

LOKADO QUAKIEN

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By Stephen Foehr

The Jig-Saw Man

On March 16, 1969, Thomas Andre Karl Riha, professor of Russian history at the University of Colorado, mysteriously disappeared. He has never been found. The case has been a cause celebre touching off a major rift between the CIA and the FBI, causing speculation of skullduggery between the intelligence and the academic communities, and the commitment of Gloria Tannenbaum, the enigmatic woman in his life, to a state mental hospital where she committed suicide. There are several theories on what happened to Riha: he was a CIA agent, a double agent who defected to Czechoslovakia, a man on the run from his wife, a murder victim.

A light snow was falling Saturday evening, March 8, 1969 as Hana Hursokva Riha approached her darkened Boulder, Colorado, house with apprehension. She hoped her estranged husband and that other woman had left. It was because of the other woman, who called herself a colonel in the U.S. Army Intelligence, that Hana had checked into the Boulderado Hotel for the day. The colonel, Gloria 'Gayla' Tannenbaum, had been badgering her about her immigration status. Hana was afraid of the woman and felt bitter toward her husband.

Two nights before, Tannenbaum had come to the house and insisted that Hana sign some papers. She had been very aggressive, and as Hana recalled, had threatened, "If you refuse, I'll deport you." Hana knew she could not be sent back to her native Czechoslovakia and refused. Tannenbaum angrily replied, "I'll not take no for an answer," and said she would return later for Hana to sign the papers. "If you refuse, I'll go to the Pentagon on Monday and have you deported," Tannenbaum warned. She continued to harass Hana to turn over her driver's license, bank account, and a photograph. Hana again refused. "I'm your sponsor," Tannenbaum screamed, "I've taken care of your case, and I'm not going to let you or anyone else kick me in the ass."

When Tannenbaum left, Hana called her friend and attorney, David Regosin, in New York to ask

for advice. Regosin told her to sign nothing. The next night, Regosin was awakened at 1:45 a.m. by another call from Hana. She sounded terribly shaken. Hana started to say something when Tannenbaum grabbed the phone and started a vitriolic tirade, stumbling so over her words that Regosin had difficulty understanding her. "I'll have her deported," Tannenbaum shouted. She added angrily that she knew more about immigration law than all the lawyers put together. When Regosin tried to calm her, Tannenbaum slammed down the receiver.

The rest of the night was terrifying for Hana. Tannenbaum drove her around Boulder threatening her with deportation and trying to force pills down her. Tannenbaum was a stout, strong woman who could easily overpower the slight Hana. When Hana tried to jump from the car, Tannenbaum reached across the seat and held her. After hours of aimless driving, Tannenbaum took Hana home. She said she would be back at 11:00 in the morning and expected the papers to be signed. "Don't try to run away," she warned sternly. "No matter where you go, I'll find you." That day Hana checked into the Boulderado Hotel.

That was not the first incident of harassment Hana had suffered. For about a month, ever since her husband had filed for divorce, she had received strange phone calls at all hours. There was never any conversation, just a silent phone, and then a click. Perhaps it was a tactic to drive her out of the house, but she refused to leave. Once Tannenbaum brought some salami and a jar of orange juice to



Richard Redman



the house and urged Hana to try some. The meat had flecks of white powder on it. Hana said she wasn't hungry and put them in the icebox. The next morning, her husband drank a glass of the orange juice. He became pale, nauseous, and slightly dizzy. After that, the meat and the juice disappeared.

When Hana returned to the house, she slowly opened the door and stepped inside. As her eyes adjusted to the darkness, she heard whispers and saw Thomas's study door close. She rushed to her bedroom and locked the door. It made her uneasy that Tannenbaum was in the house, but there was little she could do about it. The woman was constantly meddling and even had a key to the house so she came and went as she pleased. Hana undressed, pulled her nightgown down over her head, and slipped beneath the blankets, pulling them tight around her against the cold March night. Tension kept her awake. She vaguely wished for a drink to make her relax. Thomas had complained about her drinking, but why should she care now? In the stillness she heard Tannenbaum's and Thomas's voices outside her door. She saw the knob turn.

"What are you doing?" she called out, sitting upright in the bed. In a loud voice, Tannenbaum demanded that she open the door.

"If you don't, I'll shoot through it."

Hana felt the panic of the previous nights churn her stomach. She very much believed that Tannenbaum was capable of blasting through the door and killing her on the spot. She did not answer, waiting with quickening breath for the pair to make their next move. There was no noise from the other side of the door. Then a sickly smell filled the room. At first Hana thought it came from the furnace vents, but then it seemed to creep from under the door. She felt faint, horrified that they were trying to gas her. She scrambled out of bed, ran to open a window, leaned halfway out into the biting night air, and called out, "Holly!"

Robert Hanson and his wife, Nancy, were sitting in the living room of their neighbors, Dick and Helen Wilson, enjoying the last moments of the evening before going home. It was 12:30, and all the other guests had left. The party had been pleasant with socializing and shop talk among fellow professors from the University of Colorado. Suddenly Hanson sat listening intently, not to the

conversation, but to a sound outside the house. He heard it again, "Holly!" (his daughter's name). He glanced at his wife. She had heard it, too. They thought their daughter must be in trouble and led the Wilsons in a dash down the stairs and out the front door. They heard the call again, not from Hanson's house, but from the opposite direction where the Rihas lived. Hanson and Wilson ducked around the hedge separating the houses and saw Hana leaning out the window. The one person she really knew in the neighborhood was Hanson's daughter, and in her panic Holly was the only name Hana could think of to call for help.

The two men ran across the yard, lightly covered with snow, and half-lifted, half-pulled Hana by the forearms out of the window. Neither Riha nor Tannenbaum were in sight. Both men noticed a strong smell of ether clinging to Hana's nightgown and hair. She shivered as she walked between the two men back to Wilson's house. The snow turned her feet red. Helen Wilson threw a coat around her shoulders, and they ushered the thoroughly shaken Hana to the upstairs living room where the odor of ether became more pronounced. Helen Wilson opened windows to air out the house. They tried to question Hana about what happened, but her English was so halting that they could make little sense of it. They could only understand, "That woman. She is trying to do away with me." And that Hana had locked herself in her bedroom to escape "that woman," but "they" had put ether in the heating system to circulate into her room. Hana was hardly able to speak, but she did manage to make clear that she did not want to return home and that she wanted to call Regosin.

At that moment the door bell rang. Wilson answered it and found Riha on the door step, who abruptly asked that his wife be returned. Wilson remembered that Riha arrogantly "demanded that I turn over his wife to him." "She doesn't want to come, and I will not force her in light of the circumstances," Wilson replied. "Now kindly get off my property." Riha shrugged and walked away.

While Riha tried to retrieve his wife, Tannenbaum called the Boulder police. She met the two officers in front of Riha's house and identified herself as an officer with the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service in Denver. She told the officers that Hana was in the country illegally and was to be deported. The only identification she could produce was an old Illinois driver's license. She also phoned the director of the immigration service, a Mr. Todd, and told him that there was trouble at Riha's house. He could remember little later of the call except it had awoken him at 2:00

a.m. and he was too sleepy to comprehend what the woman at the other end of the line was trying to say. Tannenbaum explained to the police that Hana had locked herself in her room and started screaming when she and Riha tried to get her to come out. "I think this gal is high," she told the policemen. "She is on a trip."

The officers went to Wilson's house to question Hana. After hearing her story, they advised Wilson to turn Hana over to Riha.

"She doesn't want to go," Wilson told them.

Nevertheless, the husband has rights to her, they answered.

"But the woman has rights as a person, and you're not going to take her out of this house unless you have a warrant to remove her," Wilson shot back.

The policemen demurred and went to Riha's house to hear his side of the story. While searching the house, they found several empty ether jars and ether-soaked pads in Hana's bedclothes. The call seemed a bit bizarre, but the officers treated it as a domestic disturbance. When they returned to the Wilson's house, Hana was pouring out her story to Regosin in Czech. The officers spoke to Regosin who told them he wanted his client to spend the night at a hotel. The officers told him they had to check with Riha and left to confer with him. Before going, they explained to Hana that unless she filed a complaint they could do nothing. She refused. Riha agreed that it was best that Hana stay at a hotel. She would not return to her home to fetch some clothes so Nancy Hanson went to get them. Then the Hansons drove Hana to the Boulderado Hotel where she stayed for nearly a month before flying to New York with her aunt. Before she left, she filed a countersuit for divorce. Both Riha and Hana claimed cruelty as grounds.

The police ran a check with the National Crime Information Center on Hana. She was in the country legally.

On Thursday evening, March 13, five days after the incident at the Wilson's, Riha's nephew Zdenek Cerveny, who was then living in Denver, received a call from his uncle inviting him to Tannenbaum's house. "We are on the same street," Riha said. "You must come visit." It took Cerveny some time to find Tannenbaum's house. They did live on the same street but several miles apart. Cerveny had only been in the United States three months and did not understand the street system very well. When he did arrive, he found Riha dressed in a silk kimono and in good spirits after a home-cooked meal. Riha told him, in Czech, that Tannenbaum

had attempted to take Hana from his house by pouring ether under her door to knock her out. "Gayla was outside the door waving a pistol and threatening to break the door down," Riha said. "I took the gun away and put the ether where she couldn't find it." The acrimony between Riha and his bride of four months was very unpleasant. Riha wanted her out of his house, but Tannenbaum's tactics were too much.

Several days earlier, Riha had confided in a neighbor that Hana would be forcibly removed from his house because she had failed to meet the deadline for a permanent visa, and that she would be put on a plane and sent to Prague where her family lived. Seeing the look of surprise on the man's face, Riha added jokingly, "It isn't as if she were being sent to Siberia. Her family is wealthy, and she has friends there."

Riha and Tannenbaum did not seem to be on bad terms because of the bungled job. They debated the case good-naturedly, and Tannenbaum assured Riha that she could get Hana deported, according to Cerveny. Riha began to have doubts about Tannenbaum's methods, Cerveny said, but he wanted Hana out of his life so badly that he was willing to suspend disbelief and let Tannenbaum handle the problem. Cerveny said he believed that Tannenbaum intended to kill Hana, and Riha did not want to probe too deeply her intentions. That night was the last time Cerveny saw his uncle.

Two nights later, Friday, March 15, Riha attended a dinner party given by Ken and Jan Sorensen. Jan, a graduate student of Riha's, was taking private lessons in Czech. Riha seemed distracted and nervous during the evening, but he would not discuss the reasons. At 12:30 a.m. he drove home, and as was his habit, set the breakfast table before retiring. In the morning, a friend, Carol Word, called to remind him of a dinner at her house the next day. She called throughout the day but received no answer. That evening, she called Cerveny and inquired after his uncle. Cerveny had received other calls from various friends of Riha's asking of his whereabouts. Tannenbaum also called that evening but not to ask about Riha. She told Cerveny to say nothing to anyone about his uncle but to come to her house, and she would explain everything. When he arrived, Tannenbaum said Riha had gone to Canada, and Cerveny would be hearing from him soon. If questioned, she advised Cerveny to say he knew where his uncle was and that his reason for leaving was because of the impending divorce. She also added that Cerveny would be receiving a power of attorney from Riha.

On April 6, Cervený did receive a letter from Canada that had been notarized in Chicago containing a power of attorney and signed by Thomas Riha. It was later proved a forgery. Tannenbaum told authorities, who began their investigation into the case eight months after Riha's disappearance, that Riha first went to Brooklyn, where Hana's aunt and uncle lived, and then to Canada. She also mentioned that Riha might be in Michigan seeking peace and quiet to write a book. When writing his first book, he had gone to Michigan, she added.

On Monday morning, Robert Skotheim, who shared an office with Riha, found Tom's briefcase open on his desk and papers and books lying about. The office looked exactly as he remembered it on Friday, giving him the impression that Riha had not been in over the weekend. Shortly after 8:00 a.m., he took a call from a woman reminding Riha of an important appointment that day at the Denver immigration service. Skotheim left a memo on Riha's desk.

Riha did not make his morning Russian history class. He also missed a noon faculty meeting. That was unusual for he was a punctual and reliable staff member. But it did not cause undue alarm. Later that afternoon, the history department's secretary answered a call from a woman who said Riha had injured himself in a fall, and he had been taken to a hospital. The caller said she would pick up his briefcase, but she never fetched it. Denver and Boulder hospitals show no registration of a Thomas Riha on that day.

Riha's colleagues became worried and contacted Hana's Boulder attorney, Gerald Caplan, who called the police. Caplan and a police officer stopped by Riha's house, but saw nothing suspicious. Peering through the windows of the modest, single-story house, they saw the untouched cereal bowl and the silverware he had set out. His art collection, appraised at \$19,605.00, hung on the walls. His 1967 Volkswagen was parked at the curb. His personal papers and books were in the house along with his shaving gear and suits. Nothing looked amiss - except Thomas Riha had disappeared. Later that night, two patrol cars followed by a station wagon arrived at the house. Three uniformed policemen, two men in civilian clothes, one being Riha's attorney, and a woman walked around the house shining flashlights in the windows. They searched the backyard bomb

shelter, built by the previous owner, but found nothing.

Riha's disappearance came as a shock to his friends. He was not the type to simply vanish without a word, they claimed, and if he did go off because of marital problems, he would have informed them that he was safe. Nor did it appear that he anticipated a sudden departure. He had written to the University of Chicago Press requesting W-2 forms on royalties for his book published by the company. Income tax forms were found on his desk. His calendar pad listed appointments and engagements through April 15. One entry noted a dinner with "the Colonel," as he often referred to Tannenbaum, and another a meeting of history professors in Denver on March 15. He did not attend the meeting.

Nothing in Riha's background indicated that he took radical actions or made irresponsible decisions on the spur of the moment. He was a scholarly man who enjoyed long walks and hours of research into the past. A quiet man, he spoke with a winsome accent. He liked jokes, although not the knee-slapping kind, and had a quick smile. He was witty, charming, with a touch of the Old World tastes. He was a good cook and was notoriously tight with his money.

Thomas Riha was born on April 17, 1929, in Prague to Ruth Anna and Victor Riha one year after their marriage. Both parents were lawyers and came from solid middle-class backgrounds. The marriage was placid, but it rested on a foundation of sand. The mother was never close to Thomas or his half-sister, Luda, offspring of Victor's first marriage. In the summers, the family vacationed at a summer cottage on Lake Seeboden in southern Austria. Thomas and his father traveled around the Czech countryside buying art from churches scheduled for demolition. When Thomas settled in the United States, he was made presents from the family art collection. It was the art collection that planted in the minds of his friends the first seeds of suspicion that he had met with foul play. He was very proud of and sentimentally attached to the wooden carvings dating back to the 13th Century and spent many painstaking hours restoring them. His friends felt he would not have voluntarily left without them.

His childhood was normal. He did not show any particular talent for academics, and he enjoyed sports. He was a "nice boy" who grew up to a "quite pleasant man," as his uncle put it. But when the Germans came goose-stepping into Prague, his

home life underwent a dramatic change. His mother, a bright, good-looking woman who spoke fluent French, German, and English, was a Jew. Under the German occupation rules, the property of non-Aryans could be seized, as could the property of their spouses, even though they themselves may not be Jewish. In order to save the family property, Ruth Anna divorced Victor and, with the help of a friend in the Gestapo, fled to Vienna using false identification papers. She spent the war years working in a factory making suitcases.

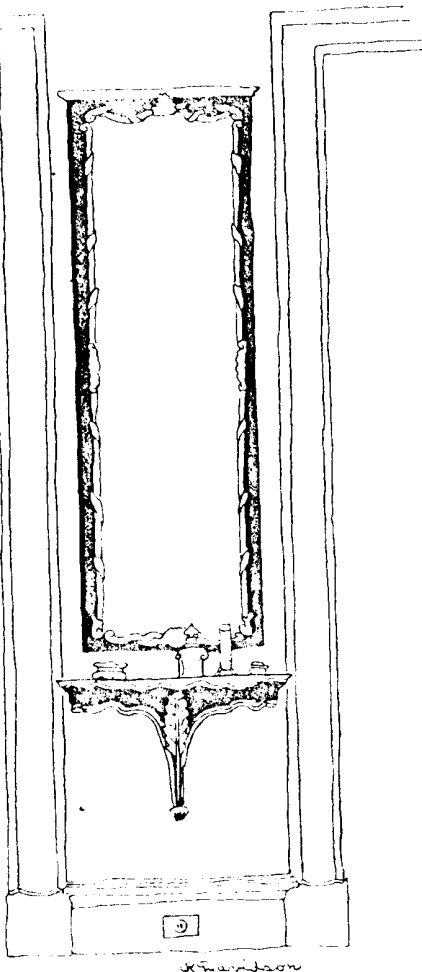
Thomas spent the duration of the war in the countryside with his beautiful half-sister. She later married Jiri Cerveny, Zdenek's father, but divorced him to marry a dashing Englishman she met shortly after the war. Thomas idled away his early teenage years waiting for the war to end so he could resume his schooling. In 1945, when the Germans were finally defeated, his mother returned to Prague, but not to stay. Victor had met an Englishwoman, and both he and Ruth Anna found it convenient not to remarry. She left for the

United States to join her mother and brother, Peter, who had fled Czechoslovakia at the beginning of the war, and settled in California. Thomas won a scholarship in England. He planned to return to Prague after the three-month course, but his grandmother, who was exceedingly fond of him, convinced him that there were greater opportunities in the United States.

