

REVOLUTIONARY LOYALTIES, TRANSITIONS AND KARMA

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CHAPTER 1

It was a Great War, even called so. THE Great War. Great for those behind the lines collecting money and preparing for what would happen in the third decade of the twentieth century. A GREAT decade, for those who survived the first two. Or who would grow into it to become more than they imagined possible, or ever wanted to be. But such is where the whole thing started, for the beginning of the next Great...Endeavor.

It was another beautiful day in the neighborhood of No Man's Land, under a gloriously hued sky of grey sprinkled with specks of black dirt dancing its way up from being cajoled out of the ground by magnificently multicolored lights from explosions that landed into it. Glorious, special nationally expressive fireworks complimented by the rhythmic drum-like beats of the exploding shells which echoed against the walls of the trenches, providing a stereo symphony audible to even the most non-musical ears, and felt in the belly by vibration receptors that replaced the rumbling of empty stomachs.

“Ah yes, a magnificent show, which when the moving picture photographers learn how to colorize, will make them rich lads indeed. American success stories!” Major Edward Jackson commented through his oversized graying handlebar mustache while pushing out his complimentarily fat cat blue blood Bostonian belly as he glanced out the window of the field hospital located atop a hill that had been converted into a mountain relative to the forest below it that had been reduced to a pit covered with dug out drenches. “Yes,” the most skilled orthopedic surgeon in the battalion commented as the next patient was plopped on his table, his shrapnel and bullet (yet not trench foot) injured leg savable only by the intervention of Major Doctor Jackson's exceptionally skilled, and manicured, hands. “American success stories, the only ones worth valuing and fighting for. America first!”

“At the expense of everyone else?” volunteer recently-graduated and intensely civilian Doctor Emily Younger challenged as she looked at the injured soldier whose wounds may have been the result of German bullets from the front, or perhaps American lead shot from the rear. She felt the stiffness of her unwashed, sweat-soaked and hopefully not too lice infested red-tinged auburn mane under her cap, and the chill in her aching and, as she recalled, shapely legs which had not felt warmth in a week. She knew this patient all too well. A popular variety of good ole boy ‘Remember the Alamo’ manhood. Jethro Walsh, a charismatically loud Sergeant, skillful supply scrounger, and mobster in training who wanted to know Doctor Emily all too well. Particularly when he had not more than one week ago burst into her tent and pulled down his pants, making her an offer she couldn't refuse. One that she did refuse, and got slapped around for doing so. Until the whistle for to organize another attack called him back to duty ended the frivolity.

Walsh valued the lives of his men almost as little as he valued a young, female medical school graduate's virtue, or dignity. But any wounded American in Major's hospital was entitled to be put in front of the line of other men turned soldiers, who turned patients, who hopefully would not be turned into other mutilated souls or corpses. Souls who had the misfortune of being British, French or, worse, Germans who had the good fobertune

of being captures, who wanted nothing to do with the War from the time of their voluntary 'enlistment' to serve the Kaiser.

"Doc, yer gonna fix my leg up real good, right?" Seargent Jethro Walsh asked the Major with a bold, Texan accent, made even more loud, crude and lecherous by a breath reeking of stolen French civilian brandy, intended to supplement the unofficial supply of morphine the Major insisted was reserved only for American patients. "So's I can have a dance with this perty Nurse when we celebrate our victory over the Krauts, after rescuing these Limey Brits and French Frogs from the Hun, right?" he continued, winking amorously at Emily.

"I'm a doctor," Emily reminded the low life Seargent who was now a vulnerable patient, restraining her personal disgust for him with a rapidly thinning wall of moral code. "Who's here to give according to my abilities to those in need who---"

"--Are Americans, like us, right?" Major Jackson asserted. He motioned for Emily to clean Walsh's wounds, pushing aside the Nurse whose job it normally belonged to, denying Emily access to surgical gloves only worn by 'real' doctors. "We take care of our own men, like this American soldier will take care of women like you once you get home. American Women who---"

"----Look after their American husbands, first, second and last, and looking after no one else, of course, unless they are his sons, or daughters," Emily assertively noted with a calm voice. With her face of course turned away from Jackson, as she had learned how to lie effectively with her voice, but not her eyes. It was a man's hospital after all, in a man's war, which she could only make less agonizing for the men in it if she deferred to men in authority like Major Jackson. A career Army Surgeon and decorated 'hero' of the manufactured for American profiteers Spanish American War who God, in yet another one of His lapses in judgment, had given the skill to put together torn open flesh. Whose Hippocratic oath 'to do no harm' did not include anyone except fellow Americans.

While stripping the tattered, blood soaked trousers off of Seargent Walsh, Emily noted his crotch, taking note of the third leg springing up between his one good leg and the other hindlimb that was about to be saved from the amputation pile. Emily so much wanted to amputate that symbol of the veteran Injun killer's, Nigger lynching manhood. By 'accident' of course while Jackson's back was turned. But Doctor Emily Younger had taken an oath too. To do no harm, even to assholes like Walsh. And to be as effective as possible to everybody else, particularly the other wounded patients in the field hospital. Who had the misfortune of having their flesh torn apart. And the worse misfortune of not being American, the only qualification that mattered in Major Doctor Jackson's hospital that allowed them to be treated in time to save their limbs, eyes, still recognizable faces, or life.

With her privately wandering eyes, while diverting curious male eyes to her wiggling ass, 'Nurse' Emily perused every corner of the commandeered barn to see who was most

savable. And if savable, who would be most valuable with regard to ending the war now, and building a world that has a chance of surviving without another war later. One candidate came to mind. Hans Muller, a German Doctor with a torn, blood covered uniform well beyond recognition, who had assisted with stabilizing patients wearing all uniforms. Until he was pushed back into the prisoner of war pig pen, from which he had escaped at least three times, with a leg and an arm that were in worse shape than any wound he tried to treat on others. Appendages which DOCTOR Emily knew were savable, but only with Major Jackson's miracle healer hands, and his arm/hand saving equipment, which he nearly chopped off the hands of more than one nurse or young doctor for trying to burrow. But how to get Hans Muller to Major Jackson's table?

Emily's self observed her eyes meeting Hans'. She found them caring, kind and reeking of an intelligence that knew that the 'what goes around comes around' rule trumps all other rules. That the only kind of effective caring is universal compassion, which requires you to serve strangers and foreigners, and especially enemies, with as much commitment and intensity as you would 'family', or countrymen. In a world where nationalism, the most legal and dangerous brand of selective compassion for 'us' over 'them', not only made wars possible, but inevitable.

Emily pretended to feel faint, pressing on her stomach. "Womanly problems," she said apologetically to Doctor-Major Jackson. "Which---"

"---You'll take care of in a jiffy, like the last times, right?" the 'good Doctor' said with a gentle 'Dad will take care of it all, little girl' to Emily.

"Of course, Doctor," Emily replied with a bow and subservient voice she had seen in so many nurses, which she had vowed never to say in such a manner to anyone when she was handed her medical degree at the graduation ceremony back home in Philadelphia. But it was a matter of necessity now. For her continued 'permission' to serve the wounded here in France under Major Jackson's 'protection. And for Hans Muller, who she sensed, after hearing what he had said and done, was more indispensable for saving the world after the war than anyone else. Even herself.

On the way to the Nurses' latrine, Emily grabbed hold of an American uniform. After faking an adjustment between her the legs and seeking 'special medication' for her abdominal 'womanly' problem, she worked herself to the holding pen of German prisoners. She slipped the Doughboy private uniform out from under her skirt (a regimentally-required garment that she found as impractical as Sergeant Walsh's testicular tissue was dangerous for future generations, and women in this one) in front of Hans Muller. "Put it on, and go to front door, please," she instructed the multi-lingual, highly educated and (as it could happen in some men) overly-intelligent German Medical officer in her best Bavarian German, pretending to address the oversized rats that worked its way into the barn, munching away on discarded arms and legs which had not yet made it into the Company Stewpot. "And go to the front door. After cutting off that beard and glorious topknot," she continued, dropping a pair of clippers into the recesses of the uniform.

Emily hoped and prayed that Muller would do the effective rather than the selfish thing. Thank God, or perhaps the return of one of the gods who wanted to help rather than torture humanity, he did.

Following the miraculous work done by Major Jackson's wrinkled, yet rhythmically moving hands, Sergeant Walsh's leg was secured onto his body, after which he was whisked off by Colored Orderlies who, by some miracle, had been relieved of their duties as grave and trench diggers by their White officers. "Next American hero!" Jackson proclaimed. "Who I promise to send home to make more Americans, who will preserve democracy for generations to come. And be sure that the Krauts pay for this War, and the Brits and Frogs appreciate who saved them from the Hun!" he pledged to Muller, not recognizing the German Doctor. "What do you say to that, Private?"

"God bless America, and Americans like you, Major," the de-bearded and freshly sheered Muller replied as a simple minded, family man working man from the land of the free and the brave, in the manner of his rank, and opportunity to spend the rest of the war outside of prison camp. Or, Emily secretly hoped, as an American soldier who will, upon medical discharge, work his way back home to the States, perhaps to her home state of Pennsylvania.

CHAPTER 2

There was another reason other than being an American as to why Jethro Walsh was given top rate treatment at the OR, and the best of care afterwards in the recovery villa. ‘Sergeant Santa’ as he was called, during the Christmas season as well as the sweltering one hundred degree dog days of August, delivered anything anyone asked for, or wanted, as long as they were American. Where and how this crafty and charismatic 50 year old veteran of so many legally sanctioned wars in exotic places and gangland rivalries in El Paso obtained illegal and borderline legal goods that ranged from a bottle of wine, to murders (and maiming) on the battlefield that were officially called ‘accidents’ were never talked about. He also provided tips on sure fire investments in the New York, London and Berlin stock exchanges that always delivered. And when asked how this ugly, low born, high school drop-out was so good at his craft, the inquisitor didn’t live long enough to enjoy his ill earned booty. In exchange for doing ‘good deeds’ for his American countrymen of all ranks, and most particularly his fellow Texans, Sergeant Santa, asked only one thing. A ‘small favor’ at some time in the future.

There was something in ‘Santa Jethro’s’ smile, with its colorfully upward right edge relative to the left, that said this ‘favor’ was merely to be a good boy, a brave man or a trustworthy buddy to most of the needy schleps who came to his ‘office’. The location of such was most anywhere Sergeant Walsh was between battles which he somehow didn’t have to personally engage in. But this time, the visitor to Santa’s ‘office’ requested something that would no doubt incur a really big favor in return.

“So,” Walsh said while leaning back against a real chair, made of real un-shattered wood with non-blood stained petty-point cushions, firmly placed in a secluded ‘alley’ between outbuildings that had once belonged to a French farmer who, officially anyway, had donated it to the American Army Medical Core just before his untimely death by stroke. “What you’re asking is not so easy to deliver, my friend,” he continued between four long puffs on a cigar. “But before I decide how to do it, and what it will cost you, to cover my overhead costs, I need to know why I should do it, Private Miller, even though yer a fella Texan.”

“Because it’s the right thing ta do,” Hans Muller replied, realizing that he had put too much yankee English into his West Texas accent. “And we’s here ta do the right thing, ain’t that right, Sarge?” the holder of four university degrees replied, trying his best to bastardize the grammar of a language he had worked so hard to master.

Muller, thankful to still be alive, but put off balance by his continued new identity as an American private, absorbed one of Walsh’s penetrating stares. Those looks that penetrated through your eyes, brain and mind, revealing more than any X-ray could show. It wasn’t a new experience for Muller, as many professors had done the same at school, as did his father at home while he still had a home in East Prussia. Muller had learned somehow to put up a wall behind his eyes, to block his ‘assessors’ from seeing any doubts, fears or lies he was hiding. But there was something that Walsh was looking for that Muller couldn’t hide. Goodness, caring and the agenda of needing to do the right

thing rather than the profitable thing. Something that Muller was warned about letting low life scum who rose to the top from seeing. Scum who were treated like saints, and who of course considered goodness weakness.

After ten seconds that felt like as many years, Santa Jethro raised his chin upward, turned up the left side of his lips rather than his right, and chuckled. “Those Kraut prisoners are your cousins, right?” he said, looking at the cage of scared, unarmed and hastily medically treated POWs awaiting transportation to a camp above ground or a grave below it. “You being born and raised by Bavarian Texans from Indianola.”

“Ya. They are,” Muller said, knowing that Walsh had detected his Germanic diction, somehow, abandoning any more painful gymnastic exercises with his mouth to hide it.

“And you accidently ran into them out there in no man’s land,” Walsh continued.

“I did indeed, by accident,” Muller said, looking towards the boys, and men in German uniforms about to be shipped off to an over-crowded prison camp, into a grave if the aforementioned were too inaccessible, who he promised in 1914 would go home alive after the war, no matter who emerged the ‘victor’ in a lose-lose situation. A promise he knew he could never keep after New Year’s Day of 1915.

“Which is why they didn’t kill ya,” Walsh said, relating a story that so conveniently fit Muller’s new identity, by either Divine luck delivered by God, or a set up initiated by the devil. “And why you didn’t kill them, right?”

“Yeah...I made a promise to their parents back home...”

“Back home in Texas, that is,”

“And Bavaria,” Muller added. “To see that our family would survive the war. No matter what side each person decided to join.”

“Which is a dilemma indeed,” Walsh conceded, stroking his stubble-covered and battle scared chin in the manner of a learned professor rather than a self-taught street mogul. “A man owes an obligation to his family, and his country. Ain’t that so?” Mentor Walsh asked ‘student’ Muller.

“It is, so,” Muller conceded with a respectful bow to the Hillbilly Professor .

“And in a Civil War, as both of our ancestors know, it’s a real problem if a family member decides to fight for another country. Like two of my uncles wearing Yankee blue in the War of Northern Aggression, my Pappy putting on Grey for the Cause, and one of them scadadiling to Mexico before the recruiters came to town,” Santa Jethro stated, reliving still painful stories that were passed down to him about the not-so distant past. “Ain’t that so?”

“It is,” Muller admitted, considering history of his own still fragmented family, whose loyalties were split in Wars going all the way back to the 1848 People’s Revolutions against the kings and capitalists, which the latter won.

“But, everything can be fixed, I suppose, if families on opposite sides of a War decide to join the same side,” Walsh proclaimed, as if he was one of those discoveries that truly Enlightened Professors made on the spot at the lectern, sharing it with the students whose curious minds made such discoveries possible. “Ain’t that really so?”

“It is,” Muller smiled, sharing in what he felt was a solution that was, unlike this tragic self-destructive war, a win-win situation for everyone. “And that solution is?” he asked Walsh.

Santa Jethro smiled, ear to ear, the outer portions of his chin revealing the kind of smile that reflected happiness for him, and no one else. “They’re working for me now. The Right side. Our side. Wanna make that so?”

“Yes,” Muller said. “But, does the American Army accept POWs as new recruits?”

“They can, for the right favor,” Walsh proposed. “And for favors after the War, which everyone in the know knows that we’ll win, since we funded it, as the Dough boys,” he continued, smirking at the reference to bread and money, both of which Americans, as late comers to the conflict, were so rich in relative to everyone else in the War. After which he turned to Muller. “But I the meantime, I am in a position to offer you, my Germanic potential friend, a job working for the right side that will take care of their families, mine and...yours.” Having put that offer on the invisible yet always present table in front of him, Walsh pocketed his cigar, stepped onto his recently repaired foot, and firmly made his way back to his private recovery room in the most ornate building in the hospital compound.

“And the favor?” Muller asked Walsh, knowing fully well the price for refusing it, for his men, and himself.

Sergeant Santa lifted his left crutch up to point at the hardest working, and misunderstood woman in the compound. She was carrying a liter containing a man three times her weight with the utmost urgency to the operating barn. “Doctor Emily. My room, third door on the right from the staircase in the master farmhouse over yander. For dinner tonight at 6.. And, if she knows what’s really good for her, which she does, breakfast. A small favor for you to arrange, to have her arrive at 5:45, alone. Just tell her that I’m an old friend from Philly who needs and wants to see her, and finally respects who she is and wants to be. Yes?”

Muller caught a glimpse of Emily, connecting to her eyes while she was, thankfully, not looking at him. Then Major Jackson, who had saved his arm and leg from the amputation pile at the hospital door with whom Emily was having a heated dispute regarding the patients. Indeed, by all accounts and observations, Jackson was a Nationalist

commanding officer who would now order Muller killed as a spy or tortured for 'information' he already knew. Yes, Santa Walsh had delivered him an early Christmas present he could not refuse, in exchange for a small favor involving Emily, for which Walsh seemed to have the deepest tender feelings. The details of which were none of Miller's business.

CHAPTER 3

“Why are you looking at the window of that farmer’s Mansion and not here, at what was delivered to OUR table, Hans?” Corporal Richard Grossman asked Captain Muller from their new accommodations in the kitchen of the servant’s king sized cottage. The table was adored with a meal of mutton and real vegetables that HADN’T been so overcooked that one couldn’t recognize what they were. With every large gulp Grossman shoveled into his hungry and appreciative mouth, a portion stuck to the edges of his graying goatee and mustache. “Come, eat, dine or gorge yourself at this table, before our host changes his mind.”

“Indeed! After we were allowed showers with hot water, and a shave, on our face and not our heads this time!” Private Werner Ranselhoff added, proudly running his fingers through his the ear length mane of overgrown, non-regulation, some would say effeminate hair which he was fortunate enough to keep hidden from the other officers over him.

“And these freshly cleaned and pressed dining clothes,” Corporal Dieter Stein added, feeling the crease on the civilian trousers that matched the jacket. Both of them were his actual size. It was the first set of wardrobe that did fit him since he was pulled out of his chair as the first violinist in the Hamburg Orchestra and thrown into an Army Unit where the only music heard was a 4/4 march, or a bugle call awakening him from a dream of playing waltzes, rondos and harmonically dissonant quartets of from learned composers as well as his own pen.

“And the contents of the pockets,” noted still private Karl Ponath, a semi-literate, ex-lumberjack whose ability and willingness to carry wounded men from the site of their demise to a place of possible recovery was as unmatched by his peers as it was unrewarded by his non-Medical superiors. The self-made yet seldom believed 50 going on 90 and 19 philosopher ran his finger through pockets filled with real American dollars rather than pebbles or ‘empty’. “All of us have ideas in our head as to what we will do with this money we now have, now that we are in Sergeant Walsh’s private civilian undercover Army. But, the real question is, what will it do to us?”

“You mean for us!” Dieter blasted back as ‘Maestro’ Stein. “After we lose the war, we can go home as richer than we were before. Playing second fiddle to nobody.”

“Especially those who are less qualified to play any instrument than we are,” Grossman and Ranselhoff interjected, unison.

“But, as for this good fortune, to be out of the War none of us believe in anymore, we should consider what this money snuck into our pockets from Sergeant Walsh and promised from his still un-named bosses will do TO us. What kind of men it would make us,” Ponath added before Stein could blast out yet another elitist Aristocratic, Jewish, Bolshevik or Intellect rather than experience inspired rebuttal. He pulled out a small fistful of the American dollars he was instructed to not spend until the War was over,

running his fingers through it. Running his fingers over it like it was a blessing as well as a curse. “Like we all found out what kind of men we were once we experienced our first baptism of combat. When we were carrying guns rather than those wounded by them, if we would be those who become effective instruments in defending our comrades, those who get a hard on when we take another life, those of us who run as fast as we can for the back lines and home, or those who freeze into a catatonic state that paralyzes our bodies, minds and souls.”

Ponath turned his gaze to his three younger comrades who had, by accident, intent or manipulation, been transferred to a medic unit, then into the reflection of himself, then a still pensive Captain Muller, his stare and consciousness held hostage by something in the window across the yard of the French farm which was only recently worthy of being called an Estate.

“As for the matter of this money,” Ponath continued, turning back to what seemed to be the most relevant matter at hand. He again thumbed through the Presidential portraits on the Yankee dollars, wondering why they were so stern, serious and unhappy. “Will we turn into those who hoard this money for a rainy day those who will seek more of it because we have some of it? Those who help others to be rich in pocket or in Visions? Those who will use it to feel more important than the ‘poor, noble, common men’ we used to be? Or...”

“Those who will lose it due to bad investments?” Captain Muller interjected, stroking the lapel of his new Parisian made blazer. Then the remnants of his regrettably cropped but, thankfully, not thinning hair, a condition which was plaguing young handsome, proudly long haired young heartthrob Werner Ranselhoff, something that everyone who saw him from behind knew but said nothing about. “And experience poverty, for the first time, and have to sing for our supper for shiteheads and assholes who maybe will throw us the breadcrumbs they intended for the pigeons?” he warned Maestro Stein. “And find out, yet again, if we value survival of our bodies more than our minds, and souls?” he threw into Grossman’s face as he finally put down his lamb-chops, considering the price of stuffing his belly with no-doubt illegally and immorally obtained food which was originally intended to feed starving civilian children.

“So, Captain Herr Professor Doctor Muller,” Ponath, the Hans Sachs of the neo-Wagnarian opera created by and within the unit of medics who had been captured together for doing the right thing in the wrong place, challenged his official boss and, in reality, Ethics and Morals 101 student. “What do we do now?”

“Survive,” Muller replied, after a long and pensive delay, averting his face from the men who he always spoke soul to soul to. “Redeem ourselves for what we have done, and not done,” he continued. “And are doing,” he muttered, audible only to Master Ponath as he stared at the window across the ‘yard’ again where he had delivered Doctor Emily. Noting that the curtains were being drawn by a bloody hand that was not hers.

CHAPTER 4

“So, tell me what happened in that private recovery suite,” Major Edward Jackson demanded from one of the most recently wounded of the two patients who had been brought to his office, which had only 2 months ago had been the private library of a mysteriously-deceased French baron-farmer.

“What I told you already, which is the truth! Something we have to do something about! About a demon masquerading as a guardian angel!” Emily Younger asserted, pointing a trembling finger accusingly to a calm, cool and collected Sergeant Walsh. Her trousers and blouse were torn, covered with blood, like she had been crawling through barbed wire, catching Jackson’s attention. “And not the result of me running through barbed wire chasing ghosts after getting drunk on gin, and sniffing cocaine then finding my way into Sergeant Walsh’s room so I could blackmail him for rape! What he did to me in that room is NOT in my imagination!”

“Yes, Doctor Younger,” Jackson replies, realizing that insulting a hysterical and delusional patient can make her even more destructive to themselves and others. But also that is it vital to face the truth in order to not be possessed by illusions. Taking the opportunity to absorb the possibilities of the moment, he rose up from his chair, looked out the window, and addressed Emily, who perhaps was a Nurse who imagined herself to be a newly graduated doctor, with his back turned. “I would ask you, and beg you, to consider, that the raping, beating and degradations that Sergeant gave you was more imagined than real. Like you imagined that these cases of pneumonia, fever, diarrhea and blotches on the skin that turn blue in MY hospital, not yours, is some kind of new epidemic rather than cholera or typhus.”

“It IS! A new disease!” Emily, if indeed that was her real name, asserted with an emotionally charged fervor that seemed to be more worthy of a Socialist play intended to motivate capitalists into joining the Communist Party and ungrateful, lazy workers to join Labor Unions rather a logically minded ‘woman of science’. “A new epidemic which is being called the Spanish Flu in places where people listen to their hearts, use their minds, employ their intuition, and scientific clarity, which if we don’t recognize now, will spread to kill---“

“---Civilians and military personnel world wide,” Sergeant Walsh interjected. “What she was ranting to me, and everyone else about this new plague invented her medical imaginations. Claiming that though her surgical skills will never be better than average, she’s a brilliant diagnostician who has ‘special skills’ about ‘pathology of the human body’ and ‘possibilities of the human soul’,” he continued using his fingers to put quotes in the air.

“Yes!” Emily fired back into Walsh’s face. Which was the truth about Major Jackson’s ‘gal Friday’. A not unattractive and bright eyed woman who, as Jackson saw it, was more in need of help with her various mental disorders than others were in need of her medical skills for physical ailments. And her sympathy as a ‘thinking nurse’. And her

services to blind or otherwise delirious soldiers who she could, and did, pass herself off as their wives, girlfriends or mistresses from back home. A dream woman who somehow found her way across the Atlantic, risking assault from German U boats or horny British Merchant Marines on the boats loaned out for top dollar from the American Navy. But even Jackson had to acknowledge how this ‘gypsy-doctor’ whose eyes seemed more witchlike than smart could bring back so many shell shocked soldiers from the horrific images they saw behind their shaking, fear-infused eyeballs, without drugs, a slap in the face, a jolt of electric current, or a bullet into the head.

Doctor-Nurse-Gypsy Emily, the most eager volunteer who insisted on staying on till the bitter end of the War described to Jackson, yet again, how after being tricked into entering a room where there was an old friend from back home with special ailments only she could cure, was manhandled by Walsh. Thrashed with a stick containing sharp spikes. Tossed around the room. Thrown onto the bed. Violated in her most private parts. Then after she was tied up with restraints that left no marks, treated to free drinks of firewater poured down her throat and cocaine blown into her nostrils. All, so Emily claimed, with the intention of landing her into one of the mental asylums proliferating across Western France from which no one emerged with an intact memory, if at all. So that all the stories she had heard about how ‘Santa Sergeant Walsh’ REALLY provided so many American soldiers what they wanted and needed would be disbelieved. As well as what kind of favors were required in return.

For a moment of theoretical thinking which Jackson fell into, his mind allowed his soul to consider that Emily was right. About who she was as a Doctor who graduated medical at the head of her class in Philadelphia while being pushed toward the bottom during her residency by many of her male classmates and the few women who were better at being compliant bitches than caring physicians. About the truth regarding how the black market REALLY worked in the ‘by the book’ sector Jackson officially Commanded as a Major in the Medical Core and, after the unexpected deaths of so many of his colleagues, Infantry Units whose job was to take rather than save lives. And about Walsh, being a possessed soul who had invited into himself the demons who were responsible for starting this ‘Great War’ in the first place.

“Yes, maybe you are right, Doctor Emily,” Major Jackson thought but didn’t say as Emily repeated her accusations and assertion. Finally, she was halted by exhaustion and a dryness in his throat that prevented anything other than forced whispers to come out of it. The overworked, underappreciated and (by trickery of his competitors at home) conscripted Bostonian blue-blood Surgeon turned away from her, then towards a full length mirror to assess what he had become, and who he really was. The first set of eyes his stare met were not his own.

“You know what we have to do,” Walsh said through the reflection in the partially cracked reflective glass which was now speckled with black soot and red blood spots that no amount of cleaning could remove. “And, orders are orders, Sir,” the Sergeant said to the Major more as a superior than one of inferior rank, and before the war, social station.

Jackson's stare was drawn to the most recent memorandum on his desk. An offer for him which no man who wanted to become better and bigger than he was could refuse. Something that came from the top. An assignment to take the War to another place, for a higher cause, and bigger reward than merely coming home to a tickertape parade and kisses from cheerleaders. And most importantly, the chance to get him, and the people he valued, or needed, or was indebted to most, out of France. To fight a new menace more vicious, and far more of an obstacle to the free market Capitalist and Christian God Fearing American way of life that was so good to him. And which he needed for his own survival.

"So, what do you know about the Bolsheviks?" Jackson asked Emily as he read the plan for the New Expeditionary Force to be sent out by President Wilson's order to Russia after his forced abdication, ASAP. "And the Communist Manifesto they are determined to use to liberate workers from their chains?"

