

Sword of Aquarius

a novel
by Rolf A. F. Witzsche
Preliminary Edition

Episode 7 of the series of novels
The Lodging for the Rose

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The Lodging for the Rose - Episode 7

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This novel is fiction. Nevertheless, when love challenges greed, wealth, and the citadels of power, we often find the sword brandished that cuts deep to snuff out the spark of love before it becomes a fire that will illumine the world. History has become littered with such swords of countless types and has been blackened by the darkness they created. Still, the spark of love remains in spite of the darkness, and so does its promise. When things become so unbelievably evil that no one will believe them, then they will likely happen as it does in the novel amidst the snows of Siberia in winter. And still love prevails. Love comes with a promise worth fighting for. - The novel presented here in preliminary edition is Episode 7 of the epic series of novels, The Lodging for the Rose.

Contents

Chapter 1 - The Nutcracker Ballet	4
Chapter 2 - Sunshine in an Icy Land	15
Chapter 3 - Destination Oymyakon	37
Chapter 4 - Where Time Stands Still	46
Chapter 5 - Aquarius in Ice	54
Chapter 6 - Reindeer Research	69
Chapter 7 - In Denial of the Truth	76
Chapter 8 - Aquarius Rising	83
Chapter 9 - Gethsemane	108
Chapter 10 - The End of History	133
Chapter 11 - Return to Oymyakon	178
Chapter 12 - Project USA	209
About the Series: The Lodging for the Rose	236
This book is a 'preliminary' version	240
More works by the Author	241
List of novels - focused on universal love	241
Books of single stories from the novels	241
Exploration	242
Eleven Volume Research Series	242
Individual research volumes of the series	242

Chapter 1 - The Nutcracker Ballet

The land of endless horizons is a land of ice, reindeer, and drifting snow. Certainly, this is how it appeared to me. The world calls the place Siberia. Some call it a land of death, others, a land of great plenty. To me, the word Siberia, stands for yet another beginning.

We flew into Novosibirsk, Anton and I. Novosibirsk means interpreted, New Siberia. On the surface, Novosibirsk is just another city, like any other large city. In our experience, however, it came to light as an oasis, an outpost cultural center in a vast empty land that extends for over four thousand miles east from the Ural mountains, spanning an area larger in size than all of South America and Mexico combined. Novosibirsk is its center for art, theatre, music, and science. It is home to more than 20 research institutes. It features a suburban 'science city' that accommodates nearly 25,000 scientists. Strangely, in this frontier setting, Antonovna's short name didn't fit anymore, in spite of the great privilege that it represented. Life seemed too vulnerable for shortcuts to be appropriate, here.

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Ushi had been right when she told me on the plane from Caracas to New York, that I would be invited back to Russia before the year is over. Except, this had been just a hunch. Now it was happening. Only a few months had passed after the last of us got back from taking part in Nicolai's world tour in support of Africa, when new marching orders were written for me. But how did Ushi know? She couldn't have known. Was she involved in something that Russia needed my help for? If so, why didn't she say it?

The nature of the trip had not been revealed when the orders were presented. This strangely corresponded with what Ushi had hinted at. There was one thing, though, that she hadn't hinted at, that I would meet Anton again.

The orders stated that I was to meet a certain Alex Koldunov at the Kremlin, to answer to some allegations about me having insulted the government of Russia during one of my remarks at the Caracas conference. I couldn't think of what I might have said. Indeed, it should have worried me, but there was this overriding feeling that Ushi had something to do with all that, in which case I had nothing to worry about.

As expected, my orders were changed when I got off the plane. An agent of Alex Koldunov handed me a white envelope, which he said contained a dinner invitation from Nicolai Vasily Berendeyev, for 17:00 hrs. at the TV tower restaurant. I pulled the card out, opened it up. The information was correct. It was written in Nicolai's hand writing, and signed by him.

The invitation was brief. It said nothing about any reason for it or anything about Antonovna. Still, I wasn't surprised to meet her there with Nicolai. In any case, I had planned to telephone her once I got to Moscow, which was no longer needed.

While Nicolai took care of my coat, I asked Anton quietly if she knew why I had been invited to Moscow. She put a finger over my lips and gestured that I should kiss her. When we embraced, after the kiss, she whispered softly, "You must trust us on this." She stepped back a foot and looked at me and smiled as she had done so on many occasions in Caracas. "I'm glad you were able to come," she added quite audibly, now.

As we were seated, Nicolai brought out a set of three tickets for the Bolshoi Theater where Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker ballet was performed that evening. "I have invited you here to give you a chance to discover the real Russia," he grinned, "and Antonovna will help you to find the best of it. This is my way of saying thank you for what you have done in helping to organize the international food aid for Russia."

Evidently, this story was for somebody else's ears since it was quite loudly spoken. I was puzzled. Why would anyone be listening? Nicolai never spoke this way before. I had never experienced this tense atmosphere before in the presence of Nicolai.

Nicolai spoke like a tour guide, suggesting places we should visit. Ushi chided him for this. "Leave this up to us, please." So he spoke about operas. He said that Madame Butterfly was being performed this week. He told us the story of it. He spoke with great compassion about the Japanese girl who had been married to an American who had left Japan and then abandoned her, but who had come back later with his wife to claim her child as his own.

Now he spoke like the real Nicolai. Though it seemed I had barely known him, I sensed something familiar in the beauty of the intimacy of his sharing, in the tone of his voice, and the care he took in presenting the story. I could also see the same care expressed by him towards Antonovna. Nicolai had changed. He had become more beautiful, more genuine, and more human. I wasn't speaking to the politician anymore, or the powerful and respected security chief of the Russian Northern Fleet. Or was it I, who had changed? Perhaps, what was unfolding here was a faint trace of what Ushi had brought up as a challenge to be overcome in male to male relationships, when we met at the airport in Caracas at the

morning of our departure.

After dinner, Nicolai told us that we had some time left for dancing. Nicolai danced only once and left the rest of the time to us. The music was loud and monotonous. Still, we danced to it. We held each other close, and with a soft voice Anton informed me that we would meet one of Koldunov's men in two days. Koldunov is helping us," she whispered.

"But why me?"

"You can thank Nicolai for that," she said, and grinned.

I hadn't thought about the implications when she said that, we, would meet his man. The word didn't register until she explained that we were facing a dangerous mission together, but an important one on which all of our lives might depend. "This mission might be the most important mission, ever," she whispered while we danced. "I told Nicolai that we can trust you," she added. "It will have to be done in total secrecy, inside of Russia. Will you help us?"

How could I decline? The great care with which everything had been arranged, a care that flowed from the depth of Nicolai's beautiful soul, was something that inspired trust. How could I not honor this trust. "Of course I will help," I replied.

"Something ominous has happened up north," Anton whispered while we danced. "Nicolai was ordered in no uncertain terms to stay away from it. It appears that an unknown device was dropped over northern Siberia in a strategically sensitive area. It was picked up by infrared sensors, but not by radar. Nicolai found out about it, but was ordered by his superiors not to get involved. The reason might be that his involvement would draw too much attention. It is more likely, however, that his superiors want to cover something up, something that is directed against our country, something big that certain traitors don't want Nicolai know about, or find out details about. Nicolai believes that the object might be a biological warhead of some sort. No one has gone near the site as far as Nicolai has been able to find out. They are treating the incident as if nothing had happened. Several of the log entries have been erased that Nicolai had made copies off. It all adds up to something big. Nicolai wants the two of us to go on site. Are you still willing to come?"

"How could I possibly let you face this danger alone?" I answered. "Besides, all of Russia might be in danger. If I can help to save your life, and Nicolai's, and the life of your people, I will gladly come. But can it be done? You just said that no one has entered the area so far. It may be sealed off."

"Not officially," she whispered in my ear while we danced. She asked me to kiss her now and then. "The officially orchestrated denial of the incidence may give us a chance to get there first. Everything is already arranged. We are invited to a research station in the area. We will travel as tourists. You, being a rich American,

will provide the needed excuse and financing to stage a private expedition to explore the area, to observe the reindeer population. Afterwards, after we found the object and have examined it, we are to report back to Nicolai. Fred has helped us with the financing of the mission."

"Fred knows about this?"

"He knows none of the details. He trusts Nicolai. He knows about the secrecy."

She told me that it was Nicolai's idea to send me on this mission as a rich American, and to have her accompany me as my guide and interpreter. She said, this trust was his way of saying thanks.

"For what?"

"For convincing me to give marriage a try. We will be married in July, in Nicolai's home town." She spoke somewhat louder now. "You are all invited - Sylvia, Ross, Tony, Fred, and of course, Heather too. You are family to me, my side of the family. Besides, Nicolai wants a big wedding."

"Now what did I have to do with that?" I almost protested.

"Remember the symphony and its finale that will never end? It provides space for moving ahead, for bringing Nicolai up to that level. Now let me tell you something that you'll be proud of, something that shook the bureaucracy, but which Nicolai strongly supported."

"Let me guess," I stopped the dance, "You are going to retain your maiden name! Right?"

"Right! But how did you guess?"

"I almost didn't notice it, Anton. Now, it makes sense. Your name was printed like that on the dinner invitation; Nicolai Vasily and Antonovna Valentina, Berendeyev Lisitov."

"Oh you!!!" she punched me.

"Don't you think I would have guessed it anyway?" I defended myself. "You always liked to use your full name. How could you just give it up? It's your symbol of autonomy. You're far too proud of being yourself, that you would give up your identity and take on that of another."

"Oh you!!!" she said again. "Here, I was going to surprise you."

"Oh, you did surprise me," I replied. "Why didn't you say something about that in Caracas?"

"It was of no great importance to us, then." She said this with the gentlest smile.

It was lovely to see her excitement as she spoke about these things. She was one woman whom marriage would not change, and yet the very idea seemed to have changed her. She was as radiantly lovely and enthusiastic about everything, and as free as she had

been that night when we first met in the same restaurant over a dozen years ago, when the world was so much simpler. And there was another thing about her that was also still the same. She wore the same type of black velvet dress, that she had worn for our first dinner, and the same type of blouse that matched the color of her hair. It was as if she was saying that nothing had happened in the meantime, though a whole new world had opened up to us. Also the view out of the window was still as I had remembered it. The Red Square was as white with snow as it had been then.

I would have loved to query Nicolai about the mission as freely as we had discussed the world in earlier times. I knew that this would not be possible now. Apparently, what was happening was too important to risk any more talk about it. It appeared wise to be patient. Consequently, not another word was spoken on the subject throughout the dinner, at least not directly. Still, I sensed that Nicolai was as impatient to talk, as I was to hear his story.

When we were seated at the Bolshoi it seemed to me that Nicolai did find a way to talk about what lay at the very heart of the mission. He did this in a way that even the FBI would not have been able to decipher. We had come in good time. The place was still largely empty. Some people were starting to get seated on the floor below us. So far, no one had joined us in our box. This seemed to trouble Nicolai, so he spoke a bit louder than he normally would.

"Let me tell you the story of the Nutcracker ballet," he said to me.

"I know the story," I replied.

"Ah, then allow me to prove you wrong," he said and grinned. "You don't know the Nutcracker until you come to see in it the very soul of Russia. Then you know; and you will know Russia. Allow me to guide you."

I nodded.

"Did you ever walk through a quiet city at night, alone, pondering about something important?" he asked. "And if you did, did you feel the eerie emptiness of the deserted streets?"

I nodded, again.

"Then, tell me what music came to your mind in this dark, silent, emptiness?" he asked. "But let me warn you, I don't want to hear the Nutcracker as an answer."

I told him that I had found the emptiest streets in Leipzig, a long time ago. I was alone. I had a perplexing paradox puzzle out, then. "But the music that I would associate with that, isn't Russian," I said. "Did you ever hear the music of Philip Glass?" I asked. "One of Philip Glass' compositions is the kind of music that would bring forth such a feeling. Glass composed a suite of thirteen melodies for

solo saxophone. The saxophone sounds clear and distinct against such an empty silence. In this setting Glass' melodies explore the emptiness. The music echoes the kind of mind that searches for answers in the lonely silence of the night."

"I didn't ask for a Russian melody," Nicolai replied and approved my answer. "Music is the language of the soul and that spans all borders."

I nodded again.

"Now picture yourself being alone in the wide open spaces of the Russian country site in the deepest winter," Nicolai requested. "The lush fields of summer have been transformed into a snow and ice crusted dessert. As far as the eye can behold nothing stirs, but the blowing, wind-driven snow. Would Philip Glass' melodies still be appropriate?" he asked.

It faintly dawned on me that they would be, and I told him so.

He asked me to imagine being there, and to be listening to these melodies of emptiness and voiceless silence where nothing stirs that hints of life, much less human life. Then he asked me to imagine seeing the outline of a small town, far in the distance. "Then, as you come nearer," he added, "a new kind of music becomes appropriate, don't you agree? Here the music of the Nutcracker begins. You can see children at play near the town, on a frozen lake perhaps. Perhaps, they are laughing as they skate across the frozen surface, like fairy princes, and princesses, because this is what they are. Please note, you have now entered a world that is totally alien to the ice crusted dessert. In this dessert the human world of that village exists like a tiny oasis of life set into an empty land. Then, imagine that you enter one of the houses. It is Christmas. The house is aglow with the light of many candles, and is being warmed by a great fire. What a rich place you have found! This place seems light-years away from the larger world, the ice crusted dessert, in which it exists. But, here, the magic only begins. The children receive gifts from those by whom they are loved. One of these is a nutcracker carved out of wood that was presented to the oldest of the princesses of the family, by an eccentric relative, Drosselmeyer."

Nicolai paused and turned to me. "Now the magic unfolds," he said, " and this magic takes us further and further away from the ice crusted world in which it located. In a dream our princess sees mice coming from under the Christmas tree, and she sees the toy soldiers coming to life with the nutcracker leading the charge against the mouse soldiers. Just then, as the soldiers are about to loose against mouse king and his forces, the princess intervenes; the invaders flee. At this instant the nutcracker becomes transformed into a handsome prince. The prince invites her to a journey to his king-

dom. On the way they stop and explore the depth of their love in the glittering world of a snow covered pine forest. Except they cannot tarry long. Love cannot long exist in isolation. They must go on to the kingdom of the prince where they are lavishly honored with celebrations and entertainment. This magic, too, seems to be just barely enough to match the miracle that an unfolding love had wrought."

Nicolai added that this richly created oasis is the world of humanity. "It is the miracle of the sublime that unfolds in the desert snows and outshines the night of its stark emptiness. Without humanity, without the human spirit, without creativity and love, this oasis would not be. The stark, drab, empty world of primitive nature, doesn't create such miracles. They could never unfold from it. This marvelous human world is a miracle worth fighting for. This is the soul of Russia, and Germany, and America. Here is where my own story unfolds," Nicolai added. "I was this nutcracker once, made of 'wood.' By some miracle I was touched by a love that none of us could really define, a love that gives meaning to life. The wood has been transformed into something beautiful by the sublimity of love. This is what Drosselmeyer signifies. Love is the magician that can make the impossible happen. Humanity cannot exist without love. The two are one."

I felt that Nicolai was speaking about our mission, its importance, its danger, and its indispensable connection to the "dimension of love, without which humanity could not exist." I answered Nicolai with a nod. He understood. We seemed to agree that anything more on the subject would be about details concerning technicalities. The weighty matters had been revealed. This was going to be a mission that is vital for the existence of Russia, if not humanity, and a dangerous mission, but a mission that the miracle of love would cause one to carry out to protect its riches.

During the performance of the ballet, Nicolai did break his silence once more, to speak about the technicalities. We had front row seats in the first balcony. Nicolai was dressed in black, as was Antonovna. There was a gentleness flowing between them that had nothing to do with sex and desire, but had to do with supporting each other to face the new world that dawned with a dangerous political unfolding. What did it mean that biological weapons could be dropped from space that left no radar signature?

Half way through the first act Nicolai handed me the binoculars and told me to watch the dancers. "It has become dangerous to talk," he whispered, leaning close to me. "Our country is almost totally governed by traitors. Money governs everything. Money buys people. The fondi that Steve talked to you about are everywhere. Our government doesn't represent Russia anymore, nor its people,

but foreign interests. The revolution has been betrayed, the people have been betrayed. Of course, this happens throughout the world now. Every country on earth, with the possible exception of China and a few others, is run by traitors. Humanity is being betrayed. Its beautiful soul has been put asleep to be snuffed out. Democracy has been turned into a farce. It has been betrayed like everything else that is noble and human. Justice has become a relic of the past. I thought I would never see the day when our country is in so great a danger as it is today, and one can't even talk about it. That's why I can't tell you anymore about your mission, except that it is dangerous. Anton will fill you in on the way. I can also tell you that the matter is extremely urgent," he said.

I put the binoculars down. "You just called Antonovna, Anton," I said, surprised.

He grinned. "There are only two persons in the whole wide world who have been accorded that privilege," he replied, "and they are both sitting right here. This makes us very special people," he added.

"No, that makes us two extraordinarily lucky people," I replied.

"I know that, Pete, I know," he answered back. "That's why we must keep this world alive, Pete. This, all by itself, is worth the risk."

I agreed with all my heart.

We spent a few happy hours together that evening, and a few more at Nicolai's place, but we hardly slept. There wasn't enough time for that. We had to be at the airport by six o'clock. The plane left at seven.

As it turned out we had barely enough time left for a proper good bye. Still, it wasn't a sad occasion. Nicolai had brought each of us a fare well present: a fur covered Russian hat for me, and a thick woolen scarf for Antonovna. We parted with a brief embrace. "Come back safely, protect each other," said Nicolai as we were about to pass through the security gate. We waved to each other across the gate until the next person coming through blocked the view.

So, there we were. Before I fully understood what it was all about, I found myself on an airplane again, this time destined for Novosibirsk with Anton at my side. The speed with which this had unfolded was bewildering, as bewildering as the speed with which the world had changed. I felt I had been caught up in a kaleidoscope that had been turning faster and faster. Everything had tumbled together; my mission, Nicolai's gentleness, our dinner of the night before, the dance, the ballet, and now we were tourists. Per-

haps it was the speed that made everything seem unreal.

Now, however, on the plane, time seemed to stand still once more. There was time for everything now. We had time to reflect, time for smalltalk, time to smile at each other for however long that seemed right. Since we couldn't talk about our mission, we talked about the ballet of the night before that had evolved from a very old magical tale that was set to music by an extraordinary composer, which was now portrayed in dance. In a way, it portrayed our story, too. Only Nicolai wasn't Drosselmeyer. Nicolai was not directing the magic. The magician was love, as he had pointed out, and that part of him was with us. I told Anton that Steve had frequently pointed out at such occasions, "we bring to each other the gift of love. This always seemed to be enough. It made us feel rich. It changed our life."

"Didn't Nicolai say essentially the same?" Anton asked.

"He did so in deed, more than in words," I replied. "He is somewhat of a puzzle to me," I added.

"And I, am I a puzzle too?" said Anton and smiled.

"You never were. You were a miracle right from the start," I said.

"A miracle?" She repeated.

I nodded. "You are both a miracle and the answer to a prayer. I always wanted to meet someone like you. I felt that being married to Sylvia and knowing Ushi wasn't enough. Something was spiritually lacking. If the Principle of Universal Love was to be our guiding light, I felt that it needed to have an ever fuller and wider expression, like falling in love again and again in ever widening circles, bringing the light of love into more and more people's life across borders that would never allow this to be possible."

"And I was the answer to your prayer?" she said and smiled.

"You prayed, and suddenly there I was. How romantic! A gift from heaven."

"No you weren't a gift. You were a miracle that happened, Anton. But it was a long time coming. The miracle started one afternoon in autumn. I was driving home across the Appalachian Mountains using the back roads. In a village both sides of the street were lined with what seemed like a miracle. The trees were brilliant in their fall colors, from a brilliant yellow to dark orange. They were aglow in the sunshine. One looked like a huge explosion of yellow leaves, a mountain of glowing color interspersed with branches reaching for the sky. As I saw this, the thought came that this is how all love should unfold, brilliant, overwhelming with an explosion of joy, filling the whole scene with light, reaching for the sky. And the scene was constantly changing. Some trees had their branches stretched out horizontally in ever-widening tiers of orange. One tree had already shed most of its leaves with only a hint of its

previous splendor remaining in patches of dark red and dark ochre. I slowed to a crawl to enjoy to the full this amazing symphony of color. That what love should be, a symphony of color, shouldn't it? But as I said, the miracle was slow in its unfolding. Nothing happened that day along this line, or the next day, or week, or month. Nothing happened for another year and some months. The miracle happened in winter in the coldest city on the planet in the middle of a snowstorm. When we got off the plane in Moscow for the peace conference, there you were."

"Yes, like the Snow Queen wrapped up in a parka," said Anton.

"That's not how I remember you," I said with a hug. "I remember you as the sunshine that turned Moscow in winter into a tropical paradise."

"Now you're getting silly," she said. "I hope you didn't get sunburned," she said and laughed.

"I think I did. Maybe we both did. It's hard no to get burned with so much sunshine around. It's a challenge not to get burned when one isn't prepared for it and comes out of the cold."

"Sunburns are never fatal," said Anton and smiled. "I fact, they add to the tan that reminds us that we've been in the sun, and some people nurture their tan."

"Yes, some do so in silence for years," I added and laughed. "I wonder why we had waited for all those years until we got back together again in Caracas."

"Maybe we were afraid that we would get sunburned again," said Anton with a kiss. "But that's all history now," she added. "We have learned to stay in the sunshine all day and relish it. That's what we've learned in Caracas, and later in Queensland, haven't we?"

As expected, there was no official reception arranged for us for us when we arrived in Novosibirsk in late afternoon. It was already dark at four PM. No one was there to meet us, nor was there anyone around that we needed to worry about. Anton and I blended in with the crowd. Like in any big American city, no one took note of anyone else. There was a certain intimacy in this isolation. I would have hired a taxi to get to the hotel, but Anton suggested that the bus would be more suitable. And so it was. We felt closer to each other in this public isolation, as close as we had felt in Caracas when dancing. Time was not an issue now. We had almost an entire day layover to connect with the flight north that was coming through Novosibirsk at three PM every day. Obviously, neither of us minded they layover.

The first thing we did at the hotel, was to go to sleep for a few hours. We had two single beds. The hotel was old, but warm and quiet. We slept right past the hotel's dinner hours, so we or-

dered some sandwiches from room service. We ate them sitting on our bed by the window and looked out into the dark. Below us were the lights of the airport, matched by as many stars in the cloudless, icy sky.

Still, the talk didn't last long. After we ate, we became more and more silent. Her nightgown was like the gown with the golden belt that I had seen in my dream, except the top of the gown was left unbuttoned. I could see her familiar breasts. The few words that we spoke now became more like a stutter than a flow of ideas. Eventually, I found myself taking her nightgown off, and mine. From then on we embraced each other in an endless embrace as we had done so quite often in the gentle warmth of Caracas, which now seemed so infinitely far away.

Her touch was as gentle as it had always been, and her genitals hot and sweet. For a brief moment I felt like a traitor towards Nicolai. I rejected the thought. I knew this could not be. Nothing had happened that hadn't happened in Caracas many times before, and the door to each other had remained as wide open as it had been, then. So I dismissed the reservations. After all, their wedding hadn't been announced yet.

We spoke not a word during those intimate times, nor were words needed. Our language was stronger than words. It was carried by the voice of the soul that no ear could ever hear. When this voice, too, fell silent, we lay content in each other's arms until we slept again.

Chapter 2 - Sunshine in an Icy Land

When I woke, I saw her face over me, and her hair hanging down.

"This isn't real, is it?" she asked between kisses.

I said that it was.

She shook her head. "No! And you aren't real either," she added.

I nodded to that. "I am a traveler from a place far away," I said. "I was born on Gamma Point Eight of the Alpha Centauri system."

"What?" she grinned. "But go on!"

"Alpha Centauri is 4.3 light years distant from the earth towards the morning star on a mid-December day. It has three suns, locked together in a gravitational bond. One is very large and immensely bright, the other is more orange in color, and the third, the smallest of the three suns is the coldest, it glows a bright red. You might name the three suns Alpha, Beta, and Gamma. And the Point Eight," I explained, "indicates that my planet's relative gravity is eight tenth that of the earth."

I stroked her hair gently while we talked. A faint morning glow was on the horizon, outside.

"Can you imagine three suns in the sky?" I asked her. "Alpha looks sometimes blue from Gamma Point Eight. And as the day changes, the light shifts to orange and later to red. Gamma Point Eight also has seven moons. It is without doubt the most romantic planet in the universe."

I talked to her, looking deep into her eyes.

"On Gamma Point Eight the air changes daily from misty morning hues that become intensely bright like a snowstorm at mid day. Then the weather clears when the orange sun comes up, followed by the red one and three brightly glowing moons. It's a planet for lovers," I said. "We make love there all the time."

"And now you are come to teach me," she interrupted.

"Teach!" I repeated, "I don't like the word, teaching. The concept of teaching has become distorted. The teacher to student relationship has become a hierarchical one in the world, in which one person is assumed to be greater than another, while it really should be a lateral relationship where everyone is equal. I would never suggest that there is anyone greater among us. I rather think that we are both perfectly complete and equal."

She didn't answer to that.

We cuddled up to each other again in a caressing embrace. We almost missed breakfast, too.

Breakfast was served at the top floor of the hotel with a view away from the airport but open to the morning sun. There were no blinds to block the sunshine. The sun was welcome there.

The place wasn't at par with the New York Hilton, of course, but who cared? There was plenty of freshly baked bread, butter, and several kinds of preserves. Even the coffee tasted like coffee. Could one ask for more? Everything was perfect, and much of it, no doubt, appeared that way simply because Anton was there with me. Her love, her smiles, her gentle gestures of caring, altogether shone brighter than the sun, and the night that we had shared added to this brightness. Nicolai's generosity, too, added to this wonderful light that had begun to envelop us, that made us feel secure.

I had to confess to Anton that I had felt like a traitor the night before, for a brief moment.

She smiled across the table, "you mustn't feel like that. In fact we must make an effort to keep on being as close to each other as we were in Caracas and in Queensland, and this in every possible way, including sex. The privatization of sex has ended. That door is closed. Nicolai knows this as well as we do. I don't ever want to loose us being as close to one another as we are now. It means too much to me. You are my heart and in my soul, just as you had said about me when we first met, which I didn't understand. So you must never feel like that ever again, Peter. Also, there really is no cause why you should feel that way. Nicolai knows that I would never be married to him behind a tiny wedding ring. He is a human being, you know. He knows that sexual interaction is a part of being alive, a part of the passion for living. We are all sexual beings and wouldn't exist without sex. But we are also human beings, with a wonderful mind, so that sex means an a whole world more. It's a powerful thing. Nicolai understands that. He respects that. And besides that, why should you feel like a traitor anyway? Nothing happened, or could have happened, that violated the principle of universal love. Our being together in Caracas hadn't established anything that hadn't already existed before. We merely opened our eyes to it. The principles that we acknowledged there and in Queensland, still apply today as they did then. Nor do these universal principles change in any respect with Nicolai coming more fully onto the scene."

She asked moments later, "What would your friend Helen say?"

"I think Helen would say: What have these little things got to do with anything?" I replied and laughed. "Do they change the principle involved or invalidate it? That's what she would ask."

"Universal principles don't change with the winds of circumstances," Anton replied in acknowledgement. "To be honest, I enjoyed being treated by you like a woman, and always will, and this for more than one reason. The truth is, I can fully understand your appreciation of women as I had been able to experience that myself."

"You, in Caracas?"

"Of course, in Caracas. Remember, you said yourself that we must always go forward. And Peter, Sylvia is such a beautiful person in every respect, not just physically. I can appreciate why you fell in love with her, and with Heather, also. I can appreciate why you are fascinated with the beautiful female nature of women, because I am, too. And why shouldn't we be? It is a part of our humanity to appreciate the beauty of one another, just like a gardener appreciates the beauty of a rose. Only we have it in our heart to do this much more so in respect one another; because we are infinitely more beautiful and complex, and worthwhile than any rose."

"We really did open the door to a new world in Caracas," I replied, smiling, "and we stepped through it into this new world, and in Queensland we moved forward. Heh, didn't I promise you that night in Caracas, that something like that would happen as you asked the question, 'Where do we go from here?'"

"It also looks like that the sexual aspect isn't the main part of it either, not by a long shot," said Anton. "It somehow unfolds in the stream of things as barriers fall all around us, and boundaries vanish, as we are becoming closer to one another. It also seems to me that one can't just jump from A to Z in a single bound in real life. It's like your dream of the four rivers where you couldn't get past the draw gate of the first river unless you cycle through all of them and become a more complete individual. As the gatekeeper warned you, if you jump the gate you cannot survive in the more challenging environment that you'll be in. Isn't that what the gate keepers have told you over and over?"

"I must have known this, to have dreamed it," I replied, "even though I didn't understand then why it is so. Maybe it was my relationship with you that inspired the dream in the first place, considering the care I had to take to build a foundation for every step forward."

Anton fell silent for a moment, evidently searching for something that didn't come easily. "Nicolai is grateful that you exist," she said quietly, "and so am I. Without our close relationship I would never allow myself to join hands with him. I would be in danger. Nicolai is a powerful man. But now that I am certain that our door will remain open, I will gladly embrace him and 'marry' him in a great celebration, as he wants, since we are married already, inextricably. I respect him for his assurance that I won't be stuck behind any closed doors. In fact, my being here with you would not have been

possible without this commitment. So, my friend, you are not a traitor. You are a part of the family, as much as I am."

"Nicolai may be a rare genius," I replied, "but is he one of those even more rare individuals who can live up to such a promise, without pulling back?"

"He is," she nodded in acknowledgement. "He understands the universal principle involved, which is greater than any of us. He is beginning to understand what moves the universe."

"Still Anton, many a man has changed once the bond was forged," I said quietly.

She shook her head, "Nicolai won't be one of them. That door is closed, because the principle involved has become extremely important to him. He told me when I came back from Caracas, that unless this same principle becomes established in the larger sphere of the world, there will never be another bond possible on the scale of the Soviet Union. He also understands, that without this bond, no development will take place throughout much of the Eurasian continent, and without this development the continent will collapse into a new Dark Age. People will die. He also predicts that the great nations that still exist at the present time, will allow themselves to be broken apart, unless they recognize that principle universally, which they know exists, and recognize it more universally. There is nothing that can hold them together without a deep-seated acknowledgement of this universal principle. Nicolai is fully aware of that, Pete. He is deeply ashamed, in fact, that the Soviet Union had not forged that gentle, cooperative bond while it had a chance to do this, focused on a widely based universal support of individual development throughout the union akin to the general welfare principle that your country has been founded on. Instead, the Soviet Union had been held together by an iron curtain and an iron fist, even an ironclad and heavily defended boundary. The Soviet Union became a bond forged in iron and enforced all too often by often-brutal domination. The Soviet Union became a trap that the republics could not escape from, nor could continue to live in. People won't tolerate this again. The age of the shotgun marriages is over. Nicolai knows that the only platform on which a collection of tribes, ethnic groups, and even entire republics can unite, is that of an honest commitment to enrich one another's existence. That's the only natural platform that unites people. And that, one can't force. It has to enforce itself in a community of principle. Remember, Steve had asked you and Ushi if you wanted to stay overnight that evening, back in Leipzig, sharing the bed together? Remember, he had asked you both a simple question. Nothing had been coerced. Nothing had been forced. And even when you couldn't accept at first what you had wanted most, he gently helped you to overcome your barrier against what you really wanted. Nicolai told me that this should have been

the operational model for building and maintaining the Soviet Union."

"Heh, how did Nicolai know about that?" I asked and grinned.

She nodded and smiled. "By talking to Steve, obviously, but this isn't important, Pete. The important thing is, that this can work as a universal platform. Nicolai understands that this must work."

Anton told me later, after we had a few bites to eat, that Nicolai is fully aware that large-scale economic development is no longer an option for humanity. It's a must! It has become indispensable for its existence. He also knows that this can't happen without an exhaustive effort to develop the same kind of bond on the individual level. He said to me that this has become a vital necessity on the global scale. "We can't have the one without the other. That's what he said. This means that he is absolutely committed to the principle involved, and to yield to its imperative in every possible respect, sexual and otherwise."

Anton told me that those were his very words.

"But does this mean that Nicolai is committed to establishing the principle in his own life?" I asked.

"Yes, Pete. That's what he meant when he said we can't have the one without the other," she grinned. "He said that the development of unity has to start at the grass roots level where we live. He said that we have to start building our lives on this principle at the home gate before we can uplift the whole world up to it. That's what he told me. He knows that the overturning has to start there, long before we can even hope to utilize the newly discovered principle as a higher platform for international unity. I know that Nicolai is fully committed to this. You know yourself that Nicolai never implements anything superficially. He is committed to what he believes in, and this passionately. This means that he is also prepared to follow the social dimension of the principle of universal love to its logical conclusion. The question is, are you so prepared?"

I said that I was.

She smiled. "Are you sure?" she asked. Her smile became a grin.

"Yes," I said. I was sure I could match whatever Nicolai would do.

"Remember, Nicolai invited you here," she replied, "and send us off together. Just look at your invitation card. He made a commitment, and this commitment is beautifully presented there. He made a fully conscious commitment to bring us here together, formally, and he has put it down in his own handwriting. He even signed it in a formal manner."

I was ashamed all of a sudden, because I had left the card carelessly in my pocket where it got wrinkled. When I brought it out

and looked at it, it came to light as a precious document that should have been framed.

"Look at the face of it again," Anton said, "you will find both of our names there, Nicolai Vasily and Antonovna Valentina Berendeyev Lisitov. It's all finely printed."

Indeed, so it was. Everything was there, printed in fancy letters like a landscape across the card.

"And what does it say inside?" she asked.

"We warmly invite you to join us!" I read. Nicolai wrote the card in his own handwriting. It was an invitation for you to join.

"Join what?" I asked. "Join for a celebration?"

Way down the page the invitation say something about dinner, and this in a much smaller writing. "Please meet us for dinner at 5PM at the restaurant of the TV tower," it said. I continued to read, "with my best regards, Nicolai."

"Did you notice that the invitation and the request to meet for dinner has been separated? Note the gap in between. The style of the writing is different. These are two separate issues. Can you see that?" she asked.

She said, she hadn't noticed the separation herself until Nicolai had pointed it out. "The point is, he invited you with the full understanding that the invitation would involve our being together as intimately as we were in Caracas. As a matter of fact, he invited you because of it, as if he was saying that his love would not close any doors, but open them wider. There is a wider sphere unfolding from this promise than you can imagine, Peter, and this not because that's the kind of man Nicolai is, but because Nicolai understands what is demanded by the principle that is involved. There will be a marriage celebration forthcoming out of this. The celebration will be between Nicolai and me, and it will most certainly include you too, should you wish to be included. That certainly would be my wish, and it would be the right thing to do. You said yourself that good is the outcome of divine Principle, a universal principle that can only be manifest universally, that cannot be divided, that must encompass all. Remember, you told me in Caracas that any attempt to isolate good, and to privatize it into a small sphere, is a slap into the face God. Nicolai understands this; I do too. But are you committed to live by what you understand to be true? We are committed. Are you? You are invited by both of us, me and Nicolai. You are invited to join us formally in celebrating the uniting bond that we can't escape even if would want to. As you said in Queensland, the universal marriage of humanity is something we've been subjected to from the moment of conception, because of our common humanity. It is a reality that we have to learn to run with. Nicolai suggests that we go one step further and celebrated it; that we celebrate it openly, profoundly, in a huge celebration that

matches the profundity of the discovered principle."

"What are you saying?" that was all I could reply.

"Nicolai proposes something akin to a triple concerto, which, as you said yourself, is an extremely rare composition."

"Are you suggesting a triple marriage celebration of two men acknowledging that they are joined to a single bride?" I asked astonished. "That comes from Nicolai?"

Anton nodded quietly.

"But doesn't he know that an artificial marriage institution denies the reality that we are already married to one another as human beings? It denies a universal principle, wanting to create something that already exists."

"You are thinking of the 'old' Nicolai, Peter, the privatizer. That Nicolai no longer exists." Anton began to laugh. "He grew up just as we all did. He recognized the principle of the universal marriage of all mankind as human beings, and that it is greater than all of us and exempts no one. That changed him. One he recognized the principle he had no choice, as he had put it, but to respond to its imperative. They way he sees his triple wedding proposal, it wouldn't create a unique bond as the conventional weddings intend do, but would merely acknowledge the bond that already exist. He sees it as a celebration that brings together three people committed to the universal principle of our all-embracing humanity, an acknowledged community of principle, a base for further development."

"Wow! Nicolai really has changed, and you with him," I said astonished. "And here I thought you were proposing a triple polygamy of two men married to a single bride."

Anton shook her head. "Nicolai would have never proposed that, not the old Nicolai or the new. So it isn't a marriage to a single bride," she added and laughed, "but an acknowledgement of a profound reality by all three of us to one another in a unity that reflects the community of principle that already unites us. If love were a vertical affair reflecting the Byzantine model, then a triple marriage would be impossible. It would become a polygamous orgy and end in chaos before it even got off the ground. But with love unfolding into a lateral flow out of the resources of everyone's own self-love, the impossible becomes possible because the reality already exists by which we are one, and needs only to be acknowledged. In a lateral flow we can easily connect up multiply, in any way we choose and support one-another and cherish one-another. In fact we cannot avoid that. The triple 'wedding' wouldn't create a boundary, it would signify an enduring celebration of the principle involved that everyone will need to acknowledge at some point in the continuous development of civilization. Civilization needs to become a celebration instead of being just a foundation for survival, precariously upheld in the face of countless conflicts. Nicolai proposes to

start building a foundation for a real civilization. That is what he is inviting you to become a part of. Who else would he invite, but you? You are the one that came foremost to his mind when the question arose. Don't you agree that he chose wisely? He loves you. He loves what you stand for. He fell in love with you way back in Suchumi on the boat on the Black Sea when you discussed the 'dimensions of civilization,' as he put it, and how the Soviet Union might be saved."

"Wow! And Olive was part of that scene back in Suchumi. We had long discussions about everything from depopulation to universal love. She was also working extensively with Nicolai during the conference there. I met Olive only for one day. We talked all night through and had ice cream and wine along the way at three in the morning in a drab place across from a gas station on a highway in the middle of nowhere. And then we talked some more until the sun came up. And it wasn't all talk."

"Maybe that's what got Nicolai curious about you, Peter. Olive has a great talent in brining people together and bringing the best out of them. So it wouldn't have been too hard for her to predict what this might lead to."

"Well, she was right, Anton. What is happening now is more or less what Olive had predicted about you and me," I said to Anton. "She predicted this several times already. She kept saying that she would be at our wedding feast. She said that last summer. And I think she knew what kind of wedding feast that would be, a feast of celebration of something that she recognized already existed."

"How could she have known all that?" Anton asked.

"If one understands the principle involved, it is easy to make accurate forecasts," I said her quietly. "This means that she understood us better than we did ourselves. Of course once the principle is recognized, a certain outcome is inevitable. She could have forecast on this basis that the triple wedding would be recognized as a kind of minimal platform that metaphorically represents the entire sphere of Helen's lateral lattice in which we find our universal humanity."

"She must have seen this result as natural and inevitable," said Anton. "Indeed, if it is natural, its unfolding must be inevitable."

"In Caracas you said to me that we shouldn't seek just beautiful mornings," I said to Anton. "You demanded that this idea should be expanded to: always! That jump was tremendous, Anton. It turned our dinner dance that night into a rich sexual affair. Now you are adding a whole new dimension again, with no limits in sight. If you had said this a long time ago back in Moscow when we had dinner together at the Sevens Heaven restaurant, what you

are proposing now, I might have fainted for joy, though it wouldn't have been possible then."

"No, Peter, you would have been puzzled. You wouldn't have understood enough to see the foundation for this joy. You would have been scared." She began to laugh. "We were both too ignorant for any of that, like two blind leading one another into a land we knew nothing about, that we could barely see through all the fog."

"Even if you had said the same in Caracas when we first met again, I would have thought I was dreaming. But then after Caracas, if you had made the proposal in Queensland, I would have congratulated you. I also recognized in Queensland that would never lose you again. So, yes, a celebration is in order as an acknowledgement!"

"Isn't that exciting, Peter?" She paused and grinned. "Now let me add one more dimension above that," said Anton. "The added dimension is quality, the sublime."

"You are saying that the triple wedding represents a qualitative advance to a higher level," I replied, "and that any advance beyond that would have to involve a qualitative advance once again that uplifts the whole platform to a still higher level? In other words, it would not be an open-ended free for all. It would be something that is boundless in form, but rigorously bound to an escalating attention to the principle that constantly ennobles the universal union of mankind as it should be reflected in us and in all people, as we begin to understand more and more of this principle. Do I make sense?"

Anton nodded again.

"And you are inviting me to become involved in that?" I added. "What an honor! But what about Sylvia, and Heather? Suppose that they would want to become a part of this formally acknowledged union that is but symbolic of a larger reality. What would happen then?"

"What about it?" said Anton. "Would their joining in that acknowledgement in celebration not produce a qualitative uplift? In Caracas we were all married to each other for all practical purposes, were we not? And look, what a qualitative jump came out of that? Isn't that what a union of hearts is all about? A marriage celebration, therefore, represents a commitment to a qualitative increase without end. As you said, we have to learn to run with that. Isn't that also what defines your marriage with Olive and with Sylvia, individually? And then there is your marriage in India that is already uplifting the life of countless people, more than anyone might know. Those are just a few bonds that you have acknowledged so far in a profound celebration. I am sure that countless other such marriage bonds exist that love has forged, that have not been acknowledged in celebration, but which have produced the same kind

of qualitative uplift in your life and their life, which you merely haven't bothered to acknowledge, not even to each other. And yes, sex may be involved in all of them as an aspect of being alive, in the passion for living by which we are all enriched in our self-love. Still, the sex and the passion won't be the defining factor. The defining factor involves an element of the sublime."

"Do you want me to tell you about my marriage in India?" I asked. "Something sublime unfolded there."

She put a finger over my lips. "No, not now. That's not important right now. What is important right now is acknowledge our union, to celebrate the fact that we are one, even though we all are."

"Of course we are one," I replied.

She nodded in agreement. "The unity that we have discovered and that binds us must find expression, Peter," said Anton. "Nicolai told me that you of all people should understand the meaning of community of principle, but where is the proof if it isn't expressed in celebration?"

"The proof of the pudding lies in the eating, it lies in celebration," I said quietly. "That's what proof is, isn't it? The expanding movement, this stepping forward towards the sublime, should become a model for the whole world. wouldn't this change the world and make it a brighter place? Is that what Nicolai is hoping for?" I said in awe. "Is that that the core of his proposal?"

Anton simply smiled.

I moved the jam pot and the sugar out of the way, and reached out my hands to her, just to touch her face. I closed my eyes and opened them again. "This isn't a dream," I said, "Is it?"

She just kept on smiling.

"Oh my God, Anton," I added as the realization began to unfold as to what a profound thing was really happening here. That was all that I could manage to get out before the first tears came, "I am so deeply honored by your proposal that I really don't know what to say," I stammered suddenly. This wasn't theoretical anymore.

"It's Nicolai's proposal and mine," she replied, "but why should you be astonished by it? What we are proposing is nothing new to you."

"No Anton. When it come to a new unfolding of love, that's always something new. It is as new as if it happened for the first time in an eternity. And the ceremony that Nicolai wants, that's something new likewise that has never been seen on this planet in its entire history, on the platform on which it is proposed, designed to uplift society for all ages to come. And you will be a part of it for all the days to come. If that is not enough to bring tears to one's eyes, what would be?"

While we talked, a waiter refilled our coffee cups, and later came back with a small potted plant with blossoms similar to a violet. He placed it on our table that was flooded with sunshine. He smiled, but didn't say anything.

"He should have said, happy honeymoon," Anton suggested. "He probably sensed that something wonderful was in the air. As a human being, he would have been touched by this, too."

"On the other hand he might have heard us talking, and may have realized that something was happening here that has never happened before, that may have historic implications like a new step for mankind."

"This sounds to me you are comparing our triple celebration proposal to man's landing on the moon," I commented. "A small step for a man, a giant step for mankind."

"Yes," she agreed. "That's a perfect analogy. When you come to the point that all those lower aspects that create boundaries, dishonesty, isolation, domination, and so forth, are invalidated, then the number of people involved in a union of hearts has no real significance. It could be a celebration of three, seven, or even ten. The qualitative improvements are then the real factor. Think about that."

"The number is seven," I interjected.

"Seven what?" she asked.

"My marriage in India; we are seven altogether," I replied.

"That's wonderful, Peter. Maybe we will be seven one day soon, too. That's a challenging prospect, isn't it? But for starters, let's begin small. A triple marriage celebration would be a good starting point for building. That gets us to take the first giant step of acknowledging the universality of the principle of love. It breaks the barrier so to speak. Anything after that is no longer revolutionary. Nicolai thinks of this as a perfect starting point for transforming the axioms of society which determine the way people relate to one another. He equates three with infinity."

"In other words, you want us three to become truly the leaders for a brave new world?" I asked. "Wow, what an invitation! How can I refuse? I am honored. You want me to be a part of this leading edge dynamic movement. And Anton, what a beautiful initiative it is with you playing a central role in it." I stood up and embraced her.

She responded with a kiss.

"Except, what about property rights?" I asked, jokingly.

Anton laughed. "I never thought I would hear you bring up that questions, you can't be serious. I know you hate the very idea of property rights. We wouldn't be sitting here together if you didn't. From the moment on that one thinks about property, and property related rights and obligations, one doesn't think about love. Those

who get trapped into this spend their entire life fighting, and not just in the courts. Love has to be more than a commitment to enrich one another's existence. Commitments can be broken. Love has to be something greater, and it is. It is something sublime, as you say, that we are born with, that we have to learn to run with."

Here I had to laugh, too. "Of course you are right, Anton. Please, forgive me for bringing this up, but I had to hear your answer, not to test you, but to test the structure of unity that you are proposing."

Anton grinned and nodded. "I am talking about a celebration of a recognition of an aspect of our humanity, an aspect of the reality of our being, that exists far above all of that."

"You are right," I agreed. "What we mean to each other is not something that is here today, and gone tomorrow. It will remain for as long as we will live, I am certain of it, but I had to hear you say it. Now that you have said it, I feel like celebrating already, right now!"

"Celebrating is good," she replied, "let's start today, right now." She began to grin, suddenly. "Actually, did you know that we have been celebrating already, ever since we came here. Maybe this truly is our honeymoon. It could be, if we wanted it to be. A honeymoon in Siberia, doesn't this sound romantic?"

"Yes, why not? Lets keep on celebrating for the whole duration of the mission, and beyond, I suggested. "But let's devote the rest of the time we have here, to dancing."

Anton agreed that this was a wonderful idea. When we talked about dancing, Erica's story came to mind about the freedom to move on the Autobahn in Germany. The original design was that a person had the freedom to drive on the autobahn at any speed desired, except this required a responsible obedience to the underlying principle for safe conduct. When this requirement was not fulfilled, artificial limits needed to be imposed. Erica had hinted that a tremendous commitment to an underlying principle must be achieved in order to support a larger bond that is reflected in expanded freedoms, which can only exist in an atmosphere of expanded integrity and honor. "This freedom," Erica had said to me, "demands so much more in terms of love than is normally committed to towards one another."

Erica should have added that the lower level framework offers actually little security since woman are all too often raped, beaten, and exploited within the lower level marriage framework, and their families are torn apart in games of jealousy, even to the point that spouses are murdered. None of this is possible at the higher-level marriage union where the primitive aspects that divide and isolate people are no longer a factor, where the union can only be founded on a commitment to a higher principle.

Anton nodded and smiled.

As soon as the breakfast was paid for, we left. We got ourselves ready to go dancing.

"Just look at us," I continued our conversation back at our room, "it took us twelve years to prove to ourselves that the results do outweigh all the efforts that must be made to develop an understanding of the platform for expanding love. It seems as if those lean years never existed. Does this have something to do with sublimity?"

"In this case we have to upgrade the symbol CSB once again," said Anton in reply. "I promised you a still higher definition when we said good bye in Caracas, remember? So, here it is: The letter 'c' stands of 'children,' the letter 's' for the 'sublime,' and the letter 'b' for the 'betterment of humanity.'"

That motion, of course, was accepted with a kiss and a long lasting hug. That hug reflected once again the slow moving, long drawn out soft melody, of the great horn passage of Johannes Brahms' Symphony Number One that now received a new meaning as our wedding symphony.

As it was, time was running short if dancing was to be on the agenda. To save time, we doubled up in the bathroom. I didn't think much of it, but Anton remarked that she felt that were acting like any long married couple would, when pressed for time. The beauty of this was that it confirmed for her a reality that she was slowly beginning to grasp. We felt that we had been married for more than a dozen years already, since that day we first met at the tower in Moscow. For me, our being together seemed quite normal. I asked Anton if she felt the same way.

Anton just nodded and grinned, but then shook her head. "It seems more beautiful now," she added

I reasoned that she should have compared our larger marriage commitment to us having earned an advanced degree in science, except that it is something even bigger than this.

"Nicolai, certainly is excited about the possibilities that this larger marriage commitment opens up," Anton continued after a few moments of silence, getting herself ready in front of the mirror. "Nicolai said that the triple wedding idea must be modeled after the principle of the sun, for it to work. The outflow of the sun's light and warmth brings life to the world. We are the suns of brilliant white light, that contains within itself all the colors of the rainbow, locked into a single bond of white. Common marriages rarely reflect this model. That is why the larger marriage platform appears so illogical at first, because it reflects a model that is not understood, and therefore implemented."

Anton assured me, when she asked me to help button up her blouse, that she would be proud to have children with both of us, and that she meant both of us, if either of us wanted that. She said that the very idea may seem irrational, but it shouldn't be, because those children, whose ever they may be, would have a greater base of support in affection that other children may be blessed with.

I embraced her for this wonderful offer. I said that it doesn't seem irrational on the basis of that love that we share, and of our commitment to enrich one another. Why shouldn't we have children together as a reflection of this commitment? "In fact it seems natural and lawful, even ideal to do this," I added.

"Look at what happens to society in times of war," she said. "The opposite happens. The best men are sent to the front to fight, where they are killed, and the very best become the officers who lead the charge, who are the first to be killed. Afterwards, when the fighting stops, the unfit remain to propagate the nation."

She said that no farmer would operate on such an idiotic platform. She added that she understood the need for sending the best men to war, to assure the survival of the nation, and she understood that the genius in man is not so much a hereditary quality than the result of education and care.

"In spite of all this, it still seems rational for one to want to have children with the very best men the world has, whom I both love dearly" she said with a smile, "who, I am sure, will provide the very best care for those children, and the best possible guidance and education."

I agreed. "It seems illogical, really, that a family be limited to just a single father," I said. "The whole of society should care for one another as one large family bound to each other in love, don't you agree? Instead, people are in a competition to steal from one another."

"That's why Nicolai wants a big wedding," Anton said moments later. "It is needed for all the world to see the legitimacy of it."

As so often in my life in profound moments, I didn't know what to answer. I knew that everything she had said was correct, totally, and scientifically so, but why did it seem so unbelievably magical? This wasn't new, and yet it was.

Here, the NutCracker ballet came to mind again, especially Nicolai's description of it. I suddenly realized what Nicolai had been talking about. He had been taking about himself. The frozen ice bound dessert that he described was his own soul, the soul of a cold and barren scientist and security officer who had lived a lone existence of self-enforced exile from the world. That's probably why

it took years before we finally met. I remembered Steve telling me that Nicolai couldn't meet the demands that he felt we would place on him. But, somehow, in this ice-crusting wilderness he came upon a profusion of life and warmth, a human dimension that appeared too magical at first to be real. Except, this wasn't the real magic, the real humanity. This unfolded later, at a different level of consciousness which was no longer anchored in time and space, but which was real, nonetheless. Was I the prince in his nutcracker ballet, who had invited him there with Anton at my side, both of us standing at his side?

My dreams in Caracas, of the four rivers that demanded completeness, were they also his dreams? Indeed, we appeared to have shared more in this silent way than we probably ever had dared to talk about. We were bound by an undeniable unity of the soul. Should this unity be denied, or should it be given acknowledgement and expression? There was no question in my mind as to what the answer would have to be. I had answered Anton with a kiss in my dream.

I remained silent for a while, while we got our coats on, pondering over what she had said and how I had responded to my own enquiry. Then, suddenly, Heather came to mind. Anton, evidently thought about her, too.

"You should have been more loving to Heather," she broke the silence as if she could read my mind. "How many times did the two of you meet intimately in all those years after Ross came onto the scene, prior to Caracas? A dozen times in a dozen years?"

I nodded, and said that it was actually less than that.

"I wonder how you survived living behind closed doors like this?" asked Anton gently. "You shared a house on many occasions, but not your touch. You were in love, but didn't dare to be honest about it. You introduced Heather to me as a dear friend, while you had rejected her love for all those years. You kept yourself isolated by force, knowing full well that Sylvia would thereby be obliged to isolate herself, too. But I don't blame you. We are all like that. This is what Nicolai has committed himself to get away from. He is certainly aware of the hypocrisy we have committed in the name of honor. Believe me, I speak from experience. I was the champion of it. I had rejected your love, and now I wonder why I did. Some of the blame I had put on Nicolai who always loved me. He wanted me for himself as some kind of possession, and I wanted him to be proud of me. My problem was, I didn't want to be anyone's possession. Not his, not yours. That's why I couldn't move. Now tell me your excuse, about Heather."

I shook my head. "There are no excuses. Being in love with Heather was a force that made one infinitely more sensitive to the loveliness of this world. We have always been in love, but this love

had drifted away from the physical domain into something else. She is a catalyst for the sunshine. I love her for this, and that appeared to be quite enough for all those years when we were stuck in a rut towards one another and nothing was moving anymore.

I said to her that it appears that each one's love unfolds in a different form, and survives under the severest circumstances, and so fulfills its purpose to whatever degree we allow. "My love for Heather had drifted into this direction even before the impasse at the Sand Castle, so it continued afterwards the same way until a real foundation for it was built. It actually became stronger after Ross came unto the scene, even though we were moving apart physically. I'll never forget that afternoon when we went shopping for glass sculptures in Venice. Just seeing Heather there together with those sculptures, added something magical to the moment. There was a blending of something that belonged together, and all that was also linked to myself, and beyond myself to Ushi, Steve, Sylvia, Ross, and Tony. Her flowing dark hair, her radiant smile, her eyes, were all brought into focus by the magic of the crystal glass and its shape that transposed one and all into the larger frame in which we exist as one single undivided whole, made up of stars and rays of light that reflected our individuality. As for sexual intimacy, there were a precious few over the years; far too few."

Then I shook my head. "I suppose I should invite Heather once again, to come to Mexico with me for a two week tour. I should do it right when we get back, and this time not for business as in the past, but just for a private tour through the country? When I made this proposal once before, the foundation for it had not been fully established. She had turned me down," I said to Anton. "Maybe it will be different this time around. Heather loves Mexico. I think, this might still be the logical continuation of our love, a stepping stone for moving forward."

"Why wouldn't you do that?" Anton replied. "What would hinder you?"

"Nothing, really. Perhaps it never seemed really possible before, though she was like a dream come true in many other ways. We human beings have so many different wants and needs, and the infinite unfolding of love that manifests itself in so many ways, satisfies all of them when we become sensitive to the riches that we share with one another," I replied. "Life and love have so many dimensions."

I told Anton that I had noticed an enriching satisfaction when Tony and I were invited to a strip joint, way back during the beach project days, when Tony served with the Air Show team in Vancouver. Right there, in the strip joint, over a beer, a specific need was satisfied that made me feel glad we had come. It was a satisfaction born out of a different kind of love and generosity. In

the same manner, the love that you and I share here, between us, fulfills a different need again in a manner that nothing else in the world can satisfy. What we have here is unique and precious, there can be no duplicate of it, anywhere. And with Nicolai, it's all different again. Just being in the presence of this wonderful man makes me feel warm and secure. It is a real treat to be touched by his generosity and his love that encircles the whole world. We are so rich, Anton, to have found all of each other. In fact, every time we meet, the world becomes brighter. Isn't this a wonderful world in which to live?"

Anton had gone into the bedroom by then. Her voice sounded quieter now, and sweeter.

"Indeed it is," Anton agreed, speaking louder now, "our love has unfolded into something tremendously rich because of our commitment to it, and now the door has been opened still wider, and not just ours. In fact, I can see you becoming involved in a triple wedding with Heather and Ross, or all of us together, if this should become appropriate."

I shook my head. "Are you sure you are ready for that? You are moving too fast."

"No, I am moving too slowly. We have been moving too slowly for centuries, or haven't been moving at all. We are in a state of crisis in the world, because humanity has been moving too slowly for too long. This may be the real underlying reason why we are on this mission. Humanity has been moving too slow in embracing each other on a platform of enriching one another in love, on which we can build some form of universal unity. This hasn't happened. Now we must deal with the consequences, and those consequences appear grim, indeed. That's the price we now must pay for having moved too slowly, or not at all."

When I came to the bedroom Anton was almost fully dressed. I had to hurry to catch up.

"I know what you said is true, Anton," I confirmed. "Still, I feel there is something missing here that supports this universal unity, something without which universal unity will remain but a dream."

I knew what Anton had said made sense, but it didn't seem right. There was something we had both omitted. Her demand for unity, noble as it was, was still fundamentally a demand, and demands are not the outcome of love. Something was missing. Love can't be a demand. Something else was needed, something to resolve the paradox, but what is it?

"Name me one reason why the principle that enriched us should apply only to us and not universally," Anton answered, sitting on the bed, waiting for me. "What we discovered has the potential to enrich the world. It reflects a universal principle. Prin-

ciple is universal by its very nature, isn't it?"

I shook my head again. "I know this," I said. "Still, we are missing a vital point, Anton. Perhaps we don't fully understand yet what the nature of the principle is."

She shook her head as if she was about to give up.

I sat down beside her and put my arm around her. "Would we be sitting here if I had made any further advances towards you when we first met during the conference in Moscow?" I asked her. "Remember, I had messed things up so terribly between us that it was a miracle we got back together again."

