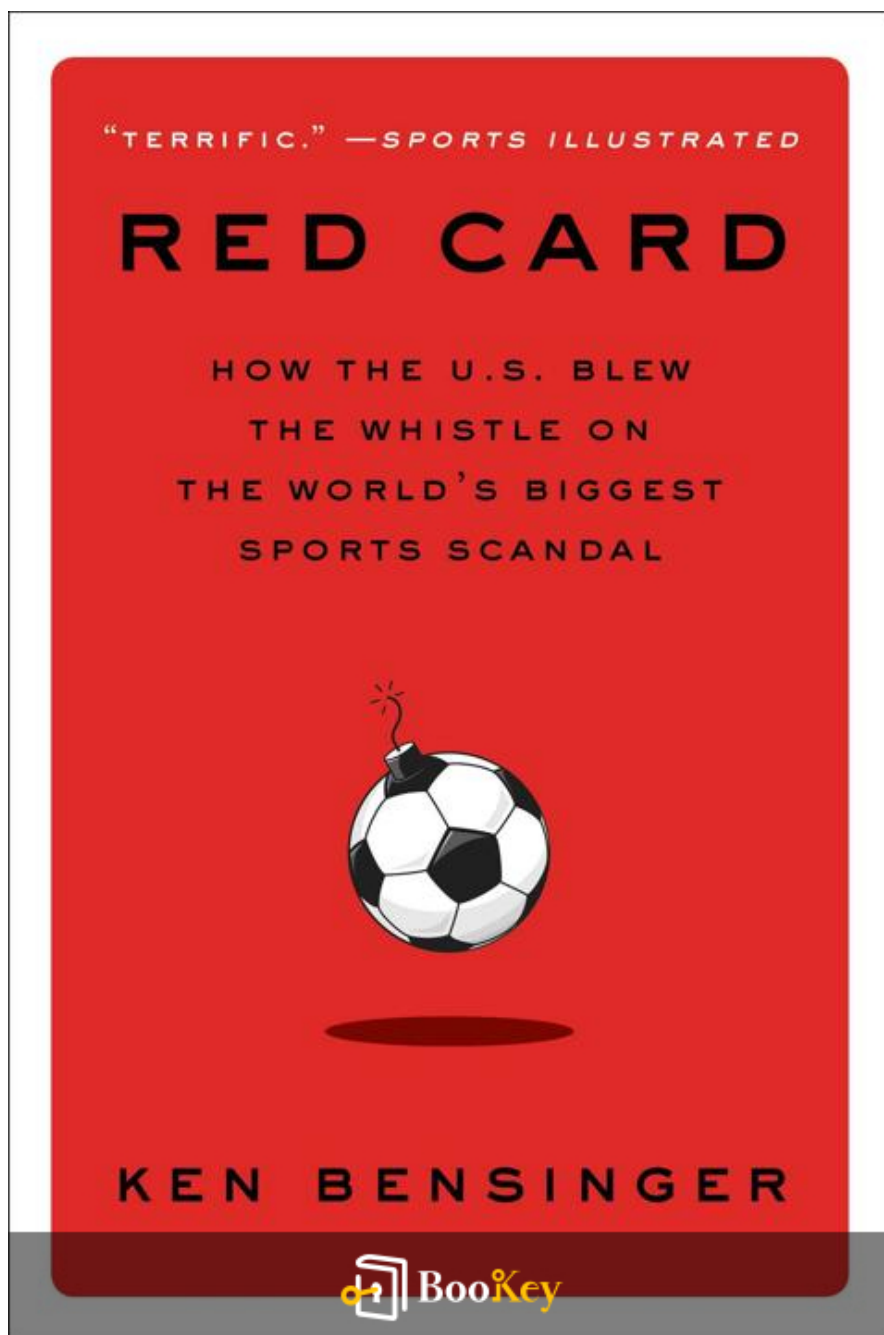


# Red Card PDF (Limited Copy)

Ken Bensinger



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# **Red Card Summary**

Uncovering the Explosive Truth Behind Soccer's Greatest Scandal

Written by New York Central Park Page Turners Books Club

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## About the book

"Red Card" by Ken Bensinger delves into the explosive FIFA scandal, a monumental corruption case that sent shockwaves through international soccer. The narrative begins with an investigation into the tax returns of Chuck Blazer, an American executive with a lavish lifestyle that belied his position. As investigators probe deeper, they unravel a web of corruption stretching to the very core of FIFA, the governing body of soccer worldwide.

Key players in this drama include Jack Warner, a former vice president of FIFA notorious for his insatiable greed and manipulation of power, and the organization's long-time president, Sepp Blatter, who fiercely maintained his grip on leadership while his administration was steeped in misconduct. As Bensinger unfolds the story, readers witness a relentless pursuit of justice by American law enforcement officials, who expose decades of bribery, fraud, and kickbacks that pervaded not just FIFA, but the entire world of soccer.

By connecting the dots between individuals and institutions, Bensinger reveals the staggering breadth of corruption, illustrating that virtually every facet of the sport had been infiltrated. With the 2018 World Cup serving as a backdrop, "Red Card" presents a compelling account of the systematic decay within soccer, highlighting how a seemingly routine investigation spiraled into one of the most significant scandals in sports history. Through vivid storytelling and detailed accounts, Bensinger offers readers a crucial

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understanding of the mechanisms of deceit and the ramifications for the beautiful game.

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## About the author

In the chapters of Ken Bensinger's "Red Card," the author meticulously unravels the intricate web of corruption within FIFA, the governing body of international soccer. Drawing on his extensive background in investigative journalism, Bensinger introduces readers to the labyrinthine world of soccer administration, where ambition and greed often overshadow integrity.

The narrative begins by establishing the cultural significance of soccer globally, highlighting its immense power to unite and inspire, yet revealing the vulnerabilities that allow for systematic exploitation. Bensinger contextualizes the FIFA organization, painting a picture of its sprawling influence—an entity responsible for overseeing the world's most popular sport, yet riddled with opaque practices and unaccountable leadership.

As the chapters progress, Bensinger unveils a cast of pivotal characters, including key officials and whistleblowers. These figures, such as former FIFA president Sepp Blatter and members of the executive committee, serve as both architects and enablers of systemic corruption. Through their stories, readers gain insight into the power dynamics at play, illuminating how self-interest and political maneuvering have long pervaded the organization.

Bensinger doesn't shy away from exploring the darker aspects of FIFA, including bribery, money laundering, and match-fixing. He presents

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significant events, such as the controversial bids for the World Cup and the exposé of the 2015 indictments that rocked the organization. These moments serve not only as climax points in the unfolding drama but also as catalysts for public outcry and calls for reform.

Throughout the chapters, Bensinger interweaves personal anecdotes and interviews, providing a human dimension to the scandal. By doing so, he emphasizes the impact of corruption on fans, players, and the sport itself, provoking a broader conversation about ethics in sports and the responsibility of governing bodies to uphold values of fairness and transparency.

In concluding sections, Bensinger reflects on the ongoing implications of the scandals revealed in his research. He emphasizes that while major repercussions have occurred, the fight for accountability and integrity in sports remains a critical issue. "Red Card" serves not only as a detailed account of FIFA's corruption but also as a powerful call for vigilance in the face of power, urging readers to consider the importance of integrity in all areas of public life.

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# Chapter 1 Summary: Berryman

## Summary of Chapter 1: Berryman

On August 16, 2011, IRS agent Steve Berryman received a pivotal alert about an FBI investigation targeting Chuck Blazer, a high-ranking FIFA official embroiled in allegations of financial misconduct such as bribery and suspicious payments. Berryman, who had a lifelong passion for soccer, was immediately intrigued by the possibility of combining his professional expertise with his personal interests.

Berryman's journey began in England but flourished in Southern California, where he initially pursued a career in soccer as a player before transitioning to football as a placekicker at the collegiate level. However, when aspirations of joining the NFL faded, he redirected his ambitions towards accountancy, ultimately becoming an IRS agent. Embracing the excitement of investigations into financial crimes, particularly those involving public corruption, Berryman found purpose in his work.

The catalyst for his new endeavor, Chuck Blazer, became the focal point of an investigation after Berryman learned about Blazer's undisclosed offshore accounts and his failure to file taxes for over seventeen years. This alarming discovery presented the opportunity for significant legal action against

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Blazer for tax evasion, prompting Berryman to seek permission to access Blazer's tax returns.

Upon reaching out to an FBI agent, Berryman was informed of the ongoing investigation into Blazer, leading to a fruitful collaboration. This partnership would expand into a large-scale inquiry into FIFA, exposing a web of international corruption that implicated numerous soccer officials. The ensuing investigation not only resulted in high-profile arrests but also unveiled systemic malfeasance within FIFA, drastically affecting the global landscape of the sport.

The fallout from these investigations stirred public and political reactions, with critics accusing U.S. authorities of overstepping by intervening in global soccer matters. Nevertheless, prosecutors emphasized their commitment to upholding the integrity of the sport, distancing their mission from any political motivations.

Thus, Chapter 1 lays the groundwork for Berryman's journey into the complex intricacies of FIFA's corruption, hinting at a larger narrative that will explore the monumental scandal and its profound implications on international soccer. As the investigation unfolds, it promises to reveal deep-seated issues that will change the face of the game forever.

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## Chapter 2 Summary: Tickling the Wire

In this chapter titled "Tickling the Wire," the profound evolution of soccer is explored, highlighting its rise from a simple game to a powerful socio-cultural force. At the center of this transformation is the FIFA World Cup, an event that embodies national pride and is entangled with corporate and political interests.

As the 2010 World Cup in South Africa loomed, intense preparations were underway for the bids to host the subsequent tournaments in 2018 and 2022. England, eager to reclaim hosting rights it last enjoyed in 1966, faced formidable competition from Russia, which sought to enhance its global standing under the leadership of Vladimir Putin amidst a period of economic prosperity. England's bid emphasized its established infrastructure, contrasting sharply with Russia's less impressive presentation, further complicated by its failure to qualify for the 2010 World Cup.

The financial implications of hosting the World Cup became apparent as South Africa poured over \$3 billion into stadiums and infrastructure, primarily using public funds. This expenditure often favored wealthier areas, leading to a disparity in benefits that did not reach broader local communities, highlighting a recurring theme in how soccer clubs' wealth remains entangled with socioeconomic issues affecting fans.

