

THOSE
HEAVENLY WISPS



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I dedicate this book to all my wonderful friends of my former spiritual group in Amstelveen called Gateway and all the friends around it.

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I especially express my gratitude to my husband and friend for life: Jan-Herman without whose help and patience with my projects this book would never have been possible.

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Constance J. Hampton
Amsterdam 2018



I Ching Hexagram 49: The Revolution

Mixed Signs: The Revolution denies a
Status Quo

The opposite is made possible only when
the time is right.

You only become a Chosen One
once you
have earned
the confidence
of the whole of Mankind.

You passwords are:
Order and Clarity.

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AIGUILLE DU MIDI

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She crouched morosely on the icy deck, trying her best to stop her teeth chattering.

God in Heaven, she was cold! Her designer jeans were practically frozen before her buttocks had even touched the icy ground.

She forced herself to stop thinking about the cold. She clutched her head with both hands, feeling as though she had an incurable hangover. Her jaw tingled while the inevitable 'afterwarp' migraine speared its venomous way into her brain.

“Eli, Eli...” she chanted softly.

Her friend Karlijn had taught her that sometimes the chant helped. Her friend who had, for many years, occupied a lonely grave in a cemetery in The Hague. Oh, Karlijn! You reaped the nasty rewards of playing with things you were not ready for...

Lucinda tried to refrain from shivering. That thought was pure arrogance from her

part, she knew. Who was she to judge Karlijn's motives?

The chant had been Jesus' lament on the cross, when he had called upon his Father in Heaven for deliverance. Not that Karlijn had seen more in Jesus than only 'another spiritual guide'. She had been adamant that the meaning of Jesus was no different from Buddha or all the other spirits known world-wide. Lucinda had never known where and with whom Karlijn found her spiritual solace. Karlijn had her own ideas about gods, devils, monks, vampires, and angels.

Lucinda had often despaired about Karlijn's wayward ideas. She had even expressed her concerns to Royal Riek; the woman who she thought was Mary, Jesus' mother, in a distant past life.

"Karlijn will get herself into hot water if she carries on like that!" she had anxiously declared.

Then she had blushed. Who was she to criticize Reiki-master Karlijn? Lucinda was at that time only a newcomer to the

spiritual world of the Rieken, the Karlijns and the Rolandas. She was the youngest present and she was supposed to know nothing! Nothing!

Riek had looked at her in alarm. Lucinda knew that Riek, for one reason or another, always held her in high regard. Riek with her strange antics had always taken Lucinda for who she was: as a newcomer in the spiritual circle of the women, Lucinda was not troubled by 'hang-ups' and prejudices. It made her feel even more of an ugly duckling, although Riek had joked that she was actually the swan among the ducks.

“If she carries on this way she'll become very ill, Riek! Someone should warn her!”

The corners of Riek's mouth, along with her shoulders, drooped.

“Things are as they are, sweetheart. There will not be an easy way back for Karlijn... She knows what you think, of course, but she does what she wants.”

“I hate being right!”

Lucinda had gritted her teeth as the beautiful, gleaming white coffin was slowly

lowered into the deep grave. She had wanted to add a resounding “Goddamn”, but her respect for the universal Great One had grown over the years to extraordinary proportions, now that she knew what she knew, so she prudently kept her sacrilege to herself.

Now, years later, all that was left was Karlijns chant... Eli! Eli! And that chant was derived from the one Great Spirit to whom her heart always seemed to go out to again.

Damn.

He found her huddled against the icy railing.

“Luce?” he asked, concerned.

She grimaced at him through the slits of her eyes.

“Damn, not again, eh?”

He stuffed his big hands into the pockets of his ski jacket.

“Or was it the Chablis?”

She shook her head, while her strange brown eyes tinged with blue, filled with tears.

“I'll send the heli to the middle level,” he said gruffly, “Jean-Paul will pick you up there. I'm going back inside.”

He turned brusquely around, but changed his mind in the same moment. He kneeled beside her, immediately regretting his less than gentle reaction, and kissed her softly on the lips.

She was his star, his lead-star. He always seemed to forget that so quickly of late!

“Your face will freeze at this altitude...” he muttered, catching a tear on his finger.

He smiled at her, joking: “Shouldn't you be used to living in higher planes?”

“I don't know...” she whispered with difficulty. “Those damn warps! I wasn't expecting to have one here, but straight away in the first lift I began to feel so nauseous. I'm sorry, love. I'm simply no longer like most women!”

He chuckled bitterly. Wasn't it true that every advantage has a disadvantage, just like every disadvantage has an advantage?

“Jean-Paul will take you to Geneva. I'll come later!”

“Red high heels later?” she asked innocently.

“Mm, you've given me an idea!” he grinned.

“You'd have to be crazy to come up here in red high heels. Typical!”

