

# Dan's Letter™

"Please...let me introduce you to my mind...one article at a time."



## FROM THE DESK OF DAN ANDERSON

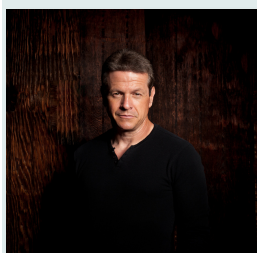
### The Power of a Mother's Kiss

When American-born painter Benjamin West was 7, he was tasked with looking after his baby niece while his mother and sister went out. To entertain the baby, who was in the cradle, he shooed away flies, making her laugh. Inspired by her charm, he drew a picture of her.

When his mother and sister returned, Benjamin, caught off guard, tried to hide the drawing. His mother, noticing his suspicious behavior, asked what he had been doing. Benjamin, fearing she would be upset, reluctantly handed her the drawing. To his surprise, his mother praised his work, saying, "I declare, he has made a likeness of Sally," and kissed him.

The following year, a cousin sent him a box of art supplies. One morning, Benjamin, completely absorbed in his new materials, skipped school to create art in the attic. His mother, initially upset about his truancy, found him surrounded by his impressive compositions. Instead of scolding him, she kissed him and promised to explain everything to his father.

Benjamin West later attributed his success as an artist to his mother's encouragement, famously saying, "It was my mother's kisses that made me an artist."



- Dan A.



## how to have the best staycation ever

(BPT) - Are you planning to take a week or two off from work, but you can't quite manage a trip anywhere? You can do the next best thing and have an amazing staycation. But don't let yourself fritter away all your hard-earned PTO just doing household chores, scrolling social media or bingeing shows on TV. Instead, create a plan that will make the most of your time, leaving you feeling relaxed, refreshed and reinvigorated.

**Make an itinerary.** If you were traveling to New York or Nashville, Chicago or Cheyenne, you'd want to make sure each day of your trip had at least one activity to look forward to. So if you're vacationing at home, do the same thing. Get out your calendar and plan out fun events and adventures, alone and/or with friends and family (whatever you want - it's YOUR staycation!) and get ready to have a fantastic time.

**Plan a beach (or pool) day.** One of the top activities to do on every vacation is hitting the beach. Search for your nearest ocean, lake or river respite so you can get out and enjoy some sunshine and a splash in cool water. Find your swimsuit (or buy a new one!), pack your car with towels, sunscreen and snacks, and you'll be ready for fun in the sun.

No body of water within a short drive, or the weather's not

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cooperating? No worries. Find a community pool or gym where you can swim, inside or out, and you can still enjoy a relaxing day. Don't belong to a gym? Ask a friend who does to invite you as a guest - or find out if a fitness center near you offers free trial days for prospective members.

**Embrace your inner child.** Can you think back to some of the things you loved to do when you were a kid? When was the last time you played with dough, painted with your fingers, built a blanket fort in the living room, ran through the sprinkler or made s'mores in the backyard?

Spend one day doing all the fun things you used to enjoy, like spending all day in your pajamas, having pancakes for dinner or watching your favorite animated movie.

**Get fancy.** Okay, so you let yourself be a kid for a day. Make sure you also give yourself a chance to have some grown-up fun. Think of all that money you saved not flying anywhere and let yourself splurge a little. Book dinner reservations at that swanky restaurant you've been hearing about, get tickets for a show or go out dancing. Consider shopping for a new outfit for your special day.

**Have an adventure or two.** Where would you take your bestie from college if they were visiting from out of town? What place are you curious about, or what activity have you always wanted to try? Add a few of those to your staycation itinerary. Ideas might include trying a rock-

climbing gym, going horseback riding, checking out an interesting museum you've never been to, hiking in a nearby state park, taking a pottery-throwing workshop, watching a cooking demo or renting a kayak. Online searches make it easier than ever to find all kinds of opportunities within an hour or two of home.

Get creative with your search and explore the possibilities! Don't be too quick to say no to anything. You may find that you have plenty of ideas to fill more than one staycation - and you just may discover your next favorite hobby.

**Just relax.** For the final day of your staycation, you may want to spend a full day just doing nothing. Stretch out on a hammock and read a great book, take a leisurely walk around your neighborhood, linger over coffee with a good friend, then find a spot to watch the sunset or do some stargazing.

Slowing down to enjoy the moment is what every great vacation is about - no matter where you are.

Dreaming and planning your ideal staycation can make it just as fun and fabulous as any trip you've ever taken - without the expense and hassle that can sometimes go along with traveling. You may find it's actually true that there's no place like home.