She became quiet after that. "It wasn't a miracle, Pete. What healed our situation was your integrity. Your integrity caused you to stay away from me. You stayed away from me contrary to everything you must have felt deep inside. Pete, this was the greatest offer of love any man has ever extended to me. I felt honored by it, though I couldn't respond. Afterwards I kept this love so deep in my heart and soul that it remained with me for all those years that followed. It nourished me. It made me feel worthy. It made me feel like someone precious. You must realize that for my entire life men have been attracted to me. It can become a curse to grow up as an attractive woman, did you know that? Men have fought relentlessly to possess me, or to use me for whatever purpose they may have had in mind, subjecting me to their crude and often despicable little games. It started in own family when I was still a young child. While no one ever touched me, I could feel the tensions that were there. I came to hate men, because of that, I feared them, even when I wanted to love them. I allowed myself to be touched by you, only because I felt that someone who is so deeply committed to the welfare of humanity would have the same commitment on the individual level. I didn't realize that you were struggling yourself to sort things out in this uncharted territory. I valued your honesty, however, when you shared with me the agonies of your own struggles and your deep concerns about my feelings. This was the greatest expression of love you could have offered, or anyone else for that matter. This is what the flower had signified that I gave you at the airport before your departure. I was sure you understood that."

With all this deep reaching exploration going on I was slow in getting ready. On the other hand, why would we want to hurry. Were we not 'dancing,' already?

I told Anton that I had been so deeply in love with her in Moscow that I had just wanted to be with her, simply because of the way she was. I explained, that after I had messed things up so badly that we couldn't talk anymore, when I had to resort to writing letters, that I suddenly realized I had cherished her for nothing more than being herself. I explained that I became ashamed I had tried to

invade her life. I told her that all I could think of during those last days before the end of the conference, was, that I had to get things back to the way they were. "And that's the honest truth," I added. "I had realized by this painful process that I had no right to alter the platform that you had been happy on, even if my motive might have been to raise that platform higher, in order to make your life a bit richer."

Two small tears came to Anton's eyes as I spoke.

"I think I learned a lesson about sovereignty during this conference, because you cherished your sovereignty above everything else," I concluded.

"Oh my God, Pete, this must be what has been missing!" she responded with a burst of great excitement. "Sovereignty is a vital element. It is essential for establishing unity. Without it unity cannot be established, much less be maintained. Without sovereignty, unity becomes slavery, a trap. Without it, no one is free." Anton grinned now as she spoke. "That's what Nicolai once told me, too," she added. "He said that without a strong commitment to the sovereignty of nations, no nation in the world is free. Nations can only be united as a community of principle, which means a community of sovereign nation states bound together by a common commitment to enrich one another."

She smiled as she spoke. "This is what Nicolai is proposing for us; something that you may wish to propose to Heather, too. I can feel that you want to remain close to her forever, and she to you, but maybe you can't reach each other without a demonstrated commitment that guarantees each other's sovereignty no matter what. This has been the problem between Heather and you from the beginning, hasn't it? What had happened at the SandCastle was the inevitable result of not knowing what was needed as a foundation. Every person needs to feel cherished, but without a commitment to sovereignty, love hasn't the ring of a true metal. If you had focused on this principle right from the beginning, the SandCastle impasse might not have happened. That's what Nicolai had said to me some time ago when you told him about your experience on one of his visits."

"Isn't that what I told you, too?" I said to her. "Love doesn't reflect itself in the form of demands. Respecting another's sovereignty means, one doesn't impose. I have never imposed anything on Heather. I have never imposed anything on you either. I didn't need to, our love has been greater than the force of caution that urges self-isolation. And so it will always be."

Here something strange happened. I couldn't find my shoes. "Did I slip then off at the restaurant?" I asked. "Maybe I left them there."

I explained to Anton while searching for my shoes, that what

I had felt in regard to Heather was beautiful, too. It wasn't a complete isolation. The remaining barrier wasn't as dense. My love should have guaranteed her sovereignty. Then ether would have been no barrier. Still there was happiness in this union. I said to myself that one doesn't need to go through an open door seven times a day to know that the door is open. One doesn't need to do this in order feel the unity that spans all boundaries. "Once in a decade should be enough to test the validity of it," so I thought.

"But was it really enough?" she asked. "Why shouldn't you have cherished your love more intimately once or twice a week, instead of twice in a decade," she said and grinned. "Whatever is right, is right universally. Have you ever thought about sharing your most intimate thoughts and feelings with Heather in the kind of letter that you had written to me during the conference in Moscow, composed with the same deeply drawn honesty and affection, and concern? That's all a part of establishing intimate relationships, and the lack of it may be the reason why you never had the kind of intimate relationship that you could have had."

"Yes," I replied, "I was a fool, but it is so hard not to be a fool. Didn't the same shallow relationship develop between us, too? We had sent a few post cards to one another until we met again in Caracas. Nothing more than this happened. Those post cards were nice, but they didn't convey what could have been said."

Anton seemed to agree with what I had said.

My shoes were eventually found, with us both looking for them. She didn't even comment on my having been so stupid as to have placed them under the bed so that they were pushed far under it with the carpet at the bedside.

After this bit of hassle was over, I told her that my relationship with Heather had nevertheless been as full throughout the years as it had been when we first met, maybe not as full and deep as it could have been. "Sure, we didn't share a bed for years," I said to her with a smile, "but this does not mean that we didn't have an intimate kind of relationship. What we shared included a lot of what had mattered the most right from the start. This had never ceased. The most valuable of what we had cherished had continued to enrich our lives. In a somewhat remote sense, Anton, one could say that Heather and I had really been married to each other all along, without either of us wanting to acknowledge it. That's the beauty about being human and in love, Anton. We keep on loving one another no matter what. There exists really no standard against which one can measure life and love. Life unfolds in countless ways, with each aspect having the potential to be as rich as the other. It's really impossible for one to make any judgments at all. Just think of how dull the world would be if all life could be measured with the same meter, and all love in the world could only have one single expres-

sion? Thank God, life and love are individual in their infinite unfolding. This makes the human sphere infinite, too."

Anton grinned in response, or perhaps in response to me putting my tie on the wrong site out, which I hadn't noticed until after I had put my coat on.

Evidently I wasn't really there. My head was spinning. Talking about the grand offer that she had made, seemed to help. It was a way of responding and exploring, except it put me even more into a tizzy, and what was worse, I loved it. This promised to be like India all over again, only better. Indira never talked about children, but Anton did. Heather wouldn't dream, of it. Ushi perhaps, but she was too far out of my life, and had been for so long. "You are right, maybe I should invite heather for a vacation to Mexico," I broke our moment of silence.

"There no reason why your association with Heather could not change tomorrow into something still better," Anton suggested, as though she hadn't noticed me correcting my tie without taking the coat off. "Anything can change," she added. "As you said yourself, there are countless facets to infinity. Our life and love should be new and fresh every moment with new experiences of love. It must never stop to grow. It must never dim and go out. This should also reflect itself in enriching one another's existence. Maybe your love for Heather should be fresh every day, as is ours, as all love should be, as your love for Sylvia is probably, too. Shouldn't love be always fresh to have any meaning at all?"

We paid for the hotel room on the way out and asked at the desk about a place for dancing.

"Go two blocks to the right from traffic sign. You can't miss it," we here told.

On the way I remembered how Steve and Ushi had treated me right from the beginning. I told her what had happened on the first day we met.

"Ursula and Steve are beautiful people," she replied and smiled. "You were fortunate to have met them."

"This means, I have a new problem, now," I replied. "How do I explain to Heather why I have remained so stupid for a dozen years against the background of that rich experience in Leipzig that really started everything?"

"My advice is," Anton smiled back, "that you don't worry about this. Don't look back at what might have been, and lost opportunities. Look forward. It is far more important that you extend the invitation to her that opens up a whole new world, and that you do it with the kind of love that is rich with your commitment to respect her sovereignty. Then, don't be surprised if this ends with a triple wedding, styled after our own, which would become a lib-

eration from isolation for both Heather, you, and Ross. If this liberation had happened earlier, the three of you would have had a wonderful family by now with oodles of little bambinos in the wings."

It turned out that all this grand contemplation had a very tangible and immediate effect on us. We both felt evermore like dancing now. Thanks to the influence of tourism, the city was able to oblige us, even at ten in the morning. We both felt that dancing was a great way of celebrating the deeper commitment to each other that had just become cemented. This day had become a bright day for us, in this land of sunshine and brilliant white snow, and this far beyond the physical sense.

The people at the hotel were right, the place they told us about wasn't hard to find. It was a big indoor market that had a dance floor in the middle to attract customers to the shops, especially the tourists. And as we were told, there was continuous dancing.

Anton loved the fast Russian dances. I even got her to try them disco style where no rules applied. Oh, she was a fast learner in the art of dancing without rules, and quick when the music got wild. Indeed, there were times when one would swear that her feet never touched the floor.

All too soon, we had to leave again. The departure time for the flight to Bratsk was three PM.

It turned out that our memories of this bright day in Novosibirsk had to last us for quite some distance. But why shouldn't it. It was after all, our own, special, private honeymoon. And why should it be limited to just one day? I suggested to her that our celebration was just beginning.

Chapter 3 - Destination Oymyakon

The sky turned dark after our departure. The weather was even colder and foggy when we descended into Bratsk. Bratsk is a typical Siberian city. Its backbone is the country itself. It is also the site of Russia's second largest hydroelectric station. From Bratsk onward, Rostislav would be our official guide, one of Koldunov's men. He met us as we arrived, even though we arrived late at night. He was a man bound to protocol. Also, Rostislav was the strictest soul on social conduct, as strict as the land was cold.

Bratsk was his city. He was proud of it. He told us, that as a boy, he had worked on the construction of the great dam that feeds the generating plants. However, there was no time for him to give us a tour. As far as he was concerned, we were on a mission, a piece of inventory of the Russian State to be used as needed and precisely in the prescribed manner. No deviation was allowed. This attitude was left over from a time, which he called the golden days.

By noon the next day we flew further north in a twin engine Antonov-24 turbo-prop that had seen better days. Beneath us, the rolling hills, covered with forests, occasionally gave way to the open taiga. The flight that we were on was the milk run, the only air service that extended civilization into the great northern wasteland that had once been under intense development. Pioneering had been the watchword.

The airports along the way consisted mostly of snow covered fields and primitive wooden buildings covered with plump pillows of snow four feet thick. At most of the airports bush planes were standing by, mounted on skis, parked near the 'terminal.'

Occasionally one could see a river from the air, stone frozen, brilliantly white, with boats pulled out unto the banks until spring. But mostly there was nothing to see except the endless horizon of a white landscape that blended into the sky in the far distance. Vast spaces rolled by beneath us without the slightest sign of habitation. Nicolai's description of the Nutcracker Suite came to mind as a perfect description of what we saw.

We were on the "Northern Service," as they called this flight. The aircraft was an old twin engine tin goose that vibrated and rattled as loudly as she was cold inside. We were told before boarding that one of the heating systems for the cabin was defective, and that it would be repaired later, along the way. For the meantime,

they had handed each passenger a gigantic fur-lined coat in which Anton almost disappeared.

Beneath us, soon, lay nothing but snow, snow that blinded the eye, that reflected the sunlight that had come through the clouds again. In the sunlight the landscape became painted in deep patterns of blue whenever shadows were created by the low sun that barely stood above the horizon.

Rostislav had been a high-ranking officer in the Communist Party in earlier days. He was polite, but devoid of personal feelings. The personal life in Russia had been suppressed. It had ended with the revolution. The state had defined the people's feelings according to the needs of the state. The state was God, the party the mediator, the people mere followers; a perfect order for a population with a peasant mentality. He allowed no cuddling, not even when we were bundled up in our heavy fur coats crossing the icy plateau of northern Siberia, shivering in an inadequately heated plane. However, he wasn't sharp enough to catch our looks. Maybe looks hadn't been covered in the rulebook. In all other matters, however, he was forceful and precise.

No doubt he was proud of his position of authority, and a status which didn't really exist anymore, but was respected anyway. His spotless uniform was obviously a part of the brainwashing package that told him that he was a superior human being. The aristocrats had used this trick, bestowing on themselves fancy titles and fancy clothing, and the doctors and generals had played a similar game later on. He was still called Comrade General, while the decorations he carried on his uniform zeroed in on that old myth of a superior being that set him apart from the masses that called him Comrade. The old Byzantine convention could not be so easily shed, so it seemed. Adding Comrade to his official title hadn't changed anything. The myth of the superior human being was in control of his heart. It had been in control of him throughout the Soviet era and had simply remained so.

His uniform was so highly important to him that he denied himself the comfort of wearing the warm parka that everyone else wore. Judging by his decorations, he had worked his way up through the ranks. This success, evidently supported the myth.

"Have you ever noticed how arrogant an accomplished idealist can be?" I whispered to Anton when Rostislav strutted through the icy cold to the terminal building on one of the stops, in nothing but his uniform. He was a model 'prisoner' of the bureaucracy state; a perfect puppet. He always used the royal 'we' when he should have referred to himself and his own personal feelings. Still, he helped us whenever help was needed. The very fact that he was

with us, spoke of his love for his country. He just hadn't learned to extend this love also to the people that were the very essence of his country.

Fortunately for us all, he was mostly quiet. Whenever he did speak, I always got uncomfortable as though I was being addressed by a royal potentate in whose sight I was nothing. He was speaking from a great distance, not man to man. I tried to change that. I asked about his family, and about the impact of his job on his family. Still, the ice could not be thawed. Every aspect of our conversation was translated by him into the cold language of state relationships, ism to ism. He was like a machine, rather than a man. That's what scared me about him, I realized there were probably others like him in command centers of nuclear missile bases. He was a model servant bound to an ideal with blind loyalty. I also felt a great pity towards him.

When I had dared to ask about his private life, whether he was married and how many children he had, he replied that in the communist society these things had not been significant, nor were they now. He said that the Russian society is quite unlike the American society, where controlling people has become a national obsession, which he said was reflected in America's determination to control the whole world.

I couldn't believe my ears when I heard this answer. Still, to some degree he was right. Of course he couldn't see perfidious Albion standing behind him with the baton of a conductor, determining his every response, just as America responded to the same baton of the same conductor. I couldn't blame him for not realizing that.

I was going to say something to him in rebuttal, pointing to earlier genocide by his beloved Soviet Union that no longer existed, but this would have been rude.

Since it was obvious what kind of game Rostislav was playing, it was no task to actually please him. Still, playing such games didn't produce a very satisfying association. It would have been easier to have a satisfying association with a lifeless machine.

"Maybe I am overstating the case," I said to Anton when I spoke to her about him when he was not on the plane, at one of the many stops.

"I don't think so," was her reply. She was fully aware of his strange character. "People were once selected for this very characteristic," she said.

Since there was no meal service on board the aircraft, we stopped for dinner at Lensk. Lensk looked no different than any of the small places enroute where the plane sometimes stopped long enough for us to get off and get warmed up. We needed these

stops for more than one reason. Rostislav was one of them. In this pioneering land, people were still beautifully human, with a practical, down to earth touch that was reflected in their ability to get the plane's heating system repaired. The food was also down to earth, honest and simple. No junk food could be found, but hot steaming sausages, cabbage, potatoes, with milk to drink, or coffee, even beer. Everyone we met was friendly. One of the pilots approached us and asked if we would like to join the crew at their table. Anton said yes. She introduced us, and then chatted and joked with them. It was a time for laughter. Since my cover was that I was an American tourist, Anton did her best to translate everything that was being said, except not everything was translatable when it came to the jokes. The subtlety of humor is so easily lost in translation. Still, she did her best as far as I could tell.

An hour later, the bell rang. It was time to get rolling again. Nicely warmed up now, the belly satisfied, and the soul filled with laughter, we ventured back out into the icy world. There remained only a faint hue now on the horizon where the sun had set. In the dark, the frost crusted entrance of the terminal building had all the appearance of an ice tunnel leading out of an igloo, while we looked more like Eskimos than city dwellers. The only one who stood out as a misfit was Rostislav. His fancy uniform was woefully inadequate for the extreme cold. The night was clear. Minute fragments of ice crystals shimmered in the bitter cold, reflecting the light from the terminal building. It was -70°F. The rapidly falling temperature, after the sun had set, was freezing the last bit of moisture from the air, creating dazzling displays of ice fog. I felt rather sorry for Rostislav.

"He is a man of principle!" Anton whispered.

"Yes, but in a dangerous way," I whispered back. "His obedience will kill him some day if he doesn't watch out."

The girls that followed him out of the terminal building looked at him and started to giggle. Embarrassed, one of the pilots stopped them.

We didn't talk much after the engines started to roll again. The heating system, now repaired, brought a touch of warmth to the cabin. Comfortable and rested, engulfed by the noise of many vibrations and the unending drone of the turbo-props, we dozed off. I had strange dreams about this epic land of ice and snow, mixed with dreams about our days in Caracas. I saw the golden glow of the mountainsides that I had admired each evening at sunset.

At one evening in Caracas, our friend Augustin had invited us to the top of the IBM tower from where we had watched the air traffic going in and out of the city airport, which handled everything from small aircraft to sleek personal jets. They came in flying along the slopes of the valley, then turned quickly and landed. Others took

off. Afterwards, all seven of us had gone to 'Mr. Ribs' for dinner, a fast food place that served giant steaks, ribs and beer. To get there, required a lengthy excursion across an ocean of cars parked on sidewalks, and dodging motorcycles that used the sidewalks whenever possible.

I remembered fondly that most of the restaurants were open to the outside, and that the air had always been moist and wonderfully warm. Also, there had always been music and laughter wherever we went. The steaks at Mr. Ribs had been as big as the plate they came on, and with dessert and beer included, they barely cost the equivalent of what would have been four dollars. This price had even included entertainment, except there was no room for dancing provided. But then, who expects to go dancing at a fast food restaurant?

We arrived in the black of night in Yaktusk. I awoke when the turbo-props grew silent. According to a sign on the wall of the terminal building, we had landed in Yaktusk all right. The temperature had dropped to eighty-three below zero according to the official thermometer. Rostislav had a taxi waiting for us at the terminal. It was shaped more like an armored truck than a taxi. It was equipped with a flat, double-pane windshield that constantly froze up. The rest of the vehicle was crusted over. The ice must have been an inch thick. I had to laugh when the taxi driver made some remark that it was cold that night. He couldn't get his cargo hatch to open.

"...it's because of the wind," he added.

I didn't figure out what he meant by that. I was too amazed that there was someone in this remote wilderness that spoke English.

The hotel, for its part, tried to make up for the bitter cold. Behind triple pane windows and double storm doors, the radiators vibrated with steam. I couldn't remember ever being as hot in Caracas as I was that night in the hotel at Yaktusk, two floors above the permafrost in the coldest parts of all of Russia. I wondered if Anton managed all right, in her separate room.

The night was short, though. The wake-up call was arranged for seven. It consisted of someone knocking the door down. Breakfast wasn't at all like in Caracas. I looked out the window. The world was still dark, milky with fog surrounding the lanterns; the cars that drove by had their headlights on. A street-sweeping machine came with special equipment to claw up the ice. Only one type of breakfast was served, consisting of freshly baked bread with butter and preserves, and real coffee. No eggs.

The breakfast was barely over when we were hurried back into the taxi that returned us to the airport to board another plane. During the drive I noticed bricklayers at work with steaming mortar. Most people were walking to work, regardless of the cold, wrapped

in heavy coats, their heads hidden under large fur-lined hats that come all the way down over the ears and neck.

"Life goes on!" commented the taxi driver as I mentioned the bricklayers. It was the same driver who had picked us up the night before. "Life must go on," he added. "Yakutia is a rich land," he said proudly. "Our products are needed. We have immense deposits of iron ore and coal, and natural gas..."

"...and diamonds," said Anton in English.

"Ah, you know your country well," the driver grinned at her.

Moments later he pointed to a woman on the sidewalk selling frozen milk in open containers that had wooden sticks frozen in them to serve as handles. He honked three times and waved. The woman waved back to us.

"You didn't know about this one, I bet," he said to Anton. She agreed.

Rostislav didn't realize that this interesting tourist adventure was building upon what we had created before, that brought us still closer to one another, and this with nothing more than just looks and smiles and simple words, like: "See here! Look there!"

The Yaktusk airport was slightly larger than all the others we had seen enroute, but it was still just an open field of hard-packed snow. I soon realized the advantage in this. Our next plane was an old Antonov-12, mounted on skis, and outfitted for supply runs into remote areas.

"It can carry tons," Rostislav explained proudly.

For our trip, however, the plane was half-empty.

"How far are we from our destination?" I asked Rostislav before we were airborne again. By then we were worlds away from Bratsk, which itself was but an outpost. Yaktusk appeared to be the final point of civilization in this ice-crusting emptiness. Rostislav simply nodded and smiled after Antonovna had translated the question.

I was puzzled by his answer. Perhaps he didn't know. At that moment the engines drowned out what he might have said, and in no time at all we were airborne again. Soon the sky became clear.

"The fog over the city must be generated by people," Antonovna supposed.

"That's how you can spot a herd of reindeer," said one of the crew. "Their breath generates a cloud of fog around them."

We flew lower now than on the previous run. Occasionally we came upon ice-crusting forests that nestled between small mountains and frozen lakes. Occasionally, there was also an isolated herd of reindeer visible. Just like the crewman had said, a group of black spots could be seen that were enveloped in a thin fog that shone brilliantly in the reflection of the slowly rising sun over the timeless snow that covered everything.

"Did you realize we are over seven and a half thousand kilometers east of Moscow?" Antonovna asked excitedly, "From here we could go another four thousand kilometers to the east and still be in what used to be the Soviet Union. And all of this country is as beautiful as this. Don't you love this land?" she said and smiled.

We looked down through the small window of the plane; "It's so untouched, so rich, so wild, so beautiful," she said.

"Yes it is beautiful," I agreed. Still, the thought became stronger that we hadn't come here to look at the open taiga. I whispered something like this to Anton.

"Nicolai has arranged everything with the commander of the Reindeer Research Station," she whispered back. "The commander and a couple of scientists, know what we are coming for. The rest of the people know only our cover story. Even Rostislav knows nothing more. Nevertheless, he has been instructed to keep our destination and our visit a secret. He can be trusted with this."

Moments later Anton pointed to the ground again where she had spotted another herd of reindeer. "Did you know that there are two million reindeer in Siberia," she asked, while I had taken over the small window that we shared. "We have 80% of the world's reindeer population in Siberia. They are bred mostly on collective farms now, and on feed lots, which is far more efficient for raising them, than shepherding herds across an icy land. The wild herds that we see are not harvested anymore, they belong to the land."

Her face radiated with a great pride whenever she spoke about Siberia. This pride seemed totally justified. What I saw was a beautiful land, a land of blue shadows, white trees, and a deep blue sky. Except her pride in it was more beautiful than the land itself.

"It is a free land, for free people," she remarked. Watching Antonovna, I instinctively sensed that this was her land, something she owned as a citizen, something she identified with, that provided her an immense satisfaction.

It was altogether a lovely experience flying with Antonovna. We had our faces glued to the window. It was amazing the things she knew and noticed. She talked about trappers and prospectors who had pioneered this land, and about today's communities serving the Soviet era infrastructure projects. Everything was exciting to her, even the shape of the mountains, as well as the bright future that this land signified to her.

In her company, the two-and-a-half-hour flight seemed like a short jump. We landed on a frozen river or lake between three hills that formed a triangle. Landmarks are scarce in this endless wilderness of ice crusted trees, and apparently, so are good landing sites. The chosen site was perfect. We came in smooth, with a gentle approach and an almost unnoticeable landing. Everything in sight

was clean and brilliantly white, unmarred by the least sign of civilization. There weren't even footprints in the snow where the aircraft came to rest. By all accounts we had landed in the middle of nowhere. Nor did anyone get off. The pilots kept the engines idling. Still, the captain did say that this was the end of the line. There was the occasional chatter on the radio, except there was no one around. As far as I could see, there weren't even animal tracks in the area. It looked to me as though nothing had stirred in this part of the country for thousands of years.

Suddenly, as out of nowhere, a huge tracked vehicle appeared. It lumbered down over a snow bank. Antonovna gestured that we should step outside. One of the crew handed us snowshoes. The snow appeared far from being solid enough to walk on. The plane, on its wide skis, had carved deep furrows.

Uh, was it cold, though. The sun was bright, and quite warm behind the window of the heated aircraft, but what a deception this had been! The wind carried tiny ice crystals that stung like needles in the face. But who cared? I was in the Siberian wilderness that few in the world had ever set foot in. It was exciting.

"Welcome to Oymyakon International Airport," shouted the driver of the snow cat in English. He looked down on us from his huge snowmobile, something out of a science fiction movie, and grinned. "Come on up." Then a side door opened.

"Thank you!" I shouted back, waving at him.

"Your taxi is waiting," he replied.

We hobbled over the loose powder like some cowboys whose legs had grown to match the contour of a horse's back. As we reached the snow cat, the driver came out and greeted us. The plane's cargo doors opened just then. We turned back and helped the driver and one of the plane's crew transfer the cargo. Our cargo consisted of wooden crates, some cardboard boxes and several heavy canvass bundles. The plane even carried a sleigh to transport the stuff to the snow cat. The cat with its massive weight might have overburdened the ice of the river or the lake. I had remained at the edge of the 'runway.'

As we boarded the cat, we handed the snowshoes and parkas back to the aircrew and waved to the pilots. Rostislav must have taken this as his cue, or maybe he had to wait until we had handed our snowshoes back. That's when he appeared at the door of the aircraft once more as if he would dive headlong into the snow. But he announced that his assignment was done, he would fly back with the plane. We had arrived safely. His mission was completed. After this little speech, and an official farewell, the aircraft's door was shut again.

For the rest of the journey, we drove, apparently aimlessly,

across the taiga. There were no roads, trail markers, nor any landmarks that I could make out. We now had a close up view of the country we had seen for hours from the air. The snow cat drove for another three-quarters of an hour through empty spaces and sparse forest of towering snow sculptures that were leaning slightly with the wind, casting bright blue shadows on the snow. At one point, on top of a bare, wind swept hill the driver stopped. He asked us to come forward and pointed towards the slope of another hill. "Look, there is a rare sight for your photo album," he said and handed the binoculars to Anton and me.

What I saw was a rare sight indeed, which however, we soon found echoed in so many ways in everything that happened up there. The hurried rush of time was swallowed up by the vastness of the place. We saw a man on the opposite slope dragging a sleigh up the side of a hill.

"That's professor Humboldt," said the driver jokingly. "He works in an area where he can't afford to bring the dogs into, lest they spread diseases. Nor does he like to bring the snow cats in. You'll probably meet him tonight," said the driver while I got the camera set up.

The driver explained later, after we were on our way again, that he had made a considerable detour to show us this sight, in the hope that the professor would still be working there. "I hope that this will give you a feeling for the vastness of our land," he added.

Eventually we came upon what looked like a small village of aluminum-covered utility buildings and one lone single high-rise. These, altogether, made up the Reindeer Research Station.

Chapter 4 - Where Time Stands Still

The Major of the station received us personally with a warm greeting. She showed us to our hut and then invited us to join everyone at the community center where we would eat. She introduced us also to the two biologists who would be our guides for 'the expedition.'

"The expedition will start tomorrow, or the next day at the very latest, depending on the weather," the major explained.

To judge by her reaction, the mission appeared to be far more important to her than either of us had expected. She was obviously fully briefed. This, in turn, meant that she was a part of Nicolai's network of close friends and could be trusted.

There were a few speeches made before lunch. Lunch had been delayed for our arrival. Naturally, almost everyone was there for the occasion. Most of the people also stayed around for a chat after the lunch was over. Questions were asked about America, and about why we wanted to take such a long trek across the icebound wilderness of the far north, and why in the middle of the winter? We told the official story that Nicolai had already worked out, that Anton had drilled into me on the plane. The people of the station, in turn, told us about their work, their challenges, and about the weather. When the unofficial meeting was over, the major offered to familiarize us with the surrounding area by plane. She flew a twin-engine six-seater with a large cargo bay, the workhorse of the station, which evidently doubled as a short-run transport plane. "Sometimes I carry fodder for the reindeer," she explained.

Twenty minutes later she put the plane down on a groomed air strip that had apparently been created in the middle of nowhere. There was not a building to be seen, nor any vehicles. She asked us to button up our furs and come with her.

"Where to?" I asked.

"I want to show you something," she said, and reached for her field glasses then opened the plane's door with the engines still idling.

We walked to the end of the runway that looked like a packed down ski trail slightly blown over with drifting snow. We walked towards the orange glow on the horizon where the sun had set. The brightest stars were already visible in the darkening sky. When we came near to the end of the runway, she stopped. "I think

it is save here for us to talk," she said.

She told us that she was completely briefed about the problem through an underground movement that Nicolai was connected with.

So, my hunch was correct. She was aware that Nicolai needs an on-site inspection to be done to determine if the phenomenon that was observed was caused by a space based biological weapon, as he suspected, and if so, to find out what type of warfare agent it carried.

"Nicolai is convinced that something big is involved," said Anton. "He had never been blocked before from investigating anything that had to do with national security."

The major said that she was aware of all that. She spoke in a hushed voice that was barely louder than the sound of the wind.

Suddenly I realized with absolute clarity why everything needed to be done in total secrecy. "But if it is something that big, what are we doing here?" I asked. "Surely there are more qualified people..."

The major interrupted me before I could finish. "Hush!" she said. "Nicolai couldn't tell you about the importance of this mission," she said, "because he would likely be monitored around the clock if something really big was going on. We can't even talk about it in my airplane," she added with a whisper. "The plane may also be bugged. Someone of my new personnel may be a mole. I think we are save here in the open, unless my clothing is wired." She handed the binoculars to me and pointed out three reindeer at the edge of a nearby stand of woods.

"The real reason goes back almost a year," said Anton to both of us while we observed the reindeer feeding at the edge of the woods. "There are few people that know this," she said. "A huge terrorist plot had been planned and foiled around this time. The plan was to destroy three buildings with an enormous loss of life to set the country on fire emotionally. The targets were buildings that Moscow is synonymous with: The new Moscow Tower, the Ostakino Tower, and the main University building. Fortunately one of the key operatives had second thoughts about the atrocity and betrayed the operation while it was already in progress. The operatives had hijacked four airliners with some daring trickery, three small planes ones from Gorky and a big one from Leningrad. The four pilots were told over a secure emergency channel that the country is under attack. They were ordered to turn their responders off and to proceed to a designated air base. In the mean time substitute aircraft were in the air behind them to continue their course. The plan was that the hijacking would be revealed at this time to get the hysteria started. At the air base all the passengers were to be ordered onto the big plane that would be instantly outfitted with a

small mini-nuke. The plan was to blow the plane up at 45,000 feet in order to erase all traces of the passenger diversion. Three of the substitute aircraft had been outfitted with remote control flight systems in addition to the standard GPS systems. They would have been crashed into their designated target under remote guidance. Since everyone of the targets would likely have survived, as an aircraft is nothing more than glorified tin foil when impacting on heavy steel and concrete structures, remote controlled mini-nukes had been placed into the target structures that would have brought them down. The plan was foiled when one of controlling operatives 'accidentally' called the secret service instead of the media to announce the hijacking. Thus, the worst terrorist plot in Russia's history was prevented by one courageous person that dared to be a human being after all. That person, which was actually a woman, was given a new identity. Many of the others were secretly executed. Not surprisingly, some of the threads led to fairly high places, for which the entire operation was quickly covered up. By all accounts a large international organization stood behind the scheme. Nicolai found out that the mini-nukes were 'stolen' from America in the form of 'disassembled' units. The failed operation quickly became extremely hot for some people so that a heavy security blanket was cast over the entire affair. Even Nicolai didn't know anything about it until just a few months ago."

The major shook her head. "I had no idea that such a thing is even possible," she said.

"The trouble with imperial blots is, that they don't go away," I interjected. "I know how the imperials think in their high-minded madness. They laughed at me once and said arrogantly, 'if at first we don't succeed we try and try again.' The trend seems to be that every time they are foiled they increase the scope of the terror. The thing gets bigger. It's almost like using torture on people. When Hitler opened the floodgates of torture he ordered his SS apparatus, the police, and the commanders in the field, to spare no brutality and to show no mercy to the 'barbarians' as he called the Soviets. This order to spare no brutality had an effect on the entire theatre of war. It terrorized the German forces into compliance, and it terrorized the Russian Red Army into responding with unyielding resolve to win at all cost. It even shaped the response of the Allied Forces. The terror firebombing at the end of the war might not have been possible without this gradual takedown of the humanity of mankind that Hitler started with his demand for brutality. Some of that still lingers on behind the national security smokescreen. The terror that's hidden there often has the same crippling effect."

"That's what Nicolai is sensing," said Ushi. "He is convinced that something tremendously big is in the making, because it is protected by an intense blanket of secrecy. Many people seem to

suspect that something's really big is in the process of being set up, but nobody dares to even blink, much less poke their nose in it. This terror in the dark that nobody can see has turned the whole country into cowards. That's what we are facing."

"If we can, we'll stop that," I said bravely. "The secrecy has a weak flank. It hides from the terrorists the potential size of the opposition. It forces us to act with the same secrecy by which their plan may yet be foiled without them being away of us, and able to do anything to stop us."

The major nodded her agreement. "So here is the plan," she said and took the binoculars back after Anton had her turn. "Tomorrow, I will fly you both to our far-eastern satellite station, together with two of my most trustworthy scientists," she explained. "The station is approximately one and half day's journey from the impact site. The station is equipped with everything that you may need, including fuel, snow cats, food, laboratory equipment, and so forth. We will leave at eight, right after breakfast. Still, you mustn't hurry. You must never hurry. You are tourists, remember, with plenty of time on your hand."

She told us that after our return to the main base she would invite us to visit everyone at work. "We have an unhurried pace here. It may take some time getting used to it, especially when time is running against us. You will have to learn to fit in and become an actor that Shakespeare would love."

By the time we started to walk back to the airplane, the sky had become completely dark except for the thousands of stars that had become a bright profusion of lights. The great band of the Milky Way stretched clear and distinct across the deep black of the sky.

The plane's engines were still running. I could see the propellers turning when we came near, though I could hardly hear the whine of the engines over the sound of the wind and the squeaking sounds of our footsteps in the snow. The squeaking snow, we were told, is typical at extremely low temperatures.

I would have loved to ask what secret installation was connected to the lone runway in the middle of nowhere. No buildings could be seen nearby, or trails in the snow leading off into the distance. The question that would resolve my puzzle, however, didn't seem appropriate at the time. There was evidently far more going on in this frozen wilderness than reindeer research. I was certain of it. This also meant that the major had most likely violated every security protocol in the book of state secrecy by bringing us there. This meant we could trust her completely and save the puzzling questions for later.

Upon our return we visited the people of the station in their labs and offices as she had requested. The people, there, told us their own cover story, just as we told them ours. Later, we all had reindeer for supper, which, as I was told, was a rare treat. To me, it tasted not much different than deer meat, a bit stronger perhaps, nor did I really care. All my thoughts were focused now on the dangers we would soon face. I couldn't think of anything more dangerous to deal with than advanced types of biological warfare agents. I had already read too much about them. On the other hand there was the promise of the richly human interchange between Anton and me, and Nicolai's implied promise that we would be safe. This would have to carry us through for the next ten days, until the milk-run would come by and take us back to Yaktusk and home again.

When the reindeer feast was completed, that was evidently prepared in our honor, most people settled down by the fireplace where we joined them, as though we were genuinely interested in the northern world and its wild reindeer herds. Most of what we told them was built more on dreams from the past than real knowledge of the land. I had always hoped to visit the far north some day. We talked about what we wished to observe: how the wild herds lived, and how they were being monitored and protected. We said that we had brought lots of film, and....

In this manner, the telling of our cover story continued.

We traded glorious lies that night, they like us, for the sake of security, and we all did it with a smile. These trivia that we debated, of course, were as unimportant to the situation that we faced as debating whether the street cars of a city should be painted green, red, blue, or yellow. Only Anton was not unimportant to me. She was my link to reality; my love; my life; all that was important; and to the mission that we had to complete. For this, whether we liked it or not, the ugly game of lying to one another had to be played in the way it was designed to be played.

We remained at the community center and played our game that night for as long as it appeared to be expected, until most people had left. Only then, we excused ourselves and strolled off towards our own cabin, unhurried, as if this slow pace was the pace of the world.

In reality, this was our second honeymoon night, to celebrate the marriage that Anton had proposed in Novosibirsk. We both knew that's what it was. We knew that the ceremony that Nicolai had planned for later would only confirm once again what had already been established. It wouldn't create anything, but merely celebrate what already was. I saw no reason, therefore, why we shouldn't celebrate again and again, what we had discovered about ourselves. Indeed, it seemed more logical to engage in such celebrations often,

as a renewal of our discoveries, even on a day by day basis.

Our cabin wasn't fancy, but it was clean and warm, and the remainder of the night was all our own. For these moments together nothing else mattered, really. Maybe it was right for us to absorb some of the slow pace that had become customary at the station. The pace was reflected in our private feelings towards one another that had become secure, which seemed to be echoed in the unhurried atmosphere of this land. Nothing was hurried anymore, or needed to be hurried.

Or was the slower pace merely a reflection of our fears, as if the slower pace could somehow hold back the march of time? I put this thought out of my mind as if it were not true. But in a sense it was true. The reality of our situation kept reasserting itself. I realized, that from the next morning on we would be facing great dangers. None of us knew what kind of a biological holocaust we would be marching into. If a new super-weapon had been unleashed, no defenses may yet exist against it. Indeed, if this were a new super-weapon that we were determined to investigate, what security dangers would we face? People are being killed all over the world in order to protect much lesser secrets. What high profile operation was this that Nicolai couldn't even risk to talk about? If the area was monitored by space based surveillance, any detected intruders would surely be swiftly eliminated. We were both fully aware of this, even if we didn't talk about it.

We also knew that we had no choice but to risk facing that danger. Nicolai had to know what kind of doomsday weapon had been dispensed from space, if that's what it was. We could no longer rule out that a weapon had been created that could threaten the whole of humanity. The depopulation utopians were still free and active in the halls of power, pursuing their despicable projects for massively depopulating the earth. We were both fully aware that my own government was spending more than thirty billion a year on covert operations that were carried out above the law, and protected from the law under the cover of National Security. No one ever knew how much of that apparatus served the utopians' wild eyed schemes for forcing depopulation, deindustrialization, and religious and ethnic wars, destabilizing nations and continents. Fred was sure that not even the government knew exactly what was being cooked up behind the scene. AIDS was rumored to have come out of this mill, without any proof ever having been found, as one would expect in such a case. Maybe the fondi were indeed as unstoppable as the man from the fondi had arrogantly boasted years ago in Venice, to both Steve and me.

Nevertheless, Anton and I also understood that the tables could be turned. In as much as the fondi's prince desired to become

a deadly virus in order to decimate humanity, by his own words, we realized that we could become a virus likewise, of a different sort, a virus of truth to decimate the fondi. We had talked about these things when we were out in the open, in Novosibirsk, walking back to the airport from our lunch and dance. We certainly couldn't dare talk about any of that in our VIP hut that was most likely wired.

Of course, none of that was important, just then. Our wedding night was reserved for our being as close to one another as we could possibly be, and for as long as we could. We talked about our love instead, and the bright times of the past, the days of our unfolding love for one another in the warmth of the tropical sunshine.

"Do you remember Caracas?" I asked her. "Do you remember our first dinner with dancing there, the night when you wore your golden belt and suggested that we should turn the entire evening into a most intimate sexual experience, even right there and then, in the restaurant?"

I told her that our being together that evening became for me a more intense and intimate sexual experience than even the wonderful time we had in bed afterwards. I suggested to Anton that we had illustrated to ourselves a rarely recognized principle, namely that our intimacy, even our sexual intimacy, isn't exclusively a physical thing, but has a higher dimension.

"When I think back to our first meeting in Moscow," I said to her, "to the night when we met at the tower restaurant, that time there, too, had been filled with an intense sexual experience, though we never touched each other physically. This lovely sexual experience remained with me in my thoughts and in my heart, and so did you. It remained with me as a light throughout those dark years that followed. I can still remember it even now."

"What are you getting at?" Anton asked. "Are you suggesting that we raise the bar still higher to explore that non-physical sphere more fully? Are you saying that we could have the same intense sexual experience with one another without the slightest physical contact?"

I answered with a nod. "That's what I am saying, Anton. Why should the sharing of our love and our joy have to wait for special conditions to exist. After all, our lateral loving unfolds out of the riches of our own heart, our own self-love, out of our being in love with the humanity that we all share, even that part of our humanity that defines us as sexual beings. Love isn't a physical thing, is it? Even our sexuality isn't really a physical thing. This means we can be miles apart in a desert and still be intimately in love with each other in a very real sexual dimension. We have already proven that principle to ourselves. Why then should it not be possible to embrace this higher level sexual intimacy more fully,

right here in Siberia, on our mission? Our entire journey to this place has been an intense sexual experience. It was wonderful. Don't you agree?"

Anton's face lit up. "What you're suggesting has never been done before," said Anton, "but that is no reason why it shouldn't be possible. At this level we would never become separated again, not by distance, not even by death." Anton laughed, "We become immortal by it."

"As we already are," I added. "If we live in each other's heart and mind, as we cherish one another as a part of the humanity that we all embody; that we enrich with our lives; then not even death can part us," I agreed.

"Then, we can feel no grief in parting, either, as there won't be any loss," said Anton.

I nodded and said in reply, "We can do even more than that, Anton. Whatever we did during our dinner/dance nights in Caracas with our eyes, with a touch, and with our imagination, we should also be able to do entirely with our mind."

"You know, Pete, only you could come up with an idea like that. I just hope that you know this time what you are saying," said Anton and began to grin.

I shrugged my shoulders. "How can I know that, Anton? We just stepped into a newly discovered country. God only knows what we will yet find?"

"Then we may have to modify the meaning of the CSB symbol many more times," she suggested.

"To mean what, Anton?"

"Well for starters, we can let it stand for coffee, sex, and biscuits once again, but without a physical component of it."

"And without the component of time," I added.

"Yes, let's forget the existence of time, tonight, for starters" she replied, "We can concentrate on the other dimensions tomorrow."

Indeed, as we spend the night together, time did seem to stand still while the magical world between us unfolded in the manner of the nutcracker suite and the magic of its music.

Chapter 5 - Aquarius in Ice

With the shrill of the alarm clock our honeymoon ended. The harsh reality came back into our life. The weather was still perfect for our mission. Stars filled the sky. This meant that everything could proceed as planned, and it did. Breakfast was already available at the center, when we arrived. The prevailing atmosphere, of course, was strictly routine.

Breakfast was radically different that morning, than it had been in Caracas on the morning after our first night together. Here, nobody knew us in terms of our intimate background. Nobody knew how much closer we had come to each other, although this seemed hardly possible.

People greeted us briefly. They greeted us as though we were part of the center, and then went on to do whatever they normally did. The center was a hall with tables big enough to seat eight people; four on each side. As it was, only three people joined us for breakfast. The Major showed up late. Perhaps she always did. She had a cup of coffee for breakfast, nothing more, and talked about how the reindeer herds were benefited by the station, especially during extreme weather conditions. Then, we were off on our way to the airfield, still chatting as we went. Our scientific team had been busy loading the plane up. They were almost done when we came to the hanger. There were a few other delays, too. The engines needed to be warmed up. Eventually, though, we were on our way.

We flew low this morning. The Major explained that we had to fly as low as we could dare, in order to avoid any possible radar contact. Most of the time we flew just a few meters above the tree tops on a heading towards the faint orange hue on the horizon that signaled the beginning of the new day.

It took us two hours to reach our drop-off point near the satellite station. Flying at near tree top level was slower of course, being more precarious, especially at first while we were still flying in the dark. The airstrip at the satellite station was a frozen lake in the middle of a valley surrounded by forest. By the time we arrived the sun had just come up above the horizon. Everything unfolded as smoothly for us as if we were on a perfect holiday. We knew, of

course, that appearances were deceptive. Evidently, it was for this reason that we didn't land in front of the station, but behind a nearby hill to the rear of the station. We landed on a narrow clearing between stands of trees. Everything sparkled in this pristine landscape. The trees projected long shadows across the snow as we came in. The Major said that she hoped that the shadows would obscure our landing tracks sufficiently, so that they wouldn't be seen from space by the surveillance satellites.

By the time the plane came to a stop a new world suddenly opened up, a world of haste driven by the realization that we were in a race against time if our suspicion of a bio-weapon proved to be true. The plane was quickly unloaded. Everything was dumped onto the ground to get the Major airborne again as fast as possible, while we grabbed what we could and hurried for cover.

We had changed into white coveralls in the plane, and put all of our belongings into white bags that would make us undetectable by the satellite spy system that the Major was sure would be monitoring the area. Once our cargo was secured and covered with snow, we were off on our trek that turned out to be an hour's march between trees, across snowdrifts, over a tree covered hill, and for the final mile along a shallow ravine that led to the station. For obvious reasons the Major had chosen not to land any closer. For the same reason we also had to cover our tracks in a manner that would make them look like animal tracks when seen from space.

The satellite station was a giant A-frame building erected on a steel frame basement that served both as a garage and as a storage area. The single communal bedroom of the station was located on the top floor. Below it were the labs and the kitchen. It would have been a grandiose place had we been on a ski holiday.

"Get yourselves ready for two nights of camping out," said the woman of our science team who called herself Leslie. She had told us earlier that she preferred to have an American name. It was customary for someone in her position to hide her real name. She showed us the book that contained the supply lists.

"This is what you need for two days," she said, "and that's where you'll find it." She showed us the map in the book and hurried off to do her own chores. The map covered the entire house. Every part of it was indexed and referred to in the attached lists. "You have 20 minutes," said Leslie, "we have to get the project finished while the weather holds."

The station was equipped with two snow cats, both painted brilliantly white. They weren't just industrial versions of the Skidoo. They were bigger, faster, powered by a large diesel engine. Nor were they riding on tracks. They were riding on eight balloon tires that

allowed the giant vehicle to travel faster and ride more smoothly over the terrain. Our first excursion was to collect the cargo we had hidden, which we took back to the A-frame. After that, we were off with both vehicles, Anton in one, I in the other.

The irony was that we had to drive slowly in spite of our haste, so as not to raise too much of a cloud of snow behind us. Only the tire tracks remained a problem. We hoped that they would be shallow enough not to be noticed. If only we had some raking equipment to drag behind us.

In this cautious fashion it took us almost an hour to get to our first planned stop, which the science team called "Check Point One."

The two people of our science team ventured outside in plastic coveralls and changed a filter paper that had been mounted inside the engine's air-intake funnel. The filter was immediately examined in an electron microscope that was built into the vehicles. Afterwards the sample was sealed into a bottle that was labeled with the location and time. Then we were off again.

The same ritual was observed every hour. Later, snow samples were collected as well, and twigs from the surrounding trees, whenever there were any. The team worked with plastic gloves and plastic hoods, and breathed through filtered masks. The scene looked more and more like an episode unfolding from a science fiction movie.

The plastic gloves and masks were discarded after each use, into a container mounted outside the air-cleansing chamber of the snow cats. The team also took samples of dead animals, whenever we came upon any.

We stopped for dinner briefly, that night, right after it became dark again. Up to this point nothing unusual had been detected. The bio team stated that this didn't mean anything since wind dispersal could have cleared away whatever there might have been, or the snow had covered whatever there was.

Driving after dinner in the dark, without headlights, was riskier. We also ran the risk that the heat of the engine exhaust could be detected from space. None of us knew for certain what the limits were of the space watch system. We only knew that we had to take all possible precautions.

We had stopped ten times during this first part of the run. Around midnight, we slept for a few hours in our seats that could be made to lean back in a low angle. After that, long before dawn, the journey continued.

By all appearances, it soon seemed as if the biological danger was becoming more acute, and also the ever-present danger that we might be detected under the clear, cloudless, sunlit sky. The

biological danger, though, appeared to be more acute. Our science and biology experts were no longer breathing just through thick filters mounted on their masks, as they had done earlier, but were breathing oxygen enriched air from pressurized tanks, like scuba divers. Later on, they also doubled up on their disposable, plastic body suits. They told us that they had detected some traces of a rare virus that they couldn't identify, that could be natural, but most likely wasn't. They also remained in the decontamination chamber twice as long as before.

At noon, almost exactly at twelve o'clock, Leslie, the expedition leader, announced that we had arrived. My companion, who drove the snow-cat that I had been assigned to, a tall man who called himself Ivan, explained that we had arrived at our destination according to the Global Positioning System. He rechecked his information sheet, and the GPS readout once more, to verify the location.. "Yes, we are on the mark," he said.

Except there was nothing to see. We took the binoculars and scanned the area. There was nothing there to be found. Ivan suggested that we should decide on a search pattern. Leslie suggested holding off. We had a long trek behind us, we were late. We had been hindered by fallen trees. Also, we hadn't dared to cross a large lake, that would have heightened our exposure to being detected. That, too, had cost us time. We had argued about it, before the decision was made to take the long and slow route. Leslie had suggested that we should dash across the lake at high speed and take our chances, rather than taking the chance that we would come too late in the day for executing a proper search to find our object. She was reluctant, therefore, to authorize wasting a lot more of our precious time on driving search patterns. "Let's see if we can figure this one out in a scientific manner," she said. "Let's look for clues. Let our capacity to reason, guide us," she added.

Nobody suggested that we had come for nothing, but driving a search pattern wasn't an acceptable option, I fully agreed. Ivan looked around. He turned to me, "according to the GPS we are within fifty meters, but I don't recognize anything out of the ordinary."

Leslie suggested that we go outside and look close up for clues.

I told Ivan that I was under the impression that the Global Positioning System is designed to be accurate within five meters, not fifty. "On the other hand, how accurate was the infrared sighting?" I asked "We might be looking for something that is miles away," I suggested.

"No, the infrared triangulators are accurate. They are designed to track incoming warheads. They have to be accurate," Ivan replied. "Everything tells us that whatever it is, that we are looking

for, must be here, right where we are."

"I suppose we are looking for something like an impact crater?" I said.

"Or what used to be an impact crater," said Leslie over the short distance intercom that allowed us to talk to each other whenever we were close enough. The name Leslie appeared to be a short form short for something, but who knows what. She appeared not to be a native from this part of the world.

The impact crater was eventually found. It hadn't been recognized initially, because Ivan's cat had stopped right on top of it. I had noticed a faint line from our rear window, a minute ledge stood out that was more circular than straight. Luckily, the crater rim hadn't been fully covered over by the drifting snow, or the wind had blown some of the new snow away to reveal the edge of the crater.

Within half an hour the object was located and dug out for closer inspection. It appeared to be totally intact. Ivan and Leslie claimed it first. They quickly wiped several samples off the interior walls, sealed the samples into a bottle, and placed the object itself into a plastic bag, sealed with a double zip lock. Only then did they allow us to touch it.

Leslie, who gave the object to Anton, said that we must be extremely careful not to damage the plastic bag. We both examined the object. The thing was astonishingly small, slightly larger in size than a large pineapple. It was made of a ceramic material with an insulated ceramic container inside. It had a single opening that was once covered with a slanted hinged lid that was still attached. The lid had been sprung open by what looked like an air pressure activated release mechanism. The entire object was made of ceramic parts, except for one single steel spring. Apart from this, there wasn't a single piece of metal on it.

The lid was shaped in such a manner that once it was sprung open near ground level, the pod would likely begin to spin extremely rapidly and violently, by which its contents would be injected into the atmosphere, possibly low enough to get it into the ground hugging air turbulence that would then spread it across a city.

The pod was cleverly designed. The moment I saw it, the words "Perfidious Albion," came to my lips. Those words had been on my mind from the moment that Anton had revealed the nature of our mission, even while we danced at the tower restaurant in Moscow. The meaning of those words had overshadowed our journey. They also explained why we had to be cautious.

Our experience in Venice came to mind, and the bragging of the fondi's chief, that there was nothing that anybody could do to

stop them from attaining their objective, especially not a bunch of amateurs like us. Perfidious Albion was alive and kicking, indeed. Fortunately those words hadn't come between Antonovna and me. She understood the meaning of them.

Perfidious meant treacherous, deceitful, like in playing one against the other. I had explained the meaning of the words to Anton, a long time ago, of the very words that the man of the fondi had used to identify his empire with. Anton understood what those words meant in real terms. She had studied the history of her nation and knew from this background how the British Empire's game had been played against it for the last two centuries. Only the specific term, Albion, was unfamiliar to her. I had explained to her that it was an old name for the British Isles, a native name perhaps.

"This might have been a test pod of a chemical or biological weapons test," Anton observed when she gave the pod to me, "or some kind of drop pod released from a high flying aircraft."

I was puzzled. "Does Nicolai know anything about such weapons tests?" I asked Antonovna.

"If he did, we wouldn't be here," she replied.

"Or maybe he isn't supposed to know," I suggested. "Maybe these are secret tests?"

She shook her head and took me aside from the others. "That was not made in Russia," she said. She showed me why. There was a tiny inscription on the side of it. She showed it to me. It wasn't easy to see through the goggles of the plastic bag suit that we wore. "This was made by Cobor Glassworks of Canada," she said. "Also, this container wasn't dropped from an aircraft. It came from space." She showed me the burn marks from the reentry fire. "This makes the thing altogether very scary," she added, "and it puts it right into the camp of the royals who alone have the needed resources to do this kind of thing."

We showed the evidence to our biological experts who suddenly became very silent. They looked at each other. After a minute or two, Leslie took the pod back to take another sample.

"This may be the end of the world," said Leslie ten minutes later after another hastily prepared sample was examined in one of vehicle's electron microscope.

"There is no doubt about this," Leslie said to Anton and me. "We have found traces of a virus culture that neither of us has ever seen before." She spoke with obvious anguish in her voice. "The device carried an uniquely engineered virus, unlike anything that has been developed in our labs, or in the western labs that we know about. Nothing like this exists in nature, not precisely anyway. The virus has apparently been engineered from a mutated strain of the common cold virus. It may have been subjected to modifications

that utilize the flu virus as a DNA carrier that might turn the common flu into an incurable illness. No one in our labs has ever dared to mess around with flu based viruses. They are far too infectious to be useful as a biological weapon."

"But not as a depopulation weapon," I added.

"Depopulation?" Leslie repeated and shook her head.

Ten minutes later we dumped the pod back into the icy grave where we took it from and covered it over exactly as we had found it. "In a month the viruses will be dead," suggested Leslie. Hopefully, no one else will come here looking for it. We even raked the surface and threw some fresh power on it from a nearby drift.

With this part of the mission completed we hurried back to the satellite station, hoping now for bad weather as we drove off into the unfolding night.

To our relief, it began to snow heavily that night, just as we had wished. Oh, how we welcomed the fresh snow. The entire site would be covered over by morning, including our tracks as if we had never been there. Unfortunately, we made deeper tracks in the soft new snow the closer we came to the station. Well, this couldn't be helped.

We didn't get back to the station until late the next evening. It turned out to be rather difficult to drive in bad weather, especially driving after dark without our headlights on, with only the GPS to guide us.

After that we slept.

Anton and I woke late the next morning. Surprisingly, life had become normal again. Things proceeded once more in the same unhurried manner in which everything normally unfolded in this ice-covered world in the north. After all, we had plenty of time now. We had four days left before the Major would fetch us back. From this point on, Anton and I had nothing to do but to make the meals for our scientists and watch them work in the biology lab. The lab was as fully equipped as the size of the building allowed it to be.

"I suppose this wasn't built just for reindeer research," I commented to Anton when we saw the station's lab that morning.

The others laughed, "Is this what you had believed? You didn't really believe in all honesty that the entire complex is just a reindeer research station. That's our cover. Outsiders are supposed to think that, and we don't disappoint them. We play the role. In reality this place is part of a network of emergency response centers in case there is a biological attack against the northern cruise missile bases. The bases are dug deep into the mountains so that they

can't be knocked out with a nuclear attack. Still, they could be vulnerable to biological weapons."

Leslie told us that every single one of the cruise missile installations had been fully staffed at one time, until the funding stopped. Even the four satellite emergency response stations had been manned around the clock. She pointed to her partner and said that they were the only two people left at the center who are fully trained to deal with any kind of a biological emergency. "Our mission once included supplying or rescuing people from the underground operations centers and depots in this area, should they become trapped during a biological attack.

Leslie explained to me that their task covered everything that was even remotely related to a biological attack, even to the point of creating emergency treatments when required. "The irony is, that most of us were educated in the U.S.A.," she said to me. "We received advanced degrees in biological engineering in your country, before we completed our training in Novosibirsk."

Leslie and her partner assured us, that before we would leave, they would be able to tell us precisely how deadly the virus is and what can be done to counteract it, to stop it in its tracks. "We might even be able to tell you which lab in the U.S., or elsewhere, created the virus." She said that they feared that our virus might have been created by one of their previous comrades who were thrown onto the scrap heap when the funding ran out, who were then eagerly scooped up by the labs in the West.

Leslie's optimism didn't last long, as it turned out. The more they learned about the new virus the more they became convinced that the virus could not be stopped by any means. She told us that the slightest infection would likely become fatal, "but it won't harm animals," Leslie added, "the virus is keyed to the human biology."

"This makes it a doomsday weapon more potent than nuclear bombs." said Anton. She had tears in her eyes as she said this.

"If it is true that the weapon does not infect animals, then the weapon is not designed as a warfare agent," I interrupted Anton. "This is something worse. This is the weapon that has long been talked about, that certain organizations wanted to create in order to liberate the planet of its 'human pest' as they liked to say. One of the organizations has a mythological name, like Gaia Liberation, something like that. This is their weapon. They wanted something that is ideally suited to destroy human populations on the global scale without affecting the environment of the earth and its wildlife."

Leslie shook her head in disbelief, "who would want to do such a thing?"

"The royals have been talking about this for years," Anton replied, "and humanity has not objected even once, not even to the

principle involved. They got a lot of people to agree that the world is dangerously overpopulated. That's what nuclear weapons might have been created for in such large quantities as we now have all over the world. The royals' goal is to get rid of three to five billion people, depending on who one talks to. The global oligarchy wants this so that their power won't be challenged again by human progress and cultural development, at least not for a long time."