Lucinda heard a nasty tone in her otherwise melodious voice.

“Oh, come on now!” he mumbled guiltily, reaching out to help her on her feet.

He supported her to the icy tunnel and beckoned Jean-Paul.

“I had a surprise for you, but it can wait. I'd rather see tears of joy in your eyes than from a headache!”

“Oh,” she replied regretfully, “did I ruin another surprise?”

She stared at his long, straight back as he walked away and heaved a deep sigh. It

was so difficult not to love him to distraction, even when someone else, who was wearing red high heels at 3950 meter altitude, was probably waiting impatiently for him to return to the restaurant. The stupid woman!

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A SHROUD

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I just don't know how you always get things done," she remarked, looking around cautiously.

André shrugged with glistening eyes.

"You know money opens all doors, right? It also works with garage doors in cardinals' basilicas."

He grinned at Lucinda.

"We were driving around and around in very busy traffic and now we're in a multi-story car park that is almost completely empty. And luckily high enough for your doors."

She indicated the lifted doors of André's Ferrari.

"Are you ready?" André asked.

She furrowed her eyebrows.

"You still haven't told me what we're going to do."

"I want you to test something for me."

He turned away from her and walked to the elevator shaft.

“Test something?” she repeated blandly, walking fast to catch up with him on her wobbly Jimmy Choo’s. She hoped she would not sprain an ankle on the damn things, but she knew better now than not succumbing to his fetish for high heeled shoes.

He nodded while he pressed the button for the third floor.

“The Chevaliers have asked me if you can test something for its veracity.”

“Here in the Duomo of John the Baptist?” she asked, “but, that’s... that’s where the Shroud is!”

“Unusually sharp of you!” he laughed, “I believe that we have to go this way. Ah, the cardinal’s secretary himself!”

“Do I have to kiss anyone’s ring?” Lucinda asked uncertainly.

André suppressed another grin.

“Cara did not say anything about kissing rings.”

“Cara?” asked Lucinda, “What does she have to do with the test for the Chevaliers?”

“Nothing,” replied André while they followed the secretary of cardinal Poletto, “but she is the only one in the family who is a practicing catholic and not divorced. She arranged this visit, with the help of an enormous donation, naturally, for repairing the roof of the Shroud Chapel. It was practically destroyed by a fire in 1997. Appropriate, don't you think?”

Lucinda nodded speechlessly. She caught herself thinking that even after six years of marriage to André she was still not used to the power generated by the great fortune of her in-laws and her husband.

“What is also appropriate...,” André opened a door for her and let her pass, “...is that this Duomo is devoted to Saint Andreas.”

He winked at her.

“Where are we going?” she asked, still impressed, as they zoomed up another few floors in an entirely stainless steel elevator.

“To a fireproof vault that was purposely designed after the fire in 1997. The Shroud seems to attract fire. Not a strange thing, as

it's the Devil's element. I think we're there. Shall I leave you alone with it?"

She looked sideways at her husband.

"I know that you're not really a believer, and probably not so acceptable after all your divorces, but I know you're burning with curiosity. Just come along! The guardians of the Shroud are not apt to leave me alone with it, so I don't see why you can't also have a look."

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She stared down at a linen cloth streaked with brown from fire and water damage.

She gripped André's hand tightly.

The guardians of the shroud, a few high-ranking priests, watched her severely. It was forbidden for her to touch anything. The guardians wore white gloves themselves, even though the Shroud lay under tempered glass in a special rectangular chest, and could be mechanically moved in and out of the vault as a whole.

"Oh, my heavens!" she whispered, pressing a hand to her temple.

She felt the warp-migraine and the accompanying sickness coming on.

“Alright, dear?” asked André, holding her by the waist.

“A chair,” she moaned, “I’m having a warp. Oh André, there is no doubt about it! It was His.”

André sat her carefully on a nearby chair. From there Lucinda stared at the rectangular box in rapt fascination. He studied her face unobtrusively. Another warp? She once explained to him that warps were periods that made her hover outside any time-period. Hence the bodily reactions. Which did not make any sense to him at all. Truth be told: nothing ever made sense with Lucinda. He knew of course that was why he had always been attracted to her and always would be.

“What did you mean ‘it was His'?” André asked curiously.

They were back in their suite at the Principi di Piemonte hotel, seated on a comfortable sofa.

Lucinda seemed to be slowly coming out of her last warp-reactions.

“It is... I'm not supposed to tell anyone...” she stammered.

“In the same way that you're not supposed to talk about The Hierarchy?”

There was a hint of mockery in his voice. Lucinda knew that he resented the fact that she withheld some spiritual secrets from him, but some commandments about those secrets were set in stone.

“Apart from that, it's so strange.”

“Nothing human is strange to me!” he quoted, taking her hand.

She lowered her head.

“I was there, you know, in a life with Him.”

