

THE MAGIC RUG

Tom Mathew

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First Edition

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Chapter I

Once upon a time, there was a Farmer who lived near Golden Mountain. He and his wife had two children, a girl named Maya and a boy named Karma. The Farmer grew beans, carrots and corn on his 10 acre farm.

The Farmer, as a young man, had gone to Cornell University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and had learned all the methods to create genetically modified seed. He bought the farm after a career on Golden Mountain.



He had found a wife, Chutney while at University, and they had wanted to raise their children, Maya and Karma,

away from Golden Mountain.

No matter where the Farmer looked, no one would sell land to him in Mohave County. He had no idea Ran Rold's charitable trust, Triumvirate Inc., owned everything in Mohave County. So the Farmer humbled himself and went to Ran Rold, the Ran Rold, the richest man in Golden Mountain to buy some land. Ran Rold, knower of all that Is on Golden Mountain, ordered his trustee to sell a few acres of worthless land to the Farmer.

Ran was jealous of the Farmer since childhood. The Farmer as a boy was loved and adored by his parents. They had taught him the Word. In turn, the Farmer learned to appreciate life and to respect people for what they were, as opposed to what they owned. The Farmer had no desire for wealth, power or fame. He wanted to get married soon after college and to have children.

Ran's company sold him a small parcel of land. The surveyor who happened to work for Ran Rold Surveying Inc. was oblivious to the fact that the Farmer had bought the

worst piece of land in the county. The land had little potable water and the clayish soil would be difficult to farm. Ran Rold was a cruel man just like his father Ran Rold XXIII. He wanted to teach a lesson to the Farmer.

The Farmer had no relatives. His wife's family went to heaven long before they had children. Every few weeks Ran Rold would drive by in his large black car to see the Farmer toil away on his parched piece of earth. Ran smiled at the sweat beading down the Farmer's face.

In the evening, the Farmer and his wife would read the Holy Bible with Maya and Karma. Tears ran down the Farmer's face when he thanked Jesus for what little he had. Chutney and he asked Almighty God to protect their children and to guide them in school, so that one day they could be prosperous and leave Mojave County.

After prayers, the family sat down to eat. The Farmer and his wife would ask the kids about school. They would tell him about photosynthesis and Michelangelo. Maya and Karma would fight to get the Farmer's attention.

Over ice cream and pound cake, they would ask their father so many questions. And he in turn would tell them about the secrets of the universe.

Karma was fascinated by interstellar space and cosmic radiation. Maya was intrigued about Jupiter's gravitational pull and Saturn's massive ice rings. They dreamt of being time travelers and Vikings and parading through Paris in the 16th century. All manners of frivolity were encouraged by the Farmer and his wife. Childhood, the parents knew had to be joyful for the children. Otherwise their children, when fully grown, would be unable to accept the vicissitudes of married life.

The harvest was meager this year. The Farmer could not understand why his yields had dropped suddenly. He was unaware that Ran Rold had secretly cut off the water to his farm over the summer. The aquifer that fed his farm was shattered by a huge Caterpillar earthmover (it was the size of a small building) that was being shipped by an even bigger flat bed truck through Mohave County.

The mortgage was due December 25th and the Farmer had no way of paying it. Ran's bank, Bank of Golden Mountain, had tricked him into refinancing his pre-existing low balance mortgage with a NINJA loan the previous year. Although he did not need to refinance, they bullied him to take the loan. He told them "no" as his farm was too small. Finally, the bank convinced him to take a loan to buy a new truck, even though he did not need a new truck. The Farmer bought a used one instead.

The bank put all these provisos into the loan document whereby the 4% interest rate would double each month. Ran's law firm, Lai, Cheetham & Soo, received a significant retainer bonus from the General Counsel of Triumvirate Inc. for putting all sorts of legal barriers in front of the Farmer.

They told him that the note had been securitized and that they could not adjust the note for him as they would have to do it for everyone else in Mojave County. Mr. Wyeth I. Lai Esq., a graduate of the Ran Rold Law School, actually valedictorian of the class of 1968, with his long

beak-like nose and bald pate did not grimace once when he advised the Farmer that the Triumvirate trustee had ordered him to foreclose on the Farmer if he did not pay by December 25th.

