

41. Vatican Therapy

Money and its vicissitudes

In any mystery, scandal or crime, veteran investigators always say, “follow the money” and you will find the crime or culprit. Perhaps this is true, but in Roberto Calvi’s case, it was not so simple. The fact is that he lived in money, it was his life. So when an investigation into the alleged illegal movement of some several billion lire from the Banco Ambrosiano, to an undisclosed recipient or recipients was commissioned by the Bank of Italy, Calvi was naturally targeted because he was President and Chairman of that bank. It is possible that the missing money might have been overlooked were it not for the fact that the bank was closely associated with the Holy See. And of course, the Vatican was a perennial target of far left politicians and various agents of the PCI (Italian Communist Party). In retrospect, after many commissions and inquiries, we now know that there were many other “parties of interest” involved in this alleged irregular movement of funds. Those parties included, but were not limited to, the CIA, MI6, the FBI, and Italy’s various spy agencies: SIFAR, Armed Forces Information Service (Servizio Informazioni Forze Armate), SID, Defense Information Service; SISDE, Service for Intelligence and Democratic Security; SISMI, Service for Military Intelligence Security.

If there were any stalkers following Calvi therefore, he would have led them to the Vatican Library on a regular basis, once every week. That he would do this, a man so loaded with work and personal problems, find the time to come from Milan to Rome once a week and spend the afternoon in the Vatican was amazing; incredible that Calvi was physically and mentally able to find the time, incredible to his watchers who recorded his every move.

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Dr. Ferrapotti's official consulting room was tucked away on the second floor of the Vatican library, between the Biblioteque Pontificale and Cortile S. Damaso. He was such a busy man, what with his students at the University of Rome and his research at UNSDRI, that he had no time for regular patients, so he confined his psychiatric practice to the referrals he received from the Vatican. He had developed a lucrative and very effective practice, essentially dealing with patients who were sent to him by the upper echelons of the Vatican, by far the majority of them involving problems of a sexual nature. At the time, homosexuality was a crime in Italy, punished by various amounts of prison time. Further, if prosecuted, the Vatican of course preferred to avoid the inevitable media sensations that would result. Dr. Ferrapotti therefore provided an essential service. He diagnosed such patients as mentally ill, unfit to stand trial, so the case would never reach the court, and his congenial relationship with the various prosecutors and judges he knew in the Vatican and even outside, assured that the case would be stamped "cleared." Thus the patient remained free, but usually required to meet with his psychiatrist on a regular basis, for a particular period of time.

One can see, then, that it was most unusual for Ferrapotti to have invited Roberto Calvi to come to him regularly for therapy (a vague word if ever there was one), not to mention that his office was inside the Vatican. The media and others, unspecified, would be watching Calvi like hawks, and undoubtedly report that Calvi had been seen entering the Vatican.

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At the time, there were no privacy laws, so what went on between therapist and patient was not, technically, legally protected. This fact was actually irrelevant in Calvi's case, or any of Ferrapotti's cases for that matter. Ferrapotti was, as we have seen, a very talkative person, who loved

passing on information, embellishing it, manipulating it, and exchanging it for other information he deemed necessary for his personal and professional life. Every sentence he uttered was laced with intrigue, and delivered in a loud whisper. Thus it was, when he responded to the light knock on the door to his clinic, he opened the door quickly, pulled Calvi inside, then poked his head out and looked up and down the corridor. He quickly retreated into his clinic and locked the door, turning a huge key in an ancient lock almost half the size of the door itself.

“Welcome to my humble clinic,” smiled Ferrapotti in a whisper. “Make yourself comfortable on the couch.”

Calvi, looking thin and a little haggard, smiled a little and sat on the couch. The decor of the clinic was hardly comforting. There was no window, only a faint incandescent light hanging from the ceiling,

“You can lie down if you want,” said the good doctor.

“I don’t know if I can keep this up every week. A lot of things are happening. I feel like I’m being hunted like a dog,” complained Calvi.

Ferrapotti picked up the small wicker chair from beside his modest mahogany desk and placed it in front of Calvi. He sat down, his rotund weight causing the chair to creak. He then broke one of the first rules of psychotherapy. *Never physically touch the patient*. He took both Calvi’s limp hands and squeezed them gently. “Roberto, I am your friend and counsellor. Tell me. Tell me anything you want. No matter. You will be better for it.”

“Doctor, Franco, do you mind if I call you that?”

“*Si, senz’ altro!*”

“You are a member of P2, right?”

“*Si*. What of it? I only do it to keep up with what is going on. You know?”