He nodded. Gradually, during the years of their marriage, she had taught him about reincarnation and her firm, deeply-rooted ideas about it.

“Don't tell me that you were Mary Magdalene in a former life!”

She laughed half-heartedly.

“No, not Mary Magdalene. Someone else. I believe without a doubt that I knew Him in His life on Earth. I felt His presence still in that cloth. No wonder that Hitler wanted it!”

“What did Hitler want with the ultimate artifact of Christendom?” André asked. “As far as I knew, he loved everything Aryan and all that was rooted in Norse and Celtic myths.”

“He also stole the Lance. Maybe he believed that the artifacts would make him invincible. He was enormously superstitious. Why did you want me to see the Shroud?”

Lucinda was happy to find that she was slowly starting to feel better.

“The Chevaliers appreciate your judgment, you know that. If we ever accept a woman into our midst, you are likely to be the first. Be that as it may: we have received an offer to test the recent discovery of a different artifact. In all probability it's Celtic, but it takes months to properly test authenticity and we want to

buy it quickly if it's real. It is a large golden cauldron. Some people think that it's the Grail, but it seems more likely to be the Cauldron of Abundance created by the Celts.”

“Oh!”

Lucinda clutched at her head again.

“Great God, André, are you doing it on purpose?”

He kneeled in front of the sofa and took her head in both hands.

“Does this reaction mean it's real?”

She barely managed to shake her head.

“No,” she ground out, “a warp... again!”

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CHIEMSEE

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The woman pulled on the collar of her mink fur coat. It was freezing cold and she regretted that she had not thought to put on a warm woolen scarf to protect her face. Everyone knew that fur coats weren't made to keep the wearer warm, due to their unfortunate fashion design, but to show that one had status.

She peered along the stone wall of the hidden boathouse and saw that Hans was straining under the weight of the large cardboard box.

“Hans!” she called softly, “I'm here. Put that thing in the boat. Quickly!”

Hans threw her a quick look.

“Nearly done, ma'am.”

He carefully placed the huge box in the front of the rowing boat.

“On the bow, Hans, then I can handle it more easily!” she urged her loyal butler.

“I'm going with you!” Hans put determination in his voice.

He was not going to let his seventy year old employer row all alone on an ice cold lake in the middle of the night.

“Hans, I don't want you to know anything about what I'm up to. It is much too dangerous!”

Hans clenched his jaw shut. He was not going to stand there and argue with her. He was already far in over his head, so what difference would this last trip at the Chiemsee make?

He shook his head.

“Two can do this better than one, ma'am.”

“If he ever finds out that I dumped it here with your help, we will die a gruesome death!” she warned him.

“Why is that thing so important to you?” Hans asked.

She laughed bitterly.

“That thing only interests me because he values it so. He told me himself, that bloody murderer!”

Hans tried to suppress a shudder. No one, absolutely no one, dared to speak about the Führer in such a fashion.

She gazed suddenly at the path where the DKW, borrowed from the gardener, was parked. Had she heard someone?

“Quickly!” she commanded.

They could argue later about her reasons for sending Hitler into a fit he would not easily come out of. Ah, she knew the villain so well! Some justice would be served!

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RETURN TO BERLIN (1943)

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I Ching hexagram 41: The Sacrifice

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Mixed Signs:

Only after Death through Sacrifice will
there be room for the Blooming into a New
Life.

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Evil shows itself
High as a mountain
While the Heart drowns
In the depths of the Black Waters
the Soul soars.

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She had to walk the entire way from Wannsee to Monbijou. There hadn't ever been a good connection between Wannsee and the neighborhood of villas where her grandma lived; for the simple reason that none of the villas' owners ever had to use public transport.

To her enormous disappointment Hans hadn't been waiting at the Friedrichstrasse station with the car. She had searched between the remains of the roof of the big station and the bombed streets, but Hans, grandma's legendary butler and chauffeur, was nowhere to be found. She had wondered if her telegram, sent before she boarded the train in Travemünde, had been delivered at all.

Grandma's house was situated in a corner of the stately section of Grunewald. It had indeed been best to get off at Wannsee, but that didn't mean that she didn't have to walk quite a distance to get to the gate of the villa.

She counted herself lucky that there was still a connection from Friedrichstrasse to

Wannsee as so many Allied Forces' bombs had fallen on Berlin recently.

Grandma's father, great-grandfather Friedman, had the villa built in Grunewald after he'd become rich from investing heavily in the German steel industry of the Ruhr Area. Lisa remembered him as an almost comical, mustached, somber, and domineering man who always walked around dressed in a black long-tailed suit. He was always very dignified, his only known extravagance being his marriage to Elisa Meyer, the beautiful Jewish daughter of Eli Meyer, the "dealer in everything, but mainly gold."

