

THE GOLDEN BILLION

Written by

Larisa Vödisch-Nikitina

Schützenmattstrasse 43
4051 Basel, Switzerland
Tel. + 41 77 4157997
Email: larisavoedisch@gmail.com

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FADE IN:

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

The room is a small sitting area. There is a leather sofa, two leather armchairs, and a small glass table in front of them on the left side of the room.

The fire blazes in a high-quality electric fireplace framed with white stone on the right side.

Bookshelves adorn the walls.

Two bald, middle-aged men - LOUIS, a small man with brilliant and shifty eyes, and JACOB, a tall man dressed in garishly colored clothes - smoke cigars in their chairs.

The third one, apparently the host, SAM - a fat man in his 70s - sits on the sofa. He drinks his scotch and looks quite pleased.

SAM

Guys, we have to come up with a new project.

LOUIS

Are you short of money? Should I lend you any?

He LAUGHS.

JACOB

It's time; the Democrats are about to lose.

He leans in his armchair, exhaling rings of smoke into the air gleefully.

SAM

What ideas do you have?

JACOB

Business as usual?

SAM

Sure. It's still working, isn't it?

He smacks his lips.

JACOB
National security, right?

LOUIS
To launch an all-encompassing idea
after the last pandemic... Hm...
But I have a suggestion. Let's say
to the people there will be a massive
earthquake that threatens California.

He scratches his left palm.

JACOB
Itchy palms! You're coming into
money!

LOUIS
I have no objection.

He LAUGHS again.

SAM
The last fire in Hawaii shows that
Congress is unwilling to allocate
much money for such projects.

JACOB
Okay. Another idea. We'll solve
ecological problems.

SAM
Which ones exactly?

JACOB
Alaska. Bears. Ocean warming.
Whales. Pick one that's closer to
you.

SAM
That's what people are sick of. Give
me something fresh.

He pours himself scotch again.

LOUIS
(excited)
Let's play on the threat of aliens.

SAM
How?

LOUIS
We say we're not protected against
the invasion of aliens.
(MORE)

LOUIS (cont'd)
So it's necessary to install a
special space shield around the
globe.

JACOB
Ha ha! That's terrific!

He presses his lips together and blows tiny rings of smoke
into the ceiling.

SAM
Is that realistic?

LOUIS
Hey, I can sell salt to a slug.
(getting more and
more excited)
Do people believe in the happiness of
gender reassignment? Trends like
this don't come from anywhere; they
must be put out and promoted to the
masses accordingly! And
cryptocurrency - who profits from it,
eh? Ponzi would be proud of me!
Furthermore, as you know, I can
organize a revolution of any kind.
I'm second to none at this!

He CHUCKLES again with an undertone.

LOUIS (cont'd)
For good reason, people call us "the
golden billion," although we are not
more than a hundred.

His eyes sparkle like those of a maniac.

JACOB
I like the idea. Panic in the media.
People, taking placards: "Save us
from the aliens!"

LOUIS
And we come then to the Congress with
proposals to solve the problem. They
would have to allocate money! Then,
we give orders to our companions to
produce some space devices, and we
manage the whole project.
(in a changed voice)
How many billions do you think we'll
squeeze out of that?

SAM
But what comes in the end?

JACOB
Veni. Vidi. Vici.

LOUIS
Media's in our hands. We'll report
we're now sufficiently protected from
any invasion.

SAM
Is it not too risky?

JACOB
We've got the money!

LOUIS
Sure! If things go wrong, we have
our lawyers! They will delay any
court until the next election. After
that, everything wrong can be blamed
on the previous government.

He GIGGLES like a little child. Sam is pensive.

SAM
That's clear. That's our usual
procedure. But I doubt whether
people will "swallow" this.

LOUIS
People are so manipulable these days
that they would swallow the theme
with great pleasure! Look, some of
them still believe that the Earth is
flat.

He CHUCKLES cynically.

JACOB
Aliens are popular.

LOUIS
We'll "find" something in the
archives, in the diggings. We can
also make a few rounds in the sky so
that everyone sees the aliens are
already there. And we'll produce
some new horror movies. What was
that again - green men? They can be
green! Not my taste, but what the
hell.

He fidgets in his chair with impatience.

JACOB

Yes! Let's warm up this big theme!

SAM

Okay. I'm gonna have a think about it.

(after a pause, to
Jacob)

Are you willing to invest in this?

JACOB

Only twenty-five percent.

LOUIS

He has invested heavily in the LGBT theme. It has not yet fully paid off, although we earned huge profits through gender-confirmation surgeries and the pharmaceutical industry. And we hope to see more.

SAM

(to Louis)

And you? Would you invest?

LOUIS

First, let's do a calculation. I'm fond of numbers. If the numbers work out for me, I'm ready for anything!

They are SILENT.

SAM

Louis, are you religious?

LOUIS

Religion is a fairy tale for small children.

SAM

And you, Jacob? Don't you ever have a guilty conscience?

JACOB

Something smells? Something is amiss?

SAM

I began to have nightmares a lot.

LOUIS

You shouldn't have a bedtime snack.

They are SILENT again.

JACOB
(to Sam)
Sam, how's your son?

SAM
He's a macho guy unlike me. Pregnant girls run after him, but he runs from them.

JACOB
Oh!

LOUIS
I'm glad I don't have kids. They're nothing but trouble.

JACOB
Women, too.

SAM
(to Jacob)
What are you going to do when you become a senile man?

JACOB
I've got the money!

Louis puts out his cigar in the ashtray and stands up.

LOUIS
I have to go! My wife is very jealous! Not because of me but because of my money! She thinks I meet women and is suspicious of any woman in my circle.

He GIGGLES sadly. Sam SIGHS.

JACOB
A marriage? Not for me! I see a wife sitting around, waiting for me to die.

He puts his already extinct cigar in the ashtray and gets up.

JACOB (cont'd)
But my dear kitty is waiting for me.

SAM
I'll walk you to the door.

He stands up, and all three men drag themselves out of the room, looking suddenly 20 years older.

FADE OUT.

THE END