“Yes. But I thought I was protected. But now I’m not so sure.”

“What are you saying?”

“My bank. I think they’re trying to destroy it.”

“My friend. Who? P2? They couldn’t even if they wanted to! It’s not really organized. Just a club, you might say.”

“Franco, I’m afraid you are very naive. It is now dangerous to be associated with P2.”

“What do you mean? Oh..ar..the communists?”

“Maybe. But there’s a lot of others. They have infiltrated P2.” Calvi looked away. Then back. “I tell you. I don’t really know exactly. But I suspect either the CIA, MI6, SID or maybe all of them.”

“But the Vatican. I thought you had a close relationship? They will protect you, no?” asked Ferrapotti as softly as he could.

“I can’t count on it. I think they are after them as well.”

“I don’t understand. Why the Vatican?” asked Ferrapotti, probing.

“They are, have, you know how they helped before, saved the *Corriere Della Sera*...”

“But now P2 runs it, no? So you will be protected from the media, at least,” said Ferrapotti leaning back, giving the impression of reassurance.

“Not here in Rome and everywhere else but Milan and even there I can no longer be sure. I may have to get away...” Calvi looked around the room as though looking for a way to escape.

Ferrapotti leaned back on his chair and it squeaked appropriately. “Anyway,” he said, “this is just a way of you avoiding what is really ailing you. Your, shall we say, trysts? Will you be calling upon anyone while you are here close to the seminary for young priests in training?”

“I think I had better be going,” murmured Calvi, looking distractedly around, squirming a little on the couch.

“We have only just begun,” said Ferrapotti, sitting further to the edge of the chair, once again reaching for Calvi’s limp hands and squeezing them tightly.

“Let me go, Franco. I feel better already. It may have been brief, but it doesn’t take long to lift the weight of deeds

that have not yet happened.“

“Guilt, you mean?” asked Ferrapotti conveying his incredulity.

“Of course not. What’s done is done. I’m sure you know that. But future acts, if you know of them. They can be pushed away and provide a narrow path to hope. The hope that they will not happen.”

Ferrapotti frowned a little. “Perhaps. But I do not agree entirely with your assumption that the past cannot be changed. There are many ways to cover up, falsify, construct counterfeit histories, perhaps you have indulged in those practices yourself? Some call it disinformation, at least that is what today’s intelligence agencies call it.”

“If you are talking about how my bank advertises itself, its public image. Yes, that is true. But when it is completely damaged, as is about to happen, the bank, even its false front, is beyond repair.” Calvi looked down, his face the picture of calamity.

“And you?” asked Ferrapotti.

Calvi looked back and stared aggressively into Ferrapotti’s ever-blinking eyes.

“Ok. I completely understand,” said Ferrapotti as he gave a deep sigh. “It’s too bad these things are happening, because I was hoping to help you more with your personal problems of relationships, like we talked about before. My next patient who is due here any minute, was going to help us out.”

As if on cue, there was a faint knock, and the door handle jiggled. Calvi looked anxiously at the door then to his doctor. He was about to get up and remonstrate, but Ferrapotti quickly rose from his wicker chair and opened the door.

Calvi couldn’t help himself. The young priest was as beautiful as could be. He entered quickly and leaned forward, arms crossed as if to hold himself together.

“Michael. Meet Roberto. Roberto, meet Michael,” purred Ferrapotti, in a soft whisper. He then quickly

retreated behind his desk, leaving the two to stare at each other.

“I was just going,” mumbled Calvi.

“Ok, my apologies. I am a bit early,” answered Michael, a happy smile on his very white, Aryan face, his big crop of wavy blond hair dazzling Calvi as he stood rooted to the spot.

At that moment the phone rang and Ferrapotti picked it up immediately.

“Yes, OK. Definitely. Oh..ah..er. Good. Good. I will be right there.” Ferrapotti looked around furtively. “I have been summoned,” he said mysteriously. “One of my sources.”

Calvi looked at him, and had Michael not been there he might have asked what sources. Instead he turned to Michael and said, “well I suppose I should be going too.” He looked at his watch and said, “I need to get back to Milano.”

Ferrapotti already had his briefcase packed and was on his way out. “Pull the door shut when you leave. It should lock automatically behind you, so make sure you don’t leave anything behind.”

A very excited Ferrapotti rushed out and away. He had been summoned to the Ministry of Defense to join a secret and select committee to review the causes and prevention of terrorism in Italy. As Italy’s top criminologist, he would later tell everyone he met, he had been called to duty. However, an important factor that may have contributed to his selection was his membership in P2.

