



ONTARIO NUMISMATIST

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President's Message

In this issue we are dealing mostly with happenings and events that took place at the 2005 O.N.A. Convention.

First I will inform you I was voted in by acclamation, I had told you in the last news letter I was stepping down do to health reasons, but no one else threw their hat in, so to speak and here I am. I will try and serve for the next two years (health permitting).

I would like to thank our three new area directors who joined our group; they are:

Area #6 Murray Smith Coldwater, Ont.

Area #7 David Bawcutt Scarborough, Ont.

Area #11 Craig Wilde Thunder Bay, Ont.

WELCOME ABOARD!

Now for the best convention we have seen in a long time. The President and General Chairman Gerry Albert and the members of the NBCC, did an outstanding job. This club set so many records, all medals sold, the most registration in a long time.

Most of the members from the club attended the banquet, and I'm sure all were there both days. They gave 110% in setting up and helping the dealers. There were over 700 in attendance for the two days. The cheese and wine on Friday night went over very well with most of the dealers and registrants attending. I do know the dealers won't soon forget the 2005 Convention thanks to the good people in Sudbury and surrounding areas.

There was only one thing missing, that being Roland Albert. We know how hard he worked at making it a success. Get well soon and thank you from all of us in the O.N.A.

I give big thanks of appreciation to the dealers and the O.N.A. staff that keep the conventions running smoothly. I never tell them enough how much I need them, without you; there wouldn't be a convention.

Now on to the Awards: Award of Merit went to William Waychison from Timmins, for a lot of years of dedication not only to the O.N.A. but also to the C.N.A. keep up the good work. Fellow of the O.N.A. awards to Gerry and Roland Albert a most deserving pair if I have ever seen. Job well done Bill, Gerry and Rolly.

Continued on next page.

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President's Report Continued

Last but not least the banquet had its fair share of laughs. The master of ceremonies Bob Ross kept us well entertained I'm sure. Newfoundland misses him!

The O.N.A. would like to thank all those who sold or purchased Dream Vacation tickets. Your support enables us to carry out our many programs, and congratulations to all the winners this year.

The hospitality of the north won't go unnoticed; you are all invited down to London, Ont. next year to our 44th O.N.A. Convention hosted by the St Thomas Numismatic Association at the Best Western Lamplighter Inn. Again Thanks.

P.S. It has been brought to my attention that if I want help with the conventions it would be wise to put the head table first in the future.

Tom Rogers,
President

"A" NICKEL

If I had a nickel
I know what I would do
I'd scan it with a power glass
To get a better view.

I'd look for dates and die breaks
And dashes here and there
And look for tiny maple leaves
And "48"s so rare.

It isn't just the jingle
That fascinates me so
It's the numismatic lingo
Of dates, both high and low.

Then, when I've had it catalogued
All properly :::just so:::
I'd put it on the auction block
And watch the bidding go.

Submitted by
Lois Rogers

Membership Report

The applications for membership which appeared in the March/April issue of the Ontario Numismatist have been accepted. We welcome Jack Labrie, Gerry Albert and Trevor Lynn.

The following applications for membership have been received. If there are no objections, they will be accepted into ONA Membership and their acceptance published in the next bulletin.

1837 Dave Marcella, Wingham
1838 Don Bradt, Ottawa
1839 Stephen P. Woodland, Osgoode
1840 Christine Guyatt-Woodland, Osgoode

Bruce Raszmann,
ONA Membership Chair

UPCOMING SHOWS

May 14, PETERBOROUGH

Peterborough Coin Club Show, Portage Place, 1154 Chemong Road. Hours: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call Colin at (705) 742-0114.

May 20-22, HAMILTON

TNS, Ramada Plaza Hotel, 150 King St. E. Dealer set-up Friday from 2 p.m. Show pass \$20. Public admittance Saturday and Sunday at 10 a.m. Adults \$4, seniors and young collectors \$2. Auctions by Jeffrey Hoare Auctions, Inc., Sat & Sun. Sponsor/Affiliate: The Canadian Association of Numismatic Dealers. For more information, contact Terry MacHugh at (905) 570-2434, fax (905) 318-1638 or email cand@cogeco.ca.

