

5. The end of one war. The beginning of the next.

When WWII died down in Europe during May 1945, Americans were still fully under the illusion, foisted on them by Roosevelt, The New York Times and British wartime propaganda, that Stalin was the best for Russia and a loyal and even handed ally, they could and should trust. Nothing could have been further from the truth, but that, it took the better part of two years to fully realize and come to terms with. Truman had distinct doubts about Stalin after Potsdam in 1945, but was not ready to voice any thoughts or opinions in public until 1947.

When Truman assumed power in 1945, he was stuck with numerous “Roosevelt New Dealers”, he would have been better off without, but because of his innate decency and good will, he let them stay on and many in positions of critical importance and influence. Harry Hopkins of all people, told Truman, in no uncertain terms, he had made a mistake holding on to so much of Roosevelt’s cabinet.

Eventually, there were retirements and changes, but 4 key leftovers remained, Ickes, Morgenthau, Wallace and Byrnes, the last two being particularly problematic, because they both had very high opinions of their own abilities, and both quite evidently felt they would have made better presidents. Morgenthau, who was treasure secretary, had been urging a postwar plan for Germany, which would reduce the country to a non-industrialized backwater on the par with Paraguay or Bolivia circa 1945. No one seemed to take that seriously, least of all Truman, and when Morgenthau realized, he was not to be included in the delegation going to Potsdam, he promptly offered to resign. Truman accepted at once. Many years later, Truman was quoted to have said about him: “Morgenthau didn’t know shit from apple butter.”

The midterm elections in November 1946 were a resounding Republican victory taking control of both houses and Truman, predictably, was held responsible for that to a degree. However, considering how long the country had been under Democratic control, it was not all that surprising, and could certainly also be seen as democratically healthy. It also had some unexpected benefits for Truman, in that it freed him of a great many “leftovers” from the Roosevelt years. Unfortunately, it led to Republican obstructionism, and the Congress 1946-48 set a record for lack of productivity not equalled until 2014.

It has never ceased to astonish me, to read and listen to historians, commentators and politicians, who for decades and generations insisted on holding the East and the West equally responsible for the Cold War. Any reasonable, righteous and sensible individual knew, and was forever being reminded by events, of the aggression and interminable provocations by Stalin, his successors and adherents. Still, there was no shortage of muddle headed and sophistic commentators who would do their best to confuse this issue and try sow discord, distrust and divisions in the western democracies.

The worst of those agitators and gadflies was the French Marxist philosopher Sartre, who for a good half century succeeded in gaining a huge following of the confused and bewildered young of the postwar generations. Sartre was in my humble opinion trendy and shallow. For the better part of two decades, he was a Stalinist. After 1956 he was a Maoist, but also a Castro and Che Guevara admirer, and later yet an anarchist. The American commentator B.C. Anderson called him nothing much more than an apologist for tyranny and terror. That was the view I shared.

Sartre wrote and lectured about Existentialism, as if that was something he, more or less, had conceived, and many of the 1950s and 1960s generations readily took him up on that. The originator and giant of Existentialism is my grandmother's favourite Kierkegaard, and many others have contributed serious and worthwhile thoughts: Heidegger, Dostoyevsky, Buber, Berdyaev, Shestov, Marcel and indeed many others. I am not aware, that Sartre and his companion de Beauvoir ever developed anything, that essentially was new or important to Existentialism, but they certainly laboured long and hard to make it seem that way. It bothers me, hardly anyone spoke out against this cynical, pessimistic manipulator of young minds. Thankfully, today he is already practically forgotten.

Likewise, to this date, it is very difficult to find anyone in the western democracies, who can agree, exactly when the Cold War actually should be considered to have started. That makes no sense either, because Stalin clearly and emphatically stated 9. February 1946, that communism and capitalism were incompatible and that another war was inevitable. Confrontation with the capitalists would come in the 1950s, he predicted. If that cannot be considered the explicit declaration of the start of the cold war, nothing can; and Stalin most certainly acted on it. He was essentially engaged in communist subversion worldwide. Of that there can be no credible dispute.

Meanwhile, in my new country USA, it was as if the entire nation had dedicated itself to aid and help the war torn countries. General Eisenhower headed fund raising aiming at an amount of \$170 million for relief of Jews in Europe. \$ 300 million was requested by the war department for relief of Germany, Austria, Japan and Korea.; and Truman asked the Congress for \$ 350 million for relief in the liberated countries. These were huge amounts in 1947, and nowhere in recorded history have I ever been able to find anything comparable to the generosity of the American people during those years. And this was just the beginning. The Marshal Plan came later.

During 1946 and 1947, it was slowly, ever so slowly, dawning on the country, the media and some of the more perceptive politicians, that Stalin was a monster, and that Roosevelt's subservience-to-Russia policies was a huge mistake. Early in the 1950's it became clear, the US and Britain knew and had been informed of the Katyn massacre already in 1943, and chose to ignore it. This was finally confirmed with official documentation as late as 2012. One wonders, how the likes of Roosevelt could have continued to support any kind of alliance with Stalin, and the only explanation I can think of, is the persuasion of Churchill, no doubt seconded by Hopkins. Just as Jennings has said, Roosevelt should never have been re-elected for a third term.

Early in 1947, Britain informed the US, it would no longer be able to shoulder support of Greece and Turkey, fighting Russian and Stalinist subversion. Britain was all but insolvent at that point, and there was little doubt Greece in particular was likely to fall to Russian control within a few months.

Truman had in fact, as early as July 1946 ordered a very thorough review and analysis of US/Soviet relations. He had distrusted the Russians as early as at Potsdam the year before, and had written in a letter to his wife: “.....the police state of communism was no different from the police state of the Nazis.”

After long and very careful deliberation, involving numerous members of the administration, the diplomatic corps and anyone else of consequence, this led to the momentous speech 12. March 1947, to a joint session of Congress, which later became known as the Truman Doctrine. The single most important line, no doubt was: “I believe it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures”

This speech became a milestone and a watershed in American foreign policy and the American place in the world. Not only was it the broom, which finally swept away the last vestiges of the once so popular isolationism, which had dominated foreign policy in the 1930s, but it drove a stake through Roosevelt’s fawning relationship with Russia, and finally put Stalin on notice: “ We know who you are, and we know what you stand for. We do not like it, and we are going to resist you!” In so many words, Truman’s response to, what I considered Stalin’s opening salvo in the Cold War in February 1946.

Needless to say, personally I welcomed the Truman doctrine. Truman impressed me immensely. Roosevelt’s alliance with Stalin had always been incomprehensible to me, timid and craven, unworthy of the US and its people. I could never find any other explanation for it, than the influence, deceit and delusion by the half American Churchill, who had succeeded in dragging the US into this unsavoury and repugnant alliance.

Although the general reaction to Truman’s speech was favourable, it was by no means unanimous. A few remaining isolationists objected because of the anticipated costs involved. Truman had requested \$ 400 million to aid Greece and Turkey. Others argued the speech was too vague and too far reaching sounding like a call to arms for a crusade, and invariably, there were some who knew such a policy would be the end of Roosevelt’s old compliant relationship with Russia, and who were unhappy about that.

Almost as a general reaction to the many years of Roosevelt’s friendship and benign approach to Russia, all kinds of people, Republicans in particular now arose in anti leftist and anti communist fervour, the likes of which the country had not seen in generations. That was to last for decades, and it caused no end of grief and odium to the country. Around that time, or it may have been a couple of months later, I was with my dear Jennings, and he showed me a copy of a manuscript, friends had gotten hold of and sent to him. This was a copy of Ralph Franklin Keeling’s “Gruesome Harvest”, which was published later that year. He had read it, and he was dismayed. He told me: “I am not sure,

you would really want to read this. It is horrifying. It is quite clear to me, that Morgenthau's and indeed Roosevelt's post WWII plans for Germany, in fact have been carried out, and that only recently Truman fully caught on to what was happening. The Western Allies have been conducting themselves as badly as the Russians all through last year. I can only surmise these were instructions left by Roosevelt, which Truman only recently fully understood and acted to reverse. It is disgraceful, and from all indications, it is already being covered up as far as possible."

