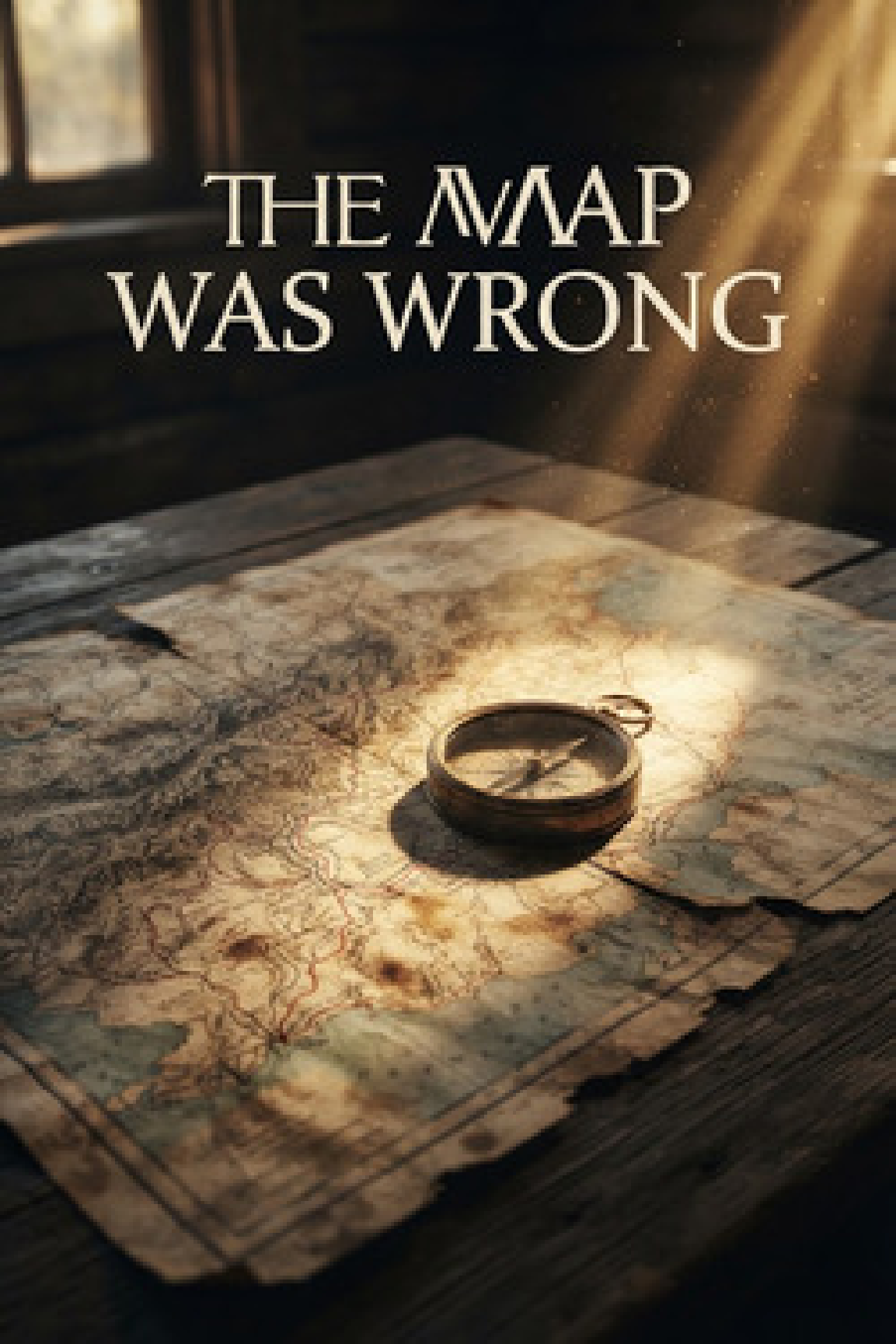

THE MAP
WAS WRONG

PART II

THRESHOLD 1

The Map Was Wrong

There is a strange arrogance that accompanies human beings.

We believe we can predict life.

We spend years building plans.

Five-year goals.

Ten-year strategies.

Budgets.

Projections.

Calendars.

Maps.

Then reality arrives.

And reality has never read our schedules.

For a long time I had believed that experience produced predictability.

The more you learn.

The more you know.

The more you travel.

The more you should be able to understand what will happen.

It seemed logical.

It seemed reasonable.

It seemed even scientific.

Then life amused itself by proving the opposite.

The most important turns always arrived without an appointment.

No reservation.

No advance notice.

No warning.

They just arrived.

Sometimes in the form of opportunity.

Sometimes in the form of loss.

Sometimes in the form of an encounter.

Sometimes in the form of illness.

The difference is understood only afterward.

When you are inside them they all seem the same thing.

An interruption.

A sudden change.

A detour.

Observing the path completed up to that moment, I began to notice a curious design.

Every time I was convinced I had understood everything, something happened that

changed the question.

And when the question changes, the answer too loses value.

I remember a particular period of my life.

I had experience.

Responsibility.

Results.

Knowledge.

Everything seemed to suggest a fairly clear trajectory.

I was convinced the future would follow a certain direction.

Not because I was presumptuous.

Because the data seemed to say so.

Then life did what it does best.

Change the game table.

Not the rules.

The table.

This is the part almost no one tells.

When the table changes, accumulated experience does not disappear.

But it becomes insufficient.

You have to learn again.

Observe again.

Listen again.

It is humiliating.

And at the same time extraordinary.

Because it reminds us that we are students much longer than we believe.

As the years passed I began to appreciate unpredictability.

Not because it was comfortable.

It never is.

But because it was honest.

Unpredictability forces people to show themselves for what they are.

When everything follows the plan, anyone can seem competent.

When the plan disappears, character emerges.

The people I admire most are not those who correctly predicted the future.

They are those who knew how to cross futures they had not predicted.

This is a different skill.

Much rarer.

Much more human.

We live in a world that rewards those who seem sure.

Those who speak with certainty.

Those who promise results.

Those who offer predictions.

I, over time, began to trust more the people who know how to live with uncertainty.

Because uncertainty is not a system error.

It is the system.

The universe has never signed a contract of predictability with anyone.

Yet we keep surprising ourselves.

We keep protesting.

We keep considering the unforeseen an exception.

Perhaps we should do the opposite.

Consider it the norm.

When you finally accept this idea, something changes.

You stop chasing absolute control.

You stop demanding guarantees.

You stop living as if the future were private property.

And you begin to live like an explorer.

With attention.

With respect.

With curiosity.

I remember a phrase that life taught me without using words:

The best things and the worst things never send a letter of introduction.

They arrive.

They enter.

They modify the landscape.

Then they leave, leaving consequences.

It is up to us to decide what to do with them.

Looking back, I realize that many of the experiences I consider fundamental would never have passed a rational preventive evaluation.

They were too risky.

Too improbable.

Too complicated.

Too different from what I had imagined.

Yet they are precisely the ones that built the person I have become.

That is why today I no longer consider predictability a virtue.

I consider it a comfort.

The true virtue is another.

To stay open.

To stay attentive.

To stay capable of learning.

Even when life changes the table.

Even when destiny modifies the question.

Even when the future enters the room without knocking.

Because there is a truth I have learned by crossing continents, crises, relationships, successes and failures.

The most important things of my life have always happened outside every forecast.

And it was precisely there that the best part of the story began.