





# THE TRILLION DOLLAR COW

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# DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to my father Linderman Zamora, he went missing in Brazil shortly after I spoke with him last. It's been almost four years without contact, and nobody knows where he is or what happened to him. I also dedicate this book to my best friend Emmanuel and my brother Frank. This book would not have manifested as fast as it did if it weren't for their support and encouragement. My sincere thank you, for pushing me with this great idea.

*“Would you fight for a greater purpose?*

*Even if that is just the freedom to surf the internet on your couch?”*

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# PREFACE

This novel is a work of science fiction, any of the characters' names and habits are coincidental. Any resemblance to real-world events is purely speculative and does not portray the beliefs or feelings of the Author. Proceed with caution.

The Trillion Dollar Cow is a novel that I had a lot of fun writing, it is to say without going much into detail that it was challenging to write. At times, I would be stuck on writer's block, at others, I did not see my characters moving past some building blocks. I'm happy to say that unlike my previous work Sensiti, this novel did not take me ten years of planning, I came up with the rough idea in three nights of inspiration back in late 2018. It was much to the support and love of my family and friends who upon hearing what I had in mind for the novel, did not stop asking me to make it into a book.

After five years in the drafts, I began writing the story. I have more social groups and hobbies than I had five years prior, so it wasn't easy finding time and effort to spend behind the laptop. The community of Indwell, where I reside, was very helpful and eager to know what I was up to. On every conversation, my book came up and I had nothing to show except to tell them I was working on it. Nevertheless, some of the more entertaining individuals inspired me with their remarkable quotes, which I did not fail to put in my book somewhere. The staff, on the other hand, were very proud of me to be doing something other than twiddling my thumbs in my apartment. I could sense in their eyes just how proud of me they are, and I hope this book delivers as much as I have in mind.

Aside from taking inspiration from my father's absence, I found myself in the comfort of innovating the story using what I was most familiar with – my relationship with my niece, and what is like being an Uncle. The innocent and delicate bond that the protagonist has, in protecting her beautiful childhood despite having grown in scarcity and fear, is something I touch briefly here and there from experience.

The characters in the book live in a dystopian society where the internet has been suppressed. I tried my best to give light to each character individually a little at some parts of the book. The robot, for example, is a character I had not planned to create, but the idea seemed so tempting that I could not pass it by. He turned out to be one of my favourite characters, for many reasons. Just like him, I'm sure each character will provide something for the reader, and the story. Enjoy!



# PROLOGUE

The man bleeding out tucked up in a corner of an alleyway was Finch Asher Solace, a father of a baby named Reymundo. The war was supposed to end as he was meant to be its hero, but instead, he became a traitor to the nation. He was not supposed to change sides, but fate had it as is. *"I must endure, for God is protecting me."* He held on, pressing on his wound while trying to get up. *"They must be still following me."* He thought as he walked slowly, blood dripping from his side thigh down his leg. The revolution against the war and famine was ever so prominent. All Finch wanted to do was go home to his child. This was not even his war to fight for. As the crowd accumulated on the streets of the US to protest, Finch inserted himself in the multitude and blended with the people who were being gassed and executed for civil unrest and violence. Unrest leaned in to surrender, but it was too late, for millions of people around the world had died, and those who survived had resorted to cannibalism. In there, at the heart of the chaos, slander and ego had risen and fallen, as a dead bird on winter.



# CHAPTER 1: THE FAMINE

In the year 20XX, natural disasters have caused a famine. Hidden amid undulating hills in Ecuador was a small, war-torn village that was home to nine-year-old Reymundo. He looked forward to his father's homecoming from the distant battle every day. For this child, long, starving days were interspersed with hours of quiet. It was unclear to the populace whether the hunger was brought on by the neglect of farmers to work the land, or by the battle of the war. A clue to that answer was the fact that both of these things were intercepting each other.

One sorrowful evening, when word spread that World War III was over, the victorious army returned home. Reymundo's father, though, wasn't one of them. The absence of his father poured a pall over his already frail heart. After the fight was done, the ghost of his beloved father continued to be a scary source of inspiration. The air was heavy with loss, and it seemed as though the sounds of distant battlegrounds were seeping into every nook and crevice. Often, Reymundo would sit on a simple wooden bench at the village square and scan the horizon for signs of his father's approach. Reymundo's longing echoed in the mournful calm enveloping the village as the sun dipped below the rugged peaks, and long shadows fell across the deserted streets.

