

2. Living in USA

It did not take long before Reverend Jennings and I got on the subject of the war, politics and trying to understand all that had happened, during my weekly, and often bi weekly, visits with him. One of the earliest subjects I remember him telling me about in some detail, was the long reign of Roosevelt, specifically his 3rd re-election, which the Reverend considered very unfortunate.

“In 1940, Harry Truman opposed the re election of Roosevelt”, the Reverend told me, and he went on: “There is no indispensable man in a democracy. When a republic comes to a point where a man is indispensable, then we have a Caesar. I do not believe that the fate of the nation should depend upon the life or health or welfare of any one man. This was written by Truman in 1940, and he did not know how right he was!”, the Reverend said.

He went on to explain, how Roosevelt, in many ways, was a spent force by 1940, who did not have the full energy and wherewithal to lead, as the country needed by then. Among other things, the Reverend told me, this led to the absurd delegation of responsibilities to Hopkins, beyond all rhyme and reason; a man the Reverend considered unqualified for the duties and incumbency entrusted to him.

Hopkins was a young ambitious social worker, who had been useful to Roosevelt for many years, who in turn had provided Hopkins with positions and responsibilities, which gave him the opportunities, as it were, “to learn on the job”. Through the 1930s, he was Roosevelt’s primary jack-of-all-trades and factotum, N.Y. State Relief Administrator 1931, same position federally 1933, Works Progress Administrator 1935-38, Secretary of Commerce 1938-40, in addition and concurrently, speechwriter, confidant and close personal friend of Roosevelt, but it was never an equal relationship of course.

Hopkins suffered from chronic digestive problems and the inability to absorb nutrients properly. In addition, he was a chain smoker and exposed those around him to heavy loads of second hand smoke. In 1940 he fell seriously ill, and since he continued to work during recuperation, Roosevelt moved him into the White House, where he lived as the president’s guest for the next 3 years.

Reverend Jennings felt, there was a particular bond between these two men, because they both suffered from distinct physical handicaps; Roosevelt being a paraplegic and Hopkins getting steadily worse and suffering with his ailments, which killed him at a young age.

Once Hopkins had been installed in the White House, and Roosevelt started to use him as his personal emissary on visits to Britain and Russia and top level negotiations with Churchill and Stalin, reporters and commentators started to refer to him as the Deputy President of USA. It was unprecedented, and not popular. There was a general feeling, any number of other members of the administration would have been better suited.

Certainly there had been presidential emissaries in past, such as Woodrow Wilson’s

Colonel House, and Theodore Roosevelt's William Howard Taft, but Colonel House was never more than just an ambassador-at-large, and Taft was after all a cabinet secretary at the time. There is little doubt, Hopkins in fact filled a position, and in some respects, acted as a second in command, but it was Roosevelt's wish and choice, and Roosevelt made enormous demands of Hopkins.

"We can't blame Hopkins for this unusual working relationship. It was entirely Roosevelt's doing", the Reverend told me. "What bothers me, and always will", he continued, "is the fact, these two men, between them, made decisions, and cooked up policy, which the rest of the cabinet, let alone Congress and the rest of the country, had no say in. And Roosevelt then proceeded to use Hopkins to implement these ideas and decisions. First of all, the commitment to Churchill and Britain, carried into effect by Hopkins, who spent a lot of time with Churchill and in the U.K. Subsequently, the dire and disastrous whim and whimsy, of throwing our lot in with Stalin."

Reverend Jennings literally rolled his eyes, whenever he went over this detail of recent American history, which he did a number of times, that I remember. He then would continue: "Roosevelt chose to commit us to Stalin's cause, prodded by Churchill and Hopkins, with astonishingly little evaluation and deliberation. The whole of the country should have been consulted, certainly every elected politician at the very least. It was a dreadful decision. We are going to have to live with the consequences for generations."

On one occasion, he read something for me, which Truman has been quoted as stating at the time, when Hitler launched his disastrous crusade against the Bolsheviks in the summer of 1941: "If we see that Germany is winning we ought to help Russia, and if Russia is winning we ought to help Germany, and that way let them kill as many as possible, although I don't want to see Hitler victorious under any circumstances."

"That should have been our policy," Reverend Jennings said. "Unfortunately," he went on: "Roosevelt was re elected for a third term, simply because he enjoyed being president, and the electorate was reluctant to change administration in the middle of WWII. By then he was already exhausted, a spent force, and he let Churchill, seconded by Hopkins, drag us into this deferential relationship with Stalin, where we ended up helping pay for and fight Stalin's march into Europe for him. Eventually, I expect, Roosevelt and Churchill will be seen and realized, to have been the two greatest dupes and chumps in recorded history. If, for example, Truman had been president, it is easy to see, how different the outcome would have been."

Later I learned, the last several years of Roosevelt's life, had actually been rather lonely. His marriage had for all intents and purposes ended, because for years he had been in love with some one else, and he and Eleanor were merely working partners and friends. There had been no cohabitation for a long time. When Roosevelt moved the recuperating Hopkins into the White House, it served the purpose as well to provide the lonely president with company and companionship for a few years.

My own reading of this part of WWII history, specifically concerning Hopkins, is that he in fact was a deft administrator during the 1930s, who participated ably in Roosevelt's New

Deal and its implementation; then during the 3rd Roosevelt administration was thrust into the predicament of stand in for the tired and subsequently ailing president, who simply passed more and more of his own burdens on to Hopkins. It did not take long before the leaders in Britain and Russia knew, this was the man they had to deal with.

Eventually, like so many others, Stalin appeared to have succeeded in snaring Hopkins, to the extent he would do almost anything in his power to please Stalin. So far, nothing specific has been suggested, but it is almost certain they somehow got to him. At one point, he tried to ship extremely critical uranium to Russia, suitable only for nuclear atomic purposes. On another occasion, he tried to get a defected Russian returned to Stalin and Beria and certain death. These are the acts of someone compromised.

