



# DIE DOLLAR DIE

FALL OF THE AMERICAN COLUSSUS

BY  
ROBERT SALISBURY

FREE CHAPTER

**Die Dollar Die – FREE CHAPTER**

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- Page 96 - H. G. Wells, *New World Order*, [First published 1940]
- Page 132 - Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*, [Chatto & Windus, 1935]
- Page 149 - Lennon- McCartney, *Do You Want To Know A Secret?* [1963]
- Page 329 - George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, [Secker & Warburg, 1949]

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Meet Phillip Banks, an ambitious young Property Analyst with private bank, Delonge Martin. Sent to Shanghai to meet billionaire Jeffrey Choi, he discovers *Die Dollar Die*. But, what does it mean?

***'Nothing happens by chance Phillip,  
everything is arranged.'***

[Henry Delonge]

***'War is good.'***

[Jeffrey Choi]

***'Debt is fiscal engineering.'***

[Lord Martin]

***'It is not a crime to kill someone you don't know.'***

[Sir Pell Hallet-Shoubridge]

Against the backdrop of Shanghai's brash new world and a declining US dollar, our hero Phillip Banks is thrust into a disturbing and conspiratorial world, run by inimical forces.

Set across England, China, Argentina and the Middle East, R J Salisbury reveals the disturbing, conspiratorial world run by inimical forces.

Solve the mystery of *Die Dollar Die*, before it's too late!

## STARRING

Phillip Banks Property Analyst

### **Delonge Martin - London**

Lord Isaac George Martin Chairman of Delonge Martin

Henry Sigwald Delonge CEO of Delonge Martin

Billy Hunt William C. Beaumont-Hunt

Tracy 'Spud' Butcher Phillip's Manager

### **Delonge Martin - Shanghai**

Raif Jamieson Director - alcoholic

Violet Livewell Accountant - vixen

Stone Reynolds Surveyor – Ex-SAS, womaniser

Henry 'Harry' Westacott Lawyer - Welsh

### **Other characters**

Rt. Hon. David Nobel UK Prime Minister

Lancelot Villiers-Bloxham PM's Principal Private Secretary

Tilly Pendleton Phillip's casual girlfriend

Dimon Ferringer American IT expert

Ruben Segal Morgan Sachs Fund Manager

Sir Pell Hallet-Shoubridge Bluestone tycoon

Yevgeny Zamyatin Russian spy

### **Shanghai**

Jeffrey Choi Chinese Industrialist

Twinkie Ho Jeffrey Choi's beautiful PA

Li Sing Hu CO of Zinnex corporation

Ban Bang Phut Choi's Thai PA, former ladyboy

Dr. Du Ziping China's richest man

Yu Wing CEO of LDC bank

Hung Wei Jin 'Hank' Building Manager

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# **SOUTH AMERICA**

CHAPTER 1  
*Sun In Winter*

Hot air engulfed him as he stepped down from the plane. *Must be good to live in a warm climate*, he thought.

Crisp cut and open collared, the 29 year old banker could feel the darkness peel away. Four years in an open plan office analysing property for private bank Delonge Martin, and there he was, one of the chosen few, a would-be *Dealer*; travelling first class, escaping London's wintry sky for the South American sun. If his thinking was right, he was on track. Someone had spotted him.

He strutted through customs, his heart pounding and eyes full of wonder. *Not bad*, thought he, *for a young Analyst*, who had never left Europe before.

The airport was not the international hub he had envisaged. So, it did not take long for him to find a taxi. Soon scuttling along a six lane motorway, in the back of a silver Mercedes, he was seized by an uncomfortable apprehension. Why had his contact Emerson not met him at the airport? Was he really so ill? The traffic bottlenecked as it exited the highway attempting to feed into fewer lanes.

What was Emerson like? Rumour had it, he'd gone native, married a local, consigned himself to being permanently overseas.

An endless array of unimpressive apartment blocks tripped by his window, until some semblance of European architecture came into sight. The tyranny of American town planners had not touched the jewel at the heart of this city. A city that deserved its accolade: *Paris of the South*.

He had arrived in Buenos Aires.