On the twentieth day, Reymundo waited in a dilapidated hut on the edge of the village, grieving for his father's return. The huge fields that were once thriving with crops were now crushed underfoot due to the devastation of war that encircled the isolated cottage. Inside, fading pictures and worn-out furniture covered the walls, each one preserving a moment in time when everyone was happy and together. A depressing glow filled the room as dust particles danced in the sunshine that came in through broken windows. Reymundo could see the ruins of far-off fights from the front porch, a sombre reminder of the chaos that had taken over their lives. The breezes whispered tales of valour and suffering, and the eerie silence heightened his desire.

Reymundo's family and the entire community endured many difficulties as a result of his father's absence, because Rey's father was a protector of the village, and without him, looting and murder were more common. The weight of accountability was threatening to topple them. Weeks passed, and Reymundo saw his older sister taking on odd jobs to make ends meet while his mother struggled to maintain their small home. The once-vibrant town was now filled with solemn murmurs of suffering and hopelessness.

Having his mother read him an outdated children's book was the one thing that made Reymundo happy at night. The new wave of children's books created after 2035 used artificial intelligence (AI) and had long since lost wonderful concepts that can only be imagined with

pure imagination. Reymundo had a cross necklace around his neck, just like his father had, and he would clutch it hard each night as he listened to the stories.

His mother flipped the last page of the book. "The end." She told in a tender voice. "Now go back to sleep. Tomorrow, I got to go to work, your sister has to work. And you have to work."

"What? When did I get a job? I'm only nine."

"It doesn't matter, I can't look after you because I'm making money to pay for the bills. Your sister is helping pay for the food because inflation is so bad. We are barely getting over the famine. If you don't help with the food too, I'm afraid we will all starve."

"Okay, mom." He musters determination under his lips. "I'll do it, and someday we will be rich."

"Yes, someday we will be rich, although now the people who used to be millionaires are in the same situation as us. I don't know what it will take to be at the level of rich people now. All I know is that God is going to help us."

"Good night, Mom."

She closed the door slowly, "Goodnight Reymundo."

Rey had a naughty glimmer in his brilliant, innocent eyes and a cherubic face when he was younger. He was always stronger than a nine-year-old because his body was made to withstand adversities through what many consider to be the last generation.

Reymundo started working as an assistant mechanic the very following day and picked up all the knowledge he could. He was filthy when he got home, with oil and gas stains all over his clothes and off-road black graphite and grease all over his face. His smile persisted for a week, but after that, something wasn't right.

"Do you like your new job?" Asked his mother Eleanor. Sensing some urgency in him. "Yes." He said reluctantly, Reymundo's heart sank early in the day when he collected his meagre wages, a mere dime for each arduous hour spent as an assistant in the bustling mechanic's workshop. He didn't want to tell his mother that his work would make virtually no difference.

It felt like a thin thread of money, in sharp contrast to the enormous amount of time and devotion he put into his work. But his frustration was contrasted by his Boss Dimas annoyance, a twenty-something young man whose professional approach was tainted by personal strife in addition to the weight of managing the workshop.

The young boss's tired expression betrayed the fatigue of a troubled spirit as he bore the weight of his troubles on his shoulders, his brow furrowed and eyes gloomy. Beneath the racket

of instruments and flutter of gears, the Dimas's irritation showed as irritability and a tendency to snap. His professional responsibilities became intermingled with personal concerns, causing his once-bright zeal to fade and his patience to shrink. Reymundo found himself the unlucky target of the boss's irritations, receiving sharp comments and critical remarks that made him feel demoralized and undervalued.

The boss's workplace turned into an arena where his anxieties intersected with his managerial responsibilities as he worked through the maze of his struggles. Caught in the crossfire, Reymundo longed for a glimmer of compassion and understanding that was lost in the raging storm inside his boss's heart.

One day while the young child and his boss were both under a car, Rey as he was called for short, asked him a question. "Sir... the war, the aftermath, who instigated the war? And who won?"