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Amid this competitive atmosphere, former intelligence operative Christopher Steele was tasked with investigating allegations of collusion in the bidding process, specifically between Russia and Qatar, which purportedly aimed to trade votes. This scandal underscored the cutthroat nature of World Cup bidding and hinted at underlying corruption within FIFA.

Simultaneously, U.S. FBI agent Mike Gaeta, leading the Eurasian Organized Crime Squad, began investigating transnational organized crime linked to the high stakes of soccer. His inquiry intersected with illegal gambling operations believed to be backed by figures such as Alimzhan Tokhtakhounov, hinting at a complex web of corruption that Steele was also unraveling.

Steele's findings related to the bid manipulations resonated with Gaeta's objectives, suggesting a potential alliance aimed at addressing the pervasive corruption within FIFA and its surrounding environment. This chapter thus intricately weaves the themes of ambition, corruption, and the socioeconomic impact of soccer, setting the stage for further developments as the World Cup approach sparked international intrigue.

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# Chapter 3 Summary: “Have You Ever Taken a Bribe?”

## Chapter 3 Summary

### Introduction to Andrew Jennings

Andrew Jennings emerges as a remarkable investigative journalist renowned for his unyielding drive to expose corruption within the realm of sports, with a particular focus on FIFA, the global governing body of soccer. Unlike many of his peers who preferred to remain within the confines of press access and favor, Jennings adopted a more confrontational approach, advocating for transparency in an industry riddled with unethical practices. His commitment to this cause set him apart in a field where many compromised their integrity.

### Jennings's Unique Approach

Frustrated by the pervasive corruption that compromised the integrity of soccer, Jennings took the bold step of directly challenging FIFA officials. In a notable confrontation, he infamously questioned FIFA President Sepp Blatter about any bribes he may have accepted. His fearless demeanor, along with a knack for uncovering scandal, positioned Jennings as a significant figure in sports journalism, despite encountering fierce resistance from FIFA.

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and its allies.

## **Collaboration with the FBI**

In 2009, Jennings's relentless pursuit caught the attention of foreign affairs consultant Christopher Steele, who introduced him to FBI agents eager to pursue leads concerning FIFA's corruption. This partnership marked a pivotal shift for Jennings. His years of investigative work, once seen as a solitary endeavor, now held the promise of leading to concrete actions against wrongdoing within the world of soccer.

## **FIFA's Historical Context**

To grasp the nature of FIFA's corruption, Jennings elucidated the organization's historical progression, tracing its origins from modest beginnings with minimal revenue to a sprawling entity rife with financial mismanagement. Under João Havelange's leadership, FIFA underwent significant commercialization, a transformation that laid the groundwork for the bribery scandals that would eventually engulf the organization.

## **Sepp Blatter's Rise to Power**

Sepp Blatter, a key figure in FIFA's commercialization, ascended to the presidency after Havelange's tenure. His leadership was mired in

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controversy, marked by allegations of election-related bribery and scandals involving extravagant expenditures. Blatter's presidency became emblematic of the systemic corruption that Jennings sought to unveil.

## **Consequences of Commercialization**

The intrusion of commercial interests into soccer led to escalating corruption, exemplified by sports marketing firms like ISL engaging in unethical practices to secure lucrative contracts. This atmosphere fostered a cycle of corruption that entrenched itself deeply within the fabric of global sports.

## **FBI's Interest in Corruption**

As Jennings unveiled the corrupt practices endemic to FIFA, he found willing allies in FBI agents, especially Mike Gaeta. Their mutual conviction in the depth of FIFA's corruption laid the groundwork for potential investigative actions aimed at accountability and reform.

## **Conclusion**

Chapter 3 chronicles Andrew Jennings's evolution from a solitary journalist pointing out FIFA's flaws to a crucial collaborator with the FBI in the quest for reform. It delves into FIFA's transformation into a commercial

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powerhouse driven by corruption and sets the stage for the subsequent investigative endeavors that would challenge the organization's malpractices.

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# Chapter 4: A Guy from Queens

## Chapter Four: A Guy from Queens

On August 5, 2010, an intriguing meeting took place in Moscow between Chuck Blazer, a prominent figure in the soccer world as a representative of CONCACAF, and Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin. Amidst the banter, Putin compared Blazer's appearance to that of Karl Marx, setting a light-hearted tone while they discussed Blazer's travel blog, "Travels with Chuck Blazer." This blog painted a vivid picture of Blazer's extravagant lifestyle and highlighted his influential connections within soccer.

Blazer's soccer journey began in the mid-1970s with the Youth Soccer Association in New Rochelle, New York. At a time when soccer struggled for recognition in the United States, Blazer's early involvement ignited his vision for the sport's potential. Despite joining the soccer scene relatively late, he rapidly climbed the ranks, eventually becoming an influential figure in the U.S. Soccer Federation, where he served as the executive vice president.

The late 1980s marked a pivotal moment for Blazer as he co-founded the American Soccer League. His ambitions led him to campaign for Trinidadian Jack Warner in the race for the CONCACAF presidency. Under

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Blazer's leadership, CONCACAF underwent a transformation, relocating to New York and generating substantial revenue through the establishment of the Gold Cup tournament. By the time Blazer joined FIFA's Executive Committee in 1997, he had solidified soccer's presence in the United States and significantly enhanced the sport's financial stability.

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## Chapter 5 Summary: The Vote

In Chapter Five, titled "The Vote," the scene is set at FIFA's Zurich headquarters on December 2, 2010, where the atmosphere is charged with anticipation. Executive Committee members are arriving to cast their votes for the World Cup, gathering in the luxurious and secure FIFA House, a stark contrast to the organization's modest beginnings. This modern edifice, equipped with ample facilities, symbolizes FIFA's transformation and the monumental significance it has gained in the world of sports.

FIFA was established in 1904 by seven continental groups in a bid to unify football associations that had previously rejected collaboration, primarily led by British organizations. Over the decades, FIFA evolved to orchestrate international competitions, most notably spearheading the creation of the World Cup, which began as an ambitious proposal in 1928 to rival the Olympic Games. This culminated in Uruguay's hosting of the inaugural tournament in 1930.

Despite facing financial struggles in its early years, FIFA's revenues surged by the late 20th century, thanks to lucrative media and sponsorship deals, which helped to elevate the World Cup to a premier global sporting event. However, the affluence of FIFA's leadership was increasingly contrasted with growing allegations of corruption, with lavish meetings taking place at the luxurious Baur au Lac hotel amidst a backdrop of whispered scandals.

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As the voting process approached, the tension amplified with rampant bribery scandals and intense lobbying from various nations. Despite England's determined campaign, their bid for hosting rights fell short, overshadowed by Russia and Qatar, which ultimately secured the rights for the 2018 and 2022 tournaments respectively. The aftermath of this vote incited widespread outrage and speculation regarding the vote's integrity, especially as England managed to garner only two votes.

Recognizing the unusual circumstances surrounding the voting results, the FBI launched an investigation into FIFA corruption, led by special agent Jared Randall. Randall, who harbors a passion for soccer, is driven not only by professional ambition but also a personal mission to unveil the underbelly of elite governance in the sport. This chapter sets a critical foundation for understanding the intertwining politics, financial machinations, and the integrity of one of the largest global sporting organizations.

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# Chapter 6 Summary: Jack vs. Chuck

## JACK VS. CHUCK

### Introduction

Chuck Blazer reflects on his long and complex relationship with Jack Warner, a key figure in FIFA politics. As tensions rise surrounding the presidential election for FIFA, Blazer contemplates the potential fallout of their alliance amid competing ambitions.

### Outrageous Stunts

Blazer recounts Warner's history of erratic behavior, illustrating his impulsive and often self-serving actions in soccer governance. Examples of Warner's unpredictable nature highlight the challenges of working alongside someone whose decisions can abruptly shift the landscape of their organization.

### Bin Hammam's Proposal

The narrative turns to Mohamed bin Hammam, who approaches Warner to discuss his upcoming bid against Sepp Blatter for the FIFA presidency.

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Warner, eager to support bin Hammam, calls for a meeting with CONCACAF members. Blazer, however, grows increasingly worried about the potential rifts this could create, especially considering their existing ties with Blatter, which have provided them with financial advantages and influence.

### **Blazer's Concerns**

Blazer's frustration mounts as he grapples with Warner's reckless enthusiasm and misplaced loyalty to bin Hammam. He recognizes the precariousness of their alliance with Blatter and fears that Warner's actions could undermine the stability and prosperity they have cultivated together.

### **Warner's Rise to Power**

Reflecting on their past, Blazer recalls how their collaboration advanced Warner's leadership within CONCACAF, significantly reshaping their fortunes in soccer governance. This narrative arc emphasizes the initial strength of their partnership, which becomes increasingly strained as the stakes rise.

### **Accusations and Financial Mismanagement**

Warner's leadership has been marred by allegations of financial misconduct

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and self-dealing, causing friction between him and Blazer. These grievances exacerbate the tension in their relationship, revealing deeper issues of trust and accountability within their partnership.

## **Declining Relationship**

As their friendship erodes, their professional interactions become purely transactional, driven largely by ongoing financial disputes and Warner's escalating erratic behavior. The deterioration of their camaraderie illustrates how ambition can corrupt relationships in the cutthroat world of soccer administration.

## **Final Standoff**

Blazer reaches a breaking point as Warner insists on proceeding with bin Hammam's agenda. In a bold move, Blazer challenges Warner, marking a critical confrontation that threatens to reshape their dynamic and the stability of CONCACAF itself.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter encapsulates the inherent tensions between ambition and loyalty in FIFA politics, highlighting the intricate power dynamics at play within soccer governance. The struggle between Blazer and Warner serves as

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a microcosm of the broader challenges faced in navigating personal and political relationships within the realm of sports administration.

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# Chapter 7 Summary: Port of Spain

## Chapter Seven: Port of Spain Conference Overview

On May 10, 2011, Angenie Kanhai skillfully orchestrated the Caribbean Football Union (CFU) conference in Port of Spain, which was the result of extensive planning. This event drew soccer leaders from various Caribbean nations and featured guest speaker Mohamed bin Hammam, who promised increased support for FIFA members. However, Kanhai was caught off guard when her boss, Jack Warner, unexpectedly introduced the topic of "token gifts" that had not been included in her plans, adding a layer of stress to the proceedings.