Emily tried to voice a profound and heartfelt reply, but her mouth released nothing except inaudible air. She grabbed hold of the Presidential plan, stamped 'Top Secret'. Her read of it was abruptly halted by Walsh's gently pulling her away from it. She bit his arm, and kicked him in the crotch, placing Walsh into an agonizing bent over position. Then she rushed to the verify what her speed-reading eyes had first seen in the document, commencing quickly to flip through the pages. She her head 'no' as she read each page and paragraph, with horror. Then looked at Jackson, pleading with him on her knees with even bigger shakes of 'no'. Until she was pulled away by guards from outside the office, called in by Walsh.

"Now that she's read about what we have to do about these godless, vicious, demonic Red Russian devils, you know what we have to do with her, Sir," Walsh reminded his superior as Emily used every muscle in her small framed body to get away from guards, inflicting bruises and lacerations on herself and them in the process. "Yes, you know what we have to do with her, Sir," the high school drop-out Sergeant reminded the overly university trained Major.

"Or for her," Jackson replied, compassionately. He ordered the MPs to take Emily away, gently. And assured a now rage-infused as well as delusional Emily, if that was her real name, that he would see to it that she would the help needed to regain her senses and sense of where her place was in the world. Hoping that after she was appropriately disconnected from the illusions she believed to be absolute truth, that she would be...happy.

CHAPTER 5

“You’re sure this is her handwriting?” Hans Muller inquired of Leroy Jones, the blackest skinned and perhaps, because of such, the most honest orderly in Camp as Leroy sewed together the shattered hindlimb tendons on Blackie soldiers on a hill overlooking Major Jackson’s field hospital. A white as snow old-before-his-time proud cut gelding who Leroy was ordered to shot and convert into ‘beef stew’ for the White soldiers when it was hot, and the Coloreds when it got cold or stale.

“That’s be Doctor Emily’s scribbin’, alright,” the dark as coal but warm as August sunshine private and self-taught ‘vetrinery’ replied regarding the handwriting on the letter Hans Muller tried to hold onto with shaking hands. “I can’t rightly say what all these big words mean, or what they says, but the letters is hers,” Leroy continued, his white teeth shining amidst his black, blood stained face.

“And the words in this...’proclamation’?” Hans inquired, looking around him to see if anyone of higher authority could see them from the hospital window. He then snuck another look at the letter delivered to him from Emily, on the ground under his aching and shacking feet. “These can’t be her words!”

“But they be her letters, alright, Sir, though I cants make out most of the words,” replied the apparently illiterate Mississippi share cropper whose hands had more skill in them than any Caucasian Doctor. But who was not allowed to touch White patients because his Black hands would ‘contaminate’ their wounds if they had any cuts on them. “But in the meantime, hold Blackie’s head steady with your left hand, keep that twitch on her ears and keep blowin’ into his ear, or we’ll both git a hoof full of Blackie’s discontent from his fetlocks. And fer Abe Lincoln’s sake, be sure ya don’ts spill over that white paint we gotsta put on his left cannon bones and right front stifle and pommel so’s he looks like the Major’s favorite horse, after he done run away from the Huns. A war houre who’s gonna be entitled to sit out the war in the back lines steada haulin’ carts through mud so’s he gets so sweenied, tied up, strangle infested and colic’ed that no one can saves him, even me.

Like most aristocratic-raised Prussians, Hans had grown up in a family that never considered you a real man unless you were a real horseman. But his ability to ride these beasts was far inferior to any of his brothers, or sisters, in part because of his inability to handle a fall. Or to entrust some other creature with taking him from point A to B, even with the harshest of bits. And as for medical terms unique to the equine world, Hans was as unfamiliar with them as Leroy was with Sheaksperian or, for that matter, any written vocabulary. But the dyslexic and, probably as a result of that and other factors due to his pragmatic rural Alabama upbringing, illiterate Black Private who enlisted to fight a White Man’s War knew people as well as he knew horses.

“Ya seems upset about what that letter from Doctor Emily says,” Doctor Leroy, said as he completed the repair of the laceration in Blackie’s, soon to be reborn as ‘Peter Pinto’s’ leg. “And what it means too?”

“She saved me from, ya know---” Hans said.

“---Dyin’?” Leroy said, laying the horse’s feet down from the custom-made hindlimb restraining device fashioned from leather straps, a dissected artillery shell, and barb-less metal wire. “She saved a lot of my kind and your kind from dyin’,” he continued with affection for the former, and hatred for the latter.

“What do you mean ‘my kind’?” Hans replied in his best accentless English.

“Somethin’ I ain’t gonna tell no one ‘bout,” Leroy replied. “Es ist zwisshen uns, du verstehst?” he continued, in perfectly constructed and accented Hoch Deutch.

“Why?” Hans asked, in his Native tongue after being told that his real identity was being kept confidential.

“Cause a what you’s probably readin’ in that letter,” Leroy replied, relieving Hans from his job as holder and restrainer, a function Colored Orderlies normally did for White Doctors. “A dear Fritz letter, if I read yer eyes right.”

“Hans,” replied Captain Muller, now ‘Private Miller’, about to be discharged and sent home with a Purple Heart and Silver Star, replied. “And I had no idea that she would ever--” .

“Forgive ya?” Leroy offered while converting an injured, too independent to be worked to death ‘white nag’ ordered to be converted to stew into a functional four legged white horse into a Paint with improvised black dye composed of coal, tar and coffee grounds. Who, if he knew what was good for him, wouldn’t buck when Jackson decided to try to command his infantry troops from atop a horse. “Emily forgives a lot. And can smell when the sweet aroma of romance is ‘bout ta turn into somethin’ that kills both lovers, slow, painful, and without them knowin’ it’s happenin’ .”

Indeed, the, to the best of Hans’ knowledge anyway, womanless Black Private was right. It was as if Professor Doctor Minister Leroy had seen so many of Hans’ relationships in the past more clearly than he had seen them, even in retrospect. With a knowledge of psychotherapy and psychological mechanisms that clouded the kind of clear, honest and universally real Vision of Heart that Leroy had. And suffered for having. But, Hans knew that he had to honor the request, and demand, that Emily made of him in the letter post-marked from Liverpool. “Professor Doctor Captain Hans...if that’s what your real name is. I’m on a ship heading home, as you should, if you know what is good for you, and us, do as well. For reasons I do not know, I love you. And hate you. And because of that, do not want to see you again. Though I do wish you well...with someone else, somewhere else.”

Yes, the words were real, but was it the truth? Hans never believed it wasn’t. But, as he knew, forcing love where it wasn’t welcomed, or workable, was the easiest way to

shackle, torture and eventually kill a loved one. And, as the so seldom written concept which never found its way into books that were popular said, wanting is better than having.

CHAPTER 6

Emily Younger, renamed patient 249A, referred to as name as a delusional defective memory amnesiac Jane Doe, did have some things to be grateful for in her new lodgings in the well guarded 'La Belle Maison' asylum. She was well behind the front lines, away from attacks by gas, artillery shells or the feared German counter-attacks which frequented the Spring and early Summer of 1918 on the Western Front, made possible by the Russians abandoning their positions on the Eastern Front. The Bayou French she had learned from her half Indian Cajun grandmother, while being overly worked in the working class family general store servicing four coal mines in rural 'English only' Pennsylvania, enabled her to be understood by the orderlies, fellow lunatics and now useless (other than for research purposes) French soldiers, the latter no more recovered from shell shock than they had been since their entry into the 'place of peacefulness' in 1914. The colorful expression of her accent and Louisiana idioms were a source of entertainment and privately-conferred therapy to the stoic, procedural, emotionally sterile, pathologically logical Parisian Physicians who had the final say so regarding her 'eventual' release.

Emily was provided with clean clothing, a shower twice a week, and the right to have hair that fell below her shoulders, unlike the other female patients who were required to have their long manes chopped into bobs as they could be used to hang themselves. As long as she didn't complain about the lack of nutrition in the food on behalf her fellow mentally-challenged guests in the grey bar 'hotel', she was allowed access to the dining hall. She did, without permission, access memories of childhood which made her think about everything she did right to become a doctor, and everything wrong, according to some anyway, that put her in her present position and predicament as a sane person amongst crazy inmates. An Alive (big A) and thinking healer amongst dulled out doctors who didn't know they were dead themselves.

One of those memories of the 'good old days' in a childhood Emily hated when enduring them, was activated on a warm day in May that felt more like June, or July. The early morning sun streamed through the bars in the dining hall from the East, its rays floating around the dining hall on their own terms. As she heard the robins, bluejays and sparrows chirping their mating calls, Emily wondered about why her calls regarding mating went unanswered. She had written to Hans Muller as his new American persona, Texan Private Miller, care of the Army, care of Major Jackson and even Private Leroy Jones. Then to Captain Muller, German POW, care of the Red Cross. But all of her letters forgiving Muller for unintentionally baiting her into entering Walsh's private recovery suite along. She found herself wondering if Hans' yearnings to (as he said so many times when they were in the same Camp during very private meetings) 'continue something wondrous that started with we were fortunate enough to connect with our eyes' was just a lie he didn't mean or one of those temporary truths he did mean at the time.

Emily's wanting to know the truth or believe a loving lie were interrupted by Marcel, the distributor and, when he was in workable mental health, preparer of breakfast. A French

soldier who had lost his sense of smell after a gas attack, who still retained his ability to recall every detail in the Army Cookbook. “Bounty from the earth!” he said to Emily as she passed by him on the line, with a sincere enough smile. “Enjoy!” he declared as she walked away to take her place at an empty table with her metal tray, metal bowl and dull-edge metal spoon.

She smelt the flavorless gruel dumped in front of her, trying to imagine it to be something else. “Yes, Granny. Great grits today,” she said as she dipped her spoon into the overboiled and underspiced porridge that looked more like something someone else had eaten first rather than the extract of oats, barley or, on rare days when it was available, corn. “I like the way you fried it today. Fried in vegetable oil for 2 minutes. Sprinkle with a pinch a garlic, a dash of pepper, a smidgen of salt, a fleck of chopped onion, and a generous as you can afford it sliver of butter. Great!” Emily said in a voice low enough to not be heard by the cook or orderlies. And most particularly by the pathologically overdressed Sigmond Freud wannbe doctors standing by doorway taking notes on ‘subjects’ being studied so they could get publish their own theories about human psychology.

With a forced smile on her face, Emily closed her eyes, hoping her olfactory visualizations of the flavorless gruel which, somehow, was both hard as a rock and slurry as spring muck, would be somewhat palatable. In the middle of yet another attempt to seem normal, and therefore, maybe, perhaps, releasable, she heard a man’s voice from the across the table.

“Father, forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And I thank you for this, our daily bread,” Emily heard. Preparing to see a Priest in front of her, attempting, with supervision of course, to heal her mind by saving her soul, she opened her eyes, prepared for another lecture from clergy who knew less about God than the Institute’s ‘chef’ knew about cooking.

“Everything will be alright, my child,” came out of a man with a full beard and shoulder length brown hair, clad in a white robe. “My father told me so,” he assured Emily, after which he gave her a portion of a cracker. “Eat of my body,” he said, bowing his head, on which there was a crown of what seemed to be thorns. “And drink of my blood,” he continued, pushing his cup of red prune juice to her.

“Sure, why not,” Emily said to the man whose eyes seemed to project kindness spirit, but whose mind seemed to be far more intelligent for the world to handle. After tasting the cracker, and the juice, finding them foul to the mouth but somehow sustaining to the soul, she smiled at the visitor from ‘wherever’. “Now,” she said with a humble bow, pushing her plate to him, exchanging it with his. While doing so, she noted that one of the ‘Professor Doctors’ had his eye on a well endowed female patient who lowered her smok. Another tended to a shell shocked, severely ematiated patient, Lieutenant Jacque by name, who claimed that there was mustard gas in the porridge he was being fed. .

“My offering to you. A generous portion of y dish of genuine Lousianna grits, in exchange for the boiled corn meal in YOUR bowl,” said to the man in front of Emily. “My Lord, or whatever you want or need me to call you.”

“Buddha, Krishna, Allah, or whatever suits your spirit,” he said, taking a bit of the gruel. “Who is thankful for your offering this wondrously tasteful food to me!” he continued with a smile reeking of gustatory delight. “What is in this bowl of culinary ecstasy?” .

“Love? Hope? Imaginations? An offering to maybe someone who isn’t an illusion in this world or the next?” Emily thought but didn’t say as she saw the ‘Jesus’ she had long ago dismissed as a fairy tale, or charlatan, enjoy the flavorless corn porridge with more gusto than she had ever experienced with real grits the way ‘Cherokee Granny’ made it. “So, what do these people, who are of the world, call you?” Emily asked. “They call me Jane.” Moving in closer to him, she continued with a whisper. “I used to be and still am..Emily.”

“Peter,” Jesus replied “As I used to be called and called myself before my...you know....”

“So, ‘Peter’ who did what to who, other than maybe put a mirror into their face and make them look at who they are, should and still can be?” Emily pressed, as assertively and gently as she could.

“Worse,” ‘Peter Jesus’ replied, as the doctors and orderlies moved their attention to the more disruptive or interesting patients. Then the growling and barking of some kind of wild dogs outside, scurrying around the garbage. “I’m a socialist. Some would say a Communist. Believing in the credo that everyone should give according to their abilities and take according to their needs. And knowing that unless we put that into practice now, by force if necessary, this Great War that’s supposed to end all wars will never end, and destroy everybody. Winners and losers,” he continued between spoonfuls of Emily’s home cooked grits.

“A Red. A Bolshevik,” Emily replied, pulling back with a cautious and curious smile. “Who my very American Pennysvlnian merchant working class family said, and still say, are godless devils. Who believe in---“

“—Universal compassion,” Peter Jesus replied, taking the word out of Emily’s mouth, and opened up soul. “Love for strangers as well as friends, foreigners as well as fellow countrymen. That’s unbounded and unlimited in spirit and effectiveness once it’s---“

“---given to everyone according to need, according to our current abilities, which are---”

“---Unlimited, if we have faith,” Peter replied, as Jesus, putting aside the gruel.

“And that elusive entity that I’ve never been able to find,” a finally Connected to Life and Someone else Emily said, as she gazed at Lt. Jacques, and two other shell shock victims

who couldn't and wouldn't take up arms against an enemy, or someone a fellow countryman said was such. "Which is..."

"Courage?" Peter, and Comrade, Jesus offered, continuing the conversation initiated by third brain, mind that had evolved between him and Emily. And Spirit big S who came amongst them. According to the promise the 'real' Jesus had made that 'if two or more of you are gathered in my Name, I am there also.'

The rest of the conversation between 'Jane' and "Peter" was silent, as attention of the orderlies and doctors were now on the general population, the panic attack of the 'gas fed' shell shocked patients ended with an injection of drugs and the dog attack from outside quickly quenched by several gunshots that hopefully scared them rather than converted them into meat for 'beef stew' that would be served for dinner.

Yes, it was time for Jane and Jesus to form an alliance. To liberate each other in body and mind, so that they could join the Revolution outside of the asylum. And join the most important Revolution in recorded history, Emily felt Peter Jesus confirming such with his eyes, heart and the diagram he slipped out of his pocket. A map displaying a 'tunnel to Ressurrection' with a time that was penciled in from years ahead of the present to 'now'. Written in English, Russian and, as Emily surmised, Arameic.

CHAPTER 7

The Russian newspapers reported that on July 17, 1918, Czar Alexander III and his family were shot as they were trying to escape protective custody and regroup the Aristocrats so they could put 98% of the Russian people back into slavery, otherwise known as being on the bottom of the free market capitalist totem pole. The English papers called it a murder. The mainstream American distributors of international events reported it as a brutal slaughter reflecting the cruelty of Lenin and the anti-Capitalist, paranoiac, vicious, godless Bolsheviks.

Those who hated the Czar, recalling the 2 million military and 1.5 million civilian deaths in Russia in the war he mismanaged, and persecutions of any dissent before the War with the Kaiser, were relieved. The White Russians who revered the 'divinely appointed' Romanov ruler as a well meaning Christian rule were horrified, despite the fact that most of them suffered from disease, poverty and starvation under his realm.

But to Sergeant Walsh, whose influence now well exceeded his rank and officially assigned station as coordinator of supply and inventory in Major Jackson's now extended battalion, the news about the killing of the Romanov royalty and the civil war it would no doubt escalate was manna from heaven. A God-fearing heaven which knew that War in the geographically largest country in the world was good for business. American business in particular. And if the Whites were supplied well enough, and the Reds would be sent to their own personal hell in the wastelands of Siberia, the new grateful, capitalist country of New Russia would reward their American Saviors by giving them profitable access to the vast resources Russian had to offer, now that the Siberian and other railroad lines was completed. A railroad that could delivery of more oil than a hundred Texas's, more gold than as many Nevadas, and enough lumber to rebuild every American city five times over, negating the requirement to be nice to the Canadians so the American lumber companies could cut down their forests instead of what was left of American woodlands.

On this unusually hot day in late July, Walsh did his best to hide the sweat collecting under his brow. He was clad in a the latest city-slicker style suit complimented with his trademark authentically-scuffed cowboy boots. He proudly strode to the podium, conscious of how short he was when not atop a horse commanding his men, or his cattle herds. In front of him was a packed banquet room in the Hotel Parisian in front of a dense and expansive wall of diners who had all ingested the appropriate amount of soufflé, which had been specially spiced with a brand of 'happy locoweed' Walsh had secretly procured and never taken himself. It was a mixture of special herbs that could turn most awrny horses into compliant beasts, obstinent people into obedient 'coworkers' and more than one independent woman into a willing sex-slave. But it had its limitations. And whatever message he delivered, had to be not only listened to, but followed through with, if Walsh's plan for making the world safe for democracy, American style, was to succeed.

Upon climbing up on the podium, he cleared his throat, tightened the tie which was already chocking his neck, and gazed over the congregation. But though these well

dressed two legged cattle had that 'I'm ready to negotiate with ya, boss' in their slightly glassy eyes, they were all bred from the finest stock, with the finest of educations, and a distrust for men who, like Walsh, had come up through the ranks rather than (as the pretentious and ungrateful Limy Tommy's would say in the trenches of France and the back alleys of London) 'to the manor born'. Indeed, these well dressed, by choice and intention, people in the audience were men and women of power and wealth who, because they had so much of such, wanted and were addicted to getting more. The hotel had advertized the event as the first meeting of the 'International Civilian Relief Society', intended to replace the well meaning but ineffective Red Cross based in still neutral Switzerland. But galvanizing these rich Western Europeans who were still living comfortable lives, Russian aristocrats who had lost most but not all of their enormous wealth after fleeing their Motherland, and war weary Allied military leaders from countries that considered capitalism and democracy as necessary for each other into a unified economic and military front was not easy.

At first glance of Walsh, who was introduced as the main speaker, the crowd seemed disappointed. Perhaps, the Texan cowboy turned outlaw, turned international urban gang boss thought it was because he wasn't thinking big enough. Because, deep down, no matter how rich and powerful he got, Jethro Walsh would still be the saddle tramp who was thrown off of four cattle drives for not being fast enough on his horse or sober enough in the saddle, no matter how many cattle bosses he bankrupted by backwater deals and spreading rumors about diseases in the herd once those bosses got their herds to market.

"Yeah," Walsh thought to himself, remembering how he had to use manipulation and intimidation for survival as, for him anyway, virtue had gotten him nowhere. "These high falutin' Lords and Ladies are puddy in my hands," he muttered to himself addressing a ghost that entered into the room, settling in with his spurs over his neck with his spurs intact, ready to ride him hard and put him away wet if he screwed up this golden opportunity like the last two investor meetings in Spring. "If I treat them like dirt. Like ya told me, Pappy, act like an asshole, ya get treated like a saint. Lead them like sheep, while lettin' them think they're wolves, Pappy. Too bad that yer second wife turned you into an honest ram. Who got himself arrested, and hung, because he wanted to become wise instead a clever."

"Like you married right," Walsh heard Pappy say to him, as the uglier than sin ghost dismounted his son's neck, and sat on lap of the finest looking aristocrat in the congregation, a woman of no more than 30 years with long, red hair, a petit hour glass figure and coral blue eyes that locked into Walsh's on stage. "Ya have to trick them into thinkin' they're being loved while they're really being fucked," the ghost continued, sneaking his hand around the high-born lady's breasts.

Walsh didn't know if the smile that appeared, then broadened, on the woman's now angelic face was due to his father's seduction, or the natural charm Walsh himself had, as a gift from God or a curse from the devil, acquired from his father. But he did know one thing. Those hands would wring Walsh's neck if he didn't get on with the task at hand.

The task of robbing these people of their money, and giving them, in exchange, something few of these rich fat cats and overfed cows never had. A sense of global purpose. The knowledge that they were going to be an indispensable instrument in the most important War in the 20th or perhaps any other century. The crushing of Communism, at its roots, before the ‘everyone gives according to their abilities and takes according to their needs’ pipe dream destroys the only impetus that drives man, or women, forward. The natural instinct of human competition and free market capitalism unhampered by any regulation, rules or the most favorite illusion of the weak and lazy, ‘honor’. Survival of the fittest, not the weakest, or the kindest. The latter would get their reward in heaven, if indeed there even was such a place.

Armed with that knowledge of the real world, Walsh began to inform the ‘good people’ of the highborn caste of the horrors that he experienced when he had snuck his way to Russia on ‘special missions’ while still in the American Army in a ‘special unit’. Such war stories were bought by these Lords and Ladies from England, France and Italy who hired commoners to take their place in the Great War to do the dying for them. And were, to his amazement and relief, confirmed as ‘acceptable lies’ by escaped Russian Aristocrats, Some he had hired as plants, and others who he discovered had found their way here.

Yes, the Bolsheviks did take over the government from the lame, war-supporting and ineffective Korinski government that took over after overthrow of the Czar by a show of force rather than through gentrified debate. Yes, the Reds did make the rich give back to the poor much of what had been stolen from them and denied to them for centuries under continued serfdom at the point of a gun. After of course attempting moral arguments which pointed out that 2 percent of the elite owning 98 % of the wealth was both wrong and unsustainable. Yes, the ‘godless Communists’ called upon people to serve each other for the sake a common humanity rather than orders from the Priests, or fear of going to hell if they weren’t ‘Christian’ enough. Yes, the Soviets sought to unite the various districts of the Russian Empire into a unified experiment of mutual cooperation rather than allow small nation states such as Georgia, Turkistan, Lithuania and Estonia to economically annexed and corrupted by larger Empires, especially British and American ones. But if one was to believe even one tenth of the tales about the Red Army’s horrific treatment of civilians, and the heroic efforts of the White Army that wanted to restore a Capitalist supporting Imperial Monarchy to Russia, it would inspire a world wide crusade to liberate Russia from the Bolshevik demons. And it did.

One by one, the high born ‘never let them see you sweat, laugh or raise your voice in unbridled self-righteousness’ who thought themselves equal to or more powerful than the Almighty Himself were turned into a herd of religious zealots eager to forfeit their fortunes, lives and what was left of their sacred honor to be part of Walsh’s Christian Counter-Revolutionary Cause. Led by an atheist cattle boss who self observed himself believing his own bullshit, lies and undeliverable promises.

All except, interestingly enough, the woman who the ghost of Papa Walsh now decided to leave to her own devises, as he gave his son a congratulatory thumbs up on way out. A

woman who now morphed into Sergeant Walsh's ex-wife, Lorena in the ex-rancher's mind. The down home god-fearing Baptist Texas gal who gave Jethro three children, all of whom she took away from him when she left him after she had become educated by an itinerant drifter. A drifter who never took her to bed, but who turned her into an Injun loving, labor union-supporting, universal compassion giving woman who dedicated herself to saving the world, by leaving Walsh and disappearing into, at last accounts, Russia. A place Walsh would liberate Lorena so that he could find her and re-educate her. And have him love her just as much as he still loved her. Even if he had to force that love into her in the process.

It was then, amidst the memories of what some called abuse, and others tough love, that Walsh saw her transform yet again into the face of...yes, Emily Younger. Who, perhaps, had been the body into which his dear absent Lorena had decided to reside, from the land of the living or the realm of the dead. A body that, yes, had to be liberated now from the asylum she was entrusted to. One more agenda to add to Jethro Walsh's list of things to do so he could live up to the expectations of his Texan ancestors. Going all the way back to the first Jethro to carry the Walsh family name who, according to the stories, had escaped the Alamo just before he was about to be executed with Davy Crocket. And was one of the few Texans who was killed at the Battle of San Jacinto, by bullets that could have been from a Mexican or Texan's revolver.

CHAPTER 8

Edward Emerson Jackson seemed more like a Major than a Doctor atop the Paint gelding who had ‘miraculously’ escaped from the German lines as he put the volunteers for the Allied Expeditionary Force through the third run of getting through an obstacle course with 40 pound packs strapped to their backs under a boiling early August sun, live ammo shot over their ducked and still, miraculously, intact heads. Of course the overly educated Boston blueblood had his reasons for yelling at these ‘crusaders for American democracy’, insulting them with custom-made racial and ethnic slurs to rouse their anger at him, and shame of themselves. “The Czech Legion which is stuck behind the New Iron Curtain set up by the Russian Communists has been through a lot more discomfort, pain and what you call suffering than you have!”, he barked out between calling the working class White corporals and privates who chose to take their chances fighting Bolsheviks rather than military lawyers who always sided with the officers who accused them of a variety of criminal activities amidst an international conflict that legally sanctioned any act of cruelty as long as it was directed against ‘the enemy’. “Getting your genetically inferior Black, Mick, Spic and WAP bodies strong will make your mind stronger, so you can show your comrades and yourself that you’re a brave man who overcame the defects of your unwashed ancestors, and not a cowardly nerdowell,” he blasted at shell-shock ‘goldbrickers’ who had recovered their senses, admittedly due to the now-absent Doctor-Nurse Emily’s ‘special treatments’. Jackson also exerted ‘tough and necessary moral education’ to the thinking soldiers paroled from execution who had the good sense to not charge a German machine gun nest at point blank range while their officers remained safely in the trench behind them. But Jackson particularly enjoyed, or focused on, educating the Coloreds. “If you Negroid soldiers rescue these Czech soldiers and help them establish an Eastern Front against the Hun,” he would scream at them again and again. “And you’ll be heroes who any White Man or Woman south of the Mason Dixon line will look at with respect, and treat you with such the rest of your lives!” the employer of a household of Black Servants in Boston who had never been south of Washington, DC, promised the Colored soldiers he had segregated from the Whites on every occasion possible, for ‘mutual benefit’ of all concerned. “Just ask Leroy Jones there!” he asserted, pointing to the angriest face and most accomplished Colored soldier in the newly formed Expeditionary Force.

Leroy, who had just been accused of fraternizing with one of Walsh’s favorite French nurses, turned his beaten and battered, mud-soaked face towards Captain Muller standing on the sidelines of the obstacle course. The German officer turned American private was now clad in civilian garb, pending his ‘discharge’ due to heroism under fire and a fund raising tour back home in Pennsylvania Dutch country to enlist fellow Americans of German descent to liberate the Fatherland from itself. “Yasser, Major Jackson!” Leroy barked back through a throat that had been nearly collapsed by the butt of an MP’s rifle at the time of his questioning regarding what he did with, or to, ‘Yvette’. “Yeah, I’ll show everyone what I’s got, and can to ta them, real soon,” the once again down on his luck self-taught illiterate horse doctor said with his eyes to Muller as he voiced another expression, silently with his mouth.