The relationship between the mother and son did not grow closer. Ruth Anna had very high expectations of Thomas, both academically and personal, and when he did not measure up to her standards, she was hurt and disappointed. He tried hard to please her but to no avail. Ruth Anna also had a spiritual side to her nature, and throughout her life searched for some elusive fulfillment. As a young girl, she was educated at a convent school and eventually converted to Catholicism. She studied yoga and was a member of a theosophical society. Thomas was indifferent to her religious and spiritual ideals. Formally baptized a Catholic, he dropped the practice of the religion at about age ten and never took religion seriously in his later life.

In 1946, Ruth Anna married Howard Cook. After his suicide in 1958, she took a job teaching at a private girl's school in Windsor, Conn. She moved back to California and taught Latin in a preparatory school in Kentland. After a short-lived third marriage which ended in a divorce, she moved to West Germany in 1964 where she taught French in a girl's preparatory school at Fulda until she became ill with cancer. After surviving two major operations, she died on Feb. 20, 1971, with the belief that her son somehow "must have taken a wrong turn" as she wrote to her brother in February, 1970. In a letter dated December 1969 (nearly ten months after Thomas' disappearance) to Libro Brom, a professor of Russian at the University of Denver and a good friend of Riha's, she said, "There is no need to worry about Thomas now," although she cautioned Brom to "say nothing about this." Brom said he believes that some authority told Ruth Anna her son was in Czechoslovakia, but she never hinted how she knew this.

Thomas studied hard to please his mother, and although he did not have a high school degree when he came to the United States, he was admitted to the University of California at Berkeley in 1947. His grandmother paid for his education. She did not give him extra spending money so he always had a part-time job, either gardening, baby-sitting, or cleaning. He did not mind making his own money and was always conscientious about his work. During the summer vacations he worked as a bus boy in the resorts at



Lake Tahoe and Yosemite. Even when working on his advanced degrees, he had a job putting frozen food into the cases at the Park and Shop supermarket. He learned to be frugal with his money and lived at what many of his friends considered a substandard level. His frugality earned him the reputation of being stingy.

He received his undergraduate degree in political science with honors in 1951. In 1953, he was studying at the Russian Institute on a Carnegie Fellowship at Columbia University when he was drafted into the army. He was stationed at Fort Bragg where, despite his education, he was kept on menial labor details. The army apparently distrusted the Eastern European who spoke with an accent. But eventually his talents were recognized, and he was assigned to low-level intelligence work, mainly with translations for propaganda materials. Tannenbaum believed he was connected with the CIA doing similar types of work during his academic career. During his last year in the army, he was a recruiting officer, a position he did not enjoy because of his dislike for public speaking. He was discharged from the army on Dec. 2, 1955.

In the army he earned the distinction of having an omnivorous sexual appetite even by GI standards. According to one army buddy, his interests in females ranged from "young to old, white to black, married to unmarried." On his leaves into town, he would separate himself from the group of soldiers and head for the whorehouses in the black section of town. To his buddies, he justified his behavior on the grounds that man is by nature polygamous, not monogamous. His love of the ladies is one reason he did not marry until relatively late. Tannenbaum called him "Tom Cat" because of his backalley nature.

After the army, he resumed his studies and earned a masters degree in Slavic Studies at the University of California at Berkeley. While studying, he lived in a basement apartment at his uncle's house on the strict stipulation that they have no communication with him unless he initiated it. He would occasionally socialize with his aunt and uncle, but they remember him as a scholarly, quiet type. After receiving his masters degree in 1957, he attended Harvard on a Ford Foundation Fellowship until 1959. He spent the 1958 academic year as an exchange student at Moscow University in Russia. In 1960, he completed his studies at Harvard and was hired as an instructor in Russian history by the University of Chicago where he taught until 1967, when he joined the University of Colorado. While at Chicago he received his Ph.D. from Harvard in

1962. Riha's academic career was that of a bright and promising young scholar remarkable only in that he had to adapt to a foreign language. He was respected by his peers for his two books and numerous articles dealing with Russian history and culture. He was liked by his students and by the university community, although a few of his colleagues in the history department found him "strange." Neighbors and friends were concerned by the university administration's acquiescence to his disappearance and by the sight of the strange Tannenbaum woman moving his belongings out of his house.

Within a day after Riha dropped out of sight, Tannenbaum was at the house, often accompanied by her three-year-old daughter, carrying out books and stuffed laundry bags. (She would later give Loretto Heights College in Denver nearly 1,000 books of Riha's.) She collected mail from his box and let herself in the house with her key as if she had every right to do so. On the Wednesday after Riha had disappeared, Dick Wilson went to Riha's house to ask Tannenbaum if she had any information about him. She answered the door wearing a scarf tied around her head and an apron, as if she had been cleaning. She told Wilson that Riha had disappeared and she didn't want to talk about it. Then she slammed the door.

The first thing to leave the house was Riha's art collection. On March 17, two days after he vanished, Denver Art Museum's curator Robert Stroessner and his son, Robert, Jr., who was the pre-Columbian curator at the museum, loaded a couple of chests and four or five other items into the back of Stroessner's truck and took them to the museum. Tannenbaum, representing herself as Riha's widow, said she wanted to donate the collection to the museum. The museum's files show that the art objects, which included a 13th Century wooden carved Madonna, a 15th Century statue of a saint, and two 15th Century panel paintings of "St. Michael and the Madonna," were donated by Gayla Forest Tannenbaum in the name of her married daughter, Margaret Zigmund of Chicago.

Stroessner Jr. was so willing to accommodate Tannenbaum that he drove Riha's car from Boulder to Tannenbaum's house as a favor when she told him she did not know how to drive a Volkswagen. Ten days later, Tannenbaum placed a "for sale" ad for the car in the *Denver Post*. Tony Stone, assistant principal of the John F. Kennedy High School, came to look at the car in front of Tannenbaum's house. He agreed to buy it for

\$1,250.00 and wrote a check to Mrs. Thomas Riha. Ten months later, Tannenbaum was charged with forging Riha's name in transferring the car's title.

If Tannenbaum killed Riha to cash in his estate, as many people close to Riha allege, why didn't she sell the collection? The museum's records show that only one piece was sold, an eight figure wood *pieta* dating from the 16th Century. In a letter to the Zigmunds dated Oct. 24, 1969, the museum's director, Dr. Otto Karl Bach, wrote he had thought the piece might be given to the museum, but he was more than willing to pay the \$1,200.00 Tannenbaum asked since the piece was valued at \$8,000.00. A gift with the value of \$6,000.00 had been credited to the Zigmunds, and Bach reminded them that it was tax deductible. Tannenbaum told Bach that she was willing to sell the *pieta* in order to keep it with the rest of the collection, apparently implying that she needed cash, and if the museum would not buy it, someone else would.

On Thursday, March 20, Wheeler Realty of Boulder received a letter bearing Riha's signature authorizing the sale of his house at 1055 Sixth Street. This letter was also later proven a forgery. That evening, Cerveny arrived with two other men in a green Chevrolet pick-up at Riha's house to move the household goods to Tannenbaum's. In less than a week after Riha disappeared, his house had been cleared out and his possessions either given away or put up for sale by Tannenbaum.

Cerveny accepted Tannenbaum's explanation of his uncle's disappearance without question, but he should not be judged harshly. He had been in the United States only four months, had a tenuous grasp of English and, like many foreigners who find themselves transported to an alien society, he was not very aggressive. He believed that Tannenbaum was a good friend of Riha's and that she must have had his authorization to take his goods. Tannenbaum was the only person to meet Cerveny when he arrived at the Greyhound station in Denver and she drove him to Riha's house in Boulder. She claimed credit for helping him get into this country and, in fact, did make a call to the immigration service's Denver office on his behalf. He often ate dinner at her house. She befriended him and even suggested that she adopt him so he could claim citizenship more quickly.

She once gave him a pistol as a present. He had been on his school's shooting team and continued the sport as a hobby. But she later took the gun back and pawned it. According to Cerveny, she always carried a pistol in her purse and

occasionally wore one in a shoulder holster when she went to the supermarket. Once they went to the Golden Bullet shooting range for target practice. Tannenbaum shot poorly and made the excuse that she was accustomed to a heavier, longer-barrelled gun. "She couldn't hit the side of a barn while standing inside one," Cerveny later said.

Gradually, Cerveny came to dislike Tannenbaum and now believes that she murdered Riha. But it took him seven months to report his uncle missing, and only then at the urging of a Denver detective and Libro Brom, who was the best man at Riha's wedding. Cerveny repeated Tannenbaum's story that Riha was in Canada. Brom said he had a way of checking that. A week later he told Cerveny that a Washington source, not the CIA or the FBI, had told him that Riha was in Canada. Brom did not believe his source. Thomas was dead, he said. The government was just trying to cover its bungling. "I was a big brother to Thomas," he said. "He would have called me from anywhere and said, 'Libro, I'm here. Don't worry about me. I'm alive. Another thing that convinces me he was dead is that he would never have allowed his property to be peddled. He was stingy.'"

Riha's Boulder colleagues were more insistent, and pressed their efforts to locate him. Three weeks after he disappeared, Professor Joyce Lebra, and four of her colleagues reported Riha missing to the Boulder police. Patrolman Donald Alps went to Lebra's house and took the report. However, Boulder police claim they had no official report on Riha until Oct. 28 when Cerveny filed one. In a follow-up report, Alps wrote that upon returning to the station after taking Lebra's statement, he turned it in to Captain Lowell Friesen. "He (Capt. Friesen) notified me that we would not take a report on Riha again," Alps wrote, "and the report was torn up. He stated that we had notification that Riha was in New York, that he was well, and there of his own accord. At that time I personally phoned Miss Lebra and informed her of this."

"No reports were torn up or anything like that," Friesen stated later, but he could not explain why Alps' original report was not in the police files other than, "It was and is, the department's policy not to take a missing person report unless it is filed by a family member."

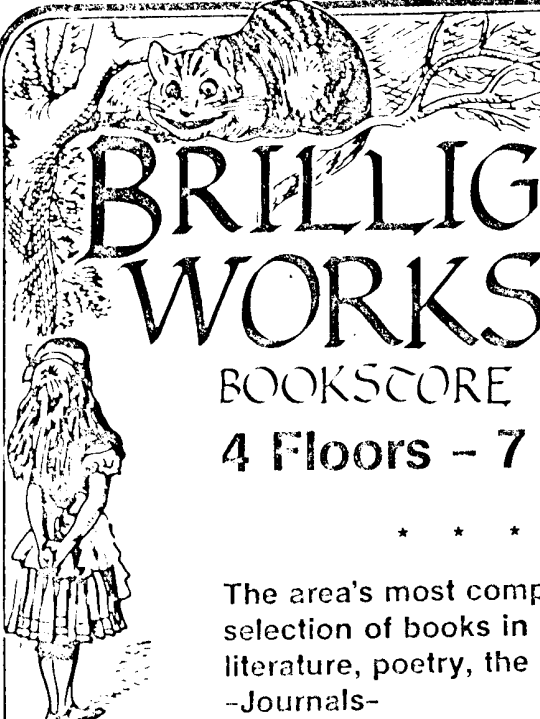
"I did have a conversation with Tannenbaum," he said, "but she didn't tell me he went to New York. She only talked about Riha being mixed up in the CIA."

That was only the beginning of several curious actions by the investigating agencies which became involved in the Riha case. The Denver and Boulder police departments were discouraged from pursuing the case by the FBI. The CIA put pressure on the Denver District Attorney to drop plans for a grand jury investigation into the case. The FBI, the CIA, and the U.S. Army Military Intelligence, were consistently evasive about their role in the investigation. Publicly, they disavowed any connection to Riha and put on a front of studied indifference in the case.

From the beginning, officialdom stonewalled on the Riha disappearance. The FBI insisted it was not involved because it had no jurisdiction. As late as 1970, the FBI informed Colorado Congressman Donald Brozman, who had asked the agency if it had any information on Riha, that it had not conducted an investigation "since there were no indications of a violation of federal law within its jurisdiction." In reality, the FBI had begun compiling a file on Riha in the summer of 1960 when he was a graduate student at Harvard. Although the FBI has never offered an explanation as to why it opened a file on Riha, the

reason may be connected to an incident in Moscow.

In 1958, Riha was among a group of graduate students chosen to study at Moscow University. There was concern on the Selection Committee of the Inter-University Committee on Travel Grants, which approved Riha, about his safety on the trip given his Eastern European background. The deputy chairman of the committee, David Munford, strictly forbade Riha's visiting Czechoslovakia for fear that he might not be able to get back out. Riha disregarded Munford's stipulation and clandestinely slipped into the country to visit his sick father. One day while walking in a Prague suburb, a car stopped and the driver approached him. The driver introduced himself as Mr. Chrpa. Mr. Chrpa knew a great deal about Riha, why he was in Prague, his destination, and the purpose of his trip to Moscow. He knew about Riha's American background. The mystery man let it slip that he knew so much because he was a Soviet intelligence officer. He bade Riha a pleasant farewell and told him they would meet again.



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Thomas was surprised by the contact, but he did not mention it to anyone. He had been warned in the United States that he, and the other students, might be approached by foreign agents. They were expected to shun any overtures and report them to the American embassy immediately. At the time, Riha did not feel the brief conversation with Chrpa was worth the bother. Nor did he mention a contact with two Czech intelligence agents. He found them waiting in his hotel room one day when he returned. They were friendly and tried to put him at ease. They had a message for his mother: She should stop making critical speeches about her homeland. They also tried to cajole Riha into continuing his studies in Czechoslovakia. If he stayed, he would be guaranteed financial aid and a good job. He declined the offer.

Several months later, when Riha emerged from a Moscow subway station, he met Chrpa standing at the entrance. It was a cold day, not the type of weather in which one stood idly around to pass the time. Chrpa struck up a general conversation, inquired after Thomas's studies, how he enjoyed Moscow, his social life. He suggested that they meet for dinner at one of the better places which Thomas could not normally afford. Riha was intrigued enough to agree and let Chrpa "wine and dine" him, as he later said. Chrpa introduced him to several beautiful Russian women knowing, perhaps, Thomas's predilection for women. (Riha reportedly did meet an attractive Russian woman and grew quite fond of her.) He was shown luxurious apartments where he might live if he agreed to go to Czechoslovakia and become an intelligence agent for the Communists. Thomas turned down the offer. He was an historian, not a spy. Nor did he have any great sympathy for the Communist cause. His family had lost property in Czechoslovakia under the Communist government.

Concerned about the boldness of this offer, Riha reported it to the American embassy. When he returned to the United States in 1959, he was questioned closely by government officials. The FBI, always vigilant for Communists, or anyone even remotely stroked by a red-tainted brush held in Moscow's hand, undoubtedly slipped a folder with Riha's name on it into its files.

While claiming disinterest in investigating Riha's disappearance, the FBI nevertheless sent its agents to work on the case. On Sept. 15, 1969, the Denver office received a memo from Washington instructing the agents to "check indices and conduct credit and criminal (checks) on subject

Riha." The agents were also ordered to "contact sources in the Czech community for any information on the disappearance of Riha... and check the marriage and divorce records of Riha and Anna [sic] Hruska." The memo went on to mention Tannenbaum and then a large portion was blanked out.

Agents interviewed Cerveny and Francesca Stein, a Czech native and friend of Riha's, in Stein's home at the end of 1969. Stein and her husband then owned the Black Bear Inn where Riha had held his wedding reception. The two agents questioned them for two hours, looked over some furniture of Riha's that Cerveny had and examined two trunks of Riha's clothes. According to Cerveny, the agents "sounded like they knew that Tannenbaum was connected to Thomas's disappearance."

Agent John Morley of the FBI's Denver office did admit that his agents had conducted two interviews concerning the Riha case in 1969, one on April 13 and another in September, but only because an anonymous phone call had been received reporting a man missing "under unusual circumstance." As is the FBI's practice, he would not elaborate.

The FBI, however, was much more deeply involved than it cared to admit. Denver Detective Mike Allegretto was quoted in the press as saying, "The Boulder police told us that the FBI told them to forget about Riha because they knew where he was and that he was alive and well." When questioned about the source of the information, Boulder Det. Sgt. Robert Dieze said that "the files indicate that another government agency advised that Riha had left Boulder to get away from his wife, that he had not left the country." A Denver detective told Cerveny that a "responsible source" in Washington had told him that Riha was "alive and well" and that the Denver police should not proceed with their investigation.