It has essentially remained covered up to this date, as far as I can tell, and neither Germans, nor Americans would appear to have any appetite to delve into the details, or try expose the truth. It is just painful, if not contemptible all around. One is reminded of the British treatment of American prisoners during the Revolutionary War; something very few today care or know anything about.

Around this time, and for that matter for years, I had to deal with something affecting me acutely and personally, although I bore no responsibility for it whatsoever. From the date I made my first acquaintance with that we call a free press, I was exposed to reams of pages of WWII reporting, German atrocities and misdeeds in general, but of course the holocaust in particular. The fact, that millions of German civilians, women, children, the old and infirm also were deliberately and systematically exterminated, has never entered historical consideration, and since we are now some 70 years past the end of WWII, I have to assume it never will.

The enormity and the pathology of the holocaust must never be rationalized, or "explained" in any way. It must, and it should, at all times be known and remembered for exactly what it was, the greatest act of evil ever known in recorded history. Stalin and the Bolsheviks murdered many more human beings than Hitler did, but the Nazi regime and Germany exceeded all evil with the Holocaust. That should always be known and acknowledged. Every country concerned should have a Holocaust museum. It should be part of every history curriculum in every school.

I am not aware anyone so far has ever been able to propose an account of how human beings could perpetrate something like the systematic extermination of other human beings on the scale of the holocaust. It goes beyond any reasoning ordinary human beings are capable of. I have mentioned previously the peculiar and disoriented state of self hate, which recurrently appears to play a part in acts of terrorism, mass murder and the systematic extermination of fellow human beings. A state of self hate is part of a fractured and disordered sense of identity, but where and why does that occur (?) -

Since I, as a human being of German origin at all times would carry the stigma of being "one of the WWII enemy", who was responsible for the holocaust, regardless of my age and how we all suffered under Hitler's tyranny and reign of terror, I thought a great deal about all of this, and I felt a need to try come to terms with it, and to understand it much better, than I ever would based on press commentary and media speculation. From time to time, it was a subject I asked my dear Jennings to try understand and make some sense of.

“Rightly or not”, Jennings said, “It is my feeling, that which is referred to as “German Nationalism”, really is Prussian more than anything else. It could have been German, or German-Austrian, which would have been something very different, but the Prussians won out, and after Bismarck’s war against Austria in 1866, Austria was out of the picture. That, I will submit, is a European tragedy, unacknowledged to this date. Austria, at that time, was a lively, polyglot collection of some ten different nationalities and ethnic groups, existing in a unique mixture of cooperation and competition, with some occasional strife, which never caused more than very temporary disruptions. I suggest, Austria between the Congress of Vienna 1814-1815 and WWI 1914, was about the most successful nation, or conglomeration of nations as the case may be, in all of Europe, during that century. One needs only look at the cultural output: music, literature, fine arts, sculpture, architecture, cities and so on. German artists and composers congregated in Austria, because that was where life and culture flourished, certainly not in Prussia.”

Jennings was amazing. I could ask him anything in a historical context, and though I might not agree with everything he had to say at the time, he never failed to open my mind, to concepts, ideas and points of view, it would have taken me decades if not generations to become acquainted with. He continued: “Prussian nationalism, which at the time as well as Bismarck’s style, was anti-liberal, anti-social, manipulative, closed-minded, begrudging of other nations, militaristic and covetous. All of Europe looked askance at Germany’s nationalism in the decades prior to WWI, but no one could figure out what to do about it. Ultimately, it did cause Britain, France and Russia to come together as allies prior to WWI. That was a direct result of Prussian-German nationalism.”

I thought about that, and I asked Jennings: “Do you think this kind of ethos, formed a basis for what became the Nazi thought, even leading to the holocaust (?)” I was starting to use terms and words no normal teenage girl usually would, because I was learning that kind of vocabulary, I loved it and I wanted to use it, even though it might not always be entirely right. Jennings was very supportive, and he went on: “It is an indisputable fact, that the Prussian led German forces in WWI, gave the entire world an introduction and prelude to what German nationalism was capable of. The German army in Belgium and later in Northern France murdered civilians by the tens of thousands, for no other reason than ethnic scorn and contempt. They also went to great length to destroy historical buildings and structures of cultural concern and veneration. This was all something uniquely German, and the world should have paid more attention. The great Danish author Johannes Jorgensen wrote a famous book about the murderous conduct of the Germans in Belgium during WWI “Klokke Roland” translated and published in numerous languages. In the US it was published as “False Witness”, and I believe it is in most libraries. Had the world paid more attention to the Belgian genocide during WWI, it might have had an inkling of what Germany was capable of. I believe, there is always a certain capacity for evil in any population, and if the national leadership tries to nurture that trait, it may end up having the outcome it did in Nazi Germany. I do not believe this is uniquely German. Stalin murdered more human beings, he just used other methods. The world should remain forever vigilant, because history is littered with genocides and I regret to say, there will be others.” Sad to say, he was so right.

From about that time on, I tended no longer to identify myself as “German”, when asked what my background was, or where I came from. I could conceive of no good reason, why I should live my life in a state of perpetual guilt for what Germany did between 1933 and 1945, when I was but a small child and a young girl in my early teens. From then on, I said, I was a refuge from the Russian genocide in East Europe in 1945, and when someone would probe further, I would tell them how many the Russians murdered in Poland, in Silesia, in East Prussia and so on. Depending on how I felt in any given situation, I would go on and inform people, how this genocide had been totally ignored in the West, and on occasions I would warn people: “Don’t get me started!”.

During another conversation we had, I remember Jennings saying: “Hitler was by no means the original instigator of anti-Semitism in Germany, just the nastiest, sickest and most deranged. Wilhelm II was emphatically anti-Semitic and even thought to blame Jews for Germany’s defeat in WWI, a claim as nonsensical as anything Hitler might have proposed.” All of these abhorrent facts about Germany left me very conflicted and wondering how I could reconcile my sense of identity with all these horrors. My loving husband was very sympathetic. He would say things like: “Renata! Forget all that. Think of your mother’s family, who probably were more French than anything, and even on your father’s side, though of good German stock, they hated Hitler, didn’t they ?”

He was so right, and so sweetly supportive. My grandfather who used to call the Nazis riffraff and vermin, with which both my parents agreed wholeheartedly. Still, we were Germans, were we not ? How could we ever escape a sense of responsibility for the way Germany had conducted itself going back as far as the first of Bismarck’s assaults on neighbouring countries, right through the horrors and violence of WWI and WWII ? My dear aunt was right, I felt; Bismarck was the instigator. It was his aggressive wars 1864-1870, which started it all. He created the basis on which Prussian nationalism evolved and grew, even though he later sought to restrain the more avaricious and ignoble aspects without much success. Then Wilhelm II took over and only encouraged all the worst elements of German contempt for others and what grew into German national arrogance. The path from there to Hitler was not checked by the outcome of WWI. It was interrupted by Weimar for a decade or so, only to erupt early in the 1930’s in full, final and ugly fury.

