

# **TURNOVER**

by

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## CHAPTER 1

It was the kind of victory post-election rally that shook the political equilibrium in Albany, created an earthquake on the hard rock mantle under Manhattan Island and violated the laws of physics that way Red and Blue would never find their ways to be most expressive with that magical hue of Purple. Moslems, Jews, Christians, Pagans Atheists and religious Atheists shared music played from a festival stage yet directed somehow from the audience as a celebration. It acknowledged the separation of Church and State but also the union of Spirituality and, as yet to be defined, new Government. This post-election rally that did not discriminate against anyone on the basis of age, race, gender, desired gender honored the poor struggling workers of the world. It did not persecute those who had an aversion to labor either. Still, it was centered on figuring out ways to convince the 1 percent of citizens who had 90 percent of the wealth to share more than 10 percent with the others, and for those 'haves' to realize that donating 60 percent of what they had (or stole) with the 'have nots' would make them richer in many other ways.

In the middle of it all was governor elect Edie Callimari, a moderately older than middle aged woman with a still shapely 25 year old body whose blonde hair still had not surrendered its hue to grey nor its anchor to her scalp to wind, or an assertive hairbrush. The deepened crow's feet around her eyes revealing how wide open those oculars were. Her confident yet still invitingly gentle smile on posters bordering the main stage assured the viewer that she really DID stand for Universal rather than Selective Compassion for All, That it is NOT cool to be cruel. And that the most primary of all the laws and bylaws in her administration as Governor of the Once Great Empire State of New York would be 'Each Gives Beyond Their Abilities and Takes Less Than Their Needs, or Wants'.

Yes, Edie was enjoying the victory of beating the candidate New York State AND the United States in general initially wanted most but needed least in a landslide fair election. It was fought at her end with weaponry that didn't belong exclusively to the right or the left, calling out the cruelty of the former and the hip hypocrisy of the latter. And it was against the most 'sizzle rather than steak' politician that the circus which had become the Right Wing's darling, and king, Iron Mike Richter.

Edie's ears were filled with music from her golden time in the 60s along with the most popular (and in some cases best) of every genre popping up in every decade since. The lyrics and musical rendition of "All 'Finally' Together Now" were expanded by band and audience members, ranging from 18 to 18. And most expressively by those who were both of those ages at the same time.

Edie's always hyper working muscle between her ears were occupied by other agendas, due to something real that felt like it was to materialize. And it was not her natural proclivity to pull away from applause directed at anyone, especially her. Or her natural proclivity to retreat from every conversation around her, or anyone else, that broke into jovial laughter. Reminding her that such was not appropriate now was Lars Jenkins standing next to her in the crowd. He was gleefully converting air into music with a

flute along with the band on stage and every fifth victorious constituent around him. His handsomeness as a senior stud who would never grow old left his beloved for the right reasons wife Edie in the dust with regard to the natural biology of aging.

Lars was not able to interfere with Edie's intense stare at whatever ghost, demon or evolving political complication had penetrated into the air thick with cannabis, tobacco and cheap beer. Even though it was all brought together with the pungent sweat of closely packed and dancing in their own way festival attendees. "Hey, Edie!" Lars yelled to his wife, still getting no response. "Yo, Philosopher Queen Governor Elect," yielded empty results again. He took in a deep breath, then pushed his way into her eyeline, keeping her head in place with a firm but loving holding of her small shoulders with his bearlike but blister free fingers. "Come on, join the dance. A dance with me, and them! The one you created!"

"Because?" Edie pressed, demanding that this time Lars would give her an honest answer, and one that was accurate as well.

Lars took a deep breath, raised his head to the sky, then plopped it down to earth. "To everything there is a time and purpose, under, whatever is up there," he expounded and sang, in the manner of Pete Seeger, the old fart of his youth who convinced him to go into politics to eventually abolish it rather than to change it.

"Theoretically most probably yes," Edie replied.

"A time to plant, a time sow, is this not so?" Lars continued in the manner of Socrates as casted in Plato's Republic.

"Yes, it is so," Edie acknowledged.

"And a time of war and a time of peace," Lars' next affirmation.