The local cops smelled something somewhat rotten in their part of Denmark. The crime was committed in their backyard, and the federal boys were butting in. "We've been told (by an agency) not to worry," Boulder Det. Lt. Ralph Ruzicka, who worked on the case with Dieze, said. "But when we talk to Riha's friends and associates and hear the facts, they don't stand up logically, and we get worried again." However, the local police were really out of their depth. The intimidating authority of the FBI, and its recalcitrance to share

information with other law enforcement agencies, made the locals timid in pressing for conclusive proof that Riha was "alive and well." FBI's Morley claimed that his agency had "placed no restrictions on any other investigating agencies." He could hardly have claimed otherwise without arousing a hue and cry from the pack of investigative reporters snapping at the heels of the case and incurring the wrath of the police. The FBI was trying to keep the case under wraps or at least its role in the investigation.

But Dieze and Ruzicka knew better than to accept what the FBI said for its face value. The two detectives paid a visit to FBI's Boulder Field Agent Smith in the first week of November, 1969. In their official report, they wrote: "Smith advised that he possibly had some information on Professor Riha, and that he thinks he heard that the professor might be somewhere in Michigan. I asked Agent Smith if I should bother looking for the body of Prof. Riha and Agent Smith stated, no, it would be a waste of time. This led me possibly to believe that the FBI has some knowledge of Mr. Riha's activities and whereabouts." Several days after the visit, Smith phoned Ruzicka at his office and left a message. "Files indicate that another Gov't agency advised that Riha left Boulder to get away from his wife. And that he has not left the country. This is STRICTLY OFF THE RECORD. DO NOT QUOTE HIM!"

According to a FBI memo, it queried the CIA about their interest in Riha and received a response that the agency had no interest in him. The FBI has also denied that Tannenbaum ever worked for the agency in order to quell speculation that she was their informant.

The CIA was equally indirect and deceptive in disclaiming any knowledge of Riha. A CIA spokesman in Denver, said, "We know nothing of him. As far as we know, Riha has left voluntarily. We have nothing to do with the man. He has no contact with our agency." The CIA may not have been actively tracking Riha, but they were not a disinterested party. The CIA first noticed Riha while he was an exchange student at the University of Moscow with the idea of using him as a "source of information," according to CIA documents. The documents indicate that the agency went through the initial steps of processing him, then canceled its plans without contacting him. But from September, 1958 to April, 1963 the CIA intercepted his mail which dealt mainly with his scholastic pursuits while in the Soviet Union,

living conditions there, and information about his personal life.

However, the files which the CIA turned over to Cerveny's attorney, Martin Buckley, who filed a Freedom of Information Act claim for the CIA and FBI dossiers on Riha, were far from complete. The CIA file consisted mainly of newspaper clippings and did not contain copies of the intercepted letters. The FBI file was more revealing, but reports dated April 16, 1969, January 30, 1970, December 12, 1970, May 6, 1970, and February 26, 1974, were deleted "to protect from disclosure intelligence sources and methods, as well as organizations, functions, names, official titles and salaries." Much of what was handed over was so heavily censored that Buckley protested he was deprived of information necessary in determining the fate of Thomas Riha.

The University of Colorado administration also participated in the stonewalling. Riha's colleagues kept pressing for some action, at least a public statement, but the administration remained silent. It had however, very quietly taken some action: Riha was put on leave of absence without pay effective March 17, the first day he failed to make his class. Riha's fellow professor, Stephen Fischer-Galati, did not remain passive. He wrote to his contacts in the Justice Department and the State Department seeking information, but received only bland replies of ignorance. The press, in the meantime, picked up on the story and began making some pointed speculations that Riha was a double-agent who had defected. The pressure finally built to the point where the president of the university, Joseph Smiley, issued a statement saying that he had contacted "reliable sources" in Washington and had been told that Riha was "alive and well." He would not identify his source other than it was an old "war contact." This satisfied no one, but Smiley kept his pledge of secrecy. "I repeat my real regret that I can't go beyond what I have said. A confidence is a confidence," he has stoutly maintained through the years.

However, Smiley had inadvertently unleashed a tiger. The FBI's Washington office wondered how Smiley knew that Riha was "alive and well." Who had told him? FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover ordered inquiries be made to discover if there had been a breach of internal security. What he was told caused him to fly into a rage that would be felt throughout the domestic intelligence community. Hoover was still smarting over the treatment given him by Bobby Kennedy, as the Attorney General,

four years earlier. Kennedy tried to crack the unwritten codes Hoover had imposed on the agency during his 36-year reign, which included the exclusion of black agents except as chauffeurs. The FBI was Hoover's fiefdom and he wanted it kept that way. The FBI was an entity unto itself and very closed-mouthed about what it did or how it operated. And with reason; it conducted illegal operations without the knowledge of the White House.

Kennedy wanted the FBI to share its intelligence information with other government and law enforcement agencies. That was anathema to Hoover. He fought it either out of embarrassment because his agency had no pertinent information to share, especially about organized crime which was Kennedy's new cause, or to keep the FBI's mystique glowing by not giving another organization any information that might lead to a break in a big case and steal the FBI's thunder. He successfully beat back Kennedy's proposal for a national crime commission which would subjugate the FBI in certain areas, but went along with Kennedy's alternative plan of coordinating information with the Internal Revenue Service and the Narcotics Bureau, the two key agencies in the campaign against organized crime.

He had been trying to get back the FBI's autonomy ever since, and what he learned in the Riha case gave him the perfect excuse to break off direct communications with the other agencies.

The CIA's agent in charge of the Denver office, Michael Todorovich, learned in April, 1969, from an FBI field agent that Riha was "alive and well." The agent told Todorovich that Riha had left Boulder because of a family squabble, and was in Brooklyn, where Hana's uncle and aunt lived. This is also one of Tannenbaum's explanations of Riha's whereabouts. Todorovich suggested that Smiley be informed of this conclusion so that he could placate Riha's friends and the press. The hope was that this action might bury the case and stop the embarrassing suggestions that the CIA or the FBI had a hand in doing away with Riha. The FBI agent refused to cooperate further however, perhaps afraid that he had played too much rope out already. The agent was well aware that Hoover would have his head for contacting the CIA and passing on information without official approval.

The CIA decided to act on its own. Todorovich contacted Smiley and swore him to secrecy, a deal which Smiley faithfully upheld even in the face of a threat by the Denver District Attorney Mike McKevitt to subpoena him to appear before a grand jury. McKevitt harbored political ambitions and a grand jury investigation into the Riha case

would generate plenty of press. It would make him look like a hard hitting prosecutor and give him much needed visibility.

Todorovich freely admitted that he got the information from an FBI agent and that he had passed it on to Smiley. In a report to Washington, a loyal FBI Denver agent wrote that he would not believe Todorovich unless the name of the agent was revealed. "No agent would have any reason whatsoever to make such a statement since we had not conducted any investigation in this matter (and) did not have any information concerning Riha," the agent stated. It was simply unthinkable that an FBI agent would betray Hoover's trust, especially to the agency's rival. Todorovich must be making it all up to cover the CIA's involvement, since the CIA's charter restricts it from conducting operations within the United States. The Denver office was simply involved in recruiting and debriefing travelers from abroad, according to the CIA.

Todorovich refused to identify his source. To do so would be to condemn the Denver FBI agent to Hoover's personal version of Siberia and ruin the agent's career with the FBI. The FBI's two resident agents in Boulder were closely interrogated by their superiors, but both denied having made any statement to Todorovich. Even if they tied the noose, they could not be expected to stick their heads into it.

Hoover was livid. This was mutiny. And it proved his contention that other intelligence agencies could not be trusted with sensitive information. In an effort to smooth the troubled waters, then-CIA director Richard Helms wrote Hoover expressing hope that the "recent incident" would not prevent the CIA and the FBI from working closely together. Hoover jotted at the bottom of the letter, "This is not satisfactory. I want direct liaison here (Washington) with the CIA to be terminated and any contact with the CIA in the future to be by letter only." Sam Papich, the FBI liaison with the CIA, urged Hoover in the strongest language to reconsider. He appealed to Hoover's knee-jerk reaction to Communism. It was vital that the two agencies cooperate closely in controlling Communist-bloc operatives and that would be impossible with only mail contact. The rupture between the two intelligence agencies would leave a dangerous gap which would very likely be exploited, he argued. Hoover never responded to his pleas.

Four months after the break with the CIA, Hoover abolished the seven-man section that maintained contact with 12 other intelligence gathering agencies within the government. He did

not want to appear to be singling out the CIA. His order was extended to the Defense Intelligence Agency, the Office of the Naval Intelligence, Army Intelligence, the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, the National Security Agency, the State Department, the Post Office, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the United States Information Agency, and to the Bureau of Customs and the Immigration Service. He also ordered that a direct line be established from the FBI to the White House.

Agents in the field were appalled. They could not function effectively without trading information with their contacts in the other agencies. Such a rigid stricture on communications would hamper serious intelligence and police work. Many agents quietly circumvented the director's order and continued business as usual. Many leading members of the intelligence community felt that Hoover should be removed, but he enjoyed President Nixon's support and continued to operate with immunity.

The Assistant Director of the FBI domestic intelligence from 1970-1971, Charles Brennan, testified before Colorado Senator Gary Hart's Senate Intelligence Committee in 1975 that Hoover's reaction was "out of proportion" to the Riha case. Under questioning, Brennan said that Riha had left the country voluntarily, that he was not spirited away, and that "there was no substantiation of any involvement in any intelligence activity or any spying."

"Mr. Riha apparently just happened to pop into a set of circumstances where the real question here was that the FBI agent disclosed some information to the CIA agent which disturbed Mr. Hoover. It was a relatively ridiculous situation which blows up to the point where it leads to cut-off in relations between the two agencies," he said.

Testifying before the same committee, former chief of CIA counterintelligence, James J. Angelton, confirmed that the CIA tipped Smiley. Angelton claimed that he "hasn't heard anything (about Riha). I have not actually inquired, but I have no knowledge. I think I heard speculation at one time that he (Riha) was in Czechoslovakia, but I do not know."

Hart's committee, which was criticized for not pushing hard enough to get complete information from the intelligence services (for example, documents requested from the Department of Defense Intelligence Agency were never delivered), reached the conclusion that:

Thomas Riha was never employed nor in contact with the CIA, the FBI, or military

intelligence. At one time the CIA had a general counterintelligence interest in Riha, but this interest was never pursued. There is no indication of any kind that the CIA, the FBI, or military was involved in Riha's disappearance.

--Tannenbaum was never employed nor involved with the CIA, FBI, or military intelligence.

--Thomas Riha is, most probably, living somewhere in Eastern Europe, possibly in Czechoslovakia. He was sighted there in 1973. Why he left the United States, remains unclear: personal reasons were probably the basis for his decision to leave.

This report still did not squelch rumors circulating around the academic world that Riha was a CIA operative, and "the Company" might have "eliminated him with prejudice," a euphemism for murder used during the Vietnam War. Denver District Attorney Mike McKeivitt was threatening to call a grand jury to learn how Smiley received his information. CIA headquarters wanted McKeivitt's investigation headed off. It was feared that it would provide more fuel to fire imaginations and give encouragement to the press to dig deeper into the case. There was no telling what the papers might find. Todorovich was told to go see McKeivitt. He asked the local FBI agent to accompany him, which was like asking the fellow to use an asp as a necktie. The agent refused. Hoover noted in a letter that the agent "acted properly." Todorovich reported to Washington that he called on McKeivitt alone to "solicit his good offices and to remove pressures and the possible serving of a subpoena on Smiley."

Like the local police, McKeivitt found himself stumbling onto the field where the big leaguers play and where he did not know the rules. The Riha case was a golden chariot for him to ride across the front pages and into the halls of Congress, and he did not want to let the opportunity pass. But those who were giving out the tickets didn't want him on the field, and they wrote the rule book. "All of a sudden, like a bolt out of the blue, the CIA called me and wanted to talk about Riha," McKeivitt recalled. Todorovich came to his office, very friendly and sincere, and gave him the signal: No grand jury. McKeivitt balked. He didn't take orders from Washington and besides, the case could be important to his future. Todorovich tried to convince him of the higher purpose in keeping a low profile on the case. "Todorovich said something to the effect: Would it help if you talked to Smiley about it (the source of his information about Riha)," McKeivitt recalled. "He is prepared to tell you what actually

happened. But in the interest of national security, I ask you not to reveal the nature of the conversation with Smiley."

That was a powerful tug to a World War II veteran. National security meant protection of the country, and if dropping the case was the price to let a missing Russian professor lie in peace, then it might have to be paid. But McKevitt was not going to give in without hearing what Smiley had to say. He didn't make any promises, but he agreed to listen to Smiley. That was only fair. He had to have all the facts before making his decision.

Now Smiley got a surprise call.

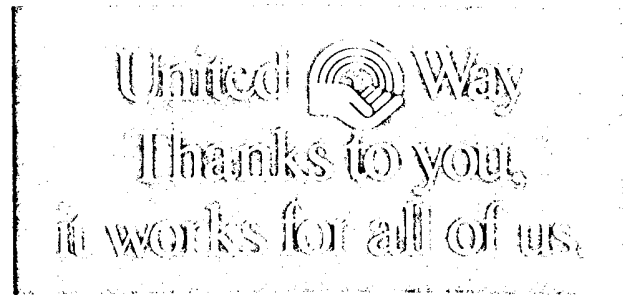
He thought the Riha case was behind him. He did not want to get involved again, especially if it made him look like a fool in public. If he repudiated what he had said earlier, information which the CIA had given him, what would people think of him? And why was the CIA asking him to lie? He was upset. He had lived up to his part of the agreement, and now the CIA, in which he had great faith, was asking that he call himself a liar. The situation was explained to him. Whatever pressure, if any, was brought to bear, he did not say.

Shortly after Todorovich's visit, McKevitt received a call from Smiley. Smiley was nervous, and his voice did not sound confident. He faltered and stumbled over his words. In a hesitant voice he explained to McKevitt that he had been "mised" or had been "misunderstood" when he contacted his "reliable source" in Washington about Riha. "He sounded embarrassed and said he was extremely sorry he had made the statement about Riha," McKevitt said. "I got the impression that Smiley said he obtained the information from the FBI—but then I'm not sure it was the FBI or who it was."

McKevitt was not willing to call a spade a spade... and neither was Smiley. He later said, "I didn't give McKevitt any idea where the information came from. I identified no agency." Years later, McKevitt was still splitting fine hairs: "The CIA didn't tell me they were the source of the report," he said. "They were very cloak-and-dagger about it."

McKevitt called a press conference and announced that the statements made by Dr. Smiley about Thomas Riha were "the results of misunderstanding and an honest mistake as to the actual facts." He further denied that he called off the grand jury investigation under pressure.

Todorovich felt pleased with himself. He did the job well; another successful mission completed. In a letter to his boss, Richard Helm, he wrote that he was "successful in persuading McKevitt to make a



favorable public statement which had the effect of putting this issue regarding Riha and other rumors to rest as far as the public was concerned."

And he praised McKevitt; "I am thankful that the district attorney, a highly intellectual and dedicated fellow, is also objective and definitely desirous of providing full protection to all who have inadvertently commented on a circumstance of which they had absolutely no knowledge. It would not surprise me if our 'country cousins' (a reference to the FBI) had not received their information from the same source all others apparently accepted—the statements of Gayla Tannenbaum." McKevitt was elected to and served one term in Congress in 1971. He failed in his bid for a second term.

While the CIA and the FBI were doing their professional denials and sleight of facts routine, the military intelligence was conducting a bit of footwork on its own. True to form for intelligence organizations, the U.S. Army intelligence branch issued a public disclaimer of having any interest in Riha while filing away a report by one of their agents that Riha had been spotted in Montreal. Colonel Lynn Fritchman, commanding officer of the U.S. Army Region 4, Military Intelligence, in Denver said his group "has never been officially involved in the Riha case." That somewhat begs the question for the fine line between "official" and "unofficial" often becomes blurred for the sake of convenience.

According to an army intelligence document, Riha was sighted in a Montreal bookstore about a month after he disappeared. He spent two hours in the bookstore, which was known as an informational drop of "Red-bloc" agents and sympathizers. He ordered several books and instructed that they be sent to Boulder. "Evidently, he intended to return to Boulder," the document stated.

The author of the army report wrote that he was "pretty sure that he (Riha) was dealing with the KGB or some sister group—possibly the Russian controlled Czech intelligence people, and not our people. Anyway, he is probably now drinking vodka with Kim Philby and Donald MacLean or maybe as my Canadian contact suggests, he is in

Algeria, anybody's guess???" (Philby and MacLean were two British spies given asylum in Russia.)

As late as 1975, the Defense Intelligence Agency, an umbrella for all military intelligence agencies, stated, "Military intelligence was not involved in any way in the Riha case."

There is a thread in that report which numerous reporters and investigators have attempted to follow up. Riha was sent a bill by registered mail dated Dec. 15, 1969, from the Philip Lozinski Bookstore, of 4763 Victoria Avenue in Montreal for the balance of payment of \$26.70. The notice was sent to Tannenbaum's address. The bill was for two books shipped in August of 1968, which only proves that at one time Riha might have been in that bookstore. The *New York Times* sent a reporter to Montreal to track down the lead. He came back with vague information that someone thought a man living with a girl in a small town in the Montreal area resembled Riha.