It took WWII to finally terminate and extinguish German-Prussian nationalism, and we all had to endure the carnage and devastation it involved. Then, with the eradication of the Prussian hubris, Germany went from being the greatest military menace in Europe, if not in the world, to riding on the back of other nations for its security and defence, and all in little more than half a century. Who could have foreseen such an evolution in 1940 ? -

I also on occasion would ask Jennings about his thoughts about some of the major national events of the time. He was fond of and very supportive of Truman, and he entirely agreed

with Hopkins' comment, that he should not have kept so many of Roosevelt's old war horses, as he called them. Jennings said: "I believe he did it for the sake of continuity and loyalty. In the event, it proved to be a mistake." Morgenthau, as previously mentioned, resigned as soon as he realized, there was no support for his bizarre concepts and plans for Germany in the new administration.

That left Ickes, Byrnes and Wallace, all of whom were to cause Truman plenty of headaches and grief, to put it mildly. Ickes was a rather testy, even cantankerous individual, referred to as "Old Curmudgeon" by more than a few, who knew him well. He had held the position of Secretary of Interior for a very long time very successfully, and that had been reason enough for Truman to keep him on. Jennings felt, Truman should not have kept him, because there seemed to be questions of loyalty to the new administration and even duplicity masquerading as self-righteousness.

The final blow up with Ickes was a squalid case of who said what, when to whom and why, involving Senate hearings and the usual media circus. Ickes resigned in February 1946. Truman accepted his resignation immediately and gave him 72 hours to clear out. Jennings felt Ickes' conduct had been contemptible. He remained active in the Democratic Party, and tried to get back at Truman during the re-election nomination.

Byrnes was in his early 60's when Truman became president. He had a long successful career going back to before the outbreak of WWI. He had been a US Representative for some 14 years, later a US Senator for another 10 years. He had even been on the Supreme Court, but left that in 1942 to head up Roosevelt's Economic Stabilization and War Mobilization administrations. These were hugely important mainstays of the war effort, and Byrnes effective leadership and close collaboration with Roosevelt, could have made him a natural choice for Vice Presidential candidacy for the 1944 election.

Wallace was the current Vice President, and he was Roosevelt's choice for nominee as well for 1944, but Roosevelt knew the party hierarchy was opposed to a re-nomination of Wallace, who was widely considered as too volatile and erratic for a Vice Presidency, which may have had some probability of becoming the head of state during the next 4 years.

Roosevelt's 2nd choice was Byrnes, but he refused to endorse anyone other than Wallace. Consequently the party felt free to make its own choice, and that was how Truman was nominated. Had Roosevelt specifically and emphatically endorsed Wallace, there is essentially no doubt he would have been nominated easily. As it was, Wallace missed being the 33rd President by less than 3 months.

Byrnes and Truman went far back, Byrnes having been one of Truman's mentors, when

Truman entered the Senate in 1935 and they had maintained cordial relations through the years. It is indisputable; however, it must have rankled Byrnes, that Truman, who was his junior and who did not have anywhere near his experience or many years of public service, then ended up being the president; but he professed loyalty and offered Truman all possible help and counselling during the early difficult weeks of the new administration.

Truman felt he needed someone to lean on in the complicated relations with the Russians and to handle foreign relations generally, and that Byrnes was the best suited man present, so Byrnes was appointed Secretary of State in July 1945. Neither Truman nor Byrnes had any real experience in foreign relations, but Byrnes had taken part in The Yalta Conference and he had a few advisors, with whom he cooked up policy as he went on.

Early on, there were indications, Byrnes made important policy decisions without consulting or informing Truman, and there is some suggestion, this was Byrnes' way of acting out his resentment of not having become President. I felt, at the time and as I understood it, this was very unfortunate, because Byrnes, in many ways, was a very good Secretary of State, energetic, resourceful and knowledgeable, but apparently it was below his self-respect to maintain the cordial relations they used to have, and to consult the President as he should have. He finally resigned early in 1947. General George Marshall was appointed in his place, and that was a very popular appointment.

Henry A. Wallace from Iowa was a brilliant agricultural researcher, developer and editor of farm publications. He bred poultry very successfully, developed swine husbandry and finally founded a major seed company. Benefits of Wallace' pioneering work early and later in the century are enjoyed by farmers and agriculturalists in many parts of the world to this date.

Wallace's father had been U.S. Secretary of Agriculture in the 1920's, and as so often is seen in US politics, the son aspired to follow in his footsteps. Roosevelt appointed Henry Wallace to this same position in 1933, in which capacity he served until 1940, when he resigned to run for Vice President. When he was not re-nominated for the 1944 election, Roosevelt named him Secretary of Commerce.

Apart from his agricultural accomplishments, Wallace was also a dreamer, a pacifist and possibly the foremost promoter of Soviet-US relations during the Roosevelt years. As such, he has later been alleged to have been a Soviet spy, but there is no valid evidence I know of to support that. He may simply have been listed in the Soviet annals as an "operative" or some other gibberish, merely indicating he was very, very friendly towards the U.S.S.R.

I find Joseph Alsop's characterisation of Wallace both amusing and accurate: "Henry A. Wallace, a man immensely knowledgeable about farm problems but a mystic and an

unreliable oddity when too far from the furrow and the manure pile.”

Once Wallace started to make speeches about Soviet-US relations, where he expressed his naively held views about the Bolsheviks, Stalin and Russia, that ran contrary to Administration policy, Truman had to fire him. That was in September 1946.

W. Averell Harriman was appointed in his place. He had been ambassador in Moscow during the war, from where he had regularly provided outstanding analysis and reports, and he had a long accomplished career behind him in business, banking and finance.

His was a timely and popular appointment.

Henry Wallace did have a considerable backing for his views generally, and after leaving the Truman Administration he became editor of *The New Republic* magazine. From this position he continued to advance his pro-Soviet views and he regularly maligned Truman's foreign policy. When Truman made his famous speech in support of Turkey and Greece in 1947, which later came to be known as the Truman Doctrine, Wallace warned, this would be the beginning of “A Century of Fear”.

I was sympathetic to Wallace at the time, but I could not see that Truman had any choice. I felt the administration had to act as it did. Wallace was a man way ahead of the country in a number of areas. His views on race relations in the US were admirable, and both my husband and I were supportive of such policies, but they were also premature and politically naïve.

By 1948 Wallace had aligned himself with the far left wing organization The Progressive Party, and ran as their presidential candidate. It was very unsuccessful, but I will get to those details later in my story.

Most of my young life, I had been starved for knowledge and information about civic affairs, state governance and the life of a vital and living democracy, and now that all that was available to me, I could not help devoting a lot of time and effort to follow it all, to understand it, and feel part of it. My keen interest in all of that impressed my husband, but there were also times, when he could get a bit exasperated. He would say things like: “Renata! Enough politics for today, leave something for tomorrow.” I knew he was right and I would kiss him and thank him for his patience.

All through the winter 1946-47, Lee and I worked hard and steady; Lee at his job and now quite often with overtime, and me with my studies and translation work. As young as we were, it was not unusual for us to put in 10-12 hour days, but we had the energy and the interest and we enjoyed it.

The way my studies worked out, combined with my translation of scientific papers, was wonderful and excellent, because during my regular classes, I learned all the basics and overall framework of nutrition, and then, when I read and translated the papers, it was as if I, at the same time, was attending an advanced or post graduate course of great benefit for my studies. At an early stage, I came to realize the tremendous benefit of what I was doing, and I started to take carbon copies of many of my translations for present and future reference. That helped me later write any number of term papers quickly and effortlessly,

because I had already done the research during the translations.

We were together with our friends regularly, always on week-ends because we were too exhausted during the week. We also visited all of the Prentice clan often as usual. They were impressed with our hard work and dedication. Lee had already been promoted a couple of times, since he had gone back to work; not major promotions, but important to him and obviously encouraging.

Jack's sweet girlfriend Jania was now living with him and with his support pursuing her studies of law. It always amused me, that a warm, sexy girl like her, should be studying law, but she told me it had in fact been an early interest for her. Her father's older brother had been a respected judge, whom she admired and who was kind enough to answer her questions when she was young, and tell her about law and how it was practised.