"More of the latter than the former," Edie conceded.

"And a time to have...what's that dirty f thing?" Lars gleefully blasted out. "Which you need more than anyone else here," he admonished.

Eddie's lips tightened, but before she could push anything assertive out of them—

“Oh, yeah, that thing called....fun!” Lars delivered into her taunted and worried face.

“Had enough of it in the womb, until I was evicted from it,” Edie replied in her normal style of delivering metaphors with a contemporary edge, along with her own real experiences. “And a past life that was happy, so your daughter Silvia the Psychic said.” She looked away from the man who wanted to give her more than she was able to receive. “Right now, I’m just---”

“---Preoccupied with seeing the bad within the good?” Lars proposed.

“The fall after the happy,” her retort, averting her eyes yet again. “The work after the play...The agonizing realizations after the....”

Lars grabbed rather than touched her by the shoulders, facing her. She lowered her head, feeling shame, failure and fear, somehow all at the same time. “Hey! We elected finally someone who is worthy of being Governor now, and President very soon later!”

“So I’ve been told,” Edie conceded, still with downturned eyes.

“And you’ve earned it, Edie!!” Lars blasted into the covering of sorrow and worry that emerged onto Edie’s face no matter how much foundation and glitter she layered it with.

“But,” she said, raising her right index finger up with more affirmation than any cattle drive boss on screen did with making a point. She then looked straight at, and into Lars. “Anyone who wants to be Governor, and particularly President, shouldn’t be trusted with the job.

“Yeah...You’re right,” Lars conceded. “Like him!” he proclaimed with anger at his own species and the Deity elected to or charged to rule over His presumably favorite creation.

Lars pulled out a campaign brochure of candidate from the inside pocket of his half-professor half wannabe Russian gangsta elbow patched coat and gave it to Edie. The penetrating cold steel but inviting eyes of Mike Richter blasted into her and wouldn't let her go. Her consciousness completely ignored the overgrown, perfectly trimmed 19<sup>th</sup> century Wall Street Mogul brown beard on his pale white face as well as the overabundance of American flags, guns and LGBT rainbow decals behind him. "A neo-Nazi wolf in Christian neoconservative and revisionist WOKE clothing, who you beat, fair and square," Still Assistant Professor at Cornell Lars reminded his trophy and beloved wife.

'Yeah, I got lucky,' Edie conceded softly, still looking at the picture of the most photogenic monster since Adolf Hitler, or most recently, Kevin Bacon.

"WE got lucky!" Lars affirmed. "All of these people here got lucky," he reminded her.

"So, why are you looking so...scared of this loser?"

"Because he's a sore loser. And a dangerous one," Edie reminded her glass is always half filled, and unbreakable as well, husband.

"Who you had arrested. And put away," the theoretical polysci professor reminded the doctor who had given up her medical practice to fix vicious laws that sent innocent people to the gallows rather than the laws of nature which dictated who got what disease. Doctor soon to be Governor Edie pulled back her lips, remembering the day she saw the richest man in Downstate New York be pushed into an Upstate Grey Bar Motel housing common criminals.

"Yeah. I did put him away," Edie said, finally with an accepting smile on her dry weather bitten lips. She then acquired her normal 'on the job' mug, hugging her husband. "Yes, WE put Iron Mike away, even if it was for a weekend," she said. "And..." she turned to the crowd, who still were more interested in the music and dance they were making more than the stars on stage, or in the audience. "These people, each one of them, put Iron Mike behind iron bars then, and will do so again, for a longer period if it comes to that!"

The initially three minute Yellow Submarine Album song back in 1968 from the stage emerged into a nearly 30 minute variations on the theme in nearly as many genres finally ended. The overly tattooed 30 something neohippie grabbed hold of the mic as if it was a talking stick passed around by his Mohawk ancestors. He reached out to the stoned face but certainly not

stoned bass player behind him, requesting him to throw him a JFK wig. Then to the piano player who had worn out the keys on the board who threw him a authentic tweed sport jacket. He bunched up his half blue and half orange Ukraine hair in a manbun then placed the oversized wig onto his small head. He took in a deep breath, then grabbed hold of the mic again with the strength, confidence and humility worthy of the youngest man to occupy the main desk in the Oval Office. "Now...It's time for you all to ask," he said in a spot-on Boston accent that NO one in Beantown would say was from a New Yorker. "Ask not what your state can do for you. But what you can do for your state.. Not because it's easy but because its....haaaad! Fellow citizens of this..."