“I can’t read lips you can, Latin like the Major says he knows, or Cajon French like that female American Doctor who saved us from that underground POW Camp ‘five miles down the road’,” born-to-the-woods lumberjack and naturally-skilled hunter Karl Ponath said to Muller, uncomfortably dressed in a newly-pressed, extra-starched suit that had belonged to a French Count he had been assigned by Walsh to wear while assessing the troops. “But ‘Doctor Leroy’ did say that we are all fucked.”

“And being commanded by fuck ups,” 21 year old former Private Ranselhoff added, stroking his recently trimmed long hair. While the military barber did use scissors, sparingly, it left no doubt to anyone who looked at him from the side or back that he was three years away from becoming as bald as Vladimir Lenin. He stroked his chin, wondering if growing a beard would help make him look distinguished rather than prematurely old. “We’re all being commanded from below by fuck ups like Walsh, who gave me this new suit without any kind of hat to match it!” he growled, attempting to cover the bald spot on his head with what little hair was around it..

“Stop complaining,” Deiter Stein said, pondering their future as Germans who could be shot as spies by the Allied troops, or traitors by their fellow Germans which thankfully had not happened... yet. “If we use our brains, we can get back home. With our honor intact. Back to our sons, daughters, mothers, fathers, wives and...hmmm.”

“Lovers who we wish had been our wives?” Ponath offered, pulling his lips into a wide smile, and his eyes inward to one of the many memories he kept to himself. “But in the meantime, we should be thankful that we were told by Sergeant Walsh to observe but not obey Major Jackson, there. Who reminds me of...hmmm.”

“Custer,” Muller interjected of the always-healthy doctor who could treat pain but never really felt it. And now seemed to be the quintessential courageous Liberator on horseback. Painfully and colorfully akin to the slayer of so many innocent Indians, Confederate soldiers, and killer of so many horses before his ultimate demise, had never experienced what it was like to be shot with a bullet or even nicked by another man’s sword. “He’s just as arrogant, and stupid as Custer. Like this conditioning men in the boiling sun to be top flight soldiers when they go to Russia, where it is cold. Very cold. And where there is less food or shelter for their horses than even here.” A wave of compassion overtook Muller, making him forget, for the moment, the heartbreak Emily caused him by telling him in as degrading way possible in print to get lost and never see her again. Indeed, the love he felt for her had turned into hatred as well as indifference.

But, as every man in war, or perhaps the emotional turmoil called peacetime, knows, or should learn, if you don’t concentrate on the present, you will not survive into any future/ As for that present, Muller put aside the grief regarding Emily aside after finding out through a letter that Walsh had insisted be delivered to him personally that his almost ex-wife and three children back in East Prussia had been killed by the Bolsheviks. Muller glanced down at the letter yet again, forcing himself to the visual imagery the witness to the massacre had described. Perhaps to torture himself for not being there to save his family, or at himself for being an idealist who considered universal compassion for all

more important than compassion for your own family. Something that started when he ignored his children's birthday parties at home so he could do 48 hour shifts at the hospital to be sure that other children could experience birthdays to come. And that continued when, against his aristocratic parents and sibling, as well as wife Elsa's wishes, embraced the ideals of International Socialism where everyone, despite family ties, was given according to their needs and took according to their abilities. Now, the Bolshviks who championed that Cause were the enemy, no matter who they were. Led by an intellectual by the name of Vladimir Lenin who, according to the reports Walsh and the other Americans working with him, had turned into one of those 'any means is justified for a necessary Enlightened end' leaders who, to avenge Muller's massacred family, and save other families, had to be eliminated, punished or, if God was still active, be visited by a heavenly angel who bopped him on the head and transplant a heart into his head. But Muller's thoughts about Lenin were interrupted by his military subordinate and surrogate Uncle, Karl Ponath.

"We could sneak something into Doctor Major Jackson's tea," Ponath suggested regarding the more immediate 'any means are necessary for an Enlightened end' lunatic who cracked his whip on the backs of three more slower than desired 'volunteers' in the obstacle course, nearly breaking the backs of two of them and continuing to overwork his sweat soaked horse into sure-fire colic. "Something to make him less arrogant, more caring, or maybe, more intelligent. Which will make him, as you claim always happens, more effectively compassionate," the self-taught philosopher offered.

"But there is a problem with that," Muller countered. "Other than that Jackson never drinks tea."

"Intelligence makes men more vicious, and less caring?" Ninth generation dock worker Grossman added, flicking off the bloody dust from his 'businessman's suit' thrown up by an Irish parolee 'volunteer' whose leg nearly got slashed off by one of the Major's obstacles. "And makes you better able to look after number one?" he said with more arrogance than any born-to-the-manor gentleman Muller had experienced, or read about. "Or," Grossman smirked as he eyed a French Nurse carting two heavy buckets of water who was ten times more beautiful than Grossman was handsome. "Any number twos that WE chose, right Hans?" continued the more or less honest working class stiff who previous to his elevation into the gangster class considered devotion to his wife and children above all, having proved such with more letter writing home and more letters coming back than anyone in his Company.

Such salt of the earth letters were the envy of anyone else in the German Medical Corp, especially Muller, who finally had to answer the question his men were posing, and which would be pivotal for the special Mission he and his German comrades were to be sent on. "As for intelligence making people more compassionate, and effectively compassionate, it is my firm conviction, and...hope, and prayer, that such is still the case. Especially as, when we meet Vladimir Lenin, he is above all, very intelligent. And he values German culture and art over that of his native Russia. He speaks English, French and Latin. And he, unlike the 'good Major' who is riding that horse into the ground in

the service of saving democracy, Lenin loves animals. And he has a special place in his heart for Beethoven, which makes anyone effectively compassionate. Especially the Appassionato---”

“Which he forbid you from playing back in 1917, because he said it would make him feel too soft, because he had to very hard things to save his people, and the world,” Ponath interjected.

The still more-young-than-old Captain Doctor and the born-old woodsman looked at and into each other, recalling the times they very unofficially spent time in a closed German railroad car which smuggled the exiled leader of the Red Revolution from Switzerland back to Russia. When Muller was called in as a doctor with special skills to treat Lenin’s ailments which no one would ever be allowed to be described in any history book, or diary. But as for the Revolution Lenin now spearheaded in Russia and the ideological dream that humanity would survive into the third decade of the twentieth century, there as one matter that had to be established.

“So, what if we put the right ingredient into Comrade Lenin’s tea, will that make his revolution more caring, and effective?” Ponath asked, in a soft voice audible only to Muller and his fellow German comrades. Hiding his mouth from anyone watching, even Leroy. “Like you said, nature, when worked with through science, never gives you a problem without a solution.”

“Which is true,” Muller replied. “But if we destroy enough nature, we destroy ourselves and any possibilities for life, or even survival. As evidence of such, he directed his Comrades’ glance to the endless landscape below of charred wooden stumps, mud and pools of blood that had once been a lush, green forest teeming with life. “Still,” he continued, seeing a family of worms under his feet emerging from the mud, slithering along to feast on a patch of grass that somehow had survived all manner of chemical destruction. “We have to try.”

CHAPTER 9

Sergeant Jethro Walsh, US Army, now Professor Emeritus J. Ignatious Wilson, Ph.D., Esq, stroked the full beard that covered his face, checking himself out in the reflective glass of the 'La Belle Maison' asylum. Yes, the beard was intact, attached with the best glue available to his face such that no one could see the expressions he would no doubt show to any of the other academic shrinks there. And, yes, the forged papers he, as President Woodrow Wilson's older and far more academically accomplished half-brother, had had fooled everybody else, including the press. And yes, the novel he was writing about Woodrow Wilson's deceased father having two wives, who had just met each other, was guaranteed to be a best seller to Republican and Democrat readers alike. And, indeed, the papers in Walsh's possession requesting release of Emily Younger into his personal custody for reasons of International State Security and Family Honor had been prepared by the finest Russian forger he could find in the death row holding cells that officially didn't exist. Comrade Peter Ivanowitch according to the papers the Moscow born Revolutionary had on him when arrested by the French Secret Police, had the good sense and courtesy to not scream when he was strangled to death at his desk after receiving, for the moment, payment for his services at a private room in the American Embassy in Paris.

But though Walsh was the confident and never seen puppetmaster of most everyone around him, in the highest and lowest places (which so often were intermingled of course), he had no control of the invisible strings of the demons who were operating the strings that were now steering his mind into the kind of 'extra-sensory information' that any functionally sane man would call madness. Standing in front of the gate of the asylum surrounded by a 15 foot wall of stone and hidden electrical wire, covered by roses and ivy on the inside and the outside, he hesitated to ring the bell. He glanced yet again at the photo of Emily Younger, doctored to look like his loving and lovely to look at daughter in the graduation photo at the Beauregard Forest Finishing School for Ladies in Baltimore. But each time he looked at the picture, it changed into something Ivan had never put into it. Bit by bit, the Emily's blue eyes turned into Lorena's brown oculars. Emily's hair began to blow in the invisible yet deafening to the ear ethereal wind that weaved the long, red strands of straight bust length maiden's hair into yellow ringlets that adorned a heavily jeweled neck which was less slender than Emily's naked flesh.

Lorena's skin was revealed under the ringlets as they shrink back upwards into the anti-feminist bob she gave herself when announcing that she was joining the Woman's Suffrage movement, the Labor Rights Union. And the International Movement for International Worker and Racial Equality. Declaring at that last dinner twenty-five years ago she and Jethro Walsh had in their ranch-house outside of Waco, Texas, now in a clear voice that was even louder than the 'wind' in the still photo, that "I am taking our children with me to New York, so they can grow up to be wise instead of clever, caring for the many instead of only being concerned with themselves and 'their own', and part of the global solution rather than part of the many problems."

“You are the problem, Lorena!” Walsh blasted back at the moving picture which had emerged from the still photo, speaking to him louder than any overbearing piano player at a silent picture show. “A problem that, yes, I can fix, and will,” he promised in a kind, and, as he felt it, caring tone. “I am sorry about forcing myself on you, and putting you in here. But it was for your own good. And the good of our beloved country. And to prove it, I’ll get you out of here.”

“Both of us?” Walsh heard from the echoing voices of Lorena and Emily. Both came from the foggy photo he pulled out of his left coat pocket hand that, as it came into focus into his mournful yet vengeful eyes, showed a left face was that of Walsh’s runaway (and if she had lived, or was still alive somewhere 50 year old) wife, the right being that of the upstart American doctor who had not reached her 25th birthday. And, if the theory of reincarnation was correct, was probably an incarnation of his beloved, hated and envies wife, Lorena. “What do you want from us?” the voices inquired in voices that merged with each other, in a tone that became firm, and resolute.

“I’ll tell you that when I release you! And save you from yourself...Or yourselves!” Walsh growled a threat, and promise.

“Save who from who?” Walsh heard in French- accented English from a very clear voice in front of him. After taking a deep breath, collecting sense of his sweat soaked body and when he had to have it, sane, functional mind, Walsh noted a thin, small framed balding man in a long black waistcoat, bow tie and wire rim glasses. Behind this frail but authoritative fellow academic stood two large orderlies in blue uniforms, sporting pistols on their right hip to keep people from the war from entering this florid-filled oasis, and chained restraints on the left side of their gun-belts for those who required special escort to their place of healing inside the walls of the red brick and steel barred building.

Pushing his fear back inside his gut, Walsh presented the ‘Professor’ with papers. “Official business, on the part of the American Embassy,” he said with an accent which he hoped sounded like it came from his half brother ‘President Woodrow’s’ Southern Gentry origins rather than his own White Trash, Texas Hill Country Saddle-tramp roots.

The Professor read the documents, stroking his overgrown mustache and, upon close examination, stubble-covered ugly face. One of the guards sized Walsh up, from head to toe, then back again, no less than three times. Meanwhile, his clean shaven fellow behemoth glanced at, smiled to, then had a ‘conversation with the eyes with Walsh’s driver, a young law abiding Michigan-raised lad who he saved from a morals charge of being more comfortable in the company of fellow American male soldiers than French or British Nurses. “He’s mine, you French fag pervert,” Walsh thought, but didn’t say to the French orderly of ‘two spirits’, as the Indians who had killed in so many campaigns would call them. “Get your own sheriff’s son and Preacher’s grandson to be a safecracker, that is if you have the brains or balls to figure out which safes are worth stealing from, or putting things into,” Walsh continued in a conversation voiced with a tongue that hopefully wasn’t accompanied by moving lips.

At the end of the unsaid threat, which was not headed, or noticed, the Professor handed back the papers to Walsh. "I am afraid, Sir, I cannot release this patient to your care, much as I would like to. As she is...gone." The Professor pointed Walsh's attention to detail of orderlies working with a few apparently carefully selected patients who were filling up a tunnel under the West wall of the hospital with mortar, dirt and wire that, when connected to the main power source, evoked an electrical shock that thrilled the orderlies, and terrified the patients. Particularly to one of the patients who decided to touch the hot wire, sending him into seizures.

"We do what we have to do, for their own good. Protecting those not blessed with mental health from themselves, others and...the sane world out there," the Professor said by way of explanation. "Sometimes our methods are harsh, but when our favorite patient goes out and is in places unknown...."

"When did she escape?" Walsh demanded. "And where do you think she is?" Under normal circumstance, he would have reached for a pile of cash in his pocket to induce cooperation from those who were not supposed to give it, or a revolver from his hip to extract such from a closed mouth official who was afraid of his bosses. But as an Aristocrat, who could easily be pulled into the establishment for 'voluntary observation', he had to play the part he had scripted. Leaning back, doing as minimal motions as possible, as such was the hallmark of every man of stature, he continued in a soft, assertive voice. "My government, and brother, who are the most powerful on earth at the present time, would be very grateful if you provided me, confidentially of course, with information regarding where 'places unknown' are."

The Professor thought about the matter, stroking his chin and lowering so that no one could see what he was thinking, and finally, after ten seconds that felt to Walsh like as many days, raised his head. He pointed Eastward. "As far as I can intuit, roughly three thousand kilometers that way. In what, depending on who has more tanks, more guns and more horses, is either Eastern Poland or Russia. Or, perhaps, a few more hundred kilometers, to Petrograd or the new capital of the Soviet state, Moscow."

"Of course," Walsh said with disbelief, calculating how many miles are in a kilometer. "An unarmed woman who doesn't even know which end of a gun to shoot and which one to use to force open a stuck door leading to a secret escape tunnel finds her way across Allied and German lines. In a miraculous journey."

"Which perhaps is possible if she had a miracle-producing Comrade with her," the Professor countered, bringing out a photo of a man Walsh recognized instantly. "When he came in here, he thought he was Jesus. And convinced even some of my most cynical orderlies that he was. He confided in me that he wanted to bring Spirituality to the Communist Revolution, since he hated and feared Christian theology as it is today in Russia as much as Lenin does. I told him to wait till the right time came, but then---

"---Peter LeFevre, chairman of the French Socialist Freedom Party made a 'miraculous getaway'?" Walsh pressed. "On his 'own Father's timetable' with---

“---No help from me, or anyone here!” the Professor blasted back, with so much fear in his timber than it had to be true. “We have as much to lose by not finding and stopping these two ‘Universal Compassion’ crusading Bolsheviks as you do.”

“And ‘we’ is?” Walsh inquired.

“Well, Sir,” The Professor-Doctor replied pulling back his lips with a collected sense of arrogance back into his demeanor. “Such questions are those we never give voice to,” he stated. “Gentlemen who are working behind the scene to insure, well...you know.”

“Yes, I do,” Walsh assured his fellow Mogul, knowing that no matter how many champagne and white tie parties he attended, he would always be the saddle tramp backwater Texan cowboy who made it possible for selected people to eat filet mignon, and those not selected to amongst the elite to be satisfied eating ground beef or cow dung.

But for the moment, the search for the woman who called herself Emily Younger in this lifetime, or Lorena Walsh in the last one, acquired an even higher priority for Walsh than the battle between Free Market Capitalism and State Regulated Sharing of Resources, between Universal and Selective Compassion, between Imperial Nationalism and the Pipe Dream of International Global Unity. Whoever she was, Emily had betrayed Walsh yet one more time. He was determined to find her, educate her, and love her, even if he had to kill her to do it.

CHAPTER 10

In a war there is conflict not only between people but between loyalties, particularly a Civil War. What happens if you are a Polish Nationalist who is also a hard Core Communist, given a choice between fighting for Poland to be an independent country after being owned by Russia, Germany or Austria for the last 100 years, even if the new leadership is Capitalist? What if your father considered Karl Marx the next coming of Jesus and your brother thought the writer of the Communist Manifesto was authored by the devil himself? Beyond the question of whether to take up arms in the battlefield for your cause, a sign in a hopefully peaceful protest on the street, or folded hands in private prayer to whatever God you believed in or invented, this was the issue at hand for so many on what had been the Eastern Front after the treaty of Brest-Litoski had been signed by Lenin, the provisional, atheist, Communist and very determined new intensely intellectual leader of the New Russia, which was finally out of the War with the Kaiser.

The terms of that agreement March 3, 1918, required Russia to disavow any claim of ownership or influence over 34 percent of its population, 54% of its industrial land, 89% of its coal fields, 25 % of its railroads and rubles to the tune of 300 million gold Marks. Such re-created several new countries, including Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Finland and, most notably for the international scene of the new post war landscape, Poland. But the most compelling reason to decide which side one fought for in the War between the Bolsheviks and most everyone else was who did the most harm to you or yours. Indeed, Lenin himself turned from being a knowledge-seeking intellectual young man into a prematurely-old one determined to change the world by extreme force after his brother was executed for dissent against the Czar and his sister was interned in the worst situations possible for voicing her disagreements with that Christian ruler.

Not surprisingly, Hans Muller, who in thought and deed, was a doctor serving all in need equally, dedicated to the Cause of Universal rather than selective Compassion, lost no time in becoming anti-Bolshevik after receiving and processing the news that his wife Elsa and the two children she enforced 'by accident' upon rather than gave him were killed by Red Army Bolsheviks. It evoked anger in him, and guilt, the latter being due to his having before her demise secretly wishing her dead every time the half-Bavarian half-Polish failed opera singer decided to have an argument with him in triple fortissimo intensity about anything. Matters from Else feeling and seeing the natural effects of age on her body before Hans did, to neglecting food wrapping and spoons he (according to her anyway) 'intentionally' let fall on the floor while frenetically in the wee hours of the morning trying to figure out new cures for old diseases in his private laboratory with the aim of (according to her anyway) becoming famous and more aristocratically elitist than he already was. Elsa lay such claims through a prematurely forming double chin that she tried so hard to hide with turtle neck sweaters, even in summer, so many times that Hans' stoic, Prussian intellectual indifference to the matters that mattered to her and all other 'normal' people became most active in his usually caring brain, an instrument he used far more than his heart, by his own admission. Oh, how Hans now wished he never muttered with his mouth to the sky, 'please put that self-absorbed moronic wench out of my misery, and hers!'. Particularly now as he gazed upon the families of refugees carrying

or, if they were lucky, carting what was left of their belongings from where they had lived to where they hopefully would be allowed to in what was now called 'The Polish Frontier', By way of who was traversing it, that could be told in part by the languages being spoken by the refugees.

Hans, having a visual more than auditory memory, was never very good at languages without having to exert a lot of effort. But he recognized a mixture of Polish and Russian being grumbled in lament, barked out in anger and voiced in solitary prayer by men, women and children all walking or pushing their tired oxen or horses Westward. How he yearned to give them all a ride to where they were going. Or, according to his chosen Calling, restore full function to both of their bandaged arms and splinted legs. Or to somehow restore sight to the eyes covered with blood soaked bandages. Or, as Doctor Emily Younger was able to do, re-infuse the ability to laugh and smile into their broken spirits with a mixture of her 'special cookies' baked over any kind of heat source available, which, because of special ingredients she had put in them, as well as the love with which she gave them, did work. More than 80 percent of the time, according to Hans calculations, Emily's magical medicines worked, outdoing the placebo effect of 37 percent that all skilled and supply-poor physicians noted with regard to 'miracle' drugs made of sugar in good times, sawdust in bad. But these refugees walking in a, so far, orderly line maintained by friendly, well fed, aloof, troops past Hans' caring and guilt-ridden eyes were in need of something other than medical or spiritual help.

Yet another emaciated Russian mother carrying a crying child broke ranks and ran towards Muller, who was comfortably seated in a car loaded with boxes of supplied labeled as being from the Red Cross, clad in a suit that was neither slashed nor blood stained. Yet again, he was spared denying the desperate pleas for help, and offerings in Russian, English and German of 'great sex' and his three well fed 'Swiss' Red Cross companions for food for her child by well armed anti-Bolshevik 'Whites, a mixed alliance of usual enemies consisting of Poles, Fins, Ukrainians and liberated Russian POWs now called themselves.

"There is no food in these boxes, only guns," a Polish Sergeant in a uniform Muller didn't recognize barked out at the woman. "Guns that will go to our troops who will liberate your homeland from a country that once banned my people from speaking their own language. Soldiers fighting for freedom. But..." The soldier looked at the enlarged breasts on the frail, thin young woman, whose hair had thinned down to strands normally seen on a grandmother three times her age. Then unbuttoned her blouse, pushing the baby aside, relating to the child, 'Papa is hungry'. He smiled at what she saw. She faked a smile back at him, her eyes filled with sadness. Then, when her 'rescuer' could see not see him, the no doubt once-beautiful old before her time maiden threw and angry stare at Muller.

"I can translate what she is saying with those eyes," Ponath replied from the back seat of the still not looted or confiscated British-made truck, the steering wheel defiantly and proudly on the right side, doing what he could to maintain a Swiss rather than his natural Bavarian German accent.

“That you’re a sucker and coward to not fight for her honor,” Grossmann delivered with a snide smirk, scanning over the woman’s still very feminine body, and shapely but not yet fat ass. “Or let any of us do so.”

“Like you fought for anyone’s honor, even your own,” Ranselhoff reminded Grossman, sounding more like a blinded, one legged 60 year old veteran of three wars than a young idealist who turned into a middle aged cynic by being in just one of them. “We are all fighting to survive. Nothing else.”

“And perhaps she will survive better than we will,” Stein offered. He pulled his eyes back into his head, thinking about past memories and future prospects with his family back home in Dresden, who he spoke about often with a strange sort of fondness, yet wrote to so seldom. “A man secures his place of power with his gun and his fist. A woman extracts obedience from any man by satisfying the gun between his legs, feeding his ego and inflicting guilt upon him with unexpected children and his stomach with a home cooked meal, of anything, even roast shit sautéed with his own love juice.”

Muller never heard had such ‘common’ language come through the always neatly trimmed mustache of the university over educated musician who turned his nose up at any music that didn’t have a Bach BWV, Mozart Kurshel listing or internationally-sanctioned Opus number attached to it. But Stein was undergoing changes, or indulging in moral experiments, just like everyone else who had put on a uniform and was subjected to the ‘comradeship’ of fellow soldiers. Or who had been forced to kill or be killed. A trial of moral fiber that, for reasons of skill or luck, Muller, as a doctor, never had to undergo. But upon hearing of the death of his, at the end of the day, still beloved wife Else and the children she inflicted and/or gave him (he was still not sure which) at the hands of the Bolsheviks, the ferociously-Pacifist doctor who nearly got killed when in basic training because he refused to even touch a gun found himself fanaticizing about the day when he’d get hold of a machine gun and get the opportunity to mow down the bastards who made him a childless bachelor. As well as delivering into the ground any ‘comrades’ who wore the Red Star on their caps. But, he had a mission now that required him to fight with his head, not his fists. One that he could not tell his own men all the details about except for the ‘what they had to know’ details, at the orders of Winston Churchill himself. And the head of the British Secret Service in a letter delivered to Muller’s room back in France by a commoner courier who seemed behind his eyes to be far above his apparent station. But there was one order and request that Muller did make of the four men who had become closer than brothers, sons or long deceased fathers. It was Ranselhoff who violated that mandate, but with the best of intentions. “So, eh, what do we do now? How do we get through these roadblocks to where we are supposed to go, Doctor?” the still young Ranselhoff asked Muller, afflicted with a bout of fear as he saw another car being pulled off the side of the road, its servant driver and well dressed gentlemanly passenger pulled out, and both taken into custody.

“Doctor?” an officer in what Muller surmised was a Ukrainian uniform, enquired in a soft, assertive tone. He was proudly sporting a large overgrown grey mustache, a large

Eastern Orthodox cross around his thick, scarred neck. Pushing his way to the British Lorie, he pulled back his cap, revealing a partially-shaved head with a Cossack warlock upon it. "You are a Doctor?" he asked in his best English. "From country where you drive on left side of road," he continued, taking hold of the location of the steering wheel. "Injured Comrades of mine who are fighting Bolshevik rebels need doctors. British doctors supposed to save lives. You and other doctors here, you come with me, yes?" he said with a big smile.

"No...Swiss doctors and assistants. From the International Red Cross," Muller replied in German accented English. For the first time, putting matters of military mission in front of medicine. "Swiss aid workers with food, not medicine," he said, pointing to the boxes.

The Ukrainian freedom fighter, or soldier, or conscript, helped himself to a look at the boxes, inspecting them with his nose. Then, after taking out a large blood stained knife thick enough to gut any dying ox, or dead horse, he inspected the contents.

"Where you take these?" the Ukrainian Cossack asked regarding the cans labeled as evaporated milk in four languages, the boxes of powder saying eggs in as many tongues and the tins reading 'beef' and several other small boxes. He helped himself to one of each of them, thankfully for Muller, seeing that they were the ones which did contain what their labels said they did. "And where did you say you take these?" he pressed, his mustache caked with no less than a quarter of what he had thrown down his into overfilled gullet.

"To where they are most needed," Muller said of the food packages bound for Moscow, as a peace offering to Lenin and the Bolsheviks, who, according to all reports, were being starved to death by a blockade around Russia. After the country had already been ravaged of resources and depleted of food by four long years of a futile, bloody war against the Kaiser that had cost 4 million lives, a third of them civilians. "The Red Cross goes to where it is most needed," he continued, firm, polite and considerate. And, above all else, as detached from all emotions, especially passion-driven compassion, like all good, or respected anyway, Swiss citizens. "Which my orders from head office say is..." he continued, reaching for an outdated map of the region, whose international borders had nothing to do with reality. "Here," he said, pointing to a region which, according to all intelligence data he had been secretly delivered, was still White territory.

"No, here," the Cossack countered with a smile that made his face seem more ugly than before, if such was even possible. With his bear-like paws his moved Muller's finger to the location he was at now. "Davay!" the Officer said to a group of his fellow comrades who were still on a smoke break, a mixture of well armed men, and some women, in a variety of uniforms Muller didn't recognize. The ensemble converged upon the British made truck, removing boxes with alacrity and force. Including the falsely labeled boxes containing odorless chemicals, volatile gels, drugs and elixirs only Muller knew how to use for the mission at hand once he reached Moscow. Thankfully, such did not removal

of the men inside the Lorie, Muller's German companions as new recruits for the White Army.