Although the bank forced him to take a usurious loan, the Farmer did his best to pay the loan as he could not afford legal advice. He reminded Maya and Karma never ever to borrow from Bank of Golden Mountain. The stress of life never appeared on the Farmer's face when he talked to his children. He walked upright and was proud to have faith in Jesus Christ.

One night over dinner, Maya asked the Farmer, "Why do we help the poor Daddy?"

"We do not help the poor, honey. If Ran Rold even thought we did that, he would put us in jail. All we do is give food to charities like the local clinic and the senior citizens center. They do not get enough money to buy fresh vegetables so we help out a little," said the Farmer.

"But doesn't the Ran Rold Clinic and the Ran Rold Senior Citizens Center have enough money to feed its people?" asked Karma.

"You would think, but they do not. We give them what we can. Besides the cook at the Senior Citizens Center and I went to school together. The doctor at the Clinic and I served in the Army together. In addition, he did some tests on you that I could not afford at the time. So I swapped some vegetables for them," said the Farmer.

"Tomorrow I am going to give them some of what we harvested."

"Daddy, why cannot Ran Rold give more?" asked Maya.

"Ran gives as much as he can and it is a lot. But he has different values than we do. He is a slave to wealth, power and fame. We are not," the Farmer exclaimed.

"Maya he is a slave to terrestrial delusions," said the

Farmer's wife.

"What is a terrestrial delusion?" asked Karma.

"That is the mythology of wealth, power and fame. No matter what we may own, it cannot satisfy our spiritual needs. We need some things. Sure. But other things we do not need. And anyhow, Jesus gave us the greatest treasure in the world," said the Farmer's wife.

"What's that?" asked Maya and Karma.

"You two rowdy kids." He yelled and tickled them under their chins. "You are worth more than all the diamonds in Russia".

"I bet you Ran Rold owns all of them too," said Karma.

"Who cares?" said the Farmer's wife.

The next day the Farmer went out from his farm. He

had three baskets full of vegetables. The kids went off to the Ran Rold Elementary School. His wife wished him well on his trip to Golden Mountain.

On the way to Golden Mountain, his truck started to act strange. Suddenly it slowed as he tried to push it into third gear. The clutch popped.

"Great!" yelled the Farmer. Five miles from home and five miles from Golden Mountain. He grew frustrated and soon became angry.

He calmed himself and rested against the back of the truck. Suddenly, a light flickered far off into the highway. He couldn't make out what it was. It looked green, then gold, and also blue. Whatever this light was it was heading straight to him. Must be a stranger, the Farmer thought to himself.

His mind drifted back to his farm and its poor crops. The last of his harvest was in the back of his truck. What was he going to do about the truck's clutch? He

had no tools with him. They were back at the farm. What was he going to do about the mortgage payment? The Farmer became despondent.

The stranger suddenly tiptoed by. He smiled at the Farmer. He had a rolled rug on his back, paint brushes in his pocket and multicolored sneakers on his feet. In the sun the stranger looked blue and in the shadows he looked golden. He noticed paint stains on the man's jeans and sneakers.

"Yo," he said.

"What's up, brother" said the Farmer. They exchanged pleasantries.

"May I get a ride to Golden Mountain?" asked the blue man.

The Farmer said, "Sure. But my clutch popped."

By the time the Farmer finished what he had said, the blue man went to the back of the truck and put the rug

and paint brushes in it. He climbed into the passenger seat.

"Yo, start 'er up, Mr. Farmer," said the blue man.

The Farmer climbed into the cab and started the engine. He pressed the clutch and manipulated the transmission into first gear. The truck started to move! He then shifted the truck into second gear. He couldn't believe his luck. Then, the blue man asked him to push it into third gear. His eyes opened wide when the truck went into third gear.

"My word", thought the Farmer. His fears and hurts left him. He no longer felt despondent. Sweat started beading up on his forehead. The Farmer soon realized that an angel of the Lord was sitting next to him.

"Thank you Jesus," the Farmer prayed. He looked to his right and the blue man was gone. He pulled off the highway. He climbed out of the cab and looked back into his truck. The blue man's rug was still rolled up in the back

of his truck. The paintbrushes were gone as well.

The Farmer looked around and smiled as he got back into the cab. He drove up to Ran Rold Clinic and said "Hey" to the Doctor. He left a bushel of carrots and corn at the rear and drove off to the Ran Rold Senior Citizens Center. When he got there, he left the remaining two bushels of corn and carrots. He offered felicities to the Social Worker and salutations to the Teacher.