### Discovery of Cash Gifts

In the aftermath of the conference, Kanhai discovered a suitcase containing what she initially thought were simple souvenirs. The following morning, a colleague revealed that these envelopes contained significant amounts of cash, with sums like \$40,000 being distributed to some federations. This alarming revelation reached Chuck Blazer from CONCACAF, who expressed concerns that these transactions resembled vote-buying tactics in anticipation of the impending FIFA presidential election.

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## **Background on FIFA's Financial Practices**

FIFA had been known for its intricate financial programs such as the Financial Assistance Program and Goal Program, which were designed to foster loyalty among smaller federations through financial support. This created a web of dependency, giving FIFA leaders considerable political leverage. With Bin Hammam actively courting votes, the direct distribution of cash to CFU delegates raised ethical red flags and prompted fears from Blazer regarding the integrity of the confederation.

## **Warner's Reaction and Defense**

At a subsequent CFU meeting, Warner attempted to quell the rising tensions by framing the cash distributions as regular practice within the confederation. He denied any wrongdoing or allegations of vote-buying, trying to assert his authority over the narrative. Unfortunately, his defense only fueled further controversy, raising questions about the ongoing ethics within soccer politics.

## **Investigation and Consequences**

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The concerns expressed by Blazer led him to consult with his lawyer, which culminated in a formal report to FIFA regarding the cash distributions. Following a thorough investigation, FIFA's Ethics Committee provisionally suspended both Bin Hammam and Warner due to substantiated evidence of corruption, while Sepp Blatter, FIFA's president, remained unscathed and was re-elected unopposed for a fourth term.

## **Final Remarks and Fallout**

In the ensuing chaos, Warner publicly condemned perceived betrayals, forecasting significant repercussions within FIFA. As the events unfolded, the integrity and governance of international soccer were thrown into turmoil, with escalating allegations of corruption and bribery looming large over the sport's future. The chapter closes on a somber note, emphasizing the complex interplay of power, ethics, and accountability within the world of soccer.

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## Chapter 8: A Made Man

### ### Chapter Eight: A Made Man

In this chapter, we follow the young FBI agent Jared Randall as he delves into the murky world of soccer corruption, particularly focusing on his interactions with Chuck Blazer, a key figure within FIFA and a pivotal character in the unfolding scandal. After a dinner meeting with Blazer, where they discussed troubling allegations of match-fixing during the Gold Cup—a tournament Blazer was instrumental in establishing—Randall keeps the restaurant receipt as a keepsake, symbolizing the intricate ties between them. Blazer, who had endured considerable personal risk by reaching out to the FBI, had stood to lose a lot from the corruption he had witnessed firsthand, especially since his lucrative contract allowed him to earn hefty commissions from sponsorships and television rights.

Randall's initial perception of soccer was simplistic, focused solely on its star athletes. However, as he began his investigation, he discovered a labyrinth of corruption that seeped through the very fabric of FIFA. In his bid to navigate this complex landscape, Randall identified major players, including Sepp Blatter, FIFA's long-serving president, and the controversial Blazer himself. Unfortunately, despite his determination, he struggled to unearth concrete evidence to implicate Blazer as a cooperating witness.

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The narrative shifts to follow the fallout from the suspensions of FIFA officials Jack Warner and Mohammed Bin Hammam, both of whom were ensnared in a bribery scandal that originated from a notorious meeting in Port of Spain, Trinidad. In this charged atmosphere, some Caribbean soccer officials began to come forward with stories of bribery schemes that offered them cash for their loyalty, revealing a pattern of corruption that ran deep. Meanwhile, Warner attempted to distance himself from these accusations, continuing to negotiate sizeable payments from Bin Hammam while publicly asserting his resignation to deflect scrutiny.

Tensions mounted within FIFA as the power struggle unfolded between Lisle Austin and Blazer. Austin's aspirations for power were thwarted as investigations into Blazer's financial activities began, raising suspicions of widespread malfeasance. Despite the looming investigations, Blazer exercised an iron grip over the financial documents, continuing to obfuscate the truth and maintain his status within the organization.

Amidst this chaos, investigative journalist Andrew Jennings made significant strides in exposing Blazer's dubious financial practices. His articles sparked a media frenzy, detailing hidden accounts and suspicious payments that only deepened public interest in FIFA's integrity. Jennings' collaboration with the FBI was crucial, as he provided them with critical documents that highlighted Blazer's questionable dealings, pushing the

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investigation forward.

As the pressure on Blazer mounted, the FBI intensified its scrutiny, fueled by emerging revelations of secret payments linked to him. This escalating interest not only captured media attention but also laid bare the systemic corruption entrenched within FIFA, illuminating the complex and shadowy dealings that had plagued international soccer for years.

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# Chapter 9 Summary: RICO

## ### Chapter Nine Summary

### #### Introduction to RICO and Capone's Downfall

The gripping narrative of Eliot Ness's relentless pursuit of Al Capone, a notorious gangster during the Prohibition era, is both a historical account and a story framed by fiction. The unsung hero behind Capone's eventual conviction in 1931 was Frank J. Wilson, a dedicated agent from the Treasury Department. Wilson meticulously constructed a case of tax evasion against Capone, resulting in his imprisonment. This pivotal case not only brought down a notorious criminal but also established a blueprint for future investigations into financial crimes.

### #### The Legacy of Frank J. Wilson

Frank J. Wilson's meticulous work marked a transformation in how the IRS tackled complex financial crimes. His legacy serves as a source of inspiration for the IRS Criminal Investigation division, highlighting the vital role of thorough investigation and the importance of following the money trail to uncover corruption and illegal activities.

### #### Steve Berryman's Mission

Fast forward to the present, IRS agent Steve Berryman, after two decades of

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navigating intricate international financial crimes, sought a monumental case to make a significant impact. He turned his focus to investigating corruption within FIFA, the global governing body of soccer, recognizing the vast potential for a groundbreaking investigation.

#### #### Berryman's Meeting with the FBI

In September 2011, Berryman approached FBI agent Jared Randall, expressing his desire to launch an investigation into FIFA's corruption. Although initially apprehensive about presenting his findings to a younger colleague, Berryman's extensive knowledge about FIFA officials and their questionable dealings impressed Randall, laying the groundwork for their collaboration.

#### #### The Case for RICO

Berryman introduced the concept of the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) as a means to address the systemic corruption within FIFA. This powerful statute enables the prosecution of individuals linked through organized criminal enterprises, even if they did not directly commit the illegal acts. Berryman sought to employ this law to dismantle corruption in soccer and hold accountable those involved in nefarious activities.

#### #### Strategizing the Investigation

During discussions with U.S. attorneys, Berryman illustrated how money

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laundering charges could be effectively applied to international wire transfers, often processed through U.S. banks. He presented a concept he termed the "money transfer rainbow," which illustrated how illicit payments to FIFA officials could establish a basis for U.S. jurisdiction over the case.

#### #### Berryman's Influence and Vision

As Berryman passionately articulated his investigative strategy, he emphasized the likelihood of uncovering bribes and building a robust case against prominent FIFA executives. His ambitions targeted high-profile figures such as Jack Warner and Sepp Blatter, aiming to bring justice to the world of sports corruption.

#### #### Evan Norris: A Rising Prosecutor

Evan Mahran Norris, a principled and skilled prosecutor, emerged as a key ally for Berryman. With his strong moral integrity and adeptness in handling complex cases, Norris recognized the potential in Berryman's insights and the significance of the FIFA investigation.

#### #### Joining Forces

Norris made the decision to partner with Berryman for the FIFA case, effectively igniting a collaborative effort against pervasive corruption in soccer. The prospect of engaging in such a consequential investigation filled Berryman with enthusiasm, reaffirming his commitment to seeking justice within the realm of financial misconduct in sports.

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# Chapter 10 Summary: Blazer's Money

## Blazer's Money: Summary and Context

### Indictment of Welch and Johnson

On July 20, 2000, Thomas K. Welch and David R. Johnson, prominent figures in the Salt Lake City bid for the 2002 Winter Olympics, were indicted by a federal grand jury on bribery charges. The indictment revealed that over \$1 million had been funneled in cash and medical benefits to influence International Olympic Committee (IOC) voters, a serious breach of trust in one of the world's most prestigious sports organizations. Despite the shocking allegations, the case was ultimately dismissed due to insufficient evidence, illustrating the difficulties prosecutors often encounter in securing convictions in high-profile corruption cases that involve influential individuals and complex networks.

### Challenges in Prosecuting FIFA

Prosecutor Berryman understood from the outset that the case against FIFA required a strong and irrefutable foundation. Recognizing the high stakes associated with public scrutiny and potential legal repercussions, he was acutely aware that any weaknesses in the case could be seized upon by

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defense attorneys, complicating efforts to hold accountable those involved in corruption. This prompted a thorough strategic approach, ensuring that the prosecution's legal framework was robust enough to withstand challenges.

## **Investigation into Chuck Blazer**

The investigation into Chuck Blazer, a former FIFA executive, was triggered by his failure to file taxes since at least 1994. As part of this investigation, Berryman sought to delve into Blazer's financial activities and connections to FIFA's broader culture of corruption. The focus on Blazer's tax evasion revealed the intricate web of financial misconduct under scrutiny and underscored the systemic issues within FIFA.

## **Blazer's Financial Misconduct**

Blazer's longstanding relationship with Sunil Gulati, a key figure in U.S. soccer, complicated matters as Gulati was tasked with terminating Blazer's employment amid growing concerns over ethical conduct. Blazer's financial dealings came under scrutiny when reports emerged of his exorbitant 10 percent commission on revenues generated within the North American soccer federation, CONCACAF. This surcharge led to widespread allegations of misconduct, forcing the Executive Committee to confront the financial impropriety before it spiraled into a larger scandal.

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## **Blazer's Tactical Financial Evasions**

To conceal his substantial income and evade scrutiny, Blazer implemented a series of deceptive financial strategies. By utilizing shell companies and maintaining minimal official documentation, he created a facade of financial invisibility while amassing substantial sums from CONCACAF revenues. His tactics exemplified the lengths to which individuals may go to obscure misconduct and evade legal consequences.

## **Final Actions Before Resignation**

In December 2011, as Blazer prepared to resign from his position at CONCACAF, he made a final attempt to secure his financial interests by awarding himself a staggering \$4.2 million in commissions. Additionally, he orchestrated a \$1.4 million transfer to an offshore account, further underscoring his pattern of covert financial maneuvers that characterized his tenure. These actions not only reflected his brazen misconduct but also highlighted the pervasive corruption issues plaguing soccer's governing bodies during this tumultuous period.