Standing beside the quickly emptied truck with his, so far anyway, poker faced men, Muller observed the White Army troops putting 90 percent of the goods into one pile, ten percent of it atop a cart to which was attached a horse. "More need of goods here to our freedom fighters than to those where your bosses say they need. My orders," the Cossack offered Muller by way of explanation, instructing his troops in quickly and non-understandable Ukrainian to share their tobacco with Muller and his men. "Truck useless from here on. No petrol stations left for 200 miles. Horse is in good shape. His name--"

Muller's ears heard and his body felt two shots. Daring to look at the source of them while accepting a light of the cigarette from the kindly Cossack, Muller noted that the driver and passenger from the car that had been diverted to the side of the road bore, underneath their civilian garb, uniforms bearing the Communist Red Star. "We would send them back home to Moscow," the White Cossack mused. "But their comrades would only eat them. We could put them in our stew to feed our people," he said as the bodies were being taken past him towards a recently dug ditch. "But their Bolshevik toxic blood poisons our people. Unless we sterilize the Communist cancer in them first," he said, after which he spit on the two terrified men who would soon be transformed into stew. Ordering one of the bodies to be held up for burning, the Cossack whipped out his knife, slicing off both ears from the Red captives. "More jewelry for my necklace," he declared, pocketing the booty as the earless Bolsheviks put their hands on their bloody heads. "And the eyes," he exclaimed proudly, tearing them from their sockets. "For the crows." He threw the ocular portholes into a bush, upon which crows descended. So as to not arouse more disturbance, he ordered a Corporal to gag the blind and earless Community, ordering their body to hung up on a tree, after which they were gutted. A sign put around its neck. Muller couldn't understand that writing, but anyone knew it spelt death to those who dared to look close, or oppose its message.

CHAPTER 11

As a woman cursed and blessed with intelligence that went far beyond, and some would say above, those around her when growing up in rural Pennsylvania, Emily Younger aspired to not only be a good person but, with regard to the Goal of Enlightening, Empowering and Liberating as many others as she could, a GREAT one. As such, much 'evil' was put in her path. Perhaps, she thought when seeing the duality of good and bad from a Higher, some would say Buddhist perspective, such occurred to make her stronger, and more effective at doing good. Yet, she knew that evil exerts its effects by means other than people who are cruel. She knew that for 'good' to win over bad, that 'good' had to be more than nice. It had to be intellectually and emotionally interesting.

Indeed, the Protestant Church she was forced to attend by her well meaning, some would say gentle, father and God fearing mother, was permeated with 'nice', which devolved into lifeless, procedural, simplistic and, above all, non-expressive. Headed up by a Minister Robert Smith with a droning voice who reminded, in word and deed, the parishioners that to serve the Lord, and please Him, you should be as non-expressive as he was. As the Saints were, And, as he pointed out via the drab, inaccurate and lifelessly 'nice' picture version of the New Testament on the walls of the Church, Jesus as well. Portraying Jesus as a man who was too Holy to laugh, too Pious to dance, and too attentive to his duties fighting evil to ever think about singing.

Yet, regarding evil, Emily knew from an early age that lifelessness was the most insidious form of evil, as it spread to others, making good people become non-expressive, nice, then polite then merely well meaning rather than effectively doing. And she also knew that Jesus was expressive, and did get pissed off, such as when he very assertively threw the money lenders out of the Temple rather than politely ask them to depart like a nice, holy person. Perhaps that was why she had become so dedicated to the Cause taken up by the Reds in what was now being called the Soviet Union rather than Russia. A Cause that was determined to implement, by any means necessary, the policy that everyone gives according to their abilities and takes according to their needs, a credo which takes into account that all men and women were not created equal with regard to abilities and needs. A Cause that required Spirituality to keep it human, kind, and palatable to the world, and particularly a Russia that still contained more believers in God than believers in the benevolent potential for humanity.

Peter Jesus, who had somehow gotten Emily out of a high security asylum, through a blockade that kept everyone and everything that Russia needed, and into a position to be head doctor in the Red Army Divisions that needed her most, would have been called the devil by Minister Smith. Because he was expressive about his Calling. That Calling required Peter Jesus, aka mental patient Peter Ivanowitch, make Red Army soldiers and any refugees in their territories with defeated spirits sing, laugh and dance, leaving the issue of healing their bodies to Emily. Somehow, the combination of faith in Peter Jesus as a Savior based in Spirit and effective medicine which sprang from Emily's highly developed diagnostic, scientifically-medical mind and skill as someone who could teach surgical skills her fumbling hands could not do to ANY doctor, or nurse, was able to

save wounded (by pathogens as well as bullets) Red Army soldiers and civilians from death, or worse, more than 87% of the time.

After dismissing another soldier from an early death as well as having to hobble back home with less than two legs, Doctor (now promoted to Healer) Emily looked across the make shift field hospital at Peter Jesus. He was delivering Communion to eight more once wounded and now functionally repaired recruits who were eager and ready to get back in the fight. A blasphemous act which would get him killed, or committed if done on the Allied or German lines on the Western Front. And, she feared, a crucifiable act here, in an Army that was fighting for a free, cooperative workers' society that was officially free from the shackles of religion, particularly as the new Morale Officer, by the way he carried himself. came her way. A tall man with a black goatee, longish, thick curly hair under his Red-Starred cap, wire rim glasses, and intense brown eyes staring at Peter Jesus, somehow knowing not only who he was, but what he was becoming in the larger picture of things.

"He's with me," Emily said by way of apology, and explanation. "He saved my life, so I could come here and save so many other lives, and.--"

"—Souls, yes," the Officer interjected, in English, with a baritone voice that sounded as godlike as it was determined. "Someone who is better at bringing recruits to come into our liberation army and to get more to stay once they see combat than anyone I know. Even Lenin. Or even Pugachev."

"The illiterate Cossack who thought he was the reincarnation of Peter II, the only Czar who tried to do anything to liberate, feed and empower the serfs," Emily replied, thankful that in her Russian history course she was required to read Pushkin's Czar approved version of the 'horrible revolt' led by the 'vicious' Cossacks with a critical and thinking eye. "Who was killed by Catherine 'the Great'. And who---"

"---Would have actually been able to lead his Army of 'believer' Cossacks into getting rid of Catherine and the rest of the Czars if a skilled doctor like you working with him. One who snuck real medication into their food that uplifted their spirits after he used 'wonder drugs from heaven' that saved their lives," the Commissar speculated.

"You mean that SHE could have put into their food, and into their wounds, Comrade Sir? In the first country where for the first time women are allowed to vote for their leaders, and come on the front lines to die for them,," Emily self observed herself reminding the Commissar. She pointed to a group of female recruits, realizing afterwards that such insolence could get her killed, and Peter Jesus, no matter how many friends he had in Moscow or Heaven, killed.

Emily watched the stubble-face of the Commissar develop thick wrinkles as he pulled his lips back into what looked like an angry grimace. Which, after she took a deep breath, turned into a warm smile. "Yes, you are right, Comrade Doctor," he replied, placing his bear-like right paw onto her thin, and shaking, shoulder.

“Comrade Emily,” she replied to the man whose English made him sound like he had spent time in New York. She saw something alluring in the Commissar’s eyes. And a face she had to comment on, regarding a dynamic that went beyond politics. “Or just plain Emily. Emily Younger, who you maybe saw when I was studying in Manhattan to be a doctor? You smiled across room at me at the White Horse Café from behind your books? Then brought me a pitcher of beer.”

“That I couldn’t share with you,” he said apologetically, averting his longing eyes from Emily’s penetrating stare. “Because I was called to critical business, and a crisis at home, that---”

“---Comrade General Trotsky!” A young Lieutenant sporting his first moustache out of his heavy breathing shouted out, having just dismounted his sweat-soaked horse. He handed the Commissar a note.

“Comrade Leon,” the head of the Red Army said as he read the memo, hiding its contents from Emily, and the Messenger. “It seems that you, my most valued Comrade Doctor, Comrade Emily and your most valued ‘whatever’, ‘Comrade Jesus’, have been called to attend to matters of importance in Moscow,” he related, paraphrasing the important details. “While I have been summoned by the dictates of history to be...somewhere else,” he continued with what seemed to be a love-hate relationship to someone who, Emily sensed, was not her.

With that, Trotsky tore off the half of the memo relevant to him, stuffing it in the pocket of his black leather jacket, gave the other half to Emily, then took the reins of the Lieutenant’s horse. “My most reliable and fastest car for Comrade Doctor and Comrade Jesus,” he instructed the dismounted Messenger, after he spurred on to the ‘back lines’ of a frontier which was becoming progressively smaller. After reading the memo, and contemplating its importance, as well as infinite possibilities, she turned her gaze to the most ridiculed, loved and perhaps valued man in camp.

It seemed that for Peter Jesus it was yet another day at the office, conferring blessings to yet another group of Red Army, so they said anyway, volunteers, this time in what was probably authentic Arameic, the language He spoke 2,000 years ago, or perhaps another tongue that the world would one day understand when it was ready to do so.

“Yes,” Comrade Doctor thankfully not patient anymore Emily said to the sky, to a God she somehow found herself believing in again, perhaps because of Peter Jesus, and or the multiple GOOD co-incidences she had encountered after taking care of him after he had helped her escape from the asylum. “Thank you for putting me in places that matter, and that are important. Please keep doing so!” she asked, and demanded..

Within five seconds she got her wish. Another memo, from another rider. This one wounded as well as tired. She opened it up, not knowing what to think, but knowing she had to act on it, fast. “Join us, or die. You and your Messiah friend. We still like, respect

and, for now, love you,” the still sealed message read. It wasn’t the first time the enemy had delivered a special delivery package to her as she rose up the ranks in the Red Army Medical Corp, insisting that she receive no military rank as the only reward requested. But it was the trio of signatures on this memo that terrified her most. Professor Doctor Hans Muller, Major Edward Jackson and, in the largest and most loving font, Jethro Walsh.

CHAPTER 12

“So, how many men have YOU lost from the Spanish Flu, Major Jackson, that you kept claiming in your reports to Washington was just a severe case of cholera, typhus or trench foot migrating into the gut,” General William Graves, asked the head of his new Corp of volunteers who were trained in not only how kill Bolsheviks but also to save wounded Allied soldiers from at least 12 different countries from going home without legs, arms or eyes, or in a box, as he looked over the Expeditionary Force to Liberate Russia of day after his arrival in the European Russian city of Arkhangelsk. “And how many have you lost to this blasted frigid January weather barely a week after the end of August?” continued the Presidentially-hand-picked leader of the 7,000 American soldier who had led so effectively, according to the historians anyway, the revolts by Philipino rebels 15 years ago. Brown skinned upstarts who dared to think that they were free after finally shaking the yolk of Spanish oppression after the American liberators had helped them win the Spanish-American War . General Graves put on another overcoat while looking through his wire-rimmed glasses over what was left of the American troops he had accompanied on a two week railroad ride across Siberia from Vladivostok. The well fed but weather beaten troops still had with them all of their M1903 Springfield rifles, M1911 45 calibre pistols, a small fraction of the horses they had started out with, and an even smaller reserve of ‘fight’ left in them. “And how many men in the unit assigned to you have YOU lost to desertion?” The glaze of failure overtook the specially-appointed, closed lipped son of a rural Baptist Preacher who was raised to tell truth. “Tell me the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, about how many men you have lost in this expedition that officially doesn’t exist, Major Doctor Jackson,” he pressed.

“None that survived to tell about it, to desertion, anyway, General,” the Boston blue blood Major informed the rural Texan born West Point General who had risen up the ranks still in the manner of a superior colleague. “And regarding the Spanish Flu that’s killing our troops before they get a chance to die for their country fighting Communism, it was someone in my team, if you recall, who identified it as a new disease.”

“Who apparently didn’t find a way to halt the disease,” Graves noted, gazing over yet another four large burlap bags carrying dead bodies being thrown into a bon fire instead of supplies for those still walking above ground. “Perhaps you can contact whoever in your unit discovered the Spanish flu and get him to work on a cure for this epidemic that’s decimating tens of thousands, on all sides of these many wars connected to the ‘Great War’ we’re about to win back on the Western Front.”

“We’re still trying to find him, Sir,” Jackson said, recalling how Emily had recognized the nausea, fever, aches, pneumonia and dark spots on the skin that turned blue as a new disease requiring a new treatment. Symptoms which he himself was coming down with, to a minor extent, for now anyway. “He should be joining our Crusade soon, General,” the highly-skilled Doctor who was still deluded into thinking he was an effective and beloved Major promised. “That Crusade being, of course---“

“---To work with the rescued Czech Legion, the Japanese, the Italians, the Greeks and the British to create an Eastern Front against the Germans to relieve our lads on the Western Front, you mean,” Graves quickly interjected just as a healthy young Reporter in a civilian suit writing notes in his pad, moved his way, sharing the look of the troops below. The young, and so far, impressionable, journalist, who no doubt was planning to write the ‘great American novel’ as his next, self-originating, assignment, was accompanied by an older gentleman whose eyes were as non-military and defiant as you could get. A sketch artist who commenced to immortalize the image of the international camp of soldiers in the Expeditionary Force below. Sketches which would no doubt would remain in the veteran New York Times sponsored illustrator’s mind that would find their way into the public eye, no matter how many times the contents of his bag were confiscated, or accidentally eaten up by rats. The Sergeant assigned to escort the young journalist and not yet ready or willing to retire illustrator as ‘protection’ held his firearm with the bearing of a man prepared to use it to defend those who knew too little about warfare, or against those who found out too much about this particular War without official security clearance.

“Yes,” Jackson added, affirming to the reporter, affirming General Grave’s party line excuse for the reason why an invasion into a sovereign country was considered a liberation. From the corner of his eye, Jackson noted in the young journalist’s bag a stack of notes within a folder marked ‘Ph.D. thesis’, bearing the gold insignia of Harvard, Jackson’s alma matter. of Harvard. “This. My fellow Harvard scholar, is about beefing up the Eastern Front so that the Fritz the Hun, who started this War with atrocities in Belgium,” Jackson related as a senior frat brother to his soon to be initiated fellow Greek. “And after it was in full swing, as you remember, sank of the Lusitania, causing the deaths of, as you know, many Americans when our country was neutral. And do not forget as well Fritz the Hun’s demonic ally, Islamic Johnny Turk who massacred the Christian Armenians in 1915. A death toll of at least a million. And, after you are through with your independent ground breaking investigation, assisted by us of course, will probably be seen to be revealed to be a lot more. And make no mistake about it. Johnny Turk and Fritz the Hun still have enough fight in them to continue to make the would Unsafe for Democracy, assisted directly and indirectly by the godless Communist Bolsheviks in Russia.”

Of course, what Jackson didn’t say was that top secret intel about the Germans was that civilians on the home-front in the Fatherland had little or no food, and soldiers in the field were on their last reserves of ammunition, and the will to fight another day, even if it was for their fellow countrymen, families and comrades. And that an Armistice was certain to be declared within a matter of weeks. And that the newest ‘menace’ to the stability of a world in which the rich still could legally oppress the poor was against the ‘Red Devil’ Bolsheviks whose mandate was immediate economic equality. One of the steps in that process being to seize the Trans-Siberian Railroad that had been built by hard working Russians so that it could supply goods to the new American of that vast, resource rich country. And assist the Czar-loving Whites who had forced the Red ‘rats’ out of the capital of St. Petersburg into small belt of territory around Moscow, moving in for the final and no doubt vicious killing of them, and the Marxist ideal of ‘everyone giving

according to their ability and taking according to their needs'. Facts that neither the American General nor Major dared share with any of their battle weary men. At the risk of being fired from their jobs, or denied the privilege of remaining alive by the Capitalist Anti-Communist bosses, who were really paying their salaries.

CHAPTER 13

“So, Russia didn’t look this big on any map,” Dieter Stein, who had spend all of his 45 years in crowded German cities before the war and even more claustrophobic trenches during it, said from his perched position in the wagon on the buckboard of the, atop an ass bearing blisters upon blisters. With a shaking chest, infused by fear from places he never knew existed, he forced in yet another breath of fresh, non-industrial, grass and flower scented air, his eyes opening with terror. “All of these vast, wide open spaces that seem to go on forever---“

“Are so big that it scares you, silver spoon in the mouth raised city slicker? Like Karl Mai wrote in his account of the American West?” Richard Grossman interjected, from proudly atop the saddle of a horse who had returned or had hidden after all the human inhabitants of his home village had been killed or abducted, four burnt down villages ago. “Russia is the land of opportunity, with plentiful land, to be owned legally and morally by whoever is bold enough to take it. Like the American West was.”

“As long as you discount the fact that the Indians owned it first,” Karl Ponath added, atop a mule from that same now non-existent village which, truth be told, could have been wiped off the face of the earth by the Reds or the Whites. “Ultimately, after we humans are finished killing each other off because we are so ‘intelligent’, the worms will inherit the earth. But in the meantime,” the old lumberjack and master cabin builder said as he looked over the rolling hills of proudly standing pine lovingly surrounding green meadows. “Let’s enjoy these grasslands and forests created by Mother Nature rather than ‘wilderness gardens’ of symmetrically planted trees and manicured grass that dominate so many of the open spaces that used to be in Germany. These wild Slavic trees and bushes can teach us much, if we listen to them. In a language that is...beautiful! Kracevoy po Rusksi!” the 60 years worn-out Bavarian exclaimed with a bigger than life smile in Russian with the enthusiasm of a 20 year old Cossack.

“Like you, are beautiful, Ma’am,” Grossman said as tipped his hat to the passenger riding shotgun on the buckboard of the wagon, with a Wild West American twang. “Or rather, as is appropriate in this New World of Adventure and possibilities, ‘kraseva.”

“You mean krasevO not krasevA!” Muller interjected from his post holding the reins on the horse pulling the wagon loaded with what was left of the Red Cross supplies allowed to pass the checkpoint operated by the Whites. “Werner Ranselhoff is still a man,” he said of the pregnant ‘wife’, beside him. “Despite the fact that he’s wearing a dress and a wig, made unfortunately from the scalped head of a woman who is no longer in the land of the living, or vane.”

“Because he likes it?” Grossman volleyed back. “The dress and long braids, I mean.”

Ranselhoff reached into his cleavage on the peasant dress, reached for a pistol which Muller specifically told him to bury with the raped, and thankfully for the injured incurred during such, woman who had been the owner of the fabric as well.

“Because we are all doing what we have to do to get into Bolshevik territory, and the new inland capital, Moscow.” Muller said as he held back, in a husbandly way, Ranselhoff’s very armed closely-shaved hand, pretending to kissing it tenderly as a pilot flying a plane bearing the hammer and sickle swooped down for a look see. He gently pulled on the reins, bringing the tired yet still faithfully serving horse in the harness in front of him to a much welcomed stop. “And these Red Army uniforms, the only ones we could find that were still intact, are necessary deceptions to get through to our assigned destination and contacts,” Red Army Lieutenant ‘Mullersovitch’ continued, hoping that the latest set of half truths about such were still being believed by the men who, he hoped, still believed in him.

“I didn’t enlist in the German Army, or let myself get drafted into the American Army, or Sergeant Walsh’s secret service company so I can die wearing a dress,” Ranselhoff barked back at Muller as he pulled his back his hand, averting his eyes from the Bolshevik pilot above who seemed to find his face, legs and paper-enhanced overstuffed breasts very attractive. And refusing to take the package of flowers and candy wrapped up in newspaper said pilot dropped into his lap.

“And this is the fourth uniform we all have been wearing since we were inducted into the Kaiser’s Army,” Stein noted, with more cynicism and less hope than Muller had ever heard from the middle aged scholar who had finally given up the hope that playing the right piece of music the right way could transform the listener, and if it reached the right listeners, the world. “The fourth soldier suit in yet another war where, I am told we are fighting godless, vicious Communists, and for...democracy back home, if we ever are allowed to go back there. Rule of the people. Which was invented by the Greeks.”

“Who in ancient times voted to put Socrates to be put to death by a show of hands. Two weeks later that democratically elected assembly voted to have a statue build in his honor.” Professor Ponath related. “Such still are countries that call themselves democracies.”

“Like Greece today, which is sending proportionally more troops than any of the other allies to fight this big country we’re stuck in,” Ranselhoff noted, thumbing the thick braid of long hair that was not his own, which the balding young man seemed to be developing an attachment to. “According to what that White Army Information officer wearing a wedding ring three villages back confided in me. Between marriage proposals. Who also told me, between smiles I was ordered to give him... Things that, maybe I’ll share with these three gentlemen, before you, ‘good husband’,” he said to Muller though painted red lips regarding Grossman, Ponath and Stein.

The Silence of the woods and meadows was replaced by another kind of quiet in Muller’s ears. The kind heard by his patients who were about to expire due to their wounds. Or as his fellow soldiers in the German trenches said seconds before a shell, grenade or bullet sent them to their Maker. Yes, a mutiny was afoot, unless Muller violated orders, and informed his four Comrades of the real Mission at hand. Information that would get them

killed, or cause them to desert. Or worse, to tell their captors about under torture. And, as any soldier who has been in any real war, knows, when the hot irons, water-boarding buckets or the skin peeling and intestinal eviscerating knives begin to be put to use, everybody talks.

Some of those potential torturers loomed on the horizon. From the East, a detachment of heavily armed riders galloped across the Steppes, each of the twenty men equipped with sabers, repeater rifles, two gunbelts and a pistol able to shoot rounds at least 45 calibre or better. Armed with the bravery of his new 'womanhood', Ranselohoff leaped off the wagon, reached for his pistol, and motioned for the gentlemen in the group, including Muller, to stay behind him. "We have to know who they are," Muller said. "Friend of foe."

Ponath removed a spy glass from his Red Army coat, an item that Muller didn't know was on his person. Gazing through it, he noted, "Red Stars on their hats."

"And determined eyes under them," Stein added, having been handed the field glass by his Comrade.

"More determined eyes than any White Russian refugee or freedom fighter soldier I've seen," Grossman, the next recipient of the magnifying device said, after which he handed it to 'Lady Ranselhoff', clearly bypassing Muller's outstretched hands.

"More determined than any of our ocular portholes," the young man who now feared he would not become an old one added. Out of pity, or smart thinking, Ranselhoff offered Muller a look see of the riders. But the official leader of the platoon that officially did not exist on a mission that would never be written about had his eyes on the newspaper wrapped around the candy and flower which the pilot had dropped so accurately into Lady Ranselhoff's lap.

Muller could read Russian far better than he could speak it. Such was not something that gave him joy at the moment, particularly when he read the news about an assassination attempt on Lenin, the main architect of the Bolshevik Revolution. Three bullets delivered into his already old-well-before-his-time body. By a rival socialist, Fanny Kaplan by name, who was earmarked for execution. Along with thousands of others potential enemies of the newly emerging Worker's State who were now not merely ideological opponents, but real threats to the fledgling noble experiment that just wanted to be left alone by the Whites and the Allied International Community.

Muller had to think fast as the riders approached at a brisk hand gallop. Particularly as his Orders regarding what to do with Lenin for a 'simple' and 'untraceable' suicide assassination Mission were out of the question, now that the head hanzo of Red Russia was even more heavily guarded.

When the riders reached Muller's naked eyes, he saw that they were enlisted men, They were commanded by a Sergeant, who saluted former German Captain Muller, now clad

as a Red Army officer, addressing him as 'Leutenant Comrade'. By the best interpretation of the gruff middle aged veteran's voice, he seemed to be asking how he and his now officer-less Comrades could be of service.

The first thing Muller thought was that he would be found out as a non-Russian speaker by his inability to pronounce certain vowels and, of course, his bad grammar in a language that had six cases instead of just three. The second fear was what he would have to tell his slain wife and children in Heaven after he was whisked off to see them briefly on his way to hell, how he failed to extract revenge on the Bolsheviks for mercilessly slaying them, or be there to protect them from the horrible deaths Walsh's hand picked messengers related at the hands of the Reds. But, thankfully, providence intervened. From a voice that spoke perfect Russian. Out of the mouth of Grossman, whose knowledge of that 'inferior Slavic tongue' he had hidden from Muller but, apparently, not his other German comrades.

From what Muller could gleam, Comrade Corporal Grossman convinced the border patrol that they were on their way to Moscow, where his superior was on a special Mission to deliver a message to Lenin personally from world famous actor William Boyce Thompson. The silent film star previously recognizable only in North America was now known world-wide as a renegade official in the Red Cross who was determined to feed starving Red Bolshevik families as well as needy Whites. One of the only Americans, other than journalist John Reed, who saw Red Russians as friends rather than red devils, Grossman boasting about how Muller knew both Americans personally. Explaining that they were carting in canned milk, grain and medicines in the cart that had been stolen from the Whites. And promising that 'Comrade Leutenant's wife would personally dance for the patrol of border guards after they got across what was, for now anyway, a 'border' behind which Red Army soldiers could heal from their wounds and their Red-supporting families were safe from renegade White Army militias.

With that, Muller and his detachment were allowed to proceed, with special passes to provide to the rest of the border patrols, and fond loving looks of longing affection from the Red Army enlistees on horseback. Something that 'Lady Ranselhoff' thanked them for with a warm smile delivered to them, and an angry stare at Grossman when said riders were not looking.

CHAPTER 14

Being a woman ruled by morality-based logic rather than impulsive emotions, Emily Younger, M.D., found it odd that ‘Comrade Peter Jesus’, who she now, in private, called the man who released her from a lifetime as a mental patient and as well, the limited horizons of someone who does not believe in a Supreme Being behind the earthly plane, was doing something...illogical.

The sermon he was giving the Red Army troops, as they finally began to make advances against the Whites rather than ‘strategically planned’ retreats, merged from Old Believer Russian into Aramaic, the tongue that the First Jesus had spoken, which somehow Emily could feel more than understand. Then again, feeling was becoming more important to her than understanding. Her mind became absorbed in Peter Jesus as the Second Coming of the rebel who redefined revolution, but her heart was falling in love with the human body which he had taken so that his message could be understood and implemented. A body that displayed, even when fully clad, Herculean muscles that rivaled any athlete Emily fawned over at football games at college she had attended first as a medic for injured players, then as a fan of the game. Comrade Peter Jesus’ scraggly beard somehow complimented his chiseled chin, making him seem both un-trainably wild and aristocratically civilized, both at the same time. His eyes seemed to change color each time you looked at them. A mystical shade of coral blue when you needed to expand beyond the mundane earthly plane of ‘normal life’ into the beyond. Brown as fertile soil when you needed to feel safe, secure and nurtured. And florescent green when he invited you to share a laugh with him, his Father, and yourself, when things were getting too linear, or lifeless. But this sermon this day, in Aramaic, was not about blessing the surgical instruments Emily somehow was able to wield afterwards as effective tools to put shattered flesh back together again. No, this time it was about hard, metal objects that were intended to blow human tissue apart.

“Why is the promoter of Peace, Love and Cooperation rather than competition with the Whites and their Capitalist Agenda blessing those cannons, Comrade General Trotsky?” Emily asked the Supreme Commander of Red Army as he stood beside her, his trademark black leather jacket glistening in the late summer sun, regarding the weapons that were, for one of the first times, captured from the Whites in an advance rather than surrendered to them in a ‘strategically planned’ retreat. “Is it because he wants to, or because he has to, Lev?” Emily continued, looking alluringly at the still very married charismatic Comrade General Trotsky. Who was charged with the task of fighting a civil war that no one hated more than he did.

