



EIGHT BILLION, One chaos

A.J. Stempleton

*For those tireless dreamers who, page after page, explore new realities.
Thank you for accompanying me in each story and for believing in the
power of the word.*

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Prologue

In *"Eight Billion, One Chaos,"* two recognizable figures of our era take center stage under fictitious but unmistakable names: **Ronald Drump**, president of the **United Provinces of Extreme America**, and **Ilon Task**, an eccentric billionaire who revolutionized the world with his technological innovations.

The story explores how Task's monumental gift—a million dollars for every inhabitant of the planet—triggers a cascade of unexpected consequences, as Drump, with his insatiable hunger for power, faces international challenges that could bring the world to the brink of collapse.

Between global conflicts, surreal decisions and moments of pure sarcasm, this novel will make you laugh, reflect and question the thin line that separates reality from fiction.

Is this just a parody? Or is it an irreverent look at the times we live in? Any resemblance to reality is purely coincidental... isn't it?

A work that mixes irony, social criticism and a touch of absurdity to captivate the most demanding readers.

J.M.B.

Chapter 1: The Million Dollars and the Cold War 2.0

Ronald Drump, the president of the United Provinces – the most powerful nation in the world – glared at a map of the world spread out on his imposing mahogany desk. The map, dotted with annotations scrawled in bright red marker, showed a complex web of military alliances and potential conflicts. His tie, an even deeper red, seemed to vibrate with the same frenzied energy that emanated from him. The war, that glorious and necessary war against Rutia and Chena, was about to begin. Or at least, that's what he believed.

In his mind, victory was inevitable. His army, the most powerful on the planet, would crush his enemies with brutal and decisive efficiency. I imagined the headlines of the newspapers: "Drump, the great victor", "The Drumpian era of peace", "The end of communism thanks to Drump's audacity". He felt unbeatable, a leader destined for greatness, a man chosen by fate to guide his nation into a radiant future and, above all, dominated by the United Provinces. He was ignorant, of course, of the subtle cracks that were beginning to appear in the façade of his power.

Meanwhile, in a futuristic mansion located in an isolated valley of California, Ilon Task contemplated with a mixture of amazement and satisfaction the magnitude of his generosity. He had divided much of his immense fortune – amassed thanks to his revolutionary video games and his cutting-edge technology companies – among all the inhabitants of the planet. Each person, regardless of nationality or social status, had received one million dollars. A gesture of unprecedented philanthropy, an act of altruism that had placed him at the pinnacle of world admiration.

However, Ilon's joy was marred by an unsettling sense of emptiness. Money, that omnipotent force that had shaped his life, now seemed insignificant in the face of the magnitude of his decision. Had he done the right thing? Had it really fixed any problems or had it just created a new set of challenges? The answer, still nebulous, haunted him like a shadow.

News of Ilon Task's generosity reached Ronald Drump as a low blow, an affront to his authority. How dare that eccentric billionaire eclipse his own greatness with an act of cheap charity? Indignation consumed him, further fueling his thirst for war. Ilon's decision represented a threat to his plan; Sudden wealth dispersed globally could destabilize the world order, creating anarchy that would make it difficult to conquer militarily.

Drump, in his paranoia, saw in Task's generosity a conspiracy. A conspiracy to weaken the United Provinces? A plan orchestrated by Rutia and Chena to undermine their military might? The possibilities piled up in his mind, fueling his anger and his determination to start the war.

As the world teetered between the euphoria of unexpected wealth and the fear of a world war, Ronald Drump and Ilon Task, two seemingly antagonistic figures, were at a turning point. Their seemingly disparate decisions were intrinsically linked, weaving a complex web of consequences that would affect the fate of humanity. The war was about to begin, but the real battle, the battle for the soul of the world, was just beginning. The million dollars, an unexpected gift, became a key piece on a geopolitical chessboard where the rules of the game were about to change forever. The question was: who would emerge victorious in this new and dangerous game?