"That's what I think this virus is all about," I supported Anton. "Somehow, we have to stop it."

"Stop it!" said Leslie. "Humanity hasn't been able to stop the common cold. This is far more infectious. Nobody in the entire world has antibodies against this in their blood stream. Creating a vaccine is virtually impossible, too."

Ivan prepared a large photo image of the electron scans and asked me to memorize it. "Study it, copy it, copy it a thousand times until you are sure you can recreate this picture at any time it becomes necessary to do so. You have two days to accomplish this." He assigned both Anton and me to the task. He spent hours with us, showing us what the critical details were. Still the questions wouldn't go away that we couldn't answer. "Why would anyone do this? What was it for? Why, why, why...? We could only speculate."

These questions, that deep down in our gut feeling, we already knew the answers for, kept coming up again and again. They were more and more tied to Perfidious Albion, the longer we stewed over them.

I told Ivan and Leslie about my infamous meeting with Perfidious Albion. "They are out to destroy your country, maybe four fifth of humanity."

Leslie almost cried. All of their years of training, contemplating the worst scenarios of chemical or biological attacks had left them still totally unprepared for this. They were devastated by it.

With this nagging pain in our hearts we returned to the reindeer center when the Major picked us up at the same place on the arranged day and time. What I had feared, but had hoped I would never have to face, was on the horizon as a tangible reality. We had touched its container. This reality could not be changed now. The thing was real. The only option we had left, was to halt its progression. Unfortunately, this had to wait. We were locked into this place for another three days until the supply plane would take us back.

Leslie approached us the next morning, saying that she would like to show us something.

We got into one of the four snow cats of the base. Three hours later we entered through a large steel door that was set into the side of a mountain. "We used to have full staffing here all the

time," Leslie confided to us. "Now, there are only two people present." One of the two came to the door. He recognized Leslie and let us in. He showed us the "great hall" that was still stocked with eighty long-range cruise missiles stored in elevator racks. Everyone was several times larger than the one that had been launched by the Russian fishing boat outside of our bay. The cruise missiles, here, were totally different. They were miniature aircraft powered by a small jet engine. The shape of the craft was like a beautiful bird from an ancient saga. Its lines were smooth, gently curved like a piece of sculpture. Every part was delicately rounded off and smoothed to perfection, according to the principle of stealth aircraft design.

The person in charge showed us one of the launch ports. We climbed out onto a ledge with him that was carved into the rock just outside of the portal. "There!" he said, as he pointed to a nearby mountain, "in this direction lies the North Pole. Canada lies behind that," he said, "and south of it lies the U.S.A.. Our birds fly extremely low, which enables them to penetrate most defenses. They are designed as first strike weapons that can reach their target undetected and with GPS accuracy. They are designed to fly at night and in the worst kind of weather. The strategic plan that they were created for, was to eradicate the opposition in a surprise attack with such a force that they would not be able to retaliate, apart from being shocked into a state of awe and perceived impotence to the point that they will not even think about fighting back, assuming that all is lost."

I simply shook my head when I heard this.

"This is all irrelevant now," said Leslie to us. "That is why the place isn't staffed anymore."

On the trip back to the base, Leslie explained that there are 30 such sites spread throughout a wide area, each with completely self-contained underground living quarters. The only thing they need from the outside, is air for the people to breathe. The rest is stored on site. "Of course, we only maintain a staff of caretakers now. The activation systems have been shut down for security reasons. The whole thing has been put into mothballs."

"That's all irrelevant," Anton repeated.

Leslie nodded, "that is why I showed it to you. I wanted you to understand that humanity has stood at the midnight hour many times before, and we've come through it. We mustn't loose hope now."

Anton nodded. "Still, let us also hope that these mothballed monsters will never be made active again, should we be lucky enough to survive the present crisis." She spoke with a sense of agony in her voice.

The same evening the Major invited Antonovna and me for a snowmobile ride. The snowstorm had passed. She wanted to hear our side of the story. We merely confirmed what she already knew. "But it makes no sense to drop it here," she said.

"It was either dropped in error," I suggested, "or it did overshoot its target."

"This was no miscalculation," said Antonovna. "I believe it was intended to be a test case to verify that animals are not affected by the virus. Some depopulationists insist that animals must not be killed when the human population becomes eradicated."

The Major was shocked by what Anton said, but she couldn't deny the logic of it. "But what can you do about it?" she asked.

Again, we had to explain the phrase "Perfidious Albion" and the policy commitment of the empire to break up Russia.

"To use such a weapon doesn't make sense," the Major replied, "not for this purpose."

I suggested that the weapon might not have been created by the empire itself. I suggested that Perfidious Albion might have merely created the required conditions that enabled someone else to do the dirty work for them. "That's their usual style for doing things. That's the way it has been for two-hundred years."

"This was probably a private venture," said Anton to the Major. "It may have been created by one of the fondi, or anyone else with enough power and influence to keep such a weapon under wraps until the killing begins."

"We were not supposed to have any kind of advance warning," said the Major. "This much is clear."

Anton agreed.

We talked about this problem for a long time. The Major regretted that there was no way to communicate our findings to Nicolai since all communications were routinely monitored. Nor was there a faster way for us to get back than the way we had come.

"What about using the telephone to phone a friend in Germany?" asked Anton.

"Don't even think of it," the Major replied. "Nobody must know that you are here, or were here. This must never happen. You must wait until you can talk to Nicolai in person."

"But the whole world is in danger," Anton protested.

"That's precisely why we can't risk Nicolai being jailed," the Major impressed upon her.

Chapter 6 - Reindeer Research

An unexpected kind of sharing developed from our honest and open dialog with the Major of the reindeer station. It had cleared the air between us. Perhaps the potential tragedy that we all faced created a common bond. Or perhaps, it was our concern for humanity that were backed up by deeds of great daring and caring on her part and ours that brought us closer together. We had forged a kind of a bond that unfolds on a spiritual level.

The Major suddenly was more intimately concerned with our struggles and feelings, and less concerned with the official protocol. She even came to lunch in civilian clothing the next day. That was for the first time ever, so I was told. She wore an attractive dress in which she looked so much softer and gentler than she had before in her uniform. The hard authority image that her uniform had projected, that she had hidden behind for so long, had been put aside.

"What we said to her must have changed her life," I said to Antonovna after we had eaten lunch and the Major was called away.

"No, not yet," answered Anton, "but soon."

"What do you mean, Anton?" I asked, surprised.

"She is interested in you. Give her a chance to be with you."

"What are you saying, Anton?" I asked, perplexed. "Are you telling me that I should have an affair with another woman right in the middle of our honeymoon?"

"Why not, Peter? That's what sets our marriage celebration apart from any other. Traditional marriages begin when the marriage bond is forged by the priest. The honeymoon that follows, then becomes an exploration of the new situation of which there is much to explore. There is no room to introduce another factor. No one would think of it. But with us, everything is turned upside down, Peter. No priest has forged our bond. We forged it strand by strand, made up of filaments of love as we began to discover ourselves in Helen's lateral lattice of the Principle of Universal Love. We didn't create our marriage. We discovered it. We discovered that our marriage has always existed as an aspect of the universal marriage of humanity. It took us more than a dozen yours to get to this point

in discovering ourselves, but we got there. The process of discovery, however, began long ago at the tower restaurant in Moscow, nine hundred feet up in the sky. I think we can celebrate now all those wonderful discoveries that we have made about ourselves ever since, and about our place in the universe of universal love. Our honeymoon is a celebration of that, is it not, and of the Principle of Universal Love? Our honeymoon would be a poor celebration of the Principle of Universal Love if we didn't consciously celebrate the universality of love. The way I see it, I think the Major is deeply longing to be included in our celebration of the universality of love. The sad part is that there aren't more people like the Major around. Luckily for us, there is one. So, accept this outflowing love, Peter, and embrace it, and celebrate it for what it is as an element of the nature of our being as children of Universal Love."

I smiled in response. No I must have grinned from ear to ear, because so did Anton. "Isn't this all a part of being human?" she asked. "As human beings we can give ourselves the freedom to do anything that is supported by an underlying principle, such as the principle of universal love that envelops us all, which we simply cannot get away from. The love that we have in our heart, that unfolds from the love of ourselves as human beings, is the love that embraces one another and all. Thus it must be universal, and our Honeymoon must reflect precisely what it celebrates. The love that flows between us is a part of that universality of love that we celebrate. If you envelop the Major in that love, you celebrate our love at the same time. Actually, love is not something can really exist by itself. Without us both consciously celebrating the universality of love, we would be heading for an impasse and our love would be doomed to die. We cannot afford to let this happen, can we?. Of course you know what this means, Peter. It means that we have to start a whole new Honeymoon tradition, which overturns every tradition that has been established until now. Nor should this type of celebration ever end. Our honeymoon should be extended through the rest of our lives, and its celebration should be rich with countless threads of universal love, as many as there are grains of sand on the seashores of the world. Since this has to be so, why not start the extended celebration right here, today, and with the Mayor whose heart is already yearning for such an extended celebration?"

I agreed. I hugged her. I told her that she is courageous and beautiful. "No one before you ever said that there must never be a Honeymoon of just two people, that instead it must be sparkling with evermore love. That's like starting a revolution. That's being courageous.

"I am not courageous," she added. "It is by the riches of the universal flow of love that unfolds in your heart, that you find

me beautiful. By the same riches you also find others beautiful. Shouldn't both be developed together? One develops and enriches the other, If you were to shut others out from this flow, you would shut the whole thing down, and who would be benefited by that? So, let's keep the flow alive and as rich and as open as possible. If your love defines me as being beautiful, and other's likewise, then you find reflected in them the same sublime elements that you cherish about me. In this way, I will be forever alive in your heart, and beautiful, and real, no matter if we are world's apart living on the opposite sides of the globe where our homes are located. By the flow of this universal embrace we can never ever be parted, since it unfolds from an acknowledged embrace of the humanity that we all share. By loving universally, this embrace can never die even if continents and oceans lay between us as they soon will."

I hugged Anton for this beautiful thought, and the light that it brought to the moment.

"If we allow love be what it really is, universal, without end, I will always be with you, and you with me, in the very image of that love," said Anton. "Therefore, there will never be a vow between us like, 'till death do us part.' This notion of death and parting no longer applies to anyone. It is no longer possible. We can never be apart for as long as we are enveloped in love, for there is but one love, which is that which is anchored in the human Soul. This makes it universal. I suspect that this principle will never change, Peter, no matter what realms we may enter into in our individual celebration of our marriage bond."

Anton looked around, as if to assure her that she would not be overheard. "With all of this considered," she almost whispered, "why shouldn't you fall in love with the Major and allow yourself to embrace each other as time permits? To judge by the way she has been looking at you all morning, I would be much surprised if this didn't result into something beautiful for both of you, and maybe for us all."

"What, have I been that blind?" I asked in reply, and grinned.

She nodded. "So, go to her. Look her up. She shouldn't be hard to find. Ask her about the reindeer research. Ask her where the herds hold out in the winter, and so forth. Obviously, we need to bring reindeer pictures back with us. Here is your chance. And keep your eyes open to her. I think she is a beautiful person when you get to know her."

"I suppose I may begin by asking her name," I said to Anton, and excused myself with a grin.

The Major was reluctant to reveal her name. She explained that they had been discouraged years ago to use their real name at the base. So, rather than lying to people by using a fake name, she

said that she decided to simply call herself by her title: The Major.

"My real name is Nina Tuleyev," she volunteered when I stopped prodding. "My real home is far away from here, in a small fishing village on the Black Sea. It's called Tuzly." She told me that when they were children, their parents would take them sometimes to the big delta of the Danube River to watch the birds before their migration north. She explained that for some strange reason, this image of the birds migrating north for the summer got her interested in coming north, herself. "That's probably why I became a veterinarian, and why I signed up later with the Reindeer Research Center. All this happened before the center became what it is now."

"Are there any herds left nearby?" I asked.

"Fourteen," she said. "Would you like to see one?"

I nodded.

"Then you better come with me. Do you still remember the size of your flight suite?"

I told her that I didn't. Strangely, she didn't seem to mind going through the motion once more to find me one that fits.

"Our rickety old workhorse is often used to supply food to the herds in extreme weather," she explained when we were finally in the air. As it was, it didn't take long to find a few herds and to give me an opportunity to use up some film. According to the script, this was my cover story. With Nina as my guide, it was easy to fulfill this mission. Since I came for pictures, she gave me a gold mine to take my fill. Since I also came to explore her love, and she obviously felt it, she provided the gold herself in countless little ways and gestures, and looks, and smiles.

She also pointed out that she was hoping to find a large herd crossing a frozen lake that we could land on, in order to watch the reindeer close up. Half an hour later, after checking a few lakes she found one. The lake was a large one, the largest we had come to. It was completely covered with a blanket of snow, brilliantly white. As she eased the airplane down in front of the herd, the loose powder swirled around, stirred up during the landing. It completely obscured the herd that was coming towards us, which soon surrounded us. The animals appeared like ghosts out of the stirred up ice fog. Nina said that it would be safe to get out of the aircraft when they came, since the plane and its people are not unfamiliar to them. Of course she was right. None of the animals seemed in anyway disturbed by the encounter. They stopped briefly and snooped as they came by, just in case there was food forthcoming. When they realized that there was none they wandered off.

It was frightening at first to be so surrounded, but also terribly exciting to stand in this sea of fine animals that came and looked us over and then departed. I embraced Nina out of sheer

excitement and gratitude, and with a kiss that said more than just thank you. It all happened spontaneously and naturally.

Her eyes sparkled as if they were reflecting the same excitement that I felt, which evidently was the case. She didn't seem to mind the kiss. She didn't scold me or pull away, but smiled instead in a way I had not seen her smile before.

We remained on the ice for a long while after the animals had come through. We talked and even embraced each other at one point, while we watched the herd slowly disappear in the distance under a cloud of ice fog of their own creating. When there was nothing left of them to see we strolled back to the plane.

Bording the plane wasn't hard. Nina had kept the cargo hatch open. Some snow had blown inside. While helping each other to get back into the plane and clear the snow out, Nina happily managed to return the kiss. After this, of course, it was my turn again. She explained that the engine needed a three-minute warm-up prior to takeoff. Oh, this time that was well utilized by both of us.

We checked on our herd once more after being airborne again, and then searched for others. Miraculously, we made it back to the base in time for supper. The flight suits were quickly shed, and our normal clothes put back on. When the bell rang we were back at our places, but things were not the same as they had been before. Anton was right, she is a beautiful person to be with.

After supper, Nina showed me the station's telescope. It didn't seem to matter that neither of us knew anything about the stars, but the stars were beautiful nevertheless. The sky was so brilliant with them. We just stood there and held each other, and looked up into this great ocean of lights.

As we left, we saw Antonovna come in with another person from the base. She winked at me and walked on.

Nina's private apartment was the largest, according to her rank. It was located on the top floor of the high-rise. One could see across the forest from her place, to a distant lake or meadow. In the moonlight, the landscape became a world of ice castles, ruled by the evil mouse king from the Nutcracker Suite. She even had the music for it. Also, we could see the whole magical world right from her bed. She felt soft, warm, and wonderful. She said, there had never been such a visitor in her castle, as I. She had longed for it, but when she opened her eyes, there was never anyone there. "Now it is different, and it seems so like a dream," she added.

Mostly, we let the music talk for us, we just danced our role to the full, since we knew the outcome already. So it was that the dancing made the evening rich, and this, once again, was unhurried.

This time, the magic of the dance was not controlled by the master magician, Drosselmeyer, as dictated by the score. It was love. It was love as it was represented in the design of the ballet. This love was a rich outflow from our hearts that went far beyond what even the best theatrical metaphor could ever symbolize. Our love was greater than that. We were both sure about its reality.

After the music of the ballet ended the melodies lingered on like an echo from the soul. It was a spiritual journey we were on, with beautiful spiritual melodies about ice castles and love with which we allowed ourselves to drift off to sleep.

The alarm clock rang at six AM. Nina got out of bed to turn the heat up and then came back. "We have half an hour," she said, and cuddled up to me. "Why is it that I feel so at ease with you?" she said. "Being with you seems to be the most natural thing in the world. Can you explain that?"

"You feel that way, because that's the way it is. We are not strangers to one another. We are part of the same humanity, with the same feelings, hopes, joys, and aspirations. Why should we not meet each other on this level as two human beings in love with the humanity that we share?"

"You make it sound so simple," said Nina.

"Oh, it is, but it took a lot of work to realize that."

"Realize what?"

"...that we are more closely connected than we think. You are a scientist, right? As a scientist you work on a platform that has been built up by countless discoveries made by the great pioneers of our past, some of which have lived thousands of years ago. The way you tackle a problem may reflect to some degree how Plato would have approached the problem of making a discovery, or Kepler, or Gauss, or Leibnitz. They are a part of our humanity by which we have become enriched. We have learned from them the process of making discoveries. In a sense, they are still alive in us. Their ideas have become a part of us as we discover their achievements and the process of making discoveries; by which they enrich us further; by which they help us to develop ourselves; by which they help us to shape our world. No person lives truly alone in this larger sphere of our humanity. However, we have become pretty good in isolating ourselves from it, and so we feel alone for that reason. Unfortunately, it is rather hard to overcome the resulting self-isolation and connect up with one another within the sphere of the humanity that we all share. Of course, when we finally manage to do that, the result is wonderful, we feel good about it. Our lives feel richer again."

According to all evidence, Nina agreed with me. She didn't say so in so many words, but in many other ways her agreement

came to light just the same. Actually, there were no further words exchanged until the alarm clock rang a second time.

Breakfast was served at the cafeteria. It was never necessary to prepare breakfast for us, nor was it possible. Anton was already there when we arrived. "Did you know that the permafrost north of Yakutia goes down to five-hundred-seventy meters?" asked Anton when we joined her at her table.

"That's thirteen-hundred feet!" I translated. "No, I didn't know that," I added.

"I found that out last night," she told us. She told us that in the early days a merchant had started digging a well for water. He had worked on this well for over ten years. At this point the well was a hundred-twenty meters deep and there was still no water. That's when he gave up. Little did he know that this was merely a quarter of the depth of the permafrost cover.

"It's probably all the same to the reindeer that inhabit the land," I said, "who have been here long before we came onto the scene. Those are beautiful animals, Anton. We flew out to a lake, yesterday, and landed right in front of their path. We were right in the middle of them as they came by."

"I thought something like this would happen," Anton grinned. "I was told last night that many of the herds would not exist, if it weren't for the people of the station, here." Anton was looking at Nina, smiling. "I was told that it was really the people's compassion for the wild herds that gave this station the official cover-up designation as a reindeer research outpost."

"Actually, it had been a research station earlier on," said Nina. "Eventually, it became a sort of research station once again. The scientists here believe that the original reindeer population was less than a fifth of what the wild population is today. I think we had something to do with that."

"The reindeer have a lot of good people looking after them," I replied.

"And some bad ones too," Anton added quietly, looking at Nina. "You have a mole in your organization."

Nina just smiled and nodded. Anton told her his name, but Nina just laughed. "The boy is too obvious to be mole. He is too naive to be a serious threat," she said. "Still, though he may only be one of Koldunov's men, we have to be careful."

Chapter 7 - In Denial of the Truth

There were tears in our eyes when the time came the next morning to say good-bye. I kissed Nina, shook hands with many others, hugged Ivan and Leslie, and then we climbed back into the giant snow cat that returned us to 'Oymyakon International Airport' as the driver called our riverbed landing strip in the middle of nowhere.

The same old Antonov-12 was waiting there in the bright sunshine with its engines slowly idling as if the world had stood still for ten days. It had brought more cargo. More wooden boxes with tools, more fuel, more canvass bags, and forty containers of milk. I was beginning to love this old workhorse of the north that came by this place every five days, provided there was a need for it, which there always was. This time it came to take Anton and me back to Yaktusk.

From Yaktusk on we were on our own again. We said farewell to the last people of the North who had become familiar to us. The pilots and the crew of the plane wished us a safe journey home. Rostislav was nowhere to be seen, which was a relief.

Our flight south, the next day, strangely, became one of the most pleasant flights that I can remember. And this wasn't so because of any exceptional service on the plane. Actually, there was no service at all. Below us lay this wonderful country that we had developed a special feeling for, a feeling of respect, supported by memories of wonderful moments and also a great fear. I treasured the spirit of the people we had found there, which matched the immensity of the place and its harshness, its timelessness, and its boundless riches.

Huddled together as before, Anton and I shared the window beside us. Looking down, we could see the great white band of the Lena River that snaked its way across the taiga. We started a game. We looked for villages along the riverbank, and tried to name them according to the map in the plane. Some were easily spotted, and others were extremely well concealed beneath the great white carpet that seemed to cover the whole world. But we spotted them nonetheless. There were Pokrovsk, Bestyakh, Sinsk, Kytul Dyura, Isit, Markha, Uritskoye, Khorintsy, all perfect tongue twisters for an English speaking person.

"Didn't I tell you that Nina is a beautiful person?" Anton interrupted our game and grinned, and then embraced me with a kiss

following. "Did you ever imagine that your wife would say something like that," she added, "and be joyous that you had a wonderful affair with another woman?"

I shook my head and said, "No, never! But it's happening, now."

"This would never be possible on any lower level than the universal level, where we touch one another laterally," said Anton.

I just shook my head in disbelief. "With you, the impossible seems to be not only possible, but oh, so naturally, too."

"That's exciting, isn't it?" Anton added. "And nothing is faked. I am your wife, and I really feel glad for you that you were able to have that day with Nina; that you were able to experience that union. As a matter of fact, it feels wonderful to be able to say that. I just wonder how many women in the world are able to say such a thing and really mean it," she added.

"Not many," I suggested.

"Would Sylvia be able to say that?"

"Sylvia, definitely. She said something like that in Caracas, didn't she? Heather, possibly. Heather bought us the concert tickets, remember? Steve and Ushi, absolutely. Need I go on, Anton?"

"Then they all ought to join us; all of them together. Maybe that should be the criterion," Anton joked and began to smile. "Do you think that will be possible some day?"

"It's possible now," I replied. "Maybe it is even possible on a universal scale."

"You mean that every bride should be joyous if her husband finds a new lover?" said Anton.

"An additional lover, not a new lover, or another lover," I corrected her. "That singularity is destructive. Love needs to expand, and become universal. How else can love expand unless one takes it out of the realm of singularities, and one puts it in its native realm, the universal realm? Indeed, how else can one embrace the principle of universal love that makes us richer?"

"Maybe then they should all join us?" Anton suggested. "Would that be stretching the envelop a bit too far?"

"Of course not," I replied. "The principle is still the same, isn't it?"

Anton paused and grinned. "Someday, this will happen, mark my word."

"It's already a reality," and hugged her again. "It's the reality of everyone's being. Aren't we all human beings of a common humanity? To any other concept than this, one would have to say: What has this got to do with anything?"

Our first major stop on the way to Bratsk was at Oleminsk. Great drifts had formed behind the terminal building. The traditional

pillow of snow had been blown off from one side of the roof, all four feet of it. It was a windy place now. The plane vibrated with the sudden gusts. Later, for supper, we stopped at Lensk again. The fare was still the same: steaming hot cabbage, sausages and potatoes. Again we were invited to join the crew. They were the same people, with the same funny jokes and laughter; only there was live music this time. And as before, we flew in the dark after supper, arriving in Bratsk way past midnight.

It appeared that we both focused intentionally on the beauty of the land, searching for things beautiful to focus on as if this could make the terrifying situation that was unfolding in the real world less real, less immediate, less threatening. Maybe we were unconsciously holding on to life and beauty, and the beauty of a humanity that was fast slipping away from us like water slips through one's fingers.

At Bratsk, however, our grand adventure was over. We boarded one of the big jets the next morning and suffered all the familiar boredom of flying high above the weather, with in-flight meal service and cheap drinks. God knows what wonderful times people have passed over in this hurried race against the clock. Indeed, we were in a race against the clock, ourselves. The sense of urgency drifted more and more into the foreground now. Now we had only ourselves left and our love with which to comfort one another. We held on to each other.

Novosibirsk was in full sunshine again. This time we didn't feel like celebrating. A single kiss was all that we could manage in memory of that bright day we had shared before. We switched planes in Novosibirsk onto the direct flight to Moscow. Nicolai had someone waiting for us who brought us to one of the lesser-known hotels. The moment we got to our room, Nicolai was at the door. He looked great. He embraced us, congratulated both of us. He listened patiently to our story, asked questions. We told him about the inscriptions and the burn marks. We even drew pictures of what we had seen. We also recreated the electron scan of the virus for Nicolai. He was both extremely pleased and extremely worried. He examined our drawings for about fifteen minutes and then set fire to them in the hotel's wood burning stove and stirred up the ashes. "I am trained to have a photographic memory," he explained. "In a society that is built on fear, secrecy is essential. In this society everyone is isolated from everyone else, out of fear." Then he started to laugh.

"What's so funny?" Anton inquired.

He laughed again. "The funny thing is," he said, "that our society is totally disinterested in the reality that is right in front of its face, even if this threatens its existence, but it wants to know every little detail of what it can't see. This means that Erica was

right about her flower garden story. There is no one in Russia who has the ability, or the inclination, to look at the whole thing and to look at the world as whole. Most people, with their narrowed down minds focus on something that doesn't even exist. They focus on a mirage. And our state security people, who are trained to have narrow minds, will poke at you until you show them what they want to see, even if it is a lie, or they will drill it out of you regardless whether or not they kill you in the process. Their minds are so narrow that they can't even evaluate what they are after, in comparison to a person's life. Just imagine what life would be like if we gave ourselves the chance to be an honest society!"

"Never mind this. Tell us what you think about the virus," Anton interrupted his little speech.

"That's what I have been doing," he said gently, with a worried expression. "This virus is deadly from what you are saying. It appears to be a part of a weapon designed for a full-scale attack on humanity. If we lived in an honest society we would have known already for two weeks what we know now. We have lost two weeks. This is a huge amount of time. This loss may make the difference between life and death for millions."

"Do you agree that this came from space?" Anton asked.

He nodded. "The question is, how are we going to tell the world?"

"No, the question is, what are we going to tell the world," said Anton. "This was obviously just one capsule of many, launched from space, a kind of test device."

"One of a thousand, more likely. The rest are still up there. We don't know many," Nicolai replied, "but there will be many of them. We have only one option; the mothership, this death star, or whatever it is, has to be destroyed in space by an atomic blast that vaporizes everything. What's up there can't be allowed to enter the atmosphere. But that won't be easy. We don't even know where it is. Whoever created this thing, created the perfect weapon. This thing is more deadly than a nuclear bomb, but it doesn't have the same stigma attached than a nuclear weapon. If those canisters were all nuclear bombs, the whole world would go berserk and do something about it. But this is only a biological weapon with an unproven effectiveness, and no concrete prove is available for its existence. So, who would even believe us? And on top of all that, we aren't allowed to talk about it under orders from the highest levels."

"Could this have been one of those infamous weapons tests that we are conducting all the time, like for a new weapon that we, or someone else, may be developing, that simply drifted off course?" said Anton.

Nicolai shook his head. "This thing was right on target and fulfilled its mission," Nicolai replied. "It was a test, alright, as far as

I can tell. As you suspected, the object of the test was to determine whether the poison would be harmless to animals. Your problem is that you can't face up to what you already know. You are in a state of denial. You have seen the thing, and you don't believe what you saw, because you don't want it to be true. This type of denial has crippled humanity. You know what you saw is true. You saw it yourself. Let's stop pretending. Let's look the thing in its face, fearlessly, and determine where it's at. Then, it can be shot down."

"There was someone new at the base, two weeks before us," said Anton to Nicolai, "who had been overly concerned with monitoring the health of the animals. This means, the thing is known to people in high circles. They had known about it for two weeks, and evidently they had known the danger it presents. The question is, why is it kept a secret?"

"No, the question is, who can we trust to tell this to, to get the problem resolved before it is too late?" said Nicolai. "Let's not waste our time with speculating why. Let's get the problem resolved. Knowing why doesn't help us to do that. Most likely this was created by one of the many organizations of the Earth Liberation crowd. The earth has cancer, and that cancer is man, right? How many times did you hear that? There are people out there who have spent huge sums for decades to develop this kind of biological agent. It looks like one of them succeeded. If people throw enough money at it for a long enough period, someone is bound to succeed sooner or later. It looks like they also succeeded in paying a few people off to keep this thing under wraps. The only question is who?"

"Maybe we should just blow it out into the open and see what happens?" I said to Nicolai.

"...and endanger the life of everyone?" Nicolai interrupted and shook his head.

"Our best approach may be to do this ourselves," I said to Nicolai. "Let's analyze all known orbital paths and see if we can match one of them to the site and the time when the object was tracked during entry from space by you monitoring stations. Except we will need help with this?"

"My theory is that this wasn't launched by the royals," said Anton. "The royals maybe responsible in some way, but it wasn't carried out by them. Contrary to all their hype about the environment and wildlife, they don't give a damn about animals. But there are a lot of smaller organizations in the depopulation arena that actually do care about animals. They may have created the weapon that the royals probably paid for in a round about way. This means that the opposition in high places may be paper-thin. If we push hard enough we may break through to someone who can help."

"And risk ending up in jail over it?" I replied. "Then no one

will carry the torch until it is too late. We have to do this ourselves until we have the orbit established. Then we have evidence."

"In this case," Nicolai interrupted me, "is there anyone we can we trust in America to help us?"

Nicolai talked with Anton at length, exploring several options, getting their own U.S. contacts involved.

I interrupted them with an urgent idea. "Don't trust anyone right now," I said. "This is too sensitive. Let's do the calculations ourselves. We can do it. Most likely, no one else can do this any faster. If you add red tape, it may take twice as long. All that we need is a limited access to the global launch databases. These databases appear to exist. We need to bring Steve back from China for this. Steve and Ross are well qualified to do the scientific work. It shouldn't be too difficult for them to lock down the satellite's position and orbital patterns."

Nicolai agreed that this might work. He knew how to contact Steve.

I telephoned Ross from a pay phone in order to get the database access arranged as soon as possible, through Fred. "Ross has the necessary clearances to access this kind of information," I said to Nicolai.

"Then it's up to Ross and Sylvia to acquire the necessary hardware," commented Nicolai. "Will they be able to do this? The funding needs to come from private resources. I don't have anything that I can contribute, overtly."

"Sylvia will handle this," I assured him. "Sylvia has made a lot of contacts over the years in the business world, she will do what needs to be done."

I assured Nicolai that before I would be back at our beach, the work would most likely be already progress. "Your task," I said to Nicolai, "begins at the very moment we know which satellite is involved. You have to find a way to get it shot down. So, you better start working on that tonight."

"What do you think I have been doing for the last two weeks?" Nicolai replied, and grinned. "You are asking for miracles."

"Hey, Nicolai, nothing less will do," I countered him, "unless you have a better idea. It has to be done by you. The U.S. doesn't have any anti-satellite capability. The only thing we can do is send the Space Shuttle up and attach a mine to the death star. I can also guarantee that hell will freeze over before congress provides the funding for such a project. Whoever did this, will surely have links into the US Congress, too. This means that any funding request will be stalled there until the disaster becomes irreversible. Russia or China are the only nations who can help at this stage."

"Or France, or Japan," Anton added.

"It will have to be Russia," Nicolai agreed.

Once the business at hand was completed and all the arrangements were made that needed to be made, Nicolai pointed out that there was a twenty-four hour restaurant nearby. He invited us for breakfast. At the restaurant, his vision of our wedding was discussed and plans drawn up. For lunch, he had a 'secret' place reserved; for something special. Sleeping had to wait. We had no time for that. "That's what airplanes are for," I remarked jokingly.

We remained together for the rest of the day. We discussed wedding dates, and who to invite to the great event. After breakfast Nicolai showed me his favorite spots of Moscow, and after lunch, the best place for dancing. He had even obtained permission for us to see the great hall of the Kremlin, briefly before dinner. Normally, I would have felt that this was a waste of time. Now, just being together as we were, was time well spent.

The time to say fare well did come all too soon, as it always does, but not until late in the evening. The flight that I had been booked on, the only one that was available on short notice, was the Aeroflot red eye special to Montreal. Anton and Nicolai came right to the gate with me. We waved to each other briefly as I entered the security area. Then I saw them no more.

It had been a hurried good-bye, though long enough for a few kisses and hugs. Little did I realize, as I entered the security area alone, that I would never see their faces again, be warmed by their smile, feel Anton's kiss and Nicolai's gentle embrace. All that I realized at that moment was the urgency of our situation that was in the back of all of our thoughts - the overriding urgency of the hour, that we had to find a way to get this thing destroyed before it would be unleashed to destroy us all.

Chapter 8 - Aquarius Rising

Steve put down the pawn that he took from me and smiled. We still had the most wonderful feeling for each other. Nothing was forced. Nothing was insecure. Nothing was unprotected. Still, this was different than the unhurried way of life I had found in Siberia. Nothing was ever casual about my association with Steve. Our unity rested in the respect we shared for the dignity of mankind. That's why he had come to Mexico, apart from the fact that our own lives now hung in the balance. We had to succeed! A saying from the early space program era came to mind: "Failure is not an option!" That's what brought Steve all the way from China.

The situation we were in would not give us a second chance. If we were to fail at this task before us, there would likely be no one left alive soon to pick up the pieces and tray again.

Ten minutes later Steve took my castle. Actually we shouldn't have been playing at all. Nor were we really. We were sitting on the sea wall playing a game of chess, but our thoughts were elsewhere. Nor was it for the game that we were there. The game was our calling card for the trapper who had seen "a rock fall out of the sky," as he had put it. We needed to get the impact time from him and verify the exact location and the object's authenticity. After that, we had to get back to Ross' place as fast as possible. It was impossible to tell how much time we had left.

Luckily, our friend the trapper, was on time. Fred had a helicopter standing by. It didn't take us long to cover the short distance to the wildlife refuge. The object was located with binoculars from the air, or rather, the fragments of it were located. The fragments matched what Anton and I had seen in Siberia. We weren't working in biologically sealed suits, this time. This meant we had to remain airborne and keep our distance. The exact spot was located from a distance by triangulation.

We paid the trapper the agreed to amount. The exact time had already been established and verified by other witnesses. All we needed to do now, was to get the chopper back across the border into the USA, and to the air base where Tony kept a transport waiting that took us back to the East Coast. With Tony's help we were home before midnight and infinitely richer with the vital data that we urgently required. We lacked nothing more from this point

on, to determine the killer satellite's identity. By the time we arrived, Ross was already working on the problem with the data that we had relayed to him right from Mexico, right from the helicopter.

"With two confirmed drop sites, complete with timing, we have the thing nailed down before dawn tomorrow," said Steve to Ross.

Actually, it wasn't until midnight that a clear identity could be established, with a method for forecasting future orbits.

At this time it was mid morning in Russia. Time was running out. We alerted Nicolai immediately so that he could arrange to have the thing shot down the next time it appeared over the northern arctic, which would occur in two hours time. "Luckily, the orbital path brings the satellite right over your area of control, right over Novosibirsk," I said to Nicolai. "Steve is going to give you the exact time and location. Anyone of your northern missile sites, or your subs, should be able to take the thing out with a single shot."

"I can't get clearance to launch." Nicolai came back.

"You've got to do it, with or without clearance," Steve took over. "The next pass will bring the thing across six major cities, and yours is one of them. This may not be another idle orbit, Nicolai. This may be the beginning of its attack run. You can't let this happen."

"I can't pull it off," he said and began to cry.

"Then, get out of Leningrad fast," Steve urged. "Everything in that era between Murmansk and Istanbul is a likely target during the current time frame."

"Ok, I'll push our people once more," Nicolai came back. "Maybe now that the thing is confirmed they will do it. But I won't run away. I am in Murmansk right now, where I have full access to our communications facilities. I won't leave when million's of lives are at stake. I could never live with myself if I did that, but I'll send Antonovna to Moscow."

"No, don't do that, that's the wrong way. Send her to Kaliningrad, and you better do it fast," I said. "There's not much time left. And get out of there yourself, my friend."

I hung the phone up and buried my face in my hands. "None of this will happen," I said quietly. "Anton will never leave him, and he won't leave Murmansk for as long there is a chance that he can do something to prevent the disaster. But they won't accomplish a dam thing. The Russians are too stubborn. We have to do it," I said to Ross. Their lives depend on us now.

"We have to do it," I repeated loudly, "Ross, Steve, Sylvia, we must do something fast. We have two hours to save the life of Nicolai and Anton, and 30 million other people. Russia doesn't respond!"

Sylvia didn't get a better response from Washington, either.

"There are 30 million lives at risk in the first pass," she told them. Nobody believed us. "We only have two hours," she almost shouted into the phone. The answer was, "Where is the proof?"

Fred didn't get a better response either. "Such a mission takes weeks to prepare," he was told, even if everything could be verified. "We can't just shoot another country's satellite out of the sky without provocation."

I tried to contact the President myself, to authorize some immediate intervention, but I was told he was unavailable during the morning hours, and the Vice President was not available, either.

Steve called Germany, but couldn't find the right contact. Most of his people had moved away, and the official contacts were of no use. "Nobody wants to accept responsibility for anything," he grunted.

"Call Moscow once more," said Steve, and speak to the secretary first.

"Strategic Rocket Forces, how may I direct you?"

"I am calling from a monitoring station in the United States of America. In one hour a satellite will begin dropping capsules of deadly viruses unto your cities, between Murmansk and Odessa. If you can manage to get someone interested to shoot this thing down, you can save the life of thirty million people. You still have time to do it, but you've got to be fast. It will be over Murmansk by two-thirty-five in the afternoon, at an altitude of forty-one-thousand kilometers. Here is what you must do. You must abandon your switchboard and find somebody who will act on this information immediately. No, call them out of their damn conference if need be. The satellite must be destroyed by no later than fourteen hundred hours, before it reaches the Barents Sea. By fifteen hundred hours it will destroy the people of Leningrad, and by fifteen-forty, the people of Minsk. I'm sure you will find someone who can prevent these deaths. No, it can't wait. By then, thirty million people will be dead. You must act now. Nicolai Vasily Berendeyev already has the targeting information in Murmansk. Did you write this down. No, you don't even have a minute to spare, because it takes an hour to get a missile set up. The thing must be vaporized in space with a nuclear warhead."

As the lady started to cry, I said good bye to her. She promised to do what I had asked. I was sure she would, but would she be more successful than Nicolai himself had been?

Steve shook his head. "That's unbelievable."

"She is still our best hope," I said quietly.

"That's why it is unbelievable," Steve complained.

"We've got to try Nicolai once more," Sylvia encouraged us.

I gave her the phone. "Here, you try your luck."

"He may not be in his office anymore."

"Try his home."

"He is not there either," Sylvia interrupted Ross five minutes later, "but I'm getting him paged to call us here."

"Right! I just hope that somebody in Russia will understand the serious nature of the problem." I said to Sylvia.

"Exactly, Pete!"

"Aquarius has awakened!" said Steve, and took his glasses off. He leaned deep into his chair and fell asleep. He had been working none-stop for over fifty hours.

I stood up and walked away.

"Get back, hurry!" Sylvia shouted, "Nicolai is on the phone."

Nicolai said he got the Strategic Rocket Forces mobilized, and that he is sure they will get the thing destroyed by fourteen hundred hours. "But there is a new development, that is now interfering," he added. "The Mexican government has been overthrown. Rebels, backed by the FARC narco-terrorists, and by factions from El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, and Chile, have crossed the Rio Grande and have entered the U.S.A.. In response, the American NATO contingent has been recalled from Europe. This is going to explode into something big," said Nicolai, "to take the focus away from what is happening here."

"It's all irrelevant, Nicolai," I said to him in a forceful manner. "You merely delivered proof that we've got the perpetrator's attention. Whenever the royals are boxed in, they'll start a war, somewhere, somehow, as fast as possible to create a change in focus, to draw the attention away from the real thing. All this is irrelevant, Nicolai. There is only one thing that is big, and that's our thing. Everything else is trivial. The longer your people wait, the more people will die, and this decreases your chances that you will get the thing eliminated at all. If you hesitate, you aid the enemy's plan. This means, you can't afford not to nuke the thing out of the sky at the first opportunity you have. This opportunity exists now. You've got to do it."

Nicolai assured us he understood all this as well as we did. "I just wanted to let you know that I'm not finished mobilizing all my contacts in Moscow to prevent anyone from interfering. Should I fail," he added, "I'm out of here and contact you later. I don't want to die in Murmansk. If I have to die, I want to die in my own home city." Then he said quickly good bye.

The only reaction that I had any strength left for, was to cry. Also, it seems I was not alone in this predicament. "They are going to let Nicolai die," I said, with tears streaming down my face. "They are going to let the two people die without whose efforts and daring this death star would have never even been discovered. They deserve better than that." With my eyes half closed, my brain in sleep-mode, I called Fred again.

I asked Sylvia to call NORAD once more. Ross was still in contact with the Northern Command people and was evidently getting nowhere. He was getting more and more frustrated.

From what I could make out on the phone, Fred didn't fare any better.

Moments later Ross put the receiver down and covered his face with his hands. "I've just been informed that it is now past fourteen-thirty-five in Murmansk." He spoke quietly and burst into tears.

I just looked at him in disbelief, but no tears came as if reality had somehow ceased to exist or its dimension had become too great to be compressed into emotions.

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There had been a time many years earlier, before 'Aquarius' had pored forth death, when Ross' surveillance station had been geared up to full alert status and every scanner had been manned day and night to warn of the slightest sign of an impending nuclear attack. There had also been other times when new scanners had been hastily installed to detect the faintest indication of the smallest advancing Soviet forces, by sea, by air, and from near space. This had been a time of fear and of an intense alertness and great optimism. There was none of this left. We had undeniable proof that the greatest wave of death in human history was about to be unleashed, and this within hours, and no one was interested at any level of government or military service throughout the whole of the USA, and Russia, and even China, to respond to the emergency.

We had also come through times at Ross' station when every dark cloud from the north had struck terror in our hearts as though it had death written on its face. In those times we had felt intensely alive, when the midnight oil burned in Ross' quarters. After this came was a time when our scanners were no longer attended to, which were later turned off, a time when the newspapers throughout the world were filled with reports of peace, and of diseases and epidemics. People were dying in ever-greater numbers from AIDS, TB, cholera, and even the common flue. It was like the Russian doctor had prophesied during the Moscow conference, except he had grossly understated the case. Still, we all knew then that this was not yet 'Aquarius.' The worst had not come to pass.

Now that the waters of Aquarius were being pored out and death was staring us into the face, my fears had strangely subsided. They had become overshadowed by the work we had assumed, of locating the satellite that had dropped the capsule that we saw in Siberia. Still, the work had not been as simple as I had thought.

Progress had been slower, and the environment had been one of intense uncertainty. There was a moment during this time when a radio station beneath the satellite's path suddenly became silent and the telephones ceased to function in that area, which was later explained as a power failure. We felt terribly lucky on our rock by the sea, not to be near a major city or town that might be a target.

Then there was a time when we could no longer establish telephone contacts with Russia at all.

"Another power failure?" Tony had wondered.

All of these concerns were pushed into the background when the giant Typhoon submarine surfaced in front of our bay. Ross had never seen the latest model of the Typhoon class ship in real life. He had seen pictures of it. We had seen the smaller version Typhoon in New York harbor when Nicolai came to lecture. But seeing the larger model of it, and seeing it anchored in front of our bay, was different. This was the largest nuclear missile submarine ever built. The boat was the pride of Russia's northern fleet. But what was it doing here?

The new model of the Typhoon was recognized by Ross, who had recognized its characteristic bulge at the base of the tower. The sub had surfaced just outside of our bay. Instantly, Ross had the video telescope set up and the signal routed to the nearest Naval Air Base, which promised to send two fighter aircraft our way.

Only when by some miracle we saw Nicolai coming out of the tower hatch did Ross call everyone off. We should have realized that the Russian's hadn't come to attack. War and Nuclear missiles had become obsolete in the face of 'Aquarius.' The new urgency had become one that was focused on saving human lives, rather than on destroying them. In this framework the mightiest nuclear arsenal served no purpose, nor did it pose any real threat.

We watched Nicolai climb down the tower. A rubber inflatable was handed to him. He placed it on deck, climbed in, and launched himself over the edge. Still, one thing puzzled me. I had seen no smile on his face when he waved to us. There had always been a gentle smile on Nicolai's face, no matter what the circumstances were. Nor did this smile ever seem out of place. I still remembered his gentle smiling face from the day we parted in Moscow, when 'Aquarius' first rose on the horizon.

Oh, how the world seemed different now when we saw him on the viewing screen rowing towards us, alone. Even Nicolai seemed different. A new feeling suddenly emerged within, a choking, uncomfortable feeling. That's when I realized that this was not Nicolai. Also, the timing of the arrival of the submarine was too short. The person that we thought was Nicolai was another Navy officer. The man's manners were different.

I remembered Nicolai's Christmas present that he had sent not so long ago. He had sent a sealed plastic bag, well pack with foam, that contained a bottle of wine, a fine Pinot Gris of what was left of the State Cellar! I remembered the label. It was the exact same wine that Antonovna had chosen those many years ago on the night of our first dinner together. I had felt tears in my eyes when I saw the label. No, this was not Nicolai who had come. This was a different man.

A moonless gray was beginning to blanket the sea. What had gone wrong? Whatever it was, I couldn't fathom it. Too much of a commotion was going on at the station while we got ready to rush down to the beach to meet the man half way.

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When I opened Nicolai's letter that day that the captain of the Typhoon had brought, everything changed again. It was a sad letter, written by a dying man.

"The virus has been dropped upon Russia, all of Russia will be dying," he wrote. "It is over for us. I have failed my country, I have failed myself, and I have failed you. If by some miracle this letter reaches you before the virus does, the submarine that carried this letter may be able to carry you to safety. The captain will explain."

I put the letter down, in shock. Now I realized why I had seen Nicolai emerge from the tower hatch. We both knew that Nicolai could not have been on this boat. It would have been physically impossible for him to be there. But the mind makes it own rules. I wanted that man to be Nicolai. We all did. Deep down within us, we all wanted our hopes to be verified that Nicolai was all right. We saw what we wanted to see. This happens so often in life, especially in times of a great crisis. We were well aware of the hopelessness of the world's situation, even without reading the letter that Nicolai had dictated. In this sense the letter came as no surprise. Still, we hoped against all that we knew, that the crisis had by-passed them both.

After a long while of pondering, I picked the letter up again and read on. I read it aloud so that all would know.

"I guess we were unsuccessful in stopping the royals" Nicolai wrote. "We had scheduled too many conferences which had tied us down without results, while we didn't cultivate closer ties with the people who control our resources. I had always believed our people would respond without hesitation in times of such a crisis. I was wrong. And now that I am dying, I still don't know if this death star was created by the royals, and who in our country is respon-

sible for covering it up. I know that there exist people and organizations that want to wipe out mankind completely in order to save the earth from its 'human pest,' as they have put it. I'm sorry to say this, Pete, I think they will succeed. We will never meet again now, except perhaps in heaven, if there is such a place in the sphere of the Mind than embraces us all. Our big wedding that might have shocked society and set a new direction, will now remain but the dream. It will never come true. We had fought so hard Pete, to inspire humanity to build a basis for unity in order to prevent a nuclear war from erupting out of humanity's rage that grows in isolation. Still, we hadn't imagined that anything like this could ever happen. If there had been a nuclear war, at least we might have had a fighting chance, no matter how small this would have been. Now we die without a hope, silently, with but a whimper."

I paused again at this point. Reading his latter became hard. But I had no choice, so I read on. "If we had won our fight against this silent war, Pete, and I think we may have come very close to winning it, we could have created a wonderful world, Pete, the kind of world we had so often talked about in the past. This too, will never happen now. Still, Pete, I think we had made a difference. We had achieved a real step of progress for humanity in our clumsy way, for a period of time at least, even if it wasn't enough. We had come so close, Pete. We nearly had won the battle when no one else was even aware that a war was in progress. We had achieved miracles with the few resources we had, though we remained outmatched in the end by the royals who have stolen from humanity for centuries and had used these resources to murder it in return. They have prevented us from winning completely.

"By the time you read this," Nicolai wrote, "many people will likely be deadly ill. The first city they hit was Murmansk, just as Steve predicted. Next they hit Leningrad and Minsk. I don't know if they hit Kiev, Odessa, and Istanbul. There are rumors that they have. We really do not know anything for sure at this moment. I only know that we are finished. Murmansk will be depopulated if your report about the virus is correct. So, farewell my dear friends, and please allow the captain to carry you to safety. I don't know if Antonovna got away in time. If you ever contact her, give her my love and my assurance that I have always loved her. My life is over now. Your life, my friends, may yet be saved. Maybe Anton will be luckier than I. Please take care of her if you should ever meet her again, and whatever you do, don't cry for me, but rejoice, because the more the empire strikes us down, the more powerful we become as human beings. In time, we shall become more powerful than they can imagine, and this will be their demise forever."

"Yours truly, with all my love, Nicolai, Vasily, Berendeyev."

There was an immediate consensus that we should accept the offer that was so nobly presented. Still, while everyone was rushing around to gather their clothing and precious things, I stood there and couldn't move. I couldn't comprehend the reality of what I had read. I couldn't understand where we had gone wrong in preventing it. I took Steve aside. "We cannot let this end, here. Ok, you were right, it happened as you had predicted, but we cannot run away from it either. If we don't fight the beast here and now, it will kill us no matter where we run. This must have been also Nicolai's response. Steve, we must bring the thing down, and we must do it over the northern arctic the moment it comes around for another sweep. We must not allow ourselves to give up on what has to be done, for as long as there is still a breath in us."

Steve checked his computer. "We have a bit over three hours."

I called Sylvia over. "Look, fax this letter to our head of operation. This is proof that a tragedy occurred, and that the attack came from a space based system." I reached for the Atlas, pulled it off the shelf and pointed out to Sylvia that the targets are all in line with each other. They can't deny this evidence. A blind person can see that the attack comes from a space based system. No aircraft exists in the world that can cover all this distance in so short a time."

"I'll call NORAD again," she said. "I'll tell them that the virus was dispersed from a commercial satellite launched four months ago in Russia. I'll give them the details."

"Also, tell them that they are using drop pods that cannot be detected by radar. They will never be able to track those pods, not even when they release their deadly contents into the lower atmosphere," interjected Steve. "Tell them that Pete has seen two of the pods."

After this, Steve and I left the station and went back to the submarine. While we were on the way to the beach, Sylvia came running after us, shaking with anger. "They said that a congressional committee is debating the issue. They will determine what to do with our information."

I looked at Sylvia; "Congress is debating?"

Sylvia nodded, and began to cry.

I asked her to join us. We ran to the Zodiac shed. We got the thing into the water in seconds and ventured back out into the black night towards the Typhoon.

In the brooding atmosphere a dream came to mind from a long time ago. The dream had puzzled me then, and it still did. I even talked to Steve about it on the day he came to help us locate the death star. In that long ago dream I had found myself in a chair with tiny wheels, like an office chair, rolling along the sidewalk of

a steeply inclined city street. It was night. There was no one there. I became aware that I was totally naked. The chair was racing down the street uncontrollably, always in danger of tipping over and me being thrown onto the hard and cold pavement. But this never happened. I made it all the way to the bottom of the hill. The street ended in a park where the rolling chair finally came to a stop. Suddenly a policewoman appeared out of nowhere: "That's far enough!" she bellowed. "What on earth do you think you are doing, don't you know it is against the law?"

I didn't know what to answer. My inability to argue calmed things down. In the end, she was very kind about arresting me, and about the inevitable consequences at the police station where she recorded my name, address, occupation, etc., and measured my penis, decoded its size via an index and entered the code on the form with some remark as to how ridiculous the process was. I agreed.

It must have been after the official formalities had been dispensed with, that I found myself in her apartment eating some deliciously tasting soup. She wasn't eating, though, but I was. She sat watching me, comfortably leaning back, her feet stretched across the table. I looked at them. Her feet were bare. I touched them. After the soup was eaten she sat beside me on the sofa and began caressing my face with her feet. I would have never thought it possible that I would feel good about such a thing. I even kissed her feet, and stroked her legs. She breathed deep and heavy. All this was beautiful, in a way. Things remained like that until her husband came home. I can still remember her slim, freckled face as she talked with him in the kitchen, it shone with a bright smile. Her husband was angry. She told him in no uncertain term that I was her captive and she was the law. That's when I awoke.

When I had told Steve about the dream, adding, "this isn't me, is it?" he had just laughed and laughed as if this was the funniest story he had ever heard.

"No, no, my friend, that's not you," he had answered. "You have experienced something profound and didn't realize it. You have experienced the future of humanity. You understand more about the world, Pete, than you give yourself credit for. You have experienced what may happen after we shut this damn death star down, should we be that lucky. The point is, humanity won't be any more alert and alive, because of our efforts, than it is now. It will remain as naked in its naive ignorance, and as vulnerable as it ever was. It won't know how to defend itself when the going gets really rough, just like you had dreamed. So it will likely be taken captive and cast into poverty. The soup wasn't a meal, Pete. As a metaphor it represents poverty. Did you know that poverty is the second most potent killer of human beings? It ranks right behind nuclear or biological warfare. Poverty destroys the physical support structures that

are essential for human living. It takes away people's food, housing, education, their chance for development, even their will to live. Without these, people die. They die, because they are deprived of the necessary resources for living. But the ploy is put forward very slowly and with great finesse, as you had experienced in your dream."

He had paused for a moment, searching for words. "What you have recognized, Pete, may be the royal's backup plan, the only plan that they could possibly resort to. You see, poverty can be brought upon humanity in such a manner that people will love it. Humanity has already become captivated by it. Misguided environmentalism can be used very destructively. It can be used to eliminate fundamental infrastructures, such as fertilizers, pesticides, refrigeration, nuclear energy, fossil fuel energy, and so forth. People have already been made to believe that the destruction of their livelihood increases their quality of life. They are literally kissing their destroyer's feet and feel good about it. This is happening now, just as it happened many times before, Pete, and so it will happen again. There is a fine dividing line between freedom unfolding from self-development, and captivity leading to self-destruction. Both may appear similar on the surface, at one point, but they are totally opposite when you experience their essence. The key is to stay alert and to keep on fighting!"

Here Steve had laughed again. "Why am I telling you all this? Your dreaming only reflects what you already know."

Those were his words. I was amazed at what Steve said, because I had dreamed this dream a long time ago. Steve suggested that my dreaming reflect a certain knowledge that seemed to indicate that we would come through the crisis alive? That question, however, was not resolved in my mind when we reached the black hull of the submarine. Still, his words kept ringing in my ears: "The key is to stay alert and to keep on fighting."

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I asked the captain immediately as we entered, "Can your nuclear missiles be reprogrammed to detonate in space. We need to find a way to destroy the satellite that is killing your cities? We know exactly which satellite it is and where it will be at any given time."

Steve explained to the captain that the satellite is in a near circular orbit at an altitude of forty-one-thousand kilometers. "It will come over the Arctic Ocean in slightly less than three hours," he added.

The captain understood immediately what we were saying. Steve had brought our Atlas and his calculations to prove our point. The captain, though, wouldn't even look at them. He held onto a railing at first, then sat down. He must have been in his late sixties.

His face was wrinkled and bore the scars of earlier battles. He called some of his officers together and laid out the problem to them. Each one confirmed that it couldn't be done. He finally turned to us and shook his head. "There is not a single missile in the world's nuclear arsenal that can reach this far into space," he explained in broken English. "This is why Nicolai failed."

One of the officers took over for him and explained the reason. "All intercontinental nuclear missiles are designed for sub-orbital trajectories," he explained. "Their booster stage simply doesn't carry enough fuel to boost a nuclear warhead to such a high altitude. Not a single one of all the world's nuclear missiles can reach that high."

He suggested that this might have been the reason why the killer satellite has been put into such a high orbit. He suggested that the reason why Nicolai had failed, might have been due to the simple fact that Russia had lost most of its technological capacity. He said, fifteen years ago, it would have been easy to shoot the killer satellite down, but no more. He explained, that once the Soviet Union was split apart, Russia had lost a large portion of its high tech industries. A lot of these were located in the Ukraine. "In the olden days," he said, "we had the engineering and manufacturing capacity to put something together in a hurry. We would have destroyed this satellite easily in those days."

"It seems we have lost the capacity to survive," said another officer. "We lost this capacity when we could no longer keep our country together," said another officer. He said to Steve that it takes the combined effort of a large nation to support these kinds of industries. He said that he was sorry that nothing could be done under the present circumstances.

"We are just as stupid," I said to Steve. "If we hadn't shut down the SDI project we would have had the capability now to take out the death star. Instead of killing the SDI to ease the tensions with the Soviet Union, we should have made every effort necessary to get the Soviets to join in the cooperative development of it, as the SDI concept had originally been designed to be developed." I suggested to Steve, as gently as I could, that we were as much to blame as was anybody else.

At this point Steve lost his cool. "The death sentence upon humanity is being too calmly debated," as he but it. "You talk about it with the same tone of voice as if someone had just explained when the next bus leaves the station." He swore at me and at the Russian officers, but immediately apologized. He told the officers that Nicolai had repeatedly warned the government that this type of situation could happen if they didn't restructure the makeup of the Soviet Union so that everyone would be enriched by joining hands, and that this stronger bond should have embraced America as a

partner against their common enemy. But they wouldn't listen! He said it all happened exactly in the manner the fondi had foretold, who had told him in their confident arrogance that they would win in the end, and we wouldn't be able to do anything about it.

"Do you know what this means?" he said to the captain. "It means that everyone on this planet is doomed."

"Surely, there must be something that can be done," I said to the captain.

"Nicolai didn't have a chance," the old captain replied, "but there may yet be a way to save the rest of the world," he added. "We are not dead yet, and while we're still alive, we will fight. We will think of something" He spoke something in Russian to one of the other officers who then explained to us that in the last years of the Soviet era an anti-satellite system had been developed that never got past the prototype stage. "The project was shut down," he explained. "It was too expensive, but the prototype was never destroyed." The officer explained to us that the captain thought the prototype might still be functional.

