





**PATTON MOUNTAIN**

*"An Epic Legacy of World War II"*

**by**

**Ian Feldman**

SSI Publishing, LLC

P.O. Box 815

Holly Springs, GA 30142

USA

+1-404-226-4351

[viking2@tapestries.cc](mailto:viking2@tapestries.cc)

Copyright 2024 © Ian Feldman

Table of Contents

## EPIGRAPH

## PROLOGUE

### PART ONE: Present Time September 1972

Chapter 1: British Tortola

Chapter 2: Jost Van der Vort Island

### PART TWO: Rising of the Valkyries

Chapter 3: Sangerhausen

Chapter 4: The Crossing

Chapter 5: The Arrival

Chapter 6: The First Year

Chapter 7: Crystale

Chapter 8: The Move

Chapter 9: The Chateau

Chapter 10: Building the Legacy

Chapter 11: Swingtime

## **PART THREE: The Assassins**

Chapter 12: Evolution

Chapter 13: Schutzstaffel Infiltration

Chapter 14: Abduction

Chapter 15: Control of the Unwilling

Chapter 16: Extortion

Chapter 17: Zelten Jerusalem

## **PART FOUR: Building the Dragon**

Chapter 18: Unterseebootwaffe

Chapter 19: Ux-506

Chapter 20: Winds to Africa: May 1941

Chapter 21: A Dream of Berlin: Back in Time 1936

Chapter 22: The Dream: Horst's Valkyrie - 1936

Chapter 23: Enigma: May 1941

Chapter 24: Leopoldville

Chapter 25: Union Miniere

Chapter 26: Lebbeke

Chapter 27: The Congo

Chapter 28: Norsk Hydro

Chapter 29: The Berghof

Chapter 30: Events in Prague

Chapter 31: The British Raid

Chapter 32: Zweitens

Chapter 33: Poisoned Destiny

Chapter 34: Himmler's Vengeance

## **PART FIVE: The Dragon Emerges**

Chapter 35: Gulf of Guinea

Chapter 36: Günther's Bankers

Chapter 37: Dogpatch

Chapter 38: Bruckmann's Vault

Chapter 39: Dancing with the Valkyries

Chapter 40: The Recruitment

Chapter 41: Crystale's Magic

Chapter 42: Gunther and Mort

Chapter 43: The Package

## **PART SIX: The End of Times January 1945**

**Chapter 44: Blind Obedience**

**Chapter 45: Revenge of the Valkyries**

**Chapter 46: Horst's Decision**

**Chapter 47: Dragon Slayer**

**Chapter 48: Rise of a New Valkyrie**

**Chapter 49: Sherezade**

**Chapter 50: Clive Street Palace**

**Chapter 51: Flight of the Valkyries**

**Chapter 52: Northolt**

**Chapter 53: Affirmation**

**Chapter 54: Viana Da Foz**

**Chapter 55: Merseyside**

**Chapter 56: Due West of Liverpool**

**Chapter 57: The First Target**

**Chapter 58: Rush to Valhalla**

## **EPILOGUE**

## **EPIGRAPH**

*"The atomic bombs at our disposal represent only the first step in this direction . . . There is almost no limit to the destructive power which will become available in the course of their future development . . . opening the door to an era of devastation on an unimaginable scale."*

**- Petition from the American Atomic Scientists to the  
President of the United States, 1945**



## PROLOGUE

### **Cape Lookout - Near Harker Island, North Carolina**

On a cold black winter night in 1943, a sleek dark form broke the surface of the Atlantic about twenty kilometers off the North Carolina Coast. The war-weary skipper of UX-506, a new type IXB German U-boat, two-hundred and fifty-two feet in length, climbed out of the control room and onto the sea-washed deck. As he watched, a special radio antenna was hoisted above the conning tower by three of his crewmen. He wasn't looking for freighter targets. The Capitan donned his binoculars and checked the horizon three-hundred and sixty degrees, then gave an all clear and paused to light up a Turkish cigarette. His first officer waited beside him in the pitch dark for a response from their recent radio transmission.

The night was clear, and the new diesels hummed quietly as the sub ran at about nine knots into the rolling seas pushed by a northeast wind.