Oct. 1, OSHAWA

Coin-A-Rama 2005, 5 Points Mall, 285 Taunton Rd. E. Hours: 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Free admission, featuring coins, paper money, tokens and medals. Free dealer draw, member draw and public draw. Sponsor: Oshawa & District Coin Club. For more information, contact Sharon or Earl at (905) 728-1352 or email: papman@idirect.com.

Is your club holding a show?

If so, let us know. Send the details to inside@primus.ca, and we will gladly include it here.

From the Editor's Desk

In this issue we are featuring a short story by O.N.A. member James J. Antonio of Niagara Falls, Ontario. James had a story published in the C.N.A. Journal in 2003. His work entitled "Miss Daisy" is coin related and fictional. I feel it brings a nice change of pace to the usual bulletin content. Some feedback would be appreciated as he has offered to contribute other works in the future.

Also included in this issue is the O.N.A. 2004 Financial Statement. My thanks to the Nickel Belt Coin Club for hosting a terrific convention!

Rick Johnson,
Editor, Ontario Numismatist

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And the winner is...



Shown above is Bill Dimitropoulos and Tom Rogers, President. Bill from London, Ontario was our Dream Vacation Draw winner.

Also awarded at the convention were:

Individual Awards

Award of Merit - William Waychison

Fellow of the O.N.A. - Roland Albert

Fellow of the O.N.A. - Gerry Albert

Display Awards

Best of Show - Bruce Brace

First Runner-Up - Dorte Brace

Second Runner-Up - William Waychison

People's Choice Award - Dorte Brace



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Buyer Beware

Courtesy of Champlain Coin Club

During the last year, the editors of this newsletter have talked with many collectors and dealers about a growing problem with our hobby, that being counterfeit coins.

This is not a new numismatic topic. Dealing with forgeries was a common problem even for the ancient Greeks and Romans. Even in the short time period of Canadian numismatics, there have been forgeries. Some of the fake coins entered and were even welcomed into circulation in both Upper and Lower Canada. These coins, called "Blacksmith tokens" and "Bust and Harp" tokens, were widely used and competed with legitimate colonial coinage for about twenty years.

Collectors and dealers have seen a rise in counterfeits, especially in Asian coins, ancient and medieval coins and gold coins. The qualities of counterfeit coins ranges from very poor to outstanding.

What can the collector do to protect himself from forgeries?

- a. The best protection is knowledge. Remember the old adage of "buy the book before the coin."
- b. Purchase your coins from reputable dealers. Ask them about their return policies.
- c. Proceed with caution when purchasing coins on line or from the mail. Are the coins graded by a professional grading service, what are the return policies, etc.?
- d. Check with other collectors/club members before making a purchase.
- e. Carefully examine every coin that you might bid on at an auction. It is usually "buyer beware" at most auctions unless the auctioneer has a good return policy.

ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 40033, Waterloo Square P.O.,
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Waterloo, Ontario, N2J 4V1



D R E A M V A C A T I O N

2005

DRAW WINNERS LIST

FIRST PRIZE - DREAM VACATION DRAW WINNER

BILL POULOS - LONDON, ONTARIO

SELLERS PRIZE (\$100.00 Cash) - INGERSOLL COIN CLUB

SECOND PRIZE - \$100 GOLD COIN

JOHN WERNER - ELMIRA, ONTARIO

FIVE CONSOLATION PRIZES - 2005 O'CANADA SETS

MARION ROSS - SUDBURY, ONTARIO

DENNIS GAILLE - WINDSOR, ONTARIO

KELLY SMITH - ST. CATHARINES, ONTARIO

KAREN CEDAR - WINDSOR, ONTARIO

LEE KARNES - TILLSONBURG, ONTARIO

The ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION would like to thank all those who sold tickets or purchased them. Your support enables us to carry out our many programmes.