Hopkins' private life and personal conduct does not impress. He married a nice Jewish girl and fellow social worker at the age of 23, but soon relegated her to child bearing and domesticity, while he travelled far and wide and nurtured his own ambitions, penchant for high stakes poker, nightclubbing and horse racing. There is little doubt, he availed himself of relations outside of marriage fairly early on, but Ethel Gross, his wife, only finally obtained divorce in 1931, on the grounds of infidelity. The courts awarded her and the children half of his salary in alimony.

He promptly married a second time, but then found himself in dire financial straits, in order to pay alimony, finance the new household, maintain his costly habits and all on the relatively modest civil service salary of the day. He was successful in nurturing and maintaining friendships with moneyed and influential people, and a number of schemes were organized to provide Hopkins with sufficient income.

One of these arrangements involved docking very modestly paid welfare workers a certain amount, ostensibly to pay Hopkins for "lectures". This contemptible scheme went on for a couple of years in the mid 1930s and netted him \$ 2000 / year. There were other "Hopkins Aid" machinations, providing \$ 5000 / year, such as titular head of Roosevelt's library, magazine articles being written in his name, etc. Meanwhile, Hopkins was, among other things, playing high stakes poker, and losing \$ 500 to \$ 600 a night, hanging out in some of the raciest nightclubs in Washington and New York, and clubbing with millionaire friends. Based on my information about how foreign visitors were handled and duped in Russia in the 1940s, it would have been a cake walk for Stalin and Beria to blackmail an individual like Hopkins.

Hopkins' second wife died of lung cancer within just 6 years of their marriage, no doubt helped along with his incessant cigarette smoking and the second hand smoke he subjected her to. After a few years, he married for a third time, but finally died, within less than a year of Roosevelt's passing, in January 1946. In sum total, it is my personal feeling, and I cannot deny my bias, this is one political operator USA could have done better without. Slowly, I was gaining an understanding of how the forces, that had been joined against Germany, had interacted, and how Stalin had hoodwinked them all. Much later, I was to learn, Theodore Roosevelt, a half century earlier, always had disliked and distrusted Russia and Russians and had rooted for Japan during the Russo-Japanese war. Such is life and

history.

During October, it occurred to me, Lee in all likelihood must have been spending much more time with his friends, particularly his two close friends Jack and Gary, and that my presence now might have caused some kind of dislocation in their happy fellowship. This was as much based on all Lee told me from time to time about their past times and various activities. And Lee admitted as much, but claimed, for now, he wanted to spend as much time as possible just with me, because he loved me so much, and our marriage, after all was such a novelty and so forth.

We would have these conversations with increasing frequency, because the subject was kind of bothering me a little, and I could not help feeling, I might be completely taking the place of Lee's good friends, which I did not think was healthy or fair and made me feel guilty as well. So, for example, I would say to him:

"Can't we have Jack and Gary over one evening for a beer or whatever. Perhaps we could play cards or something ?"

Lee would look at me, with a kind of here she goes again look, before he would answer: "Yeah, I guess we could, but Gary is kind of pre-occupied with his girl friend right now", or: "Right now, they are very tied up with college football", or whatever. There would always be some lame excuse. Then, it started to occur to me, there might be some "history" between the three of them, Lee would not want me to learn about, that might somehow come out, if we were having a drink or drinks and relaxing.

I had only been together with Jack and Gary a few times, and of course they were at our wedding. I really liked them both as far as I knew them. They both struck me as intelligent, and very interested in the world outside Kansas City, but neither had, so far, travelled much. They were about 2 or 3 years older than Lee, and neither had served in the military. One had poor eyesight, the other some kind of hernia condition. Jack worked for a subcontractor in the aircraft business and Gary was studying civil engineering. They both had keen eyes for girls and women; of that I was sure.

So, one evening, I decided to try something new. Lee was sitting in his favourite comfortable chair, and I went and draped myself across him and the chair, putting my arms around his neck and kissing him. I had his full attention. Then I said to him: "Will you be free and open with me, and tell me, is it because of what you, Jack and Gary did together before you met me, that you are not keen on us all getting together ?".

My sweet young husband actually blushed, much to my delight. I had hit the nail on the head. Just as I had done once with my mother, when I asked her, if my grandfather in fact was my "sister" Heike's real father. I kissed Lee some more, and not waiting for him to respond, I said to him: "I know you guys had a good time and there is nothing wrong with you having been with girls before you met me. You know, I was with someone else before we met, and I would want the same for you. Nothing you did is going to bother me. Human beings need love and making love. Mother told me that, when I was just 12, and I know how true it is. I will not find anything you tell me improper. Trust me!"

Thank goodness, Lee seemed relieved and happy. We kissed and cuddled some more, then he said: "Yeah, there is something about that, and I will tell you everything, but it is a long story. It will take me the better part of a week to start from the beginning and then you will get the picture. Promise me you will remain easy and open-minded; and then, my sweet honey bunny, it will be your turn, to tell your story; right?"

"Right!", I laughed and kissed him. I couldn't wait. This was going to be good, exciting and, I thought, entertaining. I also felt, somehow it would bring us even closer, than we already were, because I would know my adorable husband even better.

We did not pursue the subject any further that night, because it was bedtime already, and we wanted to get to bed and make love. It was as simple as that. The next day was Friday, and after supper, Lee stuck to our deal and started talking about his early experiences with girls, what and how he had learned from that.

I remember, he said, something like: "I don't quite know where to start on this, but I think I was about 10 - 11 years old, when dad began telling me about birds, bees, girls, boys and all that follows from that. Kansas City in the 1930s was one of the best places, if not the best place, to be. The economy was better here, there was less unemployment and the city was wide open, with the best entertainment, the best jazz, the most beautiful girls, the best clubs, night and day parties, lax or no enforcement of petty municipal bylaws, that interfere with people enjoying themselves. Everybody came here from all over the continent to share the good times, to dance, to perform, to play jazz, to see and be seen. It was something like Berlin and Paris in the 1920s, I have been told."