When the high frequency signal came in, it was quick and lasted only a few minutes. The official sign-off response would be the same as before: two static growls, silence, then one five-second continuous growl to signal "received and complete."

Moments later, the Unterseeboot was moving due east at a flank speed of eighteen knots along the surface to rendezvous with another Long Range Attack Boat, one-hundred and twenty kilometers northeast of the Azores. UX-506 had

delivered its message, high into the mountains of North Carolina, to a place only known as *The Beaucatcher Club*.

## **PART ONE**

### **A Present Time**

**September 1972**

#### **Chapter 1**

##### **British Tortola**

The late summer heat was subsiding, and the winds pushing in from the eastern Atlantic and North Africa were more temperate now. Within the islands and cays of the upper eastern Caribbean, the warm, luxurious water temperatures of mid-summer remained until the late fall.

One small, isolated island group, known as the British Virgins, provided a perfect setting for travel magazines and photographers to shoot their swimsuit models in the near buff without the prying eyes of tourists to distract their crews.

Two main inhabited islands, Virgin Gorda and Tortola, plus about fifty tiny unnamed islands and cays, as well as some highly restricted areas controlled by the British government, made up the archipelago. The region was sparsely populated and maintained a lazy serenity compared to the nearby U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

In previous centuries, pirates had figured out ways to shelter among the numerous tiny islands. There, hidden amid

rocky coves and dangerously shallow shoals and reefs, pirate ships would wait and, without warning, ravage unsuspecting ships carrying the riches of the New World to the Crowns of Europe. Over time, the islands became the favored hangouts of scoundrels such as Blackbeard, Bluebeard, and Sir Francis Drake. Thus, until the 1960s, the British Virgins were mainly uninhabited, and but for the pirates' lairs, they had remained very quiet for the last three centuries.

Then, in a joint venture with the British government, Laurance Rockefeller and Charlie Cary were given the first limited development rights to control the fledgling tourism industry on the two larger islands. Both industrialists recognized the tourism potential on the islands, but each took a different course. Rockefeller developed the posh Little Dix resort on Virgin Gorda while Cary established an international marina complex on the nearby island of Tortola for large, ocean-going yachts and sailboats. Both efforts were for high-end guests and restricted to prohibit an influx of visitors to the main two islands and beyond. In addition, certain islands were completely off-limits to anyone but officials of the British government. Although the British Commonwealth had handed some autonomy to the BVIs in the 1960s in the form of a constitution and a local legislative council for island affairs, it was the governor who had control. He was ceremoniously selected by the queen of England but was actually a British official charged with command of both external affairs and island security.

Since 1945, Jost Van der Vort had been known on all marine charts as a totally restricted access area of the British government. Lying due south of the mainstream of the Sir Francis Drake Channel and across from the larger, more mountainous, island of Tortola, Jost Van der Vort Island was nestled between Peters Island several miles to the southwest and Coopers Island nearby on the northeast. It was occasionally patrolled by medium-sized naval destroyers and smaller British corvettes to prevent encroachment by tourists or unsuspecting mariners. On this particular morning, it was unprotected. The eleven-hundred-ton, Royal Navy Hunt-class escort destroyer, HMS Juno, a late WWII vintage ship at two-hundred and sixty-four feet, had gone to Tortola for supplies and fuel. Except for two armed British SAS guards occasionally moving around on a hundred-foot hill overlooking the secluded main house, the island was eerily still as the morning sun began to climb out of the eastern Caribbean Sea. Only a gentle sound came from the surf, lapping against the white powder beach, just fifty yards below a thick barrier of sharp-needled bougainvillea foliage. The beautiful flowering bougainvillea vines crawled up the walls of a castle-like structure, unseen from the beach, that was the main house on Jost Van der Vort Island. Two medieval-styled stone and mortar turrets guarded the massive main doors of the structure, facing eastward into the sun. At its flat shoreline, the island had a surreal look of a Saharan desert oasis filled with luscious palm trees and

gleaming white-sand crystals, arranged in a turquoise blue seascape instead of mountainous sand dunes. Only the thick bougainvillea shrubs and rock out-croppings covering the hillside behind the camouflaged main building broke the tranquil line of the horizon. At each compass quadrant on Jost Van der Vort Island, a ten-foot-high red and white buoy drifted lazily within thirty yards of the shore. It stated: Off Limits - No Trespassing: By order of the Governor of BVI.