"---Country!" the Black Muslim base player bellowed out in a voice as deep as his faith in Allah and hatred for his brethren who used the Koran as an excuse to kill men and subjugated women.

"World!" the Wicken piano player declared, hair adored with an equal number of beautiful flowers, toxic weeds and sharp thorns. "Or if we expand our vision!" she declared, opening up her arms, and heart to Edie, still standing in the crowd as a common citizen. "Fellow citizens of what, Doctor Mayer Philosopher Queen and future President Edie?" She pulled out a flute from under the piano and threw it to Edie in the manner a talking stick is tossed to the next person allowed or required to speak as a meeting of many nations, or conflicting agendas.

Silence overtook the crowd, as loud as any music that had come from the stage. Edie, with flute in hand, and heart took in a deep breath, looked at the sun as it decided to penetrate through the Fingerlake Clouds, then at the mascot Gremlin from Mars behind her who for the next act was to pledge his planet's support for Edie in case a few billion humans needed to re-locate.

"Ask not what your state can do for you but ask what you can do for....the Universe?" she asked Marvin Martian but got no response, causing her some confusion. Her and everyone else's attention were drawn to the band leader on stage.

"Like you said to everyone else who has pseudo woke Millennial disease, Doc Gov Edie," the Bandleader admonishes Edie in his natural downstate Brooklyn voice. "Ya don't, like, ya know answer a question with a question? So, what's your answer!?"

Edie smiled, feeling a deeper victory than ever in a campaign that was as much against defective Millennial codes as MAGA. She put the mouthpiece of the flute to her smiling lips, then let out Bach's Bourrée, moving the refrain from classical to great jazz version. Lars and others around her lifted her up, carried her to the stage. The band on stage and stray players in the crowd joined in. Great music created by the third brains that evolved between everyone.

Edie reflected on what Jesus was reported to have said through some of his hand picked Jewish publicity agents. "Whenever two or more of you are gathered in my name, I drop in as well'. Yes, that fairy tale which Edie still wanted to believe was coming true. Until that little voice, or perhaps a very real one whispering her name into her pathologically diligent mind, yelled out a command to divert herself from the task of converting air into music, and music into multi-genred magnificence. A turn of her head confirmed a change of agenda.

There, in the wings of the outdoor stage, was a figure in a fourth hand hooded coat, proudly sporting a red, white and blue All American bandana-with an eagle sitting on a swastika. The unrecognizable admirer aimed the business end of an assault weapon at her, holding his, or her, fire, then at the rest of the band.

"Everyone, down! Now!" Edie yelled out. The harmonic cacophony of loud musical instruments was replaced by rapid gunfire from the assailant, accompanied by stray from no less than three other locations overlooking the crowd. Then---the screams of people overtaken by fear of losing their own lives or losing those they cared for more than themselves.

From her own position of justifiable self-preservation on the ground, Edie could see, feel and hear all of the musicians ducking for cover. The security guard hired for crowd control lay on the stage, blood spurting out from his belly and legs. Edie rushed to his aid, tying her belt just above the bleeding from his upper leg. He refused any other help from the Doctor Governor elect, pointing to his gun and the source of the first shooter. Following Pete Jakowitz's insistent and hopefully not last request, she turned around to the gunperson. He and/or she disappeared towards the panicked crowd below. "'Go. Go!" insisted the 'guard for hire' who failed the entrance to join the police department and was unable to strum his guitar to the satisfaction of any band member. Edie, whose only experience with firearms was shooting artificial ducks at a peanut gallery and whose fist had never hit any human flesh other than her own, took off in pursuit.

The path of the assailant who chose to kill others rather than her was easily determined by the ducking of festival attenders hoping and praying to not get shot by the two other 'gunpersons'. A large portion than expected covered either their loved ones, or strangers next to them who in the moment had become family, friends or lovers.