Chapter 2: The War of Inequalities

In the weeks following Ilon Task's historic announcement, the world seemed to go into something of a collective frenzy. The promise of universal wealth had awakened a strange mixture of hopes and fears. It wasn't just that every human being had received a million dollars overnight; it was that this sudden abundance had completely upset the social order. In countries on every continent, people rushed to make extravagant purchases and pursue consumer dreams that once seemed unattainable.

Ilon watched from his futuristic mansion in California as his grand experiment came to life on an unimaginable scale. The news showed people quitting their jobs, leaving offices, factories and service posts. No one wanted to continue doing tasks that they used to do just out of necessity. City streets were crowded with new sports cars, and luxury hotels and resorts were booked years in advance. Task, at first pleased, soon began to worry about the long-term consequences of his decision. That utopian vision of a society free of economic needs seemed to be cracking little by little.

In a public speech, Ilon attempted to explain his intentions to divide the fortune. He sincerely believed that by relieving financial pressure, people could dedicate themselves to developing their talents and pursuing their true passions. He dreamed of a cultural and creative renaissance where scientists, artists, and thinkers could contribute to human progress without the burden of money. But the reality, as he quickly discovered, was much more complicated. Instead of flourishing, there was chaos. Instead of ingenuity and creativity, there was confusion and selfishness. Ilon Task was beginning to wonder if, instead of liberating humanity, he had simply condemned it to a hedonistic frenzy.

Meanwhile, in the presidential office of the United Provinces, Ronald Drump was following the news attentively. He watched, with a mixture of contempt and envy, the chaos that Ilon Task's "great gift" had unleashed. He had hoped that this universal fortune would unleash a resurgence of patriotism, a fever of investment in the nation itself. What he saw, however, was a society gone mad, aimless, that seemed to have forgotten any loyalty. For Drump, this was not a coincidence; it was all part of a conspiracy. He was convinced that Rutia and Chena, his rivals in the global arena, were benefiting from destabilization. Action had to be taken, and quickly.

Meanwhile, in the United Provinces, sudden wealth generated internal divisions. Although Task's fortune had caught up with every person, the power structures weren't designed for this new reality. Inflation began to soar to stratospheric levels: basic goods, those that were previously easily available, were now out of reach. Companies closed because their employees no longer wanted to work; Banks were desperately trying to find ways to stabilize an economy teetering on the brink. The inequalities, far from disappearing, seemed more evident than ever, fueling resentments.

Deep down, Drump recognized that he had to give a forceful answer. "The United Provinces must not kneel before anyone," he repeated to his advisors and generals, always faithful to his imposing style. The solution to all problems, he thought, lay in a show of international strength. He believed that if the United Provinces projected their power and asserted their supremacy, their people would refocus, and the economy could stabilize. "The greatness of a country," he proclaimed, "is not measured by its wealth, but by its ability to influence and dominate on the global stage."

Drump had prepared a speech for national television, one that he said would restore hope to his people and reaffirm faith in the nation. As the camera focused on him, his eyes shone with unusual intensity. With every word, he emphasized that the United Provinces were facing an economic war, a silent war that could only be won by a bold and patriotic approach. He declared, almost as an act of faith, that Ilon Task's actions and the abundance distributed, however well-intentioned, had opened a crack in the system that only he could close.

"Generosity is not enough. It is discipline that forges the character of a strong nation," he said, staring into the camera. With this statement, he proposed a series of immediate reforms, including controls on individual spending and a "patriotic mobilization" program in which people were basically required to return to their jobs in order to preserve the stability of the country.

However, this statement was met with skepticism. Some saw Drump as the last bastion of order in a deranged world, but others perceived him as a dictator trying to capitalize on the chaos. Demonstrations in the United Provinces began to escalate, and social media was flooded with criticism and mockery of Drump, whom many accused of taking advantage of fear to consolidate his power.