Lieutenant-Colonel Robert MacCurry had spent the day before meeting with the Head of Section Viscount Dalton Ramsbotham at his Military Intelligence Post in London. His latest assignment, which in fact was his mustering-out assignment, was to be a simple clean-up and dry-cleaning. The trim, tall lieutenant-colonel knew that these so-called last jobs were meant to ease top agents into nice, remote locations of their choice as they began their retirement. At the Crown's expense and in payment for extraordinary services beyond the call of duty, a quiet final duty station was usually chosen. In the case of Lieutenant-Colonel MacCurry, he had chosen the BVIs for his last home station after twenty years of service in Her Majesty's Military Intelligence Section.

He was forty-eight, and though his red hair was seasoned with white, he looked considerably younger. Only the deep creases around his lively blue eyes told the story of the heavy responsibilities he had carried.

During the Korean War, as a captain in the Dover Light Infantry, he had received the Victoria Cross for mining an

area under the cover of darkness from which he expected a massed Chinese night ground attack to be launched. His actions prevented the annihilation of over a thousand soldiers of the 3rd Brigade, whose ammunition was almost expended. MacCurry's men then carried out a successful counter-attack that held up the enemy until reinforcements arrived the next morning.

After Korea, he spent the next twenty years with Section 5-PAC, a Post Action Clean-up unit of British Military Intelligence. His team was highly trained in after-action assessments and removal of espionage evidence that might implicate the Crown in any event worldwide. His authority to take whatever action needed came directly from the DMI - Director of Military Intelligence.

Whatever had to be done to protect security and intelligence assets was approved without question at all levels of British Military or Royal Naval forces throughout the Empire and Commonwealth.

For this latest and hopefully last assignment, he had received a sealed envelope directly from the Assistant DMI Ramsbotham. It had been curiously coded:

MOST SECRET - EYES ONLY:

PM'S TUBE ALLOY FINAL MISSION

What made this very unusual was that the PM - Prime Minister - was never to be listed or implicated in any document dispatched to a field agent such as himself. So for the first time in twenty years of service, MacCurry felt this was the deepest they had ever taken him, even

though this was supposedly his final task for 5-PAC and a simple clean-up mission.

MacCurry had endured a long day of flying from London. Plus, the final flight leg into Tortola had arrived late that night from San Juan. Robert knew from previous experience that it was impossible to get anything done safely after dark in the Caribbean, so he chose to rest up at the Royal Naval Officers quarters in Road Town for the evening.

The next morning, he requisitioned the Royal Navy Provost for a flight over to Jost Van der Vort, since all commercial boat traffic was restricted from access to the secure island. Only one Royal Navy plane was actually based at Tortola. It was docked in the harbor of Road Town.

The twin engine Grumman Mallard was a hardy 1940s vintage seaplane used only for special assignments, security patrols, and VIP visits. This particular RNG18 was about four-hundred pounds lighter than conventional Mallards built in the late 1940s because it had no need for de-icing equipment on board, being used only in the Caribbean. The twin engine plane was a favorite of the older Royal Navy pilots because it was versatile enough to drive right up onto any flat beach directly from a water landing. The greatest problem with the Mallard, though, was prop erosion caused by seawater and impact damage brought about by its nose dipping in rough water landings.

MacCurry climbed aboard the Mallard and, scanning the plane's controls, noticed that the throttle lever had broken off inside the overhead quadrant, probably during a



rough seas landing. Because fixing it would likely require a major overhead disassembly, plus salvaged parts to change-out the lever-pulley assembly, MacCurry saw that the pilot had taken a piece of aluminum and lashed it to the broken throttle in a crude attempt to ready the aircraft for his sudden requirement to be flown over to Jost Van der Vort Island.

As he began to buckle his safety harness, MacCurry looked at the contraption and questioned the aircraft's pilot.

"Lieutenant Codrington, what have we here?"