“It’s not because anyone forced him to, this time anyway, Emily,” Trotsky replied with a smile, averting his eyes from her. “Besides, if we want to be sane, effective and what many call happy, we have to fit our want to’s into have to’s. And Comrade Peter is becoming who he has to be, and wants to be.”

“A former Bolshevik atheist who thinks he is Jesus? Who you won’t allow me to treat for his delusion? Who goes out into every battlefield, bringing back more of our

wounded in the heat of battle than an army of medics, or captured deserters and prisoners assigned to the suicide platoons?" Emily countered, putting her face in front of Trotsky's while he was in mid thought, an offense that warranted a bullet or beating from any woman he had no interest in, or any man. "Who one day will get shot and realize that he won't be resurrected three days later!"

"A day that will not come, as long as the men who believe he is, or want to believe in him but can't yet, continue to give him cover under fire," he pointed out. "Besides, Comrade Jesus is a powerful competitor in the most important War of my life."

"The struggle to free Russia and the world from Capitalists, Fascists and Dictators, and the poverty, oppression and injustice they inflict on the collective and individual human soul?" Emily inquired.

Trotsky pulled in his lips deep within his overgrown goatee, turned his eyes inward to look into himself, then gazed at his left hand, taking note of the ring on the fourth digit. "The struggle as to whether to honor my pledges to past Comrades of the heart, or to new ones," he said, slowly and deliberately, struggling to find both the correct and right words. To be sure of that his meaning was understood, he embraced Emily, then kissed her tenderly, on the lips. Just as Emily felt what was in the heart of the General who the White Russians and American newspapers called 'the cold hearted, non-feeling, diabolically logical to a merciless end devil', he pulled away, then stroked her trembling cheeks with the lightest touch of a hand she had ever felt from a man. An electrifying touch that said he was connected to her, and she to him.

"So, what do we do about this?" Emily thought of saying when glancing at the wedding ring on Trotsky's tenderness-conferring hand. "And what about your wife?" she wanted to say, but didn't. But some thoughts lingered even deeper in her head, and heart.

"There's someone else in your life too, Emily?" Trotsky asked, reading her mind and soul.

"Yes," she related and confessed, looking downward as to hide what she was thinking, wanting, and yearning for.

"Comrade Peter Jesus, no doubt," Trotsky said, with a sad but vicariously happy smile. "A good pick. Comes from a good and powerful family," the proclaimed atheist mused in the manner of the Jewish heritage he still inherited from his father.

"And, someone else," Emily continued. "Who is..." the words wanted to come out, but she kept them stuck in her throat, making her chest shiver with anger, grief and heartache. "Who is..."

Trotsky put his magic and genuinely loving fingers over Emily's trembling lips. "Someone I don't want to know about, if he's on the opposite side of this War."

“But who you will need to know about?” her reply, thinking about the German Captain Doctor who she had saved from dying by turning him into an American Private Infantryman. Wondering where Hans Muller was, and why he was affiliated with her former fellow Americans, and now ideological enemies in all respects, Walsh and Jackson. “If you made pledges with your mouth, or unspoken words of the heart, to be loyal to someone, and they then become disloyal to the Cause that you both once shared, what is one to do?”

Again, Trotsky pulled back his lips, this time using his hand to scratch his hastily shaved cheeks. “What one has to do,” he said. “Praying that it contains some elements of what you want to, and can do.”

His baritone voice felt more like the voice of inevitable history rather than a mere mortal. He walked away before Emily, the woman with whom he said stimulated his mind more than any in recent memory, could engage him in another rebuttal that would challenge his mind, and soul, making both stronger. All the while Emily felt connected to the German doctor on the other side of this civil war who history forced her to love, for reasons she didn't understand, but had to accept.

CHAPTER 15

“So, tell me why it’s my job as a member of our organization, and consistent with my duty to country and assignment from God to be the one to do what has to be done with this very hot and sharp knife” Jethro Walsh asked his fellow contractor in a dark, windowless basement below Saint Dmitri’s Church. “And in this new independent country that now proudly calls itself Lithuania that wants nothing more than to be left alone by us, and our enemies,” he continued as his left ear heard a female prisoner in one of the adjacent cells begging the jailer to not kill her baby, and an old man being dragged in through the hallway swearing to God, Jesus and the Virgin Mary that he was innocent of all the charges against him. “I was raised as a God fearing Baptist,” Walsh continued while his fist felt the red hot knife in his shaking hand. His eyes beheld a blue-eyed, light brown haired defiant Bolshevik prisoner shackled to a T-post in front of him. The prisoner’s face resembled that of the crucified Messiah himself in the ‘true picture Bible books’ Walsh was brought up with as a child in Waco, Texas.

“My dear fellow Christian,” Bishop Basili informed the still-officially American Sergeant as he laid his large, hairy hand on Walsh’s shoulder. “You grew up a God fearing Baptist boy, and now you will be a God serving man.”

“Who is serving the wrong men now,” the ghost of Lorena, Walsh’s once beloved ex-wife said as she emerged from between the wall behind the raggedy clad, emaciated prisoner. The wall was covered with icons of the saints and their Messiah adorned with enough gold and precious jewels to buy twenty small god-fearing Texas towns, and everyone in them. “You do know what this ‘humble servant of God’ is really all about,” the ghost, or perhaps a re-incarnating for real Lorena, continued. This time speaking through a rat perched up on its hind quarters, pointing to the well fed, long haired, long bearded Eastern Orthodox priest. “The same crap that the Popes were all about back in the fourteen century when they built the Vatican by telling poor peasants that they’d go to heaven if they donated the lion’s share of their food, gold and offspring to the Church and convinced rich pirates that if they shared 20% of their stolen booty with the Church, there’d be a 129% chance of them passing through the pearly gates after they was hung, or by some miracle, died of natural causes.”

“And, yes I know, a Church that threatens kings and queens with damnation in hell, or revolts from their God fearing subjects, if they don’t tow the corporate line,” Walsh grunted in a low voice to rodent Lorena, while the priest gave last rights to the accused, and therefore guilty, Red Army militiaman. “And why are you following me like this!” Walsh demanded of his ex- but still somehow beloved wife.

“Why is who following you?” Father Dmitri asked Walsh as he turned around, apparently having not only eyes in the back of his head, but extra ears that could hear inaudible sounds better than any hound-dog the failed Texan rancher turned successful international gangster ever owned, or shot by ‘mistake’. “And why are you delaying in doing your duty?” Walsh continued, pointing to the knife.

“This prisoner...he...looks like Jesus,” Walsh replied, with a stutter in his usually calm voice, as he swung the knife blade towards the talking rat’s belly, falling on his own overfed gut as the rodent found cover in a hole behind the wall. “Not like a Bolshevik who knows information critical to...our Mission.”

“A Mission which is to do what, you were sayin’, Jethro?” Lorena inquired in a sweet voice, in that tender tone which loosened his tongue on so many occasions.

“A Mission to convert the devil himself into an angel, an inactivated eunuch, or a dead corpse,” Walsh asserted with a grunt.

“Which is only possible if we find out what this other Bolshevik ‘Jesus’, according to what you think you see, who is NOT the pretender blasphemer Peter Jesus you said we had to capture and crucify, really knows about his boss,” Father Basili said, pulling Walsh up from the blood-soaked floor. The well fed Orthodox Priest showed the big bellied American Sergeant a photo of a seemingly mild-mannered, short, weakling bald business man with a hastily trimmed goatee. “Lenin”, Father Basili said to the still silent, beaten but not broken prisoner. “Who personifies the devil himself. Who will do nothing to plead your case in the afterlife to save you from an eternity in hell for all the of sins you have committed, against friends, family and your fellow Comrades. Before the War, and before it as well. For everything you did in the war to survive, and before it.”

Walsh observed the guilt throwing eyes of the shaggily bearded but immaculately clad Orthodox Priest operating at full blast, his voice eliciting memories of past transgressions in the prisoner that evoked more pain than any hot, sharp knife from Walsh could inflict. The Bolshevik martyr, who Walsh had initially pegged as one of the few prisoners who would not talk, no matter how many layers of skin and guts were peeled away from his mortal body, lowered his proud head. Then pulled his eyes back into the sockets, recalling the worst memories of his no doubt tragic life, even by Russian standards.

“And, if you decide to come to your senses, and tell us what you know about your ‘new Savior’ Vladimir Lenin, I can give you a blessing, give you communion, and have all of your sins forgiven. The ones you committed during the war, and before that,” Basili continued, offering the prisoner who had pledged allegiance to the welfare of humanity rather than the pleasure of God a communion wafer. “Just tell my associate, Pastor Walsh, what he and we need to know. He can get you to a doctor who will treat all of your wounds, and make the rest of your life here bearable, and that of those you love elsewhere very comfortable, and safe.”

“Yes, I can, and will,” Walsh affirmed to the prisoner, wiping the blood-soaked dust on the floor from his coat, adjusting his Methodist Collar. “For you, and your family. In America.”

“Land of the free,” Father Basili added, as the not yet old but still no longer young prisoner’s will to keep silent continued to weaken. “Home of the really brave,” he

continued, hiding his real emotions and agenda from the human fish was about to chomp on the baited hook.

“And home of the inappropriately prosperous,” Walsh heard from rodent Lorena as she poked her head out of her hiding place inside the wall.

“Home of the inappropriately prosperous?” Walsh grunted back. But this time, as he heard himself, in a voice audible not only to the Priest but to the prisoner. “That may be true, but the rules of THIS world is...” he continued to the rodent.

“Heaven watches and earth works,” the Bolshevik said. He head raised up, his eyes defiant, his mind and Spirit restored to vitality, though he knew that his body would suffer for it. “Do to me what you have to. The only thing I have to lose is...” he broke into mad laughter, the kind coming from a man, or woman, who has nothing left to lose and therefore everything to gain. He shook his arms and legs, rattling the shackles around his wrists and ankles. “Workers, and fellow Comrades of all Callings, of the world unite!” he boldly pushed out through a voice made harsh by thirst, and bloody by beatings. “We have nothing to lose but our chains!” he proclaimed, quoting his own improvisations of the final claim in the Communist Manifesto on “So help me God!” he bellowed out, his faith in Jesus’ Mission and Lenin’s Mandate restored.

With that, Father Basili, possessed with the devil’s rage and the heavenly Father’s wrath, grabbed hold of the knife in Walsh’s hand, grabbed hold of the long mane of the Bolshevik, and peeled away his scalp. “For the sin of vanity!” the balding Priest yelled at the prisoner. “And so you can look just like Comrade Lenin!” he mocked. “On your way to hell!” he continued, after which he cut his throat, the blood from his neck falling to the floor as the color in his face turned into a dead, lifeless shade of pale. “A necessary sacrifice,” Basili said by way explanation to a shocked Walsh as he spit at the body of the dead ‘Red Devil’. “But we have other lambs and lions who will tell us what we need to know,” he said calmly, handing the blade back to Walsh. “And we both know what will happen to us if you don’t do your job on the next prisoner.”

“Yes, you do,” Walsh from rodent Lorena, in an ominous voice he could feel with his inner ears, but not hear with the ones on the side of his aching head. “God help BOTH of us,” she said with pity, anger and...love. The latter emotion being something that Walsh needed and wanted more than ever, but never quite understood how to use effectively.

But there were other Jesus’ to worry about. Walsh worried about the whereabouts of the miracle conferring Peter Jesus Bolshevik. Who was working real miracles in the real world, with the still very real Doctor Comrade Emily. Above all, he was determined more than ever to find those imposters and put them under his kind, and God fearing thumb, on HIS terms.

CHAPTER 16

Peter Jesus, his scraggly beard now almost down to his chest, his knot-infested hair having grown to the small of his back, sat at the piano in the very private study of a man who some called Ponchos Pilot and some Moses. His fingers coaxed the keys to give both perfect technique and emotionally-moving life to the compositions of Beethoven. Emily Younger watched the once 'mortal' and musically-untalented Bolshevik who had been arrested by the Communist-fearing French Police continue to play to the man who was now known as Vladimir Lenin, and the feline companion on his lap. It seemed odd that the leader of a country that seemed to pride itself on strong leaders with large muscles, boldly expressive clothing, loud voices and use of force rather than intellect to get things done was now being ruled, advised and/or guided by such a small framed man, physically frail, bald, and immaculately groomed man. Indeed, the new leader of the Soviet Movement whose invincible 'superman in the service of the common man' image on the large 'workers unite to serve each other and throw off the yolk of oppression' poster looked more like an English tobacco clerk than the intellect who was by all accounts the intellectual mastermind of the Bolshevik idea, and ideal.

There this most powerful man in the new Russia sat, in his chair engrossed in the music, gently stroking his cat on a rare break from his 16 hour days of hard work writing directives, delivering speeches and meeting with underlings who were all bigger than him in physical stature but, so he hoped, not more developed in the art of people manipulation. Emily took a mental picture in her head of this rare moment of this his plain, brown vested suit, with shoes as footwear rather than more practical and Slavic identification boots like the rest of the members of the more often than not warring amongst themselves Central Committee who he had somehow united in a Common Cause.

Comrade Doctor Emily, as the American expatriate was now called by her newly adopted fledgling country trying to not be conquered by her native land, watched Lenin's eyes from the side. This intellect who spoke four languages fluently, and was self educated in the classics of Western Europe. But the closer she tried to look into Lenin's soul, trying to determine if it was kind or cruel at its core, the more the 'guard cat' in his lap stared back at her saying 'we will tell you what you need to know on a need to know basis.'

For the moment, Comrade Doctor Emily was a welcomed guest of the Mastermind of the most radical people's revolution in history. A revolution which resembled, so far, the intellectually-led and morality-fueled 1848 Revolutions across Western Europe against the kings, capitalists and petty dictators. Revolutions that went down in the history books as revolts, if indeed they were recorded in the history books at all. Emily wondered if this meeting between a dedicated, overly sincere, once-atheist Communist turned self-believing (or some would say deluded) Messiah and an aristocratic-born intellectual who had rejected religion as his mind developed beyond the limits of a 'normal' mortal would go down in the history books at all. "But, that doesn't matter," Emily informed the cat that seemed to open up the tender portions of the soul in the animal-loving Lenin, who had ordered and/or allowed massacre of so many Czarist Imperialists and dangerous

Counter Revolutionaries. “We’re here to try to convince your friend and servant Vladimir Lenin that it is possible for kinder means to be put into effect for a more Enlightened, and sustainable, heart and mind enriched end,” she related with her eyes to the feline.

The cat kept her gaze on Emily as Peter Jesus played the piano. Each note evoked smiles in Lenin’s lips and eyes, which were as emotionally moving as they were cautious. Until Peter started to play the Appassionato. By the third measure it evoked Lenin’s wrath, which, this time, he expressed with a firm voice rather than the flick of a finger, followed by a bullet from a guard outside the door. “Stop right there, Comrade Peter ‘Jesus’,” he said, with fear in his voice and disbelief in his heart. “Play something else...anything else,” he demanded, and pleaded. He winced, once again, at the pain the three bullets delivered by a failed assassination a week earlier still left in his neck and collar bone. All while the now even more old-before-his-time not-yet 50 year old masochistic workaholic held his head in his arthritic hands, trying to push out yet another migraine.

Peter Jesus bowed, then evoked from the keys a passage from another Beethoven Opus, embedded with musical jokes, some from the composer and some from 20th century ragtime rhythms inserted by the pianist. It evoked a smile from Emily, and a well-needed chuckle from Lenin. Then, Peter Jesus looked at Emily. “Sometimes you have to give the patient medicine that he needs rather than what he wants, if you want to heal him,” he sang to her in a mixture of ancient and modern Greek, as if part of the song, to which Lenin hummed along in perfect harmony.

“Not if he has armed guards outside who want to crucify both of us!” Emily ‘sang’ back in ancient Greek, hoping that Lenin’s knowledge of languages, as the most powerful man in Russia hummed along with her in German, his favorite language.

“The heart has to be opened before the mind is made to be most effective,” Peter Jesus replied, in song, after which he played the first few notes of the Appassionato.

“Not in everyone!” Emily yelled back to Peter.

Lenin’s head ached with a volcanic eruption of pain. His eyes becoming kind, then angry. “Mind is more important than heart right now!” she said as she got up, pulling Jesus Peter’s hands away from the keyboard. Just as very armed guards from outside Lenin’s very private study came in, making their way to Comrade Jesus. “Forgive him,” Emily said to Lenin, in English. “He doesn’t know what he is doing sometimes, Comrade Lenin. He knows little about necessary political orders.”

“And so much about me,” Lenin admitted, in English in the presence of, presumably unilingual Russian bodyguards. “For reasons I still don’t know, but have to accept, for now.” He dismissed the guards, saying something to them in Russian that seemed to mean ‘it’s alright guys, these people are allowed to be here, for now anyway.’

“So,” Lenin said to Emily, in English, no less than ten seconds after the door shut, then noting that Peter Jesus was muttering something in Arameic, absorbed in a private heated conversation, with ‘Papa’ in Heaven. He leaned back uneasily on his chair, leaving the cat to scurry around for mice or ghosts that seemed to occupy the study. “Lev Trotsky didn’t tell this miracle worker Jesus who seems to deliver to those who need to believe in him. But until we win the Revolution, we can’t let our hearts be softened by music that is so...tender. We still have to be strong rather than sensitive. Or maybe Trotsky wants to weaken me so he can insert his own even more radical and risky agenda, world-wide. Instead focusing all of our resources on what is still left of the Russia. After I, by necessity, gave so much Russian land away, so the world will leave this intelligent and compassion-inspired political experiment of ours alone. If I let myself become too soft, I won’t be able to do what is...necessary,” he continued, with painful, and guilty eyes, which then turned steadfastly determined. “Sometimes love and concern for your fellow man has to be taught by force, after the bourgeoisie Imperialist Capitalist scum are gotten rid of, gives everyone, even the scum, the opportunity to live in a country governed by one law only. To give according to your abilities and takes according to their needs. Which is made possible by music that gives one mental strength rather than sentimental, deluded and destructive weakness, or as some would call it, vulnerability.”

“A concept that Plato also said in the Republic,” Emily noted as a fellow academic, after which she continued, as more of a healer of the soul, perhaps the collective human soul, rather than doctor of the body, with an agenda far more than the official reason for the visit as assigned by Trotsky. “Plato...Who also differentiated between oppressive religion and mind expansive spirituality. Made powerful by a belief in an Energy that is more benevolent than malevolent. And that is beyond definition.”

“And that needs no power to be expressed, and extended to others,” Peter Jesus interjected, in Cajon Louisiana French, making an unannounced visit once again to ‘earth’.

“Hmm,” Lenin replied, leaning gingerly back on his chair, hiding his gritted teeth at the feeling yet another jolt of pain from his wounded neck and broken collar bone. “Your French is far more guttural than how it is spoken in Paris, but is far more expressive,” he said, in English. “Which you picked up from Comrade Doctor Emily perhaps, Peter IVANOWITCH?”

“Who is more than a Comrade, and or a Doctor,” Peter Jesus replied with a continued Louisianan drawl and slow moving words that meandered through the stuffy air, all the while looking fondly at his Mary Magdalene with the kind of deep respect and unending affection only possible from a distance. “Who I, as now Peter Jesus, have too much Agape for to supplement with Eros. Agape being love of Spirit, Eros being...”

“---Love of body, yes I know,” Lenin replied in rapidly and crispy delivered Parisian French to Peter Jesus, after which he painfully twisted his torso towards Emily then summoned the white feline back in his lap. Both animal loving man and ‘spirit protector’ cat stared at and into Emily’s ocular portholes. “But what I don’t know is

why, according to what you have said, done and brought to me today, you two seem to know so much about my tastes in clothing, music, literature, women and---“

“--Men?” Peter Jesus offered with a warm, non-judgmental smile.

“As Comrades of course. Philos. A bond between brothers in arms in both war and peace,” Emily interjected to the Soviet leader had decriminalized love affairs of the body and mind between men, and between women, which were part of normal life in all classes of Russians till they were only made punishable offenses by Peter the Great in 1710 when he tried to Westernize Russia and its culture.

Lenin took in a deep breath, stroked his beard, then gazed threateningly at Peter Jesus. Seeing anger as a form of fear, Peter Jesus usually would apologize, saying that he was misunderstood, an (as he so often said) ‘occupational hazard when you are blessed and cursed with being a channel for Wisdom and Knowledge’. But this time, Peter Jesus held his ground. Respectfully firm in his conviction that without belief in Spirit and some connection to an ultimately-benevolent Deity, no Revolution could succeed, not matter how well intended. Sending that message to Lenin with his penetrating and, in more ways than one, loving eyes.

“Your Agape friend, Comrade Doctor Emily, is very dangerous, and should know when to keep his mouth shut,” Lenin said to Emily by way of both heartfelt warning and assertive promise. “But, since both of you seem effective in keeping so many Comrades in the battlefield alive in body and what some call spirit, I am willing to listen to what you have come to tell me.”

“Comrade Trotsky sent me as a doctor,” Emily replied, arching her back rather than, as was her normal habit in such discussions, bowing her head. She hoped such bravado would make her seem stronger. And that it would hide her fear, or if she gave into it, cowardice, the most punishable offense in a homophillic or homophobic Russia. . “To provide medical treatment for you---“

“—Yes, I know,” the small framed, immaculately dressed and overworked ‘cigar store clerk’ tersely interjected. “Migraines, sensitivity to high pitched loud sounds, insomnia, and now three bullets delivered into me by a Fanny Kaplin, a Socialist who was a fellow Comrade against the Czar in 1905. Who, I know, Comrade Doctor Younger, your friend, and so he sincerely believes, my Savior, wants me to forgive.”

“It would help to unite Communists and Socialists into a stronger alliance against American Capitalists and European Imperialists to the West, and the Japanese to the East, Comrade Lenin,” Emily offered, with a humble bow as to an aristocrat.

“Yes, some have suggested that,” Lenin said, dismissing the cat from his lap. He then folded both hands around his mouth. “Which has turned out to be...impractical. Now that our former Comrades have formed alliances with Foreign and Reactionary devils.” His troubled, blood shot and sleep deprived eyes seemed to be seeing an ocean of

betrayals that even the would turn even the most trusting man into a cynic. “Devils who have, as you both know, done the most hellish things to my people.”

“In a world made even more cruel by our having to give first priority caring to ‘our’ people versus any other people,” Emily offered. “Selective Compassion versus necessary Universal Compassion, which---“

“---Is only possible if there are no nations, and no classes, but one united world, we already know this,” Lenin interjected. “But such, for now, has been made impossible in Russia because of what the White Demons have done to us. Sometimes evil means are required to achieve good ends, and you have to use terror against the devils who are inflicting it on your people, and the ideal that you have been chosen by Fate to implement,” he said by way of conclusion, delivered with as much compassion as his current mood of determination allowed.

“Which is interesting and true,” Emily replied as she leaned back. She recalled a rapid flashback movies she had observed in the flesh of the cruelty done by Reds to Whites and their international supporters, as well as atrocities committed by Whites against Reds, of course. Then Emily flashed on something else. “But what is also true is that you say ‘demons, devils and evil’ when describing the Whites and all Counter-Revolutionaries. You don’t believe in God, yet you believe in the Devil.”

“A reflex left to those of us who had religion enforced upon us when growing up,” Lenin confessed, pulling back his lips in deep reflection tinged with a touch of ironic humor. A truly ‘Russian’ smile from a Slav who identified and championed German to Russian culture in so many ways. “Especially if we were brought up by Priests. Or trained to be one, such as, hmm---“

“---Joseph Stalin?” Peter Jesus interjected, calmly and collectively. “Who is competing with God to become---”

“---A more effective human being in the service of humanity?” Emily interjected so as to not let too much Truth come out of the Savior’s mouth, which, as he should have remembered from his last encounter with the Romans, will get you crucified long before you can be understood or effective.

“Some have suggested that,” Lenin replied after a long delay, averting his stare, and the thoughts behind his eyes. “Some have suggested the opposite, regarding Comrade Stalin,” he continued regarding of his chief enforcer and, for the moment, good friend in Moscow. He looked upwards to Emily, then to Peter Jesus. “But you two have come to offer me a political suggestion as well as medical advice and psychological comfort.” He pushed his not yet recovered torso up on its feet. Then he hobbled his way to his bookshelf. It was cluttered with books in French, English, German and even some in his Native Russian. He fondly ran his fingers over the leather bound volumes as if they were his closest friends, and most trusted Comrades. “All of these books provide entertainment for the mind. Which I do not have time to read anymore,” he continued,

glancing at his pocket-watch. "But I do have time to entertain, and consider one suggestion from either or both of you as to make this Revolution work, and be sustainable. As long as it is a brief, and comprehensive suggestion. You have 60 minutes." With that he turned his back, looked out the window, and let himself become absorbed in worrying about the people below whose fate lay in his hands.

Emily thought long and hard about the matter at hand, and the possibility of infusing Spirituality into the Red Revolution that was just as dedicated to overthrowing oppressive Capitalists and power-hungry Archbishops. A thought came to mind. She looked at Comrade Jesus, who nodded 'yes' to the central core of the issue. Yet she worried about bringing it up. Until Lenin's white feline jumped on her lap, meowing an affirmation of her idea with mouth and eyes as she her inner ear could hear the ticking of Lenin's stopwatch and the grandfather clock next to him that felt as loud as her own pounding heart. As the precious window of opportunity to Lenin's ever working, chronically misunderstood and powerful mind ticked down. With nine seconds left, she blurted out. "Spirituality is universal, adaptable and beyond all restrictive, mind-killing religions. And a revolution without spirituality is like a Beethoven sonata where someone plays the notes but not the music."

Having snuck the words under the wire just in time for the man who had not time to waste, Emily took in a deep breath. She hoped and prayed that the message she sent out from the desert island which was her life had reached home port, somehow.

"An interesting and intriguing suggestion, Emily" Lenin replied, after which he turned around, addressing the Comrade Doctor by her name rather than function. "Which, if your fellow escaped mental patient Peter agrees to, would involve perhaps him as an incarnation of Buddha as well as Jesus. Buddhism being at its essence...a way to develop intelligence so much that it evolves into effective universal compassion."

"Which can also be reached through Christian Religion," Emily replied.

"A religion that has says there is a Heavenly Father who allowed my brother to be tortured then shot because he was trying to do God's work, fighting the oppressive laws instituted by the 'divinely appointed' Czar," Lenin related with bitter tears which only the inner eye could see, and anger any deaf man could hear. "And so many other brothers and sisters who suffered so much unnecessarily while alive. Or died too early at the hands of evil rulers and selfish aristocrats, supported by Priests. Overfed, warmly clothed and handsomely paid Priests who promised a heavenly paradise for all those who let themselves be starved, beaten, and slaughtered. An eternal paradise with a God that doesn't exist. And if He does exist, is a sadist who wants to keep his most beloved creation drenched in ignorant, assaulted by cruelty, and in the kind of pain that no one deserves to have to endure," he concluded, breaking out into mad laughter, directed at dumbfounded Jesus Peter as his put his small arm around his old friend's shaking shoulders. "I have a notebook full of very able psychiatrists who can treat your father for his psychological maladies, and, if you are brave enough, Peter Ivanowitch. A handful of therapists who can bring you back to who you used to be, my good friend, so we can

enjoy some well deserved earthly pleasures and work together more effectively in some more Enlightened Visions for the world.”