Boss Dimas, looked over at Reymundo with a lifted eyebrow. "Pass me the key." And Rey did.

"Listen, it was the fucking Millennials that got persuaded by the Boomers to carry out their traditional war every hundred years or so. The Millennials started a civil war but the Gen Z were supposed to stop them. Ever since the internet was cut off Gen Z were on withdrawal as if they were on Xanax. It was ridiculous."

"Sorry sir, who are the Millennials and who are the Gen Z?"

"My father is in his late sixties, he is a Gen Alpha, the generation before Gen Alpha were the Gen Zs, and both Boomers and Millennials you don't have to worry about it. They are all dead. Even if a couple were alive, they would be too old to do any real damage."

"Ahh really? And what's this thing called the internet?"

"It's a mystery." The boss gets a grin on his face as his imagination goes into deep wonder. "It's the closest thing we had to magic, whoever has it can instantly know what is happening all over the world. But it was taken away because everyone had too much power, it went back to being strictly for military use, as it was intended from the beginning. Damn, I can't even own a phone because it's so fucking expensive and it got so many restrictions over the internet. It's not like it used to be sixty years ago."

"I think I remember my mother talking about that. Is that where the thing called AI is from? The person who created the dull children's books."

"It's not a person, and yes. I don't care much about that technology as much as I care about playing soccer, so I don't care what happens as long as I get to play. You are not from around here, right? You wouldn't know shit. I heard from my dad that we are living the same childhood the Boomers had, both with war and getting to play outside." Pass me the next key.

"Which key?"

"Don't tell me you don't have it, go inside and get me the medium-sized key I showed you yesterday." Rey went inside but there were five different medium sizes and he had forgotten which was the one he had seen the day before. He came back rather scared. "I'm sorry, the one you asked me is it this one?"

"No!" he frowned in anger. "Fuck!" He quickly got out of the car. "I asked you one fucking thing and you always screw it over, why are you always so damn fucking stupid."

Rey was slightly trembling, one moment he was having a nice chat with his boss and the next he was getting yelled at. His skills cannot carry on long enough to go one day without getting yelled at.

"Let's go, I can't believe I have to show you again. Don't you remember anything? Fuck and why does everybody think you are smart? You are a dumb kid." As they both walked his boss continued, "You know I have to be a saint or something because I allowed a retarded kid into my work and you get paid to do the easiest thing in the fucking wide world."

Reymundo couldn't talk back, any experience he could get was better than no experience at all. Once inside Dimas explain the whole procedure again. "Is that explained easy enough for you? You have been here how long?"

"Two ..." whispered Rey.

"Two what? Come on, how long?"

Rey bowed his head down. "Two months."

"Exactly two months, any other smart kid would have gotten the drift by now. Don't let me get you, I will hit you next time."

"I'm sorry."

"I don't want your sorry-ass sorry; I want results. The customers are waiting for my results. If you mess up, I can't work fast and efficiently and end up looking stupid to my customers. If you slow down my momentum, I can't finish my quota of ten cars per day. I'm on a roll here. So please, get faster."

Reymundo bowed his head once again.

"One more thing kid, leave the cross necklace you wear under your shirt at home. It will slow you down when you are under the vehicles, I don't want to be responsible if you accidentally choke yourself."

"Yes, but it's one of the things left by my father."

“Are you fucking listening?”

An old man walked in, “Now, now, Dimas let the kid be a kid. It’s time for tea and bread. Come on let’s go.”

Rey stared at Dimas confused, “Who is that man?” He asked.

“Let’s go.” He said, “I want you to meet someone.”

As they entered the garage, filled with malfunctioning electronics and resembling the entrance to a science fiction caveman's lair, an air of strength and wisdom surrounded the elderly man delivering drinks. Reymundo saw that it was his boss's father, and he was surveying the area with a soft gaze.

The boss's father drew nearer to his son, and the workshop descended into a quiet reverence. A faint glint of bittersweet reminiscence seemed to flood over the elder man's face at that moment of melancholy. Reymundo felt that there was a connection between them that went beyond their current struggles. It is unknown how long the father had been celebrating his win, but he was relieved that the fight was over. More happiness was brought about by the fact that the famine was also ending. However, Reymundo did not know why the war and famine were ending, more on that to come.