He got back into the truck and drove off knowing full well that a treasure was in the back of his truck. "Why did Jesus pick me?" he asked himself.

The ten miles back to the farm went quick. He got out near the irrigation ditch. His wife came up to the truck. He kissed his wife "Hello". She saw the rug lying in the back of the truck and asked if he went shopping.

He told his wife that Someone had given him a present. She smiled at him when she saw the old musty rug. The Farmer carried the rug into the house. They unfurled it

together in the small house's living room. It was only 4 feet by 8 feet. It had a weird pattern on it.

"Honey, it has every color in our house on it", she giggled.

Maya and Karma returned and were excited to see the new rug. The Farmer and his wife lived a simple life. This was the first new piece of living room furniture they got since the kids were born. They felt blessed to have something new and decent in their house. The Farmer's dog, Lollipop, a large boned Rhodesian Ridgeback, came in, sniffed the rug and sat right in the middle of it. He started to roll around it and soon went to sleep.

The kids laughed at Lollipop and soon went outside to do their afternoon chores. When they got back they started their homework and took their baths. They came down for evening prayers and ate dinner and went to bed.

The Farmer and his wife sat together in the evening and looked at the rug. It was so ordinary and threadbare at places, that Chutney had a hard time believing her hus-

band's story. Knowing his faculty with diesel engines, she knew he would never make up a story about the truck breaking down. Clutches did not fix themselves. That she knew for sure. A miracle occurred on the way to Golden Mountain. She kissed her husband strongly on the lips and was happy that Jesus had helped him today.

The blue angel, whoever he was, left them this Magic Rug. Lollipop slept happily in the middle of it. The Farmer and his wife went to their bedroom hand in hand. They passed their children's bedroom and saw them nestled under their covers. They kissed them good night and retired for the evening.

While all were sleeping, a powder blue haze came out of the rug. It permeated the living room and went throughout the house. It rolled out of the cracks of the house and onto the farm. The mist rose into the sky above the farm and also disappeared into the ground. In the dark of night, rainwater started to fall onto the farm as if from a giant garden hose from the sky.

The Farmer's plants drank up the rain water as if they were strangers lost in the deserts of the Sahara. Every plant was surrounded by intense ultraviolet light. Each plant's cellular structure was strengthened. Withered plants soon stood erect. Yellow plants turned green. Swarms of voracious lady bugs flew over the horizon and landed on aphid covered leaves, cleansing them of their pests. The farm quickly became lush and verdant.

Dawn came to Mojave County. The Farmer woke up and looked out onto his farm. He shook his wife awake. They looked over the hills with admiration. What an extraordinary sight to witness. Jesus had come through. A second miracle had occurred. They thanked God for his infinite grace.

Chapter II

School ended early. The school was abuzz as parents and teachers had IMed each other at the turnaround at the Farmer's home. Karma and Maya were eager to get back home.

The school bus dropped the kids off near their home. They ran inside their modest house to drop off their books. Lollipop greeted them lazily as he was very comfortable on the Magic Rug. The kids ran by the dog and into the back of the house to get their bikes.

"Last one down the hill is a rotten egg", yelled Maya.

She took to her bike and Karma followed. When they got to the top of the hill, they did not notice Ran Rold's Rolls Royce (of course leased from Ran Rold Rolls Royce, Bentley & Land Rover, Golden Mountain's largest luxury car dealer) following them.

Ran Rold was looking at the lushness of the Farmer's 10 acres. He became angry. Not only had the Farmer stolen Chutney from him at Cornell but he was now going to best Ran Rold in agriculture. As Chairman of the Board of Ran Rold Hybrid Seed Corporation (a Bermuda mail box headquartered in Ireland to avoid US taxes), he was not going to allow that.



"Oh, Chutney, the dynasty you would have been mother to", thought Ran Rold salubriously.

"Boss?" asked the burly minion.

"Boss?"

Ran paid no mind to the mutterings of his employees. They were all doing his bidding. They had no intelligence. From the CEO of the Ran Rold Oil Company to the Board of Directors of Ran Rold Bank, they were idiots. Ran Rold knew it. After all it was Ran Rold's College Testing Service that made sure idiots would get perfect scores and the bright students would do poorly. This way the brightest people would fill menial labor (such as nuclear reactor guards and farmers) and absolute morons would fill the executive positions of his corporations.