“As you educate your Priests in the New Russia in Spirituality rather than religion?” Emily suggested to the cigar store clerk possessed by rage and grief, breaking up what seemed to be a reunion of the best of friends, and perhaps lovers, which had been terminated by loss of faith at one end and acquiring more of it at the other. “Like you, Comrade Lenin, are educating artists now so that they produce Art that serves the people rather than their own inflated egos, and the temporary yearnings of the crowd.”

“Which has been suggested by others,” Lenin replied, letting go of Peter Jesus, and the memories the Soviet leader shared with the escaped mental patient in more innocent and less traumatic times. “Including someone I am told you know, professionally and otherwise,” Lenin continued, walking towards the door, then opening it. On the other side of it, Emily saw the face of someone she least expected to see in this lifetime, or the next. “My old friend, Doctor Muller, who effectively alleviated some of my many medical issues and most importantly cured many diseases of my traveling companions on the closed railroad car that brought me back to Russia a year ago by way of Switzerland a year ago,” Lenin proclaimed as he gathered notes from his desk, putting them into his pocket. “A welcomed guest sent by some well meaning Comrades of mine who worry about me more than they should. Comrade Doctor Muller, this is Comrade Doctor Younger . Or perhaps merely Emily to you?”

Emily could feel Lenin’s stare pierce into her almost as intensely as she could feel Hans’s eyes staring at and into her as she extended her hand out for a ‘professional’ handshake.

“Who deserves more than a handshake,” he smiled at Emily, pulling the reunited couple into a hug. “As you do also, Hans,” the Matchmaker Mastermind of the Revolution added. “Comrade Chairman’s orders,” he said, vicariously enjoying what he thought he saw going on between lovers Emily and Hans. “A collaboration between Comrades I don’t have to nurture and manipulate!” he said regarding the reunited couple, not seeing or perhaps caring about the mixed emotions Emily and Hans were really feeling, and the lies Hans no doubt was hiding behind his ‘so glad to see you again’ eyes.

“I’ll be back in 30 minutes for medical consultation and, at the insistence of my wife and other Comrades, treatment, while both of you consult about... more personal matters,” Emily heard the usually terse, emotionally detached yet mentally focuses leader of the Revolution say with unbridled joy and personal vicariously enjoyed happiness.

CHAPTER 17

Peter Jesus perched himself atop one of his boyhood friend Vladimir's desk, crossed his legs as the Buddha, prayed to the Father above and the Spirit within, and allowed Nature, or Divine Intervention, have It's way with Emily and Hans. But all they did was stare at each other outside of the closed, and (as Peter J discovered upon turning the door knob) locked from-the-outside, door. The two Doctors who had a history of being very vocal about anything idealogical, psychological or medical said nothing to each other, standing there like statues of terrified, petrified by lava victims of a volcanic eruption, paralyzed in thought as well as action. Clearly proof that Heaven watches and earth works. So, as Peter J was the rep for the former assigned to Duty in the latter, he took action.

"Come, drink of my blood," Peter Jesus said in French, then English. He leaped off the desk, then cut his forearm on the sharp edge of it, slicing open the skin around his elbow in the process, then gathered the red cocktail into a small shot glass. "Or rather, imbibe of our Comrade's tea," he continued, noting that Nature, or the Lord Above, or perhaps both in unison, had arranged for his stare to be directed at a plain, wooden tray. Upon it was a tea kettle, two glasses, two slices of lemon and as many cubes of sugar between them. Throwing the sleeves of his robes around his forearm as a top end waiter would a towel, Peter Jesus brought the tray to the meeting table in the middle of the study. He placed the two glasses opposite each other, filling them with tea, one cube of sugar, a squeeze of lemon, and a drop of his blood. Then he helped himself to a sniff of what was left in the kettle. "Good medicine for the body, mind and my over sized honker that God gave his Chosen People so they could smell good opportunities for others and our own bullshit when we think that our shit doesn't stink," he mused.

It elicited a small uplifting of the edges of Doctor Muller's, then Comrade Emily's lips. With a courtly bow, Peter Jesus invited them to sit at the table, then pulled a chair out for each of them.

"And eat of my body," Peter J continued, pulling out a large scone from the breast pocket of the Cossack shirt under his robe. "Which already had a large lunch three days ago, and is too full to eat anything now," he said, breaking the Scottish 'pastry' in half. After blessing it with a Russian prayer, he placed equal portions of the raisin and walnut scone in front of his two finally semi-comfortably seated caretakers. Or perhaps, they were disciples in a Mission Peter Jesus understood less about every day, but was more dedicated to fulfilling with each beat of his (still human, biologically anyway) heart. Having led the thirsty horses to water, it was time for him to withdraw from their immediate vicinity. He backed up to the bookshelf by the window, where he opened up a Latin version Homer's Odyssey, perusing the pages and noting the numerous mistranslations from the original Greek. All the while, from the corner of his eye, seeing if the stallion and mare at the table were smart, or brave, enough to drink from the water trough between, and within, them. Knowing that advice given is never taken when the giver is never taken in the presence of the provider of such. An understanding of human dynamics which Peter J recalled realizing even before that day in the frozen trenches when he had shot a 15 year old boy who, because of the oversized uniform he was put

into, appeared to be every inch a veteran soldier. And the hand-held machine gun in the hand of the rabid lad as he was about to slay Peter J's Comrades. A German assailant who was deemed 'the enemy'. Whose face, in Peter's mind, turned into his own as he was giving up the ghost. The under-aged German soldier's terrified eyes indicated that the place he was going to was NOT a heavenly place as a reward for sacrificing his life for his country. In any case, Peter Jesus was wiser than Peter Ivanowitch. Any identification with the latter was only experienced during nightmares the awakened Messiah had every night.

But, it was awake time now. In the world seen human eyes. And felt by a human heart, which Peter J now had to a far greater extent than a thousand Peter Ivanowitch's. That heart now felt every emotional beat experienced by Doctors Muller and Younger, who were now forced to become Hans and Emily.

"Good tea," Emily asked as she swallowed a healthy gulp the tea provided by her host, Hans had still declined imbibing of his treat, gazing at it suspiciously. "And even better scones. As authentic as anything old man McDougal made in the Scottish Bakery in Phili," Emily noted, taking in a good bite of it. "And if there is any hemlock in it, I'll go to whatever is beyond this dimension with a happy palate," she mused.

Hans took hold of the scone, dipped it into the tea and took in a small bite. "And better than anything I've ever had in Hamburg, or Glasgow," he noted, after which he surrendered to the hunger in his growling belly, chomping out a man sized portion of the tea-soaked pastry.

"You do know that dipping a home baked scone into tea is a capital offense anywhere North of Hadrian's wall that requires the Scotsman, or Scotswoman, who made it to cut off your balls and feed them to you raw," Emily volleyed back with a cautious smile and trusting eyes which acquired the first ray of loving.

"Like putting catsup on potatoes, or specially seasoned meat of some sort, prepared by a French cook," Hans volleyed back. His tight face loosened, revealing cracking open wrinkles which had been made crusty by exposure to the elements. "Which, as I remember, you almost did when the Parisian chef whose hands you saved from being eaten away by gangrene prepared a special dinner for us in your tent back at the field hospital. When I was recovering from wounds of the body that Major Jackson repaired, and injuries to the heart that you...healed."

"And if Marcel did hit me in the jaw, for not wanting to waste the black market ketchup that was given to me as a gift by one of my patients, I am sure that you would know how to fix it," Emily replied, with an open and welcoming soul. "According to the way you, as American Private Miller, took better care of the wounded there than I could, surgically. And even better than Major Jackson, our 'boss'."

Anger suddenly found its way into Emily again. No doubt due to memories Emily, aka the 20th century Mary Magdalene, had confided in Peter Jesus in the mental asylum

which nearly imprisoned their minds. And between numerous battlefields where they assisted the Reds which had liberated their souls. “Major Doctor ‘Big Daddy’ Jackson. Who let YOU assist in surgery because you was---”

“--- A man, I know,” Hans interjected, with a kind tone and empathetic voice.

“A man who—“ Emily’s words got stuck in her mouth, as her face turned beet red.

“I know!” Hans screamed out, turning his head away from her accusing stare, facing demons of his own, no doubt. “Who was responsible for you getting the message to visit a ‘special’ patient in need of your ‘special’ and experimentally tested medicine. Who turned out to be---“

“---Sergeant Walsh!” Emily grunted, her anger turning backwards into shock. “Who raped me! And mutilated me on the inside and outside!” she blasted out, tearing off her blouse to show him the whipping marks on her arms and back. “Then convinced me I did all of this to myself.”

“Which,” Hans related, calmly and compassionately. “I was told, from very legitimate sources, is what all of the followers of this Peter Jesus of yours requires his disciples to do,” he continued while tenderly taking Emily’s hand. “This ‘Prince of Peace’ of yours,” he noted while Peter Jesus’ head was immersed in the writings of Cicero. “Is siding, serving and supporting people who mutilated, raped and finally, when they had had enough fun, killed them!” the aristocratic-born German Doctor whose nearly defeated country was in shambles pushed through gritted teeth, after which he whipped out a picture of a woman and two children with a quivering right hand, his left fist so held so hard that his palms bled. “My Elsa, my son and my daughter! ”

Emily’s anger at Walsh and all of his associates turned into compassion for a family whose photographed eyes seemed to come alive, peering into her soul. Knowing that she had to release some word from her emotionally-shut down throat, she finally uttered, “I eh.. didn’t know that you eh..had---“

“—A wife who I first liked, learned to hate, and thought through all of that, that I loved,” Hans replies, putting down the picture, turning his head, wiping off the first drop of tears from his left cheek, unable to stop his right from revealing all of the emotions now competing for dominance. “Until I met---“

“—Me,” the self-made physician who had made far more than her share of miscalculations, mistakes and transgressions unto patients and so many others while becoming so replied, feeling more guilt than she ever recalled being possessed by.

“Whose mind is being led by deluded demons who will destroy the world,” Hans said referring to a photograph on the wall of Lenin surrounded by Trotsky to his left, and Stalin to his right, and a company of other strong looking men. “And whose soul is being perverted by---“

“---Me?” Peter Jesus offered, kindness, feeling guilty for his own miscalculations, mistakes and transgressions committed as who he was now, and who he had been prior to his awakening. “By the doctors whose minds were diseased and souls were dead. At the place where Emily and me...”

“Fell in love, lust or like?” Hans blasted back, into Emily’s face.

“And if it was any or all of the above, Hans?” Emily replied, overcome with a wave of understanding. She looked up towards Peter Jesus, who had since leaped, or as he felt it, silently flew, to the piano, where he lay his hands on the keyboard. Then took in a deep breath, allowing Spirit that is beyond Heavenly Father and Earth Mother to filter through his fingers. Producing heavenly music he could play, but not feel. This time anyway.

Something magical happened, as Peter J felt, and observed through a mirror that allowed him secret access to seeing the events taking place between Emily and Hans, who both pushed aside their doctor bags on the ground with their feet. They gazed at and into each other. And found something they didn’t expect, or thought they were able to handle.

“It’s called love,” Peter J thought but didn’t give voice to, letting the music speak for him. “And, this time anyway, nothing in the secret herb snuck into the tea, or experimental medical baked into the scones. “An opportunity to experience...love of soul, love of spirit and love of Comradeship,” he continued in the voice in his head which, eventually, would find its way into print. Perhaps in the wedding album which the two lovers, separated by war and lies promoted by both sides, would have soon. Officiated, perhaps, by himself as a humble Priest in a New Order of Clergy in the New Russia which would awaken spirituality. In a country, and world, where the only two options to most everyone were to be regulated by restrictive, expression-oppressive religious doctrine or liberated with ‘we’re all along here, all of us humans’ atheism.

The two doctors who had been sent to Lenin’s study to deal with the health of the Soviet leader felt themselves being healed by surgeons they couldn’t see, and the presence invisible physicians they could feel more intensely with each advance one made to the other. From Hans taking Emily’s scarred arm, kissing the pain inflicted on her body and pathologically-focused mind. To Emily gently Han’s cheek, which had gained more wrinkles, then running her fingers through his pre-maturing graying and thinning hair. Their overburdened heads edged close to each other, then their chests, pounding hearts in each of them. Finally, their lips met, embracing in a kiss. All of it orchestrated by the music coming out of Peter Jesus’ fingers, as his ears could now hear the loud Heavenly Silence in the room above any of the notes coming from the ivory keys. As the music edged its way to a crescendo by Divine Intervention. Or perhaps Peter Jesus’ very biologically based extrasensory paranormal abilities which worldly doctors and often even Emily told him, were tools that the Revolution could use and develop, perhaps in others as well, with the right medications and mental exercises.

In any case, Peter Jesus and perhaps even Peter Ivanowitch could feel Lenin walking down the hallway outside. Ten magical second later, he opened the door, entering alone, smiled at the two reunited lovers, then relocked the door.

“So, physicians, you have finally healed yourselves,” he said with a warm, tender and trusting smile that he rarely showed in any of his speeches, or to any camera lens. “So, now you can treat me,” the small framed man whose giant nature was solely based in his intellect, as he winced in pain. Then put his hand on his aching head, the organ which he valued most of all, and which, according to highly confidential comments delivered by Trotsky to Emily (which she confidentially related to Peter J), was the body part which was the first part of him to break down. “I don’t suppose you two have figured out what can keep me going for a few more years, so the Revolution doesn’t die before it gets the chance to be at least tested. In a country plagued by famine which is NOT our fault. And this Spanish flu that I may be coming down with, which----”

“—Doctor Comrade Emily discovered as a disease of its own,” Doctor Hans boasted proudly, as Comrade Muller, his arm around her. “But which I have found a cure for.” He bent down, pulled up his medical bag, and retrieved a vial. “Two pills once a day,” Muller said, putting two of the reddish green tablets aside on the table. “Starting now, Comrade Lenin.”

“Just Vladimir, between us, Hans,” Lenin said as he limped his way to the table with shaking legs. He then reached for the pills with shivering arms. With a hopeful grin anticipating relief, he took the pills into his left hand, then was handed a glass of water from Hans with his right. “Which, like the medicine you gave me in the railroad car that delivered me back home, did wonders. Because it was great medicine, or perhaps because it was a great friend who gave it to me. Which I hope will let me sleep when I want to go to sleep, and need to.” Lenin hesitated to take the pills. Such seemed appropriate to Peter J, as Lenin was the kind of man who was fulfilled by overwork and pain, more so than even the most stoic and self-punishing Orthodox Christian Priests and Jewish Rabbis he got to know, heal and minister to, who he hoped were on the road to being converted to the New Spirituality beyond religion. But, conversation with a good friend was the best medicine, as Peter J knew first hand when having open dialog with his formless and NON-male, or NON-female ‘Father’ in Heaven.

While Lenin and Hans talked about old times riding the rails from Switzerland to Saint Petersburg, Emily helped herself to a whiff of the miracle medicine that Hans claimed would treat Comrade Vladimir’s chronic headaches, sound inducing epileptic shakes, residual effects of three bullets lodged in his neck as well as the early stages of Spanish flue. Through open-minded, but scientifically self-monitored meetings with Russian herbalists and Louisiana Cajon ‘earth doctors’, who knew more than most American, or British, doctors, Emily had learned a lot about how to cure ailments of the body with something taken into the mouth, breathed in through the nostrils, or injected into a vein. Along with some advancement as a self-competent surgeon since her escape from the asylum. Particularly after Peter J blessed, and kissed, her hands before cutting open human flesh. As such, Emily had become more of a medical expert than she envisioned

she ever would be. A whole lot smarter than she thought or even imagined possible with a knowledge driven by intuition, and verified by logic.

This time, both kicked into gear at the same time, and at the right time.

“So, Vladimir,” Hans said to Lenin, whose body and mind were in escalating agony, while looking at the grandfather clock ticking away by the window, the curtains now closed by Peter J at his request. “If you take two pills now, I’ll guarantee that you’ll be free of---“

“—your ability to control your body, mind, or soul,” Emily said, having taken a final whiff of the pills. She described the combination of medications and herbs to Lenin in Latin and herbal terms, none of which Peter J understood. But what he did understand, and what Lenin understood, all too painfully, was that it was a specially designed toxin. Intended to drive Lenin mad, ineffective and, finally, dead.

“Comrade Peter, is this true?” Lenin asked Peter Jesus. “I demand an answer!” the usually completely in control leader of the intellectually designed experiment in the Revolution designed to force humanity into being humane, heavenly and God-like, ahead of the Orthodox Christian God’s timetable, yelled back in desperation, throwing the pills up at Peter J.

“I don’t know,” Peter Jesus said, smelling the magical potion, then feeling an unexpected void of any Knowledge about heaven or earth. “I’m not a doctor. Not of the body anyway.”

“But I am,” Emily said with assurance. “And I say that whatever else is in the bag, and is being planned by the men who corrupted this once good doctor and good one, will kill all of our Dreams and Visions,” she said, looking at Lenin. Then at Peter J, then with, pity, and love, at Hans.

Lenin pressed a button on the wall, after which three guards twice his size entered into the room. With eyes possessed and driven by sheer pragmatic determination. “To the lab, with that,” he instructed one of the guards, pointing angrily at Muller’s medical bag . “And to a holding cell with him,” he continued, pointing his fingers, but not his eyes, at Muller.

“I’m sorry, but loyalty to a Cause comes before loyalty to a friend,” Emily said to Hans as he was dragged away. “A friend who has been corrupted, by men who he thought were his friends.”

“Who is now betrayed by someone he loved, and who loved him,” Hans said to Emily upon being put in cuffs. “Like you were, by Judas, as you remember, or imagine remembering,” the once Pacifist Doctor who was nearly jailed for his refusal to kill another human being when conscripted into the Army said to Peter Jesus.

“Yeah, I’m a Judas,” Peter J could hear muttered from Emily’s mouth, in Hebrew, a tongue which, to Peter’s knowledge, his old and still trusted friend Vladimir didn’t know.

“A dirty job, but someone has to do it,” Peter J said to Emily, in Cajon French, mispronounced so much that no one trained in Parisian French could ascertain any of it.

“Yes, I know,” Lenin said, with a sad soul, looking at photos of his Central Committee Comrades on the wall. “And I fear will find out yet again.”

CHAPTER 19

“The only time you know who you really are is when real bullets fly over your head, your mistress tells you she’s pregnant, and when you are in jail.” Such were the words of Otto Edelmann, Hans Muller’s history teacher during his Middle School years in Berlin. An old fart with a white beard, bright blue eyes and a bum leg which was made so by circumstances he never shared with anyone. Even Hans, the only student who embraced the study of history, and whose respect for old farts was based in inner wisdom rather than the fear of getting a stick across the ass from the Headmaster.

After the school year was over, Hans wanted to know more about the old man’s life, so he could better engineer his own. But upon reaching the cottage where Professor Otto lived, alone, young Hans was informed that he had died. And had had left in his will one of the few possessions he still legally owned to Hans. A blank book in which the lad was supposed to write his own history, after he lived it, and found out who he really was.

“So, maybe I am the hero that I imagined you were when you were in those wars you tried to teach us about, from the inside?” Hans said to the image of ‘Professor Otto’ which he imagined in the wall of the holding cell containing nothing except himself in it, and, as a courtesy, a bucket in which he could shit, piss and barf out blood from his chest after multiple beatings to it. “Why didn’t I spill my guts about my bosses to the interrogators?” he asked the blood stained impression on the wall left by the last occupant of this ‘luxury suite’ in the Grey Bar Motel through one eye half closed by beatings, another that was barely able to focus on objects in front of him that, so he surmised, were in the ‘real world’. “And why didn’t I tell these Bolsheviks where Karl, Werner, Dieter and Richard were?” he asked himself in a voice that maybe he was speaking. He thought once again about the quartet of mismatched recruits who became his private platoon, then his personal responsibility. Who he hoped, and now prayed, had the good sense to flee Russia, and dedicate themselves to serving their own self interests rather than that of any country which claimed them as their own. “Do I really have that elusive virtue that is known as courage?” Muller asked Professor Otto, yet again. “Or am I just self destructive, welcoming pain and punishment for, well, not being perfect in a profession and calling where 100 percent is the only passing grade? And tell me again, why I, as a finally discharged Kraut, joined the Whites, Yanks, Tommies Frogs and Nips in this obsession they have to contain and abolish Communism?” he continued regarding the anti-Bolshevik Slavic, American, British, French and Japanese armies more united against the Russian Reds than they had ever been when fighting Germany, Turkey or the Austro-Hungarian empire in the soon to be over “Great War”.

Otto’s ghost didn’t answer any of the questions. But another one did.

“You’ve turned from someone who was too ‘morally pure’ to kill anyone, even to protect your family, into someone who tried to orchestrate massacre of 20 million Reds because of what six Reds did to me,” Hans heard from none other than Elsa, who refused to have to courtesy of adopting the shape of a ghost or inhabit the body of a cockroach. “Or thought they did.”

“It was ugly, Elsa!” Hans said to the very authentic looking apparition on the other side of the barred window. Unlike the other imaginations that entered into his head as a result of the beatings to his head, and the drugs pumped into his veins to loosen his tongue and enhance the pain of the bodily beatings, this apparition he could smell, even through his blood-soaked nostrils. Seeing that this visitor from beyond came with functional eyes rather than black holes in the ocular sockets, Hans pushed himself onto his two still intact legs. He hobbled over to the small, heavily barred single look-in window then, grabbed hold of the steel bars that he, even in his most ideal imaginations, was not able to bend. “What those godless Bolshevik bastards did to you, and our children. Torture, rape, mutilation, then a slow death afterwards. According to all the reports and pictures---“

“---Which were all fake,” Elsa replied, her lips red with lipstick rather than blood, behind which was a full mouthful of unbroken, and white, teeth. “Sent to you by the shithead, asshole and Machiavellian mastermind who kidnapped me, raped me, then made love, or what he thought was love to me. Who I pretended to love and, God help me, actually did develop some feelings for. Till he called me Lorena, his ex-wife, in the heat of passion.”

“Who still has the son and daughter who need a mother and father who talk more than fight,” Hans heard from a more recently-familiar voice behind Elsa as illusion became even more real. “I called in every favor I could, and used every dollar, German Mark and French Franc I was paid to get her out of Jethro Walsh’s private security mansion,” Richard Grossman continued, as Elsa moved aside, in the movie in Muller’s mind. “And had to fight my way through the rest of it,” the chronically broke ‘what’s in it for me’ working class stiff who had sworn that if he ever got rich, he would look after number one, and maybe a hot looking number two said with a face revealing three recently acquired gashes on it, with words that were garbled due to a displaced jaw and a mouth devoid of half of his teeth. “Yeah,” he continued, noting Hans’ horror at seeing his deformed face, which when touched, felt very real. “Yeah, my face looks like shit, but I did a whole lot worse to the three goons who were guarding Elsa---” the now fully incarnated ghost said with a proud, deformed smile of satisfaction. “I couldn’t get the kids out but I got Elsa out so you both could...ya know.“

The illusion seemed even more real. And felt so, when Hans reached out to the ghost of Elsa, touching her face, which smelled now of very expensive French perfume, the kind that Walsh kept in his private stash. Within a moment of feeling that her undamaged cheek was real, it turned away from him.

“So,” Hans said to Elsa’s averted and angry eyes. “This means that I’m dead just like you are, or you’re angry at me in the real world for---”

“---Not being smart enough to find me, or brave enough to rescue me,” the clearly real Elsa replied to the clearly not insane Hans.

“It’s about getting back your kids somehow,” very real life Grossman said. “Without the knowledge or help of Stein, Ranselhoff or Ponath,” he continued with rage-possessed and

grief stricken eyes, referring to his battlefield Comrades. The only men he ever really trusted and liked, for the first time referring to them by their Surnames rather than First of Nicknames.

“And it’s about getting you out of here, now,” Hans heard from another voice that seemed to be disguising an all too familiar one, from the very real even more painful world, in English. Grossman and Elsa moved aside as the small framed guard in a Cossack coat and oversized hat, both bearing a red star moved forward. The Soviet guard motioned for them to remain where they were, with welcoming hands, then the point of an ornately decorated double barrel pistol. The mysterious guard with the familiar eye opened the door to Hans’ private ‘hotel room’, then threw in a package, closing the porthole to the blood stained, windowless hallway hallway such that it remained openable. “Hurry. We don’t have much time!” the small framed ‘Santa’ muttered in a mixture of German, English and poorly pronounced Russian.

How Cossack Emily had obtained the key to the holding cell a Red Cross package containing a razor, a shaving kit, a red-haired wig, and a Red Army Uniform Muller dared not ask. But there was one question he did need to ask Comrade Doctor Emily. “Why?” he inquired of the woman who showed him with one glance, and a few words of conversation, what love for a fellow Soul really is. And whose betrayal revealed, in these turbulent times, how far more powerful love of a Cause was. As he discovered that the hastily elongated wig was of shoulder length, the short trousers of the uniform a skirt.

“Because, I think we’re all on the same side now,” Emily replied with a sweat soaked brow, taking off her hat, revealing a close cropped head of red hair under it. “A side that doesn’t let innocent kids get killed by manipulating demons.” She wiped off the sweat from her brow. “And which doesn’t let good doctors and good men be executed before they can get the chance to correct their political miscalculations, mistakes and transgressions,” she directed into Hans with a tender yet still cautious scare. That sometimes paralyzing and sometimes instructive human emotion he identified, and now knew, as fear. “Who have to transform themselves quickly if they want a shot at transforming the world!” she blasted out as she heard footsteps from above. “We have—” she said, looking at her watch.

“No time to lose?” Elsa interjected sarcastically with a condescending eye roll.

Hans shaved off his blood-soaked facial hair with alacrity, feeling scabby lacerations and bruises between the clean shaven skin under it.

“Why should we trust you?” Hans’ miraculously-returned from the dead still beautiful wife asked his de-feminized mistress, as he prepared to experience first hand what it was like to be of their gender. “A woman who---”

“---Is our only ticket to getting out of here, rescuing your children, and, with God’s help, as many other children, husbands, wives and mistresses, on both sides of the many political lines in this wasteful, and some would say inevitable, Civil War that’s splitting

up all of us from each other, and ourselves,” Grossman informed Elsa, avoiding the ‘who loves Hans more and who deserves to have, or endure’ him conversation that was already beginning between the eyes of the two women. He then snuck into the women’s pockets both women additional pistols from under his coat, hoping that they would not use them. “To be used on the enemy, and if captured, ourselves.”

But the conversation was not over., especially between Elsa and Emily. Just as Hans had transformed himself into a Hannah, Elsa asked him a question, woman to woman, man to man, combative wife to pacifist husband who joined the Whites after learning about her death at the Hans of the Reds. “Hans, or perhaps Hannah. Tell me one thing.”

“What it feels like to have air blowing up my skirt, and the vulnerability of such?” Hans mused, with a smile that was forced, then sincere.

“That, for later,” Elsa replied, breaking into a cautious and, if you looked at it in the right light, kind grin. “But for now,” she continued, with accusing eyes, stepping forward towards him. “How many people have you personally killed since you joined the Whites. I mean in combat?” she demanded of Muller. “Not patients who died on your table due to medical accidents, injuries beyond repair or intentional overdoses of morphine to put them out of their misery.”