Sarah Friedman, her grandma, was their only daughter, much to the chagrin of great-grandfather Rudolf Friedman, because he'd never had a son to inherit his great empire. He had been unimaginably and unwaveringly patriarchal. As far as he was concerned, Grandma was there to behave and be obedient.

Grandma Sarah was never really bothered by her domineering father. She had even

dared to marry the handsome blond Dutchman Thomas Vellinga, with whom she had fallen deeply and irrevocably in love when he visited her father for business in Berlin. Thomas was an unruly Dutchman, who lived far away from Berlin in Rotterdam. When he died at fifty-nine Grandma Sarah returned to her parental house 'Monbijou' in Grunewald. Her daughter Elisabeth, at that time already married to the ship-owner Jan Voerman, stayed in Rotterdam, with her two children Lisa and Hans.

Lisa put the suitcase down to change hands. She sighed dejectedly. The whole journey from Travemünde to Berlin had been decidedly difficult.

Grandma had sent her to a distantly related German cousin on her father's side when the first Allied bombs started to fall on Berlin.

Grandma had asked her to come to Berlin in 1939, for the chance to have a come-out in the German high circles. Grandma's

timing seemed in a way perfect: the Germans conquered Rotterdam in 1940 and since the bombing the city was reportedly still in chaos. The city underwent hard times, not least because of the frequent abduction of workers for the German Arbeitseinsatz, Adolph Hitler's slave work force.

Lisa's parents, who realized what it would mean for a girl to have a Jewish grandmother and a German grandfather in those times, were happy that Grandma wanted to have her with her in Berlin.

Her father's shipping company had been sitting idle in 1939 due to lack of orders. Father was at least wealthy enough to maintain their household in their Kralingen villa, until eager Germans confiscated the house in 1940. Father, Mother and Hans had been forced to take refuge in IJsselmonde, where their uncle Dirk Voerman owned several small houses for his laborers.

It was a somewhat difficult transition from the spacious villa to a small house

consisting of only three rooms, but Lisa's parents counted themselves lucky with their new house.

Jan Voerman was happy that he had never boasted about the German origins of his wife, due to the fact that he had married her only two years after the end of the First World War. The Dutch, despite their neutrality in that war, quickly stopped being very impressed with anything German. If anyone wondered about his wife's slight accent, he told them she came from Limburg: people there speak a mix of German and Dutch.

Uncle Dirk let his brother the small laborers-house, but he always remained nervous about it. His sister-in-law was admittedly only a quarter Jewish, but according to the Jewish laws she was considered to be fully Jewish because being Jewish is determined through the female line of descent. What's more, Lisa's mother's parents were definitely German. In the occupied Dutch Provinces nothing could be worse during the Second World

War. Elisabeth's mother had stopped practicing the Jewish faith a long time ago. The day Elisa Meyer married Rudolf Friedman she did away with the Torah and all of its complicated and restrictive rules. Her father Eli had watched those developments with sorrow, but since the death of Sarah's mother there was no dealing with Elisa on the subject.

The financially beneficial marriage came as a gift from heaven for Eli, and when the Jewish community began to exclude him he considered it with characteristic Jewish resignation.

“Oh yes, a daughter with an unfortunately stubborn mind! These children with their modern ideas...” he tended to complain to Rabbi Pratzman. He would then provide the synagogue with a sum of money, not too much, but enough to pacify the Jewish council. Of course, the situation caused him some pain in his heart: a Jew should always be a Jew!

The population of IJsselmonde didn't cooperate wholeheartedly either. In those

dangerous times every ‘new’ family was viewed with suspicion, especially a family that came to live in the Mosermans’ house. The Mosermans had been put into a German truck one night and were never seen again. Everyone in IJsselmonde harbored suspicions about the fate of the Moserman family, but they refrained from speaking them aloud. Whatever might have happened to the Moserman family caused pity, but also fear. With the Germans you never knew. People knew too much about preferential treatment and betrayal. How brave can one remain if you have kids to keep alive while your husband is gone; in hiding or taken away for the Einsatz somewhere in Germany or beyond?

Elisabeth was seen as an outsider in IJsselmonde and the story of her origins in Limburg was only half believed. No, it was better to stay out of the way of the Voerman family, even if they were somehow related to the family who provided half of IJsselmonde their livelihood.

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Lisa had been anxious during her journey, but fortunately inspections along the route had not been frequent. For the benefit of any prying interrogators, Lisa had concocted a story that she was travelling to Grunewald to work there as a housekeeper. Everyone should be able to understand that the grand old lady of the family of Friedmann Stahl needed the caring company of a spry young and active woman. Fortunately, neither Lisa's surname Voerman nor Grandma's name Vellinga-Friedman aroused any suspicion among the conductors and other train-inspectors.