Other false leads and reported sightings trickled in over the years but none of them led to Thomas Riha. The owner of the lodge at St. Mary's Glacier, 40 miles west of Denver, told police that Tannenbaum had purchased six lots in a housing development there - her check bounced - and that the area was prime country for hiding a body. They ought to look into it. There were reports that Tannenbaum was hiking in the hills near Eldorado Springs south of Boulder a couple of days before Riha disappeared. The police diligently checked it out. Tannenbaum had been there, but there was not a trace of Riha. Another report suggested the police look in the bottom of the Glory Hole mine near Central City. Tannenbaum was known to have an interest in old mining claims. There are thousands of abandoned mines from the silver and gold rush days, and the police could not possibly check out each shaft where Riha might be found at the bottom, a bundle of bones and clothes.

In November, 1970, Boulder police received a letter from Otto Stockmar stating that he had met a couple which matched the description of Riha and Tannenbaum the afternoon of Aug. 26, 1969, a full six months after Riha's disappearance, in the mountains near Idaho Springs about an hour's drive from Denver. According to Stockmar, a retiree with an invalid wife, he drove up an old mining road along Cascade Creek until large boulders blocked his way. He left his car and walked up the road about 300 feet to a grove of beautiful aspens. He carved a big X on one trunk and returned to his car for his camera. On the way

down he met a couple coming up the trail. They were not dressed for hiking but more like city folk who decided on the spur of the moment to get away up in the mountains. They didn't carry any rain gear, food, water, or a camera. The man was wearing a dark business suit, low-cut oxfords, and was bare-headed. He appeared to be about 50 years old, had hazel eyes and slight streaks of grey in his dark hair. The woman wore an orange dress and low-cut sneakers. She was blonde and also without a hat. The descriptions matched the looks of Riha and Tannenbaum.

Stockmar greeted them, but they made no reply. The man approached very close and asked about the road ahead. The woman stood at a distance, her hand in her black handbag as if she was holding something---like a gun. She watched him intently with a stern face, and this made Stockmar uneasy. The man appeared scared, and according to Stockmar, "looked me square in the eye. There was a questioning expression which I later thought was meant to tell me more, but I dared not ask as the woman kept strict watch."

The man said they would walk a couple of miles until they were tired. He asked about mines in the area and then walked on with the woman by his side. Stockmar decided to forget about taking the picture when he got to his car. He noticed the couple's car, a four-door aqua-mist Chevrolet, 1962 or 1963 model. Tannenbaum owned a 1964 Chevrolet four-door.

The police never had the time or manpower to search thoroughly all the old mines which pit the area among the rotting cabins left behind by prospectors in search of a silver strike. It is still a widely held belief that a miner's dream of wealth is now Riha's grave.

Five days after Stockmar thought he had seen Riha and Tannenbaum, Riha was reported at Tannenbaum's house by Ben Lessor, who went there to serve her with a summons. A man with dark, wavy hair brushed straight back, the way Riha wore his hair, answered the door. Lessor asked if Mrs. Tannenbaum was at home. "Gayla, baby, someone to see you," the man called. Lessor correctly picked Riha out of group shots in six photos when the police checked his story.

Tannenbaum always claimed that Riha visited her in Denver every two or three months. On May 7, she said, he arrived at her door at 2:00 p.m. carrying a flight bag. But she could never prove the visits satisfactorily to the police who believed she was the last person to see Riha alive.

Once, the police thought they had a very solid lead. Tannenbaum claimed that Riha went to Michigan to write a book. He sought the peace and

quiet of the northern woods to get away from the turmoil at home, she claimed. He had gone there before when he lived in Chicago. The police found charges on a Mobil credit card signed by a Prof. Thomas B. Riha in December 1969, and in January, 1970. The charges for gas were made at the Itin Service, Inc., 8411 Telegraph Road in Taylor, Mich. The address on the receipt was 11665 Ranage in Taylor and the license plate on the man's car was HM 7350. But that led up another blind alley.

The most intriguing sighting of Riha was passed on by Robert F. Byrnes, the head of the Russian and East European Institute at the University of Indiana. Byrnes wrote to a friend at the University of Colorado that he had information from two sources that indicated Riha was alive and living in Czechoslovakia. "The primary source is an American historian of Slovak descent whom I have known well for about fifteen years and whose integrity I trust fully," he stated. The historian learned of the sighting from a source he refused to identify, except to say that she was a Czech whom he had known for 25 years and trusted completely. She was a naturalized Canadian and did not want her identity known because she planned to return to Czechoslovakia with her Canadian scientist husband and did not want to jeopardize their trip.

The woman claimed she and her husband met Riha accidentally in the summer of 1973 while they were on an exchange program. They had dinner several times with Riha and his wife at the Carlton Hotel in Bratislava, the principal city of Slovakia, a province of Eastern Czechoslovakia. She was sure it was the same Tom Riha she had gone to school with in the 1940's. She said Riha was on the staff of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, but apparently worked in the Foreign Office as a translator. She recalled being at a farewell party for Riha in Germany in 1953 or 1954 just before he returned to the United States.

The CIA discounted the report as "third hand" and too unsubstantiated to be trustworthy. Even Byrnes raised serious doubts and stressed it was only passed-along information which he was not competent to judge as factual. The Canadian scientist, in an attempt to validate his wife's report, tried to locate their original source on a subsequent visit to Bratislava, but the man had moved from his apartment.

There are several questionable points in this account. Riha grew up in Prague, which is located in Bohemia, several hundred miles from Bratislava, and was never known to visit that city. During most of the 1940's, he did not attend school but spent the time in the countryside waiting for

the war to end. In 1947, he went to school for a summer in England to study English and then traveled directly to the United States. During his army hitch, Riha was ordered to Germany, but at the last moment his orders were rescinded. He felt bad about that, according to his uncle, and believed the cancellation had something to do with his involvement with the American Friends Society during his undergraduate years, even though the involvement was nominal.

The presence of Bob Byrnes opens another area of speculation. Stephen Fischer-Galati, a professor of Eastern European Studies at the University of Colorado and a colleague of Riha's, expounds a theory which involves Byrnes in the case. His theory has implications which weave the CIA and universities into the same tangled web. It is a theory of high intrigue, of conspiracy between the intelligence world and the academic world and of international hijinks worthy of the best spy novel. It is also far-fetched and in part provably false. But, because of the revelations about the CIA in recent years and its connection to the academic world and certain foundations, it should not be dismissed completely out of hand. And besides, it is fun reading.

Fischer-Galati is a pugnacious looking Romanian with a thick shock of white hair peppered with bits of black. He speaks with a low guttural accent and describes himself as a "key" person in the Eastern European studies field. He received his Ph.D. from Harvard in 1949, has worked for the U.S. State Department, and for Radio Free Europe. He thinks in terms of political conspiracies and tends to see bears in the shadows. He claims to know how the intelligence business works because he was close to it. He has known Bob Byrnes for 25 years.

Bob Byrnes received his Ph.D. in French History from Harvard in 1947. He taught one year at Rutgers and in 1948 studied at the Russian Institute at Harvard. After that year, he worked for the government, and from 1950-1951 worked in the State Department's (CIA's) section responsible for estimating Soviet espionage. It was at this time that Fischer-Galati, who was working in the State Department's intelligence research section, met him. In 1953, Fischer-Galati transferred to the Radio Free Europe Research Division in New York, which he claims was financed by the CIA. Byrnes also moved to New York, claiming that he had quit government services and was setting up the Middle European Studies Center in New York.

Fischer-Galati maintains that the center was a CIA front and part of Radio Free Europe.

But let Fischer-Galati tell his own story. After all, he thought this theory up and deserves credit for it.

"When Byrnes came to New York to become director of the Middle European Studies Center, he also became chief of grants for the Ford Foundation for Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. That was the beginning of the enormous amount of money which the Ford Foundation began giving out for travels in these areas. Byrnes was clearly a plant of the CIA. That was part of their expansion out of Washington and into the university centers. He has been among the most active CIA promoters and one of the most trusted members of the politic-bureau. He is extremely important. He has complete control of the funds and policy (in the academic area). He is very active in recruiting. He has been for 25 years the number one agent of the CIA in the academic areas.

"He has been the liaison for funds from the CIA into the universities for setting up Eastern European Study Centers. He was slated to set one up at Columbia, but the history department faculty fouled that up unintentionally. They were

not privy to the inner workings of the CIA/university machinations and gave tenure to someone else, thus blocking Byrnes' appointment. So Byrnes was sent to Indiana University where he set up the Slavic and Eastern European Studies Center in 1955. It was funded through the Herman Wells Foundation, a conduit for CIA money. Wells was the president of the university and a long-time hand in the CIA. The money slated for Columbia now went to Indiana, which became the headquarters of all research in the Russian-Eastern Europe field."

It should be noted that Fischer-Galati taught at Indiana University for one year. But he was not retained and moved on to the University of Colorado. Byrnes, former director of the Russian and East European Institute at Indiana University, presently teaches history at that university.

"Byrnes also was on the Selection Committee of the Inter-University Committee on Travel Grants, which was in the same position as the Ford Foundation earlier. It became evident that the Ford Foundation was a CIA conduit, so they thought it better to operate out of a university connection. That way, they could also recruit students. The committee kept track of which



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professors and students were traveling abroad; some for legitimate reasons, others for not so legitimate reasons. Some were agents posing as graduate students, and some were graduate students who went there (Russia or Eastern Europe) for observation purposes.

"The committee handled all the clearances and security. The agents were trained at universities in language or whatever for future work in the CIA in one form or another, either back in Washington, or in the field, or in universities. The attempt was clearly made to control and be sure who is who in the business, to use these people for a multitude of purposes, to be sure that the basic views, the basic analyses and information dealing with Eastern European countries were in hands that were safe, and that they would not deviate from the official government line. They wanted to be sure that people who were politically trustworthy could be placed in certain positions."

"Riha was recruited if not directly by Byrnes, then by one of the members of his group. Most of the people in the academic profession in the Eastern European field were recruited by Byrnes or by his group, or were cleared by Byrnes, or tolerated by Byrnes. Nobody could function in the business without Byrnes' approval."

Byrnes claims that he first met Riha in 1957 or 1958 when Riha applied to the Inter-University Committee on Travel Grants, of which Byrnes was a member, for funding to study at Moscow University. He was impressed with Riha's master thesis, and although there was concern about Riha's Czechoslovakian background, recommended Riha be given a grant. He met Riha on various occasions in the 1960's at conferences of historians and knew him as an historian interested in Russian history.

According to Fischer-Galati, Riha "was recruited not to get 'hard information' but 'soft information,' such as what Czech students were doing in this country, keeping track of who was writing about Czechoslovakia and reporting living conditions in the Soviet Union during his travels in that country."

Riha did work as a guide for a Montreal travel agency which arranged tours from New York through Russia and Eastern Europe for university professors. He made several trips to Russia in this capacity and was planning a trip to Yugoslavia in the summer of 1969.

According to Fischer-Galati, Riha was just a pawn played by the masters in Washington. "Riha was placed at the University of Berkeley Center of Slavic and East European Studies, a center which is the oldest CIA funded center in the United

States. Then he was placed at the Harvard Russian Research Center, also a branch of the CIA established in 1948, the year which Byrnes attended. Riha was moved to the University of Chicago by the same people who placed him in the other institutions. He was put there not because of extraordinary academic abilities, but because they needed somebody in Chicago who was familiar with Czechoslovakia and also knew something of the Soviet Union.

"At Chicago, Riha performed two functions: he was young, unmarried, and fancied himself a playboy so he made a lot of contacts not only with the students, but entertained lots of East Europe groups, especially Czechs in Chicago. And that is how he met Gloria Tannenbaum. She was in Chicago as a stoolie of the FBI or the CIA. Their relationship developed there. I think she was just one of those women who would do anything for money. If they did not work on common projects, they worked on parallel projects.

"In 1958, Riha went to Czechoslovakia ostensibly to visit his father. This is extraordinary for nobody was going back to Czechoslovakia or anyplace in Eastern Europe. There just was no way. The American government adamantly opposed anyone going there for it was enormously dangerous. Therefore, he must have gone with full knowledge and consent of his sponsors in the U.S." (David Munford, the deputy chairman of the Selection Committee of the Inter-University Committee on Travel Grants, expressly forbade Riha to go to Czechoslovakia precisely because of the danger involved.)

"He must have been accepted by the Czechs. My belief is this: that it was then through his uncle, an official in the Czechoslovakia Bank of Foreign Trade, that he established the link of being an intermediary for the buying of political people, particularly Jews, out of Czechoslovakia in return for cash. Relatives of the people would pay \$5,000 of which \$4,000 went to the Czechoslovakian government and \$1,000 went to Riha. The money was deposited in a Swiss bank account and handed over as soon as the individual left the country. And that became a rather big business. Riha clearly was the liaison man in this deal. He did not buy people out for humanitarian reasons, but strictly for money. He was an enormously greedy son-of-a-bitch. Extremely money conscious."

Here Fischer-Galati seems to have borrowed, or confused, some facts and twisted them to fit his theory. Riha's uncle, Jiri Cerveny, was a solid middle-class attorney who for the last three years of his life worked in the Finance Ministry arranging for the sale of property in Czecho-

slovakia to the Czech government by people who had left the country. Much of this property was owned by Jews. Riha had a modest life style and lived within the means of his salary. He had to borrow money to make the down payment on his house in Boulder.

However, Fischer-Galati thinks Riha's low profile was merely a cover. "Riha had an extraordinary fine collection of art objects which came from Czechoslovakia. No Communist government would allow people to take stuff out of Czechoslovakia unless they had a reason," Fischer-Galati maintains, "It was *quid pro quo*. It is inconceivable that our intelligence community was not fully aware of the facts. Even if you don't work for them, they know every move everybody makes. They were fully known at all times to the CIA and FBI."

According to Peter Kress, Riha's uncle, the art collection was part of the family heritage and given to Riha as a present. Fischer-Galati totally believes that his daily movements are being noted by the CIA or FBI. Sitting in his office at the University of Colorado, he waved his hand towards the window and said, "They know everything I do. I cannot move without them knowing it." He seems to accept this with great aplomb and indifference.

"In 1967, Riha's contract was not renewed at the University of Chicago. And for good reasons. Not that he was incompetent, but because the University of Chicago had shifted its operation from the Russian/Eastern European field to the Turkish/Middle Eastern field. So the CIA money was re-transferred into the Turkish operation which left people in 'soft money,' like Riha, out of a job. Chicago didn't need people in Russian history. Riha was up for grabs. He had a job offer at North Carolina which would have paid him more than the University of Colorado, and under normal circumstances would have gone there, but there was a fairly large Czech community in Denver and also, I'm quite convinced, that the university was willing to cooperate with the government in having Riha. There must have been some understanding.

"In 1967, the university's Slavic department was expanding full blast. It was becoming a leading regional and national center for Slavic studies. CU was looking for a man in this area. They wanted a man like Riha there. He could be placed there with impunity because there was a rationale.

"Everything went pretty well for awhile. In the summer of 1968, Riha went back to the Soviet Union as a tour leader for a group of professors. In August, the Russians invaded Czechoslovakia. Riha got married in October of that year, which was totally unexpected. I suspect he got married

because he had to because Hana knew what he was doing. Her family was also part of the Czech intelligence operation. She needed to be married to an American citizen to get a permanent visa, so clearly this was something Riha did to pretty much cover himself at a time when the Czechoslovakian future seemed very dim. I think he lost the certainty of people being able to be gotten out for money. Nobody knew what was going to happen in Czechoslovakia after 1968. It is interesting that he got his nephew out.

"Hana's family knew of the people buying business. I am positive they knew because she came here not on an emigration visa but stayed on and on and on. Riha was probably known as the liaison man in the Czech community.

"At Riha's wedding (which Fischer-Galati attended) Tannenbaum showed up uninvited at the reception. She wanted something. What she wanted to know was what was the future of the 'business.' To what extent marrying this girl was going to affect their business relationship. Tannenbaum was a partner in the transmittal of funds. I think she blackmailed him because she knew what he was doing, and he was paying her to keep her mouth shut. Tannenbaum kept after him. She wanted to marry him. He was unable to continue in the transmission of these particular funds.

"Tannenbaum wanted her cut. Riha was incapable of delivering. His sponsors in the U.S. were not able to get involved in this situation because it would be embarrassing for them. Tannenbaum told me that she had contacts with the CIA, that she worked for the CIA in Chicago. Riha couldn't pay any more. He couldn't resort to anyone because it would have blown his cover and everybody else's cover. Tannenbaum exploited it knowing full well that nothing would happen because she threatened to talk. The reason they declared her insane was because she was going to talk. No doubt Tannenbaum did in Riha because she did in two other people with cyanide. All the evidence says that she was out to get his money. He couldn't defend himself because she had the goods on him and his sponsors. She could have blown the CIA connections to the academic world.