"Nicolai would not have had access to it," the captain added, "even if he knew of its existence, because the project had never been transferred to the military. The people of the Strategic Rocket Forces had not even been told about the project, much less the Navy." His eyes now began to sparkle. "I know somebody who might help. My friend Petrovitch told me two years ago that the system had not been decommissioned. It might still be operational."

"But you must bypass Moscow," Steve urged him. "Some traitor may want this depopulation to succeed. He will stop you."

"That's not a problem," said the old war-horse and grinned. "I have no friends in Moscow. The Navy doesn't have many friends anyway. That's the reason why Nicolai has developed a network of secure communication channels for the Navy. We have the capability to reach anyone without interference. All the important things are accomplished in this manner, and on a basis of trust." He asked Steve to follow one of his officers and bring his data on the satellite's orbit.

The captain turned to me with a smile, saying, "If those systems are still operational, consider the job done."

This was the first time I had seen the captain smile, almost like Nicolai had smiled. This meant that we had a reason to hope again, rather than to despair. We all knew that it would take far too long to build a brand new anti-satellite system to save civilization.

Steve had been gone with the Russian officers for twenty minutes, which seemed like ten hours, and the old captain had gone after them. I had been told to remain on the bridge. So, I just sat there, helplessly. I actually prayed.

When Steve and the captain returned, they were both smiling from ear to ear. "Petrovitch confirmed that they can do it," the captain said. "They will be ready in time. They confirmed the target can be attained in time, with half an hour to spare."

"Their plan is to surround the satellite with three small nuclear explosions," the officer explained. "That's how the anti-satellite system was designed to work."

"And Moscow?" I asked.

"They won't know anything about it until the mission is complete." The captain grinned as he explained this. "We are patriots," he said proudly. "We have our roots in Russia, not Moscow."

Steve and I decided to wait on the sub until the time had come when we should hear back from them. Until then, radio silence was maintained. Nicolai would have been proud of the captain. I hoped that Nicolai would live long enough to shake his hand. The captain was a man who took his responsibility as seriously as Nicolai always had.

The return call came precisely on time. One of Petrovitch's crew played on his CD blaster the final portion of Schiller's "Ode to Joy" from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. It was a fit opening for a great celebration. It also said something about the quality of the men. The music said that we had won the battle. We had won, not entirely because of the still functioning anti-satellite system, but mainly because of Petrovitch's men, their ingenuity, their love for humanity, as well as that of our own, and that of many others.

The destruction of the death star was a sublime achievement, a sublime moment to be alive. The sublimity wasn't in the end of the death star. It lay in that which had achieved its end.

I embraced Steve and the captain, and some of the crew as the victory message was relayed on the intercom after the music was cut off. I said to them that we had just fought the biggest battle in the history of the world, and had won.

The submarine crew invited us to remain on board for the night. They also invited the others. Thus, for the first time in many years, Ross' monitoring station was left deserted for the cause of a celebration.

The celebration was such an uplifting event that many a grown man cried, and every single security protocol was thrown out the window. We had achieved a victory that insured the survival of humanity. We felt that war, itself, had become obsolete in the face of that momentous victory for humanity.

During the course of the celebration, Captain Yuri gladly showed us his ship, which he said would no longer be needed now. He showed us the living quarters, the galley, the missile targeting center, the launch control stations, and the missile tubes themselves

which were large cylinders made of steel that were standing tall in four long rows. He explained the meaning of what we saw. "This ship," he said, "carries enough destructive force all by itself, to wipe out every major city in North America. That's what we, and other crews like us, stood ready to do, every second of every day since these ships were built. We have the capability to launch a missile every ten seconds. Now, the madness has ended. The missiles will never be launched. The nightmare that we have endured for so long, is over."

The mighty Typhoon submarine left our waters the next morning. We never saw it in our waters again, only the name that was associated with it remained in my memory, that of captain: Yuri Brovikov. Naturally, he and his friend Petrovitch were duly honored as national heroes. Still, this wasn't the way we had come to know the captain. We knew him better.

Nicolai did not live long enough for us to see him again, or for us to talk with him, but long enough to know that the victory has been won, and to know that he had made a vital contribution towards that victory.

Also, he was honored by the Russian Navy for his heroic intervention to save the lives of most of the Navy personnel of the Northern Fleet based in Murmansk. He had ordered an emergency evacuation exercise that had cleared the entire Navy department and their dependents from the Murmansk area. He has honored for this by all the country's Admirals who came to his hospital bed in Moscow, before he died.

We were told that the illness had quickly crippled him, and left him without a voice. Still, we all knew, that without his alertness and his courage, the dying of humanity would have become unimaginable. So, it was Nicolai, more than anyone else, who had saved humanity. The sublime honor, if there is such a thing, belongs to him alone.

I knew that some day the world would hear his story. He was a man of great courage, of defiance when much was at stake. This courage is nowhere better expressed than in his swift reaction that had sent Antonovna and myself to Siberia, contrary to all the direct orders from the highest levels that commanded him not to become involved. It was plain that he had acted like a true patriot, and that all of his actions had been vital. Without the Siberian discovery, which had remained a secret that Moscow's officials never knew about, we might not have discovered the orbit and the identity of the death-star satellite as quickly as we had. Then, how many more cities and entire nations would have been lost?

We were told much later that Nicolai had died two weeks after the day of infection, together with Antonovna at his side, who had been unable to get away. They died with countless others whose names were never recorded, because too few of the people survived who might have remembered them.

Also, no one ever found out who had ordered the death-star spacecraft to be built. The UN had funded it as an advanced earth resources survey satellite. NASA had been involved in the communications design under the same misconception. Several manufacturers had been involved from around the world in building the navigation and delivery hardware. The software development was fragmented. A large portion was created in Israel, other parts were written in Sweden and Singapore. The virus was apparently developed in Africa in a primate research facility, where it was cultured and tested on deceived test subjects who had been recruited from the homeless of the big cities. Once the cultured the virus' were sealed into the drop-pads surrounded by nutrients, the final assembly was carried out in Russia by a British team that had later died from incidental infections.

The finished product was launched into space by none other than the Russians space agency that had the only boosters big enough to get the massive piece into orbit. No question had been asked. The offered payment for the launching had been 'right.'

As the investigation unfolded it became soon evident that far too many people had profited from the launch for the truth ever to be known. Hastily initiated cover up operations obscured whatever traces had been found. The cover up operations were said to have been the reason why the discovery of the first pod was hushed and became hidden behind a cloak of official secrecy. There had been no conspiracy in real terms, except the conspiracy to protect the networks of corruption.

Everyone acknowledged that the organizational effort to build the spacecraft, and to organize the cover-up effort that had obscured the project, were both phenomenally complex. The entire project had become shielded by a huge network of interlocking lies and untraceable financial transactions. The network had been so vast that in the end none of the threads that were discovered, were ever connected to a common source.

The supporting structure was also very big. It had involved so many players and decoys that the investigation ended after two years of digging, without any conclusion having been reached. It was rumored in the end that another pay-off operation eventually silenced the investigation itself. In the course on the investigation many convicts were added to the jails in many a country, including most of the royalty of Europe, which were later released.

A consensus was developed that the royals, themselves, were

not directly involved, since the project was too cleverly perceived and carried out, and too well hidden. It was believed, instead, that some perverted government agency, or agencies, with the required worldwide connections and influence, had made the royal's objective their own objective. Still, there was no proof for this, either. Ushi firmly believed that this had been the case, because it matched her experience in Nicaragua. It had become widely recognized in later years that the Contras had been supported by a secret organization within the highest levels of the U.S. Government that had imported crack cocaine by the plane loads into North America, which had been dumped onto the streets in American ghettos in order to pay for the Contras' war. She said that this was but one example of what can happen when insanity takes over in the government of a nation. In the case of the Contras, the nation's destitute and poor ended up paying for the shadow government's illegal operations that ended up killing many thousands of people. In the end, nothing was accomplished except an imposition of death. No one had ever been arrested for that operation, either. The investigations that were launched became stalled, and the more important people that had been linked to the death star project were conveniently shielded by technicalities from having to answer for their crimes. Eventually, the entire investigation was deemed inconclusively and was officially closed. One could see the same pattern unfolding that we had seen so many times in the past that had been orchestrated to hide a government's dirty hands.

The only pattern that was not repeated was the honorary promotion of the key players in high places, who in the past were 'knighted' for their loyal service to the fonsi's empire in its cause against humanity. This pattern had become too much of an embarrassment for all the parties concerned, to be repeated again.

Luckily, Nicolai's greatest fears had been groundless. He feared that there might have been a manual backup arranged, should the satellite system fail. So far, there was no sign of any backup system. Still, one could never be certain that a sleeper backup might not have been planted into hidden places in many cities that would someday activate itself. But as time passed, this fear lost ground and faded away. Steve, however, never changed his mind about me having correctly identified in my dream, the real backup plan. Indeed, he found plenty of evidence that it was already being implemented.

Regardless of what the outcome will be when the final words are spoken, Tony and I, and our entire family, felt good about the victory that we had been involved in, and the role we had played in it. To us, this was a great victory. It had made a difference. We had made a difference. Also, we were relieved to know that only three cities had been hit by the depopulation machine, not all six as we had feared, which was far less than what any of us had antici-

pated, nor had everyone died in the effected cities. A few people had recovered after weeks of being terribly ill, although Nicolai and Anton were not among them.

After the death of Nicolai and Antonovna, Sylvia suggested that Antonovna should have come to us, to Ross' station, had she been able to escape the holocaust to our rock by the sea, where she and her beloved Nicolai are loved and respected like nowhere else in the world. Everyone said they would have been glad to have her with us. Still, in spite of all that I knew, I could not accept that she was dead. She was still alive in my thoughts, as was Nicolai.

At this point I decided to carry out Anton's final suggestion, as it were. I suppose it was partly to honor Anton, and partly because it made a great deal of sense that I should invite Heather to join me for a two week tour across Mexico. "You must do it," Anton had told me in Novosibirsk, "for your own and for their liberation."

When I finally told Sylvia and Ross about it, both asked why I had waited so long. Of course, they also knew the answer.

"Would you have invited me without Anton suggesting it?" Heather asked. "If the answer is no, I don't want to come."

"I would have done this ten years ago if I had had the courage," I answered. "I have always loved you deeply from the first day we met, but I didn't dare to acknowledge this love further. Of course I tried again not so long ago, hoping against all odds, but that didn't work out either. I was actually afraid afterwards of hurting you again. The 'infrastructures' had not been built that would have made such a move possible."

I finally had to laugh. "I couldn't allow myself to move beyond that silly idea that your life belongs to Ross," I said and kissed her. "Most likely you couldn't marry him, for a similar kind of fear. At least this is how Anton had felt about Nicolai for all these years. It was not until after the Caracas conference that Nicolai recognized the validity of the principle of keeping the door open, because then, the bond will never become a trap like the bond of the Soviet Union had become for many of the Soviet republics."

So it was, that after two days of thinking it over, and by her own initiative, Heather came to me and accepted the offer. As it turned out, we never seemed to have time for this sort of thing anymore. Our joint vacation became delayed, again and again. Nor did this seem to matter. Ever since the Caracas Conference, Heather and I had continued on from where we had left off those many years earlier at the SandCastle. An unhurried kind of love had unfolded from that. Eventually, as by some miracle, our trip to Mexico became a reality.

Our private excursion into this down to earth world was

totally different than the busy official missions had been, that we had carried out together after we had returned from Caracas. There was a greater depth now to our unity that reflected a lot of additional overturning, an overturning of the trivial, and of the things that had been blocking the flow of our love, such things as were once thought to be prudent for the sake of honor. The time span we had available for our vacation somehow didn't seem to be important. Two weeks appeared too short in one respect, while a single day appeared so richly rewarding that one hardly required more time to add to the happiness that seemed so totally complete. As it turned out, we only had four days. A new problem had been brewing in Washington. These four days, though, had brightened our world.

Steve had returned to China by then. Nevertheless, we had made a covenant before he left that we would meet twice a year in Cozumel for a continuing celebration of the victory we had won, and also to address further problems should any arise.

Fred had no objections to Steve's plan, in fact he encouraged it. Fred was the only person that I knew who regarded this great tragedy that had occurred, within the framework of a victory. I had called him many times after the tragedy to apologize for having let him down in respect to the Mary Baker Eddy project that he had sponsored. For 35 years, this lone spiritual pioneer, America's greatest, appears to have stopped the empire's wars against humanity until she died in 1910. Fred had send us all for a one month emergency mission to Queensland in Australia to reestablish this early American pioneers scientific platform for the PUL, which she had discovered and put on the table and had translated into such a profound love that a single look of love in voicesless communication had healed a partially crippled woman in the space of a few moments. Evidently she has had this kind of an effect on the whole of humanity to the point that no major wars did erupt in her time.

Fred had brought us all together in Queensland to rediscover her principles through her pedagogical work, and to get us to reapply them to prevent a vastly bigger war by the Fondi Empire against humanity, than any war that has ever been fought in history. I apologized to Fred that we had failed. We had obviously failed, because those eight million people that had been murdered, should not have been murdered had our assigned work succeeded.

Except Fred didn't see it that way. He said that we succeeded beyond his expectation. He called it a miracle, what had happened. He insisted that the fondi had targeted four to five billion people in a big global war for Mutually Assured Destruction, which they had kept on their agenda as a last resort to defend their existence. Fred called it a miracle that this big war had been pre-

vented and had now become imposible to pull of. Fred called the death of the eight million that fell viction to the fondi a tragedy incurred by society's own stubbornness in supporting the fondi. He said that the big war, which had been prevented, and the tragedy that had ocured, as two unrelated items. He called the war that didn't erupt, a victory, which now opened the gate to the final steps to shut down the fondi in their entirety.

Of course he agreed that the tragedy that had happened should have been prevented likewise, but he suggested that this realively small failure in global terms shouldn't tranish the momentous victory that had been achieved. He suggested that the size of the tragedy that happened reflects humanity fault in allowing such huge games to be played with its very existence that the minutest failure leads to enormous tragedies in which millions of people are liable to perish.

Fred gave us the requested twice a year Cozumel Summit, as Steve had called it, who had also recommeded it, so that even those minute failures don't happen anymore either.

I suggested to Steve that we also invite Olive to our Cozumel event, which I did. But Olive declined.

"I don't care much for formal events," was her reply.

Her suggestion was that we should meet privately as often as we needed to do so. She suggested that we meet in the Alps again in the summer; or in Italy in the winter; or wherever it would seem right to meet, and whenever there is a need for it. She said that we should feel free to contact one another whenever such a need arose. For the time being, she suggested, there was no need for it. "But when there is a need, by all means, let's get together, and let's do it privately as in the past. Privately, we can accomplish more," she said, "that's when our unity and love is the strongest. Marriages don't work by committee even though encompass the whole of humanity. They are private affairs. Our marriage was like that even in Sukhumi, regardless of the fact that I had an entire symphony orchestra playing our tune. Afterwards, we had our little ceremony, to confirm to one another twelve years later in the privacy of that tiny chalet in the Alps, what he had already established on the universal platform. We can do this celebrating again and again, whenever it appears to be appropriate. And why shouldn't we, life goes on, Peter, while we keep the world steady in its course?" she added and laughed.

As it was, we kept our promise to each other. We decided meet again a few months down the road. Fred was in on the planning. With help, planning for the Cozumel conference was officially drawn into the foreground. Everyone became involved except Olive. Still, just talking to Olive had left its mark. I could see a difference

in myself, just from knowing that this love that had unfolded was destined to continue and unfold evermore.

Apart from that, everything remained rather normal on our rock by the sea, with the exception for a few small changes. Heather and Ross were married a month after our victory over the death star. This happened shortly after my first meeting with Olive under our higher commitment to life and to one another.

The marriage of Ross and Heather happened spontaneously one day during their own tour through Mexico. They simply remained there and got married. I had hoped that something like that would happen. They were married quite early during their tour, in a small Mexican town, and in a still smaller church, by a priest who had learned to recognize and acknowledge the beauty of humanity, and the beauty of life. No one had been invited to the ceremony. Heather explained later via a post card that they regarded their marriage as a totally private commitment with a meaning that pertained only to them. It was built on all the honesty, affection, love, and respect that they had established between themselves over the years, that concerned no one else.

They returned a week after their wedding to collect their belongings. But soon thereafter, Heather came back for a visit, alone, complaining that the place where they now lived was a beautiful spot, but dead in real terms. "There is nothing moving there," she said. She referred to it as a fate worse than being sentenced to the Admiral's garden party. This comparison had become a cliché by then. "I want to come back, here," she said, "but Ross insists that if a country is dead, the worst thing that one can do, is walk away from it. He said it needs to be brought to life. But how? "Actually, the place is worse than dead," she added. "There are a lot of terrorist actions going on, and nobody cares. People get killed, and nobody objects as if none of that is real."

"Welcome to the wider world," I said, and hugged her. "But you are liar," I added, "because you care, and that makes a big difference. As for the rest, how can you expect them to care? Most people don't live in the real world, especially in Mexico. They weren't allowed there.

"Most people around the world see the world with a very narrow perception," she continued. "Their perception is as narrow as the vision of a married man who lives in a garden filled with a profusion of flowers that you told me about, but has been conditioned to ignore all of them, except a single one. How much life is there in this?"

I didn't answer, but nodded. This saying had become a cliché by then. I suggested, however, that the story was directly applicable to the larger sphere. I suggested that terrorism exist in a political world wherever narrow perceptions reign.

I asked her to take a good look at what has been happening on the front of terrorism over the last century. In the USA the Ku Klux Klan tarred and feathered the Negroes and burned them on the cross. In central Europe Hitler's police marched into villages, towns, and cities and rounded up the Jewish people and shot, gassed, or burned them. In North Africa, terrorist gangs frequently drove together several hundred people at a time and disemboweled them alive, on the spot. In Russia, Stalin's gang killed several million of the Soviet Union's most able farmers, by starving them to death. In Japan, at the end of the war, several hundred-thousand defenseless people were put to death by the mightiest military force in the world in an act of genocide that turned out to be nothing more than a terrorist rampage of immense proportions, designed to demonstrate the fury of a new super-weapon. In the African Congo, mercenary armies paid for by western mining companies went on a murdering rampage of a different kind that killed well over a million people of ethnic minorities. Similar terrorist rampages could be seen in the Balkans, paid for by the West, and terrorism in the Middle East that is not allowed to have any peace.

"Terrorism is not something that is unique to certain nations, or cultural backgrounds," I added. "Terrorist actions are perpetrated by people of every nationality and cultural background there is. Terrorism happens wherever a people's mental focus is narrowly confined by crafty people, with lies upon lies that take away a people's humanity and put in its place narrowly focused ideals that have nothing to do with reality. Its evil is the narrowly bound focus that supports the notion, that it is a greater evil to kill a dog, as they say, than to kill a 'Nigger,' or a Jew, or a 'Jap', or an Albanian, or a Hutu."

Heather answered that she had recognized this, too. She also added that I have missed one important element that may be the key element that could turn the whole thing around, if it itself could be turned into the right direction.

"And that is?" I asked.

"You tell me," she replied with a grin.

I shrugged my shoulders.

"It's a powerful element in the entire Spanish speaking world," she added, "but it is not exclusive to it or Mexico." She hinted that it had something to do with her marriage.

"You mean the Catholic Church?" I asked.

"Right, Pete, the church is the world's most powerful motivator for narrowly confined perceptions," she said and punched me gently, adding, "I wonder what our most holy priest would say when I told him I was going north to have sex with a friend for a week or two, and that Ross didn't have any objections?"

"This would devastate him," I suggested. "He might revoke

your marriage or annul it as a mistake."

"That's just the problem, Peter, we can't do this," she replied. "We can't fight this thing by creating a war over it. Nor can we walk away from it, like we walked away from the public hearing for our nudist beach permit. We were able to walk away, then, because we no longer had any need for such a permit. This time we need the church to help the people to expand their mental horizon."

"You have to change the church, first," I interrupted.

"Of course we have to. We can't walk away from it, no matter how much we may wish we could. But how do you fight the church, to get it to fundamentally change itself?"

I raised my hand to interrupt her. "You won't need to fight the church if you begin by explaining the principle involved and its imperative for enriching human existence. You might even add that the unfolding of this principle would also enrich the image of the church. Whatever enriches mankind will also enrich the church. Your priest might understand what is involved, and respect you for your commitment to a fundamental principle that presents great challenges but also great blessings."

"Pete, this is what Ross is trying to do," answered Heather, "though it appears to me that he may be declaring nuclear war. This deep reaching challenging of the church might put Ross into danger."

"Do you think Ross can't handle this, under these circumstances?"

Heather nodded. "Still, Ross thinks he can do it."

"If he thinks he can do it, then he must be thinking about the platform of our first line principle: to enrich all mankind, and to injure none. Nothing will be achieved on any other platform. Surely, Ross knows that. That is why he is committed."

"Do you think it is really possible, Pete, to convince the priesthood of the world that a wider perspective enriches the church and everyone associated with it?"

"Actually, I don't think so," I said. "But you must try. Maybe you will find a half a dozen people with a wide enough vision that are willing to help enrich the church. This may be enough to get the ball rolling."

"So, you really think that this battle can be won?"

"Of course it can be won," I replied. "The principle for it has been laid out in Scriptures. I recall a story in which Abraham argued with the Lord over how many righteous people would need to be found in Sodom and Gomorrah for the cities to be save from destruction. The Lord suggested fifty would suffice, but Abraham suggested lower numbers, maybe forty, maybe twenty, maybe ten. The Lord agreed that the cities would be save if ten righteous people could be found in them. Maybe ten is all that it will take to

save the Church?" I said to Heather.

"So, you think it can be done?" said Heather astonished.

"Of course it can be done. Do you need my help down there?" I asked.

She just laughed in reply. "I've come up here to help you. Tomorrow we will both go together to Washington and to New York, and after that to the Vatican, itself, didn't you know that? Didn't Fred tell you? Who would be more qualified to drive this project forward, than you. Who understands the underlying principle better than you do, and you are a trained diplomat at the same time? I'll come along to help you!"

Well, what could I say? I asked Tony to arrange a ride for us with Puff the Magic Dragon, to Washington, New York, and the Holy Sea. Tony just shook his head, but answered that the Dragon would comply as Heather had requested. So off we went, by car to Washington, since Puff was too busy, and from there to New York, and from New York, by the grace of Puff, to Italy, to meet with representatives of the Pope.

I expected a stone cold rejection, even a hostile response. After all, we were proposing that the church must overturn its sacred marriage boundary mythology that makes a person blind to all the flowers in the garden, except one, and isolates it from the rest. I was fully aware that this narrow focus in all things is required to safeguard doctrinal religion. I knew that the church was aware of this too, and had to protect its foundation at all cost, since it invented it in the first place many thousands of years ago. I countered the church's position with every argument that Steve had brought up in Leipzig, when Steve felt that this narrow minded perception needed to be addressed to enable him to enrich my life.

As it was, we received a remarkably warm response for the circumstances. Some of the people in charge recognized that we were making a proposal that would greatly enrich the church and revitalize it. Some, even understood that the church's cooperation with this project is a vital factor in protecting civilization. They agreed with everything we said until it came to the need for implementing our proposal. They shrugged away and said that if this proposal were to be implemented, it would instantly unravel centuries of preaching. It would put the very authority of the church into question.

"So you say: To hell with humanity," Heather replied whenever this argument came up. She always spoke gently, though. "Are you telling me that the welfare of humanity is not important when progress requires that the church becomes honest with itself?" She never got angry.

She told me that this question created a paradox for them that the church officials would have to deal with, one way or another. She told me that she didn't mind a bit that our meetings were

always terminated at this final point before a breakthrough could be reached. She didn't see this as a defeat. She predicted that our success was inevitable, because the paradox that we created had been implanted into their mind which "will gnaw on their soul until it is resolved," she said.

We went to many churches in Mexico after we returned from Italy, with Ross joining our team. A short time later, Ross and Heather carried on the work by themselves.

Chapter 9 - Gethsemane

Right in the middle of our work in Mexico, I was once again called away by Fred, for another mission. This time I was sent to Canada. Fred called it, "an urgent mission." That was all that he revealed. He said that the rest was classified. He told me that I would be contacted in three days in Vancouver, at the University's Chan Center for Music, after the evening concert. "A ticket has been reserved in your name. Don't miss the concert!" he said. "A lot depends on you being there," he added.

The mystery became instantly clear when I arrived at the concert hall. The concert was performed by a Norwegian quartet. Mozart, Brahms, and Schubert were on the agenda. The violinist, according to the poster was Olive Osipov.

I looked at my watch, it was seven thirty. I could imagine Fred grinning, as he probably realized that I realized, whom I was to meet. Just about then, the cell phone rang. Fred just laughed and laughed. "So you made it in time for a change," he said and laughed once more. After that, he became serious. "Peter, you are not there for a picnic. You are there for an urgent mission. Don't forget that!"

As for myself, my focus was on Olive for the next three hours. This time, I could feel that she was playing for me. They all were. Sylvia's singing came to mind, when we first met. I had been at every one of her performances. Now, I felt the same again. I fell in love with her all over again through Olive's music, through her playing for me. This effect seemed hardly possible, but it was so. There was something alive and sparkling about Olive and her music, which came to life through her playing.

No it wasn't any personal magic that made her appear like that. Olive Osipov is a woman who embodies the qualities of universal love fully; more fully than anyone I have ever known. It flows from her soul through her music; through her manners; through her smiles; through her looks; through her gestures. She is the dynamo of love.

After the performance, during the applause, she was met on stage by a group of children who presented a bouquet of roses to the musicians. The children chose Olive as the recipient. I was surprised to see the children; to see children at an evening chamber concert, and more so, to see them on stage. But, there they were.

Olive was moved to tears by their gesture. She crouched down and embraced every one of them. She enveloped them with her love. It was there, on stage, that I saw as it were for the first time in my life, the glow of a love that one might call the real 'mother-love,' the kind of love that I realized I had not attained myself as yet. There was no 'distance' between her and the children; no vertical separation at all. The flow of love between them was a lateral flow; a meeting, gently, heart to heart; a meeting between many, but of one Soul.

It appeared that in this flow of love, the flow of the music that the trio had performed, continued. It was reflected in it. It was elevated to a higher order by it.

After Olive had embraced everyone of the children, she stood up, handed the flowers to the pianist, and while the children were still on stage, she picked up her violin again and played a special solo piece just for them, a piece I had never heard before. She played not for the audience primarily, but for the children. One could sense that she did, but one could also sense that this unity included nevertheless everyone, too. It confirmed the unity of the children with the audience. Afterwards, the entire trio played for the children.

When Olive and I finally met in the lobby, as arranged, the same embrace continued, only with a different focus. I felt honored to be included in this embrace that still continued, even as I felt as if the music still continued on.

We stayed at one of the smaller hotels that night, an old place overlooking the harbor. The booking had been prearranged. The view from the nearby late-night cafe, high above the city, was a sea of lights in every direction one looked. Our continuing 'embrace' in the restaurant, surrounded by this sea of lights, was carried forward by the same music that still continued on in my thoughts. It was the music she had played for the children, and for all of us as well; the music that reflected the real 'mother-love' which gave the flow of love a special sparkle.

There was no focus on sex in this embrace, even though, on a higher plain it was a sexual embrace in its totality. It was an embrace that unfolded on that higher plane where all lower aspects lose their significance, so that only that which is of substance, remains. I began to realize in this embrace, as we talked and kissed and smiled at one another; that it might have been Olive's love and its effect on me after our meeting in the Alps, that had helped pulled us out of the rut in those days before the Caracas Conference began that Olive had arranged for us for this purpose. That's just the kind of woman she was and always had been as far as I

could remember.

Olive's is a kind of love that, if one is touched by it, seems to rest on everything; pervades everything; unites everyone; is echoed in everything that is good and beautiful. I felt it as a love in which Anton and Nicolai became alive again as a near presence; a universal presence that envelops one; a presence in which their face still shone as brightly as ever and promised to continue forever.

An amazing atmosphere unfolded between us, a leisurely atmosphere that somehow reflected what Anton and I had pioneered in Caracas, and later in Siberia. Only, it went beyond that. I felt no urge whatsoever, to rush into any kind of sexual intimacy, nearly a year had passed since we had seen each other in a setting where this was possible. The short time that we had spent together in Caracas had been too brief, even for a hurried kiss. The pace now was like a luxurious eternity leisurely drawn out moment by moment, hour by hour. Nothing was rushed. Nothing needed to be rushed. I saw her inviting smile, the soft outline of her breasts. They held a promise, and I knew that promise would not be betrayed. So, why should one hurry along? The moments were beautiful and satisfying as they were. I felt like someone who starts eating his pie beginning at the crust and leaves the best for last, in order to have the taste linger on.

"What is the urgency of our meeting?" I asked Olive when we were leaving the late-night cafe.

"The urgency," she repeated and laughed. "The primary urgency is, that we have another honeymoon again. Just the two of us, for a week. The secondary urgency will become clear to you by the end of this week."

She was rather mysterious about it all. Even our final destination remained shrouded in mystery. Nor would she tell me at the hotel.

I didn't mind the mystery, of course, with her steering the ship. Indeed, the next morning we were off on our way by ship, or rather by ferry boat, across the Strait of Georgia to the city of Victoria at the southern tip of Vancouver Island. Half way through the ferry ride, crossing a narrow passage between several islands, I commented on how timeless everything appeared. I suggested that the old weathered rocks, overgrown with pine forests and other types of trees, probably looked the same a thousand years ago when no one in Europe even knew that this land existed.

We saw swarms of sea gulls, two ravens circling overhead; an eagle could be seen slowly riding the winds above a cliff. I told

Olive that there were times when I envied the birds that were so blissfully ignorant about the momentous movements of our time that had nearly destroyed the whole of humanity, which also gave us a small victory that had protected the world.

"But has our world really changed?" she asked.

I hugged her tight to me as we were standing at the ship's railing, looking at the islands that drifted by, as it were. She felt as warm and soft, and cuddly, as she always had. "No, our world hasn't changed," I said to her. "But the larger world has changed. Something had been set up to terribly hit a whole lot of people, but I think we spoiled their plan. A lot of things have changed. I can't deny that. The world has suddenly become flooded with a wave of fascist actions; fascist terrorist actions; fascist laws; so much so that no one is save anymore, anywhere. In a few countries one can even be arrested and put in jail, or in a concentration camp, not for what one has done, but for what one might do some time in the future, and the burden is on oneself to prove them wrong. They can even put one in jail, or in a concentration camp, for belonging to an organization that the government doesn't like. We haven't seen anything like it for over a half a century, ever since Hitler was shut down. Now it is all coming back, globally. Yes, I would say that our larger world has changed."

Olive shook her head and told me that I was mistaken. "No change has occurred that deviates one bit from the imperial objective," said Olive. "Everything is still on track. What you have seen, and been involved in, falls into place along this line of the fondi's permanent objective. Nothing has been done to my knowledge, anywhere in the world, to tear up the fondi's agenda; to change their objective."

I protested gently. I told her that we had made a difference. We had forestalled a terrible tragedy, we brought down the death star.

She shook her head again. "You were set up to do what you did, and you did it heroically, as you were supposed to."

I protested again.

"No, Peter. Just ask yourself, why was Nicolai given access to the missile field's security data? That's way out of his jurisdiction as a naval security chief. That stuff doesn't concern him. And why did Koldunov help him? These people hate the armed services. No Peter, the Death Star was an inside job by some high level rogue elements. It was a self-provocation of some sort, by some government or world-organization, to push the nations of the world more and more into a global world government apparatus that dictates by fascist force how the people of the world are to dance. The death star was a depopulation weapon alright, but not in the way you see it. It wasn't meant to depopulate by means of a virus, but by means

of a globally enforced abject poverty. A virus is too risky. Poverty is a powerful weapon for depopulation by 'decivilization.' It is far more effective in that, and more easily targetable."

"No!" I protested again. "That can't be right."

"Oh Peter, give yourself a week," Olive replied gently. "Step back from what you have been involved in. Try to see the whole picture. If you're in the forest, you can't see the forest for all the trees. All you see is trees."

We checked into the Chateau Victoria at noon. We got one of the top-level suites on the twenty-second floor, just below the Parrot House Restaurant. But that's not where we ate lunch, or had dinner that night. We ate at a quaint English restaurant near the harbor. Steak and Lobster was on the menu, and a light Pinot from a local vintner located in an area called the Okanagon. The decor, of course, was all English. The waiters were 'proper,' as if they had just been imported from "jolly good England, the land where the 'proper' people love to arrange a few jolly good wars to spice up the empire."

That's how Olive had put it. Of course, she didn't have to tell me. My experience with the fondi in Venice, during the SDI cancellation, hadn't been forgotten. I told Olive what the fondi's people had spelled out to me as their permanent objective, their most secretly cherished plan, their plan for breaking up all the major nations in the world, which they called empires, which they said have no basis to exist.

Olive just laughed and told me that the people of the fondi hadn't revealed their secrets at all. "Their permanent objective lies elsewhere," she said. "But you can't see that yet. You've got to step back, Peter. Set your mind free."

She paused, then smiled. "For now, let's focus on dinner," she added, "and on wine, and on love."

For this change in focus, I didn't need a second invitation. I realized that the only thing that could have spoiled our time together, was some ugly political talk, and that was now suspended.

After our dinner, our wine, and our dessert were all history, we drove a few blocks to Beacon Hill Park, to take in the sunset. From a park bench high above a cliff at the Strait of Juan de Fuca a sweeping view opened up before us, of the entire north shore of the Olympic peninsula.

"Is this was you meant by stepping back, to gain a wider view?" I asked. Below us, at the shore, a pebble beach stretched out into the distance as far as one could see.

"Are you now beginning to see the seashore?" Olive asked

a while later. She interrupted the romantic mood that was developing there, at the edge of the sea, with the sunset unfolding. "This is also how you must look at the world. You have to look at it from a higher vantagepoint. From the mountaintop, as it were. And what do you see? You see H. G. Wells arguing for a global world government. You see Bertrand Russell arguing for the same world government, but one that is held together with the terrible threats of the atomic bomb. You see Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as a demonstration exercise to entice the nations of the world to give up their sovereignty to a global world government. There was no military need for the atom bombs to be dropped," she added.

"Then came the cold war that no one was allowed to resolve. It was supposed to have caused a major catastrophe, but that didn't happen, luckily, not even on the smallest scale. The slightest nuclear hiccup would have opened the door wide to a global world government. In the background of this world government, world-population reduction would be enforced at the empire's will.

"That's probably the real hidden reason why the fondi are crying so loud for a global world government. They want to be able to enforce their genocide without resistance. But since the cold war nuclear weapons standoff has failed, the fondi changed the game and hijacked humanity's environmental concerns. They hijacked it in order to create a different avenue to push for their coveted global world government. On this platform their goals will be pursued, of forcing the global shutdown of some of the most useful chemicals and processes invented by the genius man.

"The global warming scare falls into this category. Just look at this scene and listen in the background. The ultimate focus of this scene is put on creating a global world government with real enforcement powers, and that means fascist powers. That's the platform on which the empires are able to exist unhindered, and carry out their looting as Rome once did.

"Then came the death star. Don't you hear the cries already that we need a global world government for sure, one that is wielding an iron fist to prevent 'such things' from happening again?

"Establishing a global world government fascist rule, with the hidden agenda of creating an environment of 'managed' poverty and 'managed' population controls, is the real goal of the fondi's empire. That's what they didn't tell you, but which their every policy drive moves towards. They have pushed this issue again and again. The death star was merely a provocation in this game to force the world's subjection to their goal. And if that fails, they will try it again in some other fashion."

I just sat there. I was stunned by the force of Olive's conviction. Evidently, she was right about the possible purpose of the death star. I sensed that she was, I just didn't want to accept it. I

didn't know what to answer her. "That's monstrous," I simply replied.

"The death star killed eight million people," I added. "It could have killed hundreds of millions. How can anyone plan atrocities on such a scale? That's inhuman."

"Your kind of thinking is irrelevant, Peter. What do eight million deaths matter to people who intend to reduce the world population by four thousand millions of people? Did anyone care about the hundreds of thousands of people who were killed in Nagasaki and Hiroshima after the war was essentially won? The people who arrange these kinds of tragedies for humanity, take pride in saying about themselves, that really high minded people don't give a hoot about people's life and happiness, especially other people's."

"Is that what you meant by taking in the larger view?" I asked again, cautiously.

She nodded, and added sadly that it has to be that way, before we can even begin to think about a solution. She said, that as far as she was concerned, the deaths of Anton and Nicolai exceeded the threshold. She said that killing Nicolai and Anton was the greatest mistake the oligarchy ever made. She swore that she would do everything in her power to rip up their agenda, and she added that she would like to invite me to participate in this project.

I nodded, but told her that this was impossible, since I was already committed to such a project.

"Then allow me to join you," she said.

"Welcome to the club," I answered her, and embraced her, and followed the invitation up with a kiss.

"Heather and Ross are also involved in fighting this battle," I said to her. "They have taken on the task to re-Christianize the Catholic Church, to convert it back from the Byzantine model to the original Christian model of universal love that binds humanity on a lateral foundation. We may never win on this front, the opposition is extremely powerful, but the fight is on. We have taken the battle right into the halls of the Vatican, right to the Pope. The Vatican people even listened to us, before they closed the door on us. Nevertheless, they can't close the door that easily on the principle of the idea that they must now deal with. The principle makes its own demands. It makes demands on us, too."

"Ah, this means we are all birds of the same feather," Olive replied and held her hand out to me, "as you said in Caracas."

We stayed at the park by the seashore and talked until long after the sunset had faded. The next day we visited the world famous Butchard's gardens.

Along the way to the gardens, Olive noticed a sign leading to a university botanical project. "Let's go there," she requested. "Maybe we can have our picnic there."

Indeed we could. We did. Several picnic tables had been set up near a set of rhododendron bushes that were huge in size and full out in bloom. The bushes looked like giant mounds of white and pink, which were swarmed over by countless bees. The bees, like tiny aircraft, flew from blossom to blossom. They crawled deep inside them to get at the nectar that would sustain them in their journey while they performed the vital task of pollinating the flowers that they visited. These tiny winged beings existed in a perfectly designed symbiotic unity that was evidently established long before us humans arrived on their scene.

Olive had asked me to note especially how diligently these bees performed their duty, driven by their instinct that has become a part of their nature. "That's all they know," said Olive. "This is also enough for them to know, because their action reflects the universal principle of economy that has been bred into their existence. We human beings, in contrast, have a far greater range of voluntarism than the bees have. We can discover. We can explore. We can also take utterly stupid actions that become destructive to ourselves. That's where all of our problems come from. We steal, lie, cheat, rob, murder, rape, destroy, all in the mistaken belief that we, society, can be benefited by this process. We even say openly that greed is the dynamo of the human economy. We say that it makes the world go round. We say many such things. So, we go ahead and build empires on greed and theft, and on the violence that is necessary to enforce the stealing to satisfy the greed. And finally, in the end, all of that ends up destroying us.

"The problem is that we can say anything we want and print it in the newspaper as the truth, but that doesn't make it the truth as we always find out eventually. In time, of course, we will indeed find out what the real truth is about the fundamental principles of economy; the principles that support our existence. The bees probably found this out over millions of years and adapted themselves to live in accord with these fundamental principles. Compared to them, we are newcomers on the block. But give us a few million years, and we too, will adapt ourselves to live in accord with the principles of economy that support our existence, just as the bees have. For now, however, this is something we have not yet achieved to any large degree. But why should we wait millions or years to establish that knowledge? We have the capacity with our sentient intellect to skip those millions of years of evolution, and develop those fundamental principles of our existence, scientifically. That's how we can solve our problems. This is also why we are here. We can help humanity in doing this research. We can help make the discoveries, and take part in communicating the truths that humanity's pioneers have recognized to exist. We can promote this even when people like to close their minds to these scientific advances,

insisting that there is no such thing as truth; who call truth an opinion, and regard public opinion as the truth, which they, of course, manipulate in the first place. We can change the world by reorganizing people's thinking onto a platform of sanity," Olive concluded.

"This has never been done before," I replied.

"That's no reason why we shouldn't start," said Olive and grinned. "Homer has once made such a start, and the outcome of this singular effort laid the foundation for the unfolding of the Greek Classical culture.

"Dante did the same thing. He literally laid the foundation for the Golden Renaissance in Italy. Confucius did the same in China. All the great developments in history have started that way. All that we need to do, is make the same thing happening again, except on a much larger scale. That's what we have to work on, Peter, if our love is to have any meaning. And that is what I am committed to do," Olive concluded.

"To do what?" I asked.

"To help you of course, Peter. To help you to become effective."

"Are thinking of staging another world conference?"

"No Peter, you are out of the rut now. You don't need those conferences anymore. You are free of that. You can move freely. The time has come for you to start running. You need to step into the shoes of Nicolai, and enlarge them. You need to become a great force in the world. You need to help humanity to uplift itself. That's what you must do. How else can you look at yourself in the mirror each night and say to yourself: Yes, my having lived this day has made a difference in making the world a brighter place for us all? That's what love is, Peter. Our love for our humanity, our self-love on which all love depends, forces us to do that. That's what it means to be human."

She reached into her purse at this point and handed me a folded up sheet of paper, a bank statement as it appeared.

"That paper says that you have ten-million Hong Kong dollars deposited in your name in a Chinese bank," said Olive.

"What!" I heard myself say. I looked at the paper, indeed it was so. The statement had mine and her name on it, and it was for ten million Hong Kong dollars.

"What's that?" I asked perplexed as I handed the paper back to her. This didn't seem real.

"I have solicited a donation for you, so that you can work in very country in the world where your work is needed. The money is all yours, to use as required. All you need to do, is ask."

"Wow!" that was all that I could say. I embraced her with such joy that I nearly lifted her off the ground in our embrace. "Does Fred know?" I asked.

"Fred helped arrange it," she replied. "Many people have helped. But enough of that. Let's go to the gardens," she added.

The gardens were as extensive, expensive, and as crowded as one might expect for a major tourist attraction, but they were also a terrific showcase of exquisite garden designs. The great sunken garden, built into an empty quarry, virtually hits one with a great surprise as one enters at a lookout point high above a vast explosion of colors and shapes.

"This is Erica's flower garden," Olive exclaimed. "It has become our garden of life. That's what we are fighting for. We are fighting to maintain and enrich that garden, and this constantly, even while we have become one with it in ever widening circles of our love; a love for what we find there; what we care for; what we honor; what we embrace."

We had English high tea at the gardens, at a special restaurant built for that purpose. The extravaganza added its own unique increment to the 'light' of that 'brilliant' day. I told Olive that having her with me for that celebration was like having one of the finest roses of the garden of life facing me every moment, without which the world would be empty and drab.

"Oh you!" she scolded me, then smiled and answered with a kiss.

We spend the rest of our week together at a tiny resort on the West Coast of the island, at a place called, Point No Point. We went for strolls on nearly deserted beaches, watched the breakers roll in, collected all kinds of interesting stones from the pebble beds, and discovered how we could make them skip and jump.

We ate breakfast, lunch, and dinner at the resort's own restaurant, high above the seashore with a view that seemed to have no limit. We realized, that if we could see beyond the horizon, the next human place we would see, would be Japan on the other side of the world.

For our evenings a kind of hot tub was provided on the balcony. The tub was shaped like a giant bathtub made for two. We could both lie in it side by side and watch the stars come up when the afterglow of the sunset faded away.

The view we had from the balcony of our cabin at the edge of the sea, was no different than the view we had enjoyed days earlier at the Beacon Hill Park. The sunset unfolded far to the right where the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the Pacific Ocean merged on

a fine line that existed only in the mind.

Other, similar 'vistas' also made that evening memorable, vistas of the mind that were unfolding in the sunset. Olive was at the center of one of them. She stood at the railing, facing the mellow light of the evening and the glist of the reflections of sunlight in the waters that stretched endlessly below the cliff. It appeared that the cliff had been the key feature for which the site of our cabin had been chosen, and for which we had chosen that cabin from among many. Olive's hair shone like a halo in the sunlight that surrounded her graceful figure. Though she was facing the light, with her back to me, I could see the features of her face, and the joy and the love that illumined it, in my mind. And that brightness was just as real as the afternoon sun was in physical terms.

She wore a light dress of a deep blue color. It suited her well. Sexuality wasn't much of an element in this context of a bright evening with bright vistas, among all the other aspects that made her beautiful, though it was still a part of the scene. It was a part of her that couldn't be covered up with a dress or a coat, nor did it need to be covered up. It was a part of the air in which we moved that one couldn't banish; and why should one. I realized that it had been like that from the beginning.

I joined her on the balcony and suggested to her that when we first met, we did meet in the 'rare' atmosphere of the high mountaintop in the mental domain that is commonly called universal sovereignty. I told her that when we first met she was so special to me that I had to be careful not to alter what seemed like wrapped in a wonderful magic. I suggested that this hadn't faded. I also said that we were equal on that mountaintop and still are. There, all humanity is equal in all respects. There, human beings are neither celibate nor sexual, nor gay, lesbian, heterosexual, or bisexual, but are just human beings that include all of these aspects in their individuality in which unfolds the beauty of their soul; the riches of their love; the power of their gentle heart like the radiance of a summer's day that is reflected in their very being.

"We met on that mountain top of universal sovereignty every time when we met," I said to her. "There, love is forever safe and most beautiful. Love can never be a tyrant there that makes demands out of lust, or rage, or in a quest for power. No one can carry that kind of baggage to the mountaintop. Such baggage is too heavy."

Olive just nodded and smiled so as not to interrupt the light of that idea.

"When we met for the first time," I continued, "my tears for humanity must have told you that I was there on the mountain with you, and you offered me your handkerchief to dry those tears since you stood at the same mountain with me. Still, it had always been a puzzle to me until today, why our sexual intimacies that happened

that evening had been so easy and free, so human and so far removed from the lustful eagerness that unfolds at lower levels where a person's humanity is so easily overburdened by pursuits that are not human?"

Olive just nodded and hugged me for the thought.

"Actually, this is what I had come to Russia for, to discover," I continued. "I didn't know then, what I was looking for. I had experienced great freedoms during my assignment in Leipzig, which were brighter than anything I had ever imagined to be possible. I had been invited to that same mountain top by many people, without knowing it. I had seen vistas there, of a New World. I had lived in that world, briefly. Then I faced the task of telling Sylvia about it. My closest friend had counseled me to ask for Sylvia's forgiveness. But that wasn't right. I knew I had to bring Sylvia with me to that mountaintop where that New World unfolds. This meant that I had first to discover its science."

"Were you successful?" Olive asked.

"Successful isn't the word," I replied. "I barely knew that the mountain existed. I asked for Sylvia's hand as I attempted to stumble my way upwards. Sure, I had the help of many people to guide me, especially Helen, who evidently lived on the mountaintop. I don't even know if Sylvia and I ever made it anywhere near to the top that day. The new vistas along the way seemed sufficient to turn the struggle into a celebration. Helen proved to be an excellent guide. I could hear her say in my mind, about my fears and reservation: What have these got to do with anything, do they change the principle involved? That's how I knew I was on the right track. I also felt that when one is on the mountaintop, one doesn't ask those questions anymore. The answer becomes interwoven with one's being, a being filled with joy and peace. Brahms' Number Four was performed on that mountain. I realize that now. Oh, I had hoped to see you there among the audience, because the performance reflected the same mountain air that we had breathed together briefly on the day we met. If I had only opened my mind that day more fully, to this 'mountain air,' I would have looked for you on stage instead of among the audience. I should have known that someone who lives on the very top of that mountain, like you did even then, can never be found cast in a passive role, or be a passive person in the world. I can see this now."

"The important thing was that we met on the mountain," said Olive, "and that you realized that we did, and also that you have begun to realize that we have always lived there. Because there, we just love."

We never utilized our hot tub until it was quite dark outside. We had too many other things on the go during the brightness of

the day; picnics by the beach; exploring new places; hiking on muddy trails through 'haunted' forests filled with the eerie sounds of scraping branches as the trees moved with the wind. We explored hidden beaches, one with a built in waterfall fed by a creek cascading over a bare rocky cliff.

The hot tub was a place for relaxing.

"I was going to tell you a story," said Olive one night in the hot tub. "I was going to tell you that story when I presented you the money that I had been able to raise for your work." She said this while we were waiting for the first stars to appear. The sunset had faded. Only a faint hue of light remained on the horizon where the sun had set earlier, long before we even got into our giant bathtub. The resort people had called it a hot tub, but it really was just a giant bathtub with bubble making jets on all sides, and lots of them.

"I was going to tell this story, because it reflects where the money came from," said Olive, "which came mainly from a lot of ordinary folks, like you and me. I just forgot how the story ends."

I told her to relax and not to worry. "Enjoy the beautiful night, and maybe you'll remember the details afterwards," I said to her.

She told me that I was right, and then immersed herself totally into our tiny sea of swirling bubbles.

"The story is about a kingdom and a weak king," she said a long while later when the first star became visible. "The king was king by name, but in reality he was merely a puppet in the hands of his advisors. The trouble was that his advisors were more insane than he was. They constantly pushed the king into starting wars with other people, even though the kingdom didn't have the resources to finish those wars, much less to win the peace afterwards. The people were getting increasingly desperate in this worsening situation, especially when more and more people were being killed in those wars, and the economy that was supporting the kingdom was collapsing. Bread became scarce, milk became almost unavailable, and the taxes became evermore outrageous. And still the wars went on.

"Eventually, as if it were by popular demand, the wars were only fought against weaker people who lacked the means to defend themselves. Their storehouses were looted and the people were enslaved. But soon, those 'resources' dried up, also.

"Suddenly, an announcement was made in the kingdom about a big war that would solve all problems: A war to end all wars, so they said. Some people, foolishly, liked the idea of a big war to end all wars, a war that would make the king a super-ruler over the entire region in which the kingdom was located. Everybody talked about the big war. They celebrated the war as the beginning of a great empire, even though the war had not even begun. Only a few

objected. Among them was a sage.

"The sage understood that the imposition of force and universal domination does not help a people to develop their human potential; their productivity; their creativity; their ingenuity; and their industry; which he said were the key elements for building an efficient economy and a richer life in a secure world. He told to whoever would listen to him, that society's self-development alone would improve everyone's life in the kingdom, and create the kind of self-realization that is essential for a person's happiness.

"As it was, over time many people had come to understand what the sage was saying and agreed with him. They even realized that he was offering them quite literally a whole New World, and this not on a platform of war, like the wars that had destroyed the nation, but on the platform of their self-development as a people. Thus, the sage was able to offer the people hope, and this hope was founded on the basis of his intellectual background in the tallest humanist scientific traditions of all times.

"The trouble was, that the sage wasn't the king. He was but a sage and had no power to influence the policies of the state. In fact, the king soon hated the sage for his powers of perception that he lacked himself. He hated the sage, because he knew, although he was the king, the people could abdicate him and that he would be abdicated for sure if the sage ever gained the universal support of the entire population. Thus, a battle unfolded between the king's stooges and the sage and his supporters. The battle soon became another war, a war of slander and legal actions. Nevertheless the sage was gaining support throughout the realm. Of course, that support was a far cry away from being sufficient to abdicate the king.

"In order to increase his support among the people, the sage's most loyal supporters started a campaign of fund raising, so that his ideas could be copied by many scribes, to be given to people who could read, who would then be able to teach others. This was done so that everybody could understand the platform of the sage's proposed New World for all people.

"Now, it was here where the system broke down," said Olive. "Many people said that they couldn't possibly spare any money for such a lofty project. They insisted that they had barely enough for themselves, to buy food with for their family. They came up with all kinds of excuses: Their children needed shoes; their spouses a new coat for the coming winter; and so it went on and on. They made it clear that they couldn't possibly give their scarce resources away for something as exotic as a political campaign. They all said that they liked the sage, and that his ideas are good, but in the same breath they also became indignant and asked why should they put themselves out to the point that it would be hurting their families

in order to support a man to become king? So, most of them declined and said that they couldn't do what was asked of them.

"I just can't remember how the story ends," said Olive. "It has the potential to end like the U.S. election ended in 1932, that ended with Roosevelt's election to the White House. The people gave themselves a victory by putting Roosevelt into a position where he could help the people to fulfill their dream of creating a New World for themselves. The story of the kingdom and the sage also has the potential to end like the Renaissance ended, that was destroyed when the war philosophers of Venice gained dominance and created a chain of wars that lasted for eighty years and ended up destroying half the population of Europe. That's when cities of a hundred thousand are reduced to just a few thousand and entire villages were simply wiped off the map as though they had never existed. If such a thing happened in the kingdom the people might remember the sage just as some pioneers remembered the Renaissance in the pains of their dying world during the Thirty Years War. Would this kind of ending be the right ending for my story?" she asked.

"If I were to write the story," I said to Olive, "I would give the people in my story enough wisdom, so that they would find it in their heart to support the sage, regardless of the hardships involved."

"But would this be realistic, Peter?" asked Olive.

"It all depends on what realistic means," I replied. "From a scientific standpoint, a victorious humanist ending would be realistic. In fact, it would be the only realistic answer. If I were to write the ending, I would describe the people as being willing to make the needed sacrifices when those sacrifices are necessary to protect their civilization and with it their own life, since civilization is the foundation of a modern people's very existence. Everyone's physical existence depends on its functioning. Why shouldn't the people in the story be able to understand this?"

"Historically, this kind of understanding has never been achieved," Olive countered me. "Only a very few daring souls stood up against the banks prior to 1345, at which point the whole thing collapsed and created such a catastrophe that the entire European economy collapsed with it. Of course, you know the outcome of that. People became so weak by starvation that the Black Death plaque wiped out half the population in a short period of time. There weren't even enough people left alive to bury the dead, in some places. Only many years later did the people begin to realize that the wealth of society is not in its money, but in its productive capacity as human beings, in its creativity, and its industry. If they had known this earlier, they would have protected their civilization. But they didn't know that. And we are not any better of today than

they were then."

"Dante Alighieri could see the writing on the wall," I countered Olive. "He could foresee a catastrophe unfolding two centuries before it happened. He warned the people. He became a political activist. He was exiled from Florence, his home city, because of this. But this didn't deter him. He became the moral poet of world renown for which he is still honored. He literally created the Italian language, to tell his story. He did this by collecting the most beautiful spoken dialects that he could find, to build his poetry on the grandest possible platform for an advanced type of thinking as could be created. The Renaissance might never have happened had Dante not created the linguistic foundation for it, and a moral, scientific, and spiritual foundation as well. His trilogy, the Divine Comedy, became a milestone in the history of humanist development. History also tells us that Dante received wide spread support in his long-term efforts for creating his New World, though he didn't live long enough to see it what became the Renaissance. So you see, Olive it can be done, and it has been done."

"People say that Dante was exceptionally bright," Olive replied. "He certainly was that by today's standard."

"But he wasn't that in reality," I replied to Olive. "Was Dante not a human being? And the people today, are they not likewise human beings?"

"Our modern society has become a society of dedicated actors in a very bad play," said Olive, "and they have begun to live that role. They even love it. They are playing that role for a few worthless pennies, and for a few worthless promises. Now you say that you want to tell them: Don't live that way? Forget your dream! Make painful sacrifices to protect the real world in which you actually live! They won't do it, Peter, for as long as they live in their dream world."

"Maybe that is why all the great reverse paradigm shifts in history occurred in the wake of great catastrophes," I replied, "that jolted people out of their dream world, back to reality. That is why we had the Thirty Years War, and World War One and Two, and the Cold War, and the mess that we have today. My point is that we have come to the end of that road. That is why I would write the story of that kingdom in a manner in which the sage wins and becomes king, and becomes the builder of a New World. The Old World is finished. Nothing can be built on it. I realize that my ending would represent a great, revolutionary advance for humanity, but if this would come to pass, it wouldn't be another dream, because I know such an ending is possible whether one can find a historic precedent or not."

"Actually, it has to be that way, because the alternative is unthinkable," Olive agreed.

"Besides, what point is there in writing about a failed ending?" I asked. "We have seen too many failed endings in history when vast numbers of people perished as the result of their failures."

"Still, Peter, I might be inclined to write the story with a failed ending for that very reason," said Olive after a few moments of silence. "Writing the story that way reflects the principle of the classical drama. In the form of the classical drama you set up a situation that can have horrendous consequences for people to learn, which can be avoided if the right actions are taken. These actions would require a strong stand for higher principles that lie above the fog of conventional perception and the axioms of so-called 'save living.' Thus, as the drama unfolds the right actions, which everyone knows should be taken, are not taken in the dram, for reasons of small-minded thinking. As the end result, everyone dies."

"Isn't the story that we have before us a bit more complex than that?" I asked. "The resolution of our story can only be achieved on the basis of two higher principles that appear contradictory to one another, but must be drawn together as one in order to elevate a person. That's too much to illustrate with a classical drama. I would rather show an ending that illustrates the rigors of the necessary scientific processes that can accomplish what must be accomplished for the story to end in victory."

"You are talking about the principles of universal love and universal sovereignty, right?" Olive interrupted.

"Right!" I repeated. "Who understands these today? A person might say: I am a sovereign individual. I choose not to break my back so that the sage can become king. I refuse to believe that this is the only option we have to save our world."

I suggested to Olive if I were to write the ending of her story in that manner, the story would end with the kingdom going to hell, and no one reading that story would be helped by such an ending. "Indeed, right now the world is staged around this kind of ending, and no one sees a way out. We have financial and economic piracy on a huge scale becoming evermore rampant around the world. The world has become a giant Roman pantheon of sovereign pirates that loot humanity under the protection of the law to the point that the economies disintegrate worldwide. In parallel to that we have another Roman pantheon of war mongrels, which each in his own way lights matches everywhere to set the world on fire at will. We need to have our story to end in such a way that the reader walks away with a clear understanding of the principles that can turn this mad situation around. We need to establish the mental platform that uplifts the idea of sovereignty unto the platform of a higher universal principle, a community of principle that is contrary to forming a Roman pantheon. Only then, when we can manage to write this

process into the story, can we let the story end in hell. Then the reader might understand how to prevent the same tragedy in real life, and becomes motivated to fight for it no matter what it takes. I think this can be accomplished when we bring the principles of universal love and universal sovereignty together into an indivisible singularity. That's the process that has built our civilization. At this higher platform, the principle of universal love defines the nature of universal sovereignty, and the principle of universal sovereignty defines the nature of universal love. On this interlinked platform we are finally save, individually and collectively. On this platform, love and the respect for sovereignty, which are really one and the same, complement each other, and thus we enrich one another's existence as a matter of principle."