Naturally, mother Elisabeth had never found it necessary to adorn her clothes with the yellow and black Star of David. She already was a quarter Jewish against her will, and her children, in her opinion, had nothing at all to do with it. Moreover her own mother was, according to the new German law, a 'Halbjude' and therefore not governed by the same rules as the

'Volljuden', especially because she had entered into a so-called 'mixed marriage'.

Apart from her beauty, Elisabeth had also inherited the good sense of her mother and grandmother, and her decision about the Jewish star always filled her with a sense of righteousness. Lisa drew another sort of attention during her journey that had nothing to do with being Jewish or not: she was inordinately attractive. Apart from that: most Germans were too busy with the news of their Führer's wars, the Allied bombings, and the mobilization for Russia, - where the battle for Stalingrad had begun at the start of the year and was seemingly quickly turning into a disaster for their admired leader.

Lisa remembered how sad her mother had looked when she had eagerly taken up her Grandmother's offer to come over in 1939. Lisa had just turned eighteen and she hadn't yet attached herself to any boy in the Netherlands.

The Dutch boys in Kralingen, who were eligible enough in mother Elisabeth's eyes

to be allowed to come and court her daughter, had something else on their minds when it seemed that a full scale war might be looming. There was always the nagging factor of Lisa's German origins. No, Lisa most likely had nothing to lose by trying her luck in Berlin. Being half-Dutch in Berlin was always a better combination than half-German in Holland!

During her train journey, Lisa had looked anxiously at the sky. The Allied bombardment of the German ports and the Ruhr Area were daily occurrences. She could only pray and hope that her train would not be hit by a bomb.

It was an unpleasant surprise for Lisa that she couldn't find Hans with Grandma's black Adler at the Friedrichstrasse Station. She had been forced to find out at what time the urban train to Wannsee departed and discovered to her chagrin that the offered timetable did not exactly correspond with reality. Although she had arrived at the station at half past one, it was

late in the afternoon by the time she was able to secure a place on the tramway of the South line.

After Lisa had turned down the wrong street for the third time, she put her suitcase down in the grass of the large oak- and linden-tree-planted avenue. Panting slightly, she sat on her suitcase and fiddled with her low black pumps, which, due to the scarcity of the war, she had been wearing for almost two years. She decided to take off her headscarf and shook out her full red-brown locks, which danced over her shoulders. She reached into her black leather handbag for her powder compact box with mirror. In the mirror a slightly sweaty and tired face gazed at her. Small pearls of sweat beaded above her full, rosy red lips. Summer had come early this year and it was an unusually warm May evening. There she sat, somewhere in the middle of Germany, a country that was at war with her own, while it was also the home of her ancestors. She was twenty-one

years old since April 25, 1943, which was only a week ago. She narrowed her grey eyes against the still abundant rays of the setting sun. She would like to take off her heavy, lined raincoat, but that would mean she would have to carry it on her arm. She decided that it would be best to keep it on and rose stiffly.

Lisa had always been a little plump, but the time in Travemünde had not been a stay of milk and honey. There had been food to eat, but she had not been able to indulge in such luxuries as candy and sweets. Her plumpness had disappeared like snow in the sun. Her love for rowing on ‘das Meer’ had given her a long muscularity that definitely looked good on her. It was not really in keeping with the fashion of the time, but who would think of fashion-trends in a country at war anyway?

She swiped her grey pleated skirt and resumed her journey with a sigh. If only she was already there...

The fat man with the heavy double chins delightedly tapped his cigar while speaking into the telephone's mouth-piece.

“So, you found the damned old Jew?” he shouted into the phone. “Her servant too? What, resistance? What was that idiot thinking? Huh? Beaten up? What do I care about his Aryan appearance? Huh..? Well, it's entirely up to you... Just put that Friedman on a transport, and do it immediately! And the house? Well done, the Stadtscommandatur will be proud of you!”

Pleased, he put the phone back on the hook. He laughed harshly and could not resist rubbing his fat hands together.

“Right, Sarah Friedman,” he muttered, “that was just between you and me!”

He sank into deep thought. He had always known that there was something amiss about the origins of the Friedman family. But, as long as he harbored hope of an alliance with Sarah Friedman and her fortune, her secret had been safe with him. Ten years ago Sarah Vellinga, born

Friedman, had moved heaven and earth to get into the archives of the municipal administration of Berlin in order to falsify her mother's civil status. Her falsifications had in the end not been necessary: the records were destroyed during a recent bombing.

And let's face it, he thought with a grin, everyone knew about Rudolf Friedman. The press covered that marriage extensively more than sixty years ago. Romantic nonsense, of course! That Jewish Meijer-bitch had steel magnate Friedman by more than his hair. You only had to look through the old newspapers to find out about her Jewish background.

She must have thought she was safe, the tramp...