Whenever the 6 of us were together, I would always join Jen early on. I liked her very much and I was deeply grateful to her for introducing me to Nutrition. I told her that many times, and I always made a point of hearing about her work and life. She was a bit introverted, and she clearly appreciated when someone made a point of getting her to disclose about herself. Lee told me: "You are amazingly good at that, getting people to come out of their shell. How do you do it?". "I don't do anything, you do not see me doing. I think I express a little care, a little solicitude; that's all. You do that yourself some times, I know. Perhaps with different people at different times, but you are a very caring person. I know that better than anyone!" At that point, we embraced and kissed for quite a while. No one had ever made me happier than Lee, and when I was in his arms like this, I was entirely at peace.

In the evenings, when we were with our friends, Jen and Gary would usually leave fairly early. Lee told me, they always liked to rise early and to go to sleep early. I kind of admired that, and we certainly did that during the work week, but on the week-ends, we always seemed to get to bed past midnight and we liked our week-end mornings at leisure.

Then, after they would have left, Jania and I would settle down for some real girl-girl chatter, and Lee and Jack did much the same. I know for a fact, they occasionally reminisced about some their earlier wild times together, and that amused me. Some times I would tease Lee a little about it, but I also told him, I saw nothing wrong with that. There were even times, I managed to get Lee to tell me later exactly what they had been nostalgic about, and it would usually be sexy and amusing. That way I got to enjoy it too.

Jania and I also soon became very chummy, and as all girls do, we started to tell each other some of our life stories and experiences of all kinds. I told her about my childhood, my "half" sister and her provenance, my life loving grandmother, and in due course about my first boyfriend and what we did together. I could not tell her about what the Russians had done with me, at least not yet, but I told her about Inga and our time in Berlin, and she liked that.

Jania told me about her childhood. They lived in the city, but every year spent a long

summer vacation in the country on a farm, where they rented a wing with ample space. There was a lot of open forest near the farm, and about ½ hours walk through the forest, you reached the shore of a very large lake. Children in the 10 to 14 year range would congregate there, usually about a dozen kids, often more. They would spend lots of time in the water and on the sandy beach, but also in the adjoining meadows and forest. No one used swimsuits, she told me. Once they reached this place, they simply took their clothes off and stayed like that, until they went home. Girls and boys would then play intimately with each other. They did not have sex at this age, but as she said, they did just about everything else. It was entirely innocent and joyous.

Then she said: “This is the best way. All children should be allowed to live and learn this way. We did not know sin, guilt or shame. It didn’t seem to be part of our culture then. No one was ever harmed by what we did. If anything, it gave you more self-confidence than anything I can think of. I do not believe I would be a happy, calm and reasonably confident person today, had I not been able to enjoy all we kids did together during those wonderful summers at the lake. That allowed us to grow and develop as we should.”

“I could not agree more.” I told her, and we went on talking about how our formative years had resembled each other. Over time, as I got to know her better and better, she also started to tell me about some of her experiences with men. I can’t deny, I enjoyed that, because some of these encounters were absolutely hilarious, others merely sexy, but they were all very entertaining. I admired her. To me, she was a truly complete, happy, even fulfilled human being; who always seemed to engender merriment, even hilarity about her. In time, she became my confidant; a fellow girl and woman I could share anything with, and a sensible source of occasional guidance.

There were some momentous events I remember from that year. Tornados scared me, from the first time I ever learned about them, and none worse than the horrible Woodward Tornado, that killed more than 100 people and destroyed 1000’s of homes, farms and indeed the entire town of Woodward, Oklahoma. It wrought havoc and death from Texas and through much of Oklahoma. It was estimated to have been about 3 km in diameter, and may have been one of the largest tornados ever encountered. That happened on the 9. April.

No more than a week later, a French cargo ship loaded with ammonium nitrate exploded, all but destroying Texas City and killing 580 people and injuring 5000. Just 2 days later, another ship blew up there as well. I remember Lee and I talked about how fragile life is, and how little we human beings can do to protect ourselves from that kind of destiny.

At some time in the Fall of 1945, Lee had taken me to see a baseball game in what then was called the Negro League. The Kansas City Monarchs was according to Lee the best team in the country of these all black players. I remember Lee saying: “This segregation of sports is a disgrace and a dishonour to the country, but there are people working to break it. I am

quite confident, it will be gone within a few years.”

One of the players we had watched was Jackie Robinson, and he became the trailblazer who finally broke the colour barrier in baseball, but in fact, it did not actually take place in USA, but of all places in Montreal, Canada in 1946, where he played for one season. Only then in April 1947, was he finally signed to play for the Brooklyn Dodgers. The legendary Dodgers general manager Branch Rickey had been the ground breaking force, who worked long and hard to accomplish this objective, but equal credit ought to be shared with Hector Racine, the owner of The Montreal Royals, who provided the original break. We were very pleased, Lee in particular of course, but Jackie Robinson was lost to Kansas City for good.

The weather that Spring and early Summer had been unusually wet and some time towards the end of June a horrendous weather system deluged the whole state. At a small locality called Holt, the highest measured rainfall in the US occurred during that storm, with 12 inches of rain falling in 42 minutes. Needless to say, there was tremendous flooding everywhere, roads, highways, rail yards and tracks, all of the lower lying areas, including incidentally the plant where Lee worked. He was off work for more than 2 weeks.

All of the family were O.K. Lots of inconveniences and some leaks, but no flooding; however, where Gary and Jen lived, there was a lot of flooding. Lee took a chance and drove over there slowly and carefully. They were surprised to see him, and he told them to pack a few things and come with him: “You are going to stay with us until this is over, and that is an order!”. They were very grateful and we had a good time together for about 2 weeks. Jen actually did most of the cooking while they were with us.

Also from 1947, I remember the unveiling of a magnificent mural by my favourite painter Benton, “Achelous and Hercules”. It is 22 feet long and 5 feet high. As so often, Benton had taken a legend from classical mythology, and transplanted it to the contemporary Mid West. It is bright, colourful, dramatic and gorgeous. It was displayed for a long time at a major department store in KC, but today it is at the Smithsonian in Washington DC; a very appropriate venue I believe.

By July the weather finally settled down, so we could start trying our hands at camping and we had a lot of fun with that. The boys had located surplus US Army tents, sturdy, simple contraptions, but the smell took some getting used to. Believe it was something to impregnate the canvas to make it watertight. During July-August, I believe we went out nearly every week-end, even when it was very hot. Initially we decided to stick with established campgrounds, even a couple operated by church groups, who kindly welcomed us. Later we became more adventurous and camped by a river bend, where we had total privacy. It was probably not without some degree of risk, but we were a lot of people, and we always had Max with us. Jack also carried a firearm in his car.

This was the summer we tentatively had been invited to spend a week-end with Mr. Sherman. It had originally been planned for late June, but on account of the weather and some overseas travel, it was changed to the Labour Day holiday in September. Lee was happy about that, because the summer heat should have dissipated to some degree by then. Lee was ambiguous about this invitation however, and more or less demanded of Jack, that he try get a little more information and background, such as why he specifically wanted to meet us, and what exactly was his engagement with Naturism or Nudism and so on.

Well, here is what Jack was able to report a few weeks later: the interest in Naturism actually originated with Sherman's parents. They knew a Swiss psychoanalyst and educator, Werner Zimmermann, who promoted naked gymnastics to dispel guilt and shame. Zimmermann had visited them in the US on his many travels at least a couple of times, and they were very taken with his ideas. For their retirement, they hoped to open a naturist park in California or Arizona, which Sherman probably would take part in financing.

