing that keeps nagging me is that the face of the kidnapper seems vaguely familiar. But I can't identify him. Maybe this will get solved in due course as well...

### Ed

Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2001

Drat! This P. I. fellow is closing in faster than I expected. I have to stall him till my relocation is complete. Time for Plan B...

### Max Griff

Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2001

What an unexpected stroke of luck! The Hendersens just got a call from the kidnappers. The ransom is set at twenty thousand pounds. Now we have a good chance of catching them in the act. I already managed to convince the authorities yesterday that the kitten has, indeed been kidnapped. Now, like me they are also of the opinion that catching the culprit red-handed will help in building a strong case against him.

The ransom drop is day after tomorrow. This whole case will be wrapped up soon.

### Agent 000

Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2001

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<sup>7</sup>It is actually called the Boot Depository

Those bumbling idiots! All of them have been blinded by the elaborate illusion set up before their eyes. Even that P. I. fellow has fallen for it. But then again, they have never been in possession of all the facts. While Griff and his colleagues are busy laying their so-called elaborate 'trap', the real culprit is going to walk from right under their noses. And it seems that this Ed fellow is having some help, too, from some soon to be Reality resident. Headquarters have identified him as one Dr. Ess<sup>8</sup>.

And the saddest part is, I have been asked to stand down by Headquarters. It seems that Ed is planning something insanely big (capable of destroying the whole world, or so I'm told), and Headquarters wants to catch him in the act (I think they just want to lay their hands on whatever device he is building). Hence, his operation in Reality is to be allowed to go on without any interference from us, in order to allay his fears. I have also been asked to discreetly ensure that the local authorities do not disturb our plan. This is highly unlikely, as those who could stop him have already been sent down the wrong road.

Once this whole thing is over, I will contact Headquarters for further instructions.

## Max Griff

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2001

Things went like clockwork today. The culprit walked right into our trap, the Hendersen's kitten is safe and sound and I will soon be receiving my fees.

But today was not without it's share of surprises! The first one of these was the identity of the kidnapper. It turned out to be Fred Malone, cleverly disguised as a gardener. The second surprise was when he willingly handed over the kitten to us and asked us to take it to the safe-house. When he finally realized what was actually happening, he mumbled something about repentance and vengeance<sup>9</sup>, and shut up like a clam.

One fun fact discovered later was that the grocery bills found on Fred revealed that our furry captive has quite an appetite.

## Agent 000

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2001

That villain Ed left Reality with the captive yesterday night. Headquarters tells me that he intends to use the ransom money to fund his diabolical scheme of world destruction. He will probably collect the ransom tomorrow.

Headquarters was impressed with my work and have given me a raise. They have also promised to consider me for Head Detective next year.

My further orders are to stay here in Reality and keep a watch over DVE, A and B (Ed did not take the other one with him) as Headquarters has flagged them as persons of

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<sup>8</sup>Dr. DVE, aka Dr. Die Vie Ess, aka Dr. Devious

<sup>9</sup>Is this the cause of enmity between the Malone brothers?

interest.

## Ed

Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2001

At long last! Success! I finally have the money I so desperately need.

And how do I feel now that all this is over? Happy? Relieved? Excited? A mix of all of these, I guess.

I can now take a well deserved break for a week. Till then, all the travel arrangements will also be complete.

Looking back (as one is wont of doing on occasions like this), I must admit that I did make some errors (both intentional as well as unintentional), but my presence of mind and timely help from Dee saw me through. Also, it was fortunate that the Hendersons followed all my instructions to the letter.

I eagerly await next week, when I begin construction of The Illuminator. My grand invention will change the face of this planet in ways never imagined before. The easy part is done; the difficult one remains. The road ahead will be much with many challenges, and with much obstacles. But I am confident that my hard work and perseverance will see me through.

Onward, then to the future!

## Epilogue

## Ed

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2001

Here I am, back in Reality. This time as a fugitive, hiding from the authorities.

All my hard work has been laid waste by that wannabe vigilante<sup>10</sup>. But all is not lost, as I have managed to escape with most if my research, including designs for the next version of The Illuminator.

As Dee rightly pointed out, the main reason for failure was my lack of preparedness. I did not account for all the unexpected sources of trouble, and this short-sightedness led to my downfall. Looking back, the way in which the events unfolded over the last few days seems totally hilarious.

But I must not dwell too much on the past. I have already decided what I have to do. I will hide in Dee's mansion till this whole thing cools down. And then, I will rebuild my Lab. But for now, all I can do is wait...

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<sup>10</sup>This tale is told elsewhere. See reference 4

## Agent 000

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2001

So Headquarters was right after all! This Ed fellow is back in Reality. I have tracked him to his friend DVE's mansion. According to Headquarters, he and the other targets will not pose any threat after a couple of months. This means I will soon be reassigned (finally!).