Thank you



Bruce H. Raszmann
Draw Chairman

D R E A M V A C A T I O N

2005
 LOTTERY RESULTS

Ticket Sales by Clubs

| Clubs | Books Sold |
|--|------------|
| Brantford Numismatic Society..... | 8 |
| Cambridge Coin Club..... | 14 |
| Canadian Tire Coupon Collectors Club..... | 1 |
| City of Ottawa Coin Club..... | 8 |
| Champlain Coin Club..... | 4 |
| Collingwood-Georgian Bay Coin & Stamp Club..... | 10 |
| Essex County Coin Club..... | 2 |
| Ingersoll Coin Club..... | 56 |
| Kent Coin Club..... | 2 |
| Kingston Coin & Currency Club..... | 1 |
| Lakeshore Coin Club..... | 3 |
| Lake Superior Coin Club..... | 2 |
| London Numismatic Society..... | 3 |
| Mississauga-Etobicoke Coin, Stamp & Collectibles.... | 1 |
| Niagara Falls Coin Club..... | 20 |
| Nickel Belt Coin Club..... | 71 |
| Nipissing Coin Club..... | 1 |
| North York Coin Club..... | 2 |
| Ontario Numismatic Association..... | 31 |
| Oshawa & District Coin Club..... | 12 |
| Peterborough Numismatic Society..... | 2 |
| Sarnia Coin Club..... | 2 |
| Scarborough Coin Club..... | 3 |
| South Wellington Coin Society..... | 7 |
| St. Thomas Numismatic Association..... | 5 |
| Stratford Coin Club..... | 41 |
| Tillsonburg Coin Club..... | 18 |
| Waterloo Coin Society..... | 64 |
| Watford Coin Club..... | 5 |
| Windsor Coin Club..... | 95 |
| Woodstock Coin Club..... | 17 |
| | |
| Non O.N.A. Member Clubs | |
| Bancroft Coin Club..... | 1 |
| C A W M C..... | 1 |
| | |
| Total Book Sales..... | 513 |

ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION
TREASURER'S REPORT
FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2004 TO DECEMBER 31, 2004

GENERAL ACCOUNT

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Petty Cash @ Jan. 1, 2004 | \$ 28.18 | |
| Bank Balance @ Jan. 1, 2004 | \$1533.49 | |
| | ----- | |
| | \$1561.67 | \$1561.67 |

RECEIPTS

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Memberships (Regular, Junior & Club) | \$3950.00 | |
| O.N.A. Convention Draw | \$1920.83 | |
| Club Ticket Rebate | \$ 66.00 | |
| Premium U.S.A. Money | \$ 2.88 | |
| Donations Towards Ontario Numismatist | \$1475.00 | |
| 2004 O.N.A. Convention | \$2508.42 | |
| Medals Sold | \$ 57.00 | |
| Interest on Certificates | \$ 235.69 | |
| | ----- | |
| | \$10215.82 | \$10215.82 |

EXPENSES

| | | |
|--|------------|------------|
| O.N.A. Publication "ONTARIO NUMISMATIST" | \$6056.16 | |
| Postage | \$ 26.52 | |
| Office Supplies & Expenses | \$ 251.15 | |
| P.O. Box Rental & G.S.T. | \$ 104.86 | |
| Safety Deposit Box Rental & G.S.T. | \$ 131.08 | |
| Telephone | \$ 54.65 | |
| Photocopying & Printing | \$ 44.49 | |
| Honorariums | \$ 275.00 | |
| Audio Visual | \$ -22.50 | |
| Transfer To Life Membership | \$ 600.00 | |
| Premium Rate Redeemable Certificate | \$4000.00 | |
| Reduce 30 Day & Wait & See Certificates | \$-2500.00 | |
| | ----- | |
| | \$9021.41 | \$ 9021.41 |
| Excess Receipts Over Expenses | | \$1194.41 |

| | | |
|----------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Petty Cash @ December 31, 2004 | \$ 49.63 | |
| Bank Balance @ December 31, 2004 | \$ 2706.45 | |
| | ----- | |
| | \$ 2756.08 | \$2756.08 |

GENERAL ACCOUNT - BANK RECONCILIATION

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Bank Ledger Sheet Balance @ December 31, 2004 | \$2706.45 |
| Outstanding Cheques | NIL |
| Bank Statement Balance @ December 31, 2004 | \$2706.45 |

GENERAL ACCOUNT ASSETS

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| Wait & See Certificate | \$8500.00 |
| Premium Rate Certificate | \$4000.00 |

ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION
 TREASURER'S REPORT
 FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2004 TO DECEMBER 31, 2004

CONTINGENCY ACCOUNT

Bank Balance @ January 1, 2004 \$ 449.87

RECEIPTS

| | | |
|---|------------|------------|
| Interest Guaranteed Investment Certificates | \$ 888.85 | |
| Matured Guaranteed Investment Certificates | \$17500.00 | |
| | ----- | |
| | \$18388.85 | \$18388.85 |