9th Julio Avenue is the world's widest street scape, a short stroll from his accommodation at Hotel Bristol. Tired and not yet



acclimatized, he welcomed the air-conditioning and cool travertine marble floor that met him, as he passed in through revolving doors.

'Bien venidos a Hotel Bristol,' came his welcome.

*This is the life I'm leading from now on.*

Having signed his name and declined help with his luggage he headed straight for his room. It had a double bed, en suite, coffee table, media centre, tall cupboards and gallons of natural light shining in through tall narrow patio doors which, when opened offered glorious views over the city.

*Beats being stuck in the office.* He pondered the fanciful notion of living abroad, but with his experience limited to beach and ski holidays, this was brief.

An attempt to contact Emerson proved unsuccessful. Still being early, he decided to explore. Walking the narrow side roads crowded with shops, restaurants and Tango halls, it occurred to him as odd, that a city of 13 million, larger than London, was almost totally unknown to him? Aside from Maradona's 'Hand of God' and Madonna's god awful acting in *Evita*, the only thing he connected with Argentina was the Falklands War. A twinge of envy crept upon him as he conceded what an intriguingly cool lot the Argentines were. Their Spanish-Italian blood was all the more fascinating for a mysterious ingredient that distinguished them from their European cousins.

Spotting a tourist map on a billboard he noted that Emerson's office was close by and would take but a few minutes to reach. The cancelled airport rendezvous, due to Emerson's sudden illness, now seemed unimportant. He would make a surprise visit and take in the pulse of this exciting city. Upon arrival, he climbed stairs to the second floor and was confronted by the office: DM Buenos Aires. In line with protocol its reception gave no hint that it might contain one of England's oldest and least known private banks.

He was met by a smartly dressed Italian looking woman with lacklustre hair, pinned back in a bob. She greeted him in Spanish too fast to comprehend, then, English too broken to decipher. In response he introduced himself slowly, with a nod.

'Hello. I'm Phillip Banks, from the London office.' She seemed

to understand and knocked on the frosted glass window to an inner office. *Is this the best they can do?* From beyond came hoarse rumblings in Spanish. A chair scraped its legs upon the wooden floor followed by hesitant footsteps. Banks braced himself as the door clattered open.

'Phillip Banks. It's good to meet you,' announced Banks.

'Emerson Palmer. Sorry I couldn't meet you at the airport.' Emerson hobbled back behind his desk and slouched into his chair. Seeing Emerson in some distress Banks felt it almost ill advised to enquire.

'How are you?'

'Not too good actually,' replied Emerson, straining as he coughed and wheezed into his handkerchief. His unkempt thinning straw hair was overdue for a cut and his neck sunk awkwardly between shoulders requiring raised eyes to look ahead.

'Do take a seat.' He managed a scholastic smile, the kind that precedes friendly advice, softly spoken but hard hitting. Banks sat in the leather upholstered chair opposite.

'Can I get you something? Tea? Coffee? Something stronger perhaps? I'm afraid we're all coffee drinkers here. Legacy of the Italian diaspora.' He glanced at his watch. 'It's after 11. Cappuccino's out I'm afraid. Very much frowned upon here, after brunch. Milk you see, only for breakfast. So what'll it be, espresso or tea?'

'Tea please,' replied Banks testing the swivel in his chair. 'Lemon if you have it? No sugar.' Emerson barked something in Spanish then settled down to observe the young man before him. He began a soothing ritual of stroking his unshaven chin, gathering himself as if for some difficult announcement that might require diplomacy.

'I hate to do this to you but, you are going to have to meet de Rosa alone.'

'De Rosa?' asked Banks.

'The client. I had hoped that you could help me prepare for my meeting and come along with me.' Emerson opened his desk draw and extracted a crème folder. 'But I'm in no shape to go. We won't

get another chance.' He pushed the folder across his desk towards Banks. 'Our pitch: contracts, IM docs, background on the hotel chain.' He lapsed into a fit of coughing again.

'Are you all right? I mean...!' Banks could see that Emerson was having difficulty breathing. He had run out of steam just introducing himself. 'What's wrong with you? Have you seen a doctor?'