"Tannenbaum's suicide note (stating that Riha was in Russia) was strictly self-serving. She had to make some statement. She didn't know that she was dying. She tried that type of stuff (suicide) before, and they always pumped out her stomach. But somehow this time they didn't pump out her stomach. The question is how did she get the cyanide. It is the same type of question as with Jack Ruby: How come Ruby was able to shoot Oswald?

Clearly she expected to be saved. By making the statement, she would have demonstrated she had nothing to do with the case, and she would have gotten out of the hospital.

"Tannenbaum was covered by the authorities. She had the goods on Riha, and she would have talked. She had to go because she was a permanent threat. Authorities decided that if she got out of the hospital, she could still be dangerous. By having her in the hospital, they could say, 'This woman is insane, and you can't trust what she says,' Fischer-Galati concludes.

Was Tannenbaum so sinister that the CIA would arrange her death? Was it possible that a middle-aged woman, a known impostor and felon with a history of mental illness could have hoodwinked the FBI? And through sheer ineptness did the FBI drag the CIA into a very embarrassing mess which neither agency wanted aired in public? Did they try to cover up for years only to have it eventually backfire and make them look not only silly and stupid, but also villainous? Was Tannenbaum capable of pulling off such a bold-face bluff? Did Tannenbaum kill Thomas Riha for his money, or in hate because he rejected her and married another?

Tannenbaum was not a very likable person by most accounts. She would look a person straight in the eye and lie so convincingly that few ever directly challenged her. It was difficult to differentiate between fact and fiction when Tannenbaum artfully spun them into her own reality. And it was equally difficult for Tannenbaum to keep them separate. Once when she applied for a job, she claimed to be a tightrope walker. Her prospective employer asked her to prove it. Without hesitation she walked twenty feet across a wire strung sixty feet above the ground without a safety net below. She had never done anything like that before in her life.

She felt secure when she was role playing. The mental clothes of others, with which she cloaked herself, were more attractive than her self perceived person. She described herself as a "blob," but when she felt "high," when she was outside of herself, she was capable of doing anything. The roles she assumed were more attractive to her, and stronger, than her own nature. At various times she claimed to be a geologist, a killer, a colonel, the advertising director of the University of Chicago Press, and an editor of textbooks for Scott Foresman & Co.

She tried to impress people either by exaggerat-

ing her accomplishments or by simply lying. She was a high school drop-out, but she claimed to have graduated from Florida State University summa cum laude with a BA degree in comparative literature and to have earned an MA degree in English from the same school: to have worked one year towards a Ph.D. in English, to have taught college-level English, and to being eligible for Phi Beta Kappa. She also claimed to have a master's degree in education from the Institute of Cybercultural Research at New York State University and a BA degree in psychology from Roosevelt University in Chicago. In a letter to an aunt, she said she was studying law.

No doubt she was a very bright woman and a quick-study on technical matters. She once claimed to have invented a radiation technique using Cobalt-50 to treat waste water. She wrote to the small town of Niwot in Colorado suggesting they build a plant using her technique. One evening she greeted dinner guests at the door wearing a heavy apron and gloves. She was preparing dinner in a laser oven she had invented she explained to the puzzled guests. She turned down offers of help with the meal explaining it was "too dangerous."

Tannenbaum sought self-esteem by projecting an authoritarian figure. In a poem she wrote, "Power means demanding with a lot of people behind you. Power doesn't mean begging and asking." She used power crudely but boldly, which is perhaps how she was able to pass herself off as an immigration official and an intelligence officer in the army. She was not above crass threats shouted in gutter language or of waving a gun to reinforce her position. Yet she was sly and manipulative, careful to plant red-herrings to throw suspicion off herself. She used abrasiveness like a club to batter down people's resistance, but thought of herself as shy. At one time Cerveny slept with a pistol under his pillow in fear of her. Riha once spent a night sitting up in a neighbor's living room because he did not want to return home while she was there.

Not everyone was intimidated by Tannenbaum. A few recognized the bluster for what it was and that behind the big talk of knowing famous people, being a spy, killing people, controlling great sums of money, she was a frightened woman. She was like a man who buys old campaign medals from foreign wars and wears them like protective armor.

She could be very generous, but she demanded enormous gratitude. She cared for her friends and loved her two young children deeply. She worried about her son, Jimmy, having emotional problems "of no small measure." Basically, she wanted to be nothing more than a good mother, to spend all her time with her children, but financial realities and

the defenses she used to cope with pressures led her astray. She did not have an easy or happy life. Money was a constant concern. In her letters, she wrote that she was "desperate for cash right now. . . . We plainly just won't eat if some of these things don't get straightened out. . . . but really I have reached my capacity and am about to go absolutely nuts with worry."

Tannenbaum's problems began early in life. She was born March 30, 1931, in Chicago, to a mother who had wanted a boy and "hated her guts." As a child she was physically and psychologically abused. Her mother once hit her in the mouth with a broomstick, and throughout her childhood, until the age of 10 or 11, she was frequently tied to a post in the basement. At times she was left there all night. The experiences left deep psychological scars on the young girl. Unable to escape from the imagined horrors in the dark basement, she fled into an illusionary world. She made herself into the Queen of May dancing through a field of clover, instead of Gloria Forest condemned to the basement, cowering in the darkness, punished for sins she did not understand. She developed a fear of bugs, and in later life she was terrified of spiders and insects, especially when left alone in a room.

Deception became a way of survival. If she could fool herself into believing she was someone else, then she could fool other people. She developed that skill at an early age and perfected it as she became more dependent on escapism to keep her sanity. When still a pre-teenager, she passed herself off as a 16-year-old in order to get a job in a hospital. For a year she lived a double life, carrying two sets of school books so she would not miss any time at the hospital. Concerning that year she expressed great anger towards her mother who she claimed "took away every dime I made."

Psychiatrists diagnosed Tannenbaum as having a "depressive, neurotic, and anti-social personality" which arose from emotional and physical abuse suffered in her childhood and "socio-pathic through her rearing and by what happened to her when she was young." She suffered from a manic-depressive mental illness which had begun in the late 1940's and became full-blown in the 1950's. She fit the classic pattern. Manic-depressives have a strong desire for authority and are fundamentally depressed all their lives. When they become delusional in their excited stages, the delusions tend towards the military and the religious. The delusions alternate between depression and elation, and wealth is part of their delusions of grandeur.

In discussing Dostoyevsky's "Crime and Pun-

ishment" with a friend, Tannenbaum said she agreed with the basic premise of the book: that the world is divided into two parts—the extraordinary men who have the right to do what they please, to steal or to kill, and the ordinary men who do not have this right. Tannenbaum said she was a doer and one of those active people who control society.

Tannenbaum attended high school at St. Elizabeth's Academy, a private Catholic girls' school where her aunt, Sister Praxides, was the principal, although Tannenbaum's mother was Baptist. In her late twenties, Tannenbaum began spending time in Catholic churches and had "hellish conversations about everything I did with statues of various saints. It was a two-way deal. I talked to them and they talked to me. They would introduce themselves and sometimes would come to life and walk away." But the Virgin Mary would not talk to her, Tannenbaum complained. Since she was 8 years old, she had heard voices. They always reassured her rather than threatened her. Among the voices was her father's, who deserted the family when Tannenbaum was 7 years old, and another man, who talked about rabbit hunting.

She told contradictory stories about her life to make herself sound more interesting. She even made up medical histories so doctors might find her a fascinating patient. She said that she was born in Russia, or China, or Brazil, and that during World War II, she was held in a German concentration camp where multiple surgery was performed on her. She said she entered the United States by way of submarine as a secret Russian agent and that she was a homosexual.

She claimed to be a dozen different persons in her life, including Gloria Zakharovna. That may be true. She had a social security card, a student card to Wright Junior College, a library card, and other identification made out to Gloria Zakharovna. She said that her given name was Zakharovna, but that her father changed it to Forest. As for the name Gayla, "I got arty about the name Gloria and used Gayla, which means Helen. It was sort of silly at the time but it stuck."

She escaped Chicago at the first opportunity and went to high school at the St. Elizabeth Academy. At the age of 16, she dropped out to marry a band leader named MacPherson. It was not a good match, but none of Tannenbaum's love matches worked out very well. She sought to anchor her identity in males and would do anything to secure her hold. She got pregnant at least eleven times and had three children (there is a fleeting reference to a fourth child, a daughter named Deborah, whom Tannenbaum gave up for

adoption) in attempts to bond a man to her. She stole, claimed to have been an accessory to a murder, and perhaps even intended to kill Hana in order to "deport" her just to please a man. Males were the father figure, the authority figure, to her, and in some ways she tried to adapt male macho characteristics: She swore like a trooper, liked to be in command and dominate, and often carried a gun. But males remained a misunderstood gender to her. She could not get men to love her as a woman or intimidate them to stay with her. In a letter, she wrote, "Since I have no way to being expert about the male of the species, I guess he (Jimmy, her son) is behaving like a boy should. I really should feel bewildered by the child. Responsible males are NOT a part of our family if my father and brothers are to be any examples. And I had little or nothing to go on to select a responsible person as a husband, which is why that endeavor fell apart so badly."

Marriage did not improve Tannenbaum's life. She hoped to exorcise the tortures of her childhood from her mind and fill the space with the love and protection of MacPherson, but she seemed to attract misfortune in her personal life. MacPherson joined the air force and moved his wife to the Bowling Air Force Base, Washington, D.C., where she was isolated and lonely. MacPherson kept a tight hold on the family purse strings further reducing any chance of freedom Tannenbaum might have found in her new life. He showed signs of tiring of her and stayed away from home more frequently. When he was at home, he neglected his wife. Tannenbaum became increasingly desperate to halt the deterioration of her marriage. She wanted her husband to notice her.

Her cry of desperation took unconscious and overt forms. Once, while roller skating, she fell and was knocked unconscious. When she regained her senses, she could not move her left arm or leg. The doctors found no physical ailment to cause the impairment and concluded that she was suffering from hysterical paralysis. They noted that her speech was "very fast, but the words distinct. She jumps from one topic to the next with no logical connections." MacPherson just became more irritated instead of sympathetic. Putting hope in a tactic she would use in the future, Tannenbaum conceived and gave birth to a daughter, Margaret, named after her mother. But, as is true in many failing marriages, the baby only exacerbated the bad situation. According to Tannenbaum, MacPherson continued to abuse her and also beat the child.

MacPherson was transferred to Randolph Air Force Base fifteen miles from San Antonio, Texas,

and Tannenbaum followed. There she had her first brush with the law, and, as in future scrapes with the police, it involved embezzlement and forgery. She took her husband's pay check for \$336 from the mail and forged his name to it. Before she could cash it, she lost her nerve and, she claimed, went to the paymaster's office to have a duplicate check made out so her husband would not find out. The paymaster called MacPherson and explained the situation to him. Instead of attempting to understand his wife's condition, or to recognize her signals of distress, he pressed charges. She was arrested for mail theft, forgery, and passing a government check. She was found guilty and sentenced to one year and one day in jail, given a suspended sentence, and placed on three years probation under supervision.

The marriage certainly had no future. After four years of trying to make it work Tannenbaum and MacPherson divorced. Tannenbaum moved to the



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St. Louis area and supported herself and her daughter as a bookkeeper and accountant. In 1954, a warrant was issued for her arrest on a forgery charge in Clayton, Missouri, a town near St. Louis. Tannenbaum claimed she was set-up by the mayor of the town. She was keeping the city's books and the mayor was illegally using public funds, not raking off vast amounts into his pocket, but shifting sums around and covering it up in the books. An election was coming up and the mayor, afraid that Tannenbaum could prove to be a political liability, tried to discredit her by bringing forgery charges against her. At least, that is Tannenbaum's story. Whatever the true events, the charges were dropped.

The same month she was charged with forgery, Tannenbaum attempted suicide. She was admitted to the St. Louis County Hospital suffering from barbiturate and mercury poisoning. She told the nurses that she was a captain in the U.S. Air Force and confessed to giving false medical histories to Chicago hospitals to "make herself more interesting." In June of 1955 she again attempted suicide—twice. On one occasion, she was taken to the St. Louis Jewish Hospital in a deep coma from a drug overdose. The hospital records note that she had a history of morphine addiction. She was nearly successful in her other suicide attempt. She was rushed to the Barnes Hospital emergency room in a coma and the doctors could find no reflexes. They had serious doubts if they could save her, but after 20 nembutals were pumped from her stomach she regained consciousness. She did not intend to live—in the pocket of her dress was found her last will and testament.

Apparently deciding that her life in St. Louis was too depressing, she moved back to Chicago after her last suicide attempt and met Charles Russell Scimo. She married him within a year. Tannenbaum claimed Scimo was a member of la cosa nostra, and that through him she made connections with the "Family" in Kansas City. Hoodlum or not, he was her man, and she gave herself over totally to keeping him. She helped him run narcotics and gambling equipment from New York to Chicago she claimed, and once helped him dump a large sack, which she thought contained a body, into a lake. A more helpful mate a small-time hood could not ask for, but she didn't have lasting power. They had a child, Jimmy, after two years of marriage, and as with MacPherson the child could not hold together a marriage on the skids. Tannenbaum and Scimo parted ways in the divorce court.

She worked again as a bookkeeper for a small company to support herself and her family, and it

led her into serious trouble with the law. On September 2, 1958, she was charged with one count of embezzlement and two counts of forgery. Tannenbaum did not deny that she took money from the company, but she thought there was nothing criminal about her actions. Her brother, Peter, asked her to get him some money, she said, so over a three-month period she gave him \$10,000 in embezzled funds. She explained to the police that she thought the money was a kickback payment and had to be made secretly. She agreed to pay back the money, and the charges were dropped. She did repay \$4,000 to the company. But in 1960 she was again charged with writing bad checks, forgery, and embezzlement. In October of that year she was sent to the Dwight Reformatory for Women in Dwight, Illinois, on a one-to-five year term. She was paroled after two years.

When she got out of prison, Tannenbaum, with her bulldog determination, started to put her life back in order. She retrieved her children from foster homes and began the search for a job, always an exasperating experience for an ex-convict. But she had luck. She was hired at Tannenbaum Design Associates by the owner, Leo Tannenbaum, who became the next man in her life. Leo either liked her boldness or he took pity on the young mother with two kids and a record, or both. He was divorced and perhaps lonely. In 1963, they began living together and Gloria took his name.

She became the creative and production dynamo of the graphic studio, if her version is to be believed, while Leo made the outside contacts with clients, which included the University of Chicago Press. Gloria oversaw the actual mechanics of designing and setting up the books, pamphlets, and promotional material which were the bulk of Leo's business. It was perhaps through the connection with the University of Chicago Press, which published Riha's first book while he was an associate professor at the University, that Tannenbaum first met him. She claimed that she helped him with the technical aspects of printing the book, the lay-out, and some editing as well.

Exactly how Riha and Tannenbaum met is murky. Tannenbaum maintained that they met in 1948 while she was at Bowling Air Force Base in Washington, D.C. with her husband, MacPherson. MacPherson had met Riha in Europe, she said, and they had kept in touch. Riha had lost all contact with his family during the war and came to the United States with the help of a refugee organization. Gloria and her husband, she asserted, helped Riha get settled and pick up his education which had been disrupted by the war. Tannenbaum described Riha as a naive 17-year-

old, a lost wife who was mentally ravaged by the war which had torn apart his country. According to Tannenbaum, he was put in a German slave labor camp and suffered terrible deprivations during the war until he managed to escape and was hidden in the countryside until after the war. This story is patently false. Riha stayed with his half-sister in the countryside during the war and in 1947 went to California, at the urging of his mother and grandmother.

Tannenbaum described their relationship as "one of these in and out type of things." They kept in touch sporadically and occasionally saw each other during school holidays. It was in Chicago that their relationship became much closer. Riha had a bachelor apartment at 5801 S. Dorchester, a couple of streets from the Tannenbaums, who lived at 5117 S. Kimbark. Their work on his book brought them in constant contact, and the friendship deepened. Riha was going through the throes of frustration most writers experience, and Tannenbaum gave him a sympathetic shoulder to lean on. She said Riha called her "his colonel" because she "reminded him of somebody else who was kind of bossy about how in the hell he was going to write his book." "The university was pestering him about neglecting his teaching duties in favor of research work," Tannenbaum said, and was hinting that his job might be in jeopardy. Riha shared his concern over this with her and voiced his dissatisfaction over not having a better position than an assistant professorship, even though he had been promoted from instructor to assistant professor when he received his Ph.D. from Harvard in 1962.

It is true that Tannenbaum became known as the "Colonel" when she lived in Chicago with Leo, but not necessarily because Riha called her that. She explained to a psychiatrist that "The colonel thing started again about the time I met Riha. I never consciously thought of the colonel. I just became the Colonel Tannenbaum, retired, and all that came to an end in January this year (1970) or sometime later. Even my family didn't seem real to me. It is difficult for me to say when the idea that I was a retired military intelligence Colonel came into my thinking, but it was there full-blown and as real as if it had been the only life I had had. I felt quite sufficient to the situations I encountered being the retired colonel. I was somebody good and I thought that there was nothing that I could do that would go wrong."

