

Preface-Amos Branson

Dear Reader, This is a story written in the third person. That means you and I are going on a journey of discovery and, perhaps, trepidation. I refer to us as "we" (you and I) in the following Story. Are you game?

An oddity was Amos Branson. Certainly not one of the typical denizens one would meet in church. Or, for that matter, in polite society. Add to this his inheritance and the oddities simply grew.

Amos Branson, though a wealthy man, was also a deviant. His definition of a good time was bilking someone out of five dollars; or less. A mere \$2.50 bilked would leave him chortling like mad when he got home. It was the chase that got him off. More if possible but he found that the more money people had the smarter they were with it. As he would say, "It's axiomatic." He used newspapers and, to a degree, the internet.

He had, at first, put up a "Go Fund Me" page on Facebook asking for \$1000.00 to help his wife procure needed medications for her disease; unnamed. Both disease and wife were non-existent. The ploy worked until someone, probably an ex-fleeting friend, complained to Facebook of his shenanigans and he was summarily banned. Not, however, before he bilked another \$517.34 he didn't really need from the good members of Facebook.

So, instead, he made the noble decision to prey on widows, friends and acquaintances. The latter of which he had few of and friends were, as mentioned, fleeting. A lonelier man you could not find. A more bitter man you probably could find for Amos had something that allowed him to tolerate his alone time. He wrote. He wrote using the non de plume of "Cedrick Hawthorne:" to be exact. He had sold his work for years, all

the while refusing to go on book tours or even meet his editors. He conducted all his business through a law firm which he had jokingly named "Tidily, Hood, and Wink." Not the firm's real name of course but it suited Amos just fine. Amos did have a sense of humor after all.

Our story starts on a rainy Sunday afternoon. Well, rainy does not do the weather justice. His estate was in Oklahoma and it was Tornado season. As we look in on Amos he is headed for the storm shelter outside his rather large and rambling home. A home paid for by an inheritance. Not money earned by Amos. This may explain him for some of my readers. However, there is much more to Amos than meets the eye. Shall we say, he had, in his spare time, and most of his time was spare, gotten into some rather iffy channels of endeavor above and beyond his bilking of widows. The darkness of the storm shelter may offer us all an unabridged idea of just how much of a screwed up Amos he had made himself. It is, in the final analysis, axiomatic!