Lee grew quite animated, as he related all these details, and he went on: "Here in America, we had something, which evidently now is dying out, and it used to be referred to as "political machines". You had them in all the big cities, and they tended to be tied to the Democratic Party. Some were headed by one man, others, like Tammany Hall in New York City, were more of a cooperative with several directors. Some were fairly corrupt, others less so. They involved themselves in all sorts of things, and political patronage was central to their existence. The whole idea of the political machines, was to try control local political life, for the benefit of the people involved. Eventually, they also involved themselves in national politics, and would try to "deliver" the votes of a city or state to a favoured candidate."

I was supposed to learn something of my sweetheart's early love life, and instead he was giving me a very interesting lecture about some recent history. But I was patient, and let him continue: "Our local machine here was called Pendergast, after T.J.Pendergast, who had created and controlled it with his son. "TJ", as he was usually referred to, was generally well liked, and the city thrived under his tutelage, but there was definitely also corruption involved, not least involving insurance, and they were heavily involved in the liquor business, and had been long before the end of prohibition. Truman, our good president, was never a real part of this machine; he is too straight for that. But they were friends, and mutually supportive, that I know. Eventually, all the up tights and the reactionaries went after people like Pendergast using the income tax angle, and they got him on that. The same

happened in many parts of the country, and life around here was never the same again. Kansas City today is a shadow of what it was just ten years ago.”

Then my sweetheart went on: “During those happy years, there were tens of thousands of girls and women, who took the opportunity to live freely, enjoying as many men as they had time and energy for, and not unreasonably, many of them expected to be compensated for what they were doing. Anyone observing that from afar, or at least without first hand experience, dismissed this pursuit as plain, simple prostitution, and of course, there was a lot of that too, but there were also large numbers of girls, who simply took advantage of those heady days, when anything was O.K. in Pendergast’s Kansas City. My friend Jack called it “paid-for-dating” and he was not referring to a dating agency, and that in essence was what it was. And you know where most of those girls are today ?; married, happily married to the guys who paid for dates with them!”

That was all Lee had energy for that evening. I thanked him, it was amazing and I was fascinated. I told him, I couldn’t wait for the continuation. Then I hugged him and kissed him, and told him he was a wonderful story teller.

Next day was Saturday. We often visited Lee’s mum, and also often his sister Susan and her family. As far as I remember, we were with them for dinner and played games with the kids during the evening. They were a lovely family and I always enjoyed the times we were with them. We got home too late to continue Lee’s story, so I told him he was on for breakfast, and he promised as much.

Sunday morning we usually slept quite late and made love at length, not less than an hour, often more. As Lee had observed early in our relationship, we were both very good at it, and neither of us ever seemed to get enough or too much; our intimate harmony was exceptional. Then we would shower together, and make ourselves a grand brunch, which we would enjoy in our dressing gowns. Lee was in the mood to continue his story.

“Our dad was a bit of a wild man in some ways, as you may have gathered”, he began, and carried on: “Dad read a great deal, and some of that influenced him greatly.” At this point he got up, went to one of the book shelves and retrieved a book he showed me. Much to my surprise, I knew the book. I think it was called “Man and Sunlight” in English. We had the very same book in my childhood home at Grunerhof, where we knew it as “Mensch und Sonne” by Hans Suren, one of Adolf Koch’s contemporaries, writing about and championing the cause of nudism and naturism. I was so happy to find our contemporary German literature right here in the middle of America, and there were more than one of Suren’s books, also other authors and magazines on this subject.

Lee went on: “Dad started to introduce me to these books, when I was about ten I think, and talk to me about what is and what is not natural for human beings; how so much of our natural needs and normal inclinations are stifled and suppressed, and the damage it does. He said, it makes us neurotic, repressed and is the underlying cause for rape and violence against women and children. Dad insisted, that in a totally open and free culture, it is the human female, who pursues the male for sex, not what we are used to, and the reason is our civilization’s repression of the innate libido. It is wrong, it is harmful, we should never

defer to it and we should seek to expose this perversion of everything that is indigenous to us, our source of joy, pleasure and beauty!"

I was almost stunned to hear my sweet, young husband sally forth with such a lovely passion about something my own family had felt strongly about, my wonderful grandmother in particular. It was as if , Lee might have been reluctant until then, to expose these views to me, presumably because he considered them very radical, and might have been concerned, how I would react. Well, I couldn't have been happier. I kissed and hugged him, and told him, this was generally the way my family had felt about these issues, and, for my own part, I could not agree more.

We were so happy, finally to have discovered, that we both supported these views of life and humanity, and that it had taken us some three months to reveal to each other how we both felt about these subjects. We agreed, this was something we were both going to explore and study, and Lee promptly brought more books to show me, the seminal works of Bronislaw Malinowski. Lee's dad had collected anything he could get his hands on by Malinowski, and urged his children to read and study these fascinating books. Lee's favourite was "Sex and Repression in Savage Society", from which, he read excerpts loud for me. This was beautiful. Right here in the middle of USA, I was learning some of the most basic facts of what is really natural and essential to life, such as Lee and I viewed it.

Then Lee went on: "Dad was entirely supportive of the conventional family, such as we know it, but he insisted, it should be built on friendship, loyalty, mutual support, affection, companionship and the requisite economy of the family unit. Sexual exclusivity goes against our nature and is unnecessary. It exists mainly to appease and mitigate the insecurity of one or both partners, not for any other objective reason."

I thought about that for a minute, then I said to Lee: "You mean to say, you and I should be free to have lovers ?"

"No, honey bunny, those were my dad's words, not mine, and as you know, he lived according to that."

Lee seemed very sincere about it, and in fact, that he never gave me any reasons to doubt, or anything else for that matter.

Lee went on: "When I was 13 or 14, may be younger, I can't rightly remember, I started to ask dad, when I would be able to start dating, and if I would be able to make out with a girlfriend, when I found someone, and things like that. Since dad obviously did the very opposite of suppressing the libido in his kids, he had to respond. He told me, such as life was, I should not expect 14/15 year old girls to be permitted or able to make love with me. That will come some day in future, of that I am certain, he said, but we are very far from that. The ideal, from dad's point of view, was for a teenage boy, to learn love and sex from a woman about double his age, and I suspect that may have been his own experience, but he never divulged the details."