In an unexpected response, Ilon Task posted a video in which he defended his decision and openly criticized Drump's policies. He claimed that his donation had been an act of hope and that the current problems were not the fault of money, but of the system itself. "The problem is not that people have money," he said, "but that they have never had the freedom to imagine a life without fear of losing it."

This provoked an immediate reaction in the government of the United Provinces. Drump was furious upon hearing Task's remarks and vowed that he would take action against "stability traitors." He ordered an investigation into Task for alleged economic conspiracy and launched a diplomatic operation to restrict his companies' actions abroad.

While the leaders of Rutia and Chena watched the crisis in the United Provinces with interest, the world was increasingly polarized. Ordinary citizens, however, were torn between anxiety and hope. The war was getting closer and closer, and the uncertainty of the future weighed on everyone. Would universal wealth be the prelude to an era of peace or the catalyst for an unprecedented global conflict?

Drump, determined to win the battle in his own country, intensified his belligerent discourse and strengthened his military alliances. Peace, according to him, would only be achieved with the total domination of the "rebellious" nations that threatened his power. But Task, confident that humanity could find its own way, kept encouraging people to imagine a life without authoritarian leaders.

Tension was at its peak. The decisions of both leaders, so different and antagonistic, drew a line in the soil of history. Which side would humanity take on?

Chapter 3: The Unexpected Chaos and the Endangered Economy

Ronald Drump found himself growing impatient in the Supreme House, watching the United Provinces crumble. Despite their desire to see absolute control, chaos and confusion flooded the streets. He had underestimated the consequences of the act of Ilon Task, who, by giving away his fortune to every inhabitant of the planet, had set off a series of events that not even the best analysts in his administration could foresee. The global economic system, which was once predictable and stable, was now a volcano about to explode.

Every citizen, from every nation and region, now had a million dollars in his hands. For some, money represented liberation; for others, an opportunity to change their lives. However, no one had foreseen the collateral effects of so much wealth distributed so suddenly and without any control. Factories and small businesses began to close as their employees, believing themselves to be millionaires, quit in masse. Why work, if they were rich now? Cities were plunged into an absolute vacuum while basic services began to decline.

In a desperate attempt to stop the collapse, Drump had ordered a national chain urging citizens of the United Provinces to resume their jobs. But his words were met with indifference and, in some quarters, even ridicule. Citizens, blinded by the mirage of their newfound wealth, believed they could afford not to return to work. However, Drump knew that the economy depended on a complex chain that was now breaking down at all its links. The imminent war he planned with Rutia and Chena, which he previously considered inevitable and glorious, began to seem unattainable to him without a functional economy to sustain his military power.

Meanwhile, Ilon Task watched from his futuristic mansion in Calipornia the effects of his act of generosity. He had wanted to free the world from the slavery of money, but chaos seemed to have been the only answer to his ambitious dream. He had become a hero to millions of people, but his actions seemed to have triggered an unprecedented global crisis. Health systems, transportation services, food supplies, and other essential industries were on the verge of collapse, as their workers retired to "enjoy life" with their newly acquired fortune.

Ilon began to question whether he had made a mistake. The vision he had had of a world without economic inequalities, where everyone would have the freedom to decide his or her destiny, was now clouded by news of entire cities paralyzed and public services on the brink of extinction. Far from being a utopia, the world seemed to be plunged into a nightmare. However, Task believed that change took time, and that humanity would eventually find a balance. But time was a luxury that governments could not afford.

On the other hand, in Drump's office, the meetings became tense and desperate. His advisers and financial strategists warned him that, if the chaos continued, the financial system of the United Provinces would collapse in less than a month. Banks were saturated with money but

unable to use it, and skyrocketing inflation threatened to turn a million dollars into a simple worthless figure. Ronald Drump, increasingly desperate, issued an unthinkable order: to freeze the bank accounts of those citizens who refused to work.