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# Chapter 11 Summary: The Flip

## Chapter Eleven Summary

In this chapter, the investigation orchestrated by Berryman takes a decisive turn as multiple subpoenas are issued, marking a critical phase in uncovering corruption within the soccer world. Berryman diligently examines wire transfer records, meticulously tracking financial activities using an effective organizational system that helps him establish a detailed timeline of potential wrongdoing. This methodical approach bolsters his case against those involved, highlighting the magnitude of the financial crimes tied to the investigation.

The focus shifts when Berryman uncovers Blazer's tax issues, which serves as a pivotal moment in the investigation. In response, the team engages in weekly conference calls to refine their strategy. Given the sensitive nature of their inquiry into international financial crimes, these discussions prove vital for coordinating their efforts and reassessing their approach.

During one of these meetings, Berryman suggests the intriguing code name "Operation Own Goal," symbolizing the self-destructive nature of the corruption they are uncovering. However, senior officer Norris opts against adopting a name, advocating for discretion in their sensitive probe.

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As the investigation unfolds, Berryman and his colleague Randall prepare to meet with Chuck Blazer, a key figure in the soccer scandal, in the atrium of Trump Tower. During this crucial meeting, Berryman presents Blazer with a subpoena addressing the serious allegations of tax evasion against him. The gravity of the situation necessitates a significant decision from Blazer regarding his potential cooperation with authorities.

After a tense yet illuminating discussion, Blazer expresses his willingness to assist the investigation, acknowledging the precariousness of his situation and the rampant corruption within soccer. Both agents leave the meeting with a newfound optimism, hoping that Blazer's cooperation will yield valuable insights.

Following this pivotal encounter, Blazer secures a new legal team to navigate the complexities of cooperating with federal investigators. His lawyers caution him about the serious implications of becoming a cooperating witness, emphasizing the importance of providing comprehensive information and the possibility of testifying against other involved parties.

Determined to assist in the investigation, Blazer begins to share his extensive experience in the world of soccer with his attorneys. Their meeting stretches over several hours as they delve into the intricate web of his

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experiences and the broader context of the case, laying the groundwork for his deepening involvement in the investigation. This chapter sets the stage for the unraveling of corruption as Blazer prepares to provide vital information on the inner workings of the soccer industry.

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# Chapter 12: The Crown Jewel

## Chapter 12 Summary: The Crown Jewel

This chapter explores the tumultuous history of the Gold Cup, the primary soccer tournament in North America, and the intertwined fates of Chuck Blazer, the general secretary of CONCACAF, and Brazilian marketer José Hawilla.

### Origins of the Gold Cup

Chuck Blazer faced numerous obstacles in launching the Gold Cup. Initially struggling to secure sponsorships and sell broadcasting rights, he envisioned a profitable tournament that attracted little interest. His partnership with José Hawilla, a savvy soccer marketer known for revitalizing struggling sports events, proved critical to the Gold Cup's survival.

### José Hawilla's Impact

Hawilla's deep expertise in sports marketing came from his successful management of Traffic, a company he founded to capitalize on the soccer market. Recognizing the potential of the American audience, he advised Blazer to restrict Gold Cup matches to the U.S. and outsource broadcasting

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rights sales to maximize profitability. Hawilla secured a lucrative deal worth \$9.75 million, significantly increasing the Gold Cup's prestige and revenue.

## **A Shift in Alliances**

The partnership soured in 2003 when Blazer attempted to take CONCACAF's broadcasting rights sales in-house, feeling Hawilla had overstepped despite his contributions to the tournament's success. In response, Hawilla turned his efforts toward the Copa América, another major tournament he had long managed, pulling away from the Gold Cup.

## **Hawilla's Early Career**

Hawilla initially distinguished himself by tackling the chaos within Brazilian soccer marketing. By acquiring and transforming Traffic, he negotiated rights for significant tournaments. His innovative strategies revitalized the Copa América, boosting its market value, albeit amid a cloud of corruption that became increasingly normalized in sports marketing.

## **Corruption in Sports Marketing**

Bribery started to dominate the sports marketing landscape, with officials requiring hefty payments for broadcasting rights. Blazer and Hawilla soon found themselves embroiled in corrupt activities as they fought to maintain

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their influence in the soccer world, leading to rivalry and tension among competing marketing firms.

## **The Rise of Competition**

By 2005, new entrants like Media World began disrupting Traffic's stronghold on the market. A critical blow to Hawilla's dominance occurred post-2010 World Cup when he lost the Copa América rights to Full Play, a firm gaining traction by catering to sidelined officials in South America with attractive deals.

## **Legal Entanglements and Declining Control**

Hawilla's attempts to regain control of the Copa América led to legal disputes over his questionable contracting practices. The mounting costs and complexities related to sustaining necessary relationships highlighted the precarious nature of Traffic's position in a rapidly evolving and competitive environment.

## **Conclusion**

Chapter 12 narrates Hawilla's rise and fall within the soccer marketing industry, illustrating his innovative strategies juxtaposed with the rampant corruption and increasing competition that ultimately led to his decline. It

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reflects broader themes of power dynamics in sports marketing, showcasing the struggle between established figures and emerging challengers within the sector.

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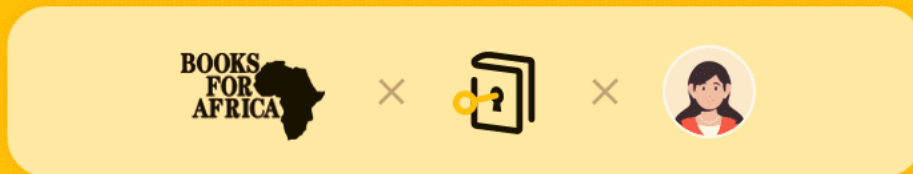




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## Chapter 13 Summary: Queen for a Day

### Chapter 13 Summary: Queen for a Day

The chapter opens with the FBI launching an investigation into alleged corruption linked to the bidding process for the 2018 World Cup. This scrutiny targets interactions with members of England's unsuccessful bid, particularly focusing on questionable financial dealings involving Caribbean Football Union (CFU) delegates and prominent figure Chuck Blazer. Given the sensitive nature of this investigation, it emphasizes the need for discretion, as corrupt officials might attempt to conceal evidence or evade capture.

On December 29, 2011, Chuck Blazer attends a proffer session—a meeting intended to elicit information without providing immunity. Facing serious legal consequences, Blazer aims to share details that could lead to a more lenient outcome, recognizing that truthful disclosures are paramount to his defense.

The investigation's intricacies are further highlighted by IRS agent Steve Berryman, who underscores the importance of tracking financial flows through systems like Fedwire and CHIPS. He explains the mechanisms of money laundering, illustrating its pervasive nature within FIFA. This culture

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of corruption allowed significant sums of money to slip through the cracks, enriching dishonest officials at the expense of fairplay in soccer.

As Blazer reveals more about FIFA during the proffer sessions, he describes a culture entrenched in bribery, detailing how sports marketing firms systematically bribed officials to secure lucrative broadcasting and sponsorship rights. These admissions from Blazer paint a troubling picture of FIFA, illustrating the depth of corruption that has plagued the sport and its financial practices.

The chapter further explores how the investigation team begins to view FIFA and its affiliates as resembling an organized crime syndicate, displaying a structured hierarchy similar to mafia organizations. The patterns of bribery and manipulation point to a troubling institutional rot, framing the potential for a broader legal case under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act.

In conclusion, the investigative team, led by Norris, gains a critical insight regarding the organized nature of corruption in global soccer. Recognizing the systemic fraud embedded within FIFA marks a pivotal moment in the investigation, allowing the team to develop a more unified approach aligned with principles meant to combat organized crime, setting the stage for further legal action against those involved.

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# Chapter 14 Summary: The King Is Dead, Long Live the King

## Chapter Fourteen: The King is Dead, Long Live the King

In early 2012, the dynamics of CONCACAF's presidency were shifting, and Enrique Sanz, a vice president at Traffic in Miami, found himself at the heart of these changes. With the confederation heavily influenced by Caribbean nations, the election of a new president was imminent, particularly in the wake of the Port of Spain bribery scandal that had marred the organization's reputation. To maintain a foothold in the competitive soccer rights market—especially against rivals like Media World—Traffic opted to form a partnership with them.

By the end of February, Sanz had identified a potential candidate who piqued his interest: Jeffrey Webb. Webb, a low-profile yet well-connected individual from the Cayman Islands with a background in banking, emerged as the frontrunner for the presidency. His unsullied reputation amid the scandals surrounding the confederation made him a compelling choice. Recognizing the opportunity, Sanz offered his support to Webb's campaign, subtly proposing a scheme involving bribes in exchange for rights to the Caribbean Football Union (CFU) qualifying matches.

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Webb, who had a strong grasp of the intricacies of soccer finance, recognized the potential for mutual benefit and advised Sanz to negotiate through his associate, Costas Takkas. In quick succession, Sanz initiated a \$50,000 payment, and as momentum built, Webb secured broader backing and officially stepped down from his banking role to prepare for his new position.

When Webb was inaugurated on May 23, 2012, CONCACAF was reeling from financial turmoil following an audit that disclosed serious mismanagement by previous leaders. Findings included improper loans and significant tax complications. Despite these alarming details, Webb projected a commitment to reform and enlisted the legal expertise of Sidley Austin to investigate and rectify the financial discrepancies.

Amidst celebrations of Webb's presidency, Sanz conferred with Takkas about the bribe necessary for securing TV rights, which Takkas demanded in substantial amounts. Understanding the political realities at play, Sanz acquiesced and subsequently saw Webb appoint a new leadership team at CONCACAF, with Sanz himself being named general secretary.

Despite lacking prior political experience in soccer governance, Sanz's industry familiarity was welcomed, instilling a sense of hope among his colleagues at Traffic. However, to facilitate the bribe that Webb needed to consolidate power, Sanz crafted a convoluted payment scheme designed to

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obscure the corrupt transaction through a network of accounts. While Webb outwardly promised transparency in his administration, his banking past indicated a keen awareness of the tactics employed to conceal unethical practices within the sport.

