

This airport had the most uncomfortable seats she'd ever sat on, but there was nothing else to do until the plane arrived so she sat and tried to ignore the noise around her. She saw a young mother trying to soothe an impatient child and she thought about her own children, and not for the first time wondered how they were doing. How does a mother lose track of her children so thoroughly, she mused. She hadn't seen them since she took her current job, which had her travelling all over the world, and she was surprised to realize that it had been many years now that she'd been doing this. She'd taken the job after a series of career changes that had, she reflected, been quite improbable. How had she spent 5 months as a crocodile wrangler? She was trained as an accountant! Suddenly that seemed strange to her, though at the time it was the logical progression.

She traced back each change and found that it had all started the day that man in the blue hat had stepped in for a tax consultation. He had seemed so old, yet outwardly he looked like he was only about 40. But there had been something he'd said, and she'd never forgotten what it was, and it had made her realize that there was more to life than accounting. The seed was planted, and it had grown into a marvelous tree. His tax problem had been fairly mundane.