At first, the measure was applauded by some sectors of society, who saw in it a solution to curb the labor crisis. But it soon became a trigger for protests and riots in the streets. The citizens of the United Provinces were unwilling to have Drump take away what they rightfully considered theirs. Thousands of demonstrators gathered in front of the Supreme House demanding economic freedom and their right to decide what to do with their money. Ronald Drump, accustomed to being in total control, found himself in a situation from which he could not get out with his traditional speeches.

Tensions increased, and the United Provinces began to split into factions. Some citizens wanted to return to the stability of before, believing that the million dollars had been a mirage that ruined their lives. Others, however, insisted on the idea of absolute freedom, considering that money had given them a unique opportunity to redefine their lives outside the oppressive system in which they had lived.

As Drump struggled to maintain control, chaos was not unique to the United Provinces. In other parts of the world, tensions between citizens and governments were intensifying. The governments of Rutia and Chena, Drump's traditional enemies, were experiencing similar problems in their own countries. Unlike Drump, however, Rutia and Chena decided to take even more drastic measures. Instead of trying to persuade their citizens to return to work, they decreed that the wealth distributed by Ilon Task was illegal and confiscated it, trying to restore order by force.

The news reached Drump's ears, who felt a mixture of contempt and envy. Although he hated the leaders of Rutia and Chena, he couldn't help but think of their ability to suppress the crisis. But Drump did not have the same control over his people, and any attempt to take back his citizens' money only weakened him politically. Still, Ronald Drump was determined not to give up. In his mind, war against Rutia and Chena would be the only way to unify his people under a common enemy and restore his authority. If he succeeded in leading the United Provinces into war, the internal chaos would be overshadowed by a greater cause.

As Drump accelerated his war plans, Ilon Task faced his own dilemmas. Although he had sought the freedom of mankind, he now saw the price of his act of generosity. Ilon was at a crossroads: interfere to restore order or stand by and watch events unfold. In his mansion in Calipornia, he began to devise a new plan, one that could save humanity from the chaos he himself had created. I knew that any misstep could make the situation worse, but sitting idly by was no longer an option.

The world, between economic chaos and the threat of unprecedented war, was on the verge of a profound transformation. Ronald Drump and Ilon Task, two seemingly opposite figures, were increasingly entangled in a web of decisions that could define the future of all humanity. What path would they take? And at what cost? In a world teetering on the brink of anarchy, time was running out to make decisions, and each character's mistakes could be the last step toward irreversible disaster.

Chapter 4: The Collapse of the Millionaires

The news of the "Task Gift" continued to spread like wildfire, revolutionizing every corner of the planet. In the early days, the collective euphoria and sense of immediate purchasing power had clouded any other concerns. But, as expected, the initial enthusiasm began to crumble in the face of the reality of what a million dollars meant when each inhabitant of the planet had the same amount.

In the United Provinces, Ronald Drump was at a crossroads. Unexpected global wealth had shaken their fragile plan for world domination and drastically altered the national and international economy. The side effects of that sudden injection of personal capital were devastating. Each citizen had become, in theory, a millionaire, and the most immediate consequence was the massive abandonment of jobs. The drivers, teachers, doctors, street sweepers, all had decided that, with their millionaire bank account, it was time to live life without worries.

"Ilon Task is a threat to the world economy and stability!" Drump bellowed at a press conference. The hysteria was palpable; luxury stores were crowded, real estate was selling at ridiculously inflated prices, and banks, overwhelmed, no longer knew how to handle the excess cash circulating. The streets, once tidy and bustling with activity, turned into chaos. Basic services began to fail: public transport collapsed, hospitals were understaffed, and empty schools reflected the decay of a system that had not foreseen such a unique catastrophe.

Drump, with his well-known explosive temper, called an emergency meeting in the Situation Room, an imposing underground chamber where the president surrounded himself with his advisers and top national security leaders. Those present shared an expression of alarm as they listened to the president, who, red with anger and frustration, listed the possible threats that this new reality posed to his long-awaited war project.

"This is an act of economic sabotage!" Drump proclaimed, banging his fist on the table. The whole world has become a millionaire, and now no one works! The machinery that moves the United Provinces is stopped!