"Aye, Colonel," the man replied gingerly, "I had a throttle lever break away from me last week on Engine One. I was coming in with a blinding sunset in m'ah face. The wind was right, but the waves were a bit high, so I used the throttle to brace m'ah self on impact. Sure 'nuff it broke right away. Now I've got a temporary fix 'til the part arrives."

Colonel MacCurry could see the exposed throttle cables and was concerned that the cable loop might soon break away from the fix, but the flight was a short hop to the island, so he simply agreed with the lieutenant's assessment and buckled himself into the co-pilot's seat.

"Well, I suppose that will have to do then, Codrington."

MacCurry was vexed at this possible dilemma created by his urgent need to visit Jost Van der Vort.

"How long do you think the flight over will take?" he asked.

"Not more than fifteen minutes from the time we taxi and get off the water," Codrington replied in a casual, matter-

of-fact way. "By the time we rotate, we'll be turning across the Drake Channel and putting down on the beach side of the island." He turned and smiled at the colonel. "All we will need to do then, s'ah, is run up the beach a few yards. Then I'll put you out, right off, at the front door of the castle, Colonel."

MacCurry replied sharply, with a distinct note of concern in his voice.

"Does everyone around here know about the castle?"

"Well, it's not too easy to disguise from the air, Colonel. And, you should know, we over-fly this place at least once a month when the Juno's getting supplies out of San Juan. Besides, I heard that the mission's over anyway since the old man died!" Codrington remarked impassively.

"When did you find out about that, Lieutenant?" MacCurry snapped back, with clear agitation in his voice.

"Well, s'ah, the Juno's back here in Road Town this morning, and the crew's already passed the word that the old man's been in the meat cooler since Monday! That's two days, so I guess he's not comin' out. Wouldn't you say so, Colonel?"

Shocked at the Lieutenant's nonchalant attitude and the complete breach of security in the matter, MacCurry lost his temper.

"My God, man, haven't you people got any sense of the confidential violations you've breached here! Somebody needs to get control of this situation before we end up with a few General Courts Martials!"

Suddenly, there was serious silence in the plane's cockpit. As if to distract the colonel from this line of reasoning, the lieutenant opened his flight manual and focused on his pre-flight check. He was clearly going to do this by-the-numbers now, probably for the first time in months.

"Who's the captain of the Juno, lieutenant?" Colonel MacCurry demanded in a very serious, command tone-of-voice. "Lieutenant-Commander Philip Wickes, s'ah!" Codrington replied with an air of attention in his response. Then he offered as a suggestion, "Do you want me to taxi over to the Juno's anchorage, s'ah?"

"No, Codrington, let's get on with it! Time is of the essence, now!"

MacCurry spoke with concern, well aware that even without the high priority of his orders, he still outranked Commander Wickes.

"I'll deal with those problems on the Juno later, and, for your information, this conversation never took place! Is that clear, lieutenant!"

"Aye, aye, s'ah! That's perfectly clear, Colonel!"

Codrington responded, then immediately refocused on his pre-flight check in absolute silence.

Not another word was spoken as both engines began to roar at full throttle. The reverberation drowned out everything within the cockpit. Instantly, the little seaplane lurched forward. They began surfing across the light waves pushing against the bow and under the boat-like hull as they made for open water.

MacCurry watched as the throttles held perfectly. Then, lifting off the water, they banked across the Drake Channel toward Jost Van der Vort Island. It felt like they were floating along slowly in a hot air balloon ride as they leveled off and seemed to glide directly for the turquoise shallows on the eastern face of the island. Lieutenant Codrington radioed the SAS officer in command at the Guard Post on the island to identify his flight approach and announce the arrival of his VIP passenger. The SAS officer acknowledged him and identified the wind approach vector for the Mallard's landing.