Sherman's parents had been studying and learning all they could find about the subject for many years, and they knew very well who Adolph Koch was and all that he had contributed. When Jack en passant had mentioned something to the effect, he knew a young German girl, who had been in an Adolph Koch kindergarten, Sherman was keenly interested, and wanted to meet me. Last but not least, Sherman was also involved as one of several backers of a fledgling Naturist magazine based in California, and one or more girls involved in the magazine would be visiting as well, and we would be able to meet them.

Lee was happy with that, and I think we all were. Lee told me he had feared Sherman might be some silly, rich playboy, whose main interest was to be entertained, but he now agreed, obviously that was not the case. It all sounded quite reasonable, and we looked forward to Labour Day.

We had made arrangements to leave a little early on the Friday, and I think the drive was about 3 hours or something like that. We were all packed in Jack's car, which was big and roomy, quite a gas guzzler I am sure, but no one cared about that in the 1940's. That would give us 2 full days, plus most of the day on Monday.

What we had heard about the place was, that it had originally been built about 28 years ago as a comfortable, but rustic private club, in particular for well to do hunters and fishermen. It was not open to the public. It failed already in 1922, during the early 20's short, sharp recession. It was resurrected within a couple of years, but there was some questions about its reputation. Again, it was a private club, but seemingly for men only. Lee's aunt Lou Ann had a cook at one time, who had worked there during those years. She had said, it's funny the place is for men only, because there were always lots of young women at the club as well. Later I discovered, this kind of out-of-the-way "clubs" were not all that unusual during those years. Many years later, I encountered details of a similar "club", which had operated for many years in the Adirondacks in N.Y.

This latest "club" also went out of business in the early 1930's, only to be resurrected again

for some years and then closing for good a few years ago. Sherman had bought it for just the back taxes owing, which had not amounted to very much. No serious maintenance had been done for years, so Sherman took his time to rebuild, paint, repair and refurbish leisurely. Among the methods he used was the idea of installing a cabinet maker and a plasterer right on the premises, later to be replaced with a painter and a plumber and so on. They would work through the week and return home for the week-end.

There were a total of 24 cottages arranged 12 and 12 back to back. Each cottage had a cozy room, bathroom and covered porch with rustic chairs. All bedding was new and very nice. The exterior colour scheme was an attractive 2 tone brown, light and medium. I do not care too much for dark brown, but this design was very appealing. An assortment of native wildflowers had been planted around each cottage.

The main building contained the Grandview Room, with lots of large windows, and indeed a grand view of the lake, forests and the landscape, behind that a large corridor, and then the dining room, which was quite simple but comfortable and pleasant. Between the Grandview Room and a much smaller parlour and reading room, there was a bar open to both sides. I found that quite unique and delightful. The furniture was mainly the heavy but very comfortable leather sofas and chairs, that was common in some of the major banks in former days.

The resort occupied a lovely peninsula in the lake, forming a hill on the side of the buildings and lower meadows, with a stretch of beach on the other side. The grounds were open throughout, but with some magnificent trees widely spread over the hilly part in particular. I seem to remember some huge oaks, but also old pines and firs.

We arrived that Friday evening, I guess around 7.00-7.30, after a reasonably fast drive from the city. The lane leading up to the main building took you to the side, where the main entrance was, the office and opposite the parking area, because cars were not otherwise accommodated on the grounds. Outside the office and the main entrance, there were some groupings of perennial flowers and flowering bushes and a couple of benches. On one of these benches, a young woman was relaxing and she was not wearing anything, not even shoes or sandals.

As we drove up, Jack took one look at her, and commented: "Well, I guess, we have come to the right place!" Indeed we had. We all got out and walked towards the entrance, and the girl as well got up and greeted us. "My name is Glenda, and I have been expecting you," she said very pleasantly. She was tall and slim, and even though she was very nude, somehow her nudity seemed very inoffensive, even innocent. Glenda continued: "We only serve dinner until 8.00, so you are just in time. Why don't you go to the dining room, and I will join you there a little later."

As we entered, Glenda followed us. At the entrance, I noticed she picked up a very simple, short frock, which she put on without anything else. It had big buttons down the front, which she buttoned, and that was the only garment we ever saw her in, but outdoors she never wore anything.

In the dining room, we were greeted by a cheerful, short black woman. She was the cook and dinner was a buffet, where we helped ourselves. It was very sensible and practical, and the food was good. There was nice cold well water from their own wells, coffee and cold beer. After a little while Glenda joined us. She told us Cees and the 2 girls from the West Coast would come tomorrow morning, and we should make ourselves comfortable. She would take us to our rooms, and show us around.

Lee asked her, if Napali was operating as a resort, or a private club, or what exactly its status was. "Well, no," she replied: "Cees bought this place a few years ago, simply because he couldn't resist the opportunity and he adored the landscape. Also, he loves to rebuild and develop older buildings, so this was really ripe for him. His objective now is to sell it, since all the work has been done, and he is not interested in owning-operating a resort. The Nudist angle came from his parents, and there are presently people interested with the view of operating a nudist resort. He likes to bring friends and acquaintances here, because he says, as long as he owns it, we may as well make use of it. It also helps to circulate information about the place by word of mouth."

Well, that was interesting. Now that we knew the story, I asked Glenda, if she had been there from the beginning, when Cees bought it. "Yes, I was along from the outset", she said: "And for my part, I wish he would keep it. I had hoped his parents might have agreed to operate it, but they are focused on Arizona or California." We stayed and chatted for a while. Then with Glenda, we cleared the table and cleaned up a bit, and Glenda walked us to our rooms.

It was probably around 10.00 P M. and the sky was moonlit and clear with all the stars sparkling. There were no lights to be seen anywhere to interfere with this beautiful night. Although we were tired after a long day, we could not resist going for a walk of the grounds. All the others had gone to sleep evidently. We walked among the great old trees. I seem to remember a couple of ancient white pines, that were absolutely enormous. We reached the lake at the foot of the hill, and then walked along the shore. That took us out of the wooded part and we got to the area, I would describe as a wildflower meadow with a lovely stretch of beach in front.

We sat down on the sand and looked at the moon and the stars, and the moonlight reflected on the lake. It was heavenly and ethereal. After a while we laid down in the sand. It felt so good, even seemed a little warm from the sun during the day. We could have stayed and slept right there all night, it was so lovely. After may be half an hours reverie in the warm evening air, I felt like putting my hands in the water, and it was so good I knew I could not resist getting in.

Lee was still lying with his eyes half closed seemingly dozing off. I quickly undressed, then knelt beside him mussing his hair a little. He opened his eyes and looked at me with disbelief, then he smiled: "That's my girl! You going anywhere ?" he asked laughing. I told

him I was going for a swim: "It's just irresistible", I said, and I ran out into the water. It was glorious and refreshing and I just swam and swam, like I used to do when I was 10-12 year old kid in our lovely lake at Grunerhof.

Lee sat on the beach with his hands on his knees and watched me. Finally, he also got undressed and joined me. "I can't get over your energy", he said; "I was about ready to fall asleep, and you have been jumping in the water and swimming like a high school kid. Are you sure, that is not what you are?" He said that in jest, I was sure, so I decided to respond the same way: "Who knows, may be!", but I had to wonder. Had he suddenly had a feeling of intuition, because I was so playful in the water all by myself, or had he harboured suspicions before. I felt I had to try find out in due course.

We walked up on the beach with our arms around each other, and we stood there kissing while the night air dried us. It was heavenly. Then we put on our sandals, and remaining nude as we were supposed to be, we slowly walked up to our room. We stayed on the little porch of the room for a while, but eventually we got sleepy and went inside and to bed. I believe we both went to sleep immediately. In the morning we made love as usual on Saturday mornings. I couldn't help thinking: "So I'm a high school kid; well, I will show you a real nympho high school kid!"