One of his closest advisers, General Sullivan, took the floor.

"Mr. President, we should consider taking direct action against Task. This... irresponsible 'generosity' has destroyed the foundations of our country's economy and, with it, our defenses.

The general's words resonated strongly. Drump, always eager for a reason to start a conflict, saw in it the perfect excuse. The war against Rutia and Chena, already in process, could now be extended to a new figure: Ilon Task, the billionaire who, with a single move, had left the United Provinces vulnerable. Drump saw a golden opportunity, but also a titanic challenge. Even so, the president was never one to cower in the face of challenges.

Meanwhile, in California, Task was still shrouded in a mixture of satisfaction and concern. On the one hand, he watched with satisfaction how, in various parts of the world, small communities and families celebrated his newfound fortune. I watched the news that broadcast how impoverished villages had managed to build new infrastructure, schools and hospitals. However, at the global level, the repercussions were less encouraging. Many countries saw how their economies, designed to depend on the daily labor of millions, could not sustain themselves in the face of a mass exodus of workers.

Task began receiving visits and calls from desperate global leaders, asking him to intervene to "reverse" his gift. But the billionaire was firm in his position: humanity had to learn to adapt to this new era. He believed that his act of generosity would force nations to change their economic systems, perhaps toward something more equitable and sustainable.

Drump, of course, did not share this view. The president of the United Provinces was not willing to "adapt". In his view, the chaos unleashed would only be resolved by force.

That same night, Drump directed a national television broadcast, addressing not only the citizens of the United Provinces, but the entire world.

"Citizens of the United Provinces and of the world, we are at war. Task's wealth is a trap, a betrayal of our nation, a strategy designed to destabilize us and leave us vulnerable. But we will not sit idly by. We will take control, restore order, and confront any enemy, external or internal, that threatens our nation.

The broadcast, full of rhetoric and fervor, did not take long to go viral. Drump had declared a kind of proxy war against Task, branding him a traitor to civilization and calling into question the morality of his act of "generosity." Listening to the president's remarks, Task felt a mixture of anger and anguish. At no time had his intention been to destabilize the world; on the contrary, he believed that he was giving humanity a unique opportunity to build a different future. However, Drump seemed determined to interpret it in the most incendiary way possible.

Tensions have risen across the globe. In several cities in the United Provinces, groups of angry people began protesting outside government offices, demanding that the government impose some kind of control over the sudden global wealth. The demands ranged from a mandatory return to work to government intervention in the economy to restore essential services. However, every step Drump took seemed only to make the situation worse.

As the protests grew, the president began implementing emergency measures, such as imposing curfews and deploying armed forces to maintain order. The most powerful nation in the world was beginning to feel the effects of a self-inflicted collapse. However, the war that Ronald Drump longed for was still in a dormant state. Rutia and Chena seemed to wait patiently for the right moment to intervene.

At the end of that chaotic week, Task, observing how the world was torn between chaos and adaptation, wrote a message on his social networks:

"My gift was not an end, but a beginning. Humanity must find a way to reinvent itself, to move forward. It was not my intention to cause suffering, but to give them the freedom to decide their own destiny. The question is: what will they do with that freedom?"

Task's message, to some, sounded like a challenge. For others, as a warning. But, no matter how it was interpreted, his message would be the prelude to a global transformation that the world would never forget.

Chapter 5: Conflict and the Last Resort

As chaos continues to spread around the world, Ronald Drump, president of the United Provinces, summons his circle of advisors and generals. The economic and social crisis generated by the sudden wealth distributed by Ilon Task has escalated uncontrollably. The government has lost steam in the eyes of citizens, protests are intensifying, and the economy is crumbling under the weight of massive inflation and widespread underproduction. For Drump, this situation is not only a threat to his government, but a direct challenge to his leadership and the prestige of his nation.

Drump is quick to blame Task more openly, accusing him of having intentionally sabotaged global stability. But his stance, far from calming the situation, only fuels tensions...

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