In the next moment, the aircraft's manifold pressure boost began to drop while the pilot adjusted for his water landing approach. Smoothly, the seaplane made its final bank over the island, and Lieutenant-Colonel MacCurry could clearly see the fortress-like castle and the thick mass of bougainvillea vines. Rock out-croppings covered the hill behind the shrouded building sitting near the island's shore. The seawater below appeared to be calm and flat, but the Lieutenant seemed to be breaking a serious sweat, as MacCurry snapped a glance at him as he made the final approach before their touchdown. Caught by surprise, the colonel grasped Codrington's quandary. The throttle for Engine One was not responding. The cable loop had slipped off and retreated back into the overhead liner, making the throttle useless for adjusting the starboard engine speed. Codrington clearly knew they were too close to the water to react differently, so immediately, he went to full flaps.

He adjusted the rudder to compensate and flew the seaplane's hull hard down, directly into the surf. Immediately, he jerked the plane to port and out of the first trough in the water, but the opposite reaction dipped the plane to his starboard side. The Mallard was now taking a severe hull pounding, as suddenly, there was a new problem. The starboard engine ripped away from the aircraft's wing. Exploding off in a bizarre flash of light, it flew forward of the aircraft for about two-hundred yards. Spinning around before it stalled, the engine hit the water in an eruptive splash. It was almost comical. There it just floundered, circling in a geyser of water like a beheaded island chicken, running around blindly in a death spasm. Then slowly, it sank to the bottom of a deep, coral chasm.

By this time, the colonel realized the landing could actually get worse as the aircraft climbed slightly to port away from the water. Then it began to roll over. Time suddenly went into slow motion. MacCurry shouted.

"Oh shit, this thing is going to rip apart, Codrington!"

MacCurry tried in vain to grab the co-pilot's yoke and help return the plane to level flight. With the Mallard almost inverted, somehow Codrington nosed the bow-heavy Mallard back into the water and prevented God knows what from happening.

Without the departed engine, Codrington quickly throttled the port engine down. Now the plane was out of control, soaring directly for the beach and the stunned faces of the SAS welcoming party.

There was no time to lower the Mallards hull wheels, so Codrington simply yelled out, "Colonel, watch out! We may hit that wall solid on. I cannot brake m'ah wheels!"

As the SAS team scattered out on each flank of the wounded Mallard, the plane roughly slid up the beach. Then it slammed directly into the bougainvillea bulging toward the shore. Fortunately, they created an elastic buffer that abruptly stopped the plane before its nose hit the outer castle wall.

Suddenly, it was all over.

Codrington, with his confidence restored, addressed the colonel.

"Well, s'ah, it's 0915 hours, and we've arrived safely at Jost Van der Vort Castle." He even dared to make a joke in the relief that was flooding the cabin. "Sorry, but we were unable to serve beverages on this run. However, don't hesitate to fly our Royal Naval door-to-door seaplane service again, whenever the need arises."

The colonel, drained, stunned, and monumentally grateful, turned and grinned from ear to ear at Lieutenant Codrington.

"You know, you're one hell of a pilot, young man! Plus, you got me here in record time. That calls for at least a wee bit of the Macallan I have stored away in your hold, lieutenant! Now, let's get out of this bird and get on with Her Majesty's work!"

"Aye, aye, s'ah, that will make a perfect welcome to this little isle, a wee bit of the Highland's finest malt whiskey, Colonel! Aye, I've not had that one in years!"

Codrington was gleeful with the overwhelming relief they both felt. Then he opened the hatch and turned to attention, saluting the colonel. Still, MacCurry could see a fleeting look of panic on the man's face, and he tilted his head at him questioningly.

"S'ah," Codrington hastened to explain, "Saltwater is working its mischief on that sunken engine, and in less than twenty-four hours, its whole magnesium casing is going to be eaten away. I shall have to take a rain check on that whiskey offer for now. First, I must get m'ah engine up from the reef, right off Colonel!"

"Very well, then, Codrington, we'll see about my Highland malt a bit later on," said MacCurry benevolently. The man was a hell of a pilot, and he cared about his equipment. Good man, MacCurry thought.

The SAS officer on duty, serving as the senior welcoming party, then saluted and added his own observations for the new arrival. He spoke out rather naively while carefully inspecting the right wing.

"Colonel MacCurry, sir," he said, "the rest of the Mallard appears to be quite okay, except for a seam fracture in the starboard wing."