Bitterness welled up within him when he remembered the humiliating way in which Sarah had responded to his proposal. It had been a few weeks ago at a splendid dinner at the State Chancellery, with all the highest-ranking SS officers. It had been difficult enough to get her to attend it - she

rarely accepted such invitations. And then she had been chatting for hours with a guy from Grüppentransport, an almost nobody in a room full of people who shone like diamonds. All of the Reichsicherheits Hauptamt's highest officers had been there, for God's sake.

She had laughed when he had found the courage to ask her. She had screamed with laughter!

“Not if you were the last man on earth,” she'd said, “I'd rather take a woman!”

Oh my God, the memory!

He leaned far back in his wood-and-leather desk chair.

Power is so delicious! One phone call from him to the Juden-Referat of the Gestapo and Sarah Friedman's time on this Earth would be up. It had been a great idea to shadow all she was doing. She'd almost escaped him in that car she borrowed from that gardener. God knows what business she had, going to that Chiemsee, but he had managed to have her dragged away from that spot, together with her Aryan butler!

Tomorrow he would inspect that house. From now on it would be his house, with everything in it. He could hardly wait, but if he went today he might raise suspicions.

Who distributed everything at the Vermögensverwaltung again? Karl Guttman?

He grinned when he heard Guttman's measured voice on the phone.

"Hi Karl," he shouted into the mouth-piece, "I just need to know something, my friend. On which list is that Jew Friedman's house? I want to bid on it!"

He felt hot anger when Guttman replied that he didn't happen to have that list and that he would ask his secretary to find it for Herr Doctor Meister Lowenau.

"Dammit, Guttman, you must know how urgently bids have to be placed?"

He almost spat into the phone. He, the Staatsanwalt of Berlin, and then to get such answers!

The following remark almost caused him a heart-attack.

“Herr Doctor Meister, the house has been recovered by the housing department of the Reich Chancellery...”

Guttman deliberately paused after that remark. Giving Herr Doctor Meister Lowenau, Staatsanwalt of Berlin, the deception of his life was something to be savored.

With the “What did you say?” from Lowenau, Guttman almost chuckled his reply: “Herr General Heinz Guderian, of Germany's second cavalry division of the Wehrmacht, will need the house when he stays in Berlin, when he is home in between battles.”

He further deigned to explain that the Führer himself had so decreed. Guderian's nephew, who is a housing officer and quartermaster for the troops section of Berlin-Spandau, would go over there as soon as possible to sort things out.

Herr Doctor Meister Lowenau's phone barely survived the force with which it was slammed down.

Grunewald was at least peaceful and rustic. Villas were scattered along the main road that led through Berlin's admired villa area. She lost her way a few times in the long avenues that all looked the same to her, but eventually she reached the imposing wrought-iron gates of Grandma's house.

Great-grandmother Elisa had known what she wanted when she persuaded Rudolf Friedman to build a house in posh Grunewald. The Berlin high society resided there after all, as well as the wealthier members of the Prussian aristocracy who wanted to have their pied-a-terre in Berlin. Elisa had turned the residents of the neighborhood against her by naming her house Monbijou, after the old demolished city castle Monbijou of Frederik the Great, (such arrogance!) but Elisa Friedman had been as stubborn as she was beautiful, and for many years she was the leader of the 'cliques and chic' of Grunewald.

It took a while before they reacted to her insistent ringing of the front door bell.

She had finally recognized the gates of Monbijou down one of the many avenues of Grunewald. The whole area had been miraculously spared from the bombing of the allied planes. Few villas showed signs of destruction. To her surprise, the beautiful wrought-iron gates with their Renaissance curls were wide open and Grandma's Adler was carelessly parked by the center flowerbed of the front garden.

She wasn't surprised to see the two official-looking black cars with Nazi flags on the side. For years Grandma had tried to find her balance in a rapidly changing Germany and in Grunewald you always drew a lot of attention; sometimes you had to howl along with the wolves in the forest.

Still, Lisa felt sudden apprehension. She looked around her with intuitive suspicion before hesitantly ringing the doorbell.

She was unprepared for the young German non-commissioned officer who opened the door.

He looked her up and down and then said haughtily: “What?”

“I uh... Frau Friedman is expecting me...” she stammered, uncertain.

Why did Hans not answer the door, or Sofia, the bell girl?

“Umm...” the young man thought deeply for a moment, sucking on irregular teeth.

“Come inside then, Miss!” he decided.

He looked appreciatively at the red-haired beauty in front of him. He had seen many beautiful girls in Berlin, but this one took the cake in his opinion. He wondered absently where in Germany her accent was spoken.

Lisa turned bright red when she noticed the way he stared at her. She hesitated for a moment and then followed him into the hallway. Her suitcase was left standing in the doorway as the young man did not take it inside for her.

Lisa's eyes widened: Grandma's usually tidy hall was in chaos. In the vestibule coats were thrown in a heap on the floor and the long Persian carpet lay curled in a strange

arc, as if someone had lifted it and then thrown it down again.