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# Chapter 15 Summary: Faster, Higher, Stronger

## Chapter Fifteen: Faster, Higher, Stronger

In the spring of 2012, significant players in the world of soccer governance gathered in Beverly Hills, where Chuck Blazer, a prominent figure in FIFA, dined with attorney Alan Rothenberg. Unknown to them, agents Steve Berryman and Jared Randall observed their conversation, hoping to gather evidence related to Morocco's unsuccessful bid for the 2010 World Cup. However, Blazer's efforts to uncover corruption met a roadblock, as Rothenberg divulged no valuable information.

Blazer had been recording conversations with various soccer officials as part of a broader investigation into illicit activities plaguing the sport. This endeavor was complicated by the fact that many of those implicated operated outside the jurisdiction of U.S. law. To navigate this challenge and mitigate risks of information leaks, prosecutors collaborated with the City of London Police for covert operations during the upcoming 2012 Summer Olympics.

As the games approached, Berryman faced personal health challenges, dealing with an irregular heartbeat, which forced him to evaluate his commitment to the case. Despite his medical concerns, he chose to remain in

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London, driven by the urgency of the investigation. During this time, Blazer held a series of meetings with influential officials, including key figures involved in the organization of the 2018 World Cup.

A pivotal moment in Blazer's pursuit occurred when he met José Hawilla, a Brazilian media executive known for his connections in soccer. Under the guise of a FIFA investigation, Blazer aimed to elicit a confession about a \$600,000 bribe related to previous dealings. However, Hawilla categorically denied any misconduct during their conversation. This encounter at the Olympics underscored Blazer's ongoing struggle to hold corrupt officials accountable, leaving important questions regarding integrity in the sport unresolved.

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# Chapter 16: My Way

## Chapter Sixteen: My Way

In this chapter, Jeffrey Webb ascends to the presidency of CONCACAF with ambitious promises of reform and accountability, positioning himself as a beacon of change in the wake of the corruption that tarnished the tenures of his predecessors, Jack Warner and Chuck Blazer. Rejecting a salary to emphasize his commitment to integrity, Webb establishes the Integrity Committee, headed by Tim Treanor, a former partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers. Tasked with probing the financial misdeeds of previous leadership, Treanor faces the daunting challenge of retrieving evidence from a system characterized by evasive practices and obfuscation.

As the investigation unfolds, Treanor's team uncovers signs of significant criminal activity, particularly linked to Blazer's failure to comply with tax regulations. Their inquiry focuses on past transgressions, leaving Webb and his ally, secretary general Enrique Sanz, largely unchecked in their current operations. Webb's vision for modernizing CONCACAF soon begins to morph into a pursuit of personal gratification, as he indulges in extravagant personal expenses disguised as official engagements.

Under Webb's leadership, high-profile retreats and lavish expenditures

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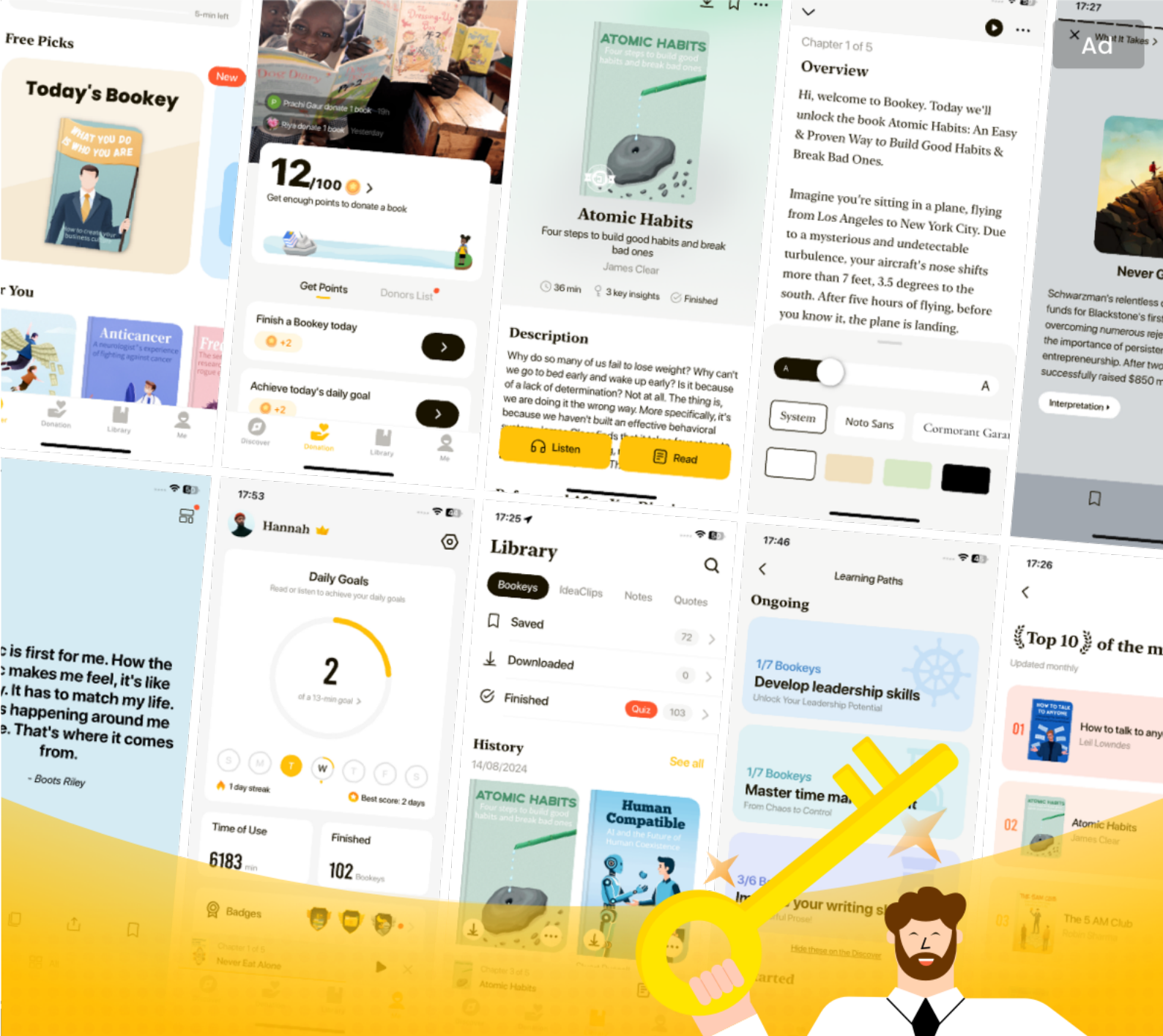
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become the norm, corrupting the very ethos of reform he initially championed. His growing appetite for excess leads to demands for kickbacks from sponsors and exorbitant payments tied to broadcasting rights. This escalation of financial expectations exerts pressure on Sanz, who operates within the murky boundaries of ethics to secure essential sponsorship deals,

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# Chapter 17 Summary: The Pact

### Chapter Seventeen: The Pact

## Brazil's Soccer and Catholic Heritage

Brazil is renowned as the world's largest Roman Catholic nation, a distinction that has greatly influenced its cultural landscape, particularly the beloved sport of soccer. This connection was starkly highlighted on August 6, 1978, when Pope Paul VI passed away during an important soccer match, underscoring the sport's status in the country. José Hawilla, a prominent soccer commentator, opted to prioritize the match in his broadcasts, illustrating soccer's dominance over religious events in Brazilian society.

## Hawilla's Struggles in Business

At the age of 69, Hawilla found himself yearning to escape the demanding arena of soccer, plagued by ruthless competition and corruption that marred the industry. His company, Traffic, had suffered from the pervasive practice of bribing officials and significant losses in broadcasting rights, making the business increasingly untenable. Despite owning successful television stations, Hawilla felt trapped by the burden of ongoing corruption and was eager to sell Traffic and retire—a decision underscored by his varied but

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ultimately unsuccessful forays into multiple enterprises, including newspapers and soccer academies.

### **The Deteriorating State of Traffic**

Hawilla's predicament deepened as he grappled with his company's declining fortunes, exacerbated by the ongoing necessity to pay bribes merely to maintain Traffic's value amidst legal challenges. The rights to Copa América, previously a valuable asset, had been unfairly appropriated by competitors, further straining Hawilla's financial and reputational standing.

### **Preparing for Family Celebrations Amidst Business Turmoil**

In the midst of his business woes, Hawilla was occupied with preparations for his son Rafael's lavish wedding in Uruguay, which offered a brief respite from his daily stresses. However, the tranquility was broken by a call from Hugo Jinkis, the owner of Full Play. This conversation steered him back into the turbulent waters of soccer negotiations, primarily focusing on the contested rights to Copa América.

### **Negotiations and New Opportunities**

Initially hesitant, Hawilla began to entertain Jinkis's proposal to collaborate

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with additional firms in a bid for more lucrative tournament rights.

Recognizing that these rights were essential for attracting potential buyers, Hawilla contemplated the possibilities presented by Jinkis and his partner, Burzaco. They introduced him to an exciting concept: the Copa América Centenario in 2016, a special event designed to feature notable soccer stars and entice sponsors. Intrigued by the prospect of revitalizing his business through this significant event, Hawilla began to see a glimmer of hope amidst his challenges.

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# Chapter 18 Summary: The Warner Brothers

## Chapter 18 Summary: The Warner Brothers

This chapter delves into the intricate world of surveillance and legal maneuvers employed by federal law enforcement agencies, highlighting the balance between privacy rights and investigative needs. Wiretaps are commonly used to monitor suspects but require stringent judicial approval, making them challenging to secure. In contrast, less intrusive methods like pen registers can track call activity without needing comprehensive warrants, allowing investigators to gather crucial intelligence more efficiently.

The focus of the investigation centers on Daryan and Daryll Warner, sons of Jack Warner, a notorious figure in international soccer known for his alleged corrupt activities. On September 11, 2012, prosecutors sought authorization to implement a pen register on the Warner brothers' phones as part of a broader inquiry into their father's dealings. The Warner brothers were not just passive spectators; they were actively embroiled in their father's ventures, ranging from running soccer clubs to engaging in illegal ticket sales. While Daryan showed more academic promise, Daryll was more reminiscent of their father but lacked his business acumen, jointly supporting Jack's often dubious dealings.

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IRS agent Steve Berryman uncovered troubling banking behavior, particularly Daryan's systematic evasion of reporting thresholds through suspicious cash deposit patterns. This financial scrutiny revealed a wider web of criminal money handling linked to the Warner brothers' international activities, exposing a trail of potential money laundering that warranted further investigation.