"Wasn't this also the ending story of Jesus' struggle in the garden of Gethsemane?" Olive asked. "He was facing his impending execution for his love for humanity, which the people, even his own disciples, had failed to respond to, right to the hour of his agonizing decision. Had the people responded more fully and more intelligently with an understanding of what was involved, his self-sacrifice might not have been required to tell the full story of the principle of universal love and universal sovereignty. But this was not the case. For this reason he chose the bitter path, though he had the power to avoid it, and allowed his execution to begin that would enable humanity later on to come to terms with the principles of universal love and universal sovereignty, even universal life."

"We can take this higher than that," I replied. "According to religious doctrine, God demanded this of him. I would say that in a humanist sense, his love for humanity demanded this of him, not God. In a scientific sense, it was his privilege as a human being to love in such a manner that humanity would be uplifted for all times to come, by his consummate example with which to illustrate the still higher principle in which the unity of God and man, and the sovereignty of life itself, is defined."

I suggested that it is the privilege of every human being to reach that high on the scale so that that whole of humanity becomes uplifted by ones effort in life, even if the outcome won't be realized within the span of one's own time frame. "Most people will shy away from this privilege," I added. "And so, they deny themselves the privilege to be truly human."

"Maybe it was the imagined tragedy of Jesus' ending, and the subsequent triumphant ending of the story of his life, that inspired the form of the classical drama. And, maybe, we have not reached the full dimension of this form yet, in presenting the kind of sovereignty in which love become a supreme privilege for the betterment of humanity."

I interrupted Olive. "In this case I am basically right," I said,

"when I think that our hypothetical story should end with a victory. Because in Jesus' classical drama, love did win its victory. We can write our story in the same manner, ending in a kind of victory in which love itself is sovereign, as a privilege, and remains so even if a person cannot hope to see the rewards of it in his or her lifetime. If the people in our story fight on this platform, for the principles of civilization that the sage represents, then they are not fighting for the sage to become king, nor for his promise for a new world they may never see, but are fighting for the sovereignty of their own humanity and the privilege of their love for one another. This fundamental shift in focus will make a huge difference in their fight and in their readiness to support the sage who then is but an element in the process of their own fight. His fight then becomes their fight, and they will see themselves privileged to have an active part in it. If this is how they will fight for their civilization, their world will survive. Their support for the sage won't even be an open question anymore. And in the process of doing that, they will build a new world for themselves on the foundation of that richer world within that they have already established in their hearts."

"Do you know what this means, Peter, what you just said?" asked Olive when I was finished pleading my case for a positive ending.

I told her that I didn't.

"This means that you have discovered the secret of my loving. You had asked me what my secret is, when we met in the Austrian Alps. But I couldn't tell you then. Remember, I said to you: me, I just love! That was all I could tell you. I think you just discovered for both of us what the real answer is."

After she said this, she let herself slide deep into the hot bubbling water as if this were a metaphor for our ongoing commitment to envelop one another with the substance of our love.

I followed her lead. I loved the metaphor, and the warmth that enveloped me, and the bubbles.

Olive never suggested how the money should be spent that she had collected for me. She had merely arranged for me to have access to it out of her deep, deep love. When I commented on the vast scope of her loving, she actually blushed. Then she replied in the same manner as she had replied in the Alps. "Me, I just love," she said. "That all I can do. That all I want to do. That's what makes my life rich."

We had begun to work in teams after 'Aquarius.' With the new money at our disposal, holding down jobs was no longer a requirement for any of us. Still, we kept the connections alive. Fred allowed us to keep our positions in an inactive manner. He called us

his backup team. In a sense, we became a greater backup team than he or any of us had realized. The reason was that we finally could do what we had felt for some time needed to be done. Fred was with us on that. He had to be careful in the past not to involve us into missions that would have compromised his and our security clearance. Now that we were on our own, we were legally allowed to actually criticize the government openly and snoop into alleys that had been off limits to us before. Often, just a hint from Fred would get us moving in the right direction. We weren't out to embarrass the government, but to uplift society into becoming more seriously involved in its own self-government in order that traitors from within could not longer so easily ride rough shot over the dreams and hopes of society, dreams that had once been taken for granted as a government goal, such as the common welfare of society, but which, as we found out, many people in government now simply laughed about when we questioned them.

The reality that we saw more and more, was that government had been manipulated to follow an imperial course, which meant that the welfare of society was no longer a concern, but rather a hindrance that the imperials were annoyed for having to work around in order to keep up the image of a concern that really wasn't there. The reality became ever clearer that the fondi had bought themselves a rich resource for their goals, both financially and militarily, with which to carry out their bidding. In other words, our government no longer existed as an institution for the greater good of society, but existed primarily as an imperial tool that was lavishly financed by society, but which fought for goals that were blatantly contrary to the deepest interests of society anywhere in the world.

To correct this trend, became our chosen objective. Still, we had to stay within the limits of the political concerns that society had become open to, and had begun a fight for on its own. The real issues that we almost stumbled on, that were quietly brought to our attention, turned out to be too unbelievable for anyone to accept as real, much less oppose in a meaningful manner. We felt we could bridge this credibility gap by raising the sensitivity level in society high enough so that the incredible could become credible. And that is what we set out to do.

Steve had continued his work in China after 'Aquarius' had been destroyed. He had become famous in China as the chief organizer of the by then worldwide opposition to the 'global warming' myth that he compared to the ancient Greek mythology that had kept the people under a spell of impotence for centuries. Steve loved to prove to anyone who would listen that the hyped up global warming scare had but one single goal, to destroy the economies of humanity by imposing murderous energy deficiencies, since energy is the key

component of any economy. Strangely, very few people were able to recognize this obvious fact. Only occasionally, when some gasoline pumps ran dry because of artificial shortages for price gauging, did a few people wake up, momentarily, and a very few of those actually stayed awake.

Steve called the people who carried out the 'global warming,' projects, the Warming Earth Society, utilizing Nicolai's term for describing all those who promote the global warming myth. He said that the Warming Earth Society was demanding the use of useless alternate energy resources. They fought against nuclear power, the only large-scale alternative to fossil fuels that exists, and promoted windmills and solar cells. Steve was demanding that the fondi that financed them, tell the truth.

From his scientific background he was able to prove that the entire alternate energy drive was a fraud. The truth was that if one were to cover the entire Sahara dessert with solar cells, the energy output of such a gigantic array would be just barely enough to supply a single city of the size of London. In other words, the entire solar cell energy fantasy is an unrealizable dream. The solar cell energy flux density is minuscule, while the costs are gigantic and the land requirements are prohibitive. In addition, with a simple calculation, Steve was able to prove to his opponents that solar cells are net energy consumers, instead of producers. Meaning, that a vastly greater energy input is required to produce the solar cells, than they ever give back during their life span. And about wind mills, Steve's calculations showed that one would have to cover the entire surface of the earth with windmills, and the output would still fall far short of what is presently required to power a modern economy.

What angered him, was the simple fact that this monstrous hidden war against humanity was not only tolerated by society, but was supported, and this even in the light of the close call of that near global catastrophe that was clearly just another part of that same war against humanity.

Steve laughed one day on the telephone, saying that the Warming Earth Society is actually his best ally in justifying China's building of the Three Gorges Dam. It doesn't use fossil fuels to generate energy, or atomic fuels. He laughs and calls it environmentally friendly. In fact, he called the dam project a project for the expanding of life, both with rich energy and with boundless water resources for the development of new agriculture in an area the size of all of Germany. In contrast to that, he called the Warming Earth Society's project that demands a 80-90% cutback in fossil fuel energy use, a project for the forced expansion of death.

Steve sometimes called the Global Warming Society also a collection of murderers by intend, since their actions are designed to

murder billions of people who will no longer be able to support themselves in their deviously imposed energy lean world that their imperial objectives demand. He said, that if the Warming Earth Society were really serious about alternatives to fossil fuel energy, it would promote nuclear power development and the development of nuclear fusion technologies.

"But its doesn't do that," said Steve on the phone. "Instead, the Warming Earth Society fights the nuclear option even more tenaciously than it fights the use of fossil fuels. It even fights China's great dam project. And so it must," said Steve, "because the fondi are not interested in human life. The imperial oligarchy is interested in creating death by depriving humanity of the only energy resource that society presently has, on which people's living depends until nuclear power replaces fossil fuels as the next natural step forward to a still richer energy abundant world."

Steve laughed again. "The Warming Earth Society people are fools," he said, "if they believe it to be possible to power trains, trucks, and industries with windmill produced energies, or if they believe that humanity can live without the vast transportation system that transports its food and its daily necessities, and can live without the industries that produce their food and all the necessities for life, all of which require large amounts of energy to operate."

Steve said proudly that his pet project is to promote the development of nuclear fusion power to assure the continuity of human life. He saw it as a requirement for the Eurasian Land-Bridge development project that is designed to enrich everyone's existence throughout the entire Eurasian continent, and to assure the rescuing of Africa and thereby the rescuing of the whole world.

Ushi, likewise, had continued her work in China, promoting economic development. She told us that she was finally utilizing her talents as a journalist, "for a great good," especially in connection with the Eurasian Land-Bridge development project that was fast gaining international support. Russia had come on board to support the project, Japan too, even India, and many other Asian nations as well. Ushi told us that she had traveled extensively throughout the whole land-bridge area, including Russia. She had traveled as the unofficial representative of the project, more as a visionary and keenly alert person, than a representative of any specific government project. She told us that she had inspired countless people though her writing, with the substance of their humanity that stands behind all the great projects that were beginning to enrich their life. She called this substance the substance of their love for one another.

Sylvia and I had committed us to a different fight at home, the fight against biological weapons, chemical weapons, and atomic

bombs. We called them no longer indefensible weapons. We called the incompatible weapons, because there is nothing in them that is even remotely compatible with our humanity. Nor are the imperial powers that require them, themselves remotely compatible with a human world and a human society.

Since there were numerous groups, financial, political, aristocratic, oligarchic, etc., too numerous to count them all, clamoring to use these mass terror weapons for imperial purposes, with all groups ultimately having financial objectives, we called them summarily the *fondi*. The term was suggested by the *fondi* themselves as they had used it in Venice. We simply continued to use it. Some of the '*fondi*' were the *fondi* of old, the rich infamous families of financiers, while others belonged to the worlds old and new 'royalty' or would be royalty, each of which had their own goals, but all of which shared a common objective, which was to keep the world's looting empires alive towards their hoped for goal to ultimately rule the world under one single universal crown or world-empire. What a utopian dream that was! Ironically it was being implemented.

That's what we fought against. No nation, empire, or world-organization was exempted by us from our fight for the universal good that humanity as a whole stood for and represented, especially not the nations who in the past had isolated themselves from the rest of the world by claiming a certain 'legitimacy' for owning nuclear weapons. And the list of those ownership nations was getting longer. We were determined to break the hope of all empires that were aiming to establish themselves as the only ones justified in the world to rule over society, and that included especially everyone who wielded these weapons of terror for the sole purpose of dominating the world. We knew that in order to win our fight we had to overturn the thinking of the entire world on that issue.

Perhaps my commitment to achieve an honest and intelligent peace reflected in part my commitment to honor Nicolai and Antonovna for their determination to protect humanity and its civilization by fighting for the restoration of Africa that had been looted close to death. We determined that it must never be said that these two heroic people have died in vain.

Sylvia had joined our fight for far more concrete reasons, which reflected her conviction that anything short of a wide and open war against the *fondi*'s goals would fail to end their ability and resolve to destroy humanity and to end civilization according to their own publicly stated goal under "the end of history" doctrine. They promoted their vision of a new world in which all prior history comes to a halt, a world ruled by a single, global, world-empire, a modern global Roman empire, a world subdued into peace by terror.

Sylvia was convinced that the death star incidence would

happen again and again in different ways, and ever bigger ways, towards this end of history if we did not overturn that 'end of history' doctrine and the destroyed human identity of the people behind it. She was convinced that as long as the fondi's goal to dramatically depopulate the planet, that was to assure the world imperial dream, remained unchallenged, the occurrence of evermore clever and larger forms of biological warfare, economic warfare, nuclear warfare, environmental warfare, or a combination of all them, would be assured, and so would be the intended consequences until the history of a human world ends.

In this context, we were all working together. We were bound together by the conviction that no warfare against humanity could ever be effective if we could bridge the self-isolation of mankind by uplifting our common humanity in the eyes of all people as the source of our common universal good, the only source of good in the universe. Even the fight that Ross and Heather had become involved in, was seen by us as not isolated from this context. Everyone's effort towards uplifting humanity seemed vital.

We also realized that it was urgent that we would win, since a renewed attack on humanity could be started at any time and almost at will. Steve had convinced Ross, before he returned to China after our success in bringing the death star down, that the fondi's geopolitical games were not designed to ever end, but to escalate until the end of history, as they had put it, would be reached.

"What would hinder them from setting the world on fire tomorrow?" Steve had asked one day. He had cautioned Ross not to forget the often overlooked fact that the fondi have never denounced their long standing goal to massively depopulate the earth towards their new golden age of perpetual feudalism, and that this goal and the 'end of history' goal were intertwined.

In a way, I envied Steve. Steve had chosen the easiest fight. He had chosen a subject that people at least talked about. As for nuclear holocaust, most people regarded it to be no longer a credible threat after the cold war had ended, or they didn't want it be a credible threat anymore. They had grown tired of, which was exactly the kind of apathy the criminals who planned for this threat, desired.

Steve had always disagreed with me on this point. He had said that people are not disinterested in what determines their future. He had said that people are too easily induced to waste their energies and their attention in contemplating trivial and inconsequential matters, so that they become bored, burned out, or put themselves asleep.

"That's what many UN sponsored conferences have accomplished," he added at one point. "Most of them are a total fraud," he said. "For as long as the participants are specifically selected for their commitment to the desired goals, such as to legitimize depopulation or economic devolution, the outcome is assured by the process of selecting the participants. That's fraud! And the greater fraud is that the outcome becomes then paraded around the world as the international will of society. This terrible fraud has created worldwide consequences which are now more destructive than a major war, and may become the precursor of a nuclear war."

Steve told me that Ross and I were the lucky ones, since we didn't have those fraudulent movements to worry about who are actively engaged in vicious fighting to bring about major depopulation that the fondi have been harping about for years. "Most of them are so blind," he added, "they don't even know what they are doing, but they are committed to it. Now tell me that this is an easy situation to deal with."

Of course Steve was right, we didn't have any of these hidden factors to worry about. On the other hand, Steve had the advantage that in his particular war, everything was out in the open, while nuclear strategies and the like, are cooked up in secret, behind closed doors, and are carried out at will without even the subtle manipulation of the masses that are commonly used as a pretext for lighting a new fire that consumes the world. It was interesting to explore these differences, even necessary in order to discover the common thread between us all.

Sylvia also played a dual role. She was actually the real diplomat of our group. Just as Heather's bright smiles and vitality always brought a sense of optimism to our gloomy battles, so was Sylvia's love for us uplifting our hopes and making everyone's work seem more worthwhile and important. She, more than anyone else, became the family link that brought Steve, Ushi, Heather, Ross, Tony and myself into one cohesive whole. On this united platform we had a faint hope to accomplish what none of us could ever accomplish alone. Nor did it seem to matter that most of us lived thousands of miles apart from each other for this common fight.

Chapter 10 - The End of History

After Ross and Heather had moved to Mexico, our immediate circle had become noticeably smaller. Tony, Dag, and Al had taken over Ross' monitoring station. Fred became a more frequent visitor after that. He would arrive on his beloved motor cycle that he bought after our return from Caracas. He became rather exited about our plan that we had secretly worked out, to stage a private conference that would bring us all together for a week, to share notes, solve problems, support one another and to explore new avenues for dealing with the growing dangers in the world. We told him that the grand event would be held on Cozumel, Mexico. We told him that we felt that the meeting was needed, since it had become evidently too dangerous to talk openly about the fondi's "End of History" project that was rumbling in the background with ever greater intensity, but wasn't yet promoted openly. Perhaps the reason why one could hear those rumbling actually openly, was that this incredible imperial project had become too unbelievable for people to take serious.

The death star event, that killed eight million people, had started this official trend of utilizing the credibility gap as a means for covering up atrocities that what would normally cause a public outrage. They called the death star a terrorist act and started a global persecution rampage in its wake, in total contrast to their deafening silence to our pleas for help in bringing the death star down.

Steve's assessment from China was, that the fondi and their agents worldwide, had taken off their own terrorist mantle and put it on everyone else, while they themselves remained to be the true terrorists, and this so openly that nobody actually believed that they themselves, as civilized people, could be the actual terrorists behind those atrocities. Steve called this new trend their most clever ploy yet, and warned us that this new trend would set the stage for much bigger things to come down the line. He also warned us to be alert of some coming world-shaking events in the political arena that would be staged not for what they seemed to be, but as a diversion. He hinted that he could not say anything more on the phone. He suggested that he might have said too much already.

Little did we realize that our meeting in Cozumel would turn out to be quite different than any of us had imagined. Indeed, none

of us had taken Steve seriously until Ross briefed us a few days before the conference was to begin, about a renewed nuclear encroachment by the West against Russia and China, that had totally altered the strategic landscape of the world almost over night.

"This is worse," said Ross, "far worse than when Latvia, Lithuania, and the Ukraine were 'accepted' into NATO. Is this what Steve had forecast would happen?"

We became painfully aware that the new encroachment brought NATO's nuclear forces to within just a few hundred miles of the Russian heartland. A fast airplane could cover this distance in a few minutes, and a missile in a fraction of that.

Our Cozumel conference, however, became focused quite differently. It certainly started out differently. Without anyone's intent, it became focused on exploring the reasons behind the death star threat, and what could be done to counter the driving force behind that. Unfortunately, Nina had not able to attend. The Iron Curtain had descended once again after the death star incidence, just days before our conference was scheduled to begin. Indira, however, had come, all the way from India. She had come on Fred's invitation by my own bidding.

It should have been a joyous reunion, with so many of us coming together, but strangely, we didn't feel safe anymore to be seen together, without even knowing why, not even at the beach in Cozumel. There was a great fear in the air. Many governments had become frightened of a threat they couldn't see. Too many civil laws and civil rights had become set aside in this atmosphere of fear that grew like wildfire in the wake of the death star, even though nothing further had yet happened to justify this fear. Rumors had it that people were being arrested in some countries for almost no reason at all, often even outside of their country. The growing strategic fears in the world were suddenly reflected in the form of a growing repression. This meant that we had to conduct our meetings in secret, outside on the beach, far from anyone, where no one could hear us. We pretended as much as we could, to be tourists and nothing more.

As it was, we didn't have to walk far along the beach to be totally alone. Cozumel was great for that. We chose the same beach that Ushi and I had enjoyed many years earlier. Except this time it would be quite a different type of meeting, less joyous, more overloaded with problems that seemed increasingly insurmountable.

While walking along the edge of the surf Ross vented his frustration over the utter blindness of much of humanity by kicking plumes of sand into the air wherever the sand was dry enough to do so. Ross lamented mankind's "stupid inability" as he put it, to recognize the contradiction between the fondi's world wide agitation

for a nuclear confrontation, and the phony environmental concerns that they put forward at the same time, behind which they hide their depopulation plans. "Nothing is more environmentally destructive than a big nuclear war that will likely end all forms of life on the planet," he said. "A nuclear war does not save the natural environment, but destroys it. The fondi are crazy," he shouted into the wind, "when they believe that a nuclear war can be managed and be contained as a small event. There has ever been a man who could stop an ejaculation half way through the process. That's how it will be with nuclear war. Sanity has to prevail prior to the eruption. But haven't we done everything we could to prevent an eruption? No we haven't. Nothing has changed. Eight million people have just died, and the game goes on. The tens of thousands of nuclear weapons that have been built, are still in place. They stand ready to unleash an ejaculation of death at a moments notice, which becomes unstoppable once it begins. And what is it all for? Who will benefit when humanity dies in this holocaust that it has prepared for itself? Nobody benefits. Not even the crazy fondi will benefit from it, which have created this mess. They only reap their own annihilation, even though they believe they have the resources stashed away to be able to survive. The whole damn world is gone crazy!" said Ross as he kicked up plume after plume of sand. "Damn, this paradox should get people to think," he added, "but it doesn't. It should wake them up, but it makes them sleepier. People should be screaming for their life, instead they sit quiet as a mouse." He took the stick he had found and hurled it far out into the sea with all the might he could muster. "What will it take to break this damn apathy? What must we do, and how?"

Ross kicked some more sand into the air again. "And why did we let Nicolai and Anton die?" he said to Steve finally. "I feel we didn't do enough to help them."

"So, that's what his anger was all about?" I thought to myself.

"What more could we have done," said Heather, who was nearby.

"Nicolai didn't just die," Steve intervened. "Nicolai was assassinated, and you Ross, are too small-minded to see this. That's the only possible explanation that makes sense. I had spoken with Nicolai many times about this issue when we were working together. He was fully aware of the dangers he had put himself in at the moment he involved himself with the redevelopment of Africa. Africa was slated for depopulation in order that the continent's natural resources could be preserved for the future use of the fondi's emporium. This was the official, although secret, policy of the USA since 1975. Nicolai knew this. He also knew that humanity, as a whole couldn't survive the human devastation that was, and still is,

being unleashed in Africa. So, he took up the fight to save us all. He was fully aware that his life might be in danger, because of that. That's why he went on that grand tour, together with some of you, to cover as much of the world in one single sweep as possible, including China and Japan. Nicolai felt that he might not have another chance after that. But he did it gladly, even knowing what dangers are involved. He explained to me that once one finds oneself in this larger arena, one's own life suddenly becomes unimportant."

"Nicolai said this?" asked Ross.

"Nicolai understood this," said Heather. "We talked out this extensively on the tour. He was certain that he would be targeted, one way or another, but he was equally certain that he would be able to protect himself. After all, he was the naval security chief for a good reason. He was good at this. I just never thought that the death star was meant exclusively for him."

"He probably didn't realize that either," said Steve, "not until the final moment. I just hope that he also realized that he did get the ball rolling in the right direction for Africa. What he has done with his lecture tour will assure that some day in the future the equivalent of half a trillion dollars will be made available annually by the whole world for the redevelopment of Africa into a human place, into the horn of plenty for the whole of humanity, which it has the potential to be."

"Your assassination theory is absurd," said Ross. "How can you believe that anyone would murder eight million people to assassinate a single man. Nor did Nicolai ever talk to me about any dangers."

Steve intervened. He put a hand on Ross' shoulder. "You have been out of touch for too long," he replied to Ross. "I told you that you wouldn't believe it, even if the evidence stares you in the face, because you are too small-minded. You are too tightly focused on little things. You simply have no idea what kinds of games are now being played. This is the age of preemption, Ross. This is the Age of Aquarius drowning humanity in insanity. This wouldn't have been possible years ago when we still had national institutions governed by principles. Now that everything has been privatized in the name of the god of profit, everything is allowed. As long as it is for profit, corporations are allowed anything they wish. That's what the fondi have accomplished while you had your eyes closed, Ross. The fondi's global Africa initiative, the destruction of Africa, is an operation designed for profit. The fondi evidently paid enough people off to get the green light for this. When Nicolai became concerned about Africa, he stumbled into the big league. I had warned him about that. Africa is a big-ticket item for the fondi. It's even bigger than claiming Africa's resources. Africa is

key to the fondi's global depopulation project. The fondi are very sensitive about Africa. Africa has also become a sensitive issue for them ever since this AIDS thing nearly blew up. This AIDS thing became extremely messy for them. It nearly blew the lid off what they were up to. More and more people began asking questions about the driving force behind AIDS, which put the issue into their court. The whole thing became exceedingly difficult to cover up. Still, the fondi are determined to protect the economic destruction of Africa by every means at their disposal in order to keep their depopulation engine alive. The new diseases that are now coming out of Africa, for which the economic destruction of Africa is still being excellerated, have frightened too many people. The fondi found a diversion for the time being, by blaming the new outbreak of diseases on global warming, which in reality doesn't even exist. Of course, if you own the press and the scientific elite, you can make humanity believe anything you want it to believe. You can control public consciousness so tightly, that the people don't know anymore what is up and what is down. Even the would-be patriotic networks are playing into the fondi's game. If you own the media, as they do, you can even make the public believe in global warming that isn't happening and will never will be, or that Africa isn't really a part of our world, so that people shouldn't concern themselves with that."

"But murdering eight million people to silence one single man, even if that man said one word too much, that's unbelievable," Ross repeated.

"That's just the point," said Steve. "It is meant to be unbelievable so that nobody will question it. And why shouldn't they make it big? Their private enterprices own the financial resources to pull this sort of thing off. Its all private now, Ross. NASA is private now. Much the defence institutions are privately run. They are no longer answerable to the secretary of defense. Being based offshore they are answerable to no one, except maybe the General Accounting Office for invoice clarification in the context of their contracts. Human beings are not even a factor in this equation, and much less so in their own equation. If they had assassinated Nicolai directly, as a high ranking security officer, questions would have been raised, and those questions might have exposed the fondi's Africa depopulation project. So they couldn't go this route. That would have been too risky for them. The Kennedy assassination nearly backfired at the fondi. Too many questions were asked by alarmed patriots that nearly blew the lid off the fondi's game plan. Any true enquiry would have wrecked the fondi's long-term project. It took a huge cover-up to keep the lid on. And even then, the damage control was precarious and expensive. The fondi won't make the same mistake again. This time they came up with a solution that is unbelievable. That's a perfect cover. Who would ever kill eight

million people to assassinate a single man? That, my friend, makes it safe."

"That's not a new invention anyway," I added. "It's all been done before, for different reasons and on a different scale."

"But killing eight million people, that's going too far," said Ross. He sat down on a log, mentally exhausted and devastated, resting his head in his hands.

Steve sat down next him. "If you would understand the dimension of the games that a played at the fondi's level, you would not say that. Their goal is to eliminate two to four billion people to create the kind of poverty in which a feudal system can be maintained. What's the sacrifice of eight million people compared to that? It's not even an opening step. It's just another incidence in clockwork of preemption. Maybe it is a test case for the real thing to come. So, they combined the test case with something that needed also to be done, like assassinating Nicolai and Antonovna."

Steve told Ross that he had been in touch with some friends inside the fondi-empire for some years. "Their first priority is to find a way for assassinating their target that is totally unbelievable to anyone, and secondarily can be blamed on someone else. That has become their main criterion recently. So, they look for somebody who has a project under way of the required type that they can use. In this case they latched onto some utopian society that wants to free the earth from its 'human pest' as they put it. These types of ideologies have been heavily promoted by the fondi in the mid-sixties as semi-religious cults. Obviously, they found one and latched onto it, and offered to make these people's dreams come true. They probably even arranged the financing for the project and insisted only that it be carried out their way. So they build the doomsday machine, which corresponds with their general goal, knowing full well that the device would eventually be tracked down and be destroyed. In the end, nobody would ever believe that Nicolai was the real target, and that he was killed in order to protect the fondi's Africa project. The trail is too long to connect the dots. It is the very insanity of this process which makes the assassination unbelievable. Thereby, it keeps the project protected. To them, it is a simple question of economics. They need to keep the Africa project intact just as it is, as a breeding caldron for new and exotic diseases that will nicely depopulate the world according to their master plan. They want to do it the natural way so that nobody of the fondi can be blamed in the end. They carried the project out like we did that Hiroshima project after Japan was essentially defeated. Who cares about human beings when the goal is as big as world domination. They told me their standard reply when I objected. They scolded me. They said that really high-minded people don't care about such little things as life and happiness, especially other peoples."

"You are crazy," said Ross. "No wonder they call people like you conspiracy theorists."

Steve just laughed. "If you believe that," he said to Ross, "then tell me for what reason the very first target city that was hit by the death star. Which was the only city in the world were Nicolai would likely be found during an emergency? Why didn't they target the East coast of the American continents, from Canada all the way down to Argentina, they could have hit big cities like Montreal, Boston, New York, Miami, Sao Paulo, Rio, Buenos Aires. They would have netted a few hundred million casualties in a single sweep. But they didn't do that. Instead, they hit a tiny little place like Murmansk. And even then, they stopped their operation half way through the sweep. Why didn't they go for the full sweep all the way down to Istanbul? So did they stop with Leningrad? The obvious reason was that the mission was accomplished at this point. Leningrad was included in the list of cities to be hit just to make it look good. If they had left Leningrad off the list, someone might have asked why. That's the face of geopolitics, Ross. Those games have been played for hundreds of years, though usually on a smaller scale."

"Maybe they were after Russia's nuclear submarines, which are based in Murmansk," suggested Ross.

Steve shook his head. "No Ross, they knew that Nicolai would get the Navy out of port at the slightest sign of danger. That's his job, to protect the Navy. They also knew that Nicolai would not leave his post until it would be too late for him to get away. They profile their targets. They know exactly how their targets behave, and tailor their plans accordingly. That's how things are done in the real world. That's how they sprung the trap on Iraq to open the door for Dessert Storm that has made the entire Middle East a tinderbox. That's the kind of enemy that humanity is facing, Ross. They even used us, cleverly, in their game. They gave us all the necessary information that we needed to track the thing and shoot it down. They made it almost too easy for us. The drop pod in Mexico was put there for our benefit, don't you see. They also gave us plenty of time to locate the pod in Siberia. Everything was made too easy for us. They gave us everything we needed to bring this thing down. It just took a while for me to realize that.

"Our job now, is to make humanity understand this new enemy, and to understand the kind of games that are being played against it, and to make them realize how difficult this fight is. The fight is incredibly difficult," added Steve with a sigh.

"That is why even you guys, the most alert people that I know, have enormous difficulties in recognizing the complexities involved," Steve continued. "As for the eight million people who got killed in the process of Nicolai's assassination, the fondi have a word for them. They call them collateral casualties. It really makes

no difference to them whether there are a million or a hundred million collateral casualties involved. Why should these little details worry them when their ultimate goal is to eliminate four to five billion people? So, what's a few million? That's nothing. They have said it often enough, openly, that 'really high minded' people don't care about human life and happiness, 'especially that of other people.' That's their attitude. They have been complaining for a long time already that wars don't kill enough people, even big wars. One of the fondi's clan suggested some time ago that a new Black Death plaque should sweep the earth once in every generation. That is why they are restructuring the earth, especially Africa, to create the condition under which this can happen. Do you really think they give a hoot about eight million people? Their goal is to create a planet wide new Dark Age in which their feudal empire will never be challenged again by the Renaissance spirit of humanity. That is what they mean by the end of history. At the depth of that kind of dark age, the very idea of a human renaissance, or human value, becomes irrelevant for all times to come, just as it had been for the thousand years of the fondi-empire's golden period of the dark ages."

"You are too kind to the fondi," I said to Steve. "They are much worse than that."

I turned to Ross. "I think Steve is right, your problem is," I said to him, "and you have this problem in common with much of mankind, that you try to understand the fondi from the standpoint of a normal human being. You can never understand the fondi that way. You have to put yourself into their shoes and look at the world with their eyes. The fondi have faced a continuous existential challenge from the Renaissance period on. The greatest threat to their existence as a looting empire is a highly developed sense of humanity in the world. It has always been that. That is what they are fighting against. The Venetians understood this clearly, ever since the Renaissance had nearly wiped them out."

Steve agreed. "The fondi's response was the development of synarchism, a kind of engineered synchronized anarchism. The Venetian's face of this synarchism was to establish two opposing factions and to set them against each other in a similar fashion as the East/West, or right/left, factional divisions have been created to destroy society today. But the Venetian synarchists failed with that approach. After the Thirty Years War was halted by a paradigm shift that linked the European society back to the Renaissance, a great humanist revival began in many parts of the world that culminated in the American Revolution. This revival of the humanist focus became the greatest threat that the fondi-empire had ever faced. In order to meet this new threat, a new phase of synarchism was developed by them that directly targeted the humanist and scientific elite of society that had brought about the revival of the human

spirit. That new synarchist approach was more brutal. In order to squash the revolutionary spirit of society a wave of social chaos was artificially created, which subsequently opened the gate to the most far reaching fascist police state measures ever imposed. The budding revolution that had been unfolding in France at this time, which had been focused on creating a constitutional state, became completely hijacked by the fondi. In fact it was the fondi who created that brutal wave of violence that became the French Revolution that had been quickly turned into a mass hysteria by the fondi, which subsequently opened the gates to the dehumanizing bloodbath in which the nation's leading edge humanist thinkers were publicly eliminated. The dehumanization of the French society under Jacobin terror, which the French Revolution became infamous for, set up the stage for the establishment of brutal dictatorial power that soon thereafter spread its fascism through all of Europe."

Steve pointed out that this second stage strategy of synarchism, which had been created at this time, is still actively utilized in today's world as a weapon to destroy the republican spirit in society in countless different, and often well-concealed ways. "It is especially heavily utilized against the nation of the USA," said Steve, "but it is also focused against Europe, Russia, the Middle East, India, and China."

Steve also suggested that this second strategy had failed to achieve the fondi's objective. "It had failed to bring the USA down," said Steve. "Even when the fondi worked overtime to setup a synarchist slavocracy empire in Central America, as a lever to split up the Union and then to take it over by military force, they failed in a humiliating defeat. Russia's commitment to prevent the British Empire from entering the American Civil War on the side of the fondi, enabled the Civil War to be won by America, and so the USA was enabled to endure by the Tsar of Russia."

Steve pointed out that in the background of this historic failure still another, more horrible synarchist strategy was developed decades later by the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, which may be called the beast-man strategy, a strategy of gore and bestial brutality, to be utilized as a weapon to destroy the human spirit on a vastly larger scale than ever before.

Steve explained that Hitler's persecution of the Jews was not actually directed against the Jewish people themselves. "The real target of Hitler's persecution was the spirit of humanity that always exists in a human society, which stands in the way of imperial goals. The destruction of the human spirit has always been a priority goal for every empire builder," said Steve. "This is still the goal today, globally, and it was absolutely the goal in Hitler's Germany," Steve added forcefully.

Steve explained that the Jewish people had merely been uti-

lized by Hitler as a convenient sacrificial target with which to achieve the brutalization of the German society in order that Hitler's big war could be staged, and to some degree humiliate humanity as a whole. Steve explained that this same strategy was later re-applied by the synarchists against the American society by 'utilizing' the destruction of the Vietnamese people for the humanist destruction of America from within, which succeeded.

"The revolutionary spirit of the Kennedy era simply had to be destroyed, as far as the fondi were concerned," said Steve. "The fondi succeeded with that plan, absolutely. With the Vietnam War the destruction of America was finally beginning to unfold. Vietnam, as a nation already in turmoil, simply became used as a convenient target for the fondi's objective. In this psychological war against America, 600,000 Vietnamese people were used up for this purpose. They were brutally butchered to death in the most dehumanizing manner, as was done again later by America for the humanist destruction of America from within. The fondi's goal then, was essentially the same as when the Christians were ripped apart alive by the lions in the Roman's arenas as a public spectacle. The dehumanization is essential to open the gate to the fondi's larger objective, which was at this time the destruction of Africa, and through Africa, humanity as a whole, on a very large scale. In this context, the half a million Vietnamese deaths set the stage to fifty million AIDS deaths, and there is no end in sight yet. That is how the fondi play their games, Ross."

Steve pointed out that this third synarchist policy of the fondi is like all the other policies, still being applied. "It remains to be a powerful policy for the imperialization of the world," said Steve. "Nuclear weapons will likely be utilized some day soon in order to complete the dehumanization of society through terror, gore, and mass-hysteria that has already been far advanced. Once the human spirit has been reduced to a sufficiently low level at which the application of nuclear weapons will be tolerated by society without a revolt, then the nuclear weapons will be utilized in a big way to open the next escalation of terror with greatest mass-hysteria ever, and the most brutal fascist domination of the entire world."

Steve turned to me. "You are right, Pete. I have been too kind to the fondi. The death star incidence was merely a minor reaction in the overall objective of the fondi. I should have pointed this out. It may also have had a wider focus than just protecting the fondi's Africa project. It may be a hint for yet another policy shift to come. We may be getting close to the threshold at which the fondi will feel comfortable to begin the utilization of nuclear weapons. In fact, they have already published their list globally, of the initially targeted nations, beginning with all the big nations that don't have nuclear weapons, who are weak, who can't fight back."

"Let's not forget that the wholesale depopulation of our planet is still on the fondi's agenda," I interjected.

Steve agreed. "That's what my friend tells me from within the fondi," said Steve. "They don't know yet to what extent they want to do this. My friend thinks that they will carry the depopulation project to whatever extent is required for them to achieve total and unchallengeable world domination, for all times to come. That's their primary goal. They call this among themselves their 'end of history' project. They mean by this, that the development of the human spirit that has been carried forward through all of history, will be brought to an end forever when their goal is reached. The 'end of history' policy is the fourth synarchist policy that has been developed by the fondi. They don't say much about this policy anymore; neither do they talk about the depopulation project anymore, openly. This doesn't mean that these policies are no longer on the agenda. It only means that there is some opposition unfolding against the method of carrying out their primary policies. There is a growing opposition developing against the timing and the extent of the depopulation policy, even within the fondi. Of course, the 'end of history' policy is still firmly entrenched in their little minds. They dream of an empire that humanity can never recover itself from. That dream still governs their day to day objectives. It is reflected in everything they do. As they see it, history ends when the notion of good ends, as an element of humanity. It is their determination to bring that about. As they told Pete in Venice a long time ago, there exists no power in the world that can stop them. They made sure that such a power could never be developed."

"So far, their prediction has been correct," I interjected. "We have not been able to even hinder their game one tiny bit. In fact, they are winning against us, big time. Of course, we can declare an end to this history of their winning, by turning the game against them. We have to do this, if we want to survive. Their next target may be the destruction of the United States of America, their old arch enemy from the day the USA was perceived even as an idea. And they will do it most likely with our own help, just as we have always played their game in the past. But why shouldn't we be able to prevent this final assault on us? We may have failed in the past, but the principles of the universe are on our side. The fondi's entire fight has been to nullify these principles in the human mind. We can shift the fight the other way, by refocusing society's attention on its humanity. Our humanity reflects the all-embracing unity of good, the only intentionally created good. There is no good, apart from that which unfolds from our humanity. That good is universal. It unfolds from the divinity of the human being which a universal quality. All civilization is built on the universal Principle that reflects itself as the only source of good in the universe. And that unfolds right

here, in us. That is why we will win."

Ross just laughed. "I can't believe what I am hearing," he interrupted me. "Sure, I have been out of touch with you for a while, but this is truly unbelievable. How can you even imagine that we would act against ourselves to destroy ourselves? That's utterly unbelievable. No one would dream of such a thing."

"It is intended to be unbelievable," I said quietly.

"You still don't get it," Indira said to Ross. She had been quiet until then. "If you look at what the fondi are doing from the standpoint of a normal human being, you will never get it. Pete is right. That makes it unbelievable. I had made the same mistake in India. You've got to look at the fondi's game with the eyes of the fondi. You've got to understand their game by understanding their mind-set, because they have no human objective. If you don't do this, everything that they put in your way will be unbelievable."

"Let me explain this," I said to Ross. "Let me explain this with a question. If you stood in the fondi's shoes today, knowing their objectives, understanding their synarchist policies, how would you deliver the final death-blow to America?"

"America ARE the fondi," Ross interjected.

Indira just laughed. "Don't you know anything? The fondi have no nationality, no permanent allies, and no real allegiance to anybody. They only have their objective, their unvarying permanent objective, which is global imperial domination. Whatever resources they require to attain their goal will be taken as a matter of convenience and in whatever form they present themselves. Hitler was chosen by the fondi because he offered to utilize the Jewish people as a sacrificial resource for furthering the fondi's goals. Later they used the Vietnamese people as a sacrificial resource for a similar goal. As I said, they have no national identity. They use whosoever comes conveniently along their way, or can be forced that way, to reach their objective. Evidently, that objective involves the destruction of America. America has always been a sore spot in their eyes as a potential liability."

"Indira is right, America's possible humanist revival is still the greatest threat the fondi face," said Steve to Ross. "The destruction of America would solve this nagging problem for them, and that could be done easily in today's world, and in a manner that would bring the fondi closer to their final goal, all in one single step. That makes the destruction of America a tragically real possibility to happen, Ross. Keep this in mind!"

"So, Ross, if you were the fondi, how would you destroy America?" I repeated my question.

Ross just shook his head. I saw a tear forming.

"That is serious," said Steve to Ross. "If you understand their game plan, you can prevent it. This means that understanding

their best options is extremely important. So let me answer this for you. How would I do it, if I were the fondi, I mean from the standpoint of simple physical science? I really mean simple, Ross, on a level that every schoolchild should be able to understand? Well, the answer is easy. Destroying things is easy. A single missile could easily destroy the entire USA as a nation, which would invariably lead to the destruction of much of the rest of the world. The missile for destroying America wouldn't even have to be a big ICBM. A submarine-launchable missile would do the job; a medium sized one with eight or nine medium sized warheads, perhaps with five to ten megaton yield, each. Nothing big would be required. If the fondi were to target the U.S. Pacific Northwest with that, the USA would cease to exist as a nation."

"You don't make any sense at all," Ross protested. "I could see some logic in them targeting New York, or Washington, or Miami, or LA, but not the Pacific Northwest. There is nothing there that is of any vital value to the nation."

"Ross, put yourself into the shoes of the fondi, then you will understand," I interjected. "Their synarchist objective is the 'end of history.' They don't care about physical value at this point. They care about reaching their objective, which they could reach by hitting the Pacific Northwest. If they were to choose that option, which may be the only option they have to reach their goal, they would hit the entire area from Seattle to Tacoma, including the Bangor nuclear submarine base and the nuclear power facility in Montesano. They might even hit Portland the Hanford Works in Pasco. That's our chief nuclear research center and spent nuclear fuel storage depot. Can you imagine what this would mean?"

Steve stood up. "The entire mess of the evaporated radioactive material, mixed with the evaporated material of all the cities and forests, would be carried eastward by high altitude winds." He gestured the flow of this deadly cloud with arms. "That fallout cloud would be carried across the country in the same manner as the volcanic ashes from the Mt. St. Helens eruption, that was carried eastward, which had blanketed the entire eastern seaboard. Only this time the fallout that rained down from it would be deadly."

"That would make the biggest industrial region of the country, with the highest population density, uninhabitable for a long period," answered Ross in a soft tone of voice as if he couldn't bring himself to say the words that corresponded to his sudden realization.

"No, it would be worse than that," I replied. "Can you imagine the exploding hysteria that this catastrophe would unleash in the population, even before the fallout gets there? It would unleash a senseless rage and violence that would make any rescue operation impossible. The Jacobin terror of the French Revolution would appear

like a child's play in comparison, and Hitler's rampage against the Jewish people would appear like an innocent scuffle. But more than this, the exploding hysteria would open the flood gates to the nuclear destruction of all of the fondi's priority targets, especially Russia and China, and possibly also India and Japan."

"That would never happen," Ross protested. "No country in the world is that stupid that it would attack the USA. That would be suicide! That's the deterrent why it has never happened."

"You still can't see the fondi's objective with the eyes of fondi," I said to Ross. "You are making the same mistake that everyone else does. That is why their games are unbelievable to you and to anyone else, even after they played themselves out. Just open your eyes, Ross. As Indira said, the fondi have no nationality. There is no such thing as national objectives in the fondi's world. There are only global objectives. They will use whatever resources they can lay their hands on. They've created numerous terrorist networks and covert operatives that are all offering their services for a few shackles of gold, or for free under religious indoctrination. Without any national allegiance the fondi can choose their terrorists from across the world, as well as the arsenals they want to use. They may well choose to utilize America's own nuclear arsenal to destroy America with. These home grown operations tend to be more easily arranged, and their deeds tend to be more easily covered up. When there is no external aggression involved, the damage control is much more easily accomplished. No foreign country will spill the beans. In fact, if America were to be destroyed by a homegrown operation, nobody in world would suspect this as a cause. People wouldn't believe that this could actually happen. That credibility gap would leave the door wide open for the fondi's synarchists in America, who already are in positions of power, to lash out against every nation on the planet with America's dying breath, possibly even without drawing any retaliatory responses, at least not at first."

"That must never, ever, happen," Ross interrupted me.

I reached my hand out to him. "Welcome Ross, to the real world," I said to him. "I think you are finally beginning to recognize what we are up against, what we are fighting to prevent. We are not fighting against terrorism itself, Ross. We are fighting against the fondi and their synarchism that employ terrorism on an unbelievably horrendous scale in the pursuit of their objectives. If we don't win this fight against the fondi, we are as good as dead; and if we don't understand the fondi and their synarchism, we have already lost. Their 'end of history' doctrine implies the end of the United States, and that end is near, especially for the northern parts of it. The American spirit has always been their mortal enemy. Today, they tolerate us as useful fools, tomorrow they'll sacrifice us to further their goal, like the Jewish people were sacrificed, and the Vietnamese

later on."

Ross turned to Tony after I said this. "Why aren't you protesting?" he said to him. "You have always been quick to ridicule Peter in the past. Why aren't accusing him of fear mongering and conspiracy theorizing?"

Tony just laughed. "I am a military man," he answered Ross. "I have been trained to profile my opponents; to understand their objectives; to recognize their options; to discover their weaknesses and the strengths; even their thinking. That's what Pete and Steve have done, and Indira. I can see no wild-eyed conspiracy theory in what they said. The synarchists' methods have been put on record by the synarchists themselves. How these methods have been carried out in the past is well-documented history. The large scale murdering of the intellectual elite of Europe happened; the French Revolution happened; Napoleon happened; Hitler's murdering of the Jews happened; Vietnam happened; and the building of the atomic bomb happened. All of these events happened, Ross. I see no theorizing there. The fondi said themselves loud and clear through their mouth pieces that they wanted the atomic bomb built, and that they want to have it built in order to terrorize the whole world with it, to scare the world into submission. Their 'end of history' doctrine is an old doctrine that goes all the way back to Wells and beyond. That's not theory. They said this loud and clear. That's history, too. And we stupid Americans obliged them to built the bomb, and we demonstrated its fury to the world, at the fondi's bidding, that's history also. And when Pete asked you to draw everything together that we know about the most dangerous enemy of humanity, that wasn't a request to theorize. That was a call to open your eyes. How can you fight such an enemy in order to protect yourself, if you don't open your eyes and look him in the face? Steve has done nothing more than that. All the cries about conspiracy theories are designed to keep the eyes of the small-minded people of society tightly closed and their thinking disabled. We won't survive long like that, Ross. The fondi know this. The synarchists know this. That is why they constantly cry conspiracy theory, conspiracy theory, the moment that anyone recognizes their game. That's their way to protect their weak flank. It is a desperate reaction. We should hit this flank with everything we've got, and unmask their game. Hitting the weak flank is standard military strategy. That's what I grew up with, Ross. I am surprised only, that Steve as a physicist, has such a clear understanding of the principles of military strategy; and Pete, too, as a diplomat."

"Let me answer this," I said to Steve. "Tony, the reason for that is that we are human beings with a mind that gives us the capacity to know the truth, and to see with this mind's eye what remains hidden to the physical senses. That is how we can predict,

drawing all the facts together that we know, what the synarchists next moves will likely be. The synarchists' own intentions actually don't matter. They all have to fall into line, one way or another, with the attainment of the fondi's stated primary goal, which is the end of history."

Tony nodded and picked up a hand full of sand from the beach where we were sitting and threw it into the air. "What the fondi are up to affects us all," he said. "We have to stay their hand, the synarchists, before the actions begin that no one can stop."

"Do you really think it is physically possible to carry out the kind of a terrorist attack against the United States that destroys our entire country with our own weapons systems, operated by our own people?" Ross asked Tony. "You've been in the Air Force. Is this really possible?"

Tony just laughed. "Twenty years ago that would not have been possible. Such a thing would have been totally unthinkable. We were treated like royalty in those days. We were educated in the academy. We were also given the most fantastic toys that anyone could think of, to play with. In those days it was every boy's dream to fly. We were given a chance for these dreams to come true. We were given marvelous machines that could fly twice the speed of sound, and more. Can you imagine what it is like to see an oncoming fighter at this speed. You see a dot on the horizon, and the next thing you know he is behind you. Those are exhilarating games. Sex is nothing compared to that. Our task was to track those fast moving targets in real time, and we were given the most fantastic weapons system to do this with, that you can imagine. We had weapons systems that could track nine targets simultaneously. All we had to do was lock on, validate the target, the rest was automatic. We had all of this before anyone could even think about a personal computer. We had the best the nation could provide, and our job was to protect the best nation in the world. The Soviets would not have been able to send a fly across the border without us knowing it, and taking it out. We were even prepared to take out the Soviets if they had dared to attack our nation.

"But that was then," Tony sighed. "Now they treat our people like shit. They work them twenty hours a day, impose pay-cuts, and send them out to drop million dollar bombs onto mud huts to kill a bunch of defenseless people. And if the guys screw up under this constant grind, they court martial them. They guys aren't even allowed to complain. Whoever criticizes the system gets a reprimand in the records, or even a dishonorable discharge without pensions. Can you imagine what this does to the morale?"

Tony explained that if you treat people like shit, they don't give a shit anymore. "This isn't conspiracy theory," said Tony. "That's

reality. You asked me if it is possible that our own people will act against us. My answer is, open your eyes. The synarchists already own the government. They are in all of the highest positions. Sure, they can't order an assault against the USA directly, but they are in a position to soften up the ground for this to happen, and they do it extremely well in their synarchist way. They do a much better job than the synarchists did during the French Revolution. During the French Revolution they killed all of the nation's patriots. Today's synarchists do something much worse. They take away their humanity and turn the patriots into potential enemies who are willing to sell their country out for a buck. On this basis they can do anything. Whatever the military can do, the synarchists can do, because they treat the entire military like shit, including the intelligence agencies. Everything is now built on lies.

"I'm sure the Navy boys get treated the same way," added Tony in a somewhat quieter tone. "If someone wants to reprogram the targeting of a missile, I'm sure this can be done. Our boys on the front line are like naive children in the hands of the synarchists' professional psychological manipulators, especially when the ground has been softened up. And whatever technical information you need to do this, can be bought on the open market. Too many leading edge people have been laid off the by the defense contractors, and been replaced with newer and younger, and cheaper employees. The laid off experts are on the market for hire. All the synarchists have to do is destroy the economy, and they'll have thousands of those valuable resources to choose from. Quite a few of them will help the synarchists without even knowing that they are helping to destroy their own country."

Tony turned to Ross. "Why do you think the synarchists made it their number one priority in recent years to destroy the economy of California?" he asked forcefully. "I would say the synarchists already have all the resources they need to destroy the United States with its own military might, and that they have the resources to do it from one of our submarines, so that nobody really knows who did it. In fact, it is far easier for the synarchists to get us to do this destruction ourselves, than it is to coerce the Russians or anyone else to do it for them. That's what I think. After all, if you want to destroy the country, the best way to do it, is to do it yourself, and to do it from within. The synarchists have been doing this sort of thing for along time already. It's become a tradition with them. That's how they started the Vietnam war. They tried to provoke the Vietnamese into attacking them in the Gulf of Tonkin to be able to start a war there, but the Vietnamese wouldn't comply, so they did it themselves. They cried, 'we are under attack, we are under attack,' when there was no attack. On the strength of that lie the synarchists got their war started, and after 600,000 peo-

ple were killed, the lie was casually admitted, almost like a joke, that there had actually been no attack. The Vietnam War escalation that resulted, was a great success for them. It did enormous damage to the American society and to humanity as a whole. Eventually though, they didn't even bother with lying anymore. They just did what they wanted to do and covered up afterwards, and they leaned to cover up better than they had done to cover up their murder of President Kennedy."

"My problem is that I still tend to think like everybody else," said Tony. "I have always assumed that the new world-empire is going to be an American empire, because America has the greatest military might. I don't think the fondi allow this to happen. America has no imperial tradition and no imperial history. To the contrary, our brightest tradition has been on the side of human freedom and self-development. We stood proudly as the global enemy of imperialism. I think it is foolish to believe that the fondi will choose America as the power base for their coveted world-empire. They will use us towards this end to as far as we are useful to them, then they will throw us away. We are too much of a liability for them. To use people up and then throw them away has always been the fondi's tradition. There is no loyalty in the house of thieves. I think the power base of the new world-empire will be Britain. Britain has never had a history of freedom and self-determination, as we have had, which people could fall back on to challenge the empire. I think America is much too great a liability for them. They will destroy us, one way or another. They have already destroyed the better part of our economy through looting. We are presently more deeply in debt than anyone in the world."

"That is what I have been saying," said Steve. "There will never be an American Empire. They will utilize us as much as they can, and loot us in the process, then, when we are on our knees, they will wipe us out. I am not saying that they will do it exactly as I had outlined, which may be a high probability. There are countless ways to achieve the same end. I am merely saying that these kinds of synarchist responses are on the table, and we have to prevent them if we want to survive as a nation. I am saying that ever since the synarchists have hijacked our government, our nation has been in mortal danger, and everybody I know refuses to see that danger."

Steve then spoke to Ross and began to laugh, saying that he should have asked why the synarchists haven't destroyed America already. He suggested that this would have been a good question to ask.

"So, why haven't they?" Ross asked.

"I think they haven't, because they are fools," said Steve. "They are even greater fools than most people, because they are

dreaming that they will bring America into the fondi's world-empire intact and alive, as a junior imperial partner, like Mussolini was to Hitler. I think they really believe that they can do this. As far as they see it, they are well on the way. They've already turned the entire population into moral and intellectual vegetables. Their problem is that they see what they want to see. The synarchists see a population that has become so gullible that the people believe anything they tell them, and will do anything they are told to do. But I don't think the fondi are buying that. Everything that I hear tells me that they aren't buying any of it. Sooner or later the fondi will pull the plug on America, and the synarchists will be their tool to do it. As I hear the fondi talking on the grape wine, America is far too great a liability to them for allowing America to become a part of a world-empire, or be the empire. They know that America's history has not yet been forgotten; not by the American people, nor by the people of the world. They know that this history has the potential to turn the American people, and much of humanity too, into human beings again. They are actually scared of the possibility."

"Still, I don't think that the synarchists, who are the government right now, will pull the plug on America," I said to Steve. "As you said, they are dreaming of bringing America into the global world-empire, or America becoming that empire. It is more likely that the ruling synarchists have synarchist traitors in their midst, who work for the fondi who are the real empire. These hidden synarchist people will do the fondi's bidding without hesitation, should the ruling synarchists fail to obey. They are the fondi's backup plan. I don't think the fondi are that stupid that they will run this kind of high profile operation without a backup plan. We have to assume that such a backup plan exists and that sometime down the line America is scheduled to be destroyed when its usefulness has run out, or when that destruction becomes useful for the fondi. The destruction of America has been the fondi's goal ever since the USA was founded, so why would that change? The fondi never relented from this goal. America represents the antidote to imperialism. They will never forget this. Nor will they be able to change this. They know that they can't. They know us better than we know ourselves, but not for long. We will begin to exploit our strength, the very strength that they fear. We will even begin to develop a real sense of justice that honors the brilliance of our humanity. It will no longer happen that when a person gets beaten up in our cities that people stand around watching the crime or walk away. They will all be held accountable together, as criminals against humanity, together with whoever is committing the crime that they allow to proceed. When we get to this high level of justice, of truthfulness with ourselves, there won't be any crime. Crime will be unthinkable.

Synarchism will be unthinkable. The fondi will loose all of their stooges, and the world that they have known to operate in will exist no more. That will be their 'end of history.'"

I could see a sense of horror in Ross' rapidly changing facial expression while I spoke. It appeared to me that he could already see those millions, or tens of millions, or even hundreds of millions of people, dying in great agony, should we fail. He shook his head and said nothing.

"I know what you must be thinking," I said to him. "How can they do this? Every human being would be thinking the same thing. This is our strength. This will rouse people to do the human thing. That's a part of our history. We have roused ourselves once before and defeated the synarchists' Nazi empire. We did this, because our humanity demanded this. We had no choice. So we do well to ask ourselves: How could they dare plan this again and hope to get away with it? Indeed we have asked ourselves the same question every time before the synarchists unleashed their terrorism with ever-greater ferocity. 'How could they dare to do this?' But have we asked ourselves that? First there were a few hundred casualties, then a few thousand, then a few million. Will they feel any different about killing a few hundred million in one go? Probably not. It's all the same to them. They did Horoshima. They did Nagasaki. They will do the USA just the same. They will say, 'Let's do it!' And then, they will simply do it. The process is the same in every case. As the synarchist Bertrand Russell had put it: really high-minded people don't care about human life and happiness, especially other people's. They only care about it in their own little diabolical way as beast-men. They care about the gore they create and how it brutalizes society globally. The more gore they create, the deeper will the brutalization penetrate, reaching to the very core of the individual's consciousness. But the fact that this gore happens at all, no matter on what scale, indicates a failure on our part as a human society, which is a failure to value ourselves fully as the greatest manifest of life in the universe that the human being is. When this happens, we will rouse ourselves to protect what is precious, and tolerate no form of synarchism, imperialism, even the looting of society."

"We can still achieve this transition," said Steve to Ross, taking over from me. "That is our greatest strength. Right now, mankind's awareness of its own humanity is a thousand sizes too small, its like a grain of sand that we pick up from the seashore, instead of embracing the seashore as whole, including the waves, and the wind, and the sunshine. We can make the transition to this fuller realization of our humanity throughout the world. It is possible to do this on a global scale, Ross, because we are all human being together, existing as one. The universal unity of good, is our unity.

It is possible to establish this fully. If the few of us here, can make this transition, as we have already begun to do, then all of humanity can do the same and go beyond it."