After we showered, we almost got dressed by mistake, and then remembered, we were supposed to remain undressed. Then we wondered, what to do for breakfast, because we had been dressed for dinner. Just then, there was a knock on our door, and much to my delight, there was a very nude Jen with a rather reserved expression on her face. She was so cute and since we were both nude, I couldn't help laughing and giving her a hug. "Jen, you look so cute. You should do that more often!"; I told her. She appreciated my support.

"Anyway," she said: "I came to tell you, the breakfast is on the patio outdoors. No clothes there, Glenda told us." We thanked her, and followed her to the patio, which was on the opposite side from the main entrance. There we found the rest of the gang all as naked as we were. The patio was spacious, with simple cement tiles, screened on one side by a five foot brick wall and part of the building on the other side. It was about 2/3 covered by a pergola and grape vines. It was very neat and pleasant and the vines gave a pleasing semi shade.

I could not help asking everybody: "So, how do you find life without clothes?" Jack promptly answered: "I could get used to that very quickly. It feels healthy, it looks healthy and I am certain, receiving the sun on all parts of your body is wholesome. It also saves on clothes and laundry, and I am certain both I and all my fellow citizens, would keep our bodies in better shape and finally lead longer lives, if we spent a lot of time without clothes."

"Touché!" someone exclaimed right behind me. I had been standing during my conversation, and Jack now turned his attention to the newly arrived, Cees Sherman and the two girls. Jack told him: "Your timing is perfect. We were just discussing the merits of nude living". "And you spoke well indeed" Sherman commented. Jack then proceeded to make the introductions, and we all shook hands with our host and the girls. I often tend to

have some pre-conceived notion of people I am going to meet, and Mr. Sherman was much shorter, than I had imagined. I guess you would call him of medium height, but very healthy, active and energetic, with a quick wit and lively mind. He seemed to think faster than most people and he could be slightly condescending at times, but he was also by all means a genial host, and made sure we all enjoyed ourselves.

They left presently, to go to their room, and to get appropriate as Sherman said. Jack asked us what we thought, and I commented: "Very sharp and suave, and the girls very showy and sexy!" They all laughed about that, and Jen said: "I think they came straight from Central Casting." That caused further merriment, but Jack interjected: "They are actually quite bright. The shorter one is a photographer and they are both very dedicated nudists. Now, they are trying to promote this new magazine."

At that point, Jania asked: "Do you think they would like us to model for shots for their magazine?" "I'm sure they would take you up on any offer you might make", Jack said. "I wouldn't mind", Jania kind of thought aloud: "But I would not like my name printed." I agreed with that right away; "You are right, no names, but pictures O.K." Then my Lee piped up: "No normal, healthy young girl refuses publicity, particularly having her picture taken nude or otherwise." I was standing beside him, and I mussed his hair because of his comment. "Guys like that just as much," I said; "You just like to pretend this is only a female penchant." We had a good laugh about that again, and Lee picked me up with his strong arms, and put me sitting across his lap. The others looked kind of impressed, that Lee had dared to do that in our nude state. I loved it.

Around that time the other 3 returned and now appropriately nude. In my mind, I had to agree, the 2 California girls were very attractive, even quite sexy, but also a little inane, even frivolous. I thought, no use engaging them in deeply philosophical conversations. Anyway, they were nice enough and very dotting on Cees, and I am sure, that was what mainly mattered to him. He was nicely muscled and proportioned, but I thought he had a rather small penis, at least compared to those I knew, not least my sweetheart's. I know some people would say, you are not supposed to pay any attention to other people's sexy parts. I think that is phoney. Why shouldn't you. They like to look at yours.

Cees told us they had a couple of nice older horses, very docile, so anyone could ride, but they had no saddles. He mentioned, Glenda had learnt to ride them bareback, which she did often, and she would show any of us, if we wanted. Anyway, he said, we should all go for a swim since it is so warm and sunny, so we all trekked to the beach. Lee and I told Cees about our midnight swim last night and the starlit sky. "I am so happy you experienced that," he said; "because today it is harder and harder to view the night sky, without the contamination of lights. The first time I saw it here, it shocked me to realize, it had been many, many years since I last had seen the full night sky in its entirety, like you can see it here."

The plan was to take a quick swim and then walk back for lunch, but the water was so

lovely, and it was really exhilarating for all of us to be in the water nude together. I could have stayed all day. Initially we just swam, even far out, but then it got more playful. We started that time honoured water game, where girls ride on the shoulders of boys and wrestle other couples, to see who would keep standing. It was enormous fun, exciting, sexy, even compassionate. Lee and I were usually the last couple standing, because Lee is really strong, and he held on to my legs more effectively. Then, one of the California girls, asked me if I would mind, she try a turn with Lee, and I liked that idea. I asked Lee to give it a try with her and he happily consented. Then, almost predictably, Cees Sherman insisted I take a turn with him, and that I couldn't very well refuse. Anyway, we got hauled down fairly quickly, then tried again at least a couple of times. Eventually, we had enough and slowly made our way back to the beach. We had brought no towels, so we just stood around and dried in the air. Then we walked back to the patio for lunch.

Our amiable cook had made us lots and lots of delicious sandwiches for lunch. Toasted brown bread with fresh bacon and tomatoes, also some with nice ham and some with grilled cheese. There was also a huge bowl of mixed salad, coffee, tea, water and cold beer. It was delightful and I told the cook how much I had enjoyed it. She was standing at the far end of the buffet table, from where we collected the food. I really liked her, and I asked her: "Doesn't it bother you with all us naked people?" "Heck, no," she laughed, "I don't see nothing the Good Lord did not create. It don't bother me any. And some of the boys are good looking. That one you are with, he is really swell." I had a good laugh at that, and told her he was my husband. "You chose well girl," she said, "Now you should have some young ones." I thanked her and told her we were trying.

Jania had talked with the California girls during lunch, and indeed they would love to be allowed to use any of us for modelling. They promised no names would appear in print. They had enlisted Glenda to help with the horses, so we could try doing a Lady Godiva display. Gary asked to be excused from the photo session. With a bit of a smirk, he said, he was not well suited for that, but I told him we wanted him, as well as Jack and Lee to come along, even if no pictures were taken of them. Eventually he relented, which was just as well, because the 2 other boys likely would have used that as a reason not to come as well.

The girls proposed we should make our way down through the part with the beautiful old trees. It was very open, more like a series of glades, with lots of sun. Glenda was walking the 2 horses, one rope in each hand. They were both tethered, but no saddles were available. The horses were quite mature no doubt, but they walked well, and they contentedly munched on wild carrot plants I pulled up and gave them. Glenda said to me: "How did you know horses love those plants?" That amused me, and I told her I grew up with horses, and I rode horses since I was young. Also, I had ridden bare back without saddle, and I had ridden horses out in our lake in summer. Now, sadly, it was a few years I had not been near a horse. Glenda was impressed and we talked some more. She told me she was a painter and during the last two winters, she had been studying art full time. This was her summer job. Before we went home, she showed me some of her drawings. They were excellent. We made plans to get together when she moved back to the city.

The consensus was, we should start with the horse shots. I suggested, Glenda should be the first model, since she knew the horses best and besides had a somewhat regal facial profile. All agreed, and it worked well. I told Glenda, if she could, she should both try to sit sideways and also sit astride, because I had an idea Lady Godiva rode seated sideways. She did in fact look the part, sitting very straight and gazing at the horizon.

Then they all insisted I be the next. I could not refuse, and Lee helped me up on the horse. I actually rode around a bit and I had no difficulty getting the horse to follow which way I wanted to go. I did various poses, also one where I bent forward and hugged the horse affectionately. They all loved that. Then I got this slightly wild idea, to try stand on the back of the horse with my arms in the air, as if I was worshipping the sun, or something like that. I had to stand with my legs apart for balance and I also raised my face towards the sun. The girls loved that pose and took numerous shots of it from all angles. I heard Jack ask Lee: "Was Renata ever a model before you met her? She is amazing. This was very professional, and look how she even directed Glenda." Lee told him, he was reasonably sure I had never been a model, but she is inventive and very versatile he said.