Suspicion grew further when Daryll purchased an extravagant penthouse with dubious financial backing, including falsified information for mortgage acquisition. This incident exemplified the Warner family's broader pattern of financial deceit, as the illicit sources of their funds became increasingly apparent.

The narrative reaches a critical turning point on November 20, 2012, when law enforcement took advantage of a family gathering to arrest Daryan and Daryll. Agents hoped their detainment would pressure Jack Warner into cooperation. However, the encounter revealed Jack's steadfastness and unwillingness to yield to the investigation, showcasing the challenges authorities face when confronting influential figures entwined in international corruption.

Ultimately, despite the substantial case building against them, the Warner brothers found themselves at a crossroads, weighing the implications of cooperating with prosecutors in hopes of securing leniency in exchange for

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testimony. Meanwhile, Jack Warner successfully evaded arrest, fleeing to Trinidad, which underscores the significant hurdles that law enforcement must overcome in tackling corruption linked to powerful global entities. The chapter paints a vivid picture of family loyalty amidst the harsh realities of consequence and corruption.

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## Chapter 19 Summary: “A Sad and Sorry Tale”

### ### Summary of Chapter Nineteen: A Sad and Sorry Tale

Chapter Nineteen explores the persistence of organized crime and corruption, focusing on the Gambino, Genovese, and Bonanno crime families, alongside scandals within CONCACAF, the governing body of soccer in North and Central America.

#### #### Indictments and Arrests

In early 2008, a significant crackdown on organized crime was initiated when a federal grand jury indicted 62 individuals from the three major crime families. The most substantial impact was felt within the Gambino family, which experienced a wave of arrests that imprisoned many top leaders. However, instead of collapsing, the Gambino organization adapted, seeing new leaders assume control to sustain their operations.

#### #### Further Investigations and Convictions

The momentum continued in January 2011, when a large-scale operation resulted in the arrest of 125 individuals connected to the Gambino family’s hierarchy. Among them was Bartolomeo Vernace, whose 2013 conviction on multiple criminal charges marked another chapter in the ongoing war against mob activity. Despite these setbacks, Domenico Céfalu rose to the forefront

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as the new boss of the Gambino family, indicating a resilient criminal structure.

#### #### CONCACAF Investigation Findings

On April 19, 2013, investigations by CONCACAF's Integrity Committee unmasked a troubling pattern of corruption within the organization. The findings pointed to former leaders Jack Warner and Chuck Blazer engaging in extensive financial misconduct, with Blazer embezzling over \$20 million while Warner misappropriated around \$26 million through deceptive financial practices. Their actions illustrated a blatant disregard for the organization's integrity.

#### #### Leadership Changes in CONCACAF

Amidst this turmoil, Jeffrey Webb was appointed as the new president of CONCACAF. Although he claimed to champion reforms, Webb's presidency quickly became characterized by power consolidation and loyalty appointments. This dubious governance not only reflected an attempt to fortify his position but also raised concerns about financial impropriety and favoritism towards Caribbean member states.

#### #### Pressure on Jack Warner

As scrutiny intensified following the integrity report, former power broker Jack Warner, known for his political prowess, began to feel the heat. With mounting public criticism and media attention, even the Prime Minister of

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Trinidad and Tobago urged his resignation. Warner's tumultuous journey from political influence to a figure embroiled in corruption allegations showcased the complex interplay between power and accountability.

#### #### FIFA Ethics Committee Findings

An investigation by FIFA subsequently corroborated longstanding corruption issues, particularly connected to ISL, a marketing firm with deep ties to FIFA. The investigation compelled the resignations of several high-profile individuals associated with ISL and laid bare the widespread corrupt practices entrenched within the organization, reinforcing the notion that corruption is endemic.

#### #### Conclusion

In summary, Chapter Nineteen effectively highlights the cyclical nature of corruption within organized crime and sports administration. Despite efforts to impose regulation and discover accountability, the enduring legacy of these issues remains evident, painting a sobering picture of resilience in the face of systemic wrongdoing.

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## Chapter 20: “Leave Us Out of This”

### Chapter Twenty: “Leave Us Out of This”

This chapter delves into the intricate web of corruption within soccer, centered around José Hawilla, a prominent figure in sports marketing and owner of Traffic, set against the opulent backdrop of Brickell Key. Once a dilapidated island, Brickell Key was transformed into a luxurious enclave in the late 1970s, primarily inhabited by affluent Latin American buyers. Now secured with locked gates and patrolled for safety, it features the Mandarin Oriental hotel, one of the few places accessible to the public.

On May 3, 2013, the story turns to the Mandarin Oriental, where FBI agent Jared Randall confronts Hawilla as part of an expansive investigation into corruption in soccer. During a tense fifteen-minute interrogation, Hawilla flatly denies any involvement in bribing soccer officials, despite the mounting evidence that would later challenge his claims.

As the narrative unfolds, it highlights Hawilla's struggles with his business due to declining newspaper circulation and ongoing efforts to sell his assets. His meetings in Buenos Aires suggest he is attempting to forge a partnership centered around the storied Copa América tournament amidst an atmosphere rife with concerns about bribery among soccer officials.

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A turning point occurs when Hawilla learns from Alejandro Burzaco about the endemic bribery ensnaring FIFA officials, painting a grim picture of corruption at the heart of soccer's dealings. Additionally, Jinkis from Full Play reveals to Hawilla that Traffic is on the hook for considerable bribe amounts in connection with the upcoming Copa América deal, deepening Hawilla's ethical quandary and involvement in questionable practices.

Unbeknownst to Hawilla, the FBI is keenly monitoring his activities, especially as he travels to Miami for personal business. After the initial encounter with Randall, further probing by the FBI raises alarms for Hawilla, hinting at their knowledge of his sordid past.

The chapter then introduces Chuck Blazer, an associate of Hawilla who has begun clandestinely recording conversations. His recordings provide critical evidence bolstering bribery allegations. Prosecutors feel that if they can convince Hawilla to cooperate, he could become a pivotal witness to expose the vast bribery network in soccer, potentially reshaping the landscape of the investigation.

The tension escalates further as Randall and fellow agent Berryman return on May 9 to arrest Hawilla. They present him with a stark choice: face the legal ramifications of his actions or assist the federal investigation. Opting for cooperation to avoid incarceration, Hawilla signs a waiver, marking a

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significant shift in his engagement with the authorities.

The personal ramifications of this upheaval surface as well, particularly for Hawilla's family. Eliani Hawilla, his wife, finds herself in a precarious situation and reaches out to Aaron Davidson, a trusted associate, for support

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## Chapter 21 Summary: I Am Not Your Friend

### CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE: I AM NOT YOUR FRIEND

In this chapter, we explore Hawilla's drastic change in life circumstances following his arrest. Once enjoying the opulence of the Plaza Athénée hotel, he now finds himself confined to a modest New York apartment, where his status as a criminal is a constant reminder of his downfall. Under strict supervision, including curfews and GPS monitoring, his freedom is curtailed, and his \$20 million bond—a sum secured by his business assets and properties—illustrates the high stakes of his situation. The emotional toll of isolation from loved ones in Brazil weighs heavily on him, intensified by being unable to participate in significant family celebrations, such as his wife's 60th birthday or his own upcoming 70th.

In his desperation, Hawilla has attempted to negotiate with prosecutors to attend these events, but they have firmly denied his requests, suggesting he fabricate a cover story about being away on business or suffering health issues. Feeling the sting of his lost connections, he decides to take a more proactive approach: cooperating with the authorities.

Hawilla begins to provide valuable information regarding longstanding bribery practices in soccer, including details about influential figures

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encompassed in South America's corrupted sports landscape. He wears a wire during meetings with old associates like Ricardo Teixeira and Enrique Sanz but finds the results less fruitful than anticipated; thus, he intensifies his efforts to extract deeper insights and incriminating evidence from his extensive background in soccer corruption.

His cooperation reveals how entrenched bribery is woven into major soccer events, including the Copa América, which involve systemic corruption spanning decades. Hawilla even facilitates significant wire transfers for bribes, illustrating the depth of his involvement despite the precariousness of his own legal situation.

Ultimately, Hawilla's transition from a once-feared power player in soccer to a critical informant sheds light on the pervasive corruption that has plagued the sport. His journey underscores the moral dilemmas faced by individuals entrenched in corrupt systems and serves as a turning point in the investigation, exposing deep-rooted issues while challenging him to confront the ramifications of his actions.

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## Chapter 22 Summary: One Is Silver, the Other Gold

### ### CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO: ONE IS SILVER, THE OTHER GOLD

#### #### Steve Berryman's Investigation

Steve Berryman, a tenacious investigator, ascends to the office of Zorana Danis, a key player in the intricate web of soccer corruption linked to South American operations. His probing reveals suspiciously large payments associated with her company, International Soccer Marketing, suggesting potential bribery. Danis's background is significant; her father was a notable figure in soccer history, which adds layers to her motivations and connections within the sport.

#### #### Discovery of Corrupt Payments

As Berryman delves deeper, he uncovers a troubling pattern of payments from Danis's accounts, directly connected to Nicolás Leoz, the former president of CONMEBOL (the South American football confederation). Recognizing the potential legal ramifications, Berryman opts for a subtle approach in his inquiries, aiming to catch Danis off guard and gather critical evidence without alarming her.

#### #### Daryan Warner's Cooperation

On another front, Daryan Warner, the son of Jack Warner—a former FIFA

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vice president embroiled in scandal—pleads guilty to charges relating to corruption and ticket scalping. Despite his plea, Daryan's willingness to cooperate yields minimal insight, adding frustration to Berryman's efforts. His brother, Daryll, faces legal troubles as well but proves to be less of a reliable source regarding wider conspiracies within the organization.

#### #### Berryman's Second Encounter with Danis

Berryman's second meeting with Danis includes FBI agent John Penza, and their goal is to draw out information regarding the bribes without revealing their existing knowledge of the situation. During the conversation, it becomes evident that Danis is aware of the corrupt transactions, and she hints at a potential willingness to cooperate with investigators after stepping outside for a cigarette, a moment that suggests vulnerability in her facade.

