

The Market #9

Quickly, sensing this might not be the safest place, I closed the huge book, tucked it under my arm and announced that we should move to somewhere a bit more public or at least a bit safer! We, almost as one, began to move toward the nearest street lamp and I breathed a sigh of relief when I saw we were not followed. "Let's go to the corner café, I'm buying!" I said. Together we walked across the street to "Julie's", a cutesy 50s style restaurant, and were seated quickly in the nearly deserted eatery. With hot coffee in front of us, a hot meal on its way and Shep patiently waiting by the front door, we were now ready to attempt to decipher "my" book!

"Wait one minute!" Cowboy said, placing one fat, ugly hand on the mystery journal. "How do I fit into the scenario? I mean, I want to help, but I want something for my time, you know!" Thinking quickly, I tried to remember how valuable his research in the area of hidden treasures was to the University, and said, "Hey, I'll cut you in 80/20...twenty is you, of course!"

Scratching his chin, trying to look scholarly but succeeding only in looking stupid, he argued, "I want 40% or I'm out of here". "Go", I said, "Veronica and I will be fine all by ourselves!" More chin scratching, more looks of consternation, more thoughts of Veronica and I solving this puzzle without him and he finally nodded, "Ok, 30% it is!" I sighed, "Yeah, alright, but you better be as good at problem solving as you are at irritating me!"

Again, the book was opened, and we began searching for a clue, any clue that might indicate where the treasure was hidden in our little town. The first entry that caught our eye was : Eht retaeht : nigeb ta eht gninnigeb... stercec eil ta eht dne. Wow, we had our work cut out for us!!