“None, so far,” Hans replied. “Because...I suppose I was---“

“—Lucky, right,” Elsa blasted back. “Or smart enough to let a whole of others do the killing for you? ‘Good doctor’ doesn’t want to get his hands bloody. Or maybe he’s a coward?”

Hans assessed the issue, and Elsa was right. Indeed, such was one reason why he wanted to leave her soon after she gave birth to their second child. And was glad to be sent away at the start of the War was because she could see the weakest part of him. But Elsa now lost no time in being brutally honest. Or perhaps, merely just brutal.

CHAPTER 20

Jethro Walsh knew somehow that someday fellow manipulator and small fish who was determined to be big one Richard Grossman, former German dock worker in Hamburg who distrusted his bosses and fellow laborers alike, would figure out that stories about the brutal deaths of his family, and Muller's, at the hands of the Bolsheviks were as false as any of the American Sergeant's civilian passports. Walsh somehow knew that Emily Younger would look for the remains or gravestone of Elsa Muller and her children, and find out through the more drunk than sober cemetery operator that all three were above ground, with all of their body parts intact. And that she would turn Muller and ¼ of his private army of four battle-weary German paramedics against him and his powerful army of four hundred very skilled soldiers, assassins and fellow scum balls some day.

Such was as sure as the death of any glory-hungry Russian or German aristocrat by means of a bullet into the back from 'stray fire' while leading an infantry charge of reluctantly conscripted 'mortals' against tanks or entrenched machine guns. And sure as the body of common sailors or overpaid inspectors being rendered as great eating for the sharks and seagulls for any who dared to look into any of the crates Walsh's fleet of 5 ships bearing the neutral Spanish flag that traversed the Atlantic in both directions three times a week. After all, though Emily Younger thought she was in control of her mind and body, the smart assed and interestingly independent doctor was unaware that she her soul was now owned by Lorena, Walsh's ex-wife. Lovely and leacherous Lorena, who had left the Texas ranch he had built for her. Who, according to the reports from Walsh's perhaps trustable spies, had died in a Socialist demonstration in New York for women, Nigger and white workers rights that turned into a Communist-fueled riot, the details of how many injured had died not making any newspapers. Indeed, in death, according to the gypsy fortune teller in Houston whose predictions always came true, Lorena had become able to share space in many women, but took over full ownership with Emily. Such was obvious to anyone who could see beyond what the human oculars could. But not to two souls who Walsh was determined to bring back from the dead and into the Light, any way he had to.

At the dining hall in a small, rebuilt, and modernly fortified 16th century (now once again Polish) castle surrounded by several abandoned villages which, officially anyway, were evacuated and burnt to the ground due to an outbreak of the Spanish flu, Walsh watched, yet again, the aristocratic-born Muller 'rug rats' (known to the world that only saw with biological eyes as Greta and Heinrick) ate a meal of grub specially made for them. Tex-Mex Chili and chicken fried steak with white bread, as his own kids, Jake and Maggie, enjoyed when they grew up on the ranch. The reincarnated Walsh kids, with some active encouragement, were eating voraciously, after being taught proper Texas table manners, with a knife in one hand, the fork in the other. Not switching hands for each bite as was expected of high born European children born into the Muller dynasty. Heinrick's haircut matched Jake's bowl cut and, and with hair extensions chopped off the head of from a curious woman from town who had no need of them anymore in the afterlife, the two braids attached to Greta's shoulder length hair made her look remarkably like Maggie.

Heinrick and Greta (as the world knew them anyway) had of course not spoken more than three words of respectful English to Walsh since he had rescued them from evil Prince, Hans Muller. They had spouted out a whole lot of German insults and threats he didn't understand during their captivity, and attempted to escape the luxurious lodgings they had been given three times, with more cleverness than they had when they were Jake and Maggie. But such was of course because Lorena, in the guise of even more evil Queen Elsa, still had them under her spell. That spell was finally broken by a combination of starvation, beating of selected body parts, and of course the latest non-existent Mind/Soul numbing concoctions the American War Department had produced in non-existent laboratories overseen by non-existent bosses such as Walsh. The latest flavor additive to the chili, a compound with a long name for the most part, seemed to be the best of the bunch.

“So, what do you say to the man who rescued you from the evil German sorcerers, and the Bolshevik demons outside this castle who will eat you alive and sacrifice what is left of your soul to Satan?” Walsh asked his two re-united children after they had finished their bowl of chili, cleaning up the remains with white bread, after having gobbled up every bit of chick fried steak, leaving not an ounce of fat on the plate. “What do you say to me?” Walsh asked his son, yet again, a team of scientists who studied life who turned into chemists who sought to pervert it taking notes behind him.

“Thank you, Papa,” normally soprano-pitched voice Heinrick replied, this time in a baritone register and, even better, the emergence of a Texas drawl that was Jake's signature vocal expression.

Pleased with the tone and delivery of voice, and that it was given by direct eye contact, Walsh knelt down next to his beloved and, after a complete hair die, blonde princess. “And what do you say for me protecting the most beautiful girl in the world from the ugly world outside these so expensively decorated walls, Maggie?” he inquired with a big, wide smile, not quite knowing what was behind Greta's either defiant or deceptive eyes.

“Thank you,” ‘Maggie’ replied, in Greta's voice and diction. But not this time with a sneer, eye roll or spit delivered gleefully into Walsh's face.

“Thank you want, Mags?” Walsh pressed, waving a piece of Bavarian strudel in front of the still hungry girl's face. “Thank you, Daddy?” he said, recalling his favorite word coming out of his favorite girl. A girl he loved more deeply, and in more special ways, than he ever loved her mother.

Greta said ‘thank you’ in Texan ‘English’, appended by ten terms ranging from commoner illiterate such as ‘Pa’, to overly educated lingo including ‘overly enthusiastic and aggressively loving sperm donor’. By the tenth ‘no-Daddy’ reply, Walsh pulled his Arkansas toothpick out of the sheath, grabbed hold of the ungrateful wench, and prepared to give Greta another haircut, this time below the scalp, so he could scream some

common sense into her corrupted head. This time, he was stopped, his blade hand held back by one of the scientists.

“The potion works differently on girls, I think,” he said. “Particularly when they reach puberty and hormones start to kick in,” he continued, pointing to Greta’s overly grown mammary tissue. “Big breasts on a prematurely-blooming young woman.”

“Who is just havin’ some womanly problems, Papa,” Heinrich replied as Jake, grabbing hold of his defiant sister. “Ifn ya gives me time along with Maggie here, I can talk some reason into her.”

“Or beat it into her?” the scientist suggested, scratching his chin. He reached under his coat, retrieving a battery powered ‘correction stick’ specially designed to induce severe nerve pain with no external bruises for special suspects. “Take it, Jake,” he instructed the lad who had come into Walsh’s protective custody as Heinrich.

Walsh watch closely as the boy’s soul oscillated between being Heinrich or Jake. He prayed to God above, offering everything he had, or ever would have, if Jake were to emerge the winner. He closed his eyes and let the spirit take him over. After three Hail Marys and a twice as many ‘Our Father’s’, Papa opened his ocular portholes and saw that Heinrich’s body was finally overtaken by Jake. He wielded the stick with a firm, God fearing hand, inflicting pain on his defiant demon-possessed sister. Screaming “Satan Out!” with each beating on the still, on the outside anyway, beautiful West Texas Hill Country princess. Until she finally said “Thank you, Daddy.”

Jethro Walsh opened his arms, receiving the girl into them with a big loving hug. Feeling enough Maggie within Greta to continue to experiment, and expedition. But knowing that the head scientist who failed to deliver a drug that worked on women as well as men had to be dealt with appropriately.

“You know,” he said to the clean shaven man in the even cleaner white lab coat. “This new drug of ours will work, as long as women don’t get the vote.” He mused.

“Yes, such seems to be true,” the scientist replied, in a tone which belied his sense of intellectual and social superiority, his crisp English accent cutting through Jethro Walsh’s heart like a Bowie knife. “I’ll have my people work on it appropriately.”

“Indeed you will,” Walsh said through a big Texas smile, and averted eyes, as he gently delivered his now de-possessed daughter Maggie to his regained son, Jake. The proud father of the two re-united children then pointed to the middle aged British scientist’s elderly assistant. Then signaled the old man with a nightingale’s courting whistle. By the time the avian come on line was completed, Karl Ponath injected a lethal injection of morphine into the ‘good doctor’s’ vein. Werner Ranselhoff, being stronger in body than the old, zombified without his knowing it by special medications, slung the dying body of the English egghead over his shoulder.

“To the pig pen with this Limey pansy cock sucker,” Walsh instructed Ranselhoff. He then turned to the next in line to take over the overeducated and street-dumb scientist’s second in command. “And to the lab, with you, to figure out what his books are really saying, Herr Professor now Doctor in MY University Stone,” he said to the now totally Americanized and, in ways that matter to the people on top, compliant Dieter Stein.

Walsh treated himself to a glance of Jake and Maggie helping themselves to more apple pie, pushing aside the German strudel as if it was poison. He then dismissed Muller’s men, who he had, by so many means, converted into making his own. A trusted trio who would no doubt prove themselves ‘transformed’ when Hans Muller came a calling. Bringing with him, according to his intelligence reports from those with Red and White affiliations, his beloved Lorena. In the form of an even more beloved carrier body-mind named Emily Younger, wondering who he would conquer with his own brand of love first.

CHAPTER 21

“Breaking into Castle Walsh is easy, Hans,” Richard Grossman assured his once superior officer in the German Army, and now fellow Comrade in a war that went beyond international boundaries as still Doctor, once Professor and Captain, Muller gazed upon the defenses protecting his son and daughter from the ‘evils’ of the world. “As long as you ignore, and put aside, the fear of the electrified barbed wires, the motion detectors have eyes behind their backs, and the marksmen we can see, and those we can’t see who can shoot the ears off a rabbit at a two hundred yards and the left testicle off any man who thinks he can make himself look like a tree, bush, or ghost. Top flight snipers who found out that their enjoyment of killing matched their skill for doing it, God help them.”

Muller watched Grossman’s stare peruse the towers of the four hundred year old fortress as the hard-line atheist crossed himself, in the manner of the Catholics who he once claimed were drugged by Communion wafers from the Pope. Then the Eastern Orthodox Priests who hypnotized their flock into being obedient with the incense burnt at the altar. The physician who had to learn by hard experience that many of his patients who said they were in pain were actually seeking the euphoria of morphine, wanted to believe that Grossman had converted from being a ‘what’s in it for me’ to a ‘what’s in it for all of us’ man. And that the map Grossman presented to him of the underground tunnels to the inner sanctum of the facility was built by captives who let themselves be taken prisoner so they could free their buds, and eventually take over the castle. And that the hidden underground passageways that allowed one to enter any room of the castle undetected offered an opportunity to get anyone out without detection. And that, most importantly, his son Heinrick and daughter Greta were still alive, and able to travel. And that, what seemed to be most important, Walsh could be found, brought to justice, and lead to the arrest or death of higher up vermin who were already planning the seeds of the next World War, the winners of course being the probably mostly American Capitalists who were making money from funding both sides. Dough boys who would become dough MEN. But there was something behind Grossman’s eyes that said something different. Like he had a plan of his own. One which, when Muller asked about, he was told the details about on a need to know basis, so ‘no one who is against us will be given any ammunition’ and ‘no one who isn’t supposed to die is killed, or worse.’ It was the way Grossman said ‘or worse’ that scared Muller most, on day when he dared not show fear. So, Muller listened to the plan regarding extraction of his children from their surrogate father, agreeing to all of its terms, complimenting each one of its precarious steps and illogic practicality.

But it was the unspoken conversation Hans heard behind the tree stump ‘command center’ table between members of the ‘fairer’ and ‘weaker’ gender as they prepared the weaponry to be used with as much skill and alacrity as any man. While Elsa and Emily exchanged forced smiles that belied their wish to use those weapons on each other, or perhaps first on Hans himself.

“I found him first, bore his children and had to put up with his ‘too good to argue, especially if it was something that was important to me’, from a man who presumably

loved me so much that he was too cowardly to say he fell out of love with me,” Hans heard from his almost-ex wife’s face as her fingers loaded up the hand machines guns Grossman had dug up from the bushes surrounding and hiding of the escape tunnel number 2A that he personally opened up on his solitary, clandestine exit from Castle Walsh.

“You may know his heart, but I know his mind, and not only accept it, but understand it,” Muller could feel coming out of Emily’s nostrils as she loaded up dart guns and syringes with special medicine that she and Grossman felt would be most effective in turning Walsh’s army of macho obedient men into helpless girls or rebellious bitches.

“So, maybe we can have a duel to decide,” Elsa countered with a click of the magazine into a Tommy gun with an attached silencer, the business end of which was, accidentally, pointed Emily’s way.

“And the loser gets to keep him?” Doctor Emily replied, squirting the air out of one of the syringes, the contents of such going through the large hair bun atop Elsa’s head.

“Sorry,” Emily said, with words, in German.

“We both are,” Elsa answered, in English.

“As am I, for everything,” Hans said, his back still turned to the ladies, as he felt and saw both of them staring at, and into, him. “But for the moment, we have to work together, against them,” he said, pointing to the fortified castle. “ALL of them!” he grunted, possessed by both hatred of Walsh, anger at the three men in his medical team who had aligned themselves with the Master Manipulator, and, most dangerously, very selective compassion for his daughter Greta and son Heinrick. And at himself for ‘noble and brilliant’ accomplishments while in Walsh’s service which had to be nullified,

CHAPTER 22

The room was as lifeless as it was sterile, made even more tragic by the fact that no one in high tech chamber knew the difference between such. Such was Emily's gut impression when after she crawled through the trap door in the castle laboratory, though an underground maze and at a specific time as dictated by Grossman. According to Grossman's timetable, the herd of spiritually gelded male workers were gathered in around the lunch table at the most well lit area of the room, clad in clean lab coats, with clean shaven faces, and having clean conversations praising the virtues of clean WASP society that excluded Blacks, Indians, Jews and, unless they valued making babies rather than discoveries about life, women. Yet these fascists with arched, erect backs, symmetrically trimmed military hair, ranging in age from 19 to 50 seemed happy with their lot. Proud of who they were, maybe because they didn't know who they were, or...actually did. In any case, they were so engrossed in themselves and the monotone conversations they indulged in with happy, zombified smiles, that they did not notice her.

According to Grossman's instructions, Emily quietly grabbed hold of a lab coat and put it in an adjacent room an office with notebooks neatly stacked on a large oak desk. According to his instructions, she noted a distillery behind it quietly putting distillate into one collection flask, and residual sediment into another. and put it on, according to Grossman's instructions, and then, against his instructions, did a mirror check on her new appearance longer than three seconds. At four seconds, she noted that her self-imposed crew cut made her look more masculine than she thought possible. At five seconds, she self observed her spine snap to attention in military style, with a demeanor that, if done by a man, would impress the hell, and/or hec, out of Major Edward Jackson or any drill sergeant under his command. At six seconds, she felt...superior somehow. Like a new member of a Master Race which was, as she noticed at seven seconds in the reflection in the mirror, was portrayed in a Poster bearing the American flag and a strange new East Indian logo that she recognized as a swastika. A symbol of Universal Compassion, Spiritual Bliss and Wisdom which was affiliated a picture of a handsome man who was well muscled below the neck, but who lacked any caring in the face above it. Who was being hugged, and worshiped by a large breasted, long haired, hour glassed figured 'domestic goddess' in an skimpy dress and high heels which Emily, or as she was becoming, Emilio, felt to be the most perfect image of White female beauty dating backwards to the 'good old days' when White men at the Plantations enslaved non-White men, and women remained enslaved in their positions as servants of any White man.

There was something in the air as well which found its way to Emily's nostrils at seven seconds, before Emilio could take her over. A strange odor she had smelled a week and ten thousand life experiences ago, in Comrade Lenin's study. Another careful whiff confirmed that it indeed was an aroma with a not pleasant fecal core, an outer layer of peppermint chalk, and a silver lining of apple-cinnamon. No doubt the most recent botanical-medical wonder herb which Hans Muller was, when he was working for Walsh. trying to sneak into Lenin's tea and biscuits. So the mind of Muller's old friend would be fried, his will broken and his keen sense of intellect perverted into a madness fueled by

the lower emotions which would that would lead to self destruction of his body, but not before he would be cajoled by the madness to make decisions that would destroy the newly born Soviet Union.

The same wonder drug, Emily noted, that she discovered in a lab at the University of Pennsylvania as an aspiring graduate research student which she accidentally entered when looking for a thesis advisor to take her on, the day before she was asked to leave the program and never come back, because she had apparently failed the qualifying exam on which she KNEW she put in all of the right answers.

By eight seconds, Emily dared to look at the mirror again, asking herself what to do. By the ninth second, she was reminded of what her real mission there was. She felt woozy, her strong will becoming passive. Her urge to care about the world, and anyone in it, converted to apathy. Just like the rodents she noted, by ten seconds, in the cages next to the distillery at various outlets for the vapors, who either lay passively in their own excrements, or had turned into cannibalizing monsters eating their fellow rodents alive, seeming to enjoy the meat as well as the pain inflicted upon the weak. Depending on where she was standing, Emily felt like giving up on life, or taking it from others.

“So, Grossman sent you to get the lab books,” she heard from a masked man entering the office she recognized by voice only, until he took off his protective mask, handing it to Emily. “And this,” always long haired and tastefully bearded Dieter Stein, now sporting a clean shaven face and military crew cut, said of an open vial of the mind altering drug which she was beginning to feel the effects of. He reached into his pocket, handing Emily “Electrovolt versions 1A3,” he said of the two vials in his hand. “Killer of conscience, destroyer of clear thinking, demolisher of free will, the urge to life, or the urge to value anything at all,” he noted. “Depending on the dose, ratio of the components and, according to the research done so far, genetics, race, gender and hormonal components of the n value who it is given to, perhaps related to metabolizing enzyme differences in the liver or kidneys, or different neurotransmitter receptors in the limbic system and certain portions of the cerebral cortex”.

“Which you describe to me in English. American English,” Emily noted, and stated of the, according to how she knew him, least multi-lingual member of Muller’s medical team. “With just a trace of an accent.”

“Which makes me sound smarter than I really am,” Stein confessed and related. “But which I have to work on,” he continued, running his fingers over a bald spot on the crown of his cropped head. “Like a cure for baldness that works for older men such as myself as well as it does for young men such as Werner Ranselhoff, who, well...”

Dieter’s jovial tone dropped into a pit that Emily recognized all too well. “Sold out?”

“By a merchant who we all have to put out of business, fast!” Stein replied, grabbing hold of the lab books, handing them to Emily. “Hans, who was responsible for coming up with this drug, as a weapon in the ‘War to End All Wars’ and the War to Eliminate the

Reds who he thought killed his family said, that you believed in the credo that nature never gives you a problem without a solution. Which means that you, and he, if he has come to his senses, can stop this man made toxic plague before it gets out of hand?" he pleaded.

"We will...do our best," Emily promised, and felt determined to do. After which another more frightening thought same to mind. "But you have to promise to find out who Walsh's real bosses are."

"Me and my international team will do our best," perhaps superspy Stein offered. "But in the meantime, where are members of your team?"

"Where Grossman said they were supposed to be, I hope, and pray," Emily answered.

"Which is what I was afraid of," Stein's reply. After which he put his hand over his mouth, giving thought to a new plan. One that, Emily hoped that perhaps Peter Jesus, or the real Jesus, could make happen. Assuming of course that it was a plan that had the best interests of the world in mind, and not private agendas of people who had dangerous secret agendas of their own to fulfill. Or to redeem themselves for.

CHAPTER 23

Being able to tell people what you are really thinking, and saying that same thing to everyone. Something that in the modern world one does not do because you do not want to harm someone else, or the other person can harm you if you tell the wrong person the wrong thing. “Yes, my sometimes in some ways dearest Jethro, you have to entrust everyone with different secrets about yourself, and life,” Lorena’s ghost said to her still embodied ex-husband, ‘Sergeant’ Walsh as she entered the kitchen of the castle bearing his name from what was now an open door.

“So what do you really want to tell me now?” Walsh inquired of Lorena, feeling disconnected to his body, time, space and even less connected with his mind as he poured the last batch of specially spiced Texas chili into a plate for another ‘family’ meal at the dining table. “You can say it in front of Jake and Maggy, who now are over thinking they are Heinrich and Greta,” he said regarding his two dinner guests. “Come,’ he said, scraping the remainder of the chili containing selected herbs, and flavored meat of human origin into a third bowl, laying it on the table. “Come partake of this food that the Lord has bestowed upon us.”

“As long as you share what is in that bowl with me,” Lorena said as she once again seemed to acquire more human form, gently lifting another bowl from the cupboard, spooning out a generous portion from her bowl for her husband with a warm, inviting smile. “And tell me who my and your Lord is, Jethro,” Elsa Muller continued, confident that, for the moment, Walsh saw Lorena’s face in front of his pathologically paternalistic eyes and not her. “What is his, or her, name?” she continued, clad in the best imitation of the dress she had been required to wear when he was Walsh’s involuntary guest, her hair tied back into a partial bun, as Queen Lorena’s was in the photos husband King Jethro had placed in every room of the castle.

“You know I can’t tell you that, Lorena,” Walsh assured Elsa with a wholesome, and, in his own way, loving grin.

“Because?” Elsa inquired doing her best to imitate the Texas drawl that Walsh liked to hear, and insisted that she speak with.

Walsh pulled his words into withdrawn lips which were upturned at the edges in ways Elsa had never seen during her captivity. He turned around, looked up to the sky, and proclaimed. “Because He has no name! How can God have a name if he is beyond all attributes, my dear Lorena?” he said by way of divinely given reason, in the manner of his Pastor father.

“And beyond gender, I humbly add,” Elsa thought, but didn’t say. Her agenda instead was for her children, Heinrich and Greta, who, as Jake and Maggie, on the inside and outside, set their spoons into the chili, preparing to eat it. She assertively placed her hands between the hopefully not lost to her again children’s spoons and their open

mouths. "But whatever or whoever God is, we owe it to that Spirit beyond spirits to say grace before eating."

Father Jethro agreed. He sat down at the table, folded his hands, and began the prayer. "Dear Lord, who has reunited this family, this American family whose country is the only hope for a world that has gone to the devil, we thank you for---"

Elsa continued the prayer, giving thanks for every blessing conferred to America as the Lord's favorite country, singing each lie as it was the truth. Blessings for the brave White American slave holders at the Alamo who liberated Texas from Mexico. The economic boom from the Great War which finally put America on top of the International economic ladder, according to "Jethro" Jesus' plan. And singing blessings for President Wilson, Southern aristocrat who would finally see to it that the inferior black races were put back into their proper place. And that the savage Pagan redskins were all finally dead, or being educated into being proper Christians in Reservation Boarding schools. In a perfectly pitched musical voice that bored the children, and, after the third chorus, put Jethro into a fond memory, which he was experiencing them with eyes tightly closed, and a smile so wide that it seemed to crack open all of the wrinkles and battle scars in the face of the rancher rags to royalty conferred riches Kingpin.

Finally, Elsa saw Heinrich and Greta emerge from behind Jake and Maggie's glossy, mentally altered eyes. "So, they listen to the music and not the words," Elsa thought to herself as she handed them a note, written in German. "You have to go now, quietly," the first note read. "With him, who will take care of you," the next memo, as she pointed to a well armed man outside the door that both children seemed to recognize.

"Forever this time," Papa Hans Muller mouth whispered to Heinrich in pig Latin, instructing his son to translate the message to his daughter, who, because of her younger age when he first left home, was not old enough to be tri-lingual. Or perhaps knew more about Muller's inability to be a loving, rather than merely providing, father than he envisioned.

Mama Elsa went back to singing the praises of Walsh's WASP comrades, and disdain of disruptors to the New Order such as Jews, gypsies and homosexuals, while stroking his groin. Papa Hans motioned for his re-awakening children to follow him. Finally, Heinrich convinced a very scared Greta to get up from her chair, and escorted her to the door. Just before Papa Hans could take her trembling hand, Greta broke loose from her loving brother and, so Elsa hoped, re-committed father. The once defiant girl who was the last to give in to Daddy Jethro's terms of captivity grabbed hold of Walsh, holding onto him for dear life. Until he edged his money grubbing, thick fingers under her skirt, and began to pleasure her.

With a reflex that overtook her, Elsa grabbed hold of a fork, and rammed it into Walsh's forearm. While he screamed himself out of the 'family dream', Hans rushed into the room, butting his former boss in the jaw with the stock of his machine gun. Possessed by rage, Hans stuck the business end of the silenced machine gun Walsh's mouth.

“All of you, go!” Hans commanded his children still not yet divorced wife.

“Not without you, not this time, not again,” Elsa pledged, and promised. “Not before we find out what he knows. And who else has this ‘Good Lord’s food’. And who his Lords are.”

“A plan that makes sense,” Hans conceded, his face beet red, his mouth breathing heavily his forehead soaked with hot sweat.

Else smiled with pride, finally seeing that she had married a man who would kill for her, and her children. Instead of a man who fought attackers bearing fists with intelligent words. She yearned for the latter, as Hans loaded Walsh’s blood soaked mouth with generous portions of mind altering chili. “Swallow it! Swallow it all!” Hans screamed out, his ability to reason held hostage by unrelenting rage. “With some extra spices!” he continued, grabbing hold of two labeled spice jars from the cupboard above the imitation Texas ranch wood stove, ramming the powered contents in with the chili.

“If he does, it will kill him,” Heinrich said in German, without a trace of Jake in his voice, pulling his father from making Walsh take his own medicine.

“And we’ve been working on another plan, Papa” Greta replied, in Hoch Deutsch, then pig Latin, addressing him by the loving P word Hans constantly had begged her to use instead of the distant, ‘you live your own life, I’ll live mine’ ‘father’. “At least we were working on it before I became...Maggie.” Greta caught a glimpse of herself in the mirror, still looking like Maggie. Until she ripped the blonde pig tails Daddy Jethro had embedded into her bobbed hair. Then looked at Walsh, who was now unconscious, spitting at his face, and ‘Daddy loving daughter’ evil-possessed eyes.

Elsa had no idea that she had raised such intelligent, and secretive, children. Who, now by some means, had tricked their captor. And who were now adults, responsible for their own liberation, and the liberation of the World from Walsh and his minions. Or bosses. More so perhaps than anyone who had the misfortune of outgrowing the innocence of childhood.

CHAPTER 24

“You are sure that this variation on the formula in this medication will make it more powerful, Herr Professor Young?” Carl Schmitt, Dieter Stein’s small framed horn rim glassed senior Lab Tech asked Emily Younger in crisp, Swiss German that cut the ears it landed into like a knife. “And that it will make us even more effective as the New Master race?”

“Yes, of course,” Emily answered with affirmation, as Emilio as Schmitt sized her up, sensing something about her body and perhaps voice that didn’t fit her new identity.

“And the evidence for such is right here!” Grossman, the new head of the lab pointed out, pointing Schmitt’s attention to a small rat who had cornered three ‘stud’ rodents twice his size into the manure-covered corner of their cage. While mating a soon to be big Mama rat.