There was no sign of Grandma, Hans or Sofia.

Lisa stopped abruptly.

The young corporal turned around and frowned at her. Lisa looked coolly at him. He looked no older than twenty. He had a pleasant face, with almost comic traits, which was caused by his pointed chin, slightly slanted eyes and curly hair, which peeked out from under his Wehrmacht cap.

“Fräulein.?”

“I uh...”

Lisa hated to show him her uncertainty.

“I am here for Frau Friedman. She wants me to work for her.”

Thumping sounded on the stairs.

“What is it, Rolf?” asked a cheerful voice.

An officer leaned over the upstairs railing and looked down on the young woman with open interest.

“A visitor, apparently, Herr Untersturmbannführer!” Rolf responded while he jumped to attention.

“Himmel!” the officer replied. “What a nice find, Rolf. Why are you here, Fräulein?”

Without waiting for a reply he suddenly said: “Take her to the side study in the hall, before the Gestapo feels compelled to interrogate her. And you both; keep your mouths shut!”

Rolf nodded and pushed Lisa into a small antechamber, opposite the stairs.

“Wait here Fräulein and make as little noise as possible! Those Gestapo men are a bunch of maniacs who might make things very unpleasant for you.”

Whispering, he added: “It would be better to talk to my boss, than to them.”

Bewildered, Lisa slumped down onto a chair in the antechamber. The little space was a mess: the curtains were ripped from the walls and paintings lay in a heap in the corner of the room.

She had to keep her teeth from chattering at the remark that the Gestapo were in the house. Who had not heard the dark stories of that secret police force, who apparently

could dictate life and death in Hitler's new Reich? They were mainly concerned with espionage and... Jews. Lisa wondered if the Gestapo was in the house for that reason: because her Grandma was half Jewish. But Grandma had been safe! She was the widow of a Dutchman of Aryan appearance and Frisian origin. She was supposed to be a Halbjudin, an enormously rich one as well. Grandma used to say that the advantage of money was that it opened all doors and closed all mouths.

Lisa bit thoughtfully on a lip. All in all she'd have to be very careful...

Rolf was still looking at her.

“Fräulein stay here until they're gone. They're searching the upper floors of the house for eh... crimes against the German Reich.”

His look seemed to transfer a warning to her.

“The Untersturmbannführer and I are here on orders from the Reich Chancellery. The Wealth police started to clean out the house, but now the orders are changed,

because someone else has to come and live here by order of the Führer himself. It is a famous general.”

In a confidential tone, he added: “It is coincidentally the uncle of the Untersturmbannführer!”

“Crimes against the Reich?”

Lisa turned white.

“Frau Friedman?”

“She hid the fact that she was Jewish.” Rolf said curtly. His training with the Hitler Jugend and then with the Wehrmacht had always been focused on hatred for the Jewish population.

“It would be better if you had nothing to do with her, Fräulein.”

He stated it with concern, but also menace. Lisa's beauty made him milder than normal, but the idea that she might have something to do with the Jewess filled him with aversion.

“N... No...” stammered Lisa.

She knew she had to think hard.

“Frau Friedman hired me for her household. Uh... my mother worked for her

when she was still living in Rotterdam. Frau Friedman felt alone and she was helpless...”

She realized that the latter wasn't so smart to say to a boy who had learned to despise Jews.

“I'm going to talk to the Unterstürmbannführer,” concluded Rolf after thinking hard.

He knew his young boss would get to the bottom of things and to deliver a girl, and such a good looking one, into the hands of the Gestapo just because she had rung the bell of a front door at an unfortunate time, was going too far for Rolf.

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Kaj Guderian scrutinized Lisa harshly.

He had immediately gone to the antechamber after his unfriendly colleagues from the Gestapo had left.

Lisa was still shivering after hearing the Gestapo pass by the little room where she'd been hiding from them.

“My Hauptscharführer tells me that you came here as a housekeeper for the Jewess,” he said sharply.

Lisa was startled by the threatening tone in his voice.

“There wasn't anything much left to eat in Travemünde,” she said weakly. “They gave me a chance...”

“What,” asked Kaj harshly, “to make Jewish food?”

Lisa protested feebly.

“No, no, to care for her! I am sure she had a cook or some such? Nobody ever mentioned Jewish food. I did not even know she was Jewish!”

She blushed as she gave those answers to the officer.

Forgive me, grandma, she thought helplessly.

The Untersturmbannführer frowned.

“Do you know how to cook and manage a household? Even in a big house like this?”

When she nodded, his attitude changed.

“Nah, Liebchen,” he said suddenly, most definitely in a better mood, “then you can

prepare a meal for us now and work temporarily for the Wehrmacht.”

He laughed when he saw the stunned expression on her face.

That night Lisa lost her virginity to Kaj Guderian, Untersturmbannführer in the Wehrmacht.