Steve nodded and turned to me and to Ross. "We have no choice in this matter," said Steve with a stern expression. "We have to exploit that great potential that still exists in our humanity throughout the world, and develop it fully, and turn it against the fondi and against the synarchists now, even yesterday if we could, and against everything that denies our humanity. And we have to do this as fast as possible, before the synarchists take whatever final steps they need to consolidate their power as Hitler once did in Germany. Unfortunately, we are in a Catch 22 situation in America. If we make the synarchists vulnerable there, without bringing the world population behind us to destroy them decisively, the synarchists will bring the house down before they give up their power. They will do this. The synarchists are terrorists; the only terrorists; the original terrorists. It has been the fondi's plan from the beginning to utilize terrorism as a platform to build their world-empire on, just as the Romans had done. That is why they lobbied so hard for the development of the atomic bomb and the demonstration of it over Hiroshima. They lobbied for the atomic bomb as a terror weapon, before the atomic bomb even became a technical possibility. I can guarantee you with absolute certainty that the synarchists will use the bomb as they have done in the past, and they will use it against America if we don't stop that entire history of terrorism right now. The synarchists have been bred to be obedient dogs. They have been bred to be obedient to the fondi, even if this goes against their own plans. The fondi will make sure that the synarchists will do as they are told, one way or another. That is why we have to get the synarchists out now, all of them together, from their positions of power, and hit the fondi at the same time, globally. And we can do this. We have the Principle of the universe to build on, which they utterly mock. That will be their undoing."

"This means that we will have to turn the whole of humanity into real human beings, just as the fondi fear, while we still can," said Tony astonished, "and this with a tight deadline, like yesterday. Maybe, it is already too late for that."

"Pray that it isn't," said Ross.

"I am serious," said Ross to Steve moments later. "I am beginning to realize what we are up against, you, me, and all of us together, even the whole of humanity, because they are already doing it on the same huge scale that is equal to the destruction of the whole of America. The synarchists have been doing this for years already, especially economically. They've destroyed Argentina already. They've destroyed Brazil. People are starved to death economically in

those countries, as in many other countries, including the whole of Africa. When you have a dying child say to her mother, expiring in her mother's arms, 'Mama, is there food in heaven?' than I must see this death as an act of deliberate murder when this happens in a country like Argentina. Argentina has a population of thirty-odd million. It produces enough food to feed three-hundred million, yet its people are starving to death. As we all know, that sort of thing is happening big time around the world. Still, the synarchists are crying for more austerity, more blood, more genocide. They will never stop crying, and looting, and murdering."

"You are too kind," said Indira. "You are talking about small consequences. No one will ever know how many hundreds of millions of people have already been killed worldwide as a consequence of the synarchist originated ban of the DDT pesticide," said Indira. "DDT had nearly eradicated malaria throughout the world. Now, after the ban, malaria is back to the tune of hundreds of millions of cases. And all this is done deliberately to kill human beings. Even one of the synarchists' own scientists, one of the people who helped banned DDT, said that the 'only danger' that he saw in DDT, was that it enabled too many people to live. Yes, that is what he said. This ban has killed hundreds of millions of people already, as surely as if the synarchists had bombed them to death. Compared to this single deliberate attack on humanity, which is but one of many on the same scale, the destruction of America would be a relatively small event by comparison. So, Ross, we can't say; will they do it? They are doing worse things already, especially in Africa."

Indira stopped and began to cry, evidently remembering from personal experience the horrid dimension of what she was talking about.

"That is also the reason why Africa must remain to be one of our primary focal points," I said to her, and to everyone. "Rescuing Africa is the Strategic Defense Initiative in today's age. We must never lose sight of this necessity, even now while we have much more urgent problems to think about. Our passion for human life, universally, is our strength. The fondi killed Nicolai for it in a most horrible way. By doing this atrocious thing, they revealed a severe weakness in their flanks. Nicolai had already hit them on this, and it had hurt them. We must remake Nicolai's strategic example into our own platform for a global humanist SDI. Nicolai's Africa project must remain a part of it. That's a project that must succeed anyway, for the defense of humanity. So, let's give it a dual meaning."

Steve reminded us that LaRouche had developed the original SDI concept not merely for the defense of the USA alone, but for the common defense of humanity. "Yes, the fondi and their minions had put LaRouche in jail," he said, "in order to prevent the idea of

a real strategic defense from succeeding and spreading around the world. Well, they succeeded in stopping it. We even helped them. I hate to admit this. Society had lost that round. That is why we still have nuclear weapons today and the fondi are still king!"

"I say that our loosing trend has to stop," I interrupted Steve. "Naturally, they will want to shut our own, new SDI project down, probably in the same manner. They want to shut it down, because our goal is the same. So, let's not allow them to do this. Our goal is the real strategic defense of humanity. If focusing on the rescue of Africa will get the ball rolling big time. Let's do this big time. LaRouche's SDI goal had been intended to be a big time project, to set in motion the joint the development of the global economy, by which nuclear weapons would have been obsolete. Let's take this approach and take it one step further and not stop until the fondi themselves become obsolete. That approach was the key element of LaRouche's SDI proposal, wasn't it? We must be rallying around the same principle and hit the fondi with it, and make our Africa SDI effort a success. I think we can shut the fondi down and save the world at the same time. All that we need to do, is get a movement going in that direction in a really big way. Even the physical means that we require are the same as those that LaRouche had proposed for his SDI. He had proposed the development of new physical principles. His proposal is just as valid for our larger SDI project, especially in regard to Africa; such as the development of nuclear fusion energy systems; high speed transportation systems; continent wide water distribution networks; sub-oceanic fresh water storage facilities that are fed by all of Africa's great rivers. Yes, they had put LaRouche in jail, and they did kill Nicolai, but the SDI concept must never be allowed to vanish from humanity's sight. If we let this slip out of our hands this time, we will not survive long. This is guaranteed. Our first slip-up has cost humanity dearly. If we would let this slip out of our hands a second time, we would have earned the fate that follows. But that won't happen."

Everyone agreed with that assessment except Heather. "We are not looking at the whole picture yet," she said. "There is more to it. I think Nicolai had hit the empire at a much deeper level than is apparent on the surface. I think he hit them with an 'atomic bomb' that could endanger the existence of the entire global oligarchy, and with it every empire on the planet."

Heather looked at me. "Peter, you should know what this is," she said, "since Nicolai and Anton had invited you to be a part of it."

Those words hit me like a 'ton of bricks,' as people say. I began to cry. Of course, that's what it was. Nicolai's plans for our triple wedding ceremony, that he was so exuberant about, must have reached the ears of the fondi. The Christ Principle behind it, the

Principle of the universal unity of good, must have scared the fondi to death. His triple wedding idea was designed to openly represent the principle of the universal marriage of humanity, which in turn is but a subset of the still larger, all-embracing Principle of the essential universal unity of all good. I explained to everyone that if humanity were to embrace all of these underlying universal principles, especially its already existing universal marriage to one another as a universal reality, and were to build itself up to the realization of the associated Principle of the universal unity of good, the oligarchic system would cease to exist without a hope of ever coming back. I suggested that Nicolai might have realized that. He might have realized that without a global development of these principles, the vital redevelopment of Africa would never be carried out. I suggested that this might have prompted his triple wedding idea as a means for focusing on all of these principles simultaneously. I pointed out that he might also have realized that if we don't set our goals high enough we might not find it possible to attain the smaller goal of eradicating the fondi. I suggested that Anton might have been the fondi's target together with Nicolai, for that reason.

"And what about yourself?" Heather asked me. "Obviously, you are therefore just as prominently on their target list as the third member of the triad. In fact, we are probably all on their target list."

"I agree," I said, "the fondi might be trying to disable all of us by making cowards of us all. They probably reckoned, that once we realized what the bombing of Murmansk was all about, we would remember what they had told us way back in Venice; that we are but amateurs in their sight; that we could do nothing to stop them. This means that we are all at risk. But then, we are all at risk anyway."

"The question is, do we comply and become cowards," said Heather, "or do we fight them on every weak flank until we win?"

"If we become cowards, then we have already lost," I replied. "Besides, we couldn't do this if we wanted to. Remember how boring life was ten years ago, when nothing vital was happening anymore, when the most exiting thing that happened was to sit in front of Ross' fireplace to read bed-time stories to one another with a cup of hot chocolate in hand? We were stuck in a rut then. We were as dead! We can't go back to that. We can only move forward. Since the fondi have declared war on us, let's fight them on every flank that they told us they are vulnerable at, and win. Since they put us on their target list, lets not give them a chance to take the offensive. Let's wipe them out first!"

"But how?" Ushi asked.

"That is what this conference is all about," Steve reminded her. "We are here to figure out how to respond."

Ushi, unlike every one of us, was calm. She said that the

heightened threat was nothing more than just another increment in the royal fondi's depopulation game that has at its very core the goal to disable humanity's spirit as human beings, as irrational as such a goal is. Her suggestion was that we simply address the depopulation threat, because that's what the fondi's Africa project has been created for. Ushi suggested that this is how our fight to stop the fondi for the sake of humanity must be defined.

"If humanity is too blind to see the obvious, then we must tell the people about it," she said. "If people have gone asleep in apathy, we must wake them up. The game that is being played must be unmasked. The fondi's objective, for which nuclear weapons exist; for which depopulation has been invented; for which genocide is being applied; must be brought before the hearts and eyes of all humanity. If the fondi's ultimate aim is to kill up to 90% of the people of humanity, that game must be unmasked globally. We must tell the people of the world the truth. Nothing less will enable humanity's self-defense, and which our own self-defense depends. The fondi are right, by ourselves we are nothing; we are nothing at all compared to them. But we are not alone if we fight our war on the foundation of the principle of the universal unity of good. The fondi may have a lot of power with their financial might, but they can't defeat the principle of the universe; they can't stand against it; they can't even defend themselves against it. They are nothing compared to it. The principle of the unity of good is the most powerful weapon we have. It would be a crime not to use it. Whoever discovered it, should receive the Nobel Price."

"Guess who discovered it," said Sylvia. "Indira did, practically on the first day that she and Pete got together in Delhi. Pete had focused on it a long time ago, but then had moved away from it. We all had. That is when we began drifting ever deeper into a rut that we didn't seem to be able to get out of. Indira helped us with this, without even knowing that she did. When she rediscovered the divine Principle of the universal unity of good, and Pete discovered subsequently that every other principle reflects this one universal Principle, things began to move for us, we began to pull ourselves out of that rut that we had been stuck in for more than a decade. Her contribution in the development of that discovery was probably the key element that got us moving again. So let's built on that and move forward with it on the global level."

"Yes, lets use it. Let's use it globally," said Ushi. "Let's win with it!"

It certainly was nice to see Ushi's old spirit coming to life again, to feel the dynamism behind her commitment that I remembered from our days in Leipzig. Our meeting in Caracas had been much too brief for this dynamism to come out, and then in Queens-

land, we had been merely dancing around the issue. We were aware of the danger that humanity faced, but under the shadow of eight million people having been murdered in a single blow, the danger became much more tangibly real, even intimately real.

Steve too, hadn't changed. He had always been precise, truthful, and committed to principle. Also I remembered that everything he did had always been done in a grand style, like a fireworks in motion. Whenever we had felt proud of ourselves, when we had thought we had done a good thing, he chided us for not having gone far enough. At one point, when we talked about how we could carry Nicolai's project forward to get a larger funding commitment to help Africa, Steve stood up and said emphatically, "No, No, No! That's not the issue right now. The issue is to get rid of the fondi. Everything else is meaningless if we fail."

Steve agreed that focusing on Africa is useful, but only in the historic context that highlights the riches of our humanity. He liked our concept of the divine Principle of the universal unity of good, which he said draws the whole of humanity together into a profound, single, indivisible source of good, even the only real source of good. He said that we are in a war now, and that being in a war, we have to ask ourselves where our strength lies that matches our opponent's weak flank.

"That takes us back to what I said earlier about our history," Steve said at one point. "Our strength is our history. When everything collapses in people's life, that brighter history keeps coming back to mind as an image of the real face of our humanity, an image of the good we have accomplished as human beings. The synarchists know nothing about this. Their total lack of humanity is their weak flank. It leaves them exposed. The American people, on the other hand, have this history in their heart, even though they rarely show it. Still, this brighter image of our humanity keeps coming back in times of crisis when they most need it. That's our strength and our immortality. The fondi are aware of this strength to some degree, and they fear it. They always have feared it, because they felt themselves powerless against it whenever the American people utilized their strength."

"Are you talking about the history of our republic?" I asked.

Steve nodded. "I am talking about everything in our history that shines brightly. I am talking about names that stand out like stars in that history, like the names of Gottfried Leibnitz, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, Abraham Lincoln, Franklin Roosevelt, and others."

"That includes the history of the very founding of our republic," I added.

Steve just nodded and smiled.

"And those names are not just a part of our history," I continued. "The founding of our republic is a part of the history of humanity. The founding of the first true nation state republic in the world, is one of the great humanist achievements in the universal history of mankind. That event makes all of their achievements a part of the image of every human being. In these achievements, and in the good that resulted from them, we see an image of the substance of our humanity; even an image of ourselves. We should find a great deal of strength in that."

"In this sense," Heather added, "I should see those names not only as bright spots in American history, but also in the history of the world pertaining to all mankind where they stand like precious jewels together with other such names, like that of Dante, Cusa, Plato, Socrates, Pythagoras, or modern names like Gauss, Schiller, Shakespeare, List, Mozart, and so on."

Steve kept on nodding and smiling and slowly repeated the names of Gottfried Leibnitz, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, Abraham Lincoln, and Franklin Roosevelt. He spoke in a reverent tone of voice.

Indira, too, spoke up again. "I take it that there is actually no such thing as a uniquely German history, or Russian history, or Indian history, or Chinese history. I take it that these are all really subsets of the universal history of mankind in which the strength of our universal humanity comes to light, that we all share."

I applauded her. "I would even say that if one understands just one of these great geniuses of our humanity," I added in reference to what Heather had said, "then one understands a little more about one's own humanity and about the humanity of mankind, which is one and the same thing."

I also suggested that if one really understands one of these geniuses, like Gauss, for instance, one also understands necessarily all the other geniuses like Plato, Nicolaus of Cusa, Abraham Lincoln, or Franklin Roosevelt. "There may not be a commonality between them in the technical sense, which is actually unimportant," I said. "What is important is the greater commonality of their humanity, of the good that unites them all into one. That is where our strength lies, in the unfolding Principle of the universal unity of good, which is the hallmark of the humanity of mankind and its universal marriage to one another as human beings."

I glanced at Steve and smiled. "Yes, that is where our strength lies, and our immortality," I affirmed. "That is also where the fondi are most deeply exposed, because they have no humanity. Their existence is not rooted in any one the principles of the universe, much less in the divine principle of the universal unity of good. They have rejected their humanity. They exist without a prin-

principle. The reaction of their humanity is reflected in the rage of their emptiness. Likewise, they exist without power. They come to us as beggars to give them power over us. So far we have complied and done their bidding, but this can be undone. We can stop to bow to our executioners. We can revive our history in which we have taken this courageous stand several times already. We can do this globally, since these historic achievements are a part of mankind's universal history."

"If you were to talk to a Russian about Lincoln, for instance," said Steve to me, "he would be able to understand what you are saying. Russia's history is very much intertwined with our own history. He may proudly acknowledge that Tsar Alexander II had offered to put the entire Russian Navy under the command of President Abraham Lincoln, should Britain dare to enter the Civil War in support of the fonsi's Confederacy. He may proudly acknowledge that this commitment by Russia to the universal good had probably saved the United States. One can even say that this commitment may have helped save humanity later on from the hands of Hitler, which would not have been possible without the United States."

"The history of humanity is profoundly rich in people's devotion to universal good," I commented in support of Steve's suggestion. "Franklin Roosevelt took a bankrupt and broken nation and turned it into the richest nation on earth to the envy of the entire world. This wasn't just his achievement. This was the achievement of the entire nation; of the American nation's devotion to universal good. This profound economic achievement was made at a time when the nation had fielded eighteen million soldiers overseas to liberate the world from the cancer of Hitler's synarchist horde that had crippled already all of Europe and northern Africa. That kind of achievement of a people is a substantial historic achievement that stays on the books of humanity forever. That is also a huge foundation that we can build on, to achieve the final victory over synarchism and over the looting of society, and over imperialism."

"Yes, that is something profound we can build on," Indira agreed. "All of that happened, and I don't think it has really been forgotten. It is a part of the history of humanity as a whole; the history of every human being. If we can mobilize a worldwide acknowledgement of that history, focusing on the brightest examples of our human capacity for good, we may have a chance. I have already experienced a little of that in India; actually more than just a little. The fonsi have always been committed to destroy this history of good. They certainly are committed to destroying America that symbolized it, just as ancient Rome was committed to destroying the Christ idea by nailing its representative to the cross and throwing the Christians to the lions in the arenas to be ripped apart alive. It's

all done in order to discredit the very notion of the divinity of man. Today's synarchists, unfortunately, are much worse than the Roman fascists had ever had been."

"I don't think we can defeat the synarchists themselves," I interjected. "They have destroyed themselves as a human being, and one can't reason with a non-human being. We can only inspire humanity to rouse itself, at least those of society who have not yet been synarchized, to uplift the standard of government so high that the synarchists become locked out as they no longer fit in. In this way we can get rid of the synarchists and their disciples from the forefront of society. We would be denying them a place to exist, together with their godfathers, the fondi. In this way, perhaps, we can purge synarchism from society, or more correctly, society will do this by its own accord."

"We can start the ball rolling towards this," said Steve, "by making the synarchists appear incredibly small in the eyes of society, as they really are. We can force the 'end of history' on them, that they want to force on us. We have it in our hands to make good today what the Renaissance powers had failed to do in 1511, when they failed to eradicate the Venetian Empire once they had them totally in their grip, if only that hadn't been persuaded by the Venetians to relent! Synarchism might have never been developed."

"Unfortunately, it was developed," I interrupted Steve. "Still, with this global approach of developing a higher sense of humanity around the world, which deprives the fondi and the synarchists/terrorists their playground in the world, we can win this time if we commit ourselves to do that."

"I am convinced that we can win," Steve came back. "We must win. The alternative is unthinkable. And only then, when we have won, can we even begin to think about rebuilding Africa and the global economy. If we don't win, all of these other aspects, as necessary and urgent as they are, will become irrelevant."

"Can you be effective towards this goal, being hidden away in China?" Sylvia asked Ushi.

Ushi nodded. "Sure, I can. China is a part of the world, you know. The Chinese people are a part of humanity. As Pete has said, the unity of good is indivisible. It is universal. Still, China isn't the key factor in this context, not yet. Sure, China is threatened like everybody else is threatened. In fact, China is the ultimate target of the fondi. All of its goals are directed against China, because of China's enormous economic development potential that has already been proven is the fondi's real target. But they are not going for it yet. They don't have the means to do this yet. They have to clear the road first. They have to totally capture the U.S.A. first, like Hitler had captured Germany, or wipe it out, which is more likely, as we all know. If America should ever become destroyed, the Arab

countries will have no status at all anymore. The fondi will simply steal their oil and divide and destroy whatever still stands against them in the Middle East, in Western Europe, in Russia, and in India as well. Only then, when the road is cleared, will they risk going after China, unless they eliminate China together with the USA in one fell swoop, which they may see to be their best chance. They may also try to draw China into a nuclear war confrontation at the moment the USA is dying on its knees. That, too, is highly likely. It may happen for no apparent reason at all. The fondi have a long history to simply invent whatever reason the gullible public will buy, if indeed they will bother with public opinion when the going gets hot. That is why the fight is so difficult to understand, because the games that are being set up right now in the synarchists' heads are so unbelievable, and probably intentionally so. From a rational standpoint there exists absolutely no valid reason for the U.S.A. to threaten China. But their slandering of China, which has become loud and large, indicates that China is on their target list to be served a death blow in their 'end of history' game."

Ushi sighed. "China has never been a threat to any of its neighbors. Threatening other nations is not a part of its culture. It hasn't invaded a single country in its entire history. To the contrary, it has been helping many of its neighbors to develop their potential. Neither did China use force to get Hong Kong back. It sat back patiently and negotiated with the British, and waited. Nor did China ever take an aggressive position against the U.S.A.. Until the U.S. synarchists had turned up the heat something fierce against China, China had no more than twenty nuclear missiles as a deterrent, in contrast to the seven hundred China faced on the American side, and those twenty missiles that China had were strategically obsolete. Now with NATO camping virtually at its door steps in Taiwan, China is tragically forced into the nuclear arms race in a big way, contrary to its own cultural heritage. Obviously, the synarchists' provocative confrontation has no other purpose than to precipitously draw China, Russia, and the U.S.A. into a trap that assures their mutual annihilation as functioning nations. When this happens, the whole world will look ten times worse than Africa looks today, if anyone survives at all."

"Does the Chinese leadership know this?" I asked.

Ushi nodded. "A few people know this. Steve has been working overtime to alert them. I would say that those few understand the global situation better than the rest of the world does, but those are just a few, and they are strongly opposed by all the saboteurs that have been hired by the fondi to destabilize and disable China from within."

"This means that we must help those few who are fighting with us," I said to Ushi. "We must help them by getting the nation

of China to open its eyes. We must focus on the synarchists' universal war against humanity in all the places where it is not yet understood. We must expose their game. It is only unbelievable to the naïve. We have to expose what is being played out everywhere in the world. We must make it plain for everyone to see who has eyes to see. If we focus on anything else, I think we miss the fundamental issue and achieve nothing."

"I agree, this is bigger than Africa," said Tony at one point, who rarely speaks up. "This is global. Unless this gets resolved, the Africa problem won't even make it onto the agenda to be considered, much less become the key focal point. Pete and I have been in Africa. We have seen the disdain in which the West holds the Africans. The fondi are treating the Africans like shit, just as they treat all of South America."

"I agree, the game that the fondi play is not just a game," said Ross. "It appears to be something much bigger, something like a desperate fight for their survival. It appears that they see themselves cornered on all sides, even while they have the entire world down on its knees. If they are that scared, we must realize that they are also extremely vulnerable, and perhaps much more so than we may think. That means, we shouldn't be scared ourselves at this critical juncture when the opportunity for winning is actually greater than ever before, which their extreme fear indicates. We should be celebrating and martial our resources."

"Sure, it is never just a game for the great nations to be set up for their mutual annihilation," said Heather. "They may play it as a game, but they are scared of the outcome themselves. To call that a game is an understatement. Nevertheless, the process that they set up seems go ahead. It unfolds with the cold precision of a well-thought-out game. No matter how desperate the fondi are, and no matter how unbelievably diabolical their goal has become, so that they become afraid of it themselves, the process goes ahead as if the plan itself was in control, and the fondi and the synarchists are but bystanders in the wings. They are playing a game they cannot win, even if they destroy the entire earth. All good in the world is rooted in humanity itself. If they destroy that, they end up with nothing. That's what the Romans had experienced after they killed the one man who could have saved the Roman society with the Christ idea of the universal good of humanity."

"The fondi are actually fighting against themselves," I interjected, "like the Romans did when they killed the only person who could have saved their society from its madness that eventually destroyed it. That man, Christ Jesus, understood the principles that could have saved Rome and uplifted it into becoming the greatest civilization ever. But in their blind fear for their own puny little

existence, they killed the man, and with it they sealed their own doom."

"The fondi are no different than the Roman were," said Ross, still kicking up sand. "That's what makes the whole thing scary. They are crazy and scared. That makes them dangerous."

"Just think of what must happen the moment that North Korea is hit with nuclear bombs," added Tony. "We Americans boldly tell the North Koreans that they must do as they are told or they will cease to exist. What do you think China's reaction will be when this 'or else' happens right at its border? Will the Chinese stand idly by? Or how do you think Russia will react when this happens just a few miles off its border? The Russian people are scared, too, and many of the people who hold the key to power in Russia are irrational as well. Then, when the shit hits the fan and the Middle East explodes from behind, and when Israel the USA and Britain, hit everybody in sight, including Russia's allies in that entire area, nobody can estimate what is going to happen, except that a huge chaos will erupt. And that is what the fondi want. They hope that they can utilize this chaos to re-stage the world to their advantage, like they had always done in the past, though on a much smaller scale."

Ushi calmly replied "That's how World War One was set up by the British monarchy. Everybody knows that now. Ironically, they are doing it again, and precisely for the same purpose, and just as it happened then, nobody will recognize the game until long after it's over, provided that there is anybody left to make that recognition."

"They don't really call it war anymore," said Ross sarcastically, "they call it a policy of preemptive defense. They go in and terrorize an entire nation at will, and destroy it in the name of fighting terrorism. They even provide the provocation themselves. That's called preemptive defense. They give themselves the right to destroy any nation they choose to annihilate, on grounds of their own fears that this nation might become a threat in the future. They are right, in not calling this warfare, anymore. There is no proper word that can describe preemptive annihilation. Insanity is too soft a term."

"Actually, all of this has happened before," added Sylvia. "It's been happening covertly on a very small scale. Now that scale is expanding as the stakes are infinitely higher for the fondi. That's why the whole process gets blown out into the open in an ever-larger context. But basically, none of that is new. We just haven't seen it on the larger scale before."

"That's not exactly true," said Ushi. "When the Thirty Years War ended, that actually was a part of an eighty year period of war, three quarters of the population had perished in some parts of Europe. By all accounts, this war was the most destructive war in history.

Projected onto the present global scale, the amount of killing that had been unleashed during that eighty-year period would be equal to almost four billion casualties in today's global context. Some cities were depopulated down to a mere five percent of their former population, and some entire areas were totally depopulated and destroyed."

"We can do the job more efficiently today," interjected Tony sarcastically. "It won't take us more than ten minutes. We can launch a preemptive annihilation of ourselves to save us the trouble of having to fight for eighty years, or a hundred years."

Ushi protested against this. "This kind of focus gets us nowhere," she replied sharply to Tony. "Our situation is far too serious for us to repeat what everybody already knows. We have to move forward or we cease to exist. The stakes are that high."

I had been watching Sylvia's reaction while Ushi spoke. The forceful manner in which Ushi spoke had momentarily brought tears to her eyes. I could feel tears myself. Oh, go on and cry I would have liked to say to her, but I didn't. All of us had already suffered far too much from the fondi's already ongoing depopulation game. How much more could anyone take? Still, we had to fight on. From all that I could sense, Sylvia had loved Antonovna and Nicolai and deeply mourned their death. After all, they had been a part of our family for a time and had been taken from us.

"So, how can we deal with this madness?" Sylvia asked a while later as we made ourselves comfortable on the sand when we felt we had walked far enough. "I think the fondi have revealed their weakest flank by so forcefully reacting to their greatest fear. Their weak flank is the principle of the universal unity of good. We can hit their vulnerable flank by exposing this principle all over the world, beginning in Russia, where Nicolai had thought that the development of it could really take off. Don't you all agree that this could work?"

Steve lay stretched out in the shade of his favorite umbrella, looking aimlessly into the sky as if an answer could be found there, or could be brought down out of the sky in the form of a script carried by some magical bird that he couldn't yet see. "There is only one way you can exploit the fondi's weakness," he said calmly without changing his position. "It must be done the way my networks had won the war in Bosnia."

He sat up moments later and said, "There were two factions fighting each other in Yugoslavia, both of which were also at war with the Serbs. Once we were able to convince the two feuding factions that they were purposely set up against each other, by the fondi's crowd, for their mutual annihilation, they stood back, thought about this for a while, and then decided to support each other

against their real enemy. That's how the war was won. NATO didn't come into the scene until the war was essentially over."

Steve reached for the water jug that he had brought and took a long drink. "We have to convince Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Israel, and the USA, to do the same. We must convince them that the confrontational game that they are drawn into by America's synarchists is intended to assure their mutual annihilation. Get them to think about that for a while, and I can guarantee that this will dramatically change the world."

Steve paused for a minute to let us think about the meaning ourselves, of what he had just said. He took another sip of water. "The fondi will never relent from their objective," he continued. "They will forge ahead with their plans to dramatically depopulate the planet according to their perceived needs, America included. The only thing they cannot do, is force the nations of the world to annihilate each other to fulfill their dreams, and that includes America as well. This final step to self-destruction has to be taken by the nations voluntarily. We can prevent this final step. The nations' voluntary cooperation for their mutual annihilation can be prevented. The fondi may provoke the entire world, and they are very good at this, but they cannot force the world to comply. And this is where we come in. We can make sure that the people throughout the world understand the game that they have already been drawn into, so that they won't comply but raise themselves up as human beings to start a new game in which the fondi's history ends. Unfortunately, before this can happen, we have to rebuild humanity intellect from the grass-roots level up. Humanity has been put to sleep, and its intellect has been shut down with an intense barrage of trivial pursuits as in the days of Rome."

Tony remarked to Steve that he must be dreaming.

Steve replied, "what I said can be done. It is totally possible. Can you think of any other way?"

Steve turned to me and asked if I could still remember the Bible story that he had asked me to read a dozen years ago in Leipzig, the one that had been omitted from the Oxford Study edition.

I remembered the story well. It was the story in which Christ Jesus had refused to condemn the adulterous woman that the law required to be put to death?

"Remember, we discovered that the harsh law had been politically created to isolate the people at the grass roots level, to divide the indivisible good by force in order to artificially create deep divisions and to establish the notion for people that it the divine will for them to assume the right of ownership over another person at the grass roots level. And as we know, the people did comply, even while it destroyed their very hearts within."

Steve asked whether I remembered what we had recognized as a probable reason for this imperial notion. He reminded me that we acknowledged that the notion, which had legitimized the ownership of another person, was foundational to the hierarchical power structure of the church and of every dynasty and empire. "That's why this notion couldn't be allowed to be eroded by somebody making a mockery of it, such as by enriching one another's life in violation to the ownership doctrine. They understood that the ownership-doctrine of human beings had to be protected at the grass roots level, if needs be with the death penalty. They had to protect this human ownership doctrine, because it represents the most powerful denial of the principle of the universal unity of good. That is why they were so deeply committed to this doctrine. By the same token, this ancient biblical story also defines our task," said Steve. "We must work to erode that doctrine that the empires fought to protect, and this erosions must occur at the grass roots level. We must fight our war at the same level where the war against humanity had begun. If we do this, we can change the world. If we fight this war with an idea of universal love and universal freedom, humanity will recognize itself as human beings. And it will recognize itself as being victimized. Then, and only then, will humanity claim its freedom and its right to love. If we do this, we will win. It won't take an army of millions of activists to spread this idea around the world. We, who are assembled at this beach are enough to accomplish the task before us, because the seeds for our success are already lodged in every human heart. We may create a movement of millions, or a million movements of human beings. I think we can do this. If we don't acknowledge this possibility and reach for it, we don't acknowledge the principle of the universal unity of good and cheat ourselves out of its rich unfolding as we have done for far too long."

Steve lay down again after this, looking up into the sky as before. He looked peaceful to the eye. Soon, we all did the same. We all needed to contemplate how everything could be done that needed to be done. I realized that Ushi had actually already addressed the issue at its very core, using different words. As I mulled the problem over in my mind, it became apparent that a single solution was actually crystallizing. We were all taking about the same solution in our own special way. We were looking at every possible scenario, and the answer always seemed to be the same. We always came back to our humanity as a universal resource in our fight to save our world."

A while later Ushi and Steve talked about their recent visit to the Ukraine. Steve laid himself down on the sand again, next to

Ushi. Ushi reminded us that the Ukraine was once considered the breadbasket of Europe. Then came Stalin and murdered five million of its finest farmers for totally insane reasons, by taking away their food. This collapsed the nation's productive potential that had never been fully recovered. After the collapse of the Soviet Union the Ukraine became isolated even further, by which its potential collapsed again. "Today, the Ukraine is a place of wide spread hunger and misery," said Steve. "The whole country is looted and destroyed, and is literally being starved to death by a growing insanity within its own population. Nothing works anymore, and whatever riches had once existed, had all been stolen by the international thieves."

Ushi told us that in the Ukraine fourteen million pensioners are condemned to live on \$10 to \$15 a month, and that even this minuscule sum is frequently withheld, sometimes for half a year. "Who can survive under those conditions?" she asked. "In this extreme deprivation countless people simply die or commit suicide."

She told us that the teachers, farmers, doctors, and business people are not much better off than the pensioners who had once built the country. She said that the situation was so grim that it appeared to her that the government, itself, was trying to kill off the bulk of the people. She also told us that in addition to that, there is a great deal of mental destruction going on. Only four tenths of one percent of the GDP is devoted to advanced education, and this in a country that once had the most highly educated work force in the world.

Ushi told us that this silent collapse goes on in the background, while at the same time forty percent of the nation's taxes are 'confiscated' by the IMF for debt service payments. "This is another facet," she said, "of the world's war against humanity. We must stop this multifaceted war. If we succeed, most of humanity's deep seated problems will disappear."

"And if we fail?" asked Tony.

"That's unimaginable," she said.

"The whole country is collapsing," said Steve. "Unemployment is snowballing, together with crime, mortality, corruption, psychological disorders, and the collapse of public morale and tax discipline."

Steve pointed out that this tragedy should be seen as a great tragedy for the world, because the Ukraine is not a banana republic, but has a highly advanced technological background. But mostly, it should be seen as a defeat for humanity as a whole. Everyone stood by and allowed this tragedy to happen. Would the world react differently if America were being destroyed in the same way? Probably not.

"The Ukraine has also inherited a large array of nuclear weapons from the Soviet era," said Steve. He suggested that it should be obvious to a child that this potent nuclear technology

becomes dangerously volatile when it is mixed up with crime, corruption, a high mortality rate, and mounting psychological disorders. "Russia suffers the same fate," Steve added, "which had eighty percent of its industrial capacity destroyed by the IMF. This means that half of the world's nuclear weapons exist in an extremely volatile environment that is overshadowed by and history of economic rape. In addition to the pain that is being imposed, these nations, especially Russia, are constantly agitated and threatened anew, militarily, by the fondi." Steve said that this brief overview should give us an indication of the urgency of the fight we are in. He suggested that this fight for our humanity, on which all the solutions depend, should be carried forward with the same intensity with which we had fought against the death star.

"In the Ukraine, starvation has reduced the population by two million in two years," Steve continued. Steve stood up and drew some figures in the sand that demonstrated that this is a huge figure for a nation of the size of the Ukraine. He proved with these figures that the rate of starvation in the Ukraine already supersedes the death-rate of Hitler's holocaust during World War II, and that it superseded several times the loss of human life in Africa that resulted from all of the wars there, and all of the diseases, and all of the starvation that Africa has become infamous for. He suggested that the tragedy in the Ukraine, nevertheless, only hints at the larger, creeping collapse of civilization around the world that presently claims the life of 50,000 children each single day across the globe, because their human world has been destroyed by the fondi's new weapon called, money. Money has become more and more an end unto itself for social destruction, just as it had been in feudal times, instead of being employed as a means to enable the self-development of society and the enrichment of its civilization.

"Here lies the key to saving the world from nuclear war," Steve continued, standing up like a lecturer once again. "If the feudal monetarism cannot be defeated, humanity will die and finish its course in the fire of a nuclear war. Of course, the defeat of the feudal monetarism cannot be easily achieved. The entire 'my money' syndrome that the western society has been coerced into, and Russia too, and the Ukraine, and China and India to some degree, will have to be overturned. The focus needs to be shifted away from personal enrichment according to the model of a black hole in space, that is costing countless people their life, to the enrichment of the entire human society according to the model of the sun, that enriches the world. This is the only way by which we can overturn the goals of the fondi who will do everything in their power to prevent us from being successful. Still, this is how mankind can win World War III, which has already begun."

Steve paused and sat down onto the nearest log. "I know

how the fondi think. I have maintained my under-the-table connections with my contact inside the fondi, as you might have guessed. Even the fondi know that a comprehensive focus on its humanity, is mankind's only hope. This is also why they fear it. They fear it in every nation, even while they arrogantly tell me on the phone that World War III will never be won by humanity."

Steve paused and took a sip from his water bottle. "We must prove them wrong," he continued. "This is what we must find a solution for. We must deflate their arrogance, defeat their resolve, and make them human again. We can't save humanity in isolation, without inspiring the fondi into becoming human again as well. We must take them out of their self-isolation, in which they, too, have no chance to survive. This single point is more fundamental for their survival than their depopulation games or nuclear war conflicts that they have designed to carry out. This single point draws into itself all aspects that pertain to human survival, where they become a part of the larger issue that determines whether the whole of humanity dies or creates a richer civilization than has ever been imagined. This is what is at stake. We must begin our war against nuclear war by fighting for a new world-economic order that enables the self-development of all nations as human beings, and for this to happen we need to create a new and higher identity of man, universally. We need to go beyond seeing ourselves as merely made in the image of God, as man had been perceived during the Renaissance. We need to see man as being one with the infinite All, by which God is defined. We must see ourselves as creators and discoverers, as people of wisdom and dominion, endowed with beauty, compassion, love, even as the very reflection of God. We must see ourselves as the Supreme Being on this planet and in our universe. We must recognize ourselves as divine being."

"I hope you realize that you are expecting a miracle," said Sylvia to Steve after he was finished making his speech. "You might succeed with that in China; you might even succeed with that in Russia; but in North America, you are treading on thin ice. There is nothing there that you or I can build on. People have become so deeply isolated from their humanity by years of diseducation through the schools; brutalization through entertainment; and brainwashing through the media; that they will kick us in the teeth the moment we open our mouth to tell them that their world is dangerously rotten to the core, that it is collapsing and may soon be destroyed. They will sooner listen to the synarchists than to us, even if they can sense that we are right and the synarchist are dangerous and may indeed blow America up. They still won't help us. The word, help, isn't in their vocabulary. They will do their usual dance and back away with folded arms and closed hands and tell themselves

that this danger doesn't affect them. Instead of helping us, they will most likely say to the synarchists, 'if you want to blow our country up, hop to it, we won't get in your way, nothing works anymore anyway; just tell us when the fireworks start so that we can get our cameras in place and rolling. There is a fortune to be made from selling that kind of footage.' They may also add, 'please give us a week's notice before you blow the country up, so that we can shift our investments out of the dollar and buy derivatives against it, that will make us fabulously rich.'

"I can almost guarantee you that this will be the type of reaction you will face in the USA today," Ushi added.

Steve just smiled. "Is this something that makes you afraid? Is this something that you can't handle? Is there anything in that empty scene that you don't know the answer for, to enrich it?"

Sylvia quietly shook her head and smiled back at him.

"I didn't say it would be a cakewalk," Steve continued. "I merely said that we can do it. We have everything on our side that we need to succeed."

"Except money," Sylvia replied.

"You have enough of that to get yourself started," said Steve and waved a finger at her as if she said something naughty. "The rest will come if you do your job right. Don't even believe that you must fight this fight alone. If you think that way, you deny the Principle of the universality of good that your fight is based on, which would be self-defeating. The truth is, this is humanity's fight."

Steve began to laugh. "You are not the only human being in the world," he said to Sylvia. "You are fighting this fight in unison with humanity. You are inviting humanity to save its skin. You offer to help, but not to do it for them. Don't deny that every human being has a self-interest in protecting the world that we all share, and our civilization in which we all live and are supported and enriched by. This fight, Sylvia, is humanity's fight. We are merely helping the people to see that. There actually is no other way possible for us to succeed. To be satisfied with anything less, such as shouldering the burden yourself, would be a denial of the Principle that our fight is based on, which alone makes it possible for us to succeed. To deny that would be like shooting ourselves in the foot before the race starts. It's hard to win that way. The principle of universal good is what you'll be running with. Good is universal. It exists wherever human beings live and love and care. It will be expressed universally, and that will carry the fight. I would even say that you should examine your attitude. If you aren't approaching this challenge with joy, rethink your commitment. The fact is, you are going to be involved with one of the brightest features of the human being, which is its generosity. If you present the challenge properly around the world, you will never have to ask another per-

son, 'Is this all what your existence is worth? Is this all what your life is worth? Is this all what our civilization is worth to you, including our world?'"

"Why don't we just join the leading edge organization that is already committed to this fight?" Tony asked. "Why don't we simply join the LaRouche organization and support their fight?"

Steve just laughed. "That won't do," he said. "The LaRouche movement is not the end-all. It is the beginning. The simple fact that there are a thousand fascist movements in the world tells me that there are not enough LaRouche movements in the world, because if they were, the fascist movements would not exist. Our commitment must go beyond just joining a movement. Our commitment must be to create thousands of new LaRouche type movements, one on every corner, a million across the world. For this we must create a million new leaders, or several millions, even. For this we have to create a whole new education system on the model of the 14th Century system that created the leaders of the Renaissance. They called this system, The Brotherhood of the Common Life. That's the model. It isn't the task of an education system to stuff a people full with useless facts. It needs to be a system that guides people to discover our common humanity as human beings, to bring out to the full what we already have, to develop it, and to develop an appreciation for it, to make our humanity shine as the precious jewel that it is. We need leaders who inspire people to become human beings. LaRouche has put on the table the model for this development. He never expected humanity to join up and become tag-along followers. He expected to set the stage for an explosive development of humanist movements around the world, even small movements of one person, movements of human beings that bring light into the world. He expected to see a lateral lattice of the type that Helen hinted at a dozen years ago, a boundless lattice of countless, laterally interconnected humanist movements, all illumining the universe with light and love, and truth. That's how I see it. LaRouche never set himself up with a vertical organization that one simply joins. Everything that he created is linked laterally, heart to heart. Whenever he visits a country he leaves a seedpod behind for a new LaRouche organization to unfold. And they do unfold around him. His standard is the human being. No one is greater and no one is less, and his goal for everyone is, as far as I can tell, to become as fully a human being as the divinity of our humanity implies we are able to. Everything that he stands for, stands on that. That is what his name represents to me and many people. And his name will remain synonymous with that, forever. So I say, we have the task before us to create at least a million LaRouche type movements around the world."

This time, I think, Steve had us stunned. Nobody said a word.

"If any of you think that this task is too hard, then let me ask you how much you think your life is worth, or the life of your country is worth. Hiroshima was destroyed in the space of a moment. The USA can be destroyed just as quickly. Hiroshima was destroyed by the synarchists. Now the fondi have penetrated their synarchists more deeply into our government than ever before, with the evident commitment to destroy us from within. The synarchists have been brought in through the back door, mostly unelected, and have been placed into all the top-level positions of power. This is the evil that we know, that we can see. The evil that we don't know, that we can't see, is made up of all the synarchist sludge that was dragged in behind them. Even if we get rid of the evil that we know, America remains vulnerable until the sludge has been removed. You can't remove the sludge if you have a population that is mentally in the sewer, which thinks like the synarchists want them to think. You can do this only if you have a population that is deeply aware of the riches and the value of its universal humanity. To such a population that lives in the sun, the sludge will become visible like an ink spot on a white tablecloth. For this we need a society that is universally uplifted by a vast network of new Renaissance leaders. Nothing less will be sufficient. The grave insecurity of our country, as that of any other country in the world right now, isn't a problem that one can shoot at with a single shot, and then go to sleep again. It requires a constant commitment to universal good. The question of they, as related to government, then becomes a question of I: What am I doing to uplift the value of our humanity in society."

We had an entire week set aside for this conference. This was just the first morning of it. This weeklong conference was to be OUR time in history, a time to stake our claim for eternity. We had a brief span of time to come up with an answer that could alter the world, and we all knew it. There was no doubt in my mind that we had made good progress already.

Of course there was also time included in our unofficial schedule for swimming, even for dancing after dinners, although the thought remained right beneath the surface wherever we were and whatever we did, that this fight before us had to be won, and that it had to be fought in a manner that left no one vanquished and caused the world to be uplifted.

Suggestions of how to proceed were brought forward at the strangest places, even out in the ocean while we were swimming.

On the third day, while we were dancing to the local band

in the restaurant, after our dinner, Sylvia suggested to me that I should go back to Siberia and convince Nina to help us. "You can get her to become a pioneer herself, in the fight," Sylvia said. "If Nina is the kind of person that you told be about, she will want to bring the idea forward through her channels within the Strategic Rocket Forces. I am convinced that the people that Nina interfaces with in high places might be alert enough to latch onto those vital ideas that must be implemented. They, in turn, may even get other departments to follow suit, and who knows, even other nations."

I didn't like the idea of risking Nina's position for this, and told Sylvia so.

"Then you are prepared to be risking her life," Ushi responded sharply, who had overheard our conversation on the dance floor. "No one is not involved in this," she added. "No one is isolated. No country is not in danger. Isolation is not a possibility. That is what Olive told me in Caracas," she added.

Ushi pointed out that this is the very platform that Olive has used to solicit funds for me, from reluctant donors. "She had told them that no person on the planet is not involved in what is going on," said Ushi.

"Isn't that exactly what you had told me way back on that day in Washington?" said Sylvia. "You had likened humanity to a village located downstream from a dam that is breaking up. The emergency affects everyone. Then someone says, 'I am not involved, the dam is not my business. I have a vegetable garden to tend to.' And so that person declines. Nevertheless, that person is involved. By refusing to help, that person becomes involved in the destruction of the village that might otherwise have been saved. By not becoming involved in the necessary fight for life, that person becomes involved in the destruction of his or her world, and her own life with it.

"So, Peter, don't worry about inviting Nina to become involved," added Sylvia. "She might recognize this invitation as an expression of being honored by you, with an invitation to become involved in something that is far greater than oneself."

"But going back to Siberia seems so unproductive," I replied.

Nevertheless, by the time the dancing was over, and the more I thought about it, the more Sylvia's proposal appeared to be valid. It appeared that Sylvia's plan could work and quite effectively so.

Sylvia suggested later that night that captain Yuri Brovikov might be able to get me back into Russia for this project, skipping beneath the New Iron Curtain with which Russia had isolated itself once more. "Yuri would do this in Nicolai's honor," said Sylvia in a reassuring tone.

The next morning, during breakfast Sylvia also suggested that Ushi should join me. "Ushi knows many people in Russia and might be able to look up some of Nicolai's friends and her own trusted contacts."

The more Sylvia talked this way about the plan, the more exciting the idea became to contemplate. We talked to Ushi about it on the beach once we had a foundation established. We also talked to Steve who supported the idea. We practically worked out the entire itinerary right on the beach. Ushi became excited about the potential breakthroughs that could be made by us going first to Russia, before taking the tour to the West. Indeed, it was fun to do this kind of grandiose dreaming again in with Sylvia, Ushi and Steve all played a major part.

When Sylvia presented the complete plan to everyone, I watched Tony's reaction. Would he ridicule her? Heather instantly supported us. So did Ross.

Heather's support came out of the depth of her usual excitement with things that are "full of vitality and life," as she had put it a long time ago. "Yes, you must do that," she said to me instantly and wished us luck.

Heather's enthusiasm affected Tony. He simply approved of the plan. But then, after he thought about for a while, he said that he would help us do the same within the USA, once we returned. Sylvia, too, promised to help. She said that she would do the work in the USA together with Tony. She told us that there are certain people at the NORAD center who still had a bit of respect for her left over from the cruise missile days. She was certain that she could get them to see the truth about the reason for which their center even exists. She said, she might even be able to get her foot further into the door, up to higher levels, with Fred's help, who had always been close to her. Tony, too, promised to help her in any way he could. "So, why not start right away?" said Fred when we called him.

I also phoned Erica in Germany that night to ask if she would cover Germany. She agreed that this could be done, but she said that she would need help.

"You must make it clear without fail," Steve took over the phone, "when you talk to people that the threat of nuclear war or depopulation, or anything like that, is fundamentally an economic issue. You must let people know that this is a part of the fondi's war against humanity, and ultimately against itself by the same token; that this is a war that is fuelled by a failure of perceptions. You must also make it clear to them, that deep down at the most fundamental level the whole problem is ultimately a social issue that

goes back to the political perversion of the Decalogue. Use the metaphor of the flower garden to illustrate this. If we can all do this, and do it well, I think the people might respond and take the necessary steps to save themselves and their world by shutting down the fondi's wars, by elevating even the 'royal' society of the fondi into becoming human again."

"I need help with this. No one can do this alone," said Erica.

"Nicolai always worked alone," I reminded her.

Steve added that he would try to convince Ross to help out in Germany.

We thanked her for her promise.

Steve, it seemed, was finally getting excited, now. He volunteered to take on the Chinese in the same fashion. He said that the Chinese are just as deeply affected by the fondi's 'royal' wars. "They are up to their eyebrows in it, even though they don't want to be involved. They are involved. As Sylvia had said, because no one is not involved."

Steve added that the Chinese were in a state of denial, because they are far too tightly focused onto building to take time out to protect what they have built, and to protect their civilization. Steve noted that this failure had been a deadly problem for the Chinese many times in history.

I suggested to Steve that the Chinese people needed to learn the lesson that Nicolai had tried to teach us with his two New York seminars on Russia and on China. "He had spent two hours talking about China's vast development plans," I said to Steve, "and another two hours taking about the economic collapse of Russia through international looting to the point where Russia had nothing left except its vast arsenal of nuclear weapons. Nicolai's point was clear then: that unless Russia is rescued economically, and strategically, the vast construction efforts in China will be irrelevant, because when Russia falls in the synarchist games, China falls right behind it, one way or another. I suggested that to some extent, what Nicolai had recognized was still true."

"The whole world must be rescued," said Sylvia, "and not just Russia and China. The hole 'weapons of mass destruction' scare show that is being unleashed in the West by the fondi is set up as ruse to create a pretext for destroying the industrial and pharmaceutical infrastructure of all the targeted nation. That's the beginning of the real target. This kind of senseless targeting must be prevented. Russia and China must play a role in this. We must built a world wide club of nations that are fully aware of the game that is being played by the fondi, that will make it clear to the fondi that they are not allowed to play their games anymore, to be toying with the

life of entire nations as they have for so long. China cannot be exempted from this responsibility."

"Of course China cannot be exempted," Steve agreed. "What do you think I have been trying to do all those years?"

"In this case you must double your effort," said Ushi when she overheard what we were talking about. "We must bring the whole world together as one family. We must end the isolation, division, confrontation, etc., that the fondi have drawn us into. We must built an international movement of informed citizens which will assume the leadership role that they have erroneously delegated to their governments that have now been taken over by the 'royal' fondi. The reason why nothing has happened so far, is partly due to people's conscious neglect, and that includes us. We haven't focused on building up the kind of quality in people's thinking that is required for responsible leadership to come forward, and to be effective. With this I mean respect, honor, and affection, without which, no unity can be established, not on the grass roots level, nor on the international level."

The Chinese question remained unresolved until the last day of our conference, until our farewell dinner was almost over. That's when Heather announced that she would help Steve by working with him in China for as long as Ushi would be away in Russia. Ross told us that he had a whole stack of invitations from a number of scientifically oriented institutions in China. He had received them in response to his papers. He told us that he would make a copy of them for Steve. Ross said that he always had to turn the invitations down for the lack of time. He told us that Steve might want to try to rekindle these contacts. He promised to help him once he was done in Germany.

"If I can convince people of the truth," said Ross, "the revelation might travel like wildfire and filter downwards. The Chinese are not as closed minded to spiritual perception and scientific thinking as the West is." Ross raised his glass to wish us all God speed in our new endeavors.

Ushi, too, gave a fare well toast at the final party. She rarely made speeches. She spoke about my first visit to Leipzig where I had said something to her that had always puzzled her. She told everyone that we were in a cafe at the time, and that I had told her that the two of us, by ourselves, were sufficient to change the world with a right idea. "Now, this sort of thing is really happening," she said, and raised her glass.

We drank a lot of this Mexican fruit juice that night and danced until the band stopped playing. The next morning we all boarded the bus together, back to the airport. The fight for our life was about to begin.

Chapter 11 - Return to Oymyakon

We met Captain Yuri on the high seas some three hundred miles from shore. The Coast Guard had brought us to the agreed upon spot. One of the Russian officers picked us up with a rubber raft after the Typhoon had surfaced. Once this was done the real work began.

It took as many days to convince the Russian captain of the validity of our mission, than it did for the sub to return with us to Murmansk. In Murmansk, he showed us the graves. He brought us to Nicolai's resting place that was marked by a cross that bore the composition of Nicolai's full name intertwined that of Antonovna, the combination that Anton had treasured. The inscription was almost identical to the one I had seen on the invitation card where their names were finely printed like a landscape across the card. She had been proud of this composition of their names as: Nicolai Vasily and Antonovna Valentina Berendeyev Lisitov. I could still see her bright smile as she had pointed this out to me on that radiant morning in Novosibirsk. Now I saw it carved into the stone cross that marked their grave.

Yuri had paid for the stone and the inscription. He had found the composition of their names on an invitation card he once received. Ushi, evidently had no idea what all this meant, nor did I elaborate. This had been a part of our private domain, and so was the grief I felt for the loss I suffered, and the loss that humanity incurred by their untimely death that should not have happened. I should have prevented it. Their death was caused by the world's apathy, and our own apathy, my apathy. The SDI system should not have been shut down. The greatest efforts should have been expended to get the Soviet Union to agree to the joint development of it, as the system had been designed to be developed. If this had been done, Nicolai and Anton would still be alive to live and breathe and love, and continue in their struggle to enrich their country and the world. Even the Soviet Union would have been spared the collapse it suffered. The worldwide scientific and technological development focus that would have resulted, would have enriched the Soviet economy, and the Soviet State with it. But all this was gone. Millions had died because of that single failure, and Nicolai and Anton had died with them.

I could still remember the euphoria in Venice when we felt we had done the right thing in shutting the SDI system down that

had created unbearable tensions. Those had been exciting times. Little did we realize that we stepped backwards that day, instead of advancing forward. We had rejoiced in a success that in real terms was not a success at all, but marked the beginning of one of the greatest tragedies in history that we hadn't foreseen, but that we would have foreseen had we opened our eyes more fully.

The same must be said about society as a whole. My failure had left society unprepared to respond to the great crisis that had occurred. Society had been caught asleep, all of us included. A society that is unprepared to meet unforeseen challenges cannot survive. I had understood this for a long time, but why hadn't I acted on this understanding? Most of the people weren't willing to acknowledge the existence of the crisis while it was unfolding, even while people were dying from it, but I had been more advanced. I had understood the game that was being played with humanity and had done next to nothing with this knowledge for twelve years. I had a greater responsibility, therefore; that of waking humanity! I had failed. It is the mark of a poor character to give no warning when one sees dangers ahead, even if nobody is willing to listen.

I felt tears running down my face when I realized this. Anton and Nicolai died, because I hadn't acted while there was still time, and worse than that, I had acted incorrectly from the very beginning. In Venice we congratulated ourselves with champagne. In Moscow Anton had called me a hero. It all seemed so right what we did. Now Anton was dead because we had been wrong thirteen years earlier. We had been wrong, because we hadn't dug deep enough when everything hung in the balance. We had fished on the surface. We had latched onto the first idea that appeared, that was vaguely founded on a fundamental principle for establishing unity, but unity has no meaning by itself. Unity requires that we enrich one another's existence. I had known that. I had also known that the SDI had been designed to accomplish that. Steve had found this out in Venice. Still, we had shut the SDI down, knowing what it had been meant to accomplish, and could have accomplished.

Because of that failure, two heroic individuals had been forced to deal with the consequences alone, and had lost their lives in the fight. Would they forgive me for having been stupid, when it really counted? And even afterwards, during the years when there was still time to reverse the mistake, I should have used all the diplomatic resources at my disposal to get the governments of the world to recognize the great dangers they faced, and inspired them to recommit themselves to the original principle of the SDI.

That realization, too, seemed like an excuse. The truth can't be avoided. It struck me like a knife pricking the heart that it was ultimately my own action, not my inaction, which had caused their death. I had been the chief advocate for shutting the SDI program

down. I couldn't get away from this guilt. If the SDI system had been in place as it had been designed, any satellite could have been destroyed, anywhere around the earth, within seconds from detection. I had lobbied for shutting the SDI down as a means for dealing with a crisis of tension. I was hailed for having saved humanity, instead I had left it defenseless. I had left it poorer. I had left it at a lower state of civilization and had kicked the genius of LaRouche into the face, who had struggled to raise our civilization. The thought became painful to bear that I had committed a crime against humanity by eliminating the greatest defense system ever envisioned. I had robbed humanity of its chance to build a defense for itself out the resources of its ingenuity, its science, its technologies, and its humanity. I shouldn't have shut it down. I should have convinced the President of our country to invite the Soviet's again and again to participate as an equal partner in the proposed cooperative effort to develop that defense system for the common welfare and the common defense of humanity.

In deep, deep sorrow I knelt onto the ground before the gray stone cross that marked my beloved friends' grave and wept. I begged for their forgiveness, to pardon me for my unforgivable apathy, and for the apathy of the world, but mostly for my own. I should have prevented their death, but like Shakespeare's Hamlet, like the most pathetic fool in all the great literature of the world, I did nothing. Hamlet saw the advancing armies that were approaching to devour his kingdom, but he did nothing. He knew precisely what actions were required to save the kingdom. But like a fool, he did something worse than nothing. He did the wrong thing. He even knew why he couldn't act rightly. He said to himself that it is easier by far to suffer the pains we know than the pains we don't know and the dangers of the unknown land where conventions don't apply but truth does, where one is demanded to be a complete person. I wept, because I had played the role of Hamlet right from the start and kept on playing it for years and years. I knew what needed to be done. Nicolai came all the way from Russia and told us in two powerful lectures what was required, and what did I do? I accepted them as entertainment. For twelve years, while the empire's forces were gaining speed, I had been content to waste my life having a party on the rooftop of the bus that I had allowed to get stuck in mud to its very axles. Damn me, I should have acted like a Joan of Ark and saved humanity like she had saved her nation, and she had been but a child compared to my knowledge, my training, my experience, my leading edge background, and the position of influence that I had established for myself. She had rallied an entire nation and changed its most pathetic king with her powerful innocence. Where was my innocence? I, more than anyone else bore the guilt for the death of three cities and the death of my beloved friends.

I beheld Anton's name on the gravestone and cried as I knew that her destiny had already been sealed by my action by the time we met again in Caracas. Twelve years should have been sufficient for me to reverse that, to accomplish for the world what Joan of Ark had accomplished in that glorious brief moment in history when she intervened and altered the destiny of her nation, never fearing for her own life.

Ushi remained standing beside me, silently, reverently. I knew I couldn't share my pain with her, my deeply drawn acknowledgment of guilt, at least for some time. I was too ashamed of myself, too deeply torn with self-accusations. I remembered William Palmerston's words from our meeting in Venice the day after I had announced the shutdown of the SDI. I realized that everything had unfolded as he had predicted. Had he already seen me in the role of that pathetic Hamlet that I became? I remembered his words with great pain. He had told me bluntly during that dark night, that there was nothing I could do to alter the outcome of the empire's will. I must have believed him deep in my heart in spite of my refusal to join his game. At least I could take comfort in the thought that I had done one thing right, by not joining him. But had I really done something right? By refusing to do the right thing, Hamlet had caused the death of his beloved's father, by his own hand. I had caused the death of my beloved herself, and the one we both loved. I should have died instead of them, but I remained to bear this pain. I also knew that there is no pain or grief, no matter how personally it now touched me, that lay beyond the redemption of love.