The simulacrum that Ran's ancestors built meant that wage workers on Golden Mountain would get frustrated and drink themselves to oblivion each weekend. During the week, those who considered themselves to be part of the chattering class would gamble away their life savings on get rich quick schemes.

Ran Rold was not worried as Buddy Airlines brought in new workers every day looking to climb the social ranks of Golden Mountain. His corporate workers would never catch on. Unaware of their innate aptitude, they would

torture their children to be smarter. How could they be smarter? Each day these children would wonder why the immigrant gardener was smarter than their executive Dad. Ran could not stop laughing at how perfect it all was. Everyone in Golden Mountain envied him except the Farmer.

He did not know how the Farmer got into Cornell. How did he beat the test? He got a perfect score on the standardized test to get into college. The sycophants who worked for him at the Ran Rold College Testing Service reviewed the materials and could not determine why there were tic-tac-toe patterns all over the exam paper.

"How did the Farmer beat the test?" asked Ran to himself. " Who taught him to beat the test?"

"Boss?"

"Yes, Sharma," replied Ran Rold, arbiter of all that Is on Golden Mountain.

"Boss, did you want me to grab the kids and ask them some questions?"

"Why...that is an excellent idea," said Ran. "Let me out here."

Ran knew the law well. After all the District Attorney of Mojave County was a graduate of Ran Rold Law School, a school that Ran Rold XVI founded nearly two centuries ago. Full scholarship of course. Of course! The professors taught future do-gooders what attempted kidnapping was.

He did not want to be accused of attempted kidnapping. And if he was, he would fire the driver to correct any act of wrong doing. Sharma had been convinced by so many of his peers that he was not smart. The driver never ever minded to read the laws of Mojave County. Thus, Ran loved the law.

Ran looked over the fields. There was no Santa Claus. How was this possible in Mojave County? Did he not cut off the water to the farm? Of course he did not do it

himself; an independent contractor did it. This way Ran could not be prosecuted under the laws his lobbyists had written for him. "Those poor fools at the Ran Rold Golden Mountain Penitentiary," he chuckled.

"What sort of hybrid seed could have produced such bounty?" Ran asked himself.

His driver showed up with the kids. Maya and Karma looked frightened.

Ran Rold first thought of his corporations first. "What ya doing", he said in his expert 'gosh-gee wilikers' charm. Karma ignored him. Maya politely answered, "we were riding our bikes until Goliath here nearly ran us off the road with that massive black car".

"Hey! You guys mind if I have some corn?" asked Ran to the children.

He laughed inside at the Biblical methods the Farmer used to raise his children. Ran exploited the kindness of

the children for his own benefit.

"Sure, we have plenty", answered Maya.

He grabbed some of the Farmer's corn and told Sharma, his limousine driver, to get some bags from the back of the Rolls. The driver went and got sterile bags with Ran Rold Hybrid Seed Corp. written on it. By getting the children to give it to him, he knew he had plausible deniability in his future patent filings.

Drool was coming out the sides of Ran's mouth. "Like stealing candy from a baby," he thought to himself.

"Boss!"

"Boss!"

Insolence is what he could not stand in his servants. Ran knew everything that was there to know. After all he was the current Chairman of the Board for Ran Rold Uni-

versity. The last thing he hated in his perceived omnipotence was someone interrupting him.

"What?" asked Ran.

Quickly, the driver let go of Maya and Karma. Ran looked up from the children and saw his limousine driver running full speed towards the Rolls Royce. "Bring us back some Cokes, Sharma" Ran ordered obtusely.

Lollipop looked down at the children from the farm. Ridgebacks are not too different from most work dogs. They are very territorial. Once they feel threatened they do not back down unless their master is present. The Farmer was nowhere in sight. Lollipop gave a menacing growl that even the hardest man would have a hard time ignoring. It was bone chilling to the driver in the Rolls Royce.

Ran didn't notice the standing spine hairs of the Ridgeback as he walked towards the children. Ridgebacks were bred to defend livestock in Africa against preda-

tory lions, the king of beasts.