EXPENSES

| | | |
|------------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Guaranteed Investment Certificates | \$18500.00 | |
| | ----- | |
| | \$18500.00 | \$18500.00 |

Excess Receipts Over Expenses \$-111.15

Bank Balance @ December 31, 2004 \$ 338.72

CONTINGENCY ACCOUNT ASSETS

Guaranteed Investment Certificates \$32500.00

INSURANCE ACCOUNT

Bank Balance @ January 1, 2004 \$1543.15

RECEIPTS

| | | |
|---|------------|------------|
| 5 (2004) Club Premiums @ \$75.00 | \$ 375.00 | |
| 27 (2005) Club Premiums @ \$90.00 | \$2430.00 | |
| Interest On Certificates | \$ 277.53 | |
| Matured Guaranteed Investment Certificate | \$3800.00 | |
| Cashed Wait & See Certificates → | \$5975.00 | |
| ↙(1000.00 & 4975.00) | ----- | |
| | \$12857.53 | \$12857.53 |

EXPENSES

| | | |
|---|------------|------------|
| Insurance Premium (Mar 1/2004-Nov 1/2004) | \$ 1782.00 | |
| Postage, Photocopies & Telephone | \$ 44.34 | |
| Insurance Premium (Nov 1/2004-Nov 1/2005) | \$ 3240.00 | |
| Postage, Photocopies & Telephone | \$ 51.73 | |
| Wait & See Certificates (4975.00 & 4200.00) | \$ 9175.00 | |
| | ----- | |
| | \$14293.07 | \$14293.07 |

Excess Receipts Over Expenses \$-1435.54

Bank Balance @ December 31, 2004 \$ 107.61

INSURANCE ACCOUNT ASSETS

Wait & See Certificate \$4200.00

ONTARIO NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION
 TREASURER'S REPORT
 FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2004 TO DECEMBER 31, 2004

CASH ASSET SUMMARY @ DECEMBER 31, 2004

| | | |
|--|------------|------------|
| Cash & Bank Balance - General Account | \$ 2756.08 | |
| Wait & See Certificate - General Account | \$ 8500.00 | |
| Premium Rate Redeemable Cert - General Account | \$ 4000.00 | |
| Bank Balance - Contingency Account | \$ 338.72 | |
| Guaranteed Investment Certificates - Contingency | \$32500.00 | |
| Bank Balance - Insurance Account | \$ 107.61 | |
| Wait & See Certificate - Insurance Account | \$ 4200.00 | |
| | ----- | |
| | \$52402.41 | \$52402.41 |
| Cash Assets (2003) | | \$50854.69 |
| Increase In Cash Assets | | \$ 1547.72 |

LIFE MEMBERSHIP ACCOUNT

Bank Balance @ January 1, 2004 \$242.91

RECEIPTS

| | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Interest Guaranteed Investment Certificates | \$ 329.45 | |
| Matured Guaranteed Investment Certificate | \$1700.00 | |
| Transfer From General Account | \$ 600.00 | |
| | ----- | |
| | \$2629.45 | \$2629.45 |

EXPENSES

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Guaranteed Investment Certificate | \$1700.00 | |
| 59 Membership Dues (2004) @ \$15.00 | \$ 885.00 | |
| | ----- | |
| | \$2585.00 | \$2585.00 |

Excess Receipts Over Expenses \$ 44.45

Bank Balance @ December 31, 2004 \$287.36

LIFE MEMBERSHIP ASSETS

Guaranteed Investment Certificates \$9700.00

The Bank Accounts are maintained at
 the T.D. Canada Trust, Belmont Branch
 Kitchener, Ontario

Treasurer Bruce H. Razymann

Theme Collections
Courtesy of Champlain Coin Club

World Coinage: Are you in the mood for a change of direction with your coin collection? Tired of the pennies, nickels, errors or tokens? Why not take a look at creating a "topical" or a "theme" collection?

Where do I look and what do I look for? Why not start with your own collection? I found the following easy themes: famous people, ships and animals. I have created a list of inexpensive yet interesting theme coins that are readily available from most dealers. Most of the coins listed below cost less than one dollar. Check out the dealer's dollar bins, treasure boxes, swap with friends or club members but get started with something new, fun and inexpensive!!!