I couldn't help, at this point asking Lee, where his sister figured in the picture, since she was quite a few years older than him ? "Well", he said, "my mum stayed out of this

business completely. It was kind of understood, this was dad's responsibility. As far as Susan was concerned, she was dating Rick at 16, I think it was, and dad told her she was free to make love, if she wanted to, provided she did it responsibly. That meant: no sex without condom, never, ever! It couldn't be much simpler than that. I remember, Susan was ecstatic. Dad claimed, the condom was one of humanity's greatest inventions, right up there with the use of fire, footwear, tools, the water closet, canned apricots and various other good things."

I was so sad I never had a chance to meet Lee's dad. I found all of this delightful and audacious. I was so impressed, because, somehow I had been under the impression most Americans then were reserved and restrained in anything related to eroticism and intimacy, and that this had been among the reasons, so many Americans visited Berlin in the 1920s and Paris in the 1920s and 1930s. Evidently some erotic liberty did exist here and there. I couldn't wait to hear the details of Lee's sexual education. I reasoned, it should be really good.

"Let me go back to around 1930", Lee continued; "as you know the economy was in a shambles, unemployment was completely out of control, farmers were being bankrupted in huge numbers, banks were insolvent by the 1000's, and the sitting government had no clear idea of what to do. Through a combination of exceptional circumstances, Kansas City survived the depression in better shape than any major city in America. A huge hydroelectric project had been started almost as if it had been planned that way, providing substantial employment for several of the worst years, with lots of spin off effects, and also with perfect timing, the city had launched a major urban renewal scheme, that extended for better parts of the decade, and in turn involved many private sector projects that tied in and contributed as well to our economic well being."

"According to my dad," Lee went on, "Kansas City had always had a reputation for being a kind of "good times town" going way back. By the early 1920s, entertainment, nightclubs, gambling and prostitution was thriving. Already then, some of the best jazz in the country was to be found here. Probably, the single most vital factor, that really drove the city into the big league, was the prohibition, because by then Pendergast was in control, and he looked upon the prohibition as the opportunity of a lifetime. Bars and nightclubs flourished and stayed open day and night, liquor and even marihuana was 25 cents a shot or a toke, and the prohibition years 1919 to 1933 essentially did not effect our city. Kansas City had the highest proportion of nightclubs to population anywhere in USA., and people flocked here to enjoy the good times, the amazing jazz, footloose girls and women, the liberty and tolerance unknown elsewhere. In 1938 The Christian Science Monitor wrote a scandalized exposé of life here, with among other comments: "residents (are) astonishingly complacent about it all", and indeed so we were!"

My sweet young husband made no secret of how he had felt about the life here during those wild and exuberant years. He continued his captivating story: "When I was in grade 6, friends and I would slowly walk along Cherry and Locust streets, and admire the working girls, sitting by their windows looking for business. For the most part they were naked, just holding a small towel on their lap. Many of them were young and pretty. Then we would

talk about, when we would be old enough to visit them. We even had particular favourites. One, we called the “Italian” would blow us kisses. The ambience in Kansas City then was erotic and sensuous. It used to be said, “Fornication is not something you talk about, it is something you do!”, and I knew my dad was sympathetic to that.”

I knew Lee was looking for a break at this point, but I wouldn’t let him off. This was just too good. I made him carry on. “My dad had strong feelings about the way escort girls are regarded and treated,” he continued; “as a group or class of human beings, they are among the kindest, warmest, most affectionate individuals you can find anywhere, he maintained; and they are subjected to so much abuse, vilification and belittlement, and mainly from people, who do not have the remotest knowledge or even acquaintance with any of them or any accurate idea of what they do. Dad contended, and I believe he was right, when he said the working girls, the paid for dates, escorts, call girls and all the other terms used, create more joy, pleasure and happiness, than any other profession we know of. We should respect, protect and reward them, not malign and abuse, as now is the case.”

Then we came to a particular perspective, which has fascinated and transfixed me ever since. Lee spelled it out: “My dad was convinced, that when conditions of permissiveness arise, by coincidence or by design, which allow girls and women, or even encourage girls and women, to live freely and openly, to act on and pursue their natural lustful urges and feelings without hindrance, at complete liberty, with or without compensation, then a state of happiness and euphoria arises affecting the entire community. That was Kansas City during the 1920s and particularly 1930s. It was a freedom to love, to celebrate basic life, to cherish and embrace the simplest yearnings we are endowed with, to love and make love without shame or guilt. You would have to go back to Malinowski’s tropical islands to find anything as pleasurable innocent.”

Sex work and prostitution was something I didn’t really know anything about, and yet, I knew everything about it. The approximately five months, I had been Vodkin’s sex slave, had been exactly that. What the girls on Cherry and Locust streets, Lee had just been telling me about, were doing, was, for all intents and purposes, exactly what I had had to do with Vodkin. They did it presumably, more or less, for their survival, and I certainly did it for mine. I wasn’t going to interrupt my sweetheart’s wonderful chronicle at this point, we would get to my story soon enough, but I was indeed able to sympathize with the girls he euphemistically was calling working girls, paid for dates, etc.

Lee continued: “By the time I was around 15, I knew full well, the last person I would want to learn lovemaking with, would be some naïve, innocent girl my own age, and that pretty much applied to everyone I knew in our school. Sure, there were a couple of wild ones in the next grade, but they, in any event, had their hands full, in every sense, and I didn’t care for either of them. By then, I knew, what I really would like, was to find a cute working girl, I could spend time with perhaps once a week. My dad, in so many words, encouraged that, and promised me he would help me with the cost. I told dad, I had my heart, and something else, set on that girl we called the Italian. He thought, that might be too expensive, if I wanted to visit every week, but for my first time, it might be a good idea. Dad told me, in no uncertain terms, what to say, what to ask and how to conduct myself, and not to be shy. I skipped one class early in the day and stole over to her area. She was not

in her window, and seemed very surprised, when I knocked on her door so early in the day. Anyway, she was very happy and invited me in to her small flat. Haltingly I told her the purpose of my visit, and she laughed happily, hugging me and acting as if she might have been ready to proceed right then and there. Then she told me to come at the same time early in the morning, and she would spend one hour with me, and she promised to make me very happy!"