Lollipop was angry. "Don't mess with the alpha male's pups," Lollipop growled.

Lollipop started to run towards the children and he let out such a menacing bark. Ran Rold, the Ran Rold of Golden Mountain, determiner of all that Is could not speak *Ridgeback*. Shiny two inch teeth covered with dog spit looked pretty scary and quickly made him realize he was human.

Fear soon came into Ran's eyes as Lollipop came closer. He turned and started to run. A bigger mistake. You do not run from Ridgebacks. That is what Lollipop wanted you to do. Lollipop was doing what he was bred to do.

He ran full speed after Ran. Lollipop did not know what wealth, power and fame was. He only knew that he had to protect the Farmer's pups, Maya and Karma.

The driver opened the automatic Rolls Royce door just as Lollipop opened his jaw and snapped at Ran's Burberry. The dog was upset at itself as he missed Ran's buttocks by an inch. Quickly, once the dog felt danger had passed, Lollipop turned to comfort Maya and Karma. He looked at Ran through the black tinted glass and barked loudly.

"Sharma," ordered Ran.

"Yes, Boss," answered the limousine driver.

"Quickly, drive back up the hill to the Farmer's house," ordered Ran Rold, the Ran Rold, employer of all that Is in Golden Mountain.

"Yes, Boss."

Chapter III

Ran looked at the house. He almost laughed. The Farmer's house was not even the size of one of Ran's chicken coops at his country estate far north of Golden Mountain. He looked around to find something that could have produced all of this water.



The Farmer was smart. He had worked for Ran Rold Hybrid Seed Corporation for three years. It was at a Christmas party that the Farmer had met Chutney.

"Oh, sweet Chutney," Ran muttered to himself.

Ran could not understand why the farmer would quit such a high profile career to marry Chutney. What could she possibly see in the Farmer? To the day he died he could not ever understand the desires of the chattering classes. "Obviously, a Communist," he said to himself.

Independent contractors, not his employees, had inadvertently destroyed the aquifer. That is what his tort lawyers at Dodge, Liam & Steele would say. There is no way water could flow here. No rain was forecast by the Ran Rold Meteorological Survey for weeks. He looked at his satellite images of Mojave County from two weeks ago and could not understand how so much rain could fall in just one area of the county.

"There should have been a mud slide. Impossible! Maybe the images he had received were false. Maybe the farm was productive all along. No way," he thought to himself. Nothing can prosper in Mojave County.

Ran told his CEO to personally instruct the driver of that twenty ton earth mover to come through this part of Mo-

jave County. Of course, such weight would crush the road bed. The aquifer was only ten feet below the road bed. It was only six inches deep. "Accidents do happen," laughed Ran to himself. The other farms along the Farmer's lane were all bleak with drought. Soon, I will have to foreclose on them as well.

"No hard feelings. It is just business," that is what grandfather Ran, a previous Ran Rold, taught him as a boy.

Ran hated the Farmer. His goodness. His Jesus this. His Jesus that. How could he be so naïve? Where did he get this blind belief from? Ran made a mental note to have his lawyers advise the Archbishop to transfer all of the priests out of Mojave County and to bring in some new priests from Golden Mountain.

"It is so hard to find a good priest today," quipped Ran to himself.

As Ran approached the house, a powder blue glow ap-

peared in the windows. Its iridescence was barely noticeable to a man who was always focused on the color of money. Ran looked around the house looking for seed packages and horticultural tools. Anything that would lead him to believe that the Farmer had come up with some new hybrid seed. After all, the Farmer had been one of his best scientists.

Nothing could be found. Ran looked through the windows and noticed the Magic Rug. "What's this," he asked himself?

He came around to the front of the house and looked into the window. There was the blue glow again but it seemed to be coming out of the rug. The more he looked at the rug, the more the glow got brighter.

"What sort of magic is this?" asked Ran.

Ran didn't notice the blue light emanating from the home. The closer he got to the house, the brighter the blue glow got. His desire for power pushed him forward to his certain doom. He grabbed hold of the brass door

knob. The Magic Rug was no ordinary rug. It was a quantum gateway. For those who could suspend avarice, it was a portal to greater happiness. For those who were cynical and looked for power, wealth or fame, it was a vast labyrinth of despair.