'Never mind that.' He cleared his throat, beating his chest with the inside of his fist. 'You'd better read that lot. Call me tomorrow, we'll debrief. We'll only get one chance. And... unless I can make a recovery overnight, you're our man.' Emerson fell silent, catching his breath. Banks looked at the document on the table, picked it up and flicked through it.

'You want me to meet the client?' Shock registered across his face, he was just the analyst, 'by myself?' Normally he provided dealers with analysis, presentations or data for property being bought, sold or valued. He had never conducted a deal before.

'No time,' Emerson choked, 'to get anyone else.' The Receptionist entered carrying a silver platter of drinks, churros and dulce de leche. She looked askance at Emerson and put a glass of water to his lips. He waved her away. She cursed in Spanish. There was something a little too familiar about their interplay. *Could she be his lover? Maybe this is what they meant by Emerson's gone native?* He responded in Spanish and she exited the office.

'Sorry about this. Would like to show you around but...!' Emerson lapsed.

'Of course. Shouldn't you go home? Or to hospital?' suggested Banks.

'We'll talk in the morning? His ranch is 2 hours from here, you'll need a car. Here, use mine.' Emerson handed his car keys to Banks.

'Are you sure?'

'Meeting's for 11am. You must be jet-lagged. I'll try to make it through the night,' Emerson attempted to laugh, but his chest was too heavy.

'Shall I contact head office?'

'NO! No, not a word.' He coughed. 'Promise me, not a word.'

'But surely they should know?'

'No!' He spluttered and hit his chest. 'We just need to deliver. Or we're dead.'

'Dead?' *Why dead?* It seemed so unambiguous.

'All you need know is, we must get that contract.'

With the day to himself he took the document back to his hotel and began reading. But the temptation of streets teeming with Latin women became unbearable and his soon found himself outside.

As a city for a walking tour Buenos Aires held up well, with grandiose plazas, narrow alleys, Tango halls, sex bars and street theatre. Feeling conspicuously Anglo-Saxon in his blue pinstripe shirt, he soaked up the novelty and ogled the slim waists and petite behinds of the Argentine brunette. As one approached carrying a glossy sales bag Banks spontaneously smiled.

'Hi!' She did a double-take but did not stop. 'Do you speak English?' called Banks walking alongside her. Even though her impish charm was aroused, she dashed him a curious look and continued walking. Banks stopped and called out. 'Hey Bella!' She twisted around and retorted in Spanish, tossing her hair and flicking her hands as if to say, *better luck next time*. He watched her leave taking in her buttocks as they struggled for supremacy within the confines of her spray on slacks.

'Phew,' *God she's hot*. As the anonymity of the crowd swallowed her, the unfamiliar palate, that businessmen used to coordinate their dress struck him: a stylish use of greys and browns, more suited to an olive skin. He noted the double twill of his shirt too hot for summers in the southern hemisphere.

Ordinarily he would cancel the meeting and wait for Emerson to recuperate? But Emerson had been unequivocal.

*Maybe he's delirious? Afraid of losing his job? Why would he offer the deal to me?*

He recalled Spud's advice. 'The City's a casino of crooks.' That, from his head of section, Tracy Butcher, whose mission in life was to dispel any feminine qualities his name might imply. 'Remember,

the man in the best whistle is the biggest crook of all.'

The next morning Banks called Emerson to find that he had been taken into hospital overnight with an attack of the shivers, and was now recuperating under sedation. With the chance that the fever might last a few days, it was all he could do to leave a message.

Emerson had warned him the day before that it was not possible to re-appoint.

*Should I take the word of a sick man or call HQ for support?*

He knew Spud wouldn't agree to let him do the deal. But, Spud wasn't in Argentina, and it was too late to fly someone in to replace Emerson.

'We must win that contract to sell his hotels,' Emerson had told him. It was now or never.

Banks couldn't believe his luck. The implications were dramatic. If he could close the deal he would earn more than he earned as an analyst in months; as *Executing Agent* he would be entitled to a percentage of bonus.