Famous People

Queen Victoria, British penny, 1841-1902
King George V, British penny, 1902-1936
King George VI, British penny, 1937-1953
Queen Juliana, Netherlands, 1948-1980
President Kennedy, U.S. half dollar, starting at 1964
George Washington, U.S. quarter, starting at 1932
P. Von Hindenburg, Germany, 2 Reichspfennig, 1936-1939
Alexander the Great, Greece, 100 drachmas, 1990-1993
Terry Fox, Canada, one dollar, 2005



Animals

Buffalo, U.S. nickel
Rhino, India, 25 paise
Horse, Spain, 5 ptas
Lizard, Australia, 2 cents
Springbok, S. Africa, 1 rand
Bee, Norway, 10 ore
Dolphin, Italy, 5 lire
Rabbit, Ireland, 3 pence
Seahorse, Singapore, 10 cent

Ships

Bluenose, schooner, Canada, 10 cents
Sloop, Bahamas, 25 cents
Dhow, Kuwait, 10 fils
Man-o-War, P.E.I. token,
Phoenician War Galley, Lebanon, 5 piastres
Canoe, Canada, dollar
Viking longship, Isle of Man, 50 pence
Great Lakes freighter, Welland, ON, souvenir dollar
Dragon Boat, Thailand, 1 baht



Other Themes to Consider

famous buildings
odd-shaped coins
birds
flowers or plants
children
explorers
vehicles
monuments
historic events



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Did You Know That...
Courtesy of Oshawa & District Coin Club
By Bruce R. Watt

Georgian coins denominated in "tetri" bear reverse designs depicting Borjgali, or symbols of the sun.

The 1923 Monroe Doctrine Centennial half dollar bears portraits of James Monroe and John Quincy.

The Silver American Eagle is as much a U.S. coin as a Moran or Peace dollar.

The Monetary Authority of Singapore stopped issuing 1-cent coins, and \$1, \$20, \$25 and \$500 notes, but the currency remains legal tender.

Although being the key date to the Indian Head cent series, the 1877 cent has only the second lowest mintage.

The Cent and 3 Cent tokens produced in German silver by Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger circulated freely during the 1836 to 1844 coin shortage.

Except for Benjamin Franklin and Susan B. Anthony, the persons whose images appear on regular issue U.S. coins have been U.S. presidents.

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Did You Know That...Continued
Courtesy of Oshawa & District Coin Club

The Bank of Uganda is surveying citizens about whether they want to replace 1,000 shilling bank notes with coins of the same denomination, according to a news report at www.allAfrica.com.

While the nationwide survey is under way, the bank will continue to issue the 1,000 shilling notes, releasing an upgraded version by the end of May. There will not be an immediate recall of the older notes.

This move follows upgrades to 5,000, 10,000 and 20,000 shilling notes. Most recently, 10,000 shilling notes dated 1995 or 1998 were recalled from circulation.

These notes, which ceased being legal tender at midnight, Dec 31, 2004, do not have a foil security stripe and bear the signature of the late Gov. Charles N. Kikonyogo.

Lithuania is on track to coin euros beginning in 2007, according to a news report at www.eubusiness.com. European Central Bank officials visited the Bank of Lithuania March 15 and 16 to gauge its readiness to strike euro coinage. The ECB officials gave a positive report, which means the bank can begin minting test euro coins this year, and euro coins in 2007.

The bank said in a press release at its Web site (www.ib.it) that it has already approved the plaster models for the national side of euro and euro cent coins. Those were approved Feb. 24 by the bank's board.

Vilnius sculptor Antanas Zukauskas design the models.

The first steel "wartime" Lincoln cents were struck during the week of Feb. 21 to 27, 1943.

Coins of Vespasian, the ruler who put Rome on track after Nero committed suicide, are "must haves" in any Roman Imperial Collection.

That there are more than \$754 Billion in coins and currency are currently in circulation in the United States of America.

MISS DAISY

a short story by

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Daisy had come to Venice for a specific reason, unlike the swarms of tourists she'd worked her way through en route to the Cà Del Dose Hotel. She envied them in a way, but business was business, nonetheless, and she was very good at what she did and well paid too. Her room was absolutely sumptuous and she was tired enough to appreciate its comfort and charm, especially after such a hard trip. The flight from London hadn't been the greatest with all the jarring and shaking from turbulence and then the rough ride across the choppy lagoon in that crowded boat had been enough to make her even a little cross. She looked into the heart-shaped mirror with its rosary edging of gold beads and managed a tight little smile. She'd travelled to a lot of places but never before to Venice. She giggled and shook her head in disbelief. Why, she'd gotten off the plane, gone into and out of Marco Polo airport, and jumped right into a boat! It was almost like a scene out of a James Bond movie!