Tannenbaum had other delusions at the same time. In one incidence, she thought she was from outer space and didn't belong to this planet. "I would get lost in front of my house because

everything looked strange," she said. "Nothing was familiar. I only knew my kids and Leo. I felt like a pink cloud. I was Leo's wife, but was really common-law. I worked in the studio and went places like Cuba against the wishes of the United States Department [sic]. He (Leo) wanted me to go so I went and took photographs."

In time, her relationship with Leo began to take the inevitable dive. She had a child, Rebecca Eva, known as Becky, but Leo refused to acknowledge parentage. When Becky was three or four months old, Leo moved out. She took him to court for child support, and he finally agreed to pay \$5,000 if he was relieved of acknowledging paternity. The judge stipulated that \$1,000 go to pay Tannenbaum's lawyer and the remaining \$4,000 be placed in a savings account to be used solely for Becky's benefit and withdrawals be restricted to \$60 a week.

* * *

In 1967, Riha found a new job at the University of Colorado and was preparing to move to Boulder before the fall term began. According to Tannenbaum, he told her, "Well, look, neither one of us are getting any younger. I don't have any children. Supposing we give it a try." It was to be the perfect combination; he would write books, and she would design them. "We had a perfect working combination set up between us," Tannenbaum said. "All of our ideas of working together were fine except Becky was still pretty small and a loud-mouth baby. It was terribly distracting for Riha, who was 38 and trying to write. The Jimmy part of it was okay, because this was a little boy, and they got along great."

Tannenbaum had some doubts. "I had just hopped out of a bad marriage situation and was still pretty broken up, and it seemed like it was more irritation than it was gonna be smiles, and I decided that, well, I'll take the kids and go back to Chicago (if the relationship did not work out)."

In the summer of 1967, Riha taught at the University of Hawaii as a visiting professor and arrived in Boulder in September. Tannenbaum claimed that she sent her heavy furniture with Riha's household goods in a Bekin's van because the University of Colorado was paying his moving expenses. She also stated that she loaned him \$7,000, money which Leo had given her, as a downpayment on a house. Riha did sign a promissory note for \$7,000 dated Aug. 3, 1967, payable to Gloria Tannenbaum. It was superseded by another note dated Sept. 1 that stipulated the note would be cancelled if they married each other.

Riha found a modest single story frame house near the university and settled in. Tannenbaum

claimed she loaded the rest of her belongings in a U-Haul trailer, drove to Boulder with her children, and moved in with Riha in September. They had been living together for one month when, according to Tannenbaum, they decided to let things "cool off a little bit." She and Riha thought it best "to see if there's anything of value to stand the test of a little bit of time and let Becky grow up . . . He could adjust his business at school because the school had turned out to be much more of a challenge to him than he was willing to admit right off the bat. It was really time consuming and he didn't like the little kid, and I didn't want to get into a marriage situation—which is why we were living common-law—that wasn't going to be pleasing. Myself, my three marriages had gone sour, and I didn't want to get into another one that was gonna be the fourth one to go sour."

But she entertained serious thoughts about taking the trip to the altar for the fourth time. "He was so darn anxious to get married again," she told the Boulder police during their investigation of Riha's disappearance, "but he couldn't stand the kids. I thought it would have provided a home with a father figure, but it didn't work out that way." Tannenbaum maintained that Riha married a woman in Longmont, Colorado, in 1958 but the union lasted only thirty days, and he left to study at the University of California. There is no corroborating evidence to support this, and members of his family deny the marriage ever took place.

There is also a large discrepancy in Tannenbaum's account of when she arrived in Boulder, which casts serious doubt on her story that she lived with Riha. On March 18, 1968, she wrote a letter to a Boulder attorney, Dennis Blewitt, who was recommended by a mutual friend in Chicago asking for help in relocating in Denver. She explained that she had had a "messy divorce" and wanted to get away from Chicago. Blewitt verifies that Tannenbaum did not arrive in Colorado until 1968, that she moved directly to a house in Denver he had located for her, and that she never lived with Riha in Boulder. Blewitt and Tannenbaum later worked closely together in a land development plan to build a housing project, but it ran into financial problems and never came to fruition.

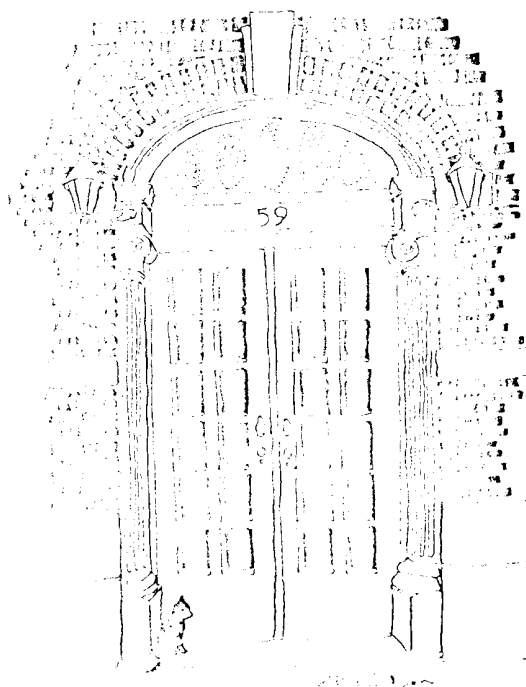
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Tannenbaum was right in thinking Riha was serious about finding a wife. He was close to 40 years old and was feeling the urge to settle down and have a family. In the spring of 1968, he squired an English woman named Hillary around Boulder,

introducing her to friends as the future Mrs. Riha. She was a tall redhead and made a very favorable impression. They planned an autumn wedding. But upon her return to London for the summer, she found an old boyfriend ill with the mumps and dormant tender feelings for him bloomed. By the time Riha phoned, she had changed her mind about marrying him. Over a crackling trans-Atlantic phone line, she tried to gently explain her sudden change of heart. Riha was apparently not too shaken by Eros's little joke. He found it perhaps ironic that after waiting all those years to decide on a mate, his chosen one would be so cavalier. In recounting the conversation to friends, Riha laughingly stated that she wanted him to feel sorry for her boyfriend, too. More galling was the fact that he was paying for the call to hear her describe "the chap's bloody swollen cheeks."

Despite the setback, Riha was still anxious to find a wife. In the summer of 1968 he led a tour of professors through Russia, and, before he left, he wrote to an uncle in Prague asking that a notice be placed in the city's newspapers stating that a naturalized American professor of Czech origin wished to meet young women with the object of marriage. Four hundred letters poured in with pictures and purple prose. But again Eros enjoyed thwarting Riha. A week before he was to arrive in Prague to conduct the interviews with prospective brides, the Russians invaded forcing him to change his travel plans.

Thomas waited patiently in Vienna, hoping the situation would improve. When the Czechs took to



the streets throwing stones at Russian tanks and the Russians cracked down, Riha turned homeward still a bachelor. But he had a surprise waiting for him in New York. His uncle, Jiri Cerveny, had been visiting relatives in the United States while Thomas was in Russia. Cerveny met Hana's aunt and uncle, the Grossmans while in New York, and once he saw their beautiful niece, commented that Thomas would probably like to meet her. The Grossmans thought such a match would be the answer to their prayers. Hana had only a temporary visa, and they did not want her sent back to occupied Prague when it expired. If she married an American citizen, and a Czech at that, it would be perfect. When Riha landed at the John F. Kennedy airport, Hana was waiting for him with an armful of roses. Cerveny would later admit that he wished he had never arranged for the two to meet.

Riha apparently liked what he saw during the few days he spent with her in New York. He invited her to visit him in Colorado, an encouraging sign, and Hana accepted. She arrived in Boulder and checked into the Boulderado Hotel. Thomas immediately invited her to stay in the spare bedroom at his home. She was his guest and should not stay in a run-down hotel. When Hana's aunt and uncle learned that she was staying with Thomas unchaperoned, they threatened to bring moral charges against him. It seems odd that a man of worldly experience like Riha would be stampeded into a marriage by such a threat. Perhaps this pressure and the thought that Hana was as good as any mail-order bride from Czechoslovakia made Riha decide to marry her. At any rate, a wedding date was set for Oct. 13, barely two weeks after Hana arrived.

On the day of the wedding, it appeared that Thomas might have had a change of heart. He left the house early and did not reappear until shortly before the time to leave for the church. He did not explain where he had been and was very quiet and nervous. He changed into a freshly pressed black suit, placed a white flower in his buttonhole, and checked to see that the ring was safe in his pocket. He was a handsome groom. A slight man with narrow shoulders, he was slim, attractive to women, and moved with athletic grace. He had deep smile lines, sun-burst crinkles around his blue eyes, and wore his thick, dark brown hair combed straight back, which gave him a debonair look. It was a big day in his life, one he had looked forward to but had tried to avoid through most of his adult life. He still felt a bit uncertain about marrying. He loved Hana, or so his best man, Libro Brom, firmly believed, but he hardly knew her. But she was

pretty, and they had gotten along well during her short stay. In many ways she seemed helpless: she could not drive or speak English very well, and she found the kitchen confusing. Helping her appealed to Riha's ego. She was so charming when she looked at him with her big brown eyes that he forgot about her lack of much formal education, or her disinterest in his work. He had been longing for a wife to cook for him, to make his house a home, to give him children, and to be a witty companion.

But he did not act like an excited bridegroom. "He was not pleased about getting married," Brom recalled, although Thomas never said specifically why. Hana, on the other hand, was in good spirits and had no foreboding about her future life with Thomas.

The guests were waiting at the First Unitarian Church when the wedding party arrived for the short and simple afternoon ceremony. When the bride and groom came out of the church everyone threw rice and laughed and smiled. All the doubts and quiet questions Thomas had were pushed aside by the moment. Hana and Thomas looked like typical happy newlyweds as they ducked into the waiting car and led the wedding party to the Black Bear Inn for the reception.

At the party, Thomas was very animated. He went around to his friends with a big smile, clasping himself by the elbows, and proclaiming that marriage was for life. Hana was hardly known and shy by nature. At one point, she looked up and could not find Thomas. She looked again several minutes later and saw him in a corner talking to a stout woman with dishwater blond hair.

Thomas was talking intently with Tannenbaum. They huddled together for about an hour leaving Hana to fend for herself in the room full of near strangers. According to Tannenbaum, Riha asked her if she knew anyone who could pull some strings to help his nephew, Cerveny, who, having left Czechoslovakia two weeks after the Russians invaded, was sitting in an Austrian refugee camp waiting to come to the United States. Hundreds of Czechs were in the camp, and it could be a long wait before his number came up. He was restless and talked about going to Canada, but Thomas thought it best that he come directly to this country. Did Tannenbaum know anyone who might speed up his application, or know of any government agency which Thomas could appeal to?

* * *

As luck would have it, Cerveny had missed Thomas in Vienna by two days. He had waited to see what the Russians would do before making the

decision to leave his homeland. Politics had never overly concerned him, and he hoped the invasion would not seriously disrupt his life. He was young, handsome, had plenty of girlfriends, and a good job as an engineer. He was not aware that the Russians had taken over the Dubcek government, which Moscow feared was too liberal and would set a precedent for other Russian satellite countries to follow, until he left a girlfriend's house early in the morning of the invasion. When he saw the first Russian tank, squat and menacing, he was shocked and bewildered. He did not know exactly what it meant, or what he should do. Better to wait and see, he told himself. Perhaps they will be here only a short time, and then he could continue to live normally. But after two weeks it became apparent that life would not be the same under the Russian guns. Cerveny decided to leave the country while it was still possible.

He wrote to a Dutch friend, Aneka Hockandikj, an older woman he had met while vacationing in Yugoslavia, and asked her to sponsor him so he could get an exit visa. He grew increasingly nervous for fear the routes out of the country would be cut off before her offer arrived and decided to leave immediately. It was much easier to get out than he had thought. Although the Russians controlled the country, their grip had not penetrated down into the lower levels of the government. Dubcek's people still ran the bureaucracy and were freely giving out exit visas. The Russians were making no effort to stop the flow of Czechs streaming into Austria, although later they would shut the border. Cerveny got a visa in one day, bought a ticket to Vienna, and left on the next train.

He had a short wait in the refugee camp located outside of Vienna. The U.S. Congress passed emergency legislation which allowed large numbers of Czechs to enter the country without waiting for the normal lengthy processing. Cerveny was in the first waves of refugees to reach this country. Why Riha thought Tannenbaum could help remains unclear, but she was not going to dispell his belief. She had questioned Riha closely as to whether Cerveny was a Communist. Thomas said, no, he might be a bit liberal but he was not a Communist. If he was, Tannenbaum warned Riha, she would send him back to the "middle of Russia." She promised she would do whatever possible, which later turned out to be a call to the Denver Immigration and Naturalization Service office. She then left the wedding reception after a cursory introduction to Hana.

* * *

Tannenbaum had not been invited to the wedding and claimed she would not have attended if an invitation had been made. She only came to the reception because Thomas was so insistent. She was not terribly happy about Hana, whom she had never met and did not want to meet. She was upset that Riha chose to marry a woman he had known less than two months and dashing whatever hopes she harbored of claiming him for herself. She was also jealous of the younger and prettier woman. Hana had large doe eyes, long dark hair, and an attractive figure. Tannenbaum, in contrast, had a lumpy figure, a receding chin, and dishwater blond hair which she sometimes wore in a thin ponytail. She pretended to brush Hana off as a dog does an irritating flea, yet the bite left behind constantly itched.

Tannenbaum was suspicious of Hana. She thought there was something very fishy about the rushed wedding. The Grossmans' moral indignation was a front, she thought, to scare Thomas into marrying their "little girl," as she called Hana, before she was deported. They were afraid she would be forcibly returned to Czechoslovakia and turned over to the state police, or so Tannenbaum thought. It was Tannenbaum's theory that Hana was in this country, and the Czechoslovakian government allowed her to remain here on extended visas, because she was to supply the secret police with certain information. Hana had not fulfilled her part of the deal and was afraid that once back in her native land, she would never be allowed to leave. To support her theory, Tannenbaum pointed out that Hana was lax to the point of indifference about informing the American immigration authorities of her change of status, of keeping appointments with them, and of filling out the necessary forms. She relied on her attorney, Regosin, to straighten out the problems. But she was always very prompt in presenting her passport to the Czech embassy to have her visa renewed.

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Hana and Thomas did not take a honeymoon. He was in the middle of the fall teaching term and could not get the time off. They settled into his house and began their life together.

But, despite his determination to be blissfully happy with Hana, Riha had lingering doubts. He was forty years old, she was twenty four and not as firmly molded as he. Their goals in life were different as were their styles of living. He once told a friend, "Sometimes I wonder how it's going, then other times she is so happy and cheerful. Last night we went to a party, and she was like a child - so

happy. She brought out all her clothes and asked me what to wear." After the party, Thomas was so pleased with Hana that he took her on a midnight walk and picked a bouquet of wild flowers for her. Looking back on the evening, Hana said, "For him, life was like a flower. He enjoyed life so much. He was so alive."

Riha found it difficult to adjust his idealized vision of a wife to the reality of Hana. Like most older bachelors, he was set in his ways and accustomed to his routine. In that, he was not the easiest person to live with. He was a fastidious man who filed his papers in a neat pile, his pens lined up, and his files in good order. Clutter distracted him. It took his mind away from the job at hand with its nagging insistence to be put straight. Within six weeks of the wedding, Riha began to realize that he had made a mistake. Hana irritated the hell out of him. Her idea of preparing dinner was thaw-and-cook. She left her clothes lying around the bedroom, and Thomas would grumpily pick them up. She neglected to change the sheets. Unable to stand soiled sheets, Thomas would rip them off the bed, gather a big bundle of laundry in his arms, and storm off to the laundromat.

But still he agreed to go through a second wedding ceremony for Hana's parents when they arrived in New York in December. Hana had already sent her wedding dress back to her aunt and wanted very much to have her mother and father share the marriage of their daughter. She returned to New York in November to prepare for the second ceremony and to escape the pressure she felt building in Thomas. He dutifully arrived during the Christmas break, walked through the mock wedding, and returned to Boulder for the beginning of the winter term. Hana returned in mid-January, and within three days Riha complained to Tannenbaum that he could not stand her any longer. He wanted a divorce. He began spending long hours at his office to avoid going home, but found even there he could not escape the tensions. He could not concentrate. His work began to suffer. Life was no longer fun.

In February, Riha saw a lawyer and quietly began divorce proceedings. He was not interested in any attempt at a reconciliation according to his attorney. Riha's mind was set, and he wanted the proceedings to begin immediately. He accused Hana of being irresponsible, of not keeping appointments, of not caring for herself or for him, of not being a good housekeeper, and of drinking too much. He would not pay alimony, he said, because she had contributed nothing to the marriage. But he eventually agreed to give her \$5,000 if she would not bring any other claims.

