ForeWord Reviews
Clarion Review

GENERAL

The Marinolli Treasure
Hal Lewis
Lulu
978-1-4303-2416-4
Four Stars (out of Five)

"What attracts men and offends women is that there are no feelings in Malenglish" Lewis' protagonist Chuck Evans explains. That's because it's how men talk to men when no one else is around. Maneglish is a kind of conversational protocol involving the use of trivia with rules almost as complex as a language. "I'd grown up with three brothers no sisters and a matronly mother who made June Cleaver look like a biker chick I didn't learn this until it was too late."

In *the Marinolli Treasure* Attorney Hal Lewis has codified the phenomenon and coined the monicker in his first novel. He spins the tale with wit and trivia. An immigrant boy living in an orphanage and working for a printing company steals a box of baseball cards the Marinoli treasure. Many years later his grandson Joe Marinolli finds what's left of his grandfather's hoard—one sheet of baseball cards in uncut pristine condition. That unimaginably valuable sheet containing six Honus Wagner cards sets off an amazing series of events as Joe tries to sell them. Joe wants the money in order to help the kids of the orphanage buy a baseball field that's about to be turned into a high-rise building.

Attorney Chuck Evans is contacted by Jerry Johns a baseball player who wants to buy an Honus Wagner card. Sounds easy but selling the cards turns out to be anything but straight forward. Motivations collide as negotiations heat up and buyers jockey for dominant buying positions. Firebombing kidnappings even murder will do to get those cards.

The quantity of trivia packed into this book might suggest obstacle to telling the story. But Lewis has succeeded in blending the trivia into the very fabric of the tale as well as using Malenglish as the medium for telling a suspenseful but lighthearted tale of intrigue.

While this is not deep literature it is written with a refreshingly original approach and includes consistent believable characters in a suspenseful story that almost turns the pages by itself. Trivia buffs will get an extra kick out of knowing the references which abound on nearly every page while baseball fans card collectors and lawyers may find extra interest. Ordinary folk who don’t speak Malenglish will enjoy it too.