"All went according to plan;" Lee continued; "I was doing well enough in school, that I could afford to skip one morning for such a turning point in my young life. I remember, it was raining lightly, but the air was pleasant and everything smelled of spring. My chosen girl was waiting for me in a simple dressing gown, which she encouraged me to remove. I have to admit, my hands were shaking when I did that, from sheer excitement. She made me sit with her on her bed, and tell her my name, age and something about my life and plans for my future. She was very kind and relaxed and made me feel good about myself and what we were going to do. Her body was beautiful and I was even shy to look at her after we together had removed her dressing gown. She clearly enjoyed being naked, and she walked around like that completely unconcerned. Then she helped me get undressed, and I felt awkward about my state of arousal, but she was very content and caressed me affectionately all over my body, evidently also to calm my teenage nerves. Her name was Vera, much later I learned short for Veronica, and she was only 18 at that time."

"Lee, I love it;" I told him; "This is the ideal way for a guy. Please tell me the rest. I can't wait."

"Well;" Lee continued; "Vera then made me touch her, which I had been too shy to try until she actually instructed me to do so; her shoulders, breasts, sides, belly and between her legs. Touching a beautiful young girl like that, at that time, was for me something like a worshipful event, a reverence for life, almost like the most religious experience I had ever had, and you know, our family are not very religious. She was a professional working girl, paid for date, prostitute, and that had no relevance for me whatever. She was a beautiful, kind, loving and very sexy human being, who was treating me like the king of the earth, or so it felt, that was all I knew, all that mattered to me. Then we got up, and she walked me to the bathtub. She made me get in, and kneel facing the faucet, while she knelt behind me with her body against mine. She reached around me and stroked me tenderly, until I came in her hands after just a minute or two. I was dejected, because I thought I would not be able to consummate our tryst, but Vera was very encouraging. She turned the water on, washed and rinsed me lovingly and told me this was good, now I would be able to give her a good loving, or something like that. We walked back to her bed and laid down. She made me lick her breasts and nipples and caress them, and then, holding her legs open, she took my hand and patiently showed me how to touch and fondle her vulva, holding her hand over mine. She told me always to do this slowly and gently and wait for a girl to be wet, indicating she was ready for me. She even told me, if it was not working, to use saliva, lots of saliva. Just as Vera had predicted, I was soon fully aroused again, and she asked me if I wanted to use a condom. I fished out one of the ones dad had given me, and Vera put it on me, and showed me how it was done. Then she made me lie back, while she straddled me, took hold of my sex and joined us. It felt heavenly, what I had been waiting for so long.

Vera then proceeded to make love to me. Initially, she laid down on my chest, rubbing her adorable breasts against me, nuzzling her face on mine, kissing my cheeks, nose and eyes, all the while riding and squeezing me, bestowing me with all the love and affection a young girl like that can offer. From time to time she would sit up, even leaning back and supporting herself on my legs, while moving and twisting her body joyously. At other times, she put her hands on my shoulders, and I reached up and fondled her lovely breasts. Then, after what seemed quite a while, she laid down on me again, now moving faster and stronger, even shaking and moaning loudly, while she was holding on to my shoulders and arms strongly, and with long, loud gasps, we joined each other in bliss and rapture. She stayed right on top of me, where she was, while we caught our breath again. She told me I was going to be good at making love and that I was going to make girls happy. Considering that it had been her making love to me, and that I had done next to nothing, that was generous indeed, but I thanked her and kissed her. Then she got up, diligently removed the condom and took me to the bathtub again, where we showered together. After my love lesson with Vera, I could not get my hands off her. I just wanted to hold on to her, hug her, fondle her and not let her go. She was amused and pleased, and told me she hoped to see me again. I got dressed, paid her the amount she had told me, and I gave her every last cent I had as well. If I had had a million \$, I am sure I would have given it to her. I was so happy.”

I knew there was much more to come of Lee’s story, but his description and recount of this experience had put me in such a state of excitement, I removed what I was wearing and went to sit on his lap. Within a minute, we were in bed making passionate love. Then, I couldn’t help asking him: “Am I as good as Vera ?”, and Lee had a good laugh.

“No, honey bunny, you are better, because you and I do all kinds of things together, with her it was one sided, ultimately educational, training if you will.”

“Yes, I understand, but when I am on top of you, like she was with you, how is it ?”

“Actually, she was kind of in her own world. It was fantastic for me, and evidently very good for her, but thinking back to that morning, it is not excluded, she might have been thinking of someone else, while doing it with me. When I make love with you, I know we are entirely dedicated to each other. Certainly, I am not thinking of anyone else, and I don’t think you are either. Anyway there is more to the story than that. Vera left her place, and someone else took over. Nearly three years later, a friend of mine told me, Vera was married, and already had a little boy.”

“You are good Lee Prentice, very good. I love you, and I believe you. Vera taught you well. You are a wonderful lover.”

After that, believe it or not, we made love again.

“Dad was very happy for me;” Lee continued his story; “But it caused me to kind of take stock of what I was doing. After my initiation with Vera, I felt that school wasn’t really getting me anywhere fast, and I told my parents I was going to leave school at the end of that year, and try get a job. In fact I already had a good idea of what I wanted to do, because a friend had gotten an apprenticeship at the engine plant, where I am now working the year before, and that is what happened. They were very good to me, but I also knew a lot about engines, because I had always been an aspiring grease monkey. Dad and I used to do our own car repairs for years, and I had been involved in that since I was a little kid. It also meant, I would have some income I could spend on girls. That was part of the incentive. I

was accepted for the apprenticeship even before the end of school of that year, subject to my grades being at a certain level, and that worked out fine. I was so keen, I went straight from school to work, my first job, without vacation. Anyway, back to girls. As much as I had adored my first teacher of love, Vera, I was fearful of getting into anything romantic and lovey-dovey. If I had gone back to her, I was afraid, I would fall in love with her, regardless of her calling. That would not have been difficult to do. At that age, I was aiming for a girl or girls I could be playful with, like happy, energetic, with high spirits, but nothing romantic and without drinking and drugs. It seemed like a tall order. I met a couple of really sweet girls, but they were both of the good old romantic mindset, and I was not ready for that.”