I feel that this whole affair concerning Ed should be made public. The people of Reality have a right to know about the villains living in their midst.

Which is why I intend to return to Reality some time in the future (when the time is right) and leave this journal here.

I guess that's all I had to note for today. Bye Reality (for now)! We will meet again in the future.

## Max Griff

Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> December, 2001

I got a letter from one of my previous clients today. I remember the case as it was yesterday, as it was one of the turning points of my career. The case involved rescuing their kidnapped kitten. It culminated in the arrest and conviction of Fred Malone.

If I remember correctly, there were a few loose ends that were never quite tied up, such as how Fred had access to Dr. DVE's mansion. I remember asking myself 'Was there something else here that we missed?'. But nobody bothered much about it as Fred was caught red-handed. However, nothing stays hidden forever in Reality. All secrets get revealed in due time.

Now, back to the present. The Hendersens have sent me a photo of their kitten, along with a small thank you note. I was searching for something to adorn the empty wall over there, and this photo will be perfect for that.

## Ed

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2002

Dee's state of the art surveillance equipment picked a man man prowling on the mansion grounds. After observing his movements for some time, we found out that he had a hiding place in one of the more wooded areas in the grounds. He seems to be a harmless squatter. But we will keep a watch on him, just to be sure.

## Ed

Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2002

A very strange thing happened today. The squatter whom we had spotted earlier, disguised himself with a mask and a fake ponytail before leaving the mansion grounds today. I wonder what he is up to...

## Ed

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2002

An unexpected turn of events has forced me to cut short my stay in Reality. It seems the local postman found a letter to Dee, apparently written by me. Dee somehow succeeded in casting sufficient doubt about its authenticity. However, to be on the safer side (and to prevent jeopardizing Dee's operations), we decided that it was best for me to continue hiding at one of our other safe-houses.

As it is essential that I leave as far as possible, I will leave my equipment and other things in Dee's safekeeping for now. I will return to retrieve them when things have settled down a bit...

## Agent 000

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2012

This is the last entry in this journal. I have been retired from the service for some time now and live a life of peace and anonymity.

It is almost over a decade since I had first come to Reality. It is now time to place this journal in the public domain. I am leaving this in a box in the alley. I request whoever finds it to use the chain of events depicted within these pages to obtain an understanding some of the hitherto unknown events in Reality's history.

So there it is! The story of the furry feline which we see in Max Griff's office. Even Max does not believe that he was a kitten's (or was it a cat's) whisker away from exposing a global conspiracy. It also sheds some light on these events in Reality's history

1. Timely intervention by the Nameless FBI Official to foil Dr. DVE's plan<sup>11</sup>
2. The hatred between the Malone twins
3. No-Beard's plan to frame Hooky McPegleg<sup>12</sup>

I am sure that by now, you must be eager to know what actually happened (and whether you were able to guess it correctly) during those four weeks. So, in parting, I leave with a brief description of events as they happened.

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<sup>11</sup>See reference 5

<sup>12</sup>See reference 6

## Week 1

- Unable to obtain funding for his project, Dr. Ed plans to kidnap Fluffy, the Hendersons' pet cat
- Agent 000 follows Dr. Ed to Reality-On-The-Norm
- Agent 000 tries to enlist help of Max Griff and the local authorities, but fails to convince them

## Week 2

- Dr. Ed successfully kidnaps Fluffy
- Dr. Ed's minion sends the ransom note to the wrong people (the Hendersens)
- Dr. Ed decides to use the goof up to his advantage and makes his minion kidnap the Hendersons' kitten, in order to create a diversion
- The Hendersens approach Max Griff for help
- Agent 000 keeps shadowing Dr. Ed's minions
- Max Griff and Agent 000 successfully track one of Ed's minions to the Airplane Graveyard

## Week 3

- Max, acting on the assumption that the kitten is still in Reality, succeeds in locating Dr. Ed's hideout
- Agent 000, who has been keeping watch over the Airplane Graveyard, also locates Dr. Ed's hideout
- Dr. Ed sees the two keeping watch on his lair, and comes up with a back-up plan
- Agent 000 makes another unsuccessful attempt to secure Max's assistance

## Week 4

- Max succeeds in capturing one of Dr. Ed's minions on camera
- Ed makes a ransom demand, hoping to delay action from the authorities and draw attention away from his original plan
- Max and the local police succeed in nabbing one of Ed's minions
- Dr. Ed collects the ransom money from the Hendersons
- Dr. Ed leaves Reality

## References and Sources for Further Investigation

1. Journals of Max Griff
2. Diary of Dr. Ed
3. Agent 000's investigation notes (currently in Albert Waek's shop)
4. Permanent Daylight
5. Return of Die Vie Ess
6. Hooky McPegleg: Pirate Postman