*Why shouldn't I close the deal?* Spud had nominated him as Team analyst. He'd been to all the meetings in London, knew the clients portfolio as well as anyone, Emerson obviously thought so. They could either give up on the deal or he could do it. Besides, Emerson had spent months courting de Rosa, visiting all 4 hotels, pouring over the books, meeting with hotel managers, tenants, architects, councils, looking into re-development possibilities, valuing everything and it all came down to this: one meeting, one deal.

Emerson's car was an old American 6 litre monster, as wide as an ocean liner, using more hide than a herd of cattle. Once out of Buenos Aires he soaked up the surroundings, passing through rolling coastal towns that led south.

Some way before Mar Plata he turned off the highway into agricultural land. Fenced off from miles of open pasture the dusty track rolled before him as far as the eye could see. There was no sign of property until a cluster of wooden agricultural structures

came into view. As he decelerated to pass over a cattle grid, white wooden gates opened automatically. He noted a rotating camera capture his arrival, stealing any advantage his arrival might contain. His noisy passage eased to a hum as the road repaired to a sealed surface. Upon the approach, outbuildings, barns and an impressive old ranch came into view.

Once parked alongside six other cars, he gathered his folder and crossed the court yard to approach the front door. It opened before he could reach it, revealing an attractive woman in a bold red blouse and long black skirt. She smiled with fiery eyes then led him through to a large interior quadrangle, main-staged by a central water feature and manicured garden. Bowing her head to indicate he should wait, she left without speaking. Banks would have fancied to annoy her, just to see her riled. She looked like a spirited woman. Left alone he remained pensive, attempting to put a face to de Rosa.

The theatre of meeting in someone's home is always carefully choreographed, with scene changes and curtain calls, to calm, disarm or frighten the guest. At first, Banks felt little suspicion of his treatment. But, as the sun beat down upon him, he soon felt there was reason to the location assigned him. Sweat trickled down his neck, forcing him to seek partial shade on the opposite side of the fountain. Although his temperature fell marginally, the beat of his heart told him that it was not the sun driving him, but his nerves.

Thirty minutes later he stood before de Rosa, vulnerable on all sides, to de Rosa's men, who surrounded them. More Accountant than Gauchos their well dressed silent vigil only heightened the sense of unease and isolation he felt.

'So..' said de Rosa, sat with his back to the wall. He didn't look like a shipping magnate, *drug dealer more like*. Banks looked him in the eye.

'We sell property for those who wish to deal beneath the radar,' stated Banks, holding an inanimate expression, to match his flat delivery. Meetings might last hours, but Banks knew that deals

were won or lost in seconds.

'How long you been with Delonge Martin?' The shipping magnate who had left him waiting in the sun for 30 minutes now took his time, rolling an over-sized Corona Corona in the corner of his fat hairy mouth.

Banks felt the air conditioning chill the sweat to his shirt. He had not yet acclimatized. Alejandro de Rosa raised a cruel eye breaking the dark carpet of his mono-brow. He enjoyed messing with people, skewing the odds and was acutely aware of Banks' discomfort.

'How you plan sell my hotels?' came the challenge. A dense grey haze spread like an estuary from his Cuban cigar. Banks hoovered in the sweet aroma through flared nostrils.

'Whatever it takes,' replied Banks holding eye contact. 'No questions asked.' He toyed with the idea of saying nothing more, but knew he was in need of the big man's approval. Paunched with sloping shoulders and hairy sausage fingers de Rosa considered the slim Englishman before him. To his mind, too young and too clean, to pull off a deal so miraculous. But he was from Delonge Martin and his contacts had recommended them. He sucked in, igniting an orange pulse at the tip of his cigar. 'You have come a long way and wasted your time.'

*Oh fuck!* Phillip's heart jumped a beat. There was something menacing about his slow softly spoken delivery.

'Our buyer will be disappointed,' he replied quietly, covering the surge of spite that was welling within him. A knock at the door broke tension and all eyes watched as Etienne entered the room.