He looked at the Magic Rug. The blue glow appeared green in his eyes. "My destiny! What if I possessed it? I could conquer India with it! I would be the Lord of All Hosts. King of Kings. The pashas of Araby would be my slaves."

Slowly, he entered the house and walked onto the Magic Rug. A big mistake! It transported him through his past. The Magic Rug placed him in suspended animation. Space and time stopped for Ran. The Magic Rug spewed cosmic energy at him. He saw all the evil he had done before. His greed. His false promises. He saw the families he had dispossessed. He watched as hundreds of people's agonies roamed past his consciousness. The pain was intense.

The blue energy of the Magic Rug robbed him of his avarice. The Magic Rug replicated every stage of his life and changed his heart to gold. His complexion gained pal-
lor. His brown teeth became clean. He looked healthier. His hair grew and became dark brown.

The Magic Rug transformed his hatred into love. The evil in his mind tried to shake free of the visions placed into his soul, but it was no use. Ran could not move. His ego could not shake his body free. He stood there frozen in time. Lollipop entered the house and waited earnestly for the intruder to move. But Ran Rold did not.

The Farmer was driving up the hill when he noticed the speeding Rolls Royce. It was Ran's Rolls. Everyone in Mo-
jave County knew what Ran's Rolls looked like. He sped up to the farm. The door to his house was open. The kids were nowhere to be seen.

He walked in to his living room and looked at the frozen Ran Rold standing on the Magic Rug. He lifted him up and moved him onto the sofa. Lollipop bought a pillow over.

The Farmer placed it under Ran Rold's head. Lollipop licked Ran Rold's face. The cosmic energy from the Magic Rug did not seem to bother the Farmer, the dog, or Maya and Karma who waited outside.

Ran came to his senses within a few seconds of being removed from the Magic Rug. Jubilation shown on Ran's face. His vitality returned.

He had no desire for wealth, power or fame anymore. Tremulous, he pointed at the Farmer with good humor. "There is a God, Farmer. Hallelujah. God is not a manifestation of my id!" he yelled.

"I understand!" he exclaimed joyously into the heavens.

His driver, Sharma, was speechless. His jaws fell agape. No one said anything.

"Good news, children!" he yelled. Before he could finish his sentence, a bolt of energy hit him right in the index finger. His gold plated Ran Rold University ring turned

into solid diamond. He fell to the ground as the power of the Holy Spirit had overcome him.

The Farmer told the children to go inside and start their chores. Maya and Karma stopped staring at what was going on and went inside their humble abode. Lollipop enthusiastically followed.

Sharma, the limousine driver, came and helped Ran up. A few minutes later, a helicopter from the Rold Stipulated Simulacrum Sanitarium (a subsidiary of the Ran Rold Psychiatric Association) landed nearby on the road. Dr. Muhammad, an old man with glasses in a big white coat came and talked to Ran.

The man who determined all that IS on Golden Mountain told Dr. Muhammad, "There is a God! There is a Jesus Christ! I saw Him!"

"He towered over Babylon. I walked with Him through Zion. He cleansed me of my hatred for my father. He told me that the hydrocarbon age has ended. For once

where I was confused, I now know the answers."

The Farmer humbly went into the house thanking Jesus for saving Ran Rold, the Ran Rold, owner of all that Is on Golden Mountain.

"Merry Christmas, Farmer! Merry Christmas, Children!" yelled Ran.

The psychiatrist attempted to inject him with a mild sedative. "Get that away from me!" screamed Ran.

The psychiatrist put away the needle. Ran Rold, the Ran Rold, healer of all that Is of Golden Mountain, and Dr. Muhammad, his chief psychiatrist, got into the white helicopter with the big red letters R.S.S.S. written on it.

"We all serve a purpose here!" howled Ran in ecstasy from his levitating helicopter. He threw the original mortgage note for the farm to the Farmer with "paid in

full, Ran Rold, President" written on the mortgagor blank.

"Whether you live on Golden Mountain or here on this farm, there is nothing on this earth we can bring to the next life. Nothing (no wealth, power or fame) can match everlasting life. Every Christmas we honor the faith God has in us, His greatest creation. That is why He sent us Jesus.

"To remind us that the greatest gift at Christmas is faith. Faith in our nation and its leaders. Faith in our parents. Most of all, faith in what Jesus Christ loved the most, our children."

"Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas, dear children."

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