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between the
United States
and China, and
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grows more
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from? Lisa
Margonelli's
desire to learn
took her on a
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thousand mile
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station to oil
fields half a
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truth behind the
myths, she
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platform where
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oil analyst who
almost gave
birth on the
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floor, Chadian
villagers who
are said to
wander the oil
fields in the
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changed the

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and ideals that
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deeper stuff
than her own
ancestry: in a

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time of conflict
over who we are
as a country,
she tries to
find the story
where we all
belong. Praise
for Futureface
“Smart,
searching . . .
Meditating on
our ancestors,
as Wagner’s own
story shows, can

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Money And
Power

suggest better
ways of being
ourselves.”—Maud
Newton, The New
York Times Book
Review “Sincere
and instructive
. . . This
timely
reflection on
American
identity, with a
bonus exposé of
DNA ancestry

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testing, deserves a wide
audience.”—Libra
Money And
Power
ry Journal “The
narrative is
part Mary
Roach—style part
icipation-heavy
research, part
family history,
and part
exploration of
existential
loneliness. . . .

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The journey is
worth
Money And
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taking.”—Kirkus
Reviews “[A]
ruminative
exploration of
ethnicity and
identity . . .
Wagner’s odyssey
is an effective
riposte to anti-
immigrant politi
cs.”—Publishers
Weekly

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When Thomas
Jefferson died
on the Fourth of
July 1826 -- the
nation's
fiftieth
birthday -- he
was more than
\$100,000 in
debt. Forced to
sell thousands
of acres of his
lands and nearly

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all of his
furniture and
artwork, in 1831
his heirs bid a
final goodbye to
Monticello
itself. The
house their
illustrious
patriarch had
lovingly
designed in the
Blue Ridge
Mountains of

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Virginia, his
beloved "essay
in
architecture,"
was sold to the
highest bidder.
Saving
Monticello
offers the first
complete post-
Jefferson
history of this
American icon
and reveals the

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amazing story of
how one Jewish
family saved the
house that
became a family
home to them for
89 years --
longer than it
ever was to the
Jeffersons. With
a dramatic
narrative sweep
across
generations,

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Power
Marc Leepson
vividly recounts
the turbulent
saga of this
fabled estate.
Twice the house
came to the
brink of ruin,
and twice it was
saved, by two
different
generations of
the Levy family.
United by a

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fierce love of
country, they
venerated the
Founding Fathers
for establishing
a religiously
tolerant and
democratic
nation where
their family had
thrived since
the founding of
the Georgia
colony in 1733,

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Largely free of
the persecutions
and prejudices
of the Old
World.
Monticello's
first savior was
the mercurial
U.S. Navy
Commodore Uriah
Phillips Levy, a
colorful and
controversial
sailor,

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celebrated for
his successful
campaign to ban
flogging in the
Navy and
excoriated for
his stubborn
willfulness.

Prompted in 1833
by the Marquis
de Lafayette's
inquiry about
"the most
beautiful house

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in America,"
Levy discovered
that Jefferson's
mansion had
fallen into a
miserable state
of decay.

Acquiring the
ruined estate
and committing
his considerable
resources to its
renewal, he
began what

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became a
tumultuous nine-
decade
relationship
between his
family and
Jefferson's
home. After
passing from
Levy control at
the time of the
commodore's
death,
Monticello fell

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once more into
hard times,
cattle being
housed on its
first floor and
grain in its
once elegant
upper rooms.

Again,
remarkably, a
member of the
Levy family came
to the rescue.
Uriah's nephew,

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the aptly named
Jefferson Monroe
Levy, a three-
term New York
congressman and
wealthy real
estate and stock
speculator,
gained
possession in
1879. After
Jefferson Levy
poured hundreds
of thousands of

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dollars into its
repair and
upkeep, his
chief reward was
to face a
vicious national
campaign, with
anti-Semitic
overtones, to
expropriate the
house and turn
it over to the
government. Only
after the

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Campaign had
failed, with
Levy declaring
that he would
sell Monticello
only when the
White House
itself was
offered for
sale, did Levy
relinquish it to
the Thomas
Jefferson
Foundation in

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1923. Rich with
memorable,
larger-than-life
characters,
beginning with
Thomas Jefferson
himself, the
story is cast
with such
figures as James
Turner Barclay,
a messianic
visionary who
owned the house

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from 1831 to
1834; the fiery
Uriah Levy, he
of the six
courts-martial
and teenage
wife; the
colorful
Confederate
Colonel Benjamin
Franklin
Ficklin, who
controlled
Monticello

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during the Civil
War; and the
Money And
Power
eccentric, high-
living, deal-
making egoist
Jefferson Monroe
Levy. Pulling
back the veil of
history to
reveal a story
we thought we
knew, Saving
Monticello
establishes this

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Power
most American of
houses as more
truly reflective
of the American
experience than
has ever been
fully
appreciated.

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