Who was doing the shooting and from where was not known. But what did seem certain to Edie was that the main shooter enjoyed being chased, and particularly by a gun-toting Peace Now and Always Candidate whose gun ban platform was stronger than any other gubernatorial candidate in the US, or provincial contender in Canada. Shots were fired at her from the assailant, but they missed her. Finally, she got a clear view of the shooter, as that cowardly low life was hiding behind a 'loving lemonade and and 'subvoiyisive literatuure' stand that had been pushed into a barricade.

But before Edie, as seemingly the only attendee in the possession of a firearm, could fire the shot that would wound or, if necessary, kill the assassin a sneaker bearing red, white and blue hues with the face of Ghandi on it tripped her. She looked up to see who was its bearer, but the other foot pushed her to the ground, causing her to not know where she was, or what universe she was in, if in any universe of the living at all. The unidentified tripper pulled her away, dragging to a position of 'safety' from the bombardment, then ran away, disappearing into the mass of huddled and wounded bodies.

Gunfire persisted from three hidden and well protected locations of the 'assistant' shooters, such being the last thing Edie could consciously hear till she faded into unconsciousness. She was awakened by the sound of motorcycles approaching from the back row of what had been a happy festival, then gunfire from ominously low volume automatic and thunderously loud single fire weapons coming from them. Gunfire from the strategically located and protected perches of the still unidentifiable shooters stopped. Edie looked up, noting that the cavalry that had come in on two wheeled horses had fled away in hot pursuit. After a few seconds of ominous silence, the air was filled with moans of the wounded, worried and terrified.

The assuring sound of police sirens finally took center stage, but with only two blue and whites and three ambulances. Tall, NON-Bubba belly bearing Sheriff Oliver Evans, wearing jeans that had been worn by weather and cowboy boots that have been scooped on real horses, emerged from the lead car, He took note of three biker jackets positioned in such a way so that they would not be unseen even by blind man. With minimal movements of his apposed index and

third finger, he sent half of his scant uniformed staff, and sometimes support team, over the grounds to have yet another routine look-see at yet another shooting site. He sent and the rest of the detachment to pursue the bikers and/or shooters who had fled the scene. He then slowly and deliberately walked over to Edie, who was spitting up curses in Italian along with blood from her mouth.

“Where’s Lars?” she inquired with mixture of anger, shame and fear.

Officer Evans pointed to one of the ambulances where Lars was being treated for a wound on his arm. “I’m ok, Edie!” he said with calm assurance to his wife, allaying some of her fears.

“And you, Doc, Governor-elect and hopefully soon President Capillano? Are you okay?” he asked, knowing that this issue was always, and still was, last on her masochistic workaholic agenda.

“The blood between my teeth is still my own,” she stated with pride and her usually wittfully textured answer to any question as she spit out, hopefully, the last wad of blood from her bruised mouth. But there was something distasteful to the tongue that she couldn’t hide.

“Salty, Doc?” Evans said. “The taste of fear, Edie. Which is...”

“---Where’s the rest of the medical cavalry?” Edie asked upon seeing no more than three ambulances on the scene.

“Still stuck on the bridge. Behind two ‘accidently stalled and stuck’ abandoned freight trucks,” he stated without an ounce of terror, fear or apprehension, at least any that could be seen by anybody else, he hoped. “Only reason why I’m here is that I was in the neighborhood and---” He diverted his attention to the three biker jackets left behind by whoever accidently came onto the grounds well after the nick of time. Or perhaps who was secretly hired, to manage crowd control and arrived late. “Interesting...Real bikers never leave their colors behind, Governor elect Edie,” Evans said, hoping his soft whispering speech was not audible to journalistic human ears and wannabe or perhaps real reporters. “Any idea who they were or who brought them here?” he asked Edie.

“No,” she replied taking charge of the events and perspective of it all. “But I know who, and what I am.”

Edie handed over her gun to the Sherriff, as if it is toxic. She then grabbed hold of the stethoscope from under her coat, for reasons she still could not determine, non-blood stained coat.