The boss's father held out a worn hand, soft but firm, making the room seem to hold its breath. That touch melted the boss, who was normally harsh and rude. When their gazes locked, a wordless understanding—a history of love, sacrifice, and unsaid words—passed between them.

Fixated by this unforeseen window into their relationship, Reymundo observed. Time seemed to stop for a minute, allowing a father's love to pierce through his son's tough exterior and remind him of the power he had inherited. The father looked aside, thoughts of what lay ahead piercing his chest like an uneasy arrow. He was both relieved and terrified by the stories of the internet being brought back. A Gen Alpha remains Gen Alpha, forever.

The workshop felt different in that little moment—a haven of memories where the burden of duty and the ties of family came together. Reymundo couldn't help but be filled with awe for the boss's father, who exuded a sense of grandeur and kindness that left a lasting impression on everyone who saw him. For someone to become that smart and mature in life, it must have come from experience. Time moved on, bringing about as much good as terrible. It helped people move past a vague sense of apprehension and bewilderment.

Once Rey got his Tea and bread, the old man sat down next to him. “Children like you should be at home playing video games, that was my childhood. One of the best ones.”

“What’s a videogame?”

“Let me show you.”

The man proceeded to turn on a TV and play a game on a PS10, the graphics and the game looked so epic that Rey was mesmerized.

“Back in my day, kids your age were very demanding of the best graphics and fuss about every little detail. I’m glad your generation got so clueless, I’m afraid you were humbled down without even knowing it,” he said, followed with a laugh.

“That’s a videogame? It’s so cool I could watch you play all day.”

Rey was shown how to use the controller and he was glued to the screen. Dimas as busy as always yelled over. “Let’s go, you didn’t come here to play, you came here to work. Hurry the hell up.” He was waiting for him outside.

“I’m sorry, I have to go. But can I come and play here tomorrow?”

The man smiled, “Sure thing.”

For the next few days after work, the old man taught Rey history and how technology used to work.

“I thought you were a mechanic?” Rey was curious about the man’s background.

“I major in computer Engineer, among other things.”

Rey picked up a strange green thing he thought was scrap.

“That’s a motherboard from an old videogame console of the 90s.”

“This thing is where all those cool effects come from?”

“Yes, that’s right.” The man sipped his tea while telling this as if it was the most common occurrence.

Rey savoring the moment said, “It’s amazing you still have something from a hundred years ago. It is a big deal, wait until I tell all my friends about this. They won’t believe me.”

“Nope, they probably won’t.”

“Wow, I can’t get over that fact.” There was a smile that went from ear to ear on Rey’s face.

“Do you know what movies are?”

“The ones created by AI? I thought it was supposed to be a joke that people watch on those screens.”

“No, not the AI movies, the real movies. Have you never seen one?”



There was a puzzled expression that seemed to last for a while, "No I never seen one."

"You have much to discover, it's all on the internet. One day, when you have access to the internet, you'll discover just how amazing the past was."

"If things like video games are on the internet, it must be the most amazing thing to ever happen to us. Can I ask you something?"

"Yes, go ahead."

"What's the most important thing when building a game machine, or any machine that is sci-fi-like?"

The old man ponders for a moment with chin tilted upwards towards the sky, the remnants of ideas conflicted with logic dance around in his head, there was a brief recollection of his memory, sharpened from decades of solitude under his garage fixing old models.

"Everyone has their own opinions but I think the digital and physical space of the model is important as well as how much data you can squeeze in the space you have, some people like portability and lightness. Others want heavy-duty performance. Every choice you make will change the outcome of the end product, whatever you make will be determined by what you desire."

"But if I have to focus on one thing to be as good as you. What would that be?"

"Space, both in terms of memory data and physical space, if you do a good job on those, then when you learn about motherboards and compression you will have some room to wiggle your tail."

Reymundo sipped his last drop of tea, "Space, got it." He went back to work with a quiet demeanour, processing what he was told, with only one goal in mind. Expanding his knowledge of the unknown world he was discovering little by little.

Time flew by and many changes took place. The world was restored to some degree but the economy was barely established, soon the whole world would come to know Rey. They just didn't know it yet.