#### #### Chuck Blazer's Declining Health and Plea

Meanwhile, Chuck Blazer, once a powerful figure within FIFA, sees his health decline. This deterioration prompts him to confess to numerous crimes—including his involvement in the bribery scheme during the bidding for the South African World Cup. Blazer's extensive cooperation with prosecutors is pivotal; he acknowledges not only his own misdeeds but also implicates the broader corrupt practices embedded in FIFA and its affiliates, which signifies a crucial step forward in the overarching investigation into soccer's systemic corruption.

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#### #### Conclusion of Blazer's Case

Blazer's formal admission of guilt marks a transformative moment in the inquiry into soccer's misconduct, underscoring the widespread corruption that has tainted international football. This chapter closes with the revelation that this tangled web of deceit is unraveling, paving the way for greater accountability in the sport.

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# Chapter 23 Summary: Trust and Betrayal

### Chapter Twenty-Three: Trust and Betrayal

## Enrique Sanz's Career Shift

Enrique Sanz began his career in sports marketing, diligently working for over a decade to secure important contracts. His expertise culminated in his appointment as the general secretary of CONCACAF in 2012. This role transformed him from a mere negotiator to a key player within the soccer industry, significantly elevating his status and income to \$800,000 annually, complete with benefits like an expense account and a luxury vehicle.

## Deals and Corruption

Sanz's tenure at CONCACAF was marked by notable achievements, including securing a pivotal \$60 million deal for the rights to the Gold Cup and Champions League in collaboration with his associate, Aaron Davidson, from Traffic Sports. However, his success was marred by increasingly evident corruption, as he found himself embroiled with bribery schemes linked to CONCACAF president Jeffrey Webb. These illicit arrangements provided Sanz with substantial personal rewards, tarnishing the integrity of his position.

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## **FBI Investigation Begins**

The turning point came in January 2014 when FBI agent John Penza approached Sanz, informing him of a grand jury investigation into rampant corruption in soccer. Penza's warning prompted Sanz to consider his precarious situation, advising him to seek legal counsel as he became a significant target in the widening probe.

## **Cooperation and Betrayals**

Amidst this turmoil, José Hawilla, the owner of Traffic Sports and Sanz's former ally, faced mounting legal troubles of his own. Initially reluctant, Hawilla began to cooperate with prosecutors, spilling details of widespread bribery within the soccer hierarchy. However, his failure to provide truthful information incensed investigators, jeopardizing the value of his cooperation and complicating the case further.

## **The Web of Corruption Unfolds**

As efforts by law enforcement intensified, the breadth of corruption involving Sanz and Hawilla became evident. Sanz's willingness to cooperate exceeded prosecutors' expectations, laying bare the extensive bribery network that permeated soccer operations, revealing shocking truths about

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the sport's governance.

## **Personal Struggles for Sanz**

Tragedy struck in March 2014 when Sanz was diagnosed with leukemia, adding a grave layer of complexity to the ongoing investigations. Despite his serious health issues, prosecutors viewed Sanz as a critical asset to their case due to his extensive knowledge of the illegal operations. Navigating the dual challenges of his legal entanglements and health demands became essential as prosecutors weighed the implications of his cooperation against his declining condition.

## **Prosecutorial Decisions**

The gravity of Sanz's situation prompted the prosecution team, particularly Amanda Hector, to reevaluate their approach to his case. While he faced significant legal challenges, they recognized the humanitarian aspect of his illness and allowed him time for treatment, keeping the option of pursuing charges open for later escalation. This balancing act between justice and compassion played a crucial role in determining Sanz's fate amid the unfolding scandal.

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## Chapter 24: “All of Us Go to Prison”

### Chapter Summary: Twenty-Four - All of Us Go to Prison

### Copa América Centenario Announcement

On May 1, 2014, key figures in the world of soccer, including Jeffrey Webb and Eugenio Figueredo, convened in Miami to announce the Copa América Centenario, celebrating a century of the prestigious tournament. Though Webb portrayed it as a unique milestone, journalists voiced skepticism over scheduling conflicts with other events and the absence of FIFA's endorsement, which could jeopardize its success.

### Opportunity for Investigators

For law enforcement, the Centenario tournament was a critical opportunity to gather evidence against prominent officials involved in soccer corruption. They readied cooperator José Hawilla, who had a vested interest in revealing the inner workings of the corrupt system. With the press event unfolding in the U.S., it provided a strategic environment for potential breakthroughs in their investigation.

### Financial Arrangements

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The venture Datisa had secured lucrative broadcasting rights, poised to amass profits exceeding \$100 million from the tournament. Nevertheless, concerns emerged regarding Webb's outstanding bribes and the vulnerability of existing partnerships. Hawilla, although initially apprehensive about wearing a wire, adeptly guided conversations towards admissions of bribery, which could prove vital for investigators.

### **Risk of Exposure**

After the press conference, conversations among the implicated officials became increasingly candid, discussing the dire consequences of possible law enforcement scrutiny. Discussions of bribery and cover-ups revealed their deep-seated fears of imprisonment, underscoring the volatile nature of their illegal dealings.

### **Death of Julio Grondona**

The chapter also highlights the death of Julio Grondona, a pivotal FIFA executive whose life was marked by corruption and wealth. His passing posed complications for investigators like IRS agent Steve Berryman, who had long tracked Grondona's activities and was determined to understand the networks of corruption that extended through soccer's upper echelons.

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## Berryman's Strategic Moves

Despite facing obstacles with significant suspects, including Grondona and fellow official Ricardo Teixeira, Berryman maintained focus on crucial connections, particularly with Alejandro Burzaco. During a temporary

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# Chapter 25 Summary: Payback

## Chapter Twenty-Five: Payback

This chapter unfolds against the backdrop of a brewing scandal within FIFA, the international governing body of soccer, as the investigation into widespread corruption reaches a pivotal point.

### Media Exposure of Chuck Blazer

On November 2, 2014, the New York Daily News published an explosive article on Chuck Blazer, a former FIFA executive, revealing his involvement in tax evasion and his cooperation with the FBI. The article not only spotlighted his lavish lifestyle but also disclosed that he had recorded incriminating conversations, marking a major development in the ongoing investigation into FIFA's corrupt practices.

### Impact of the Leak

The article's source, Blazer's former girlfriend Mary Lynn Blanks, provided the authorities essential information that eased the pressure on investigators, such as agent Norris. However, the article glossed over the consequences of Blazer's guilty plea and neglected the broader implications of the ongoing

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RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations) investigation, which implicated defendants worldwide.

## **Evidence Accumulation**

As investigators intensified their efforts, they began to accumulate evidence, shifting their focus toward deciding the right moment for indictments. Plans were carefully crafted for a significant takedown, ideally timed with an upcoming FIFA event, either an Executive Committee meeting in Zurich in March 2015 or the annual congress scheduled for May.

## **Negotiations with Swiss Authorities**

Recognizing the need for delicate negotiations, American prosecutors sought to secure the cooperation of Swiss authorities, particularly given the scrutiny they had faced for their actions against Swiss banks. Cooperation was crucial, considering the prominent stature of FIFA and the intricate web of corruption they were unraveling.

## **Transition in Leadership**

In a notable twist, President Obama appointed Loretta Lynch as the new attorney general. With her previous involvement in the case, Norris recognized Lynch as a potential ally in negotiations with Swiss officials,

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aiming to bolster their efforts in the FIFA investigation.

## **Ongoing Corruption Issues in FIFA**

The chapter briefly touches on Michael Garcia's investigation on FIFA's Ethics Committee. His findings underscored the organization's glaring lack of transparency and accountability concerning corruption allegations, painting a sobering picture of an institution operating under a veil of impunity.

## **Preparations for Takedown**

As the prosecution team geared up for the anticipated takedown, they marked their progress with a celebratory dinner, acknowledging the critical role Blazer had played in their investigation, reinforcing the personal stakes involved for many.

## **José Hawilla's Cooperation**

The narrative then shifts to José Hawilla, a prominent sports marketing executive who cooperated with prosecutors, disclosing a vast array of financial assets. Despite previous deceitful conduct, Hawilla faced an overwhelming financial forfeiture amounting to over \$151 million as part of his cooperation agreement.

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## Consequences and Personal Struggles

Hawilla's cooperation came at a tremendous personal cost; he faced estrangement from his family and severe health challenges. The chapter closes on a poignant note, detailing his stoic appearance in court—a stark reminder of the heavy toll exacted by the corruption scandal and the intricate legal ramifications that enveloped him and others caught in the web of FIFA's dark underbelly.

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## Chapter 26 Summary: Things Fall Apart

### Summary of Chapters from "Things Fall Apart"

On April 16, 2015, the CONCACAF Congress convened at the opulent Atlantis Paradise Island Resort in the Bahamas, hosted by Jeffrey Webb, who had recently assumed the presidency amid controversy. The event, marked by extravagant expenditures nearing \$3 million, included lavish accommodations and late-night parties attended by high-profile officials like FIFA president Sepp Blatter. This excessive display epitomized Webb's penchant for luxury, casting a shadow on his leadership amid his troubling tenure.

The partnership between Webb and Blatter was built over years as Webb consistently defended Blatter during various scandals, benefiting from subsequent influential positions within FIFA. At the congress, Webb reinforced his power by strategically silencing political rivals, culminating in his re-election as president and solidifying his control over the confederation.

Despite public assertions of a \$1.1 million budget surplus, the financial reality was dire, with projections indicating a daunting \$6.5 million loss due to Webb's unchecked lavish spending. His lifestyle, which included high

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salaries and extravagant trips, raised significant concerns regarding the financial integrity of CONCACAF and its long-term viability.

Amidst the backdrop of this financial mismanagement, FBI agent Jared Randall sought to gather evidence of corruption at the congress through communications with Enrique Sanz, a key figure within CONCACAF. However, Randall's covert efforts were thwarted when Webb's security became suspicious, forcing him to abandon his investigation prematurely.

In the midst of this unfolding drama, Enrique Sanz faced a health crisis, collapsing at home and subsequently being hospitalized. In the wake of this event, his wife discovered messages on his phone that indicated leaking sensitive information to the FBI, suggesting deep-rooted corruption and a breach of trust within CONCACAF.

Webb's extravagant lifestyle, characterized by lavish purchases including a Ferrari, contrasted sharply with his modest beginnings. Driven by dreams of ascending to the pinnacle of FIFA leadership, he showcased ambition that masked the underlying challenges his administration faced.