Jania said: "I guess that is enough horsing around for now, unless anyone else wants to take a ride?" And it was agreed to concentrate on people. They took a lot of shots in all kinds of positions, crawling up in a huge old willow tree hanging out over the lake, and we also did group shots, for example one of Jack with his arms around Jania and me on either side of him. Lastly a shot of Lee carrying me in his arms effortlessly.

Eventually, we ended up back on the beach, and the girls wanted us to do the pose with us girls riding on the shoulders of the boys, but on the beach. They took lots of shots of us like that, and finally one with all 6 of us standing side by side, with us girls holding our arms on each other. The girls said: "This is a real winner!" By then we were all sweaty and dusty and in need of a swim, so we spent the rest of the afternoon in the water and on the beach. We did some speed swimming competitions, and I taught both Jen and Gary how to float with confidence.

In the later afternoon, we were lying and sitting on the beach, and we got to talk about the nudist experience we had had so far. Jen said: "This has been a revelation to me. Somehow, perhaps because of my upbringing, and the opinion of my parents, the church and what not, I have always thought of nudism as something slightly indecent, even lewd. Now, I know how wrong that is. It is really excellent, healthy and wholesome. I can't think of a better environment for small children and kids of all ages. I am a convert." Gary, who was right beside her, added his five cents: "I'm with you absolutely. Imagine, how much healthier people could be living like this, or just spending all spare time and vacations without clothes."

Both Jania and I added something of our childhood experiences, and I stressed how harmless and innocent it was, and how I felt, it had given me a self-confidence, both mental and physical, I do not believe I otherwise would have had. Jen smirked good naturedly, and asked: "Is that how you get up the nerve, to pose standing on the back of the horse with your arms in the air?" "In a small way, yes I guess you are right"; I said."

The horses happily grazed in the adjoining meadow, while we were on the beach. Glenda told us, we would have supper on the patio as usual, then assemble in the Grandview Room, where I was supposed to tell everybody about my grandmother's Adolph Koch kindergarten. I knew, that was expected of me, but I also asked Jania, if she would mind saying a few words about her childhood summer life in Hungary. She readily agreed. Glenda told us not to wear anything in the Grandview Room. "We sit on towels, she said. You will find them there." Glenda and I then rode the horses back to their barn, and I joined Lee in our room for a quick shower before dinner.

Cees Sherman joined us for dinner. He had been busy on long distance phone calls, because as he told us, he had customers in countries, where our week-end in fact are workdays. Also, he informed us, he would have to leave the next morning, to attend to some major potential deals. "But I expect you all to stay until Monday night and enjoy it", He said. We thanked him profusely and told him it had been a wonderful experience. Lee then said: "If there is anything you can think of, that any of us might be able to contribute to help with a possible sale or future of this lovely place, we would expect to hear from you." He really liked that.

The dinner was a kind of boeuf bourguignon with a nice potato salad and buttered collard greens. It was delicious. The California girls were in high spirits. During our long photo shoot with them, they had been using a total of 3 cameras, and they had taken several rolls of film. They promised to send prints as soon as the films were developed.

I think about 8 P M we then retired to the Grandview Room, where we found small stacks of towels, we helped ourselves to and spread out and sit on. I do not know why, but being naked indoors, with ten attractive people, somehow felt very different from outdoors. We went everywhere on the grounds including the patio nude and it felt entirely harmless and innocent. In fact, much of the time, you tended to forget that you were not wearing clothes. Well indoors it was different. Here, somehow, it felt racy, even daring and certainly also sexy. It was as if everybody were checking each other out more brazenly and why I don't know. Later that night I asked Lee his opinion about that. He said: "It is as if nudity is entirely appropriate outdoors, but not indoors, and so it feels kind of provocative indoors. Is that how it felt to you?" "Yes, something like that;" I said.

Anyway, we were all present, and I started to talk about my grandparents, because I had to provide a little background, I thought. After a short while, I stood up and also walked around a little, because my voice is not so strong, and I think some of my audience couldn't quite hear all I was saying. I told them about how liberal my grandparents were, about my grandmother's modelling for painters and their various extra marital relations, which didn't affect their happy marriage in the slightest. I even mentioned my grandfather's paternity of my "half sister" Heike, which never caused any problems either.

When my grandmother originally encountered Adolph Koch, she knew he was on to something healthy and wholesome, and that every effort should be made to promote his concepts and ideas. She discussed it with everyone in the family, and we went to work on

rebuilding the empty house she had chosen. From the very outset, it was both daycare and kindergarten, the very youngest children being 2-3 years old and up to 7, when they went to school. There were anywhere from 12 and up to 24 kids, more often About 20 to 24, and the parents were very supportive. All the children were nude and all of us, who worked with them, were nude as well. I can safely say, the children were happy, very happy. By the age of 7, they could all read and write. They knew the alphabet by heart. They usually jumped at least one grade, when they entered school.

Both I and my half sister spent a very happy childhood in the kindergarten, and by the time we were around 10-12 years old, we worked there every day as well, after our own school day. As long as I live, I will remain convinced of the validity of this approach to the earliest childhood education. There is no better way to prevent the curses of sin, shame and guilt.

Then some questions were asked, Jack wanted to know if it would not have been better, if the schooling could have continued after Koch's precepts right through high school, and I told him: "Absolutely, but during the dark ages of Nazism 1933-1945, no such schooling was possible."

One of the California girls wanted to know, if young nude boys did not get erections very often, and what did we do about it. I couldn't help laughing, and I told her: "It happened all the time, and no one paid the slightest attention to it. That is so basic for young boys, and the good reaction is to ignore it. The same incidentally applies to girls, who often pet themselves between their legs. Just ignore it, and if it goes on and on, try divert the child's attention, but never punish them for that or in any way express displeasure."

Cees Sherman asked some questions about the economics, and I told him, it never made money as such, but then it was not intended to either.

Then Jania took over and told us about her childhood experiences, specifically the long summers in the country, and how the group of children she was part of congregated far from adults and played according to their own ideas. Their age range was about 9-10 to 14. They were nude most of the time by the lake, and when not in the water they often engaged in very early intimacies, girls with boys. For example, they loved to experiment with kissing, and that could go on for hours. She said they also touched and caressed each other without hesitation or shame, but they did not engage in actual sex at that age.

One of the California girls commented: "Yah, I can relate to that. I am from a small town and we used to spend time in a dry creek, where there were many water holes we could use. We used to play like that too."

They all thanked us generously, Cees Sherman in particular. He told me, this information was an absolute eye opener for him, and he intended to study the subject of early childhood education extensively. He said: "It is a subject I find infinitely fascinating, more so than professional sports, golf, even making money. It just seems that much more worthwhile. Your grandmother surely set a shining example with what she did."

I was quite moved and gratified to hear that. Evidently, Sherman was a serious person, at least in some respects. I had not failed to notice, he and the 2 girls all slept in the same room, and apparently, there was only one bed in the room. Anyway, there is really nothing wrong with that, as long as everybody were happy, and as we had seen, they were.

Before we went to bed, I asked my sweet, patient husband a theoretical question. I said to him: "Lee, tell me, if you ever had, or would have, an opportunity, to grope an attractive girl in a situation, where you felt, you could get away with it, or the girl might not object too strenuously, would you do it?" "That is quite a mouthful. What is the occasion?" he asked. "I promise you, we will get to that later, but I really would like to try understand if there is some kind of standard, most guys follow." "Fair enough;" Lee said, "I will try explain, but first, can you be more specific, like fondle her hips, put your hands on her breasts, putting your hand between her legs, what are we talking about?" "All of the above;" I said.