## CHAPTER 2: THE CALL

Sixteen years had slipped through the hourglass of time since Reymundo first stepped foot in the mechanic's workshop, his family left Ecuador on a wisp of opportunity that came for his sister, she got hired as a caregiver up to the coasts of Canada.

Reymundo had just completed his studies, and his sister had paid for his college fees. Rey's hands grew raw from his laborious work, and he now stood on the brink of a new chapter in his life as the globe embraced the ever-expanding boundaries of scientific discovery. He had changed from being an innocent youngster to a DNA research assistant, delving deeply into the secrets contained in the fundamental components of life.

Though tech courses were not very popular, they were studied with the serious consideration that came from undergoing two years of military training in anarchy. Rey's actual passion was technology. However, Rey had been dubious of all things estimated by the government, and he didn't want to enlist in the army since they had been unable to provide him with any information regarding his father's location.

His smooth jet-black hair, which seemed to reflect the wildest recesses of his mind, gave his face an oddly vigorous frame. He was always searching for new information and solving scientific problems, and behind a pair of rectangular glasses, his warm brown eyes shone with a mixture of perplexity and resolve.

Reymundo was surrounded by clinking glasses and whispered talks in the research facility's hallowed halls. With scientists bustling around him, their eyes bright with purpose and inquiry, the air crackled with expectancy. One's heart would skip a beat with the amount of information and invention contained behind those walls.

Wearing a brand-new lab coat, Reymundo approached his desk with a mixture of excitement and anxiety. He was facing a large frontier of unexplored territory and unrealized potential: the field of genetic exploration and DNA analysis. He felt a thrill shoot through his veins with each deft stroke of his gloved hands, a deep-seated desire to discover the mysteries tucked away in the complex web of life's blueprint.

"Software." He murmured to himself.

"What did you say?" asked the head researcher.

"I was told data compression was the way to go about things, in order to understand space. So I went with DNA, but it's more like the software of the human body than it is the engineering part of it. What do you think? Is DNA Software?"

“Well ...” He began, “We scientists think DNA is hardware, there’s nothing more to it. At their core, both DNA and hardware function as the building blocks of complex systems. DNA, composed of nucleotides, forms the genetic code that carries the instructions for an organism's development and functioning. Similarly, hardware, consisting of interconnected electronic components, serves as the foundation for the functioning of our digital devices.

“DNA employs various compression mechanisms. One such mechanism is called repetitive DNA sequences, where specific sequences are duplicated and stored in multiple locations across the genome. This redundancy allows for more compact storage of genetic information.

“Furthermore, DNA employs compression techniques through the use of codons. Codons are three-nucleotide sequences that encode specific amino acids or serve as signals within the genetic code. The genetic code is structured in such a way that multiple amino acids can be encoded by different codons, allowing for information compression by reducing the number of distinct sequences needed to represent all the necessary genetic instructions.

“What makes these compression strategies in both hardware and DNA intriguing is their inherent trade-off between compression ratio and accessibility. Higher compression ratios generally result in more efficient storage and transmission but at the cost of increased complexity in encoding and decoding processes. Balancing compression efficiency with ease of access and processing speed is a delicate dance in both domains.

“Additionally, these compression mechanisms in hardware and DNA highlight the remarkable efficiency and optimization found in natural systems. DNA's ability to store massive amounts of genetic information within the microscopic confines of a cell showcases the incredible density and information-carrying capacity of biological systems. Similarly, data compression techniques in hardware demonstrate human ingenuity in minimizing data size for efficient storage and communication in the digital world.”

Rey was blindly shocked by the sequential remarks of his boss’s understanding of higher digital and cellular information. Unfortunately, Rey wasn’t as smart as he thought he was and only understood a portion of it. All that he knew was that the world was ready to merge biology with technology.

“I see,” he replied casually trying to deviate the conversation somewhere else. Although he was there because he finished his studies, he was only ever so capable of being an assistant instead of a proper researcher.

“Where are you from again?” questioned his boss, Martin.

“My family were farmers on the outskirts of Colombia, we moved to Ecuador because of the famine. But our life was not easy back in those days. If my sister didn’t get a Permanent Residence here in Canada, I’m afraid we would have been dead by now.”