“My poor baby,” I said to Lee; “What a terrible predicament! I really feel for you.” He looked at me, trying to figure out if I was serious or kidding him, then he went on: “Apart from all the nightclubs here, there were also so-called gentlemen’s clubs, sporting clubs, resort houses and of course brothels, bordellos and saloons, all with a lustful and lascivious orientation. There were clubs, where lunch was served by nude waitresses, or they were wearing cellophane skirts and nothing else. There were clubs providing nude dancers and entertainers, strippers and everything in between. All the detractors and naysayers claimed the poor girls and women involved were grossly exploited, mistreated and suffering wretches. Well, you could have fooled me. That was not what we saw and experienced. The vast majority appeared to enjoy those wild, wonderful times. In fact many of the girls specifically moved to Kansas City to enjoy the freedom, sexual and otherwise, that existed here.”

“O.K. Lee;” I said impatiently; “So tell me about your part in that, because I am certain you got to play your part; right?”

Lee was pleased with my eagerness, and he went on: “I had a few innocent dates with nice girls. I didn’t try to seduce them, or anything like that. I would only have sought intimacy, if they showed interest or willingness. So I found myself longing for someone like Vera, or girls like that. By this time I was 16, and I had become quite self confident and wanted to try out my growing courage with girls. I used to hang out with some of the other young guys at the plant, though by then they were being called up for the military one after another. One of the guys, before going off to the army, told me he was going to introduce me to a couple of cute and sporty dancing girls, who had come up from New Orleans a couple of months ago, and who were not adverse to “paid-for-dating”, but only with someone they really liked and approved of. They were very young 17 and 18 and sounded exactly like what I could only dream about. They were staying in a high basement, at the back of one of the major gentlemen’s clubs in the city. This building had been a large, grandiose home built around 1870. And converted to club use in the 1920s. The grounds were quite large, and the basement was at ground level on the back. The entrance door was hidden under a bulky rear staircase cum fire escape, that had been added much later. The grounds in the back were mainly just open lawn and no one ever came there or used it for anything, but the grass was cut occasionally. There was ample space on one side of the building and a driveway, with both sides of the driveway used for angular parking. The guy who took me there was around 18 I think, and we went early on a Saturday afternoon. He introduced me to Lola, who was a tall slim, sexy and shapely girl, half light skinned black

and half Cuban, or so she told me; and to Nicky, who was as shapely, but shorter, and half oriental and half Amerindian. They were amazing, full of life and energy. Lola, in particular, was mainly on her feet, dancing, wriggling, twisting, even doing gymnastics. You would hardly ever see her sitting down, and usually only if she was eating. The space they occupied was unusual. On the right side, when you entered, was a very large open room, and along the front wall 3 or 4 large, built in laundry tubs, in heavy porcelain; evidently laundry tubs from, when the house was built around 1870, but no longer in use now. The girls used this room for their dance training and exercises, for which it was ideal. It had some kind of upholstered benches along one wall, and a simple, long table along the wall facing the back, where the only windows were. Not a lot of light entered, because the floor above had a considerable overhang on that side. A small passage inside the front door led to a nice little kitchen, and from there to a small bathroom, and a very small bedroom. Well, the girls seemed to take to me immediately. They both hugged, and soon kissed me and called me their baby. In no time, the other guy disappeared with Lola, and Nicky took me to the only very large, old, leather comfortable chair in the place, which was standing down near the laundry tubs. She settled down with me there, and soon we were kissing and necking. Later I thought, how appropriate, I was necking with Nicky! Something always sticks in my mind, when I think about my times and experiences with these girls. Like Vera, they were as affectionate, certainly as desirable, warm, kind and human as anyone else, even though there was some money involved. This is what newspaper and magazine publishers should keep in mind and consider, when they print ignorant rubbish about prostitutes, written by hacks who do not have a clue what they are writing about.”

I knew, much of what Lee was saying about the slander and defamation of prostitutes originated with his dad, but that did not make it any less valid in my estimation. I had to admire them both for taking such a courageous stand, and I know Lee never wavered from this point of view. Soon enough, I encountered the official attitude to prostitutes and sex workers, with good old American sanctimony and hypocrisy, and that has never really changed, with minor variations from decade to decade.

“So, my dear husband;” I said; “How far did you get with your necking with Nicky?” I loved the fact, that after just a few months together, we were so close we could jest and kid each other like that. In some respects, we were like an old married couple, who had been together for years, and knew each other’s ideas, feelings and opinions so well.

Lee continued: “Nicky and Lola both loved to fool around and loved making out. They adored sex as much as any teenage boy, so I loved being with them, and that first time was no different. After a while, Nicky took her T-shirt off, just like that, and put her breasts in my face to kiss and lick. It would have been impolite not to respond. It wasn’t very long before we both took our clothes off. She made sure I put a condom on, and we did it right there in that big, old overstuffed chair. It was divine. I can’t tell you how good it made me feel. Nicky liked to try many positions in the chair, so we changed around a lot, and that way I could go on much longer. While we had been playing around, it had gotten dark and there was very little light in the room. Only when we had exhausted each other, did I realize Lola had been in the room watching us. Then she joined us and made it clear, it was her turn with me next time! For a minute, I could have believed I had passed on and gone to

heaven. It sounded just about too good to be true. That was how they were, sweet, lusty and passionate; always ready for fun and loving. Before I went home, Nicky asked me, if I had any money, and I gladly gave her my week's pay. She was happy with that."