Hana never received the money.

Hana knew things were rapidly deteriorating between herself and Thomas, and although she was not completely surprised, she was nevertheless taken back when he told her formal divorce papers had been filed. She was hurt and angry and raged at him in tears. Her newly found security was threatened. Her aunt and uncle would be furious. Her tears turned to bitter hostility, and she vowed to get everything she could from him. She refused to move out of the house, but she did switch to the spare bedroom. The tensions built to such intensity that normal living and thinking became nearly impossible.

In a letter dated the day he disappeared, Riha wrote his good friend Donald Fanger, "If my beloved wife has her way I shall not have the \$7.00 to read *Portnoy's Complaint*. Her lawyer has already launched a full-scale campaign to ruin me financially, and all this for less than four months of marriage. My wife has actually stolen from my files copies of my income tax returns, titles to house and car, and my savings account to boot. She moved out a week ago after a scandalous scene involving the police, whom she summoned. But it all backfired, her room was found to contain several empty liquor bottles, and smelled of ether. The police report was that she had been 'on a bad trip.' So I am exonerated before the neighbors. And, best of all, I have it on unimpeachable authority that she will be deported in very short order. In fact she was subject to deportation when I met her, and this is why the big hurry and pressure put on me for the wedding. She is guilty of four violations of immigration law, including fraud—a firm she said would employ her as secretary when I met her does not exist. She has not paid her 1967 income taxes. The list of her sins is long, and so will be my life without her. Since our divorce hearing comes up in May she will by then be deported, and it will be an uncontested divorce. I have seen her Czechoslovak passport which is valid only for return to Prague, and is stamped 'not to be readmitted to the USA.' Her goose is cooked. That all this was not exactly soothing on the nerves of your faithful Admiral goes without saying, but I shall survive to tell my grandchildren."

Hana was served the divorce papers on March 8, the day she was rescued from her ether-filled bedroom by Wilson and Hanson. Perhaps now that she had been served with the final notice, Tannenbaum and Riha thought, she would leave the house, or could be driven out by force. That evening, they tried to do just that. The events of that night were charged with high emotions so it is little wonder that the accounts are colored. Hana.

Tannenbaum, and Riha might well have had something they wanted to conceal concerning that ugly incident and tailored their recollections to suit their needs. Tannenbaum and Riha had the most to cover up so their version is the most suspect. But shards of truth can be found in each account, and by putting them together a mosaic of the night can be pieced together. Hana believed that she was gassed, perhaps in an attempt to murder her. Tannenbaum tried to portray Hana as a petulant adolescent, unreasonable and self-destructive.

* * *

Tannenbaum went to the Rihas' house that night to confront Hana, she told the Boulder police. She had been offering to teach Hana how to drive, but Hana kept missing their appointments at considerable expense to Tannenbaum who had to hire a babysitter. "About the third or fourth time that happened I was pretty miffed, so I wanted to talk to Hana face to face and ask her why she was doing this to me," Tannenbaum said. Hana was not at home but Thomas said she would return at 10:00 o'clock. "I went to the movie in Boulder and came back to his house," Tannenbaum said in her statement. "When I arrived, she still wasn't there, and then a couple of minutes after I'd gotten in Hana comes in."

Hana immediately called someone and told them that Tannenbaum was in the house. "You could hear her all over the place," Tannenbaum said, "because we were quiet and the Wilsons, next door, were having a party so I was sitting there and wanted to talk to her so Tom went out and told her I wanted to talk to her and she didn't say anything in English, and I don't understand Czech, so whatever she answered she answered in Czechoslovakian. So she's back and forth to her room, to the bedroom, and to the kitchen, and we smelled this kinda funny smell, and we thought it was paint drying on her tennis shoes she was doing oil painting as a hobby at the time and we just thought, well, she started her painting, because she would do this stuff at the weirdest hours of the night. She couldn't sleep, and she'd get up and paint."

Hana finally stayed in her bedroom and, according to Tannenbaum, she and Riha sat in the front room and called to her to join them. "She kept answering in Czech and said she wouldn't come out. She he went to the door and he told her that if she didn't open the door he was going to break it down, that she was going to come out and talk to me. About that time the door was locked, there was no way to open it from the outside as it wasn't the key type lock she goes to the window

and opens it and stands at the window calling for help." Tannenbaum claimed that Hana was on a "trip." "Thomas had said that if she ran out of money, cuz at that time he was giving her just so much a week cuz she was living in the house that if she didn't have enough money for liquor she would find something else to get high on."

Tannenbaum called the immigration office in Denver because she thought "that when a gal was pulling from a high or whatever it was and acting like that that they might be able to come in and help." She claimed to have spoken to the director, Mr. Todd. "He got on the phone and he said only if she'd been convicted would they be interested, that this was their position, that they did not have her full file here and until they did, they were not going to take any position one way or the other."

* * *

The police were skeptical of Tannenbaum's tale. Indeed, by the time of her interrogation on the Riha case, on January 20, 1970, police suspected that she had since become involved in the "suicides" of two of her Denver friends, Gustav Frederick Ingwersen and Barbra Egbert.

Ingwersen, a 78-year-old chemical engineer and inventor, was found dead on his living room couch shortly after having visited Tannenbaum. The cause of death was first listed as a coronary attack but an autopsy revealed he died of cyanide poisoning. He had met Tannenbaum through Egbert in April, 1968, and they took a liking to each other. They shared an interest in old mines and spent afternoons in the mountains exploring. He would have dinner at Tannenbaum's and enjoyed roughhousing with her kids. Tannenbaum wrote that "he seemed like a nice fellow, terribly lonesome. My children climbed over him, and he just soaked it up like a sponge." He was ill but was still an active man not willing to sit in a rocker and let his body and mind become atrophied. He carried out experiments, some using sodium cyanide, and powerful acid capable of dissolving a human body leaving only rings and bridgework behind, in a large bath tub size vat in his garage. Whether he was becoming forgetful with advancing age, or Tannenbaum was laying the ground work to cover the murder remains unknown, but she warned his relatives that he was becoming careless in his chemical experiments. She was concerned that he might harm himself, she told them, and suggested that he be urged to make a will.

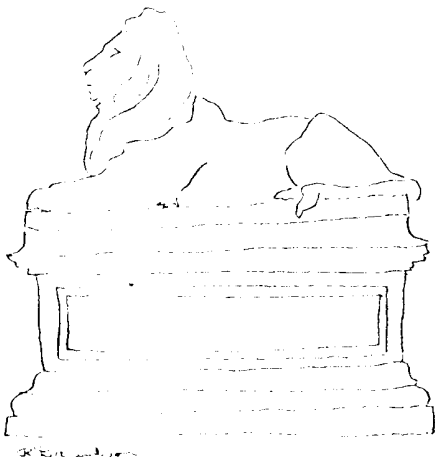
In early June, 1969, he flew to New York. On his return, he was met by Tannenbaum at Denver's Stapleton International Airport and driven to her

home. He called his sister-in-law and was reportedly in good spirits. He had enjoyed his trip but was glad to be back. The next day friends phoned him at home and received no answer. They tried several times throughout the day, but the phone continued to ring until they hung up. On June 17, Tannenbaum called his relatives and said she was worried about Gus. He had not come to a dinner she had planned for him the previous day. Would they please check on him. Neighbors also had not seen the old man for several days and became concerned. A neighbor finally decided to investigate on the evening of June 18 and found Gus stretched out on the couch dead.

The next day, a small boy dashed into the Denver Probate Court, and threw a piece of paper on the clerk's counter and rushed out. The paper was Ingwersen's will which named Tannenbaum and her children as his beneficiaries. It was witnessed by Zdenek Cerveny and an Esther Foote. Neither Cerveny nor Foote actually saw Ingwersen sign the will but were persuaded by Tannenbaum to sign it after the fact.

Foote told the police that she never saw the will until an attorney for the estate sent her a copy. Several days after Ingwersen's death, Tannenbaum asked her to sign the will but she refused on the grounds it was probably illegal. Tannenbaum railed against her, claimed to be a colonel in the army intelligence, and showed the frightened woman a gun in her purse. "I have killed people," she said meaningfully. She told Cerveny that Ingwersen had not had time to get the will properly witnessed before his untimely death and it would be a great favor to the old man if Cerveny performed the little formality. "It happened because I'm dumb," Cerveny ruefully admitted later. "I signed it without reading it."

Ingwersen's relative became suspicious and had a handwriting expert examine the will. It was a



forgery. Tannenbaum was arrested by Denver police on Oct. 23 and charged with forgery. No charges were brought against Cerveny or Foote. Tannenbaum was released on bond and instructed by the judge to take a psychiatric examination at the Colorado Psychiatric Hospital.

Two months after Ingwersen's death, the police found Riha's wedding ring in Ingwersen's apartment. Tannenbaum explained that she had given it to Ingwersen to have the inscription "Hand to Thomas, 13 Oct. '68" removed.

Almost three months to the day after Ingwersen's death, Barbara Egbert, 51, was found dead in her apartment. She was ritually laid out on pillows on the living room floor with a lighted candle beside her and rose petals scattered about. A suicide note was nearby. She had died of cyanide poisoning. The suicide note was a forgery.

Tannenbaum and Egbert had known each other for nearly a year, according to Tannenbaum. They met at an employment agency, and Egbert invited Tannenbaum to attend a meeting of the Metaphysical Research Society, with which Egbert was deeply involved. Tannenbaum declined, but later attended several meetings with Egbert. They became friends and Tannenbaum, as she put it, helped Egbert "pull her life together."

Egbert had divorced her Mormon husband and relinquished custody of her three sons in order to devote herself to metaphysical studies. She also fell in love with one of the teachers at the research society. It hurt her very much to give up her family, and she seemed "bothered" by the close relationship between Tannenbaum and her children. She would come to dinner at Tannenbaum's with Ingwersen and would be "troubled" by the affection between the older gentleman and the kids. She lost a job taking classified ads at the *Denver Post* because she kept forgetting to ask the customers if they wanted the family plan on their ads. She could not hold a job and had to constantly shift from one apartment to the next because she could not make the rent. Tannenbaum wrote that she tried to help Egbert by playing "dirty pool" with employment agencies to find Egbert a job without paying the agency fees. Tannenbaum would submit her own resume and go to the interview at the agency, after which she would brief Egbert on the job offered. Egbert would then make an appointment to apply for the job. However, she usually failed to keep the appointments because her metaphysics teacher had directed her to do something else, she explained. The banks were hassling her about overdue loans on her car and record player. Once, when her parents came for a visit she "was almost in panic that the man at the

Bank of Denver would call about the past due note while they were there." According to Tannenbaum, she rejected financial aid from her parents other than allowing them to take over payments on her Mustang. After Egbert's death, the car was found in front of Tannenbaum's married daughter's house in Chicago. There is a curious note about the car payments. In a letter dated Aug. 28, 1969, Tannenbaum wrote, "Thomas was here and since Barbara was behind on payments (for the car) gave the Bank of Denver \$200—which didn't go thru because his other half has intercepted the funds."

Egbert sold her tape recorder and appliances to meet expenses and cut back on food to save money. She lost weight and became increasingly withdrawn from the world. "I would point out that she simply had to go to work," Tannenbaum wrote in an account of their relationship. "She would give an almost hysterical laugh that everything was going to be all right, that she had a solution to the problem." Her classes at the Metaphysical Research Society were focusing on death and reincarnation, and Egbert believed she was some Egyptian royalty reincarnated. She disagreed with the society's teachings that anyone who took their own life would come back a cripple. When a person came back in a new life, the old life would be forgotten and there was no sense in punishing someone for something they would not know they had done, Egbert reasoned.

Tannenbaum claimed that she became so concerned that she called Egbert's ex-husband and told him that Barbara was "off the deep end." He complained bitterly, she said, that he thought one of the society's teachers was personally responsible for the divorce. He was also seriously concerned about his former wife's mental health. A neighbor had advised him to call the suicide prevention people, but he did not. Tannenbaum said she called them, and was told that they couldn't even take the name unless someone brought Barbara in for consultation.

"During the week before she died," Tannenbaum wrote in her account, "she came over and shoved a note into my mail slot cancelling all our 'food dates' for the week. I think it was Monday . . . Tuesday . . . I went to the meeting (of the metaphysical society) as I wanted to talk to her. I brought a bottle of sparkling Burgundy wine I bought at Cherry Creek Liquors on the way to the meeting. I put the bottle in the front seat of Barbara's car and had some silly thing written on it like from Santa Claus or something. She seemed to perk up when she found it, and I phoned her later that night, and she was all cheers."

On Saturday, Egbert was to meet Tannenbaum at her house but never arrived. Tannenbaum said she tried to call her several times but got a busy signal. That night the coroner called Tannenbaum and said Barbara was dead. Tannenbaum's number had been found near her telephone.

The bottle of wine made the police suspicious, but they could prove nothing. Two months after her death, a mutual friend of Egbert's and Tannenbaum's called the FBI and raised doubts about the suicide. The friend explained that Egbert was a very positive person and would never have committed suicide, especially by cyanide poisoning and that Tannenbaum had been acting strange before and after Egbert's death. Tannenbaum even commented on the suspicion directed towards her. "About six to eight weeks after Barbara's death, it was told that some friends in the East had written to some other members of the society and told them that the Denver police had said they thought Barbara was done in, and that it was probably one of her women friends. This upset Mary Ann (Hendee) and myself as we were the only two close to Barbara at the time. The story snowballed and has caused people to act like we had the plague or something. If someone in the Det. Bureau had made such a statement, it was certainly irresponsible, and is very much part of the reason that I have been reluctant to discuss this with anyone else."

* * *

Was Tannenbaum capable of plotting the murders of her friends? Many people think so, but no one has been able to make a conclusive case. In Ingwersen's case, a motive can be established since she was charged with forging his will. But, except for the car in front of her daughter's house, she did not stand to materially benefit from Egbert's death. She could, however, financially gain from Riha's death, and people have tried for years to establish a solid link showing she killed him.

* * *

A Denver writer received permission to dig up the basement of Tannenbaum's former house on the belief Riha was buried there. He was accompanied by a *Denver Post* reporter and Cerveny, who did most of the digging. "There was a terrible stench," Cerveny remembered, and he kept turning over the dank earth expecting to find his uncle's skull at each shovelful. Bits of bone, shreds of paper, and a layer of greasy matter were found. Chemical analysis showed the matter was organic but did not prove it was human in origin. Tannenbaum had an explanation for the dis-

covery. The basement had a serious drainage problem because the house was built on an old marsh. When it rained, water flooded the basement and the sewer backed up. That accounted for the smell and the material found.

The only charge the police were able to bring against Tannenbaum in connection with Riha was one of forgery. From the first week of his disappearance she had been signing letters to his attorney, his dean at the university, his publishers, and real estate people, with Riha's name. The forgeries were passable to the untrained eye and went unnoticed until the police began their investigation nearly a year later. The letters gave instructions on the disposal of Riha's property, offered explanations for his disappearance, and requested money. A forged letter to Dean William Briggs said he (Riha) was very sorry for his sudden actions but domestic troubles with his wife made it necessary for him to leave Boulder and that he intended to return and teach in the fall term. Another letter requested that whatever money was due to Riha be forwarded to Tannenbaum's address. Briggs wrote very sympathetic letters back to Riha, one addressed to Hana's aunt and uncle's home in Brooklyn and another to Tannenbaum's address. He advised Riha that his leave without pay would begin effective March 17, the Monday Riha failed to meet with his class, and that he was glad Thomas would be returning for the fall term. Forged letters to the University of Chicago Press and Notre Dame Press asked that royalty checks for his books be sent to Tannenbaum's address.

A letter dated in mid-July, 1969, to the University of Chicago Press asked that advance payment to be sent to Tannenbaum's address, "for reasons I do not care to relate. At this time, I found it necessary to leave the Boulder address." The company followed his instructions and sent two checks to the Denver address. Both were endorsed "Thomas Riha, pay to the order of Gayla Tannenbaum." She collected a total of \$2,226 in Riha's book royalties.

The Boulder police finally got a firm case against Tannenbaum on a bad check to Judson Flying Service and charged her with forgery on Jan. 23, 1970. The check, for \$330, was for a trip she made with Cerveny and his Dutch friend, Anneke Hoekendijk, to San Antonio on July 28, 1969, in a plane chartered from the Longmont flying service. Tannenbaum claimed it was all a misunderstanding, that Cerveny was supposed to pay for the flight, but she was left holding the bag. Cerveny claimed that he asked Tannenbaum for her car to drive to Texas with Hoekendijk, who was visiting

him, to see some relatives. Tannenbaum refused, saying that the car was equipped with special bullet-proof glass and she could not risk having anything happen to it. Instead, she offered him a ride on the charter flight which she implied was being paid for by the government. Cerveny gladly accepted.

