

Chapter 1

You'll know me by now. Everybody does. Antonio Pesic, also known as Tony Peso. The guy going down for killing people already dead. The guy who offered the impossible ride: The last ten seconds of life. Over and over, if you could afford it. That, robbing banks of billions and taking down the FBI. That is to say, everyone thinks they know me, know my story, but the one that's become the legend, as is so often the case, isn't half of what happened.

Even today, I know very little about cryogenics, or more accurately cryonics and, when all this first kicked off, I knew even less. What I did know though, was an opportunity when I saw one. When it all started I was living in a little studio flat with a garden, a poorly converted Victorian terrace, the neighbours from Hell living above me, my overgrown garden home to a young fox I'd taken to calling Memphis, who seemed to have a weird fetish for used nappies. I'd find them strewn across my ivy-leaf lawn, all bloated with rain or morning dew. Wrapping my hand in a shopping bag I'd go out, holding my breath as I gingerly tied it off to deposit in the bin, knowing it a futile gesture, as there'd surely be another come tomorrow. You might guess, I never had kids.

Cryogenics, for those of you who picked this book up by mistake, is the study of materials at exceedingly low temperatures. 'Cryonics' is the application of this branch of science to preserving human remains once they've died, in the hope that, as science evolves, they might be brought back to life at some point in the future. The breakthroughs being made in the past decade being as rapid and stupendous as they are, even I, in my ignorant day-to-day life had been made aware that the process of preservation had been markedly improved from those

early days towards the end of last century. Still, you had to be pretty well off to give it a go; well, middle-class anyway.

It's surprising how much money is out there. Once you get to the end and tot up your fiscal sum, taking into account property prices in the city, or the country spread you relaxed into, the nest egg, the portfolio, the second home or boat, the cars, the heirlooms, the artwork and few oddments of collectible furniture dotted about the place. Once cryonics proved itself to be much more of a real deal than anybody had really anticipated (through Yours Truly, I might add), down-in-the-mouth kids were looking forward to a drastically reduced inheritance, because mum and dad had latently decided to bury a good lump of their net worth into a personalised subterranean stainless steel fridge for the foreseeable. And why not? They'd earned it.

I made so many millionaires, in so many unforeseen ways... they made more money than I ever saw- and still are to this day. It's a billion -soon to turn trillion- dollar industry. Like mobile phones. Cryonics labs sprang up not just across America, but the entire Western-Eastern-Southern world and by the thousands, by the tens of thousands. Germany, Britain, Scandinavia, France, Switzerland, Austria, Belgium, Australia -even as far as Tokyo, Beijing, Kuala Lumpur and Hong Kong. Singapore. Needless to say, it went bananas across the Middle East. Suddenly, everyone was an expert, everybody wanted in, either this side, earning the money, or the other for the pregnant promise of Life After Death.

I singlehandedly turned the stock market upside-down overnight: Made stainless steel casing manufacturers turn millionaire to billionaire. Bottled gas companies, piping companies, fixtures and fittings suppliers, temperature

control electronics geeks, security providers, logistics, marketing, even previously unwanted property prices went through the roof in the mad scramble for suitable realty. The guys who really cashed in though were the cryonics companies who were there at the start, they were the ones with the head-start, the ones who could say 'we're the genuine article', the 'original and best', there at the beginning. They made an absolute killing. The whole thing went Totally Nuts. And I was sitting on it all, all on my own-some. I mean, don't get me wrong, I'm nobody's fool, I saw it was big, really big and we made a stinking huge pile of dough out of it, enough for several lifetimes, but even I didn't see how big.

How did it all start? It's hard to know where to begin really.. It wasn't a lightbulb moment I don't think, more an accumulation of things, a series of seemingly unconnected events, both circumstantial and mental that took me to that crossroads in Time where Everything Changed. I do know for certain that if I had arrived at that exact same situation without the other stuff happening also, I probably wouldn't have made the same decisions, or even seen it for the opportunity it was.