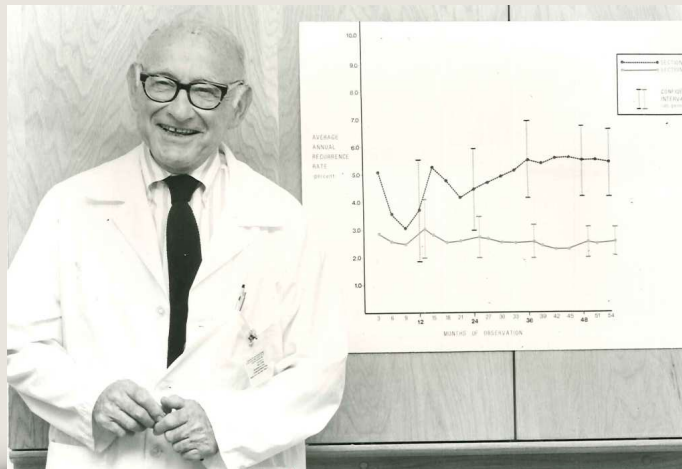
## The '3P' Approach to Reducing Stress

Meyer Friedman was a pioneer in the research of the connection between disease and behavior, specifically in the relationship between heart disease and stress.

The cardiologist, who coined the term "Type A" personality, and often referred to himself as a "recovering Type A," did not believe in the inevitability of stress.

He believed that Type A individuals could drastically reduce their risk for heart attacks if they slowed down and learned how to relax.

Friedman liked to quote Shakespeare's Hamlet to his patients: "Assume a virtue if you have it . . . For use can almost change the stamp of nature."



And the good doctor, it seems, took the Bard's words to heart—eventually.

How did he do it?

By reading the classics. Specifically, he read Proust's seven volumes of *Remembrance of Things Past*—three times! He believed that Type A's needed to plump up the creative side of their brains.

He also practiced what he called the 3Ps—spending time with plants, pets, and people.

The result: Friedman lived and worked in his field until the age of 90—proving that learning to chill out can drastically lengthen your lifespan.



# Gems of Deception

## A Victor Sage Mystery

by Dan Anderson

### Chapter 5 - Whispers of the Past

As the afternoon light waned, Victor Sage and Clara Simmons were ushered into the solemn confines of Scotland Yard. Inspector Edmund Sterling, a steadfast figure in the realm of law enforcement, greeted them with a firm nod. His office, lined with case files and historical tomes, spoke of a career built on meticulous scrutiny.

"Your timing is impeccable," Sterling began, his voice echoing slightly in the quiet room. "We're here to discuss a matter that extends beyond the simple theft of a jewel, however precious it may be."

Victor acknowledged with a grave nod. "The theft of the Hawthorne Emerald Brooch wasn't just a crime of opportunity; it was calculated, with a message encoded in its execution."

Sterling spread out an array of documents and photographs. "In the past six months, similar heists have occurred throughout Europe, each coinciding with the anniversary of an historical event. This pattern is no coincidence."

Clara examined the documents closely. "Do these events share a theme, or is it merely their historical significance that links them?"

"There is indeed a pattern," Sterling affirmed. "Each theft occurred on the eve of a notable historical anniversary, suggesting a narrative or statement being crafted by the thief."

Victor pondered, his fingers tracing the lines of thought on his forehead. "The brooch disappeared on the eve of the Battle of Waterloo's anniversary. Perhaps an allusion to the chaos and strategy of that pivotal moment in history."

Sterling leaned in, intrigued by the deduction. "Precisely. The Battle of Waterloo, fought on June 18, 1815, marked the definitive end to Napoleon Bonaparte's tyrannical ambitions, changing the course of European politics. It was not just a battle but a complex chess game of military strategy, alliances, and deception."

Clara, always keen to grasp the broader implications, added, "So, our thief, like Wellington on that day, uses strategy and surprise, cloaking his moves in layers of complexity."



"The Historian," as Sterling referred to the thief, "seems to fancy himself a player on the historical stage, using our heritage as his playing field."

Victor and Clara listened as Sterling detailed the Historian's known movements. "We need to predict his next move, and for that, your unconventional approach could be key, Sage."

As they strategized over the map, pinning locations and drawing connections, Clara discovered a financial clue. "Each of these items was heavily insured just weeks before their theft—a pattern of preparation and inside knowledge."

"Insider involvement, or just another layer of the ruse?" Victor mused, his mind racing through possibilities.

Before they departed, Sterling handed Victor a small, leather-bound journal. "This contains all our gathered intelligence. Guard it well; it might hold the key to predicting his next move."

Under the cloak of night, the weight of their task felt all the more daunting. "He's playing a dangerous game, but it's one we must win," Victor stated resolutely as they made their way back.

Clara nodded, her resolve firm.

Their figures receded into the night, the flickering street lamps casting long shadows as they returned to their office, the heart of Victorian London pulsing around them with hidden secrets yet to be uncovered.

(To be continued...)