She introduced herself to the pilot, Robert Gaines, as a government agent and gave him the impression that the government was footing the bill. During the flight, she sat in the copilot seat and chatted about adopting foreign citizens and bringing them to the United States. She asked many questions about flying, and at one point Gaines let her take the controls to make a couple gentle turns. Based on this she would later claim that she was a pilot. At the San Antonio airport, Tannenbaum told Cerveny and Hoekendijk she would call them later in the day about the return flight. She phoned Cerveny in the afternoon and said she had to return to Denver immediately. Cerveny and Hoekendijk returned several days later on a Texas International flight. Hoekendijk told Cerveny that Tannenbaum was a "snake-in-the-grass."

When she landed in Denver, Tannenbaum gave Gaines a check for \$330 and signed it Thomas Riha. The check was one of four blanks Riha had left her to pay for the storage of his goods, help cover Hana's moving expenses, pay for miscellaneous bills, and for her own expenses, Tannenbaum explained to the police. He gave her the checks on March 18 or March 19 when she took him to the airport to catch a flight to Chicago. She did not understand why the police were involved. She was simply doing Riha a favor by looking after his affairs. He would vouch for her story.

The police, naturally, were skeptical. If Riha would attest, in person, to her story the charge would be dropped they promised. Tannenbaum insisted that he was living in Canada, either in Montreal or somewhere in the countryside between Montreal and Toronto. He had a Canadian driver's license and worked as a travel guide to support himself while he wrote another book, she claimed. Riha had visited her several times up to the end of May or June and he would return within the month. She sounded exasperated at their persistent questioning about Riha. If they would only be patient he would show up, she said. It was a simple matter to clear up.

The police asked the Canadian immigration service to run a check on Riha. They could find no trace of him.

"I'm going to break my butt to arrange it (a

meeting between Riha and the police)," she told the officers. "It may take me a week, it may take me two weeks, but very little longer than that, because I usually hear from him on the average at least once a month, every three weeks or sometimes less, and there's nothing much more said on the phone than "hi."

Riha never showed up, and Tannenbaum never led the police to him. She was confined to the Boulder County jail to await trial. Jail depressed her terribly, and she was a difficult prisoner. She complained to her lawyer, John Kokish, that the matrons were over harsh and that she felt like a caged animal. "I'm already condemned, and it is evident that even you think I have done all those miserable things," she wrote him. "Really, there is nothing left anymore. Inside I am already dead. The flesh and bone will follow shortly." She admitted that she had been "involved in a lot of dirty business" in Chicago, but "I have never killed anyone in my life." She also railed against the newspapers which had been hotly pursuing her case. For all those who had "found good reading in the *Post* (*Denver Post*) and the *R.M. News* (*Rocky Mountain News*), sorry to spoil your fun, but I cannot stand the pain of the slow destruction, and while it may please you to watch me in pain, I am going to reduce it to a few seconds and deprive you of material." She gave instructions for the disposal of her possessions and referred to herself as "trash." She wanted her body donated to medical science. The letter closed with a quote from Martin Luther King: "Free at last, Free at last."

Her bond was set at \$5,000, but was later reduced to \$3,000. On April 29, she pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity and a sanity trial was set for July to determine if she was competent to stand trial on the criminal charges.

While in the Boulder jail, she was charged by the Denver police of burglarizing the home of Betty Jo Helton in Arvada, a town adjacent to Denver. According to police, on Dec. 31 she took a briefcase containing Helton's checkbook and other personal papers. Two days after the burglary, Tannenbaum appeared at the drive-in window of an Englewood bank and cashed a \$1,000 check bearing Helton's signature, Helton claimed. Later the same morning, Tannenbaum went back to the bank and attempted to cash a \$2,000 check on Helton's account. The teller, having been alerted to the burglary at Helton's home, went to confer with her superiors. Tannenbaum became nervous and quickly left.

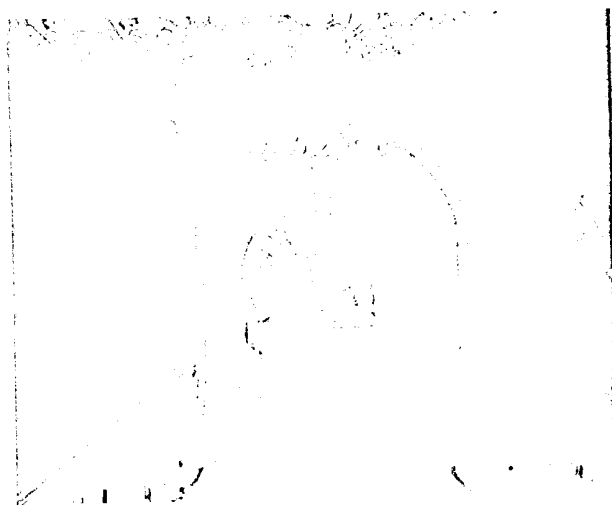
The relationship between Helton, a widow, and the director of the Police, Sheriff, and Firemens Museum which her late husband had founded, and Tannenbaum is a bit muddly. Tannenbaum claimed to have known Helton and had business dealings with her. Before the burglary, she wrote Helton a letter demanding prompt payment of an \$865 fee for a mission (unexplained) performed for her. Helton claimed she never received the letter and that she did not owe Tannenbaum a penny.

In a long, rambling statement, which the police took to be self-serving, Tannenbaum claimed she phoned Helton on Dec. 22 and arranged a meeting at her Englewood office to discuss some business, presumably the bill owed. But, feeling ill, she went to a doctor and missed the appointment. She called Helton to arrange another meeting. Helton explained that she was going to spend Christmas with her family in Tulsa and would be out of town for a week.

On Dec. 30, Tannenbaum called Helton's house and was told that Betty Jo was out at the moment, but would return shortly. After getting Helton's address from a friend, Bernice McClaren, Tannenbaum put the bill with the receipts in a large brown envelope and drove with her children in the front seat to Helton's house at 6753 Reed St.

"It seemed that someone was home," Tannenbaum stated in her somewhat inchoate statement. "Pushed the door bell, no answer, felt someone was home, went around house and called, light was on in basement, could not arouse (sic) anyone so went back to front door, storm door ajar, opened it to knock on door, lost glasses, they fell off as they need adjusting, was extremely dark, bent down to feel for glasses between storm door and front door, shoved envelope up tight under door so it caught, turned around and left front of house."

Tannenbaum said she stopped to talk with some



neighbor was coming across the street but did not dally long as it was cold. She then drove to the Soda Lake Club for a New Year's Eve party for which she had cooked a turkey. At the club she asked Bernice McClaren if she thought Helton would balk about paying for the time she had spent looking for the "BHI materials." She put another turkey in the club's oven and went home to bed.

As for the forged check, Tannenbaum claimed that on Jan. 2 she received in the mail a check from Helton for the bill. She took it to an Englewood bank, showed her driver's license and the check, and was given a receipt. When she returned home there was a message to call a detective at the Arvado Police Department. She returned the call, and moments later Detective Thomas Smith arrived at her home with a search warrant. He found a number of Riha's possessions during his search. Tannenbaum explained that Riha was in Montreal and she was keeping his things. The detective also found two pistols, a .357 mag and a 9mm both with holsters, and six sticks of dynamite with fuses.

Tannenbaum added a postscript to her statement: "Have this to say, I do not know what sort of black cloud has been hanging over my head but I NEED HELP. I am willing to cooperate as much as possible if I can be certain I will get a fair shake."

* * *

After a two day hearing on the Riha forgeries, Boulder District Court Judge John B. Barnard, on July 15, ruled Tannenbaum incapable of standing trial by reason of insanity and ordered her committed to the Colorado State Hospital in Pueblo. Two days later, she was delivered to the hospital, signed in, her meager possessions recorded, and she was assigned to Ward 69 South, a restricted area. The charge stemming from the Ingwersen forgery was dismissed—she pleaded innocent by reasons of insanity—because Judge Barnard had committed her. But she still had to face charges on forging Riha's house title and the transference of his car title, and for the Helton burglary.

Tannenbaum found the mental hospital only nominally better than jail. She had more freedom of movement and there were therapy sessions to occupy her time, but she still suffered from spells of deep depression and periodically spoke of suicide. She continually griped about the treatment she received from the staff, especially from the ward director, Dr. Olenik. She was not well liked by two other patients, who were afraid of her. She was suspected of causing the deaths of two women

patients, although there was no evidence to support those accusations. But the fact that they were whispered around the ward is an indication of her reputation at the hospital.

If kept busy, Tannenbaum avoided the depths of depression that turned her inward and reduced her from an aggressive woman to a weeping shell of jangled nerves. She became a student of Colorado history, American government, and Spanish. She was chosen as the secretary of the ward council and spent ten hours a week in individual and group therapy. One of her favorite activities was painting, and she showed talent. Once she painted twenty-five pictures in four days. During her eight-month stay in the hospital, she had only two visitors, her attorney and an unidentified woman who signed the register as "a friend."

In November she was back in the Denver County jail awaiting a second sanity hearing to determine if she could be tried for the forgery in transferring Riha's car title. Upon entering the courtroom, she vomited into a wastepaper basket. An analysis showed the presence of dilantin, Librium, and barbiturates, all drugs generally given to epileptics. It was theorized that she got the drugs while in the holding tank at the jail or during her trip from Pueblo to Denver. Her trial was rescheduled for Dec. 10.

Her general mental condition noticeably got worse the longer she was incarcerated. One observer noted, "She has deteriorated to the point where her conversation is almost unintelligible." At her December trial, an eleven-day ordeal, she sat staring dully ahead. When her eleven-year-old son, Jimmy, took the stand and testified that his mother should be taken seriously when she said she took trips to Vietnam, designed Mercury spacecraft, and has a car with bullet-proof glass Tannenbaum wiped her eyes and groaned, "I ain't going to make it through all this. I'm just coming apart inside."

The judge found her sane, despite the previous insanity ruling, and ordered her to stand trial on June 28. She showed no emotion when he read the decision. Before returning to the hospital, she told a jail matron that she had stashed cyanide behind a loose brick at the hospital. The hospital's staff was alerted, but in a search nothing was found.

At the hospital, she became close to a therapy technician, Henry T. Madrid, and he took upon himself to help her through her problems. They struck a good working relationship: she would give him a date on which she was going to commit suicide and let him talk her out of it before the deadline. She assured him that she would not do it while he was away from the hospital so he could

enjoy his days off and vacation without worrying about her. When she returned from Denver, she began to make the threats more often, but Madrid paid them no more heed than before. She gave Madrid a small packet of white powder, which she said was cyanide, and asked him to get rid of it. She had hidden it under one of the basins in the restrooms because she noticed the janitors did not clean there. She warned him to be careful how he disposed of it because it could harm someone. Madrid took the packet home and hid it behind a can on a shelf in his garage. He did not bury it or throw it into a stream because he was afraid some animals might accidentally be contaminated and die.

Nor did he tell his superiors that Tannenbaum had given him the packet. Tannenbaum had threatened him that if he told his life, and the lives of his family, would be in danger. "She had threatened all sorts of things," he said during an investigation of the incident. "She said that she had killed people, that she was a pro at what she did. A lot of times she would say if anything goes wrong, I could easily be taken care of, but she would say it smilingly. That's why I say after awhile I didn't know if I just took it on a joke, but still it affected me that maybe she could. She said 'nothing is hard for me. I'm good at what I am, and even though I am in here, I can still have it done.' She said my car could blow up, and one time the brakes went out on my car. It was just a mechanical failure, but I thought she was getting me."

Tannenbaum had claimed another victim.

On March 6, when Madrid came on duty, Tannenbaum told him, "This is the day." But Madrid did not believe her. "She was so happy. Everything wasn't like the other times," he recalled. "Other times, you know, she would say 'today is the day' and she would have a superficial happiness, or what I consider superficial. I can really feel when she was really hurting. This time everything it was just feeling good. I didn't feel there was that much depression as I was really picking up the other times."

Early that evening, she gave a hospital technician a philodendron and asked her to return the vase. A short time later, she told another technician that she wouldn't be going to the square dance less on because she had "other things to do." At 9:00 p.m. she met with Madrid in the women's lounge for her private therapy session. "She was still in a good mood," Madrid remembered. "She was really happy except for kind of feeling bad because she hadn't heard from her kids. She felt her kids had just done away with her. She said, 'I have learned to accept this because, you know, this

is better for my kids. They are better off.'" They talked of Jimmy and Becky, her love for them as a mother, and then drifted off into philosophical ruminations. She kept saying "Tonight is the night," and Madrid kept thinking that it was the same routine, that he would have time to talk her out of it. "I decided to do it March 30," she said. "My kids' birthdays are this month so I've decided to move it up." Actually, Jimmy was born on Oct. 8 and Becky was born on Feb. 12.

It was a quiet night on the ward. Despite Tannenbaum's threats, Madrid was not anxious. He had been through it before. She seemed a little melancholy, but not overwrought or deeply depressed. They talked for about an hour, and then Madrid went to do some other duties. He left her writing notes on the philosophical points they had discussed. In fifteen minutes he returned, and they continued the discussion. Tannenbaum was drinking from a can of Coca Cola and asked for a cigarette. Madrid gave her one.

At 10:30, she said she had to go to the restroom. "I'm going to do it," she said and started down the corridor. She went into the restroom next to the lounge. Madrid grew nervous wondering if she really was going to follow through with her threat. The longer she stayed in the restroom, the more he felt the pressure building. He wanted to go in after her, but he remained seated, fidgeting, glancing anxiously at the restroom door. "You know, you can't run in the women's restroom," he said later. After five or ten minutes, he heard the toilet flush and Tannenbaum wash her hands. He was glad he had not panicked and dashed in after her. She came out adjusting her dress.

She sat down, propped her feet up on the coffee table and picked up the conversation. She did not have the Coca Cola can with her, nor did she seem any different than when she went into the restroom. Five minutes passed, then she said matter-of-factly, "I took it. Do you want to hold my hand?" As Madrid reached forward, her head flopped back and she began to foam at the mouth. "Oh, goddammit!" Madrid said and rushed to find the registered nurse on duty.

She was not at her station. Madrid called to the ward below, the panic he had successfully held back earlier now flooding his body. "Tannenbaum has taken something," he shouted into the phone and ran back to the lounge. He noticed a sweetish, pungent odor. The nurse came dashing up the stairs and into the lounge. She noticed the smell, also. She quickly began checking Tannenbaum's pulse and respiration, called for an oxygen bottle and a blood pressure gauge while trying to pry Tannenbaum's mouth open with a pen. "Call the

ambulance," she instructed while holding the oxygen mask tight over Tannenbaum's nose. If she kept her breathing, there was a chance. In the rush Madrid forgot to mention that the smell in the lounge was exactly like the odor of the white powder Tannenbaum had given him.

The ambulance attendants came running down the hall carrying their stretcher. They expertly lifted Tannenbaum's limp body onto it and dashed for the exit. She was unconscious but still breathing. The nurse ran alongside carrying the oxygen bottle and keeping the mask clamped tight on her face. Tannenbaum was rushed to the medical facility where Dr. Roger Byhardt and a nurse worked over her feverishly. At 12:35 a.m., she went into convulsions and died five minutes later poisoned by three-fourths of a gram of

cyanide.

After an autopsy, the Pueblo deputy coroner said that the cyanide found in Tannenbaum's blood came "in a kind of white crystalline powder. It's made commercially and used in photography development and polishing diamonds or rocks." Tannenbaum had a rock collection and used cyanide to clean the stones. It was never discovered how she got the poison into the hospital.

In a letter shortly before her death, Tannenbaum wrote: "It doesn't matter really. I didn't do Tom or Gus or Barb in. I went nuts with hurt over losing them."

Before she lost consciousness in the lounge, Tannenbaum whispered to Madrid, "I didn't kill that son-of-a-bitch. He is in Russia. He just made it."

By Don Gordon

2039

She will be coming of age
In the year two thousand:
A number without content,
A row of zeros indicating space
Or something vast and sunlit.

Where will she live
In a structure like air,
Like a cloud;
Or in the salt caves
Where the waste is stored
For its half-life.

Who will be there
One with saurian feet;
Or the prince who always saves
The red-gold child
In the dark forest.

What will she do
With grace notes,
Or sea-color, or antelope motion;
Or on her knees
In the Buchenwald of that season.

I tell myself: two thousand
Is no more to be feared
Than one.
I tell her:
I would have loved you
If I had lived.

By Colette Inez

The Children Are Going to Far Places

I will take the lawn into my recollection
of leaves, gingko, oak picked off by the wind.
The katydid's throb to be kept in a box
with a set of proper words. Winter.

The children are going to far places
in the poem I will write after it snows.
Marigolds to fit into my description
of the town they leave in the summer.
Seasons in between? Trillium, spring,
asters, fall.

The children have come back from Germany
and France. I am writing the poem in which
they leave again for The Netherlands. Snow
on a path to the letterbox.
Here's a letter describing summer

in The Hague. Begonias, phlox. If I open
up the box of katydids, the words won't sing
in a special way. Best to go to Limousin
with grandiose plans; dinner with Lady Diana
in a vanilla confection of a dress. A surfeit
of lilies. Spring.