MacCurry, still somewhat drained from the ordeal, smiled widely and replied with an edge of sarcasm, "And you really think I'm going back on that thing again, do you, captain, with a perfectly good Royal Navy destroyer in the neighborhood? I would have to be daft. No offense to the fine flying of Lieutenant Codrington!" He turned and grabbed his briefcase from out of the plane's hold. "In

fact, for me to fly another Mallard, it would really have to be a rather cold day in hell, old chap! Now, let's get the rest of those bags out of this old hulk, boys, and get this party operational. By the way, captain, where's the grand ballroom in this English castle, anyway?"



## Chapter 2

### Jost Van der Vort Island

Robert MacCurry had very seldom found so-called simple clean up operations at MI-5 to really be uncomplicated. In fact, they were often complex matters of state which needed immediate attention to avoid any likelihood of detection by outside observers, the press, or enemy combatants. This appeared to be such a situation. Once things had settled down, with the SAS boys back on perimeter patrol and Lieutenant Codrington fishing around the reef for his accursed engine parts, MacCurry could finally get down to business.

First, grimacing that even Codrington had known about the old man's location, he went to the kitchen with his briefcase and located the door to the meat cooler. It was a walk-in. Inside and propped up in the back corner was an old man whose skin had turned purple from the 34°F temperature maintained in the cooler.

He was dressed in a full-length, burgundy house coat with a Royal English family crest emblazoned on its left pocket and a gold cravat properly stuffed around his neckline. His eyes were closed, but his face seemed to hold a smile of final satisfaction.

MacCurry did a complete survey of the situation: an initial cause of death analysis and finally a check for objects of interest to assure the final disposition of the subject person. Then he exited the cooler and laid out his work items on a large butcher-block kitchen table centered in

the middle of the room. Breaking the seal on the coded pouch brought from London, the red block type again flashed into his mind as he opened the inner envelope:

MOST SECRET - EYES ONLY

PM'S TUBE ALLOYS FINAL MISSION

His interest had been building since seeing the PM listed on the initial field orders. As he drew out the inside document, it appeared to be somewhat faded, but the Office of the Prime Minister's Seal was obvious. The letterhead was pre-1950 and displayed the Crest of England on a green and white background field with a silver shield below it that stated:

THE RIGHT HONORABLE PRIME MINISTER

OF GREAT BRITAIN

WINSTON CHURCHILL

DATED: APRIL 10th, 1945

Suddenly, Colonel MacCurry's mind stepped backward in time to the last year of the Second World War. Cautiously, he began reading the twenty-seven-year-old document, revealing its shocking secret from the past . . .

TO: SUPREME COMMANDERS ROYAL NAVY, ROYAL AIR FORCE, AND ALL GROUND FORCES GREAT BRITAIN

CC: ALL SECURITY DIRECTORATES OF THE COMMONWEALTH

FROM: PRIME MINISTER -

WINSTON CHURCHILL

DATE: APRIL 10, 1945

STATUS: (MOST) SECRET - EYES ONLY

RE: THE MATTER OF GERMAN

SS-GRUPPENFUHRER HORST DEEKE

NOTE: MAJOR GENERAL AND KOMMANDANT OF SSI (SCHUTZSTAFFEL INFILTRATION) - SS-GRUPPENFUHRER HORST DEEKE IS TO BE CONSIDERED AN (MOST SECRET) ASSET OF THE HIGHEST ORDER TO ENGLAND AND THE COMMONWEALTH OF BRITAIN - BY ORDER OF THE PRIME MINISTER - WINSTON CHURCHILL FROM THIS DATE: APRIL 10, 1945 - FORTH AND FOR AN INDEFINITE TIME OR UNTIL SUCH EVENT AS HIS NATURAL DEATH.

SUB-NOTATION 1: UPON THE DEATH OF SS-GRUPPENFUHRER HORST DEEKE HIS REMAINS WILL BE DISPOSED OF ACCORDING TO HIS LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT WITH THE FORMALITY OF THE VIKING ORDERS OF NORWAY.

SUB-NOTATION 2: SS-GRUPPENFUHRER HORST DEEKE WILL BE AFFORDED THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF PERSONAL SECURITY NOW OR AT ANY FUTURE TIME EQUIVALENT TO THAT OF THE CROWN OF ENGLAND OR THE PRIME MINISTER OF GREAT BRITAIN - WITHOUT EXCEPTION.

