

Editor's Note

In preparing the American edition of Howard W. Campbell, Jr.'s confessions, this Editor's Note dives into the complexities of Campbell's identity as a writer and a person accused of severe crimes. Campbell, a one-time playwright with moderate success, is illustrated as someone who could manipulate truth to suit artistic demands. The editor presents a dichotomy: while Campbell's fabrications may mislead, they could also embody a form of truth that captivates readers.

The editor clarifies their role not as a critic, but as a facilitator, ensuring Campbell's confessions are presented in a polished manner. They mention minimal alterations made to the text, primarily concerning grammatical corrections and the addition of italicizations for emphasis. To protect innocent individuals, several names throughout have been changed, including those of Bernard B. O'Hare, Harold J. Sparrow, and Dr. Abraham Epstein. The editor notes that additional changes were made to certain content for ethical reasons, citing legal concerns over a claim made in Campbell's original manuscript regarding "I-Am-An-American Day," which lacks substantive proof.

Furthermore, the editor undertook the task of restoring Campbell's poems quoted in German, as Campbell's own versions were often muddled due to his dissatisfaction with them. This restoration was executed by a competent linguist, Mrs. Theodore Rowley. The editor, while aiming for fidelity to Campbell's voice, admits to making significant cuts in two chapters: one due to legal advisement related to potentially slanderous content and another involving explicit material, which Campbell himself requested be omitted.

Finally, a note about the book's title references a speech by Mephistopheles from Goethe's **Faust**, emphasizing the struggle between light and darkness and introducing themes of duality. Campbell originally wanted to dedicate the book to "Mata Hari," but reconsidered, shifting towards a broader commentary on those who hide their misdeeds behind a façade of righteousness. The ultimate dedication reflects Campbell's self-awareness, revealing his conflicted nature as one who served "evil too openly and good too secretly."