Missed a chapter? - [Tap here for the Kindle version and audiobook.](#)



**The Historian** is a cunning and enigmatic figure who orchestrates elaborate heists with a meticulous eye for historical significance. Cloaked in shadows, this master thief intertwines their crimes with pivotal moments from yesteryear, leaving cryptic clues that reflect a deep knowledge of history and strategy. Intelligent and elusive, the Historian remains a step ahead, turning every theft into a statement and every encounter into a challenge.



# What They Didn't Tell You

Al's story is one of remarkable transformation. In his early years, Al felt utterly useless and wrote to his sister expressing his deep sense of worthlessness, stating that he was nothing but a burden to his family and that it would have been better if he had never been born. As a child, he was taken out of school because he was what we would now consider mentally handicapped. His education continued at home under the tutelage of his mother.

By the age of 22, Al had hit rock bottom. His parents, now impoverished, could no longer support him. He desperately needed a job, but his search was met with repeated rejections. In desperation, Al turned to an old school friend whose father had government connections. Through this connection, Al secured an interview at the Federal Patent Office with the director, Fred Heller.



Heller informed Al that the office needed personnel capable of assessing whether patent applications had any merit. When asked what he knew about patents, Al candidly admitted he knew nothing. Under ordinary circumstances, this would have ended the interview, but there was something intriguing about Al's honesty. Heller decided to probe further, asking Al to share more about his background.

Al recounted his troubled academic history: he was expelled from high school at 15 and, without a diploma, college was out of reach. He applied to a technical school but failed the entrance exam, forcing him to return to high school. After graduating from a different school, he was admitted to a technical institute. However, his chronic absenteeism, barely passing grades, and irreverent attitude toward professors made it impossible for him to secure employment. Al seemed to have "loser" written all over him.

Despite these setbacks, the interview lasted nearly two hours. Heller concluded that Al was not stupid or mentally handicapped but had simply been a repeated failure who lacked self-confidence. Recognizing potential where others saw none, Heller decided to give Al a probationary position as a technical expert third class.

This opportunity marked a turning point in Al's life. Inspired by his first unequivocal success, he began to realize his potential. This young man, once on the brink of utter uselessness, transformed into the incomparable genius the world knows as Albert Einstein. His story exemplifies how a single chance can alter the course of a life, proving that behind every failure, there may lie an unrecognized brilliance waiting to emerge.

**Now you know what they didn't tell you.**





## DETAILING MASTERY



SCAN OR TAP BELOW FOR VIDEO



TAP  
Here

### Unlock the Ultimate Clean: Transform Your Car's Interior with Chemical Guys

Are kids' sports seasons turning your car into a mess? Don't let a dirty interior sideline your family! Chemical Guys products can transform your car into a spotless sanctuary.

Start with Nonsense Cleaner to wipe out dirt and grime effortlessly. Next, use Silk Shine to protect and restore your surfaces, leaving a sleek, low-shine finish. Clear those pesky fingerprints with Streak Free Window Cleaner, and eliminate any lingering sports odors with Odor Eliminator.

Spring sports season doesn't have to mean a dirty car—get ahead with Chemical Guys and experience a pristine ride every time. Elevate your car cleaning game to championship level!



## TAKE A BREAK!



### Meringue Shells With Fresh Berries

These Meringue shells are perfect for filling.

#### Ingredients

6 egg whites - bring to room temperature  
1 3/4 cups confectioner's sugar  
pinch of salt  
1/8 teaspoon cream of tartar  
3/4 teaspoon vanilla  
Choice of berries  
Whipped Cream

#### Instructions

Pre-heat oven to 200\*, line baking sheets with parchment paper or Silpat. In a clean grease free mixing bowl, whip white on low speed until foamy. Add salt, cream of tartar and vanilla and continue whipping about 8 minutes or so, the whites should begin to have soft peaks. Gradually add sugar, a few teaspoons at a time and continue beating until the whites are stiff and shiny, like satin. Either use a pastry bag to pipe out shapes or drop by tablespoons on prepared sheets. Bake for about 1 1/2 hours at 200\* with oven door slightly ajar. When they are done, they will be crispy and light and will be easily removed from the cookie sheet. Fill with berries and whipped cream. Enjoy!

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FOR INTERACTIVE PUZZLE

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### SOLUTION

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5	6	7	4	9	2	8	3	1
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7	4	6	2	1	8	9	5	3
8	2	9	3	4	5	7	1	6



## Summer | Dolomites 8K Timelapse



A Dolomites timelapse video featuring the beautiful mountains of northern Italy changing over the seasons. Summer can be an epic show of changing weather and steep rock towers piercing through the clouds. Between those majestic mountain peaks you can find beautiful green meadows and forests.

*Let's travel...*



*Check out*

**Dan's Blog™**



*TAP here*