Admiration of form is not exclusive to the female sex. For all men present paused to witness Etienne use the space around him like he was in the bullring. His curved his upper torso thrust into the room on strong footballer legs. Deporting himself with the poise of a ballet dancer, he closed the door with a discreet click. Then, stood in its way as permanent and immovable as an oak tree. The solid jaw and coffee brown eyes remained detached, like they had seen no one. But Banks knew that he would know exactly where everyone was.

Banks weighed up his options. There was a tall brass figurine within his reach. He could club Etienne and make his exit. As if reading his thoughts de Rosa tilted his head towards it, maintaining eye contact. Alejandro's eyes flashed at Etienne then back to Banks.

'Your buyer... he is Russian?' asked de Rosa. The cigar was applied to the thick purple lips once more, its intoxicating aroma working the senses. 'Or China perhaps?' He didn't flinch. Nor allow his eyes to drop.

*Come on you bastard.*

'It will be the first thing I let you know when we have a deal,' whispered Banks huskily. As if something foreign had soiled his palate, Alejandro de Rosa spat at the floor, then leaned forward to pick up some dried meat from a slaver, which he put into his mouth to chew. He relaxed back into his seat.

'You try Argentine beef? It is the best, no?' de Rosa indicated the plate of dark beef jerky before him. Banks took a strip and applied it to his mouth. It was salty and stubborn to chew. But, he had never tasted anything quite so delicious.

'Mm. Very good,' commented Banks.

'No Americans. No Colombians. Not a cent below 200 million.' Banks maintained complete indifference. 'Send my regards to Emerson,' croaked de Rosa. Etienne opened the door and stepped aside.

Banks maintained a flat demeanour and lifted his head minutely to recognise the open door. Fireworks were exploding inside him. He reached into his pocket to retrieve a memory stick, which he held up in front of Alejandro.

'Our contract and terms, with tickets, compliments of Emerson.' He placed it onto the table in front of de Rosa then turned slowly and left the room. He wanted to jump and punch the air, but walked calmly to his car instead. He started the engine and followed the waving arms that directed him out of the court yard, in measured silence. Once a safe distance from the property, he called Emerson.

'Well?' asked his boss, suppressing a cough.



'We've done it! Got the deal!' He shook his clenched fists in the air, 'Yes!' letting the car free-wheel along a straight stretch of highway. He'd won the contract to sell de Rosa's La Reina Ricoleta hotel chain. All he had to do now was find someone willing to pay \$200 million to buy it.

Back in Buenos Aires Emerson was still in hospital with a mystery illness. At his bedside keeping vigil was his distressed receptionist, who agreed to leave them alone so that they could discuss business. Emerson was clearly struggling to suppress the seriousness of his condition. Through fits of coughing he came straight to the point.

'I'll split the bonus with you, fifty-fifty.' It was generous of him, considering Banks was just the analyst. 'You'll have to tread carefully around Mr. Butcher.' He coughed violently. 'I hear he doesn't take kindly to anyone attempting to deprive him of bonus.' Emerson explained that as Team Manager in London, Butcher, 'Spud' had the power to apportion bonus as he saw fit. But, as *closing agent*, Banks was entitled to a cut. Emerson promised to send a report to London to back up as much. Banks thanked him and despite offers to stay on in Buenos Aires until he recovered, Emerson said it was unnecessary and ordered him to return to London immediately.

Banks checked out of his hotel and headed for the airport. Whilst waiting for his flight he read the Financial Times.

*Trouble off the Sea of Japan. Japanese pilot and \$160 million fighter jet go missing over disputed waters between China and Japan.*

Banks weighed it up, hi-tech fighters with GPS and millions of dollars worth of technology, *they don't go missing*. Even if they sink to the bottom of the Pacific Ocean the black box still pings.

Later that evening aboard BA217 there was a lot to consider. Why was de Rosa so adamant that it shouldn't be sold to Americans or Colombians? Would Spud payout on his cut of the bonus? Now Banks had signed up the property for sale which dealer would sell

it? Would Spud sell it himself? After all it would net the dealer commission of half a million dollars. Who would have \$200 million dollars to invest in Argentine property? The Arabs? The Chinese?

Banks sank his beer and reclined in his seat.

*If only I was a dealer.*

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