In conclusion, the congress highlighted Webb's aspirations and ambitions, while simultaneously foreshadowing the significant challenges ahead. As evidence of corruption loomed in the background, the groundwork for the unraveling of his leadership and the confederation's integrity was being laid.

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# Chapter 27 Summary: Takedown

## SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 27: TAKEDOWN

### Preparation for the Takedown

Steve Berryman, an IRS agent, found himself deeply engaged in an ambitious operation targeting corruption within FIFA, the international governing body of soccer. Working alongside a team under Richard Weber at the FBI's field office in New York, often referred to as the "war room," they prepared to execute a meticulously crafted indictment. The indictment utilized the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act, arguing that FIFA officials had established a corrupt criminal enterprise exploiting their positions for personal gain.

### Strategy and Execution

Months of careful planning culminated in the drafting of Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties (MLATs) and seizure warrants, setting the stage for a significant crackdown. The strategy called for the arrest of key FIFA officials in Zurich during routine regional soccer meetings to minimize media attention. The team operated under a veil of secrecy, with agents quietly communicating in anticipation of the pivotal event scheduled for

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May 27, 2015.

## **Unforeseen Leak**

Just minutes before the operation commenced, an unexpected media leak threatened to unravel their plans. News outlets began reporting on the forthcoming arrests, which brought chaos to a carefully orchestrated takedown. Reporters converged on the Baur au Lac hotel, where many FIFA officials were lodged, undermining the element of surprise crucial to the operation's success.

## **The Arrests**

On the day of the arrests, Swiss authorities proceeded to apprehend several high-ranking FIFA officials, including Jeffrey Webb and Eduardo Li, as news of the police action spread rapidly. However, the media leak enabled some individuals, such as Alejandro Burzaco, to evade capture, highlighting the unpredictable consequences of the breach.

## **Aftermath and Public Reaction**

Later that day, a press conference featuring prominent representatives from the U.S. Justice Department announced the indictments. The anticipated reveal was overshadowed by the earlier leak, engendering frustration among

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the prosecution team, especially Evan Norris, who had invested significant effort in building the case. The aftermath included complex extradition requests since many indicted officials were located in various countries, complicating the pursuit of justice.

## **Impact**

The sweeping allegations against FIFA officials sent shockwaves through the global soccer community and captured extensive media attention. This unprecedented action by U.S. authorities against FIFA was regarded as a landmark move in the ongoing fight against corruption in sports. The chaotic events in Switzerland underscored both the mistakes and successes of the operation, marking a pivotal moment in the battle against institutional corruption.

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## Chapter 28: “A Great Day for Football”

### Chapter Twenty-Eight: A Great Day for Football

In this pivotal chapter, tensions surrounding corruption in international soccer come to a head as key players face legal consequences. The chapter opens with **Zorana Danis**, the owner of International Soccer Marketing, who, in a Brooklyn federal courtroom, pleads guilty to wire fraud conspiracy and making false statements on tax returns. Since late 2013, Danis has cooperated with authorities, providing significant insight into the case against **Nicolás Leoz**, a long-time soccer official. As a result of her plea, she agrees to forfeit \$2 million. Her secretive admission underscores her ongoing importance in the broader **RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act)** investigation, aimed at dismantling systemic corruption within soccer.

Following Danis's plea, an unsealed indictment reveals charges against several influential figures in soccer, identifying Danis as Co-conspirator #5. This strategic choice by prosecutors is intended to provoke dialogue among other implicated individuals, potentially leading to greater cooperation as the investigation intensifies.

In light of these developments, **CONCACAF** (the Confederation of North,

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Central America and Caribbean Association Football) holds an emergency meeting in Zurich led by new president **Alfredo Hawit**. The meeting is marked by concern among Caribbean delegates about the implications of former president **Jeffrey Webb's** corruption, prompting a proposal for an internal investigation to assess the damage and the legal ramifications of Webb's actions.

Meanwhile, amidst this chaos, **Sepp Blatter**, the incumbent FIFA president, is surprisingly re-elected just days after the indictments. Dismissing the gravity of the investigation, his win is met with skepticism. However, public outcry and mounting pressure quickly lead to an unexpected announcement of his intention to resign, a move celebrated as a critical moment for reforms in football governance.

In a statement of contrast, the FIFA-commissioned film titled **United Passions**—intended to celebrate Blatter's legacy—premieres to disastrous reception. It is met with scathing critique, reflecting the organization's tarnished image, and ultimately becomes the lowest-grossing film in U.S. history.

Meanwhile, **Alejandro Burzaco**, feeling the heat from federal authorities and stripped of his wealth, chooses to surrender in Italy. His decision to cooperate with U.S. officials culminates in his arrest in New York, where he provides damning testimony that unveils extensive bribery schemes linked

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to high-ranking soccer officials.

As these legal troubles unfold, Hawit tries to distance himself from previously mentioned bribe schemes, believing he could obscure his involvement through deceptive contracts. However, his efforts backfire when a conversation with a wiretapped consultant brings him under scrutiny. The unfolding investigations continue to shine a light on the pervasive corrupt practices within CONCACAF, suggesting that the fallout from these events is just beginning.

With these developments, Chapter Twenty-Eight encapsulates a significant moment in the ongoing struggle for integrity in international football, laying the groundwork for future challenges and potential reforms in the sport.

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# Chapter 29 Summary: A Zealous Advocate

## Summary of Chapter 29: A Zealous Advocate

### Introduction

David Torres-Siegrist, a dedicated attorney and volunteer soccer coach, is thrust into a complex legal crisis when he receives alarming news about his uncle, Eugenio Figueredo, who has been arrested amid high-profile FIFA corruption allegations. This news compels him to travel to Zurich to provide legal counsel.

### Initial Response and Journey

Torres-Siegrist, while inexperienced in the realm of international soccer, quickly obtains a passport and journeys to Switzerland, motivated by the urgency of the situation. Upon arrival, he discovers that Figueredo is in a precarious financial position, unable to afford the exorbitant fees being demanded by large law firms to represent him in the ongoing investigation led by U.S. authorities.

### Advocacy Initiatives

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Driven by a profound belief in zealous advocacy—the idea that an attorney must fervently defend their client's interests—Torres-Siegrist decides to take on Figueredo's case himself. Though he lacks experience in criminal law, he begins to dig deeper into the implications of the case, recognizing it as part of a larger narrative involving global politics and sports corruption that extends beyond his uncle's individual predicament.

## **Encounter with the Russian Embassy**

In his pursuit of allies and strategic insights, Torres-Siegrist visits the Russian embassy in Zurich. He suspects that Russia's vested interests in FIFA could yield critical support against the escalating U.S. investigation. Here, he engages with Vitaly Mutko, a prominent Russian sports official who hints at possible strategies that could aid Figueredo in resisting extradition to the U.S.

## **Legal Developments**

As the U.S. intensifies its efforts toward extradition, Figueredo, intent on avoiding such a fate, considers cooperating with authorities from both the U.S. and Uruguay. Torres-Siegrist commits himself to developing a robust legal defense, distinguishing his approach from that of more seasoned lawyers who may be more inclined to negotiate settlements rather than challenge the substantive legal arguments.

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## **Uruguayan Extradition Request**

In a twist, Uruguay submits its own extradition request for Figueredo. Despite its initial lack of depth compared to the U.S. case, the Swiss court surprisingly favors Uruguay's bid. This unexpected ruling comes as Figueredo expresses willingness to collaborate with Uruguayan officials, marking a significant shift in Torres-Siegrist's strategy.

## **Final Ruling in Favor of Uruguay**

By December, the court's decision solidifies Uruguay's extradition request, favoring Figueredo on the grounds of his health and potential rehabilitative opportunities. Torres-Siegrist rejoices at the unexpected victory, feeling a deep sense of accomplishment as the courts rule against the U.S. appeal.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter becomes a pivotal moment in Torres-Siegrist's career, showcasing his growth as a determined advocate. He embraces his role, confident that his commitment to fighting for his client's rights can ultimately challenge formidable odds, marking a defining achievement in his legal journey.

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## Chapter 30 Summary: Plus ça Change . . .

### Chapter Summary: Plus Ça Change...

The chapter opens on December 3, 2015, when Swiss police arrested two key figures in the world of soccer governance: CONCACAF president Alfredo Hawit and CONMEBOL president Juan Ángel Napout. This operation echoed a series of arrests from May, leading back to an extensive federal grand jury indictment in Brooklyn. This indictment, which targeted 27 defendants primarily from Central America, unveiled a staggering 92 counts of corruption—painting a picture of deep-rooted malpractice among soccer officials who publicly advocated for reform while secretly engaging in dishonest practices.

As the narrative unfolds, it highlights the troubling pattern of corruption characteristic of CONCACAF and CONMEBOL leadership. The chapter delves into the checkered past of officials like Hawit, Jerome Valcke, and former FIFA vice president Jack Warner, illustrating how they ascended to power amid scandal yet perpetuated similar corrupt activities. This entrenched culture of self-enrichment under the guise of reform illustrates the alarming persistence of misconduct within these federations.

In tandem with the indictments, Sepp Blatter, the controversial former FIFA

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president, finds himself grappling with the fallout from a broader criminal investigation into a suspicious payment made in 2011. Banned from all soccer-related activities, Blatter's hopes for a dignified exit from FIFA's presidency are dashed as he receives an eight-year ban—a punishment that manifests as a near-permanent exclusion from the sport he once ruled.

Amidst these upheavals, Gianni Infantino triumphs in the election for FIFA's presidency. He comes to the office with promises of financial reform and increased support for member associations—a bid to portray a new era for FIFA. However, despite his reformist rhetoric, there are echoes of Blatter's governance style, suggesting that while the faces may change, the underlying reliance on financial patronage remains firmly entrenched.

Prosecutor Steve Berryman emerges as a persistent force in the effort to root out corruption. His determination shines through as he pursues additional corrupt officials within the international soccer landscape, specifically within the Asian Football Confederation (AFC). Berryman's search for potential collaborators underscores the complexity of tracking corruption, compounded by intricate international banking systems that obscure illicit activities.

In conclusion, this chapter paints a bleak but realistic portrait of FIFA's struggle with systemic corruption. It captures the cyclical nature of misconduct, with arrests, indictments, and the semblance of reform

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contrasting against a backdrop of continued criminality. Berryman's resolve signifies that the fight against corruption in soccer governance is far from over, underscoring a persistent quest for justice in a deeply flawed system.

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