The next morning she got a wake-up call in her room. She wasn't one to ever sleep in but she didn't want to take any chances on being late for their agreed upon time. This would be the coin deal of her career if she could pull it off and, not only would she make herself and the company plenty of money, she'd gain a measure of fame as well. She had a warm shower, got dressed in loose-fitting,

chocolate colored slacks and a beige blouse, and sat down in front of the mirror to do her hair. She had short blond hair, parted somewhat to the left of center, and she combed it out carefully so that the bottom swooped forward just under her ears in curlicues. She lightly put on some lipstick, normal red, and sat back to gather her thoughts. She was attractive in a 'cute' sort of way, with her narrow blue eyes and her tiny nose, and she took consolation in the fact that she was still single at thirty-three because of her unavailability and nothing else. She worked long hours and travelled a fair bit and well, there just wasn't much time for romance.

After a light breakfast in her room of mixed fruit, whole-wheat toast and coffee, she made a phone call to Mr. Domanico for confirmation and directions, and then went downstairs and scuttled outside to the 'riva', or quay, to hail a gondola. It was a lovely day, and she guessed it was already in the low seventies. She watched as a flock of pigeons cooed around a smattering of bread bits and seeds. It truly was a beautiful place and as she stood there with her microscope box and her purse, she tried to dismiss, for a moment at least, the work aspect of her trip here just to appreciate the setting. She took a deep breath and the air, with its bit of salty tang, reminded her of being by the sea. It was quiet too, despite the fact there were

a good number of people already about. Nobody, she could see, was in much of a hurry. She heard a church bell tolling off across the old buildings somewhere and, like bees, the buzz-buzz buzzing of small boats as they slipped hither and thither in the jade-colored water of the 'rios', or canals. Daisy was gazing fondly at the foam green of the sky, wondering what ever made it such a lovely color, when a voice, in very good English, called up to her from just below.

"You are waiting here for a gondola and I am here to take you wherever your heart desires."

Daisy came to her senses at once. She glanced down and saw in a newer gondola a handsome man in black pleated dress slacks and white shirt waiting to take her hand and help her into the boat. He had a scarlet sash around his waist that mimicked a belt and the end, fringed, fell casually halfway down his leg. He reminded her of a matador. He was tanned, but what caught her eye like a flash of lightning were his bright aquamarine eyes.

Letting herself down into the boat awkwardly while she held his hand, Daisy told him where she wanted to go. She was somewhat weak in the legs--and not from physical exhaustion--but she certainly wasn't lost for words.

"I could have walked," Daisy began, trying to sound unaffected by the presence of the handsome gondolier, "but I just had to ride in one of these gondolas. They look so re-

laxing and I might never get the chance again."

"It is spectacular!" the gondolier exclaimed. "You will not regret it, not even for one second."

As soon as Daisy was settled on the padded seat of the boat, she felt the craft moving slowly away from the 'riva'. She was glad in a way that she was facing forward and that the handsome gondolier was behind her. She could feel the hot blush in her face and she guessed it would now be about the color of his sash. She wondered whether or not he was married or had a girlfriend. He must have one or the other, she told herself, as good looking as he was. And though she didn't know for sure, she was disappointed anyhow.

Soon, they were cruising easily along the canal and the water, sounding like a kitten drawing milk from a saucer, lapped against the oak sides of the gondola.

"You are a very pretty woman," Daisy heard the gondolier say in his smooth, Italianized English. The remark had come as a bit of a surprise. "Your husband must be very happy. You should have brought him along with you."

Daisy corrected him right off. "I'm not married," she said, not bothering to turn around and trying to sound miffed. "And I'm here strictly on business."

"That is spectacular but not very right. Venice, it is for romance--for love. Where is there a better place?" She could tell he was a good talker. She didn't say anything.

"This man you are going to see, I know him well. Raphael has sold us many coins, my father and me, but strangely, numismatics is not his specialty. He is an art dealer and one of the very best. He has a thorough knowledge of the art world and he can tell at a glance if a painting is genuine or if it is not. He is spectacular for sure."