I was genuinely happy to hear Lee's early history with girls, because I personally viewed it as healthy and wholesome. I saw nothing wrong with any of that, and I told him so. And I was happy he trusted me with every intimate detail with no fear of disapproval or reproach from me. Most important perhaps, he would be more likely to accept all that had happened to me, without too many misgivings.

"Lee;" I said; "Where do Jack and Gary fit into this? So far, you have not mentioned them at all."

"They were both friends of Lola and Nicky. They introduced us. I met Jack first, and we became fast friends, and later Gary joined us. The five of us had a lot of fun together. Some of it pretty raunchy, and so what. We were all young and lusty, and I know I had my dad's support. We were not into drugs, and we drank just beer and not a lot of that either. In summer we went on outings together all five of us, swimming, hiking, things like that. Finally, the girls moved to Chicago a few months before I joined the army, but Jack, Gary and I remained friends."

Over the years, Lee would tell me other details of the near two years they all shared, and some of the romps and hanky-panky they engaged in. Many years later, it occurred to me, when Neolithic man wanted to spend amorous time with a girl or woman, he would often offer her fresh meat or fish or something else desirable. In this day and age, girls like to be wined and dined, taken to shows, movies and generally entertained. That does not assure a young guy of what he really needs: sexual release. Just as often, he is just being strung along. How can you blame a boy or a man, if they prefer to offer a girl money in return for sexual favours, love and affection ? I know young guys need that desperately. That is nature's design and imperative. So let us act on it, deal with it, make sure it is available to them, as it should be.

Without being urged or anything by Lee, I started my story soon after he finished his. I did that because I wanted, in a sense, to try benefit from a degree of similarity between his and my experiences, so that he would not be too upset about the extent of sexual use I had been forced to. I knew already then, many boys and men, can be very insecure about how sexually experienced their girlfriends or wives are, and more than a few can become quite impotent, when they discover their loved ones had as much experience or even more, than they did themselves. I did not think I had too much to fear with regard to Lee. I thought he was amazingly mature and level headed, but my history, such as it was, had to be conveyed gingerly, of that I was sure.

I started off telling Lee, Prussians in Germany, had generally always been thought of as conservative and very traditional, but that my family were outsiders, certainly the Reinharts, but also more recently both my grandmother and my mother. Our home, family and everyone close to us, were like an oasis in a desert of stodginess, or something like that. Then I told him about my freewheeling and free living grand parents, and how their

lifestyle resembled Lee's own father's philosophy, and how happy that had made me, when Lee had told me about it. Lee was very pleased to know, his dad's ideas had not been so outlandish or even shocking, as he at times had feared.

I told him about grandmother's art magazine and the beautiful nude paintings, I suspected my grandmother to have been model for, and many other details in a similar vein. Then I went on to Adolf Koch, and how his ideas and leadership had motivated grandmother to create her amazing nude kindergarten, and how that had taught and affected me from a young age. And then of course also all the political background in Germany, the tragedy of the demise of the Weimar Republic, the advent of Hitler as king of the self-haters and all that followed from that.

Then, of course, the story and background about Heike, and the mystery surrounding her paternal origin, finally revealed to have been my grandfather! Then all the life and action on and by our lovely lake, and how Heike and I grew up, learned about life and not least my dear mother's wonderful, frank and open sex education. That brought me to the chapter of my life involving my first boyfriend and lover Heiner. I had to be very careful about the issue of age, because that was not something I was ready to come clean about. I could not possibly admit to my adorable husband, that I had deceived him into marrying some 15 year old jailbait adventurer, but in some respects, that was what I was. When he picked me up in Berlin on that memorable day, I was in dire straits. I could not in good conscience to my own survival reject Lee's love and offer to marry me, as rash and even reckless as it might have seemed at the time. So far the outcome was very promising. I would venture to claim, we both were very, very happy, very compatible and very supportive of each other. Some day, I knew, I would admit it to him, when we were older and the three year age difference, relatively diminished; but now was not the time.

So, I did not tell Lee, that Heiner had been one of the groping boys in school, but I did mention this phenomenon to him. I was curious, if something of this nature occurred in USA as well, and Lee admitted, it was not unknown, but seemed to be more limited in nature. Lee thought, the girls being subjected to this kind of offence, tended to be a few provocative or voluptuous types, who seemed to be looking for that kind of attention. And the boys also tended to be fewer. Lee called them slackers and delinquents.

It was quite evident to me, he did not participate. There was always a kind of gentlemanly touch to Lee's personality, which I found very endearing.

Anyway, I gave Lee the complete story of Heiner's and my relationship, also of Heike and Rudiker and how we all got along together, hanging out in her mother's house, and how we finally lost the boys. That was all fairly straight forward, nothing very unusual. Lee was sympathetic, and none of that would have loomed over our caring relationship.

Then I started on the story about the Russians, and that was something very different. I began with everything Heike and I learned from the Ukrainian girls, which was frightening and unsettling. I went over that in as much detail as I could. Then came the attack of the Russians in January, our late flight and the massacre on the road. Of course, I had told Lee about that several times before, but now he was hearing it in the complete context of all that happened, and it was unsettling for me to go over it again. At this time, I would just as soon

try to forget it all, and bury it as deeply in my memory as I could. I said to Lee: "I have to try to forget as much as possible of that part of my life. It is so disturbing and troubling, it upsets me to go over it and relive the details. I promise you, I will tell you all, and you will understand what I had to do to survive. After that I would like to try banish as much as possible from my mind for good. I feel I need to do that to remain sane."

Of course Lee knew I survived the massacre, but for the first time, I now told him in near minute detail about my overnight stay in the fruit orchard house, and my trek back to our village; my visit with the two old ladies, the little cat I brought along, and how I got back to Grunerhof alive but frightened and emotionally scarred. He was very sympathetic. Then that strange inter regnum until the Russians arrived and took control of Grunerhof, and all the conversations I had with my Ukrainian friends, where they told me what was almost certain to happen: we might get raped and killed, or we might get raped and then shipped off to Russia as slaves, or if we were "lucky", we might get raped and kept as sex slaves where we were. Hardly any German girls and women had the luxury of knowing what most probably was going to happen to them, I did.