With this assurance of redemption came a ray of light. From under the burden of grief, like an answer to a prayer came a feeling that I had Anton's forgiveness, and Nicolai's, and would always have this for the rest of my life. It came in the form of a melody, a melody that I had associated with our brightest moments, moments when we had daringly challenged the validity of centuries of false ideals and traditions, when our little group at Caracas had boldly faced the world and had won against incredible odds. Anton was there. This meeting became a turning point towards a sequence of private events without which the death star satellite might have never been identified and been eliminated, so that a vastly greater death would have occurred that might have been designed to destroy half of humanity. The melody of our greatest joy in Caracas came to mind, the melody of the beautiful horn passage in Johannes Brahms' first symphony.

I stood up straight and erect now in front of the grave. I looked at the grave stone and at the redemption of love that it signified, and as I did so, more and more of Brahms' first symphony came to mind, almost all of it. The grand opening statement came to

mind that reflected the joy I had felt when I first saw Antonovna at the airport in Moscow, and later, the beautiful smile she had for me when she allowed me to call her, Anton. I also remembered the music that I had associated with our struggles at that meeting in Moscow, and the conflicts and paradoxes that evolved around the letters we wrote to each other. The second movement reflected the great peace that flowed from her reply, a peace that had lasted through all the intervening twelve years of silence between us.

Everything that I remembered from this period was precious, and so had the music become to me that I had associated with it. Then came the lighthearted scherzo of our first days in Caracas together; the breakthroughs that followed, and the burst of joy that gave way to the great horn passage of our embrace. That beautiful, leisurely drawn-out melody described the inner, private domain in which our hearts fully met. This, too, I felt, I could never share with anyone. I knew I could have shared it with Nicolai who had become a part of this unity, through Antonovna. I also knew that our embrace, which the horn passage celebrated, would never end, which Nicolai had been enfolded into.

I suddenly remembered what the man in the airplane had once told me so long ago, who had spoken to me about unity: that there can be no parting from the all-embracing unity in which there is but one I or Us. Brahms' horn passage reflects this type of unity. The melody of this passage doesn't really end, instead it transforms itself into something ever more beautiful. Rather than ending, it becomes changed into that precious new melody that is reminiscent to Beethoven's setting of Schiller's "Ode to Joy." And even this melody doesn't really end either, but becomes changed into a melody for dancing. All of these, of course, become drawn together in the grand finale of the symphony, where all the melodies reappear with much greater power and firmness, unfolding a completeness that says: 'one cannot have more than this' which now also meant, 'one cannot have anything less.'

I knew that our private symphony, which Anton and I had shared, into which Nicolai, too, had entered, could never be fully shared with another, or be understood by another. Our symphony had been a commitment to enrich each other's life, and we had done this. In this, we had found great freedoms. We had realized that this freedom was based on a principle that, by its very nature is greater than any one of us. Here, also came the thought that if something is greater than oneself, it doesn't need to be shared, because, by its very nature it unfolds universally, again and again, in countless ways, on its own terms. Also another thought came to mind at the same moment, that by this renewed unfolding, the private love that Anton and I had for each other would become validated again and again and find infinite expression, and that those expressions would

be even greater in scope than what we had been able to realize ourselves up to this point. The melody reminiscent to the "Ode to Joy" and the powerful melody for dancing that followed, were statements of life, statements of truth. Their unfolding to great power and majesty in the finale of Brahms' symphony, where they become interwoven again with the melody of the horns, were not ours alone to share, but represent the universal out-flowing of joy, peace, and power that pours forth from every embrace that is allowed to be. I realized that our commitment to enrich each other's existence would in fact have no meaning if it came to a halt at this gravesite. Its principle would be invalidated if this happened. I realized that it should be honored for evermore in life. It should be honored, because in its unfolding are found the great riches that we had brought into each other's life.

I began to realize all this as I faced Anton's and Nicolai's grave and was forced to deal with the paradox of their separation from me by death. The paradox was that this separation could never really occur in truth. With that realization, I felt as if a great light was lit at the deepest recesses of my Soul. I knew that I had to honor this principle, the unfolding of which had been our greatest gift to each other, which had been the foundation of all the freedoms and the treasures we had found in each other. I knew, that by the commitment to honor the substance of our love, that love would forever remain a part of my life.

With this bright and liberating realization my sense of Brahms' great symphony changed once again. It was no longer merely a musical accounting of the unfolding of our love, but a musical representation of the unfolding of all love, unfolding in trials and liberation into peace, joy, and power, unfolding to humanity all the great riches that lie in being alive. I realized, that I would always honor Antonovna in this context, from this day forward, because on that platform we are indeed, One.

As I stepped back from the grave site I understood with total clarity that my acknowledgment of her as that bright and lovely Morning Star would remain alive in me, who had been determined to brighten my Soul with the sparkle of a love that has no boundary itself, that she had shared freely.

Suddenly, I remembered Ushi again, standing patiently at my side. I read out their names out loud from the grave stone. I read them out loud as a tribute of respect. I read them slowly: "Nicolai Vasily and Antonovna Valentina Berendeyev Lisitov." I read their names just as they were engraved into the stone. It was only then that I noticed the three small letters CSB engraved beneath their names. I felt that Anton must have given these three letters a special place in her home, for Yuri to have put them on the grave stone

together with their names.

"What do the letters CSB stand for?" Ushi asked quietly a moment later.

"They are the symbol of our love, of all love," I replied. "I was married to Nicolai and Anton, did you know that? The letters CSB indicate to me that I am still married to them. We are a family together. Only the wedding feast did not take place. There was no time left. The CSB, however, is primarily related to Anton and me. It is deeply intertwined with the way our love had unfolded. In this regard it is rich with meaning."

"Is the symbol too precious to you, to share what it stands for?" Ushi asked.

"No!" I said emphatically. "The symbol is precious, yes, but it becomes meaningless in secret. That symbol can never become so precious that cannot be shared, because its value exists only in life. But are you ready to hear and understand the meaning of it?"

Ushi nodded, with the same sad expression that she came with. "Let me shock you," I answered. "CSB stands for Coffee, Sex, and Biscuits."

Ushi almost laughed, and would have laughed had we not been in a graveyard. "You must be kidding," she said.

"I am dead serious," I replied. "The CSB symbol originated with this meaning before Anton became involved with it. With Heather's influence it's meaning changed. It then stood for Clear headed living, Sex, and Beautiful mornings. Anton, however, thought it was wrong to restrict all of that to just the mornings. 'Why shouldn't we embrace our sexuality always, and in the fullest sense possible' she had asked. So, the CSB symbol was modified to signify that higher perception. It stood for being Complete, for Self-empowered self-love, and for Brilliance. These terms best described our love at that stage. This happened in Caracas, of course, but before the conference ended. When the conference was over, the symbol's meaning had to be uplifted once again. I raised its meaning as a parting gift to Anton, to represent, Caracas, Sunshine, and Brahms. All three aspects had played a big role in our love."

I told Ushi that Anton had reserved her reply until we got to Novosibirsk, where she presented Nicolai's idea of our triple marriage. I explained that the triple marriage was perceived as a pioneering platform for a qualitative improvement of the bond of love between people, built on the lateral flow of love. This gave the CSB symbol still one more, higher meaning. At this point it represented, Children, the Sublime, and the Betterment of humanity.

I explained to Ushi that we didn't leave the symbol at this stage for long. We always tried to push our love further ahead. I explained to Ushi, that when Anton had said in Caracas that we should embrace our sexuality always, she had been thinking in physi-

cal terms and in reference to us being together. At our wedding night at the Reindeer Center we decided that this was still too restrictive and unnecessary. We realized that everything that we had shared, our sex, our love, our being together, existed mostly on a higher level than physical contact. We realized it was born in our soul and our heart. It came out of our self-love in which we embraced all that is good and beautifully human. We realized that the sexual sharing was really a reflection of our inner world, of our love of ourselves as beautiful sexual beings. We realized that the sexual sharing was really secondary in nature, a kind of by-product, as we linked up with one another laterally. So we asked ourselves if the physical element was really required from that point on, since it was so restrictive. We realized that the physical element wasn't essential at all. We realized that we quite literally lived intertwined one another's heart and soul, so that we had become a part of one another's self-love."

I told Ushi that Siberia became our testing ground. I explained that while we became separated for a number of days right after our wedding night, the lateral flow of our love should logically continue. With this new realization in mind we decided that the CSB symbol should once again be upgraded. We decided that it should stand for Coffee, Sex, and Biscuits, once again, only this time in a higher dimension in which we existed as one. With this in mind, our marriage became more beautiful. It became so profound that it could continue to exist in spite of us being separated by the vast physical distance that would often lay between us. In other words, we could have our coffee, sex, and biscuits, regardless, with each other, at any time. We realized that the foundation for that isn't physical, but is within us.

"And it is still there," I said to Ushi with a smile now.

I said to Ushi that Anton would always remain alive in me, and Nicolai too. I explained that they would live for as long as I live. "Even Anton's sex remains alive," I said to her, "as I find it reflected in the sex of other people. Anton's smile is reflected in their smiles, her love in their love. Anton has enriched and ennobled the way in which I look at other people," I said to Ushi. "She has enriched me. She has enriched my humanity. She has enriched the way I love you, too. She has become a part of me, or all of us. In that, she lives on. They both live on in that fashion."

With all of this having been said out loud at the grave site, I felt suddenly free to leave that place of remembrance, to leave the grave, the stone cross, to leave them all behind with a great joy. I walked away with lighter footsteps than I had come, and with a greater sense of power than I had experienced since the day the tragedy had happened. The effect was, that the energy within could now be devoted to the urgent fight ahead. I walked away from the

grave with a freedom and peace that was embracing Ushi as well.

Ushi loved my definition of their immortality. Perhaps she could feel its substance. Yuri, too, could understand what I said. He told us during supper that night, in his own house and with his family present, that it didn't make any sense to force Nicolai and Anton out of his heart, soul, and mind, with the power of grief, just because their bodies had died. He said that they were still there and alive.

I told him that I didn't say fare well to them at their gravesite, because they didn't live there. By saying fare well there, I would deny their immortality, and with it my own immortality that Anton had taught me to accept and respect. I told them that what we had achieved together, and had shared together, has the potential to enrich many more people by which Anton and Nicolai will remain alive in some form in the hearts of humanity to enrich them forever. I said to Yuri that the only thing that I could say to them at the grave site was a heart felt, thank you: "Thank you for having lived. Thank you for having raised the platform for our love to such a level that it can never dim. Thank you for that great gift you have given me by sharing your life with yourself, and me so that I can now hold you forever in my arms and give you a New Life. Thank you for the chance to live that life with you."

I turned to Ushi at one point while we ate and suggested that nobody really knows how many millions of people remained alive in the world, simply because Anton and Nicolai existed, and we were intertwined in a bond of love. I suggested that without Anton's exuberant daring we might never have found out the truth about the nature of the death star, and without that, we might not have brought it down as early as we did. "Anton, I, and Nicolai have faced great dangers together," I said to Ushi. "We have contributed to a significant victory. Should their contribution to the victory be reflected on their grave stone, with an inscription, such as: Here lie the saviors of humanity?"

Yuri confessed that he had thought about something like that, but he felt that they wouldn't have wanted that.

I assured Yuri, that it would have been a tragedy if he had done that. I explained that this inscription would have been the final period of the last sentence in the story of their life, and they would have died with it. "But this tragedy didn't happen," I said to Yuri. "Their life is not over. The last chapter has not yet been written."

I said to Ushi, "If the love that we have shared, and still share, can uplift all love in the world to a higher level, even as we had uplifted our love to one another, than it may yet be possible to create a basis for ending the cycles of war in the world and to

eradicate our countless nuclear weapons. For this reason," I said to Ushi, "Anton and Nicolai must never be allowed to die in our hearts, for with the love that we shared and still have, may rest the future of humanity."

Here, Yuri addressed Ushi. "Some of that love will be reflected through you too, very soon. It will be reflected throughout Russia, because of your tour, and later, perhaps in China, after your return."

"So you see," I said to Ushi, "it is still true what I said to you on our first day together in Leipzig, in the little cafe, that two or three people with a right idea can change the world. Now I must add that they don't even need to be physically present, as long as they are fully alive."

The next day, Ushi and I were off on our way to Novosibirsk, and from there, the next day, to Yatusk where we boarded the same plane again that I had traveled in with Antonovna. The plane was still manned by the same crew. Nothing had changed in that part of the world. The same taiga appeared beneath us that I had seen before, that I had cherished with Antonovna. It was as brilliantly white as I remembered it. I could still sense the excitement we had felt when we saw this land for the first time, flying as low as we did. Now, as the same excitement was up welling again, I felt free to share it with Ushi, who quickly became caught up in the flow of it.

The plane followed the same river, just as it had then. Our view of the landscape, as it passed beneath us, inspired a feeling in me that made everything appear like a familiar dream, only it wasn't a dream. I was determined not to let it be a dream, but to make it into something new, something that would move both of us further ahead. It appeared that Ushi had sensed my determination and was helping me to turn it into an event that was marked by a new dancing and the power of it.

After an occasional period of silence Ushi started a conversation that brought a whole New World into view, one that was tightly connected to our being on this airplane together.

"When you stood at the grave, did you think of Brahms' Symphony Number One?" she asked right out of the blue.

"Yes, but how did you know?" I grinned, and punched her gently. "You seem to know every secret of the heart there ever was."

"That was a secret?" she said, grinning back at me. "Anton was bubbling over with joy when she told me about the concert you had been to, together. She told me all about it while we were waiting at the airport in Caracas. She said it was so sweet of you to invite her to hear this symphony and to explain its music to her and

how it correlated so perfectly with the unfolding of the love you had for each other. That must have been quite an evening," said Ushi and grinned.

"It was a beautiful concert," I agreed, "and I am glad I was able to share it with Anton, but it was really Heather who had bought the tickets, and it was someone else again who had arranged the entire concert for us."

"That must have been Olive," said Ushi, still grinning. "Nicolai told me about her great love for you. I can believe that Olive would do a wonderful thing like that."

I nodded. "But let me tell you about 'our' music, the music that reflects the unfolding of my love for you from the first moment that I saw you," I said to Ushi.

Ushi's grin became a smile that made the brilliant landscape below us seem dull in comparison.

"Did you ever have a chance to hear the great organ symphony of Camille Saint Saens?" I asked. "It begins easy going, happily, with a lighthearted orchestral music in the style of Mozart and of about the same wonderful quality. The flow of this part of the music reflects our first day together. Do you remember our time at the beach in Leipzig, and the time we had together in the cafe afterwards, and that beautiful evening when we had dinner at your home? These events had a Mozart type of feeling to it, don't you agree? There was a tremendous movement going on and everything blended together. One never knew what would pop up next, but it all blended into a single fabric with total consistency in the way we had supported each other's thoughts and feelings.

"Now in the second part of the Saint Saens Organ Symphony, the organ itself comes powerfully into play in one of the most beautiful melodic and majestic passages that may have ever been written for the organ. These powerful, majestic melodies reflect the way our night had turned out to be, a night of heavenly melodies interwoven with powerful feelings that opened my heart to a newfound sunshine. When Steve suggested that we should spend that night together, a whole new world unfolded, a world of superlatives that sparkled, that moved with a powerful joy which totally changed my life. The organ symphony expresses this daring, the exiting atmosphere, the intricate unfolding of our love. It expresses these more clearly, and more magically, than any other music that I know."

"Pete, that sounds wonderful," Ushi replied while I was still speaking. She even hugged me for it.

"Did you ever have a chance to hear the Saint Saens Organ Symphony?" I asked.

She shook her head.

"I know, it's a rarely performed work," I replied. "Perhaps

people do not experience the unfolding of such a powerful love anymore, and therefore they cannot relate to the music. Relationships have become too superficial. You should really hear this symphony at the very next time you get a chance to do so.

"Perhaps Nina has a recording of it," she commented.

I nodded. "There is quite a large music library at the base," I said to her.

"Except, the music that you spoke of may not be appropriate anymore," Ushi replied.

"Why do you say this, Ushi? I can't think of anything that describes better the way our love has been."

"Whatever has been, is history, Pete," she replied. "Think about what our love is now, today, what it is like this very minute, and what it may yet be. What were you thinking about, for instance, at Nicolai's grave? Were you thinking of the past? Or were you thinking about what might have been? Don't look back Peter, not in this fashion. Forget missed opportunities. Life is now. Life is here. Your love for Anton is still alive and will ever be so, and so is ours and it will be forever unfolding."

"I told you at the grave that we were about to become married, Anton, I, and Nicolai; all three of us to each other; and that Anton and I had a private little marriage ceremony already, just for the two of us, in Novosibirsk and later in Siberia."

Ushi grinned, and nodded. "I was glad for you when you told me that. I thought that was wonderful."

"All of this was prompted by Nicolai's response to the principles he came to understand. It was Nicolai's response to what unfolded in Caracas," I replied.

"This would have been the most revolutionary step ever undertaken in Russia," said Ushi. "A triple wedding with a double polygamy, wow!" she said.

"I'm glad you approve?" I said with a smile.

"Pete, this would have been wonderful," she replied.

"Nicolai wanted a big wedding, Ushi."

She began to grin. "This wedding would have really shaken up the starchy mentality of the Russian society, especially in his home town."

"It would have shaken up any society," I suggested, "but it would have also caused a lot of people to look at themselves. As you may know, same sex marriages are not uncommon anymore. Something has changed people's perception to the point that they begin to acknowledge that marriage is no longer primarily focused on procreation, but has become something more, reflecting a commitment of people to each other, a bond of a more fundamental union. There is no reason that I can see, in this context, why marriages between people must be limited to a certain sex or to only two individuals.

A community of principle cannot be limited that way. The key element is the commitment of people to each other to enrich each other's existence. This is unity, based on the principle of love. It unfolds universally. Don't you agree?"

Ushi nodded thoughtfully. "This has been the foundation of our own love, too, hasn't it, right from the beginning?"

"Love forms the basis for any union based on a community of principle," I said to her.

She agreed. "Wherever there is no community of principle, there is no union established, whether one is 'properly' married or not."

"Nicolai believed," I said to her, "that one's commitment to enrich one another's existence is actually more meaningful on a larger platform. He understood that if there is a principle behind it, this principle must be universal, because any principle applies universally. Our triple marriage would have been an acknowledgement of the universality of this principle. That's how he saw it. He didn't see it becoming just another, although expanded, framework for just another set of limiting boundaries. His proposal wasn't that we isolate ourselves in this larger sphere, but that we create a monument against isolation."

"Ah, but Nicolai missed one important point," said Ushi. "He missed the most fundamental point of all, the one for which you and I should have been married a long time ago, and may yet be married."

I should have been surprised at her proposal, except I was searching for a way to make such a proposal myself. What astonished me more than her proposal was my reaction to it.

"Tell me, was this marriage idea already on the table when we met in Cozumel, those many years ago?" I heard myself say.

She nodded.

Actually, I was surprised at what I said. I had no idea where the thought came from. It simply appeared, and I felt a great joy when I saw her response to it.

She nodded again. "It might have worked already then," she said, "because then, all the essential elements had already been in place."

"What elements, Ushi?"

"No, Pete, you tell me. Tell me, how did you look at people after our first night in Leipzig. How did you look at other women? Did you not feel different towards other people? Did you not feel freer, freer to be honest with yourself? Did you not feel a greater flow of love? Did you not feel closer towards all other women in this manner?"

"Yes, I felt all of that, and in an ever expanding manner that I almost became ashamed of," I said. "I felt an intimate sense of

oneness towards every woman I saw, even if we met just in passing. I enjoyed her look, her smile, if there was one. Something wonderful had happened that night with you, that had brought this about. Nor was it primarily a sexual feeling that developed out of this towards the other women that I met. What I felt was based on the idea that it was natural and OK to appreciate a woman, whoever she might be, for her beautiful individuality, her character, her care in presenting herself, and for being a woman. It was a new kind of love, in a universal, non-possessive sense."

"And then, Pete?"

"Then, Heather crossed my path. The universality of what you and I had established between us became a powerful imperative in responding to Heather."

Ushi held out two fingers. "That's the second principle," she said. "In absolute terms, unity is universal. Is there a third?"

"The third principle is Steve's principle," I answered. "How can I ever forget Steve's so often repeated comment that we bring to one another the gift of our love, with which to enrich each other's existence?"

Ushi approved the answer. "Tell me," she said, "wasn't all this already established when we met in Cozumel? We were both responding to these principles. There was a community of principle. In fact, we were responding to them in much the same way as we do now. We responded to each other in full acknowledgement of these principles, even at the most intimate level. There was only one thing that we didn't do back then. We didn't acknowledge our commitment to each other as a lifelong, enduring commitment. Love invariably demands this when it becomes deeply rooted in what we honestly treasure about each other. Our first night in Cozumel should have been our wedding night. We should have recognized that. We should have been able to make the necessary acknowledgement. It should have been important to both of us that we do acknowledge the monumental commitment that had already been established at this point."

"Actually, Ushi, I had always felt that way, whenever I was with you, as though we had been married forever," I replied.

"I felt the same," she said. "And let me tell you, I was serious when I told you about the freedom I had been given to have a child with you? I would have carried your child if you had wanted me to, provided that this formal commitment to one another had been made to the nth degree. The problem was that you couldn't see at the time what a majestic bond of unity we had already established between us. You could feel something, but you didn't understand the principle behind it, and I understood it but vaguely. Steve understood this principle more fully. Do you remember that he even paid for the hotel of our wedding night that never came to be?"

The problem was, that neither us had been able to acknowledge openly that our commitment to each other had already been fully complete. You were too worried about the past, about Sylvia. That's why you couldn't reach ahead to fully embrace what we had already established and bring her the good news. This possibility didn't exist in your mind, then."

"She would have never accepted our marriage as anything valid," I replied.

"That is why you had failed to respond, because of the limiting axioms that had not been dealt with. Maybe that, too, was one of the reasons why a formal acknowledgement had not been possible at that time. But, Pete, I think it is appropriate now, don't you agree?"

Since words tend to fail me at such occasions, I simply kissed her. But I did say later that I felt it was appropriate now, because I had come to realize that none of my additional marriages had invaded, or did invalidate, any of my other marriages, but had always added to them a new dimension; a new glow.

"Also, we do have a responsibility to acknowledge the truth," I added. "This means that we must make the acknowledgment today, even though the bond between us existed for all those years already. Didn't Steve say that the original Decalogue in the German translation demands that one honor this bond, so that one won't brake it? It is therefore never too late to acknowledge that, which is honorable."

"Do you realize what this means?" she asked.

"It means, that when our marriage ceremony finally takes place, the ceremony won't create a union that didn't exist before, as the traditional marriage ceremonies are indented to do. Instead, our ceremony becomes merely a joyous acknowledgement that finally reflects what has already been established as an undeniable reality."

I suggested that we could have that ceremony at any time. We could have it right at this moment in the plane, if we wanted to, or at one of the small airfields where the plane stops long enough for people to get out and have something to eat. "The next such stop should be somewhere after Lensk," I said to Ushi. "What more do we need for a formal celebration than a down to earth atmosphere, some food and a drink, and music in the background and lots of people around?"

Her smile became brighter. "Yes, let's celebrate our union at one of those far away, small places in the open countryside," she agreed.

"A place where they serve cabbage, sausages, potatoes, apple wine and beer, were there is laughter and music?" I continued the thought.

"I wouldn't have it at any other place," she said and grinned,

"than having it at the grass roots level. Where else should a marriage ceremony take place that represents the principles of universal unity that has to be, and has been, discovered from the ground up?"

I agreed with her that this was the ideal place for it.

So it came to be that we said our vows to each other over a plate of steaming cabbage, sausages, and potatoes. It turned out that what we said to each other was as plain and as profound as the food was that we shared. While the words merely reflected what had already been a reality for a dozen years, they carried a poetry that was new, that sprang from an advanced realization.

The magic of the moment reflected the light of our reaffirmed love. It echoed the profundity of us finally stating to one another what should have been said, with all honesty, a dozen years earlier.

"To be absolutely honest, I did feel as though we had been married to one another when we met that day in Cozumel," I said to Ushi while we ate. "I felt so close to you, even then. I felt as if we had known each other for all of our life. I felt that we shared something that was deeply human, that reflected both of our humanity. I felt that we belonged together, and always had. I felt this way right at the docks. Seeing you was like being touched by a beautiful warm wind. Compared to what we shared on that higher level that we had committed ourselves to, to build our lives on, everything that had happened during the conference in Sukhumi appeared dull and lifeless, even the bright parts of it. In Sukhumi nothing had been moving ahead. Everything had been encumbered by limits and barriers that everyone beat their head against and had dreamed of stepping beyond. But never happened. Everyone was fighting on the same level on which the problems were created. Then I saw you, standing at the docks. You represented a totally different world. Indeed, you were from a different world. We lived in a different world from that moment on. There were no barriers between us. I felt so close to, that I wanted to crawl right into you."

"I know, Peter. What a compliment that was!"

"I nearly did, you know, symbolically anyway."

"Why didn't you do it, Peter? Why did you stop short of that symbolism?"

"Why? Because we are often too scared to trust the universal Principle of Love. When I saw you, I wasn't surprised to feel the way I did, to feel so close and so embraced by your love. I suppose I expected that, because of the principles that we shared. That made our meeting almost predictable, and I wasn't disappointed, but I wasn't prepared for the surprise that unfolded when I saw you standing there, waiting for me. I suppose that is why Love is called an infinite Principle. That surprise was like a fire, and that fire never subsided. I don't think Steve had any idea of the range of what he

was referring to when he said that morning in Leipzig that Love unfolds in the 'complex domain,' and really nowhere else. The concept of marriage just didn't seem to a part of that domain. It seemed to be a relic from a lower level. In a scientific sense, I suppose, we had actually been more deeply married than most married people regard themselves. But ultimately, we can only be married to God, to our humanity, and thereby to each other. This can only unfold universally. This recognition brings marriage into the complex domain, as Gauss had called the domain where we begin to see with the mind the higher reality of principles that the senses can never behold, that they can only behold by their effect when we allow the substance of these principles to become real in our life."

"So you agree that we had been married to each other even then, on a lateral basis," said Ushi.

"On a universal lateral basis, yes. Yes, I knew that, I just couldn't acknowledge it then. It didn't know how to," I replied. "I was used to seeing marriage as some kind of a 'vertical' relationship. I saw it in terms of the Byzantine model, a kind of top down interrelationship, not the wide open, all-embracing lateral relationship that it really was. I couldn't see us married in a 'vertical' relationship. No way! That door was closed. That wouldn't have worked anyway. That's why I didn't see the marriage that you had offered."

"But none of that really matters now," said Ushi. "It doesn't change the reality, or alter the principle involved."

"It wouldn't have changed the reality then, either," I replied. "You've been in my heart and soul ever since the day we met, which has made my life richer. This was something real that I could feel and acknowledge. But marriage? The infinite concept hadn't been developed. It is usually seen as something smaller that pertains to the economy of running a household, of getting along, of raising children, of living with one another day by day.

"That still applies," said Ushi, "except not in such a small way. The family that we have become a part of is larger. The sphere of our concerns is still the same in principle. It is only wider in its application. Do you remember that I invited you to share in that larger concern when I raised the issue about having a baby in the shadow of a possible nuclear war? That was an honest invitation. I wanted you to feel that it could have been your baby, as it could have been indeed. That door had been open. It still is. Also, the question is still open of how we can best enrich our world with life. In a very real sense, the place that we live in day by day, is the world. The world is our home, and we have a responsibility to make it as rich and as human, and as beautiful as we can, and protect that world from thieves and vandals. If we embrace each other in our self-love for our common humanity, we must embrace the world that is a part of that humanity which we share. So you see, we are

married to each other even in the traditional sense, only in that larger sphere. The larger sphere reflects the higher platform of our marriage, the universal marriage of humanity, the infinite marriage that all lesser forms are symbolic of. As we connect laterally in the overflow of our self-love, or love for our humanity, the humanity that we all share, then we find that this love cannot revert back to the small word. That step would invalidate everything."

"The small world seems to be tied to the top down vertical model," I replied. "It reflects the Byzantine model, the vertical model."

Ushi shook her head. "The vertical model is not totally invalid. It is only invalid as a platform for relationships. In the world of science it fulfills a valid function," she countered mw and then began to smile. "The real vertical model pertains to our individual self-development. It doesn't represent relationships. It represents the developmental flow by which we pull ourselves out of the rut. At the top of this vertical model is always the absolute Truth that we aim to discover and pull ourselves into line with. At the bottom is ignorance. The intermediary standing between the two, is science. Science is the key element in our spiritual, cultural, social, and technological self-development. Without science, by which cognition becomes understanding, there is no boundless self-development. Consequently and we stay in the rut like animals, when this happens. That is also the primitive Christian model. The Truth at the top level, relates to God. The intermediary is still Science, labeled the Christ that has also been defined as the spiritual idea of God; and the ignorance below relates to Christianity that struggles to overcome its ignorance as the outcome of the Christ idea in Christian history. This is a beautiful vertical model. It is the original human self-development model, as it has been perceived thousands of years ago. If this model is not recognized for what it is, in all aspects, our advanced marriage cannot function. If we don't pull ourselves out of the rut by means of a scientific understanding of reality, we will continue to live in the land of fairy tales, trained emotions, and mythological dreaming, even while our entire world falls apart into poverty and war."

"That's almost a paradox, isn't it?" I replied. "We have to subject ourselves totally to a fully functioning vertical model in the mental domain, in order to be able to embrace the lateral model in real life. Otherwise we cannot accept our lateral marriage relationship and what it represents on the infinite scale of universal truth. We would be bound to the ignorance that draws everything down to the lowest level of small minded thinking and living."

"The world is full of such paradoxes," said Ushi, "which are only paradoxes in the sphere of small-minded thinking. But we don't live there anymore, and haven't for a long time. Our sphere is bright with the highest understanding of Truth based on the most ad-

vanced scientific perception. That's what governs our commitment to each other and humanity, which is the commitment that we are celebrating tonight. Naturally this commitment also reflects itself in the most intimate domain in which we embrace one another as two beautiful human beings enveloped in a profound love for each other. All of that comes out of our love for our humanity, our self-love, doesn't it?"

Ushi raised her glass of apple juice as a toast for the occasion and grinned and nodded as if she was urging me to make a speech.

"You are wonderful genius," I said and raised my glass likewise, and began to grin too. "What more can I add? What you said makes me feel warm inside. There is a beauty in it that is sublime. Living in China has been good for you." With that said I began to laugh.

She shook her head again. "The core idea of what I said came from Olive."

"Olive? You really did know Olive then."

"Steve came to know her through Nicolai, then we met," said Ushi. "We are all married to one another. It was Olive who developed that concept that one needs to acknowledge what one recognizes as the truth, no matter how controversial and improbable that may seem, and difficult to implement. Did you know that? She also said that you had started this trend."

"When did I do that?" I replied.

"In Sukhumi, Peter. Olive said to me that when you met in Sukhumi that day, you both felt so comfortable with each other, so close, and so connected with the whole of humanity, that she realized that you were married to one another in some very real way. She merely didn't know how to articulate it then, just as I couldn't articulate in Cozumel what Steve and I recognized as a reality concerning us. But that's all history, now."

"This means that my symbolic triple marriage with Nicolai and Antonovna was anchored there, and wouldn't have remained a triple marriage for long," I said, surprised.

"It would have remained so for as long as you had needed it before you allowed yourself to embrace the wider world on the same platform, and to grow beyond it, Peter. We are all married to Nicolai and Antonovna in some form, along this line, are we not? We are married even now to what they symbolize in our hearts. Don't you feel this way too?"

I nodded and smiled. "Nicolai and Antonovna live in all of us," I said and raised my glass again. "The beauty of life never ends. That element never dies."

Ushi simply nodded and smile. "That's what marriage is really all about, isn't it?" she said a while later.

"This marriage thing is really taking on a life of its own," I said and kissed her. "How many other such marriages are you involved in?"

"None that you don't already know about," Ushi answered. "And you?"

"A bunch. I am a part of a large family in India, in New Delhi, there are nine of us, and Sylvia and Olive belong to that too. You have met two of them. But I am proud to tell you that my first marriage on that larger platform was with you, even though I was too blind to see it. Helen had opened the door that had made this possible, and Steve sensed that something was unfolding on a higher level, the scientifically honest level that she had pulled me up to. That's how it all began. That's what had made it all so magical. Olive became drawn into it. I had thought it to have been the other way around. And now the magic continues."

"Do you realize then that we are celebrating a profound happening then?" said Ushi with a kiss.

I simply smiled. "What unfolded in those days has already shaped the world," I answered. "What happened at the Sukhumi Conference had started a whole chain of events. without us even knowing it. But what started there was a real marriage commitment. It all started when I met Olive in Russia at a time when I was in a terrible crisis."

"That's when you couldn't figure out how to tell Sylvia about me, right?"

I nodded. "Olive and I met when I could no longer face the depopulation madness that was drawn out into the open during the conference. I became very sensitive at this time, to the incredible loveliness of our human world. The depopulation lecture had hit me so badly that I suffered an emotional breakdown. I left the conference hall crying. Olive helped me to restore my sanity. She also helped me with much more than that. None of that would have been possible to the extent that it happened, if you hadn't been so beautifully open to the principle of universal love, back in Leipzig. Your openness took away so many barriers and boundaries. And look, that idea did change the world. Olive was fighting the same fight that I was fighting. I don't know if Nicolai told you that, but in order to help me with my struggles, Olive had arranged for a symphony orchestra to perform Brahms' Fourth Symphony on the last day of the conference. She took part in the performance herself. I didn't know this at the time, but her concert and Nicolai's speech from the day before, changed my life. In a very real way Olive provided the basis for me to be able to uplift Sylvia to where she could accept what was happening. In a sense, we were married to each other even then."

"But you were never aware of it, Pete."

"I agree, I wasn't. I was blind to so many things Ushi. It took me a decade or more to realize that this kind of marriage isn't something that we choose. It just comes to light as if it always existed. If we are alert enough we might even recognize it. It took me years to get to this point. Olive and I didn't acknowledge that a marriage had taken place until twelve years later. That's when I finally began to recognize Olive's great capacity for loving, and the love that had enveloped us both right from the start. Nicolai told me at Ross' place how Olive had struggled to arrange for the symphony orchestra to perform at the closing of the conference. She had told him in private what her reason was, that I needed to hear that music. For this she had caused the entire last day of the conference to be rearranged. And it was all done just for me. Would any wife have done more? Olive and I agreed that a marriage had taken place that day, the very day we met. So what, that the ceremony didn't take place until a dozen years later after Nicolai gave me her new address? Our honeymoon took place in the Alps. We met for an entire week to celebrate our commitment to one another and to the whole of humanity that this marriage was a part of."

I explained to Ushi that this commitment never changed. "When I told Olive that our group had drifted into a rut, so that nothing had been moving anymore, that our bus had gotten stuck in the mud, she promised to pull us out. She made the promise without the slightest hesitation. And she did what she promised."

"Wow! How did she do this?" Ushi asked with a big smile.

Talking about Olive's commitment heightened the spirit of our own celebration.

"You may not believe this," I replied, "but the outcome of this promise back then in the Alps, was the Caracas Conference, and with that we did change the world a little. That conference was her idea, her way of getting us out of the rut. She knew someone whose friend was close to the Austrian ambassador to the UN. Also it was Olive's doing that the conference was set up to be a four-week affair. She felt it would take me four weeks to break the ice with Antonovna. She knew about my love for her, and that I called her Anton. She also knew that Anton had been abused in her early years and needed help to overcome the barriers these experiences had erected around her. Both, Anton and Nicolai needed these barriers to be removed. Consequently Olive made whatever effort was required to set up the conference as a four-week affair, even though that has never been done before. The conference was her gift to all of us, powered by her great love. Was this proof enough that a marriage had taken place? And was this living proof enough, for us all to acknowledge that our marriage still existed?"

I suggested to Ushi that we should not so much celebrate OUR marriage, than celebrate marriage itself, the universal marriage

of all mankind. We should celebrate that we have become drawn into something big, by our commitment to each other and to the world. "That's what I learned from Olive."

"Oh, dear, dear Olive," Ushi replied. "Yes, I agree. Let's celebrate her love that may have saved all of our lives," she said in a voice that portrays a sudden, profound realization. "Without you, Anton, and Nicolai becoming close to one another, as the result of that marriage, there might not have been an early investigation of the death star, no early pinpointing of its location, no a meeting with the captain of the submarine who happened to be one of a few who knew the only person on earth that had the means to eliminate the threat. If you hadn't acted as swiftly and decisively, this person, too, would have been under the death star the next day. China would have been in range within a week. Does Olive realize what far-reaching events she had set into motion with her loving determination? She might have saved the lives of all of humanity. And all that came out of a marriage that she didn't fully understand herself at the time. - Yes, that is worth celebrating!"

I nodded and smiled. "But that's not what is important to Olive."

"Which is?" Ushi asked.

"Which is, that she helped us get out of the rut, and that we helped Anton to accept Nicolai's love. The rest, Olive feels, is not to her credit. She feels content that her love was sufficient to help us. The rest she credits to love itself, without which there would be no civilization. All civilization is founded on that, even while strangle it in so many ridiculous ways."

Ushi's smile brightened again.

I mentioned to Ushi that Olive told me sometime later that love isn't something that anyone owns. Love is a universal force that unfolds in all of us. We can only open ourselves to its flow and move with it in our daily life. The miracles that unfold in response to that love, came from the flow of love itself.

"Aren't you proud to know such a woman?" said Ushi.

"I am. I am equally as proud to know you. It's bigger than pride, though, what I feel. Gratitude, maybe a better term; gratitude for what love inspires, because whatever has been accomplished isn't really anyone's own doing. It's too grand for that. All that we really ever have done is to become more honest with ourselves about it, which allowed us to be swept along with the flow of it. That's where the imperatives come from that drive us until things begin to happen. If I hadn't met you in Leipzig and allowed myself to be touched by your love, I would not have allowed myself to meet Heather, I would not have stood on Ross balcony and alerted him about the fishing boat that launched the cruise missile. Which means that the missile might have been launched undetected. The whole of

Washington was saved because of you. But can you take credit for everything that came out of it? No, the unfolding of love is bigger than any of us. Many people came into play that day, to save Washington. The only common factor was love; love for one another; love for humanity. It's all there. It's all happening, even if it is happening precariously. What sets us apart, you and me, from most people, is that we acknowledge it and embrace the fullness of it for as far as we dare to look."

"Aren't we doing the same right now?" asked Ushi.

"Of course we are," I replied and raised my glass of apple juice, just as we had done that night in Leipzig, "and I am immensely grateful that you exist."

"The trouble with our marriage recognition is," Ushi responded, "that it always come too late. By the time we wake up to it we have to acknowledge with shame that it has been the reality of our being all along."

"Nicolai wanted a big acknowledgement," I said. "I think he wanted to get the whole world to make that acknowledgement too."

"For me, a glass of apple wine will do just fine, together with the joy of seeing you smile," Ushi responded and kissed me. I stood up and embraced her for that, followed by a long drawn out kiss that was eventually followed by some dancing to the background music that filled the tiny airport building where we had eaten. That too, seemed like a grand public acknowledgement to me. Before we realized it, however, it was high time for us to get back onto the airplane.

When we walked out into the cold, I felt like walking on air all of a sudden, even though nothing had fundamentally been added to our love, but an acknowledgement. The air shimmered in the icy evening at sixty below zero, adding a touch of its own magic to our celebration. Even something as plain as the small terminal building seemed magical in this now magical setting, with its plump pillows of snow covering the entrance tunnel that looked like the vestibule to an igloo.

The three other passengers who traveled with us on the plane were already seated when we stepped on board. "What kept you?" said one of them.

"I didn't want to interrupt your dancing," said a member of the crew to us with a warm gentle smile as she closed the plane's passenger hatch behind us. She also said that she had a surprise for us. She grinned as she said this.

The surprise came after takeoff in the form of music being played over the intercom, some lighthearted music for a different kind of dancing. The music was from the-mid sixties, a parade of the Beach Boys famous hits, including such classics as, Surfing USA, or,

Getting Around. They also played some another famous tunes from the same period. One of them was the famous South American tune, The Girl From Iponima. It was all music made for dancing.

While there wasn't any room for dancing on the plane, no such restriction applied to dancing in the mind. To judge by the smiles of the crew, they knew they hit the right chord with this music.

The tape must have been from one of the crew's private collection. It was a collection of summertime music about surfing and beach parties, music from the USA and other countries, composed during the world's brightest recent era.

Indeed, the music created a lighthearted, summertime mood that utterly defied the fact that it was still winter outside in spite of the sunshine that we had seen, that had now faded into a faint dark orange hue on the horizon. A deep blanket of snow covered the Siberian landscape below us, dimly illumined by the colorless light reflected from the moon.

The final song that was played over the intercom was a beautiful Jazz version of the old classic from the musicals, "It's Summertime and the living is easy..." With this tune still echoing in my mind after the music ended, the captain announced our impending arrival. As the plane taxied to the parking area, Ushi predicted that we would have a much bigger ceremony soon. "Why should we limit ourselves to just a single ceremony?" she said. "And why should we limit ourselves to something as small as a triple wedding?" She said that the next logical step would be to arrange a marriage ceremony for ten, that includes Steve and Sylvia, Heather, Ross, Fred, and Tony, Dag and Al, and us.

Ushi predicted that this larger acknowledgement would have the potential to act like leaven in the making of bread, leavening the whole of the human society, causing profound changes. She said that the principles involved are so fundamental that all people can relate them to their own lives, individually, and that they will likely do this with a great joy. She explained that the resulting commitment of society to enrich one another's existence would certainly have profound economic effects with an enriching impact on everyone's life. "Society will start building again; new infrastructures, new hospitals, concert halls, airports, trains, waters supply systems, energy networks, new approaches to farming, new housing, whole new cities, and more. She said she has seen this already unfolding in China. While China has still a long way to go to pull itself out of poverty, the people are building for one another a brighter future than they ever had before. Even though they face enormous problems, and mistakes are made along the way, there is a spark of love in their hearts for one another that is powerful enough to power that giant economic machine that has been created in China on the basis of

their commitment to one another. She said that this love was already inspiring all of the surrounding nations that have committed themselves to spread this development throughout Eurasia and the world. Thus, the flow of love, literally will change the world. Only another major war by the fondi can prevent this flow of love from bearing fruit.

Here she became quiet and spoke in a more serious tone. "World War I was arranged by the British to prevent the economic development of Eurasia, that had already been committed to at this time. Today's drive for the economic destruction of entire nations, is driven under the guise of preventing any nation from developing 'weapons of mass destruction.' The entire campaign to combat 'weapons of mass destruction' isn't directed at weapons at all, but is designed to destroy a nation's economic potential in order to eliminate any possible resistance to the empire's goals.

"World War II was arranged in a similar manner, and for the same purpose; to destroy the development potential of Europe, again. The danger is very great indeed, that another war, and a still bigger war, will be launched to prevent this development once more from taking off, and from being realized. But it may be different this time. Maybe a marriage ceremony will unfold instead, that outshines the royal fondi's hatred for humanity."

Ushi became very serious after this. She said that our discovery of the underlying principles, and our commitment to them, might be comparable to the Eurasian Land-Bridge development project that China is committed to and is drawing other nations into. She said that the underlying principles are the same. She explained that the Eurasian Land-Bridge Development Project is centered on the idea of a railway link across the entire Eurasian continent that would stretch from China to Spain. At strategic points along the way, economic development centers would be created, complete with the appropriate types of industrial infrastructures. These centers would then serve as hubs for the development activities that reach deep into the interior. By the same principle, trunk lines could extend away from the main link, so that huge areas can be developed simultaneously, complete with the building of brand new cities that are immediately tied together by the continental Transportation Bridge. Ushi pointed out that our own development towards a larger scale marriage commitment could function exactly like those development hubs that are designed to uplift entire regions. She told us that by this realization our private little marriage ceremony came to light as a world-significant event. Ushi even predicted that if we were to establish this kind of a foundation throughout the world, the entire world could be totally changed in less than a year, just like the Land Bridge idea is already changing the world. She predicted that for the Land Bridge, many large-scale construction projects would be

launched in parallel. One of these would be the building of the much-needed southern link of the Eurasian Land Bridge across India and Pakistan. She said that this, too, would likely happen soon, since nothing more is required to make the project a reality, than the larger commitment to enrich one another. "The same holds true for our larger marriage union," she said.

She also predicted that for the Land-Bridge project, a tunnel would be built underneath the Bering Strait, in parallel with all the other projects, in order to link Asia with North and South America. She predicted further that a new and fundamentally different world-financial system would be created to facilitate these projects. It would be one that isn't designed to facilitate the stealing from society through speculation and financial looting that the present system is designed to facilitate, but that it would be a system that is designed to enrich society by creating credits for every type of infrastructure development and industrialization that is needed.

Ushi also predicted that in this new environment of up-welling optimism, or realism, that would then be created, the entrepreneurs would no longer loot society with labor exploitation, but would derive their riches, like everyone else, from the expanding physical economic processes, and the cultural processes, that enrich the whole of society.

She finally predicted that in this atmosphere of universal mutual support, nuclear weapons would be rapidly dismantled without any fanfares. Then children would no longer point guns at each other, or at other people, not even toy-guns. The very thought of wanting to hurt another person would then become repulsive.

With the recognition of this bright future at humanity's grasp, our journey in the North was fast becoming a most exciting and beautiful celebration. It became an adventure into inner space with a beauty all of its own. What unfolded between was radically different than what Anton and I had experienced on our previous adventure to this brilliantly white and sun-filled world.

When I looked at the taiga below on the last segment of our flight in the brightness of the next morning, a feeling emerged that was totally linked to Ushi. There was no blending between Ushi and Anton, or any blending between the present and our early days when our footsteps were unsure. The present came to life with its own profound unfolding.

We saw the reindeer herds again, but somehow, they seemed not so significant this time. We realized that their continued existence, too, would depend on our success in changing the world at the grass roots level, which we felt certain we could accomplish.

Shortly before we landed, I finally understood what Ushi had

meant when she said that a new type of music would become appropriate to describe the new developments of our love. The past was history. The future was now. And with this in mind the idea emerged that the percussion concerto of the Scottish composer James McMillan would be an appropriate work to describe our love. The music describes the way our long overdue marriage ceremony had been, its simplicity, the joyous acknowledgement of our love, the celebration of our commitment to each other. Even the glitter of the ice crystals is reflected in that music, as they shimmered magically at the airport when the temperature had dropped deep into the minus degree range so that it freezes the last bit of moisture out of the air.

We landed at noon on the same frozen lake or river that the snow cat driver had called the Oymyakon International Airport. Only this time, Nina was waiting for us. She had come with her much lighter twin engine plane. She had left the engines running and came toward us on snowshoes, carrying two pairs of snowshoes for us. She was glad to see me. She welcomed me with a hug and a kiss. I introduced Ushi to her as another one of my loves, whom she likewise welcomed with a kiss and great big bear hug and a smile that seemed brighter than the sunshine reflected in the snow.

I told Nina about our marriage ceremony along the way. In response to that, she put us up in her own apartment, as her personal guests, which appeared like it were a marriage acknowledgement of her own. Oh, and she did have a recording of the Organ Symphony of Camille Saint Saens, and all the other music that we needed, as well as the Nutcracker Suite. I had remembered correctly, the cruise missile base did have a large music library. But more surprising than this, was Nina's acknowledgement of her own unfolding marriage with us. Perhaps she realized that this expanding infrastructure of love embraced her too, which it did, which she acknowledged with a great joy.

Nina told us over lunch that she was prepared to spend the next two weeks with us to shift our joint peace project into high gear as fast as possible. She said that this didn't mean that she was prepared to talk politics for the entire duration. Indeed, the sensitive nature of our political situation made this kind of talking quite impossible, anyway. Consequently, the major part of our project in Siberia became a journey into inner space, exploring the magic of ceremonies, the power of commitment to principles and to meeting the human need. In this unfolding from the heart of joy, the need for sexual intercourse never came to the forefront for the entire duration. It didn't seem to be important enough, even though there was never a denial of our sexual nature and individuality for one minute. In fact, that element became richer because of it.

As it turned out, these more intimate parts of our journey were more deeply connected with the peace project than the political aspects were, and may have been the crucial element for its success later on. I spoke to Nina about Erica and Caracas, and how we all spend a number of nights and days with Erica and her friend talking about Tokomaks and other inertial confinement fusion reactors.

"We talked about creating bridges that would span the oceans made of materials harvested from the mantle of the earth deep below the sea," I said to Nina. I told her that one aspect though, never came to the surface during those days. No one seemed to be interested in sexual intimacies. We were too much in love with each other. "Sure there were sexual intimacies unfolding in a rich and open manner as a part of living together, but there wasn't a need to go beyond them. Our love became focused onto the larger developments."

"Ah, then you were truly married," grinned Nina, "and you didn't even know it."

Mostly, our time with Nina was spent away from the center, checking out reindeer herds in order that we could talk freely about the political subjects that we couldn't dare discuss at the base. It didn't take much to convince Nina that our idea was right, but it was infinitely more difficult to give her the courage to put the idea forward within the hierarchy of the Strategic Rocket Forces. As it turned out, the two weeks we had set aside for this project were indeed needed to get everything squared away.

We had followed the Cozumel protocol in dealing with Nina, where nothing had been planned, where nothing had been hurried, either. This, of course, matched the unhurried manner of the country we were in, where changes appear to be measured in very long periods of time.

This unhurried atmosphere proved to be more productive in the end than we had anticipated. We didn't realize this at the time, but Nina's involvement had opened doors for us that even Nicolai had never passed through.

I had told Antonovna on our previous trip to Siberia, how much I had enjoyed seeing the real Russia. Now, it appeared that Russia was made up of much more than I had ever seen before. Russia became defined to me by its people, by their strength and their fears.

Ushi and I spend another six weeks in Russia after leaving Siberia. We met with as many people as would listen to our advanced ideas and perceptions, even our advanced ideas about marriage. Naturally, the focus was on nuclear war, depopulation, economic issues, and social issues, and on what they meant on the much deeper level. Still, the connection to the development of love

and the reality of the marriage of humanity was always maintained in the background, and was even put into the foreground as needed. We would also use Erica's metaphor of the flower garden, as Steve had suggested, to illustrate the problems that are associated with a narrowly focused vision. We would illustrate that in a global perspective the fondi's war against humanity is easily recognizable as an economically motivated war to protect the feudal platform of their looting machine, for which they demand depopulation. We would show that their war was designed to destroy the renaissance spirit of humanity and its platform of sovereign nation-states and their sovereign self-development. We would talk about the vast resources that are available to mankind to create for itself the richest future ever imagined. We would build on the economic concept that Erica and I had developed at the end of the Caracas conference. In a sense, we acted like ambassadors for that conference and for the vision that had been developed there, and for the sublime achievements that were wrought.

To our great surprise many of the Russian people were able to understand these complex issues, even among the ordinary people. We spoke at union meetings, in factory meeting halls, at town meetings set up in schools, in farming communities, we even spoke in a barn once, and more than once we spoke in a pub. We also spoke to academics and university students, often even on a one to one basis, and sometimes in meetings to which thousands came to hear us. We also spoke to high-ranking officials who had the power to shape the nation's policies. Some would argue. Most people, however, would credit what we said. The only thing that we could not tell, was, whether our efforts had made any difference on the global scale.

In the small domain of our private living, those six weeks working together, traversing Russia from one end to the other, had made a tremendous difference. It had elevated us in the way we regarded each other. We had become enriched by the sublime moments of joy that unfold beyond the sensual and ecstatic moments into a higher and more permanent inner peace, and also for the simple fact that we were making a difference. We were enriching people. We were uplifting their thinking with a higher and justified hope and an advanced understanding of their world and their own status as human beings. In those moments we were touching the sublime.

Against the background of this enriching environment our first days together in Leipzig, in Cozumel, and afterwards in Moscow, that lay more than a dozen years in the past, appeared now like the first footsteps of a child in the newly discovered world of the sublime. Although those times had never been fully forgotten, our

feelings over the years had been more and more influenced by activities on the professional level. Now, our six weeks in Russia had renewed all the old affections from the days when our love had just begun and the world was bright in the bewildering sunshine of its unfolding.

That renewal had already begun during our first night in the submarine. It had brought us face to face with the old and forever new frontier of a profound and ever expanding flow of love. Love had become a river. It had become a contest of who we could brighten one another's day in the most honest and most profound manner. There was even something special in the way we looked at each other now, which happened at first quite unintentionally. Soon we would share beds again. That too, happened quite naturally. It begun right in the submarine without anyone noticing it. This gentle unfolding was interrupted, of course, in the captain's home in Murmansk, but nothing did hinder it thereafter. We experienced intimacies beyond intimacies as we embraced the whole world at the same time with our love, that made us richer thereby and more deeply at one. Also, in this cherished union there were never any closed doors towards Nina or anyone else who aspired to join that union of hearts. The land of the sublime, the land beyond the sensual and ecstatic, isn't reached easily, nor is found behind closed doors.

By the time our work in Russia was done, the world had changed somewhat. Russia had changed. We were able to travel home the normal way. Russia's iron curtain had been lifted once again so that the captain's services were no longer needed to get us back. Naturally, we wondered if our work had accomplished this. Ushi was certain that it had.

There was nothing 'normal' between Ushi and myself in the conventional sense. It was certainly apparent that our excitement with living had been felt by others too, who had not become blind to the beauty of our common humanity. The time we had spent in Russia had been a revolutionary time that was revolutionary even for us. It seemed as if I had never known Ushi before in the way I came to know her in Russia. She was as beautiful in body and as a person, as she was passionate in her love for humanity and for all that is human. Perhaps, being in Russia had made us more sensitive to each other, by becoming more sensitive towards other people than we had ever been before. Also, our commitment to enrich each other's life, which had become intertwined with our love, had somehow enhanced this. With Ushi, each new day had unfolded another facet of the art of just living, of being sensitive to the beauty of life, and to the strength of humanity. Ushi was not unlike Antonovna in this regard. I could certainly see why Nicolai had

loved Antonovna so much. Still, Ushi and I had stepped beyond even that. Even Erica's metaphor of the flower garden, in respect to the social dimension, was becoming understood in Russia. There developed an openness in this context that became quite enriching. Perhaps, also our fight for life itself, to protect all what is human, made us more sensitive to the magic and beauty of life, which had become a focal point in this inevitable process that had unfolded like a great and silent renaissance.

When the time of our return drew near, it seemed less and less important to me to see any direct evidence of our success. A confidence had come to the surface that the success of what we had set in motion would be inevitable. Also, my feelings for Ushi were intertwined with all of this, possibly so deep that they could never be separated from what we were fighting for. And why should they be?

As I arrived home, this same feeling lingered and also encircled Sylvia in the same rich measure. Oh, something had changed all right in the world, something big had changed as if a new age had begun. Or was it just that our own world had changed? Perhaps something had been set into motion by us that had really affected those we had touched, something that might not end, by which the world as a whole becomes a brighter place to live in, in due course. This, at least, was my hope.

Chapter 12 - Project USA

I traveled across the U.S.A. with Sylvia as my teammate. Here my hope became dimmed. America was a lifeless place by comparison.

The kinds of 'town' meetings that Ushi and I had been able to arrange with relative ease all across Russia, were not so easily organized in the "Land of the Free," and those that were organized were poorly attended. People were either afraid of police state measures, or were more concerned with making money than with the survival of their nation and civilization, which is fundamental to their own survival. Their focus had been drawn away from the reality in which they lived, into a narrowly confined world that had become increasingly irrational, bordering on insanity. This growing insanity seemed to have pervaded the whole of society, from the grass roots level to the very top. The prevailing attitudes, and the country's policies, had become increasingly inhuman. Most people had become like so many black holes in space that draw everything inwards unto themselves with a gravity so great that not even the faintest glimmer of light could escape, nor a thought about another and the survival of humanity. There was no vitality left in the society that we found. Nothing was being built anymore. Industries were destroyed or fell apart, and the workers that once supported them were gradually thrown onto the scrap heap together with the once functioning facilities. Hardly anyone seemed to care anymore about anything outside of their selfish concern centered on their, "my money" mentality. People cared little about the homeless who were dying on the streets, or the uninsured who had no longer access to medical help when illness struck. This self-isolation of society from one another had become exceedingly deep and seemingly impenetrable. Where we drew a thousand people to our meetings in Russia, to explore the road to human survival, we got twenty at home, and often the response we got from them was cynical, if not hostile.

Occasionally the response was outright frightening when people couldn't face the fact that their life-long savings, which had been thrown into the financial markets in the hope of lavish returns, had evaporated into nothing during the great crash after which there was no liquidity left in the markets to repay anyone their hard earned investments, much less profits. The profits that people were told they would receive had never been produced by anyone. The minuscule amounts of profit that were actually pulled out of the

speculative market, that gave the impression that profits were indeed being generated, were not profits in real terms, but redirected investments of other unwary trusting souls. In the shadows of these losses, the few industries that America still had, that once supported a few people's living with savings left over, were like all the previous industries gradually being torn down.

It was plain to us that a society cannot survive on a platform of legalized stealing from one another for any extended period. Sylvia and I saw the evidence of this tragedy everywhere. But why couldn't everyone else see the facts before their eyes? Why the delusion? Why the denial or reality? We tried to explain the facts, but to no avail. Whenever Sylvia spoke up to confront people with the truth that they should have seen themselves, especially since the financial disintegration had already begun again, some people reacted with uncontrollable anger as if their world was being destroyed by Sylvia's declaration of the truth. One businessman even drew a gun at Sylvia in a hotel lobby, so that I had to step in between them and disarm the man by talking some sense into him. The man ended up crying.