More paramedics emerged from the ambulances, and two more that finally arrived on the scene. Hoping on the horse always between her legs, Field Commander Edie took charge. “Any doctors here?” she boldly asked, holding her hand up. “With medical degrees?”

Ten hands went up with shaking arms attached to them from the bewildered crowd.

“And real experience with this shit, in two OR four legged patients?” the next inquiry from the Philosopher now General Comrade Queen. Some hands went down. Others came up. Some of the latter from victims who were unable to stand up.

After three four second assessments with her eyes and ears Edie did the walk around the festival grounds, assigning paramedics and docs to the appropriate patients. She noting the ones in need of care first with a single digit, secondary importance with a victory sign of two fingers, and tertiary concern with a three, much like she did when prioritizing which issues are most important and lease critical for the moment while doing campaign speeches. She was interrupted by a particularly emotionally evoking moaning coming from the victim in the location where she was shuttled to by the ‘sneaker dude or dudette’ who tripped her and dragged her to safety.

Upon closer examination, the victim was a brown faced dreadlock bearing middle aged woman. Her dull and dark hued mug was highlighted by the brightest shade of red lipstick, loudest blue eye shadow and most blinking sparklies on her cheeks that Edie could remember seeing on screen or in person on the campaign trail. “Move your legs for me,” she asked the woman, whose eyes alternated between being a quarter open and 120 percent closed.

“You got it,” she replied in a musical Jamaican diction as colorful as her natural complexion, accompanied by nothing moving below the waist.

“And your fingers, please?” Edie requested.

“No problem, Doc?” she emitted from smiling lips, her averted eyes opening wide enough for Edie to see abnormalities in her rapidly oscillating pupils, accompanied by motionless fingers. Following the gut instinct which never failed Edie with regarding understanding medical biology and, so she hoped anyway, her recent understanding and treatment of human political pathology, Edie smelled the once patient, and now person’s, breath. She let the medical data consciously seen, and unconsciously felt, rumble around in her head, allowing all of the information to find its natural slots as it related to an understanding of the problem and, theoretically anyway, a way to fix it.

The woman closed her eyes. A Paramedic came by, assessed the situation by the usual mean and shook his head in that negative manner which meant ‘even Jesus can’t resurrect people up from this kind of hole’. The Paramedic pointed to another ‘case’ ten feet away. “Doc, you’d be most useful over---”

“---Here, where I am right fucking now!” Edie insisted, after which she removed an acupuncture needle from her pocket, poking it up and down in a hen like action at the frenulum above the Jamaican patient’s bright red, perhaps due to blood or maybe lipstick, lips. “This one’s mine,” she insisted as there was more than a barely audible death rattle coming out of her enlarged nostrils.. As for the reasons for Edie taking special attention to this victim over the others. “She looks interesting and...her symptoms present an interesting and contradictory challenge that only I’m qualified to take on.”

“Huh?” the Jamaican woman suddenly blurted out. Such terrified the overly trained but under-experienced Paramedic into a near heart attack.

“You’re gonna be alright,” Edie assured her somehow resurrected gun shooting with a sure smile, holding the patient’s still motionless hand. Then letting it go, putting her open-fingered right hand up in the air, fingers forcibly-apposed to each other. “Drop out from the Scouts for

the right reasons Honor, you are doing to be alright!” Edie promised with more assurance than any political pledge she had offered anyone.

“Thanks...Doc,” the patient muttered in a barely audible but loudly felt whisper. After which she closed her eyes, allowed her outer lips to move upward in a smile. And started to bleed from the abdomen and leg. “Thanks, doc,” flowed out of her quivering lips.

“But ya gotta stay with me!” Edie yelled back at her patient, and most important agenda. “You too!” she threw back at the Paramedic.

Sheriff Evans watched Edie assist the wet behind the overly ringed ears of the paramedic load the woman on the stretcher, putting her into an ambulance which was about to be loaded with two other patients. She assertively gave medical instructions regarding all three patients to the transportation staff, then rushed out to take over triage that she had set up. Such involved taking over for those whose abilities she overestimated and giving more responsibility to those whose skills she didn’t appreciate, or bother to fully assess. Nothing new for a field commander wearing a badge or carting around a stethoscope.