Lee thought about it for a few minutes, then he said: "It is easy for me to answer, for the simple reason, I have never done it, and I can't really imagine a situation, where I would do it, unless I was very drunk, or something like that; and since I do not drink a great deal, it is highly unlikely to ever occur. Now, what makes this proposition more complicated, is for me to answer, why I would not do it, and why I never did it. Is it because of upbringing, or inherent decency, or because I wouldn't have the guts and so on. I have actually thought about that on occasion in the past, and I came to this conclusion: if I desired a relationship with a girl, I always had some preconceived ideas how I would like it to proceed, to be really enjoyable for both of us, and for that reason alone, groping wouldn't work. In my simple mind, it would spoil and preclude, what I would like together with the girl. It is really that clear for me. If I started off by groping and the girl responded positively, then, that would not be a relationship, I would want to pursue. It is complicated. Does it make any sense?"

"I think it does. I like what you are saying, because it is ultimately very romantic. It is also decent and graceful. Now, one more question: how many guys generally, would follow that same reasoning?" I asked. "Well," Lee said; "I tend to believe, the vast majority of men kind of follow that direction, but there are probably quite a few, who would be inclined to slip up, as it were, given an unusually tempting situation, often involving alcohol. The actual hard core gropers, who would take advantage of any situation, with or without alcohol, I would estimate to be no more than 10%, but I'm surely no expert on this subject. Remember too, even though the hard core gropers may be a small segment, they give all men a bad name. All too often, the entire gender of males, gets blamed for the bad behaviour of a few. It always seems to work like that. I am sure there are as well some variations between nationalities."

"There is another side to this question, of cause;" Lee continued: "If a guy has any feelings for a girl at all, he surely wouldn't grope her in any possible way. And if he is merely a horn dog looking for swift sex, then he might be inclined to do it. That may in fact well be the common denominator. I also suppose gropers probably harbour a poor opinion of their own self-image vis-a-vis girls and women. It is like they feel, I have no hope of getting her

consideration, so I may as well grope her. Something along those lines.

And while we are talking about it, I want to mention, girls and women grope or touch too, but they are so much more gentle and sensible. They start off gently touching hands. They also like arms and shoulders, and when really forward, they may gently put their hand on your cheek. Mothers should teach their little boys, that is the way you approach a girl. Anyway, now it is time for you to spill the beans, my honey bunny; right ?”

“Right, my love;” I replied: “But first I have to ask you, not to get overly upset, and not under any circumstances, show you know what I am going to tell you, or take any action to avenge what may have happened.” “If you say so, but this sounds serious”; Lee responded. “Well, yes and no. I have surely suffered indignities far, far worse in my short life, so I wouldn’t worry too much about this.”

“When we were introduced to Sherman and his girls, he quickly dispensed with you guys, then he paid much more attention to Jen, Jania and I, and me in particular. I can only explain his conduct as leering. Don’t forget they were still dressed and we were all nude. He plain and simple looked me over with a lewd grin on his face. Admittedly, it only lasted a few minutes, while you guys were busy chatting up the California girls, but it was unpleasant, and I tried to forget it as fast as possible. Whenever he was present, I noticed he had me in his eyes as much as possible. He reminded me of some of the creeps I escaped from in East Berlin.

Well, when we were in the water and we had all that fun, Sherman was there as well you will remember. He was playing with the 2 girls, that were with him, and I paid him no heed. That all changed so suddenly, when the girl asked to take a turn with you. At the time I thought it was very fair, and I certainly didn’t want to be a spoilsport, so I encouraged it. Now, I am convinced Sherman put her up to it. As soon as she was on your shoulders, Sherman was behind me and I felt his hands on my back and sides, as he insisted I now do a turn with him. He even for a minute rubbed himself against me. He had the nerve to say to me: “It’s all in good fun!” Then he knelt down and I had to get on his shoulders. Of course he groped my legs and thighs in the process, but that I had to expect, I suppose. His quest was to feel, paw and grope me as much as he could get away with, and so he made sure I fell off his shoulders as soon as seemly. It was 4-5 feet deep there, so I fell under the water, and Sherman immediately bent himself and reached with his right hand between my legs. He kept his hand there, while he lifted me up and with his other hand, he pawed my hips. It may only have lasted 20-30 seconds, but it was gross and disgusting. It felt like the start of a rape. He demanded I try another ride with him, which I felt somehow I had to do, but this time I knew what he was up to, and as soon as I fell, I swam away. That was my reason for asking you about groping. Now I do not want you to be terribly upset about it. I promise you, I will have forgotten about this event by next week. I just don’t ever want to see this creepy little man again!”

My poor sweet husband was fuming, his face was red and he was cursing under his breath, then he took me in his arms and held me close for a long time. He said: "I can't get over how strong you are. If you would allow me, I would smash the face of the little jerk. It would only take me minutes to do!" "I know"; I said; "and that is why I wouldn't want you to do anything. Leave it alone, leave him alone. I already feel much better, now that I have told you, and I promise you by this time next week, it will have been buried in the archives of my mind and forgotten."

That last riposte from me actually made Lee smile. "I have never heard of the archives of the mind. Where does that come from?" he asked. "I'm not sure"; I said; "it is something like the sub-conscious, but not quite the same." With that, we relaxed, showered and went to bed. We slept peacefully in each others arms. God I loved my man. I did not know what I would do without him.

The next day I felt good. Sherman was gone and we were not going to see him again this week-end, also I was reasonably sure I would never encounter him. After breakfast, Jen, Jania and I relaxed together on the patio, while the boys went off with Glenda to try their hands at horse riding. She was very patient and helpful, and I had on my mind to try spend some time with her. She did in fact not seem chummy with Sherman at all, more a formal employer / employee relationship, or something like that.

Anyway, I told Jen and Jania about my travail with Sherman. They were disgusted. "What a creep;" Jen said; and Jania added: "I had an inclination, he was one of those, when we were introduced, but I kept it to myself. I couldn't make accusations of that kind just on a haunch." "No, of course not; "I agreed. Around that time, the horses appeared, being ridden by Gary and Jack, very slowly and carefully and with Glenda walking alongside. Lee came a little later and joined us. He told us Gary and Jack had never been on a horseback, and it had been a lot of fun to get them up on the horses.

After breakfast, we girls were chatting on the patio, and Jen asked me, if we kids in the kindergarten ever touched each other, either accidentally or deliberately. "Yes, certainly;" I replied: "Invariably we would bump into each other, even touch each other during games and activities; particularly as we got a little older, there could be some slightly inappropriate touching also, and it was mainly done by the girls touching the boys. As gently as possible, we told the kids not to do that, but the boys liked being touched, and the girls enjoyed doing it. My half-sister Heike, was one of the worst for that.

We actually discussed that at some length with my grandmother and the other ladies who worked with the kids. The consensus was, that kids since the dawn of humanity have been touching each other, that it is entirely natural and even desirable. Much later, I have come across anthropological texts discussing child play and touching between girls and boys."

Jania commented: "That is the appropriate way for girls and boys to grow up. I know that from my childhood. This notion of protecting children from being touched, should never

apply to other children of the same age. Clueless and fanatic zealots have gotten in their twisted minds, that one child touching another child, is a molester and predator. This is crazy and absurd.” We all agreed with her.

At some time the next year, Jack told us Sherman had sold the place, but he believed with the mortgage provided by him. It was a local nudist-naturist group, who took it over and they built as well a campground to encourage visitors, since all the rooms became permanently occupied. I’m not sure for how long it operated, but today it is gone, long gone. A huge hydro electric development flooded all of the area, and today it is under deep water.

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