Only on rare occasions had we been able to actually address the primary issue of our campaign, the impending nuclear war and the force that is driving it, and the nature of this force as an economic issue. Usually, there were constant interruptions by which the focus was shifted back onto trivial concerns that were totally inconsequential in the face of the world's gradual drifting towards an evermore-likely global nuclear war.

A few people, though, understood what we were trying to accomplish. Those came to our rescue when we were labeled "communists," "anti-Semites," or "fascists," or worse. Their interventions were welcome. It was mainly, because of them that our hope for the nation remained intact, by which we could labor on. If it hadn't been for those few who supported us, we might have despaired, because no other encouraging signs could be found.

When we were asked during discussions how mankind's progress towards peace and security can actually be measured, since peace can never simply be measured by the absence of a war that could end everything in minutes, we would answer that such a yardstick exists with which one can measure the prospect of mankind's survival quite accurately.

I would tell them about an experience I had at the Chicago airport, years ago, where the Lyndon LaRouche organization had set up an information table at the time, to alert people about the impending nuclear war that was being prepared at the time under Russia's Ogarkov plan. What I experienced was so astounding that it radically changed my perception about the mental health of our society. It was shocking what I saw. Those people had stood there

at the airport at the height of the greatest existential crisis in history, with real evidence about a buildup towards a war that had the potential to end all life on this planet. And what was the public's response? It was a response of utter cynicism and apathy. Those people at their information desk had collected no more than \$10 in five hours, in the form of public contributions for their efforts to alert the nation about the unfolding crisis. Of course the crisis had not been covered in the media that routinely feeds society misinformation and trivia, but this didn't excuse the shocking tragedy that no more than fifty people had stopped at this table in a five hour period, out of the thousands who had walked by.

I used this story often to inspire a paradigm shift in the way people think of what is valuable to society. I used this story to illustrate that society regards money as wealth, which people therefore are inclined to protect by hoarding it. Then I would point out that the real wealth of society isn't in money at all, but is in its productive capacity as human beings to enrich their world. I would tell them about the great financial collapse of 1345, when the money, which was deemed society's wealth, became worthless in the global banking crash. As a consequence, the entire physical economy collapsed. People were starving. The whole society became weak. Suddenly the Black Death plague emerged and swept like wildfire throughout Europe, by which half of the population of Europe perished.

Then I would ask the people of the audience what the outcome would have been at this time, had the people understood that the wealth of society isn't in money, but in its physical economy, in its productive capacity. I would then suggest to the audience that if the people had understood that, they would have found different means for operating their economy, perhaps with an interim sovereign currency. Instead, they allowed the physical economy to collapse and disintegrate, on which their existence depended, as if it had no value. And then I would tell the audience that this very same irrational paradigm still rules the world today, with similar consequences.

I would tell the audience during discussions later on, that this pitiful response the LaRouche people had received to an unfolding civilizational crisis, indicates in a measurable way to what degree humanity is prepared to fight for its future and for its survival. I would tell the audience that the public's disinterest that I had witnessed, and the cynicism of the responses, indicate to me that the field is completely open to those who are determined to destroy humanity for their selfish reasons. It illustrates graphically that a society which shows such gross disinterest in its own survival is indeed unfit to survive and therefore may not survive.

Finally, I would point out in connection with all of that, that the donations which I had solicited after previous lectures in which

this paradigm failure was illustrated, amounted to nothing more than what the LaRouche people received on donations. I suggested to the audience that this pattern should tell them something about themselves, and about the riches of their world, and the security of their existence.

At this point Sylvia would usually remind the audience that the power which the fondi and their minions wield; or the 'royals' of this world, to steal, to create wars, to depopulate the earth; is theirs by default since the most advanced nations of humanity simply don't care what happens to them. Sylvia and I would then challenge our audience to find a single LaRouche table anywhere in the USA where the public responds with a greater sense of commitment to the modern nuclear-war threat that was becoming more immediate than it was in those days so long ago when an actual nuclear war was narrowly avoided several times. We would challenge our audience to look into their own hearts to find the barrier that would prevent their own support of those people's efforts to protect humanity. Sylvia and I would predict that this barrier would likely be related to other barriers in their life; to marriage barriers; sexual barriers; to countless unfulfilled needs; even financial fears, and to the cynicism about their own ability to make a difference in the world. We shook up their narrow minded, exclusive commitments to their families, friends, businesses, marriages, philosophies, and so forth, which are all inconsequential if society doesn't survive.

We have even brought up the metaphor of humanity being a village that is located behind a great dam this is leaking. We told the people that this village behind the failing dam is their village, and that no one in this village is not involved. We told the people that those who insisted that the dam wasn't their business, were nevertheless directly involved with it by their refusal to help. Their reaction would thereby involve them indissolubly with the destruction of the village that might otherwise be prevented.

Finally, we would tell the people that if their own fight for the survival of humanity should begin some day in earnest, they would be able to measure their impact on humanity by the yardstick we had just described, or similar ones. We told them that the financing of the self-protection of humanity IS their business. They are involved in it, because there simply exists no option not to be involved. They must see themselves as either as becoming involved as a part of the solution, or as pathetic fools that could have prevented the destruction of their world and their life, and refused to do so.

Unfortunately, we found not a great many occasions during our travels when those deeper issues could even be addressed, and fewer still at which the audience could comprehend that nuclear-war, depopulation, the destruction of nations, the ravishing of Africa, and

so forth, are all manifests of one single economic issue that stems from the feudal oligarchy of the world aiming to protect its base of power and its instruments for looting. And on still rarer occasions did anyone comprehend that the core failure in all of that was their own irrational perception as to what really constitutes the wealth of society. It was never easy for those people to understand that the economic issues of humanity had subjected to the war that the 'royal' fondi had fought for centuries to prevent the renaissance idea of sovereign nation-states and sovereign people, to become a foundation for the sovereign self-development of humanity around the globe that the feudal oligarchy would not survive.

Of course, there were fewer occasions still, when the people at our meetings could recognize that the wider view of perception in which this economic issue comes to light. And even then, when our talk became centered on the need for taking responsibility, and the nature of responsibility as Erica had once explained it, "to enrich all mankind, and to injure none," very few people remained committed to fight with us in support of humanity. Many people loved the idea of expanding their mental vision and experiencing expanded freedoms, but when it came to the need of taking responsibility for their actions, it appeared that we were asking too much of them. The sad reality was that no one stood up and even hinted at what Erica had said, that night at the dance hall in Germany, that this was the most minimal demand, meaning that nothing less would do.

Nevertheless, our hopes for humanity had remained intact throughout this time in spite of the overwhelming fact that much of America had lost its once beautiful soul, which had been destroyed by the fondi far more extensively than that had been accomplished this in Russia. Our hope was based on the fact that we had experienced in our own life, that a people's lost soul could be restored, as it was when the Renaissance was created. We never lost sight of the fact that a revolution in people's thinking can be unleashed overnight, once the ground for that revolution has been thoroughly prepared.

"There is no law," Sylvia would remind me whenever my spirits became too low, "that a decade or more must pass before this renewal of the human soul can be accomplished." The more Sylvia and I became convinced of this fact and projected it in our speeches and in our work with individuals, the stronger became our conviction that the survival of humanity and its civilization might still be assured, even at this late hour.

We both felt that there was a type of satisfaction associated with this work, that brought its own reward, even though we could never be certain that we would win the final, necessary, victory for humanity.

"So, has it all been worthwhile?" we asked ourselves. "Has

it been worthwhile even if the final victory eludes us? Has the struggle made us richer as human beings in our own lives?"

"How would you describe your life now, after all that has happened to us?" I asked Sylvia one evening on the road to the next city on our agenda.

"It has been like a symphony," she replied instantly, and then thought about it for a minute. "It has been like a symphony by Brahms, like his second symphony," she added. "This symphony is rich in melodies and in power of expression. This is what our life has become, hasn't it? Brahms wrote this symphony in one of the beautiful areas of Austria, of which he said that the melodies are so abundant there that one must take care not to tread on them. Doesn't this reflect what our life has become; a garden that is rich with beautiful melodies, so much so that one has to be careful not to step on them because of their profusion?"

"Indeed," I replied. I answered honestly, because Brahms' first symphony had been thoroughly dealt with in my experience with Anton. We all had grown by its power. "Isn't it amazing what deep reaching experiences Brahms had been able to share," I added, "and how badly he was treated in response by those who relate his work to the fact that he was never married, who see his work as the result of an unfulfilled longing. The history books tell us that Brahms was deeply in love with Clara Schumann, who was married to Robert Schumann, a respected friend and fellow composer. After Robert's death his path to Clara was wide open, but nothing became of it. Brahms never married; not Clara or anyone. But how could Brahms have written works of such beauty and power, as he did, had his own life been so sadly unfulfilled as the 'experts' suppose? Why are people so blind?"

Sylvia laughed, "Brahms' life wasn't unfulfilled. Listen to his Fourth Symphony that was written at the end of his life. This is not a sad farewell by an unfulfilled person. The symphony is a rich celebration of life itself, of satisfaction, of a life lived to the full. As for Clara, who knows what worlds she and Brahms had explored together? Their affair had been the subject of every would-be psychiatrist of the time, and even of some in our own time."

"And Brahms stood above them all," I said. "His first symphony will one day be seen as an answer to what none of the psychiatrist could comprehend. I think his first symphony was his Clara symphony. It has to be, because nothing less would have been sufficient as a foundation for what came after it. People say that it was sad that Brahms didn't marry Clara Schumann after Robert Schumann died. But how could he have? He would have found himself encumbered by the boundaries of a system that would have isolated him into a smaller sphere than what his creativity demanded. After all, Clara was a strongly dominating woman. She would have

isolated him from himself. Then, all the great works that came after his first symphony might never have been written."

"Some day, I am certain, our lives, too, will reflect the fullness that his fourth symphony celebrates," Sylvia replied. "We may even have oodles of children some day. For now, however, I am satisfied with the profusion of melodies that have come into our lives, even if one must be careful not to step on them, and the power of the music that goes along with the melodies."

"Ah, perhaps this may be the reason why we haven't won the fight yet, against nuclear war," I suggested. "Perhaps, we need to embrace more? Perhaps, we are not reaching high enough, or dream tall enough dreams. Our dream must be to defeat William Palmerston's empire in order to heal humanity of its disease, to purge its crimes from the fabric of society. We must do this, and do it with such a self-escalating revolutionary approach that the very concept of a revolution will be redefined thereby. We must step completely out of the political arena and into the arena of life itself. We must sow the seeds for a new human era at the grass roots level where humanity lives. We must tell the world Nicolai's story, and Anton's story, and Heather's, Ushi's, and Steve's, and go beyond even that. Perhaps, then people may find it possible to make a commitment to each other to enrich each other's life, with life itself, with the full spectrum of it. Then things will get moving. Maybe then, can the tectonic movements of the Empire's grinding down of other nations, be transformed into a new kind of movement where the enjoyment and respect for life, and the fullness of it, is the only remaining powerful motivator. Do you think this can be achieved if one opens one's eyes to it?"

Sylvia merely smiled and nodded. This meant she was in full agreement.

"Perhaps it is one of the fundamental principles of being that one must embrace the fullness of life first," I continued, "before one is moved to protect it. After all, how could one possibly rouse the people of the world to protect what they barely know? We must teach them who they are, what humanity is, and what the human being is capable of under ideal conditions for self-development. It could be that the lack of this knowledge maybe the reason why humanity is so willing in its stupor of denial, to let all life be put at risk, to be destroyed. It could be that people have forgotten what life is, or they haven't bothered to explore its wonders in the first place. Maybe we should become pioneers in this new quest, ambassadors of life, and put life on the map, like everyone else should as a step forward to break the denial."

I asked Sylvia to stop the car. I became serious now, as I realized the profundity of what I had just stumbled on. "I think you should go to Paris," I said to Sylvia, "and explore all of France; its

people, its art which you had longed to explore for so long and never were able to; and as you do, tell the people there our stories. Perhaps, you should invite Ross to join you. He loves art as a science, and he desperately needs to get away from his tiny village in Mexico where life is beautiful, but stands still. And maybe you should invite Fred, too. He loves to be with you. Also, he needs to get out of his office and be touched by the wider dynamics of living. And I, perhaps, should invite Tony and Heather on a journey to explore the whole of South America, and tell our story there, since both of them speak Spanish. In this way, my dear, we could set the world on fire with a new kind of love, which hopefully, will be bright enough to kindle some kind of a response in the gold old USA that is totally lacking the spirit of life. Afterwards, we could join up, all of us together at Steve's place in China and enrich each other with the wonders that we have wrought, and set China on fire. Of course, we should let Fred's office cover the costs, because the costs will be minuscule if one considers the possible consequence. What huge costs will be incurred by humanity should we fall short of what is really needed to save our civilization from the doom of a nuclear war, or from any one of the 'royal' fondi's other depopulation projects that they may be preparing right now for our collective doom."

Sylvia just smiled and shook her head.

"Heh, why should this not be possible, Sylvia?" I said in reply to her smile. "Why should it not be possible to reach out from this foundation that we have built, to inspire humanity with an appreciation of the infinite riches of life that are within reach of everyone, provided we fully explore them ourselves?"

Sylvia replied by starting the car up again, turning it around into the direction of the East Coast, towards our home on the rock by the sea. "There are preparations to be made," she added.

As it was, I wasn't surprised. I suggested, however, that if we were really going to do this, we would have to give credit for this in some small way to Johannes Brahms one more time, who provided the music for this project with his Fourth Symphony. "The way I see it," I said, "his Fourth Symphony reflect a celebration of life from its first bar to the last. It begins with a strong and beautiful melody of a new dawn that has already far progressed and is being celebrated in melodies of beautiful images. From there the celebration develops upward, reflecting satisfaction, strength, and joyous moments of peace and power. And then, in the finale, wow! One wonders how anyone can create a finale for such a continuous celebration. Brahms did it by structuring the finale in such a manner that one feels invited to continue the celebration by oneself, in one's own life, without end."

"I think we can find the equivalent music for our project also in the many of the beautiful chamber pieces that have been written," answered Sylvia as we were driving home. "Can you remember the Piano, Violin, and Viola Trio that we heard on the radio last night? And that's just a beginning. There is so much more out there to be found. Don't you agree, life is a source of boundless riches, like a kaleidoscope that never stops turning?"

"Isn't it strange," I replied, "that there is always another breakthrough unfolding when one comes to a point when things don't seem to move forward anymore? Suddenly, bang, a whole New World opens up with the unfolding of a new idea. Do you think we can go on like this forever?"

Sylvia nodded and smiled, and added that we certainly had a great life until now, "but," she added, "it seems we have only begun."

"Yes!" I replied, "it seems that all of this is only the beginning for something that will be much grander than anything that we have imagined. And for this, my dearly beloved, we need a different kind of music, not Brahms, something bigger, something like Vaughan Williams - I am thinking of Vaughan Williams' Sea Symphony, his Symphony Number One. That's early Vaughan Williams. That's huge Vaughan Williams. It's a symphony for massed forces; a large orchestra, chorus, and solo voices. It is a symphony of immense proportions. Sylvia, it is as big and wide as the sea. **"Behold the sea itself,** proclaims the opening choral passage. If you recognize the sea as a metaphor for life, then this symphony becomes our symphony," I said to Sylvia, **"Behold the sea itself. On its limitless heaving breast, the ships...** proclaims the mezzo-soprano later on. We are those ships, Sylvia: **Oh we can wait no longer,** sings the Baritone at the end. **We, too, launch out on trackless seas, fearless to unknown shores on waves of ecstasy to sail."**

I suggested to Sylvia that a big music is needed to reflect what we must necessarily do; something big and profound; something that can change the world; something that won't be easy but is necessary.

"We have come a long way," I added moments later, "and every step along the way has been revolutionary. At first there was Erica's discovery of that fundamental principle that goes totally contrary to the world's convention. Her metaphor of the flower garden opened up a whole New World, don't you agree? It totally changed the way we lived. Then Steve brought the same type of discovery into focus in his own unique way. He gave expression to it. A principle must be expressed in daily living for it to have any value. Steve further recognized that the expression of a fundamental principle must have a purpose. This purpose he discovered to be love as he recognized what was unfolding. He inspired us further with it.

He always reminded us that we bring to each other the gift of our love to enrich one another's existence."

I pointed out to Sylvia that these three aspects are all interlocked. A discovery may be profound, but one needs to give expression to it in order to experience its essence. Also, one needs to understand the purpose for it. But even those three aspects are not enough for one to fully utilize its fundamental principle. Something is missing, without which our achievement is incomplete. I explained that this missing aspect is a deep seated acknowledgement to ourselves, of what has been discovered, expressed, and understood of the principle involved.

"I think the time has come," I said to Sylvia, "that we make this firm acknowledgement to ourselves and then extend it to the world. We must acknowledge every aspect of it; our discovery of the fundamental principle, our expression of it in our lives, and our understanding of its purpose that translates itself into a commitment to enrich one another's existence and that of the whole world. If this acknowledgement takes the form a ceremony, so be it. Perhaps it may even be a marriage ceremony, as it were, if it confirms our common commitment to this principle that we have discovered by our commitment to each other."

I explained that the ceremony must necessarily include all of us, since we all have demonstrated this commitment to each other. "It must be a marriage ceremony that includes more than just you and I, but Steve, Ushi, Heather, Ross, Fred, Tony, and Dag and Al as well."

"And Olive, and Indira and the whole clan," Sylvia added. "We have all made a deep commitment to each other, a commitment that goes deeper than an ordinary marriage between two people."

"Right! This commitment too, is more profound, because it is not centered on rights, demands, and obligations, but is based on an out-flowing appreciation of one another that is modeled after the model of the sun, as Ross had pointed this out in Caracas."

I suggested to Sylvia that our marriage reflects this commitment. It has become a sun among other suns. It reflects a totally different fundamental principle than that which a tightly confined marriage reflects where the flow is inwards oriented.

Sylvia raised her hand to stop me. "Are you proposing that we all get married together in one gigantic ceremony?"

She kept her eyes on the road while she spoke, but she wasn't smiling when she said this.

"Yes, Sylvia," I replied. "This, in essence, is what I propose, because this type of a deeply honest acknowledgement is required of us in obedience to the principle that we have recognized as imperative, that has shaped all of our lives. Such a huge ceremony would bring into focus the bond of unity that our commitment to each

other has helped to forge, that is reflected in our larger commitment to enrich the world with an ever expanding love and life."

We talked along these lines until we came upon a small motel at a highway junction in the dessert. We decided to stop at the place, relax, go for a walk, have supper, and of course cancel all the other meetings that we had scheduled.

"We've come a long way, Sylvia, have we not?" I said to her on our walk through the dessert that night. The moon was already visible above the darkening sunset. "There was a time when Steve's concept seemed so incredibly daring," I said and laughed. "His insistence seemed incredibly revolutionary when I was first confronted with his far out demand that he placed mostly on himself, that we bring to each other our love to enrich one another's existence. It seemed, oh, so utopian and impractical. Just look at us now, we've gone far beyond that. In those days we said with the poet, whoever the poet might have been, that love is joy in the beauty of another, which we had aimed to share. Now we find that love is much more than even this. It is richer. Love is joy in the beauty of life itself, as we enrich one another in its vast dimensions. Don't you agree that is why we must go China, you and me? That's why we must join Ushi and Steve. We must go to where this kind of love is already unfolding on a national scale in the form of countless civil projects. We must become married to this country and take part in its joy."

"You are dreaming Pete, what could we possibly accomplish in China? What would you do there? You're not a civil engineer."

"Sylvia, I can motivate people. I can help them to enrich their appreciation of the value of what they are doing. The people there are not slaving all day long to enrich some moneybags as most people do in the West. They are working to create a better and richer world for their children than the one they inherited, and they are getting paid for it, too. I wish we could say this to ourselves in America. The Chinese people don't know how fortunate they are to have given themselves this chance, the kind of chance that we have not given ourselves for a long time."

"But running away from our mess at home isn't the answer, Pete. We should work here and help our people to give themselves the same chance."

"No, Sylvia, we must go to China. We must experience the dynamism of life that is unfolding there. Things are too dead, here. Maybe after a while, when we return, we may be fit to light the fire that is needed here. Just look at what have we accomplished so far in America, in the last few decades. Almost nothing! The problem is, that we can only share what we have experienced. Nothing else will

be sufficient to enable us to bring America back to life. Maybe Ushi and Steve will follow us back, once the fire that we will light, has cleaned out the Stasi-hunters and fascists from the Justice Department and other institutions, so that both Steve and Ushi will find America safe to return to. Don't you think there is a great need in America for people like Ushi, and people like Steve? Just imagine what they could do here with their experiences!"

"So, you really want us to go to China. Is this what you are saying?"

"Of course, Sylvia, as soon as possible, provided you would like to come, as I hope you will. Still, I don't own your life; I merely want to be a part of it. So, it's up to you. Would you consider such a move?"

"Of course I'll be coming, silly you," she said and punched me. "Fred and I will meet you in Beijing right after our visit to Paris. We will meet you there if you and Heather don't get stuck in South America. I hear the fondi's people are more fascist down in South America than the Romans had ever been."

"Ah, but they won't be like that when we leave there, Sylvia, if I can help it. We will see you in Beijing, that's a promise. London's terrorist gangs won't harm me in South America. We'll be gone before they know we were there. We'll be with the little people where the life of the country is rooted. With some help from us, these people can become a big power in the world, because they still have within them what it takes to build a nation. This power is native to the human mind that we all share, unless it becomes drilled out of one. All that these people need to do is move with what they have, and I think they can be inspired to do that. I don't think they are quite as dead yet as the people in the U.S.A. have become. The North American society has destroyed itself with its fascination with violence, fascism, and with stealing from one another and from the world."

"I think Nicolai had intended to reawaken the world to its humanity, with his planned triple marriage celebration in a big and splashy manner," said Sylvia. "It would have laid the groundwork for a wider recognition of the universal marriage of humanity that is the reality of our being, built on a recognition of us all as human beings sharing a common humanity. It would have shaken society. The ripples would likely have been incredibly wide. That wedding march would have been the overture of the requiem for the fondi. It would have been their death march. I think the fondi recognized this, perhaps better than we did. I think that this may have been the real reason why they killed Nicolai, and why they did it in such an obvious manner, with such a powerful deterrent attached. They were telling us that they are prepared to go to any extreme to prevent this from happening again. The Hebrews imposed the death penalty

in ancient times for the same reason. The fondi are prepared to this again, and they are prepared to be as radical in doing that as the danger is great to their continued existence if they fail."

I nodded. I agreed. Yes, that probably was the real reason why Nicolai was killed and eight million people with him. I also determined that they would never have a chance to do this again. That was their most desperate measure, with which they exposed their greatest vulnerability, their weakest flank. That meant that we could wipe them out, through that weak flank.

"It took us twelve years to learn the meaning of what we must now acknowledge universally, beyond anything that Nicolai had dreamed of," I said to Sylvia a while later, as we were having supper that evening. "As you know, life in this period leading up to where we are today, has been quite rich at times. Every facet of it became enriched. It even involved sexual intimacies right across the board when it was appropriate, and this in probably a richer measure than is commonly found everywhere else. All this occurred because we simply acknowledged our human needs as sexual beings, which didn't necessarily mean that we were drawn into intercourse. This makes an ever-larger union very much a possibility, and an exciting one to consider. This kind of commitment also caused us to respond to each other's larger needs as well, like organizing the food aid for Russia that Nicolai had urged some time ago, or getting Ushi's help in canceling the SDI project, which turned out to be a mistake. We have even saved the world from a real nuclear war that could have unfolded from the cruise missile attack. Somehow, we prevented that by responding to the larger needs of one another. Except, we can't stop there. We can't say we have done our share. We can't say this until the world is safe again. We have to go further with this. We have to inspire the whole of humanity into a similar commitment than the one we share among us, in order that humanity becomes committed to protect its civilization in this nuclear age. This goal is not won until the last vestige of fascism has been erased. Towards this goal a vastly expanded marriage acknowledgement will help tremendously. In fact it may be totally necessary for us to do this. Obviously, we too, don't survive, if the world does not survive."

As I said this, Sylvia began to grin and then laughed, "you have missed a couple of things," she said. "You have missed to point out the fundamental difference between the traditional wedding ceremonies and the ever expanding ceremony that you propose for us. You have failed to point out to me that in a traditional wedding the bond of a union is **created** by the consent of a priest or some higher authority, which is either the church or the state. You should have pointed out that the universally expanding wedding that you propose has no other purpose than to acknowledge what is already

fully established as the reality of our being, long before any ceremony takes place. So, it becomes nothing else, than a celebration thereof."

"Of course, Sylvia," I replied excitedly. "All of that goes without saying. That's understood, isn't it? But why are you asking this? You must have talked to Ushi, haven't you? You just wanted to see how much of it I would acknowledge. Well, I acknowledge all of it."

Sylvia nodded and grinned even more now. "You further forgot," she said with a smile, "to tell me that your proposed universal marriage acknowledgement would be the functional equivalent to those development hubs that LaRouche had proposed should be build all along the Eurasian Land-Bridge development corridors. You forgot to mention that these physical development centers are intended to support the development of all the regions round about them, by which the whole country becomes developed. You forgot to mention that this is what we must also do in a spiritual context, in the context of uplifting ourselves and humanity in the manner, by the same kind of process."

Sylvia grinned again. "And as for asking Ushi, you're wrong Pete, I have talked to Steve about it. We also talked about something else. Steve had actually made the very same proposal before you did. The only thing that's not fair about what is happening here, is that it took you so long to commit yourself to the idea of drawing our entire world-wide group into one single family on the highest platform of marriage imaginable."

"All-right! And here, I thought I had to sell you," I said in reply and began to grin, too. "But that's history. The important thing is the future. It is important that we go forward with this as rapidly as we can. Didn't I say something like this when we talked about music? I think the point is brought out loud and clear in Ray Vaughan William's Sea Symphony. It really is a beautiful, powerful, joyous symphony. It best describes what our life will yet be. It's a huge symphony, in every respect: in tone, in majesty, in length, and in its beauty and power. It embraces the whole world. You've got to hear it some day, Sylvia, especially its ending. There is a movement in it that never stops: **Oh my brave soul, farther, farther, farther sail**, sings the Baritone near the end. The symphony also has a beautiful, quiet, ending that trails out into the music of the spheres as if it were embracing the universe. You will get a feeling when you hear the ending, that the symphony goes on and on. Perhaps Vaughan William's Sea Symphony should be our combined wedding march."

"Yes," she said, "let's make it so. But let's do a little of it now. Let's do it here, today, tomorrow, and always. Let's be 'married'

anew on this higher level that has no boundary, where our bond is a love that is out-flowing and enriching one another and uplifting the whole world. Let's us be the first to have the ceremony that universal celebration ceremony that acknowledges what our unfolding love unites."

"This ceremony will celebrate a miracle," I replied, "do you realize that? Love without boundaries is a miracle. It is divine Love, a love that meets all human needs. We must acknowledge that foundation in our ceremony so that we can go on more freely and expand our love evermore. Also, we should have many more such ceremonies in the future. Perhaps one every year. Let's have ceremonies that celebrate our moving ahead instead of anniversaries that remind us of what had been. And why just every year; why not constantly? The entirety of our life should be one single celebration of love, of the oneness of all humanity, of the divinity of man. Anything less won't do."

Sylvia nodded with a big smile. "Right, and as we go forward," said Sylvia, "as we move into the future, we must consider other expressions of this oneness in terms of other types of unions based on the same principle. We must do this just as we must consider other types of music to explore what our life should be like if life is to be without limits. I am thinking about Sibelius, the Sibelius Violin Concerto. Its music speaks to me of a passionate celebration with the excitement of being touched by the wonders of life. This is music for a new type of dancing that never lets up. This, too, is what I want our life to be like. It should be a part of our new, infinite wedding march."

"Indeed, that's what all living should be like," I replied, "shouldn't it, Sylvia?"

"Pete, with these movements we can transform the world into something far richer than has ever existed before," Sylvia acknowledged.

"So, our big expanding wedding celebration in China, that takes us one step further, is really on?" I asked. "Then the fondi should be terribly scared."

She nodded and smiled, "But don't worry about tomorrow. Instead, think of our wedding celebration today, our gratitude for all love with which we will light a fire right across the world, all at once, beginning with our start-up celebration here and now. Think about the wonders of even contemplating this acknowledgement. Think of what is involved in the flow of an constantly expanding love without limits, which our openness to love has brought into view. Think about the brilliance of the unknown, the yet to be explored, perhaps even the unknowable. If we do that, we won't have time to think about tomorrow. And of course, to answer your question about our China project, that larger ceremony that is designed to begin

and never to end, will be the first thing on the agenda in our brave new world." Sylvia spoke these words with a sense of joy that seemed like a fresh new wind compared to the drab experiences in our lecture work. "In fact, our China project is almost completely arranged already," she added. "A single phone call to Steve will be enough. We can make this call together as soon as we get back to our rock by the sea."

On the way back to the motel, with the motel almost in sight, Sylvia referred to the big wedding celebration once more. "Steve suggests," she said, "that the celebration must be held in China, which has a long history of spiritual commitment. He also suggests that the celebration should be arranged as soon as possible to counteract the presently unfolding developments towards a new war. Steve suggests that in generating a widely based commitment to love lies our hope for defeating the specter of a new war in this region that could spread throughout planet."

"There is no reason why this can't be done, and can't be all beautiful," I said.

"Of course, it can't be anything else but being beautiful," Sylvia replied, "if the process is modeled after the sun."

"In this case," I said to Sylvia, "we mustn't forget the beautiful melodies of Mozart's Piano concertos. These are so infinitely rich and complete that they stand out like an inner peace that nothing in the world can erase or supersede." I said cautiously. "This, too, is a dimension which our lives should reflect."

Sylvia just nodded and smiled.

Before we went to sleep that night, while Sylvia relaxed in the bathtub, she asked me to get the map out to determine how long it would take us to get back home, and which intersection would be the best to get to the interstate that would take us East, to the coast. Then she pointed out that we need to add one more musical dimension to what our future should be like. She spoke about the violin concerto of Phillip Glass, that unfolds into a continuous flow of music that seems to challenge one's very concept of infinity. It keeps recycling with endlessly new variations that may seem the same but never are. Glass portrays a lateral infinity that echoes Helen's lateral lattice. "It seems to challenge even one's widest vision and desire to embrace more," said Sylvia.

"Indeed, we should add this to our celebration," replied.

"Yes we should," said Sylvia, "but for now, I am satisfied that our cup is full. We are having a beautiful celebration ceremony already," she added. "We are venturing into realms upon realms in our thought that no one has been in before, perhaps not even the composers of that music that we have been talking about."

I agreed. "Still, there is something missing in all this," I said to Sylvia, who was still in the bathtub. "We need something that lies above all this. We need something that can get us from where we are, to where we want to be." I pointed out cautiously that wishing has never solved anything. I suggested that I had a pretty good idea what this additional element should be, which we need to find. It must be something that goes beyond even the nature of beauty, all the way to the sublime, because it is there, in the sublime, that we find the deepest realization of Truth."

I decided to let Sylvia digest this idea for a while, because truth and beauty are linked, through this link that is not easily seen, while the nature of Truth cannot be understood without it.

When we got onto the Interstate on our way home, I found it easier to let the mind contemplate the sublime. At this point the city of Auburn lay far behind us, the traffic had thinned out.

"Where will this take us?" Sylvia asked, "and I don't mean the I80. The I80 takes us to Salt Lake City, I know that. I am talking about the movement that takes us beyond beauty to the sublime."

"That takes us back in time," I replied. "It takes us back some twenty-five-hundred years to 500 BC, to something profound that the people had understood once in that age, which most of humanity doesn't understand anymore. It takes us back to something I had almost forgotten myself, to something that the German poet Goethe had made a poem about. I am talking about the saga of Prometheus. I am talking about Aeschylus, the patriotic poet of the early Greek Classical era who wrote the great trilogy, **Prometheus Bound**."

I told her that as far as I could recall, the image of Prometheus is rooted deeply in Greek mythology where Prometheus comes to light as an immortal being who ranked among the gods, but as a criminal. His crime was that he defied the pagan deities of Olympus. He had taught humanity the technology of using fire. For this he was condemned. In the oligarchic world, represented in the play by the gods of Olympus, no greater crime could have been committed than aiding mankind's self-discovery as an intelligent species. The Olympian Zeus has banned human beings from the discovery of the use of fire. That's the oligarchic method. It is designed to prohibit human development, especially scientific and technological development. Its dictum for mankind is death by poverty. The modern equivalent of the Olympian dictum is the Postindustrial Society Doctrine. Prometheus has defied the ancient oligarchic doctrine by giving mankind the freedom of the discovery and use of technology and the development of science. The ancient Olympians couldn't roll back what Prometheus had enabled. They could punish him for it,

but they couldn't roll back the advance of mankind. That is what the Prometheus play is about. Prometheus remained defiant of the Olympians. But what about us? What Prometheus won, we have carelessly thrown away. Beginning in 1951 with the CIA sponsored Congress for Cultural Freedom the banning of technology, the shutting down of scientific and technological progress, began anew. We have betrayed Prometheus by allowing this course, and with this betrayal the postwar world began to collapse. It started with the ban of sanity in international finance in 1971, followed by the ban of fair trade under free trade. In conjunction with this, we saw the ban of DDT and CFC, followed by the ban of truth in the form of the oligarchy's global warming project. And all of that was just the beginning. Today we are deeply mired in war and in the killing and torturing of human beings. Prometheus has been betrayed. In order to end this betrayal we need to understand what Prometheus stood for."

"Prometheus was an economist, Peter. That's what he stood for," said Sylvia. "Nicolai and Anton were economists, and so are we. Every human being is an economist. True economics is built into out nature. That's our immortality. We discover principles, develop ideas, utilize science to understand the nature of the principles, and so we create technologies in applying those principles to build a brighter world. That's the flow of economics. Every human being is an economist. That's our identity, our sex, our passion in life. And the Principle of Universal Love is driving this passion."

I nodded. "Prometheus represented what a human being is. That's why he was called a god. And Zeus, who claimed to be a god like the oligarchy does and always has, claiming to rule by divine privilege, is being exposed in the play to be a liar. On this ground Prometheus stood firm in defiance of the process of oligarchy. In the play the imperial oligarchs of Olympus realized that they could not simply kill Prometheus, since he was immortal, they ganged up on him and bound him, and subjected him to eternal torture. Except the torture didn't work for them, as indeed it never does. However, Prometheus, the champion of discovery and science, knew what would be Zeus' unavoidable undoing. He understood the self-defeating nature of any basically inhuman process, such as imperialism, oligarchism, and fascism, which are really all the same. Of course Prometheus wouldn't tell Zeus what it was that spelled his doom. In order to get the secret revealed the Olympians offered Prometheus a deal. That's how the oligarchy still works, to the very day. Zeus promised that he would stop torturing him if he would give up his secret. That may have sounded like a fair deal to the audience. But there is always a hidden hook built into the imperial deals. Prometheus couldn't accept what was offered. If he were, he would deny himself. He would denounce what he stood for, representing the freedom of

discovery and scientific development. He knew that if he were to deny that, he would destroy humanity, the object of his love.

With this paradoxical setup, the poet puts his audience into a conflict with itself. The audience is made to feel the pain and the agony of Prometheus, whereby it would be inspired to hope that Prometheus will give up his secret to save himself from the incessant torture. Except the audience also knows that its hope must never be fulfilled, because if it was fulfilled the audience would lose the basis for its existence. It would protect Prometheus, but can't in order to protect itself. That's oligarchism, the irrational thinking of empiricism that get no one anywhere. The audience realizes that it would be destroyed itself if Prometheus were to give in to his rival, Zeus. The audience was inspired to hope that Prometheus would remain defiant, even while it sincerely wished he would give in to save himself from torture.

"At this point the play unfolds towards the sublime for everyone involved," I said to Sylvia. "The resolution in the play takes us beyond empiricism where no real solutions are intended to be found, into the realm of universal principles and the discovery of truth. While a chorus on stage urges Prometheus to surrender his secret to save himself, we see Prometheus defiantly standing his ground, even being in pain. That's when the audience begins to side with him, in spite of its own pain, knowing that he cannot betray humanity and himself. Here a sublime moment begins that shifts the scene. The audience begins to realize that by his staunch refusal, Prometheus turns the table and Zeus really becomes the tragic figure instead of him. The audience finds that Prometheus is able to answer back to the gods of Olympus, even from his bed of pain, with the full realization that they can have no power over him, because the very worst that Zeus had been able to impose had been but a small thing compared to his love. He laughed at them. He had endured their torturing, and could endure it forever. He says to them that the pains of torture pale in the face of his love for humanity. Thus he laughs at the mighty gods whose existence is filled with such hate that it becomes a torment upon themselves more grievous than his own. In his laughter they realize their doom, a fate most certain that they lack the power to escape. By this process of proving to the Olympians that they have no power, their self-claimed status as gods becomes uncovered as a lie. Humanity is saved. Prometheus is free. That's how we can free our world, Sylvia, and we must. Prometheus lives in us as he did in Nicolai and Anton, and still does in many others. We may have failed on some counts. The tragedy that killed eight million people should have been avoided. We should have moved faster. But in the end we won. It is my hope, Sylvia, that in the end humanity will win its victory over imperialism and oligarchism in as decisively a manner as Prometheus had and as we had won in

the end against the death Star."

"After relating the story I suggested to Sylvia that by means of this classical tragedy, the audience becomes educated to grasp the meaning of the sublime which is rooted in a higher truth. "The people's thinking becomes elevated," I said. "It becomes more truth-oriented. Sublimity begins with the discovery of truth and unfolds with the scientific development of the human understanding of it. And the truth is that we are all human beings. The mythology of imperial masters acting in a zoo of underlings has nothing to do with the real world. It is nothing more than the acting out of a scrip in an Olympian game that unfolds in tragedy. The poet of the Prometheus trilogy tells mankind that it is free to write its own script, a human scrip, a script of renaissance instead of slavery."

"Isn't it amazing," said Sylvia, "that the poet in ancient times also understood the nature of the platform of human freedom. Prometheus represented the freedom that comes with the discovery and the use of the technology of fire. In his days, this meant wood power. The key element in our advancing forms of civilization is always the power of fire. We stepped from wood to coal, to oil, to nuclear fission, with nuclear fusion being on the horizon. And there is always a Zeus stepping in front of us, saying you can't do this. Sometimes the modern Zeus is successful in holding back the march of scientific and technological progress at a great cost to mankind in human misery. But the Zeus never really wins. Our humanity always wins, and wins out of necessity. We are a creature that is always a step head of itself, blazing new trails. But we cannot step back. That is why we win. We can't go back to wood power, because there is not enough wood in the world and wood power is no longer intense enough to meet our needs. We can't run airplanes with wood power. Now that we have entered the age of nuclear fission, we can't go back to reliance of coal-fired electrical plants. There isn't enough coal in the world to fulfill our planet wide needs, and the coal that is left is fast running out. In a couple hundred years there won't be much of that energy resource left, and by then the planet will be back in an Ice Age environment for the next 90,000 years. In order to live through that we need greater energy resources than ever had before. Nuclear fission power promises to provide us enough power to last 10,000. But even that will be superseded by nuclear fusion power long before the usefulness of fission power ends. So, the poet was right. Mankind's freedom is always assured by the technology of 'fire' that gives us the power to power our universe. What the poet didn't know is that each step forward gives us greater freedoms and a higher standard of living, but also requires an ever-larger human input to create and operate the technology. One person was sufficient to light a wood fire and

warm a cave, while it takes the work of thousands to operate a coal economy, and the word of millions to discover and create the technology of nuclear fission power. The development on nuclear fusion, in tern, has become a global project. In a very real sense, mankind develops not only ever richer resources of power, and thereby a richer civilization, it also discovers thereby more and more the principles of its own humanity, the Principle of its Universal Marriage to each other, and develops this principle together with the Principle of Universal Love. Thereby we become truly human. The Zeus-factor that stands in denial of the Principle of our Universal Marriage as children of a common universal humanity, get necessarily dropped and left behind on the road of human progress. The poet of the Prometheus play truly understood economics, didn't he? The shutting down of oligarchism and imperialism is a natural element of the unfolding process of economics."

I suggested that people must now consider that classical art and music isn't classical because it is old, but that it is so, because it generates a movement in the mind that enables one to comprehend the fundamental principles that underlie the economics of civilization. These 'classical' discoveries of truth enrich the human existence throughout all times. I pointed out to Sylvia that the music of a true classical composition isn't arbitrary, but is rigorously built on natural principles that generate the notion of beauty and thereby an element of reflected truth.

"We find the sublimity of Truth not in opinions," I said to Sylvia, "but in the manifest result of our scientific hypotheses through which civilization is elevated to a higher plain. By this, society becomes enabled to exist at a constantly higher potential population density, and at a constantly higher quality of living. Herein, we find the reality of absolute Truth. Isn't this what our new and wider universal marriage ceremony celebrates? Doesn't it celebrate an element of the sublime?" I asked. "It's all about truth, isn't it? It's about the recognition of what has touched us; of what has already been established; of what will forever be fundamentally true. It is about a universal principle. It is about the principle of universal love. The unfolding of this principle never ends. Absolute Truth is infinity. It is Life and Love all put into one, which have no meaning by themselves, which unfold as one in the sphere of the infinite Mind and Soul that we all reflect. Why then," I asked, "would anyone ever want to revert back from this position, to the old style of living where mankind's marriages are encumbered with countless boundaries and people's lives are locked into isolation; where their love is divided, encumbered, and disallowed?"

She shook her head. "We can never go back to that, from having touched upon the sublime. We can only go further ahead,"

she added. "That is what our life has been like as far as I can tell, constantly."

"We must go beyond what Steve knows," I said to her. "In the context of our understanding the one all-embracing Truth, mankind has become both a discoverer and a creator. We have cultivated the spark the Prometheus entrusted us with. Mankind has become a discoverer and a creator in his own right and of its own reality that unfolds in the context of each discovered element of Truth. Truth, thus, lies in the hypothesis of the higher hypothesis, without end. It was this near absolute Truth that Prometheus knew. And with it the poet gave humanity a taste of its own infinite nature. Ultimately humanity must discover by itself what Prometheus knew, which he had kept sacred, in which was anchored his love for humanity. Humanity must also rediscover out of the depth of that one universal Truth that the titans, the oligarchs, the fondi, the Zeus of every age or time, are self-condemned to disintegrate by the consequences of their own contempt of humanity, which is really a contempt of Truth. This is what the ancient Greeks once understood. It needs to be rediscovered, painstakingly perhaps, and daringly with courageous steps. But it needs to be discovered and put on the agenda again, just as Aeschylus had put it on the agenda in 500 BC."

"Isn't that what you had discovered in part in Leipzig with your own courageous steps?" Sylvia interrupted with a grin.

"Indeed, but it has to be far more daring than this," I replied, "and it has to unfold without interruption. We stopped doing it. Compared to the way we started, we had done nothing for more than a dozen years until just recently, just like the ancient Greeks had done nothing with their vast and keen knowledge to prevent the rise of the Roman Empire, the monster Zeus. That lapse by the Greek in upholding their culture was the reason for their demise. It started with the Sophistry that created the Peloponnesian War. Zeus wears the tongue of sophistry. When the Roman Empire collapsed centuries later, as every Zeus does, Greece, which had swallowed the sophistry that it once pioneered, had been depopulated by the Roman Empire so brutally that it became reduced to less than twenty percent of its original population level. Humanity as a whole would not survive such a dramatic fate. Nevertheless a worse fate is prepared for it. If we don't have the sublimity within us that Prometheus symbolizes, then we may not prevent that impending fate, and humanity, the pearl of the universe, becomes lost. In this case the brightest and most beautiful of all the love that we celebrate, has no more meaning than but an empty shell. But we can prevent going there, can we? The modern Zeus and its sophistry can be defeated. That is the task of truth and love, a task that we have appointed for us in accord with the spirit of Prometheus the economist, when we took hold of the Principle of Universal Love."

In the joy of celebration that day, as we communicated these lofty ideas, I felt as if the rising renaissance pervaded the very air. I felt the same all day long. This was our new wedding celebration indeed, and I could sense that it was also a Promethean celebration since the universal focus had been our focus on love beginning at the day of our first sunrise together. "Humanity is beautiful," I said to Sylvia. "Humanity is the greatest force for good that exists in the universe. Humanity should be proud of itself, as Prometheus was proud in his recognition of this truth, in spite of his circumstances. Our task must be," I said to Sylvia, "to encourage humanity to play the role of Prometheus the economist evermore fully. Prometheus symbolizes love, but he also symbolizes economics that unfolds from it. In this sense economics is greater than love as it is the very manifest of it. Humanity is not the scum of the universe as the fondi oligarchy proclaims it to be with disdain. Humanity is the star of the universe! We only need to give ourselves the chance to prove this. For this goal we journey to the farthest corners of the world, to find a starting point where the sophistry of the oligarchy has been the least deadly. That brings us to China. Europe has been swallowed up by the fondi and been made a dead scene with the cultural warfare of sophistry, and so has America. The fascism of Zeus has become the cultural night in all of these places. Maybe we have start in China where there is still life left with a human touch. Then we have to use this sanctuary as a base to start a rallying of all the nations to Truth's standard. Perhaps we may begin the rallying in places where people are still living, but are inwardly dead like much of the U.S.A. is, and much of Europe. It might be possible in this way that all people, wherever they may be, become inspired by this unfolding global fire of the passion of living like a human being to rejoin humanity and become alive again and active for the good of the whole of humanity."

I asked Sylvia whether she agreed that this might be possible.

She simply turned to me and grinned again.

"Why shouldn't it be possible?" she replied a while later. "Have we not already proven enough of this in our own life? Have not proven that this is possible? It isn't just possible Pete. It sounds exciting. I see it as a privilege to live in such times as our time, where the seemingly impossible is beginning to be realized. It seems to me that we are living at the very leading edge of the world. It makes one indeed feel so alive."

"Maybe it was this acknowledgement that made Prometheus truly immortal," I said jokingly. "Maybe he wasn't a god at all. Maybe there are no gods. Maybe Prometheus was actually a human being living at the leading edge, facing the absolute Truth of uni-

versal love."

"Now you're getting silly," Sylvia scolded me gently. "It's not right to be making fun of such a deeply serious issue."

"Who is making fun?" I replied with a grin. "Tell me, who is more truly alive in our world right now, today, of all the people I will mention? Is it Mozart, Beethoven, Bach, Brahms, or Socrates, Plato, Christ Jesus, Gauss, Leibniz, Mary Baker Eddy, Schiller, LaRouche, or Prometheus? This is to mention just a few."

Sylvia couldn't answer me.

"Of course you can't answer me," I said to her, "because nobody can tell me that they are not all alive in my heart and soul. That proves my point," I said and grinned.

The truth of the matter is that we both felt more awake and alive, because of our new and more infinite marriage celebration that has been carried into the sphere of infinity indeed. By the time we reached Salt Lake City we felt refreshed and invigorated, rather than worn out by all the driving. Something was in the air that had made this journey through the desserts rich, vital, and beautiful. Was this a foretaste of things to come? Sylvia agreed that it might be. She also said that it would be natural that this was so.

I suggested to Sylvia that none of this comes about on its own, but is the culmination of the visions and the daring of many people, the result of trials and agonies, of failures and triumphs, and of some people's extraordinary loving. And so it should be, because truth isn't something that one finds in a museum, but in life, born out of struggles, agonies and victories, as we become honest with ourselves in our scientific search for reality."

Sylvia and I were in complete agreement on this, with each other, and this agreement was once again sealed with a kiss and a hug.

"You were wrong on only one point," said Sylvia after our embrace had ended. "You were wrong when you told me in Washington when all this began, that your love for me would always be on top of the heap. It didn't turn out that way, did it? It wasn't possible, because in the domain of love hierarchical concepts simply become invalid. If love is God's standard as the most leading edge thinkers say, then love bears the nature of the absolute that embraces all in its infinite fullness."

I agreed of course. "Still, I was right, Sylvia, in what I said," I said to her, "when I promised you that you would live above the clouds and touch the stars and be on top of the heap," I replied with a smile. "I just didn't tell you that you wouldn't be alone there, that you would share that lofty place with the whole of humanity. That's the natural result when one reaches the sublime."

As it was, this observation earned me another kiss. I suggested in turn that having an ice cream cone would also be nice, which was a tradition that went way back with us, a tradition that we didn't have to share with the whole of humanity.

"Oh, we're not having tea on such an occasion?" Sylvia replied and grinned.

"No, this cause for a real celebration. Well never reach a point when this becomes an ordinary thing. It will always be special. This is something big, something that's possible to celebrate forever," I replied. "Tea won't do."

"But why should we limit ourselves to just an ice cream cone, then," she replied and grinned. "Let's have the works, with whipping cream, bananas, and chocolate sauce..."

"And strawberries on top, and sweet waffles," I added.

"What a way to celebrate our future!" she added and grinned.

About the Series: *The Lodging for the Rose*

The series comprises twelve novels, written by Rolf A. F. Witzsche, the author of an earlier novel, *Brighter than the Sun*. The earlier novel had been written during the Cold-War period, but in the new world of asymmetric nuclear warfare it is fast becoming relevant again for its rather unique perspective of the nuclear-war danger. It presents a minimalist scenario of this danger, on a scale so small that it seems almost unbelievable, which remains nevertheless too horrific in scope to be ever allowed to come upon us. To help us turn the 'ship' around, the Cold War story had been designed in such a manner as to bring out the brightness of our humanity in its brightest dimension, unfolding a deeply humanist world with an ever-widening sphere of love. However, the issue of universal love is far wider and more complex than what can be compressed into a single story. It became apparent that an entire series of novels would be required to explore the underlying principle that is reflected in universal love. For this reason the series of novels, *The Lodging for the Rose*, was written. The novel, *Brighter than the Sun*, may be seen as a preface for it.

The series, *The Lodging for the Rose*, has been written to help meet an urgent need, though it rarely focuses on it directly. Ever since the first nuclear bomb has been built and demonstrated, mankind has been tied to a doom that everyone agrees must never come upon us, but for which no solution has yet been found after 60 years of searching. The danger remains today as great as it had been in the mid-1980s when the initial work on the series of novels began. Although the research for the series was slow and the dimension of the challenge almost too 'radical' for one to give a face to it, the work was impelled by the unyielding need to explore the brighter image of humanity that has the potential to out-shine the incredibly ugly face of those 65,000 atom bombs that had been deployed in those days to be used at a moment's notice.

We have far fewer nuclear bombs now, only 20,000 of them, but their face in our human world remains as threatening as ever, even more so now as once again new bombs are being built, installed into new missile systems. The new systems have evidently been devised in the faint hope that it might yet be possible to create a technical solution to avoid the final doom that the nuclear-weapons insanity makes increasingly likely. But, there are no technical solutions possible for a crisis that is not a technical phenom-

anon, which is rooted instead in a deeply human failure that society has refused to deal with for a long time. The failure lies in our shameful inability to love universally, to love the profound humanity that we all share as human beings, which we then close our eyes to in order to avoid having to acknowledge it.

The chorus of those who call out for the nuclear bomb to be used is getting louder today instead of softer. The so-called 'balance' that society had trusted its existence to for decades, which has kept the nukes locked down in their bunkers, is now eroding. We had once found safety in the balance of nuclear threats under a doctrine that we called Mutually Assured Destruction. But in the now unfolding age of asymmetric warfare this precarious 'security' is waning. The hope that we had placed in it is empty, with no substance left. The age of assured mutual destruction is dawning. We find little hope left that we can survive war any longer under the unfolding new circumstances with weapons becoming evermore destructive and the newest of them now threatening the whole of mankind.

Regardless of all this we are still human beings, and as such we are not bound to any promise of doom. As human beings we have the ability create ourselves a way out of this trap. As human beings we are bound first and foremost to the profound humanist potential that is rooted in our humanity, that gives us the power to step away from this 'prison' in which doom is inevitable. We have the potential to step up to a higher level of thinking, and of acting as human beings. History has shown that there exists one profound principle that enables us to do this. This one principle has stood like a great a light in the past whenever mankind's light had gone out and the world had become dark. It is in this principle that we find our hope and our power.

This one principle has no name that one could cite, because it has been given many names by different people in different ages to identify that one something that is profound. However, it seems that it can be described. One might describe it as the Principle of Universal Love. This principle was Plato's principle before the turn of time, or Solon's before him, and the principle of Christianity after him. But all the bright sparks of its unfolding had become lost again in shadow of the overbearing inhumanity of imperial impositions. Only when darkness covered the earth once more so deeply that the epoch became called the Dark Age, when the world couldn't get any blacker, was the light of that principle remembered. It was brought back. The principle became applied, and almost explosively as the result of it a profound renaissance happened.

Actually the profound renaissance, the Golden Renaissance, didn't simply happen. It was created by a process that appears to have begun with the rediscovery of some old manuscripts of Plato that had been brought back into Europe during the period of the Islamic Renaissance. In Europe the rediscovery of the anciently recognized principle of light then set the stage for what became the unfolding Golden Renaissance.

The root of the light of that renaissance was this one principle that always comes to the foreground when the world needs to be rebuilt. The Principle of Universal Love provided the power for this to be accomplished. All roads in the search for a brighter humanity have historically lead to this one principle.

The series of novels, *The Lodging for the Rose*, has been created to explore those numerous paths in which this principle unfolded, but more importantly also those paths that have not yet been trodden. The series is designed to be profoundly daring in its approach and to take the exploration into realms that apparently have not been entered before, or even been attempted in any serious manner. The series is designed to take the Principle of Universal Love all the way to the grassroots level of our social sphere where it is often deemed treason, and where mankind is more deeply divided sexually and by marriage than in any other sphere including the political, ethnic, and religious spheres.

The exploration for the series of novels became a most challenging exercise in bringing the bright historic discoveries and methods of perception to bear on the objective for which the series was required, that of bridging the barriers against the one light that has been seen to some degree in every bright humanist period. Naturally, the exploration also puts great challenges onto the table, but those appear only huge in comparison with the 'smallness' of the currently prevailing thinking that has put us into great danger. This does not mean that the Principle of Universal Love needs to be pursued primarily for political objectives. That would put the cart before the horse. The Principle of Universal Love stands as a principles that gives us freedom and joy in every sphere while love illumines the human scene. Love is its own gem, and is precious for its own sparkle.

Just think how many quadrillions of miles one would have to traverse to the distant places in the universe before one might come upon another civilization of living beings with anywhere near the creativity, culture, beauty, and the productive power to uplift its world that we human beings have developed right here, and with a

vast potential for more that remains still dormant and unrealized. The greatest gem that we know to exist in the universe of life, truly is us. We are its brightest star as far as we can see, with a potential for a future that exceeds even the brightness of the sun. If that isn't something worthy to be loved, what is?

The series, *The Lodging for the Rose*, presents a twelve-part earth-based science fantasy cantered on scientific exploration of the Principle of Universal Love. The storyline unfolds as a multifaceted epic love story with an eye on romance, sexuality, marriage, and even erotic love. Still its focus is always in the context of universal love, the higher principle, unfolding with its own scientific imperatives. On this platform love appears in its natural 'white,' the colour of the sun, a light that imposes no boundaries but illumines the whole world. In cases where the same 'color' extends across two novels, the episodes have been labeled Episode A and Episode B.

The series, *The Lodging for the Rose*, explores the Principle of Universal Love in a world where it is shunned, a world torn by divisions, darkened by isolation, threatened by war and now nuclear war, and as of late by many millions of uranium bombs (DU bombs), which altogether put a big question mark onto mankind's very survival on this planet. Against this background the glow of universal love creates a new paradigm for the political with the challenge that we upgrade our civilization into a powerfully human world, even a world with the kind of strength that will enable us in the near future to maintain our sprawling civilization undeterred by the return of the Ice Age that might happen in possibly a hundred years time.

The suspense in the stories of the novels is not carried by political intrigue as one might expect. Instead it unfolds from the complexities of relationships, marriage, romance, sex, and science, in an environment of an ever-expanding concept of love. Here the political games that unleash imperial wars, violence, and terror are kept in the background. The flow of the novels is powered by unfolding 'intimacies' of love that are not dimmed by long-taught emotions, hatred, fear, or even by the golden cages that we isolate ourselves in socially and politically, contrary to our hopes and desires.

Yes, there is a 'magic' in the love that unfolds from the heart of our humanity that we all share as human beings. Love thus becomes the light of the series of novels where it shines as it must, because we are all, as we always will be, a people "clothed with the sun."

The truth of what we are doesn't change with the winds of circumstances no matter how dim the world may become from time to time as we choose to close our eyes to our own light and cower in fear, 'hiding' from ourselves. Our history has been like that. Its pattern has been that after even the deepest 'night' there emerged always a new 'sunrise.' Today's challenge is to take this pattern of history one step higher and closer to the light, whereby to assure that there won't be any more 'night' there. We have the power to do this. Nor is there any real magic involved in the realization, only love is involved. That is enough.

This book is a 'preliminary' version

The presentation of the novel is essentially complete in its design and function as an exploratory work into the fundamental principles that are of critical importance for upholding our civilization in an evermore dangerously fragile world. Nevertheless some technical aspects require upgrading. The work is planned to be completed in the near future as time allows.

This now puts a choice before me. One option is to put the work on the shelf to gather dust until the last 't' is crossed. The other option is to publish the work as it stands in order that the extensive work already done might benefit a reader who is searching for the kind of unique explorations and discovered principles that the novel presents. This latter option is the one that I have chosen. The work is presented with love in the hope that its light might add to the brightness of your world enrich it to some degree.

Rolf A. F. Witzsche

More works by the Author

Rolf A. F. Witzsche

<http://www.rolf-witzsche.com>

List of novels - focused on universal love

<http://books.rolf-witzsche.com>

Flight Without Limits

(space travel science fiction)

Brighter than the Sun

(the nuclear fire)

The Lodging for the Rose

(spiritual science fiction - a series of novels)

Episode 1 - **Discovering Love**

Episode 2a - **The Ice Age Challenge**

Episode 2b - **Roses at Dawn in an Ice Age World**

Episode 3 - **Winning Without Victory**

Episode 4a - **Seascapes and Sand**

Episode 4b - **The Flat Earth Society**

Episode 5a - **Glass Barriers**

Episode 5b - **Coffee Sex and Biscuits**

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