Daisy's ears had perked to attention when she heard the word 'coins'. "You are a coin collector? You and your father?"

"Sì, signorina....May I ask what is your name? Me, I am Ferdinando."

"What do you collect?" Daisy asked.

"I have sets of Soldi," Ferdinando said. "My father, he has gold Soldi which are very rare and expensive....But, you have not told me your name."

A boat ambulance suddenly appeared out of nowhere with red and white lights flashing, its siren blaring like a mad coyote; it sliced close by them leaving a frothy wake and waves that rushed over, rocking the gondola.

"My name is Daisy."

"It is the name of a flower. 'Margherita' is what we call it in Italian. That is spectacular!"

Daisy began to laugh quietly. "A margarita is a drink too." She turned halfway round on the bench, laying her arm along the back so she could catch a glimpse of him when she

spoke. "So, Ferdinando, what can you tell me about Raphael Domanico? Is he nice to deal with? I mean, does he give you a hard time when you're buying a coin and trying to get it for a better price?"

"He never changes his mind on the price," Ferdinando said, not entirely thinking about what he was saying but rather contemplating asking the pretty woman to meet him somewhere in the evening. "Once Raphael gives you a price, that's it. He will not budge. He is not easily fooled, that I can tell you."

At the Grand Canal, Daisy took a 'vaporetto', or water bus, to the Riva del Vin, near the Rialto Bridge and, with only a little searching, came upon Pinacoteca Domanico.

It was just a small shop all by itself at the bottom of an old salmon-colored building in a shady little alley. There was a small Phoenix palm in a terra cotta pot out front looking quite forlorn and forgotten. Daisy hesitated before going in. The shop seemed so dark and inhospitable, but she saw a light toward the back. She found it hard to believe that such a place could yield treasure. She was still thinking about Ferdinando, the gondolier, when she put her hand on the door to go in. She took a deep breath and braced herself for the encounter of her life.

Raphael Domanico turned on all the lights and the paintings on the maroon walls in their lovely frames came to

life like fresh new photographs. He stood waiting for the pretty woman, at the back in front of an old oak desk. He could easily appreciate the plain beauty of the woman walking confidently toward him and he was impressed.

"I have only been open for a few minutes," he told her at once, "and it is a compliment to have someone come early for an appointment....You are Daisy, are you not?"

"Yes, of course. And thank-you so much for having me here and for your interest in our auction company. We'll be able to market your coin far better than anyone, I can assure you." Daisy shook Mr. Domanico's hand, surprised that it was cool and clammy. She figured that maybe he was as nervous as she was. He reminded her of a sharp, successful, middle-aged businessman, with his fluffy dark hair combed back and all in place, the determined look on his face, his well-pressed black slacks and his sport shirt with its motley design of black and silver rectangles. She didn't miss the minuscule cell phone either that seemed to cling magically on the side of his waist. "I brought my microscope, Mr. Domanico. Authentication of this gold piece is going to be mandatory. I'm sure you understand."

"You can call me Raphael, please. There is no need for formality. Come. Sit down."

Daisy sat at the desk across from the art dealer. He offered her a cup of coffee, which she accepted but didn't

really want, and soon it came down to the business at hand.

For quite a while, longer than she should have, Daisy sat there peering at the gold piece in absolute awe, her blue eyes bugging out of her head like inflated sapphires. An 1822 United States five-dollar gold piece! And it was better than the last one that had sold for almost \$700,000! Wow!

"I took it to Milan, to a friend of mine," Raphael said, "and he confirmed that it was genuine. There should be no problem."

Daisy set the coin down carefully on the desk pad, sat back, and asked the art dealer how he had acquired the coin. After all, she couldn't help but be a little skeptical; there were only three known, two of them in the Smithsonian, the other being a choice very fine. So this one, almost uncirculated, would be the fourth.

"The whole story is intriguing," Raphael began, leaning forward. He adjusted his wire-rim glasses and looked at her unflinchingly, not blinking at all. "The half eagle, as you call them, came from the United States, from a man who lives in Kentucky. Lexington, to be exact. He is a breeder of racehorses and, I understand, one horse that he sold at a yearling sale there actually won a Grade 1 stakes race in New York. Anyway, he is very successful. He does not collect coins, I must tell you that. But he does

collect art. He prefers paintings by the masters and he can easily afford to buy them too.