I told Lee this as bluntly as possible. I stressed the gravity and despair of our situation and that we could not flee or escape. I told him about my survival instinct and how it seemed to take control of me. I kind of paused after that, to see how my sweetheart was taking it, and thankfully, he put his arms around me and held me close. "I somehow assumed you had been exposed to something of this nature. Reverend Jennings had already told me a lot about them, and I heard a lot more as well in Berlin. They are primitive and barbaric. Thank God you survived. Tell me whatever you are comfortable with." I kissed him. What a sweet guy he was. I felt so loved and secure with him, and I told him so. Then I related the whole course of events. I toned down the sexual parts as much as I could, and emphasised instead things like my seam stressing and garment repair, the clothes I gave to others, how the other girls were treated and our acute fear of what would happen to us, when these Russians moved on. Lee took it well, but I know he realized there were details missing, which I evidently was not very comfortable getting too deeply into. He did ask me to elaborate a little here and there. For example, he asked me if Vodkin ever was able to get me to come, to have orgasms. I had to tell him, Vodkin demanded it for his own pleasure. I either did it, or he treated me roughly!

Lee never seemed upset, like I know some men would be, in fact, I am more inclined to think he found my chronicle tantalizing. I kind of got the feeling, Lee looked on me as healthy, whole, beautiful and sexually very adept. So evidently I survived, whatever it was I was subjected to, and whatever it was I had to do to get through it. In fact, he said as much, that he admired my fortitude, savvy and resourcefulness. He may even have found my approximately five months of slavery slightly titillating, and that I did not appreciate, but I may have been wrong about that, and I had to show some gratitude considering how well he took it.

Of course I told him how Vodkin drugged me and hauled me out of Grunerhof, and what in all likelihood happened to the other girls, who had been kept there. I told him about the two medjuks who tried to attack me, and how I fought them off, and about my move to Berlin as

“assistant & translator” and what a joke that was. Then I told him about Inga and how we related and got along, and that we ended up having a guilt-free, harmless intimate relationship. That Lee insisted to know a little more about and it was quite obvious to me, he found it stimulating, even enjoyable. I told him, from my point of view, girl-girl sex is something very innocent, light and flighty. It does not compare with boy-girl sex, which is much more intense, and for me at least, fulfilling!

That seemed to please him, but he also gave me the feeling, he kind of admired me for having had, and having been able to have sex with another girl. He seemed to think that was sophisticated, so no harm in that.

Last but not least, I explained about the demise, in so many words, of Vodkin, and how difficult and unpleasant my work situation became, the dreadful treatment of girls and women by the Russians in Berlin, and how Inga’s courageous initiative got us both out of the Russian sector, and, in my case, from hell to heaven in a single day. Lee thought about that for a second, then asked: “You mean getting to the U.S. Sector was heaven?”

“No, silly boy, getting into your arms was heaven! We left the Russian sector at 6.00 A.M., and within 24 hours I was in your arms.”

“Yes, you are right. You had just arrived. It is like life occasionally suddenly accelerates. This seems to have happened to you a few times.”

“Yes, I feel like my father’s spirit is watching over me. I can’t explain it any other way!”

I think, we were both very happy, having exchanged our past histories, such as they were. We were still both very young, and we had both lived a lot, I in particular of course. I think we both looked on each other in a slightly different way, certainly with more knowledge obviously, but somehow also in a certain way, with more respect. We knew each other that much better. We knew, we both had considerable life experience already and neither of us, were anything like innocent kids playing at life.

For one reason or other, that led Lee to ask me, what my feelings and impressions were of Americans and life in USA so far. I was a little reluctant to say very much about that after I had been in the country not even half a year, but I had no hesitation to say, I found Americans generous to a fault, kind, very hospitable, and beyond anything I knew of anywhere. I also could not help commenting, I did not feel Americans had any reason to feel culturally inferior or inadequate, different perhaps, but not inferior. I remember also making a point of mentioning, that a continent like Europe, that twice, in less than half a century had staged or been the cause of enormous, horrendous world wars, genocides, mass murder, mass exterminations and near limitless cruelty and pestilence, had no cause or reason to express disdain or self-importance towards those who saved them.

That almost brought tears to Lee’s eyes. He hugged me and kissed me, and told me I was brilliant!

“Lee, my sweetheart;” I said; “I am not brilliant. I just see a few simple things, it appears to me others are missing, because all I have been through. And perhaps, because I was brought up by, among others, a history teacher, my aunt Andrea. She taught me, among so many other things, certain perspectives of history, which often seem to go missing.”

Anyway, while we were on the subject of my impressions of things American, I decided to try taking our conversation in a more everyday direction. I told Lee, I had great difficulty putting up with the regular sliced, white bread. I was convinced, it was very unhealthy and should not be eaten under any circumstances! I had looked in the stores for anything else, and I had found “brown bread”, which apparently was white bread with food colouring added! Lee admitted, he had a vague suspicion this white factory bread was not ideal, but he had never known what to do about it.

So, we started our quest for better bread and talked to friends and family. One family friend said to me: “What Renata, you do not like American bread ? Don’t you know it is half cotton, half fog and 100% nutrition free!” I guess I knew, at least by then. Anyway, the outcome was, we should try get hold of 100% pure whole wheat flour and bake our own bread. Since we had baked bread at Grunerhof, I was all for it. It took some doing, but Lee managed to locate the flour, I found the yeast and Lou Ann had a simple old recipe for whole grain bread. The following Saturday I baked bread. The smell alone was enough to wean you off white bread for good.

We had a hard time waiting for the first loaf to cool, and when we finally cut it, I think my dear husband ate nearly one entire loaf just with butter on it. He loved it so much, he said he would never eat white bread again. I had to bake several batches, because the rest of the family was raving about it as well. We even brought some to Reverend Jennings and he was very appreciative. Susan, Lee’s sister also started baking regularly.