He had unceremoniously taken possession of her. He had brazenly stepped into her room and positioned himself on her bed, holding her down with one arm. Lisa had chosen one of the largest rooms in the servant's quarters of the house.

She understood completely that he was doing exactly what he had planned to do with her from the first moment he had seen her. She had only resisted him when he began his rapid invasion into her maiden body, which caused her a sharp pain. When he did not let off she tried to cope and noticed that the pain gradually disappeared.

It surprised Kaj that she had still been a virgin.

“So, my Liebchen, I'm the first, am I not?” he gloated afterwards, while he lit a cigarette.

After that first time he treated her with gentleness. Apparently she had managed to win him over with her innocence. She became his mistress: he gave her little housework to do because he had summoned the staff of the Intendance of Spandau.

She now only had to endure him in her bed, often several times a day.

The twenty-four-year-old Kaj Guderian was the only nephew of Heinz Guderian, General of a cavalry division of the Wehrmacht. Kaj got instructions to prepare the Friedman house for the arrival of his uncle. Because he had suffered dysentery during his training with the cavalry, he had been temporarily placed at the Dienst Haushaltung. In the course of the wars that led Hitler to conquer surrounding countries, this proved to be an easy job and a welcome solution for a young man who valued his life in times of war. On the other hand he started to resent his job, especially

as his uncle had a shining military career to show off and had even become a confidant of no one else but the Führer himself. Kaj did not even care to explain the non-existent rigors of his job to his friends.

Kaj hoped that a reunion with his uncle would bring something beneficial his way; German officers had died in droves in the battle of Stalingrad and with a bit of luck a place alongside his uncle seemed entirely plausible.

Meanwhile, he enjoyed staying in the luxurious villa in Grunewald as he normally had to live in rented rooms in Spandau where most of the Berlin barracks were situated. Life in Spandau was not really bad, although due to Hitler's bloody wars the number of his friends there was rapidly decreasing. A lot of officers lived in Spandau with its numerous bars and brothels for evening entertainment.

Kaj had always had a lighthearted approach to life. He had a semi-aristocratic Prussian background. If it had not been for Hitler's hunger for wars, his parents would

have probably had him study at one of the country's famous universities. Now he was a career officer like his father's brother and he never worried about anything. The girl, who had just been thrown into his lap, with her gorgeous chestnut-red hair and blue eyes, enchanted him. She must have the most beautiful legs and breasts in the district.

He liked to teach her how to please him. Little Lisa wasn't as averse to having sex with him as she had shown that first night. It didn't matter a whit to him whether she did it out of fear or self-preservation.

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Lisa ultimately had to force herself not to sink into a deep depression. She was afraid that Grandma Sarah had fallen into the hands of the Gestapo, not just because she was half-Jewish but also because she was the sole heir of a gigantic fortune. She was convinced that the SS would certainly know how to find ways to take all Grandma's possessions away from her. She shuddered when she remembered hearing

of the acts the SS had implemented to completely destroy Grandma. She knew also that she was powerless against them. She considered fearfully that she was glad that she had a roof over her head in Berlin, even if it meant that she had to share her bed with Kaj Guderian. She knew by now that she should definitely hide any and all evidence that she was one of the heirs of Sarah Friedman's golden legacy.

In the day-time her terrible longing for her parents and her brother in Rotterdam haunted her. She felt like screaming when she remembered the distance between her and her beloved family. She nurtured, morosely, very few illusions that she would ever see them again. Lisa hoped that she could escape whatever dire fate might await her as long as Kaj used her as the object of his lust. In a matter of days she had changed from an innocent pampered girl into a woman trying to maintain herself in a crazy world. She at last understood what men desired when they eyed a beautiful woman and came to realize that she could

use her sexuality as a weapon in her struggle for survival.

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A noise at her bedroom door startled her out of her ruminations. She was sitting on the chair beside her bed when Kaj entered her bedroom. Lisa saw that he was not in the best of moods.

Kaj immediately put his hand under her skirt and looked angry when he discovered that she had put on her panties.

“Verdammtes Weib! I told you that you have to be ready for me, every hour of the day!”

“I'm not some whore!” she replied angrily.

“Hah...” sneered Kaj.

He tore her panties off with a heavy tug, rolled her onto the bed and thrust himself roughly inside her.

“Dirty whore...” he ground out, “Nasty bitch slave...”

His grunted words didn't shock her anymore. Rather, it embarrassed her that she felt a deep sense of excitement and at

the same time an immense sense of power. She, Lisa Voerman, alone in a crazy world, in a changing city, had Kaj Guderian in her power: she was not the slave, he was – a slave to his own lusts.

“You're going to go a long way, Lisa Voerman!” she promised herself, closing her eyes at the delight of the orgasm that was suddenly taking possession of her.

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