"He accepted this 1822 half eagle as payment for a royally bred yearling and then, when he found out through an agent, that I had an unlisted Caravaggio for sale--well, that was it! He had to have it." Daisy felt a tickle in her throat but squelched the urge to cough. "I say 'unlisted' because the painting, a lovely piece of work entitled 'Cristo nell' orto' from about 1605, was believed to have been destroyed in Berlin in 1945 with the end of the 3rd reich.

"So, I took this coin here in trade along with an undisclosed amount of cash for the Caravaggio....I have doubts now. I mean, I believe I could have got more for the painting at auction but I turned it over very quickly. Really, it was just good business."

That evening, Daisy sat at an outdoor café in the Piazza San Marco with Ferdinando, the gondolier. She was gazing absentmindedly at the lovely pink sky when he called her back to reality.

"So, Raphael is going to phone you tomorrow morning?"

"He said he would, yes," Daisy replied, reflecting now on her day. "It would have been so nice to get an answer this morning. Now my whole night is up in the air."

"'Up in the air'? How do you mean?"

"I'll have it on my mind," Daisy explained. "It may worry me not knowing whether Mr. Domanico will let my company sell his coin."

"'Up in the air'!" Ferdinando laughed. He raised his fist to heaven. "That is a spectacular expression which I am going to remember."

In the background, a fine young band was playing an instrumental, mostly in strings, entitled Tanto mi trovo. It was somewhat of a Venetian love song and its lulling sounds lilted lazily across the patio like meandering little butterflies.

"Do you come here often?" Daisy asked, leaning forward and setting her arms on the table.

"Only with someone like you," Ferdinando told her with a smooth smile.

He was even more handsome in the evening, Daisy told herself. His eyes were like gems that could see through her and maybe even cast spells. The dimples on either side of his mouth were enough to make her swoon. She wanted to believe that she could find romance in a city like Venice, that she could just come upon it and that it would happen magically. But she was doubtful. She wondered how many other women Ferdinando had brought here for a drink under the tender Venetian sky while the band played on. She carried her suspicion over to the 1822 United States half

eagle she had examined that morning. It appeared to be real and she was certain it would be authenticated. Nonetheless, there was something about this whole business that was bothering her.

Just a moment after the slick waiter had set another strawberry daiquiri in front of her, Daisy was part of one of the most embarrassing scenes she could ever imagine. A woman--a very angry one--trounced up to where they were seated, stuck her hands on her hips, and glared at Ferdinando. She was quite beautiful, with lovely long curly hair, but her face was the color of a ripe tomato and her eyes were on fire. She asked Ferdinando what he thought he was doing there, and with her, meaning Daisy. Daisy felt like crawling under the table. The patio was packed and she'd never felt so centered out in all her life. She wanted to get up and leave but she stayed to witness the conclusion. The Italian beauty smacked the gondolier across his brown handsome face and stormed away across the patio like a thunderstorm.

Ferdinando, who was speechless for a moment, quickly gathered his wits and apologized. "I am so sorry, Daisy," he said. "It is her. She..."

But Daisy wouldn't let him finish. "Please," she said, "don't say another word. I understand. You don't have to explain. I think you ought to go home now. Hopefully,

she'll still be waiting for you."

On the plane back to the United States, Daisy sat there at 35,000 feet mulling over the deal she had made with Mr. Domanico. It was a coup to be sure. She had already called the director of sales for the auction firm and he was thrilled to say the least. He was going to begin the publicity at once. She swallowed a couple of times to relieve the bit of pressure in her ears and set her head against the back of the seat. She was tired but she couldn't sleep. With the thrum of the jet engines some of the passengers had dozed off. From the corner of her eye, she peered at the elderly woman beside her; she was snoring quietly, with her head tipped down and her glasses almost falling off her nose. As successful as the trip had been--romance aside-- Daisy still felt the turn of events was too good to be true. It was that Ferdinando, she told herself with a twisted little smile; he's made me feel insecure now about the sincerity of human nature.

The day before the auction company was to send Daisy with the 1822 United States half eagle to a third party to have it authenticated and graded, they got a phone call from Mr. Domanico in Venice, Italy. He wanted his coin back.

It turned out that the painting for which he'd taken the coin as part payment, Caravaggio's Cristo nell' orto, was a fake.

END