Schmitt, whose plain, homely face and severely under-muscled body had prevented him from being the big fish in any pond, even when he owned the lake, looked at the new Super rat with fascination, and envy.

“Yes, this is the same rodent who was the runt of the litter when he was a kid, and who was the last to get any pellets thrown into his cage, no matter who was with him,” Emily said regarding the rodent who had been given an extra dose of what was listed in the books as SM(for Supermench) 12B. Easing ‘his’ way to Schmitt, ‘Emilio’ placed ‘his’ small fry hands on Schmitt’s bigger but not large fry shoulders. “If we play our cards right, we can get Grossman, our new boss, transferred to another section, and become bosses new ourselves.”

“Yes,” Schmitt, Grossman’s most brown lipped ass-kisser, replied in the manner of a master social ladder climber. One who knew that the way up the ladder is not to bully your way up, but to manipulate the boss who has the big stick, then once you do have the big stick, beat the hell out of everyone else below you. And who, if Emily didn’t work fast, would manipulate and beat him, and whoever Grossman really was, into the ground. “What do you need me to do, in your service and for the Cause, soon to be Herr Professor Young?” he asked Emily as both a sleek manipulator and crude bully.

“Become what we are making!” she suggested, taking a vial from the shelves, sneaking it into his pocket. “One teaspoon for three men you trust most, two for yourself,” she said. “I’ve already taken my three teaspoons full which, should take effect in...” She looked at the clock. “Ten minutes. But if we are going to become masters of this facility, and the New Order it will usher in, we have to work fast.”

“Without doing the appropriate toxicity and human trials?” Schmitt said. “We still have an abundance of human prisoners in the holding pen who we can test this on.”

“Who will figure out how to escape their jail cells, or break the three hundred year old bars,” Emily shot back. “I have the courage of my convictions on this!” she asserted, while retrieving another vial of SM 12 . She pretended to feed herself another heaping spoonful of it.

“And...if Herr Grossman figures out what we are doing behind his back?” Schmitt inquired.

“He already has, and has been dealt with,” Emily assured Schmitt, after which she pulled two eyeballs from her lab coat pocket, and a finger bearing Grossman’s gold ring, containing Jethro Walsh’s initials under a swastika with a Texan flag on one side of it, an American banner on the other.

“Interesting,” Schmitt said with a sadistic grin on a face that would otherwise offend only in its lack of any real emotional expression. “How did you...?”

“Do what was necessary, for the Cause, and us, who really believe in it?” Emily retrieved a blood soaked dagger from her pocket, showing it off proudly to Schmitt. “Which of course is...” she continued, referring to a picture of Walsh mounted on a horse, fixed on the wall of Grossman’s office.

“Yes, of course,” Schmitt replied. “What do we need to do?”

“Two teaspoons for you, one for three, or half a teaspoon for six of the smartest and most deserving men in your team,” she said. “Until I can make more of it. This time keeping the lab notes between you and me only. But we have to work fast. A blitzkrieg.”

Schmitt agreed to the deal, the sedate, procedural, boring man who was thus far only paid in money, becoming excited about being in the forefront of a Lightning War. With the precious amount of elixir that would turn the abused and underappreciated mortal into a god, regarding his intellectual and physical capacities, he proudly strode out as a lion, without really knowing what a sheep he really was.

Emily secretly hoped and prayed that Schmitt would follow through with the mutually arranged plan for the ‘Professor’s Coup’. And that SM 12 was, in actual fact, a drug that instantly implanted stage four of learned helplessness by weakening the mind, making the body useless for flight or fight, and making the ‘n’ values who took it easy to locate. And, perhaps, reveal any secrets they were entrusted to keep to themselves. But that would be worked out later. For the moment, Emily had to find Walsh’s latest head Professor Doctor, Dieter Stein, who was still very much alive at the escape hatch, with two functional eyes. With a left hand, for reasons he didn’t explain, now had only four digits on it, by his own choosing and insistence.

Emily packed up her belongings, checking to see that the briefcase she had packed with weapons provided by Grossman before entering the castle, and the small suitcase Dieter Stein, Masochist as she had become, had not been tampered. Smelling the vials of what

she hoped would reverse Walsh's wonder drugs to confirm that they were what they said they were. And that indeed the overdose from the SM12 labeled vial which she had so boldly partaken actually was vanilla and basil flavored flour. On the way out the back door which only Dieter showed her, she treated herself to an extra dose of knowledge. The self made woman who valued the, admittedly mostly lonely, mind that had, by necessity, become smarter than any man who tried to tame or deflate it wished she remained ignorant. As she saw Ranselhoff, with a full head of newly grown hair, and Ponath, with eyes that were more viciously clever than humbly wise, stand up at attention, salute the picture of Walsh in the lunch room, and toast to their new place in the New World Order, along with their new boss, Schmitt.

Emily made offerings in her mind to heaven and certain agents in hell that her newest concoction of drug labeled as 'SM12' which she gave to Schmitt to share with his most trusted underlings would indeed turn them into weak, helpless and controllable babbling, drooling, lost even in their own world zombies. And that they would not realize what had hit them until it was too late. And that the remainder of that yet to be named sedating agent would spread through the vents to everyone else of power and/or influence in the castle so that Hans' kids could be evacuated.

But before liberating Muller's kids from Walsh, and the world from his Fascist 'medicine' that would cure all of its Communist-inspired ills, Emily wanted to do another liberation. She glanced down at the runty rodent who had been transformed into one that took no shit from anyone, seeking to let him go. Along with his fur bearing four legged comrades. But as she reached for the cage door, there was nothing in it except a furry pool of blood and bones. 'Hercules 24', as the assertive rodent had been named, leaped at Emily's index finger, biting off a substantial chunk of flesh from it. "Biting the hand that feeds you is bad manners and karma," she said to Hercules. as he licked his lips after eating his male comrades, and dream rape date, then reached his head into the top of the wired cage. He somehow made a hole in it large enough to push his head into. Then made a jump for freedom, only to find that he had choked himself to death.

"Yeah, if it were all that easy to get out of the maze we call life," Emily said to the rodent as she entered the labyrinth under the trap door she had entered through, hoping it didn't lead to a noose that already had Emily or Emilio's name on it.

CHAPTER 25

Once Captain, always Doctor, internally Professor and now Papa Hans Muller had no difficulty getting his finally reunited family out of Castle Walsh. The underground passages laid out by Grossman led them to the motor-pool surrounded by a gate held in place by a lock a Elsa tried to open, but couldn't, even with the key she had stolen from the now unconscious but still breathing Walsh. Before Elsa's heavy breathing could escalate into a very locatable scream, Hans put his arms around her shivering chest, kissed her on the lips, harder and more lovingly than he had done in years, or perhaps ever. Then raised his machine gun with attached silencer, aiming it the lock. Before he could fire a single shot, a small hand found its way to his forearm. Heinrick motioned for his father to put down the weapon, then nodded to his sister, who, with a key she had smuggled into her hair, opened the lock as easily and joyously as a hungry toddler could moved a spoon full of chocolate pudding from the dish to his or her mouth. Muller wondered what his two precarious children had been up to, and whether it was them who were saving the adults in the children in family rather than vice versa. But there was another matter for what could pass through them, that was another matter, particularly because of what Grossman had done there before Muller's arrival.

Hans had one question to ask of his former subordinate, and now mentor, rescuer and perhaps friend. One that he demanded a clear answer to. Particularly when he was unable to locate in the distant woods the camouflaged truck they had used to get to the castle. And when he noted the smell of sugar coming out of the open gas tanks, along with vey distinguishable odor of brake fluid on the floor of the motorpool and Grossman's knife as he stashed it away in its sheath.

"Why did you put sugar these gas tanks, Comrade Richard?" Hans demanded of Grossman. "And cut the brake lines to boot."

"Because we should be using a quieter and more honest transportation," Grossman replied with a sly and learned smile as he led the Muller family and the heavily snoring 'Uncle Jethro Walsh' through a door in the motorpool that led to a large barn, with a vey openable door.

"Horses?" Hans exclaimed, his jaw dropping as he viewed the immaculately kept facility whose walls were lined the Lone Star State flag, the Stars and Bars, and the Stars and Stripe which a swastika was superimposed on the central star. And no less nor more than 8 horses, all munching contently on oats and hay in their open, king and queen sized stalls in the half-occupancy stable. A quarter-horse paint, 'Alpha' according to the name on his stall, the biggest, proudest and most independent of them gazed at Hans. As if the two legged human servant who dared to enter the barn during eating time was an equal, or perhaps a student. "How many wagons do we have for these noble creatures to pull?" Hans asked Grossman.

"None, but, for the moment, we have enough horses for us," Grossman said, moving over towards Walsh, who was conscious only of the illusions behind his half opened eyes.

“The grey is his favorite,” he continued, pointing to a horse in a stall bearing the name “General Custer”. “Who he nearly worked to death when playing cowboys and Indians with released prisoners who he hunted down, re-living his glory days of eliminating Pagan Savages from the plains so that God fearing Christian families could put their cattle on land once occupied by the buffalo, and owned by no one except Mother Earth,” he said of a well groomed horse with multiple wounds on his flank and legs.

“So it’s appropriate that ‘General Custer’ takes ‘General Walsh’ on a final ride, this time tied to the saddle like a piece of disposable cargo instead of riding on top of it,” continued, throwing Walsh over the saddle, tying him to it. “And as for the rest of this herd that somehow survived being War horses,” Grossman said, gazing at the remainder of the horses. “We have exact number we need, the rest, the most uncatchable of them, accidently getting loose an hour ago. The ones we need most, feeling their oats, and ready to go.

“I don’t think so,” Hans said with a half controlled stutter. “What if some of us are unable to ride? Or don’t know how to? Such as, say, Emily Younger, and---”

“Not you, of course,” Grossman smiled back. “Since, all officers in the German and British Armies know how to ride. That’s why they were chosen to be officers, right?”

“And since Papa is an excellent doctor, and a gallant officer, and a gentleman raised as aristocrat, he knows how to ride better than anyone here, right?” low born social climber Elsa added with wry smile, and low German diction. “Right?” she asked her children.

Upon finishing his grain, and Grossman offering him an apple, ‘Alpha’, the quarter horse paint who had chosen Hans upon his entry into the barn, pawed his feet three times, then extended its head towards the Doctor’s shaking hand, which he used every ounce of will power to not withdraw. “So, this horse knows how to add one and one with creative arithmetic,” Hans said, his lifelong fear of horses still perhaps a secret not known by his wife, children and wartime comrade. Or perhaps which was fully known by them. In any case, giving in to his fears, calling them, for the moment cautiously considered apprehensions. “He seems to have kind eyes,” Hans said, doing his best to find inner beauty in what to him was a big beast. “But I think that with the first gunshot he’ll---”

“---Keep going, in the direction you ask him to, at full speed,” Grossman replied as he emerged out of a tack room. With halter and lead line wrapped around his left forearm, he whistled to one of the horses, reached into his pocket, and offered one of them a slice of an apple. Once the horse had been tricked, or cajoled into submission, slapped a saddle on him. One that looked had something on it which was uniquely American.

“A horn,” Hans noted regarding the saddle, holding onto it with a death grip that he still tried to maintain as firm.

“For greenhorns to hold onto,” Grossman pointed out, pushing Hans’ ass upward and onto the saddle. “But for experienced riders to tie a rope to if we need to use it,” Muller’s ‘assistant’ said, handing him a rope tied into noose at one end.

Hans consciousness was pulled back to the days in his childhood, when he his fear of being 3 extra feet above the ground while a top a horse lingered, no matter how many ‘gentle’ creatures his brothers and father had him ride. Recalling as well, the five times in a half hour he was thrown off during a riding lesson. And the sixth time he was introduced to the ground by a fall off ‘Buttercup’ which he did not reply to by getting back on the saddle, but by running off back to the house, faking an injury to his head, followed by excuses to so many doctors that his ‘vertigo’ would get worse if he ever mounted another big, yet still beloved, steed again. But, for the moment, Alpha let Hans be the boss. Obeying his rider’s commands to walk forward, turn to the left, to the right and finally, to stop. By which time he turned his still terrified eyes to a now mounted children, wife, Comrade and, finally, woman who he found himself loving and needing more than ever.

“We have to motor, fast,” Emily said as she hopped aboard a black mare, a suitcase strapped to her back, a satchel secured to the saddle.

“And even faster,” Deiter Stein said, slapping his ass upon the back of a brown percheron. Taking the reins in hand with his four fingered right hand.

“And what of Werner and Karl?” Hans barked out regarding the excitement-seeking young Ranselhoff and born-old philosopher lumberjack Ponath.

“Expendable, now,” Emily noted, self assured somehow in her determination.

“Or dangerous,” the now nine fingered guilt ridden yet still not open about his real background, and abilities, Stein added, causing Emily to become concerned.

“And hopefully dead, very soon,” Heinrich added, as he looked with more concern at his shell shocked sister from atop his horse, fonding the hangnoose on his saddlehorn. With the look Hans had seen in so many kind hearted 18 year old lads who had become bitter 19 year old men after their first kill in battle, or loss of a uniformed stranger who had become a best friend.

Hans Muller could feel reason, kindness and innocence leaving the eyes of a boy who had, before his captivity, was kinder to animals than St Francis, and more assertive against people who would hurt any living creature than Fredrick the Great. Feeling responsible somehow for the boy becoming a man, well before his time. But as for time, there was none of it left. Particularly as Hans heard in his ears and vibrating gut the alarm on the Castle go off. And Walsh muttering, still thankfully incoherently, in a voice as gruff, demonically possessed voice. “You boys catch them renegade Injuns. String ‘em up, skin ‘em alive and---“

Before Walsh could relive those glory days as an Indian fighter in the cause of making the Plains safe for god fearing White Christians, his mouth was silenced again by the shoeheel of Elsa while he was strapped, belly over the saddle. After which, he maintained a smirk that was as ugly as the demons whose evil he seemed to still be a channel for. After in all probability doing things far more ugly to Elsa and her children than Muller had ever seen on the battlefield.

CHAPTER 26

It was the 11th day of the 11th month, a day when, according to announcements over radio broadcasts that would be trusted, the Great War had ended. Ironic for those who so skillfully and luckily escaped it, a new war was beginning. One which required, for a swift ending, trust. Trust by Richard Grossman that he had sabotaged all of the vehicles for Walsh's pursuers to use to overtake the horses. Trust by Dieter Stein that the communication systems he has cut to Walsh's international contacts has all been severed. Trust by Emily Younger that the fake SM 'Superman' drugs snuck to Walsh's top team of scientists, which now included Muller's former war hating battlefield Comrades Ranselhoff and Ponath, would turn them into single digit, infighting, helpless to be able to even spell pharmaceutical bafoons. Trust by hopefully still-Doctor Hans Muller that his son Heinrich, daughter Gretel, and still not divorced wife were not individually or collectively minions of Walsh's master plan to sabotage the mission to rescue them. And trust that, now that the explosions in castle Walsh the company of eight heard in the distance from their hidden vantage point on the the hills well outside of the fortress had destroyed the facility. And not trusting the easily and willingly believed idea that Walsh was not the only mastermind behind the plan for a new Master Race who would by means of arms, gentle persuasion and medical manipulation, subjugate 95% of the rest of humanity.

"So, he's waking up, finally from his dream," Dieter Stein noted to Muller and Emily as they watched the champion of the Master regain consciousness, while tied to a tree.

"And the spell the devil has over him?" Richard Grossman added. "Who will only go to another sad, pathological soul if your son gets any ideas about chocking the truth out of him with that noose," he warned an angry Elsa regarding the tight hold Heinrich kept on the rope secured around 'Daddy Jethro's' neck. "A devil who took control of you also, if you maybe can remember, or maybe won't." 'Uncle' Richard reminded his nephew Heinrich.

"And what makes you think that wonder medication you have in your bags will make him talk? And tell the truth, 'auntie Emily'? Or should I say stepmom?" Heinrich pointed out to Emily as she opened retrieved a bottle of elixir from pocket. "Pain makes people talk faster than anything else," the gentle boy who became a sadistic lad under Walsh's spell, then a vengeful man after waking up from seeing what it made him to his sister growled as he pulled the noose tighter. "Who are you working for!!!" Heinrich screamed out.

"I'm under orders from President Wilson to contain and eliminate the Communist cancer," came out of Walsh's mouth though a choked throat, this time the bruises on his neck unleashing a fresh spouting of blood. "President Wilson who---"

"---Is probably working for someone else, that Walsh doesn't know about!" Hans barked out, grabbing the rope from his son's sweat soaked, bloody before his time hands. "Please, let Doctor Younger have her turn trying to interrogate this pathological,

shithead, bastard,” he pleaded, still, for the moment anyway, able to use his grown up adult body to pull away his 11 year old son’s away from Walsh.

“And why should I do that?” Heinrich, having been overcome by sheer force, blasted back. “And for this dream women who you decided to fall in love with instead of us?” he continued staring angrily at Emily, demanding an answer.

“Because he destroyed my ability to trust and know love first,” ‘Stepmom’ Emily said, after which she tore open her shirt, turned around, and showed Heinrich a back and upper forearms that were more whipping scars than skin. “I can show you the scars that he and the doctors at the asylum inflicted after, so Sergeant Walsh, convinced everyone were inflicted by myself. Which, maybe, some of them were after I was...” Emily broke down in tears, the rest of her memoirs, which had been revealed only the Peter Jesus, who was as far away now as heaven was ever away from earth.

Emily turned towards a confounded and guilt ridden Hans for comfort, relieve and an explanation for it all. Such was interrupted, thankfully, by Elsa, whose long hair fell over and sheltered from an upcoming wind Emily’s shorn head.

“I know,” Elsa assured Emily as the latter lay her head upon her, for the moment anyway, steady and loving shoulders and. “We all have been corrupted by this piece of defective and rancid meat,” she said of Walsh, who had now woken up into full consciousness. “Who has turned us into something we never wanted or thought we could be.”

“For which you should be grateful, Lorena,” Walsh replied with a big smile, looking to the two women.

Sharing a thought, Elsa and Emily wondered who he was being most delusional about. Or, if indeed, he was delusional at all. After all, as Walsh himself would say when drunk, or pretending to be drunk, amongst people of power and influence who, for the moment, were above his official station, “bullshit baffles brains.” Yet facts of life for truth tellers and fibbers or all stations was that if you lied effectively and intensely you would believe your own bullshit. In any case, every one of Walsh’s captors knew that Walsh did know the truth about the real men, or women, behind the New Order that would put Superman in charge of everyone else. And do it very soon. In a new War in which the Central Committee of the Master Race would never have to fire a single shot from their own weapons, and come out smelling like a red rose after everyone else’s blood soaked the ground.

“Did Peter Jesus said that when two or more of you are gathered in my name, I am there also,” Hans said, channeling something ethereal that perhaps was coming over the entire congregation of world liberators’ souls, or maybe wishful thinking that was by chance correlated with the sun emerging from behind the clouds. “Does that apply to Intelligent and effective thinking as well as Universal compassion?”

“Universal Compassion is the ultimate result of intelligent and effective thinking,” Grossman noted.

“And, the truth shall set you free,” the religiously atheistic Stein offered.

“Even this bastard from the demon who is possessing him, and the world that will be put into a new Dark Ages if we don’t loosen his tongue, effectively and truthfully,” Elsa said regarding a still smart assed and smirkingly silent Walsh to Emily, releasing the doctor from the comforts of being nurtured to being...effective once again. “Go ahead,” she said to Emily, placing the vial of truth serum in her hand. “I heard that Nature never gives you a problem without solution.”

“And sometimes science isn’t the solution you need,” Emily related, and confessed.

“But it’s the only one we have left,” Hans pointed out. “Besides, what harm does that tongue loosening elixir that you, working with Peter Jesus, and Mother Nature, do anyway? From what I know, and what you tell me, it turns a stubborn or courage-possessed silent man into a talkative woman.”

Emily pulled her lips into a whimsical smile, emitting a chuckle through her flared nostrils. “There are worse side effects.”

“Which, our n value can show us,” Hans pointed out, pointing to Walsh, whose smart assed grin turned into a grimace of terror as he smelled the aroma of the elixir about to enter his mouth.

“I’m not an n value! I’m not rat! I’m a...” Walsh protested, after which a glaze over came his eyes. Somehow those oculars became windows for truth and even goodness to go into, and come out of. A ‘look’ and even, as Emily imagined, an ‘aura’ that emanated from Peter Jesus. And, in brief moments when he allowed heart to rule over mind, Vladimir Lenin. And every animal Emily ever connected with, owned or was owned by.

After three or four breaths, Walsh seemed eager and willing to talk. So much so that even cynic-before-his-time Heinrich removed the rope from his neck. Then his sister Greta untied his hands. “You can shoot him if he moves,” he said to Grossman and Hans, who aimed their guns at him, “But he talks more freely and openly if he has his hands,” Muller’s youngest child said with the maturity and depth of experience that was beyond any adult he had ever met, especially the one he gazed at in the mirror each time the reflection dared or tempted him to do so.

With that, Walsh was asked questions about his childhood. He answered accurately, clearly and with full cooperation. As if he was a horse educated by a master trainer who sought nothing more than to be of service to his superior. He was then questioned about the events that happened when Emily was lured into his private quarters by Muller, relating every horrifying thing he did to her with accuracy. A matter of fact accuracy that revealed that the truth serum was only able to loosen tongues but not open up hearts. A

drug that would eliminate cruelty would have to await another Promethian doctor someday, or further research by Emily with even more dogged determination, and, if Heaven allowed it, more work with Peter Jesus, who by all accounts was in hiding somewhere or who had, mercifully, been brought back up to Heaven by his Father.

Having tested the accuracy of the drug, its uses and limitations, it was time to open up the can of beans held tight within Walsh's heartless and sterile, but for the moment, inactivated mind regarding the Masterminds he was working for, or with.

"So, who is on the Central Committee of this plan to have the Master Race save all of us inferiors from ourselves?" Grossman asked, in the diction of a common Slavic laborer.

"Brilliant and innovative men, and a few women," Walsh related with an understated boast. "Who look much like these children here," he said, extending his hand upward, gently asking Greta and Heinrick to approach him. "Who I will tell everything to!" he pledged. "If you all will lower your guns, please," he continued. "It is very distracting."

Greta, gathering whatever courage she still had within her, stepped forward. Heinrick did the same. "No!" Hans said, pulling his children back.

"Yes," Elsa interjected, gently pulling away Hans' protective, very selective-compassion driven arms from his children. "The effect of this drug is wearing off, and the world, and the safety of other people's children depends on getting an answer, fast."

"Or faster," Emily added, motioning for Grossman and Stein to lower their weapons.

Hans reluctantly gave his children the approval to enter the lion's den. He trusted that they would be protected by their courage, and, failing that, a quick upswing of his Tommy gun would inactivate any ideas Walsh had.

By some miracle, or accident, Walsh turned into Santa Clause. He offered the children a seat, and then sugar from his pocket. He children took the seat, pretending to eat the candy. In the manner of a loving, nurturing and 'fun' father that Hans never was, and knew he could be, Walsh began the tale. "The story began with my first meeting when I was still a cowboy in Texas with---"

The identity of the man, or woman, who rescued Walsh from a hard working life as a most often law breaking rancher and two bit swindler Preacher was silenced by two bullets, one which hit him straight between the eyes, the other that went into his heart.

"Finally, the devil is sent back to hell!" the congregation of seven heard from the hills above. The bearer of the gun that delivered the deadly shots and the liberation of Walsh's ugly soul from his homely body rode down the hill on a horse. His left arm was sliced off at the elbow, his right eye covered with a patch, his forehead with a blood soaked bandage. Upon painfully dismounting he looked at Emily, bowed to her with humility, and pulled out a thick envelope from his pocket with a shivering right paw.

“Doctor Younger, a personal letter from me, or who I used to be anyway, acquitting you from the charges against you by the American Government, the American Army and its Allies, and me,” Major Edward Jackson said. “And some money he, and without knowing it, most of the time, I stole, for you to build a new life. In America, if you want to, or somewhere else, if you’re smart and daring enough to do so,” he continued, with a shake in his right hand. “Or with...” he said looking at Hans. “This German prisoner of War who I should have hired as a doctor. Along with two of his men who...” The rest of what the once arrogant, two handed, and America first above and at the expense of everyone else Boston Blue Blood American Capitalist Major wanted to say got stuck in a cough which spewed out three large bolus of blood.

“What happened to you, Major?” Emily said, as her out-stretched arms prevented him from hitting the ground.

“Life decided that instead of ordering MY men to shoot bullets at THEIR men, or pulling bullets out of MY wounded before THEIR wounded, I should see what it’s like to be the recipient of such lead and steel projectiles,” he related and confessed regarding his painful and now incomplete component of body parts. “And what happened to you?” Jackson replied, pointing to Emily’s head.

“Bad and brave hair day,” she replied with mixed emotions, running her fingers through the cropped head of hair which was once a flowing mane of red that was the envy of every nurse and a reminder to every soldier of the beautiful wife, mistress or girlfriend they had left at home.

“You people should leave here, soon,” Jackson warned Emily with his voice, and everyone else in his uni-ocular blurred vision. “Before---.”

Thunder penetrated through the profound silence that had overcome the air. Delivering with it three bullets into Jackson’s head. He fell, lifeless, to the ground.

Emily looked upward to see where the shots had come from. She and everyone brought to this remote location in the woods in an even more remote part of Poland where so much of the world’s fate was to be decided prepared to die. Or to kill. Or both. After a tense ten minutes that felt like as many years, the only thing that could be seen or heard above them over the surrounding hills was the dust of several vehicles leaving. After which the woods allowed entry of Silence back into the small valley.

“So, now what?” Emily asked herself, along with everyone else who life had brought to this spot. She looked at the letters of acquittal. Finding nothing in there that had any names listed. Other than that of President Woodrow Wilson himself.

“And you are dumb enough to believe that a President of the United States is the master of the Capitalist Imperialist Committee that controls the world?” Hans noted.

“I’d like to be,” Emily related thumbing her way through the stack of ‘forgive me’ money delivered by Jackson. “But can’t,” she continued, handing over half of the money to Greta and the other half to Heinrich. “Don’t spend it all in one place, or buy candy from a stranger,” she said, after which she got on her horse and headed East. Towards Russia, if indeed there was still a Russia left. To, perhaps, where Peter Jesus was. Or, thanks to her intervention, a very alive Comrade Lenin, who would, perhaps welcome her back to the Revolution by saving it. Or have her executed for liberating a doctor who, she would try to say, was tricked into being a minion of Capitalism Imperialism.

As for Hans, he found himself lingering behind, gazing at his family with new eyes, and a renewed heart. Accepting that it’s the people you are most responsible for rather than the one you love most who you should be with. Until life says otherwise, anyway. “We go home now to Germany?” Hans offered his family. “Or build what is left of it into a home,” he pledged.

Grossman and Stein set off to find Ranselhoff and Ponath, hoping that if they were in the land of the living, they could be turned around into who they used to be. Or if they had embraced the Cause of the Master Race, they were dead. As loyalty to Cause had now trumped loyalty to friends or even wartime Comrades.

As for the world, it was spared, for the moment, the world from a homely, deluded soldier born into a low rank who had high aspirations to rise through the ranks to become Master of the world. Breathing room for a war weary world...for the moment.