SUB-NOTATION 3: THE BRITISH VIRGIN PROTECTORATE OF JOST VAN DER VORT ISLAND WILL BE THE SOLE AND ONLY INHABITATION AREA FOR SS-GRUPPENFUHRER HORST DEEKE - AN AREA TO BE KNOWN ONLY AS BAMBURGH CASTLE SOUTH.

SUB-NOTATION 4: SS-GRUPPENFUHRER HORST DEEKE SHALL BE CODE-NAMED - LORD SUNDERLAND OF NORTHUMBRIA. ALL SECURITY AND LOGISTICAL SUPPORT FOR LORD SUNDERLAND IS THE (UTMOST) RESPONSIBILITY OF SAS AND ROYAL NAVAL ATTACHMENTS TO BE MANAGED BY GOVERNOR BVI.

END: AS REGARDS ANY INFORMATION - THIS MATTER IS CLOSED AND MAINTAINED (MOST) SECRET - BY ORDER OF THE PRIME MINISTER - ON THIS DATE: APRIL 10, 1945, FORWARD.

"*Incredible,*" MacCurry reacted out loud. He thought about the events that could have led up to this arrangement with a known Nazi SS-General - actually the highest known untried Nazi since WWII. This man was actually the commandant of the ultra-secret German Schutzstaffel Infiltration teams that were feared, but so obscure that very little was known of them.

SSI had been assumed to be operational throughout Europe and England from the mid-thirties until the collapse of Germany on VE Day in May 1945.

MacCurry knew he would probably never get to the real truth about what SS-Gruppenfuhrer Horst Deeke could have done to get the Prime Minister of England, Winston Churchill, to give him this kind of protection indefinitely, not with the layers of security in this maze. His interest was piqued, though. For now, however, his objective was to completely clean Bamburgh Castle South and dispose of Lord Sunderland of Northumbria in the manner described by his Last Will and Testament. But where was the man's will?

As a top cleaner specialist, Lieutenant-Colonel Robert MacCurry had very few equals in either finding all incriminating evidence or disposing of it. MacCurry's methods had established the original Ramsbotham Military Intelligence manual for MI-5, MI-6, and SAS Disposal Squads. Most of his past assignments had been limited time events. However, the duration of this search and clean was almost indefinite. He had the free run of Bamburgh Castle and the BVI Protectorate of Jost Van der Vort Island at his

disposal, plus an SAS security team assigned to protect this facility as long as he deemed necessary. Besides, he was retiring on this island, or at least someplace nearby, and a leisurely pace was more appropriate here in the Caribbean. The only urgency was getting the frozen Lord Sunderland buried according to his wishes.

Just as he began pondering his next step, two items seemed to stand out on the block tabletop: a small black pouch and an SS lapel pin depicting the Dragon prow of a Viking Ship. MacCurry opened the leather pouch and found a double-sided key, typical of a safety deposit box, but more likely to be to Lord Sunderland's hidden safe. Then, as he turned over the SS lapel pin, he saw the initials SSI-EF inscribed. Both items were now part of MacCurry's process, as he methodically began to discover their connections.

The key was clearly relevant to Lord Sunderland's hideout for his Last Will and Testament, but the SS lapel pin seemed to be related to his final thoughts prior to the heart attack that killed him. MacCurry felt confident that both would fall in place as he discovered the mystery of Bamburgh Castle over the next few days, but for now, he needed to locate that safe.

He spent the next several hours mapping the likely zones throughout the castle that Lord Sunderland would have treated as his prime living space. From that, he was able to analyze the man's lifestyle and movements, then discern the likely areas for locating his safe.

By mid-afternoon, he had discovered the vault located in a hidden library. It was at the base of a small staircase

below the main entrance hall. Access to the staircase required that a black iron lighting sconce be turned to its side, then a doorway was revealed at the back of the left rounded turret guarding the inside of the main entrance door. A narrow slab of marble formed the door to the staircase and the library below.

The safe was actually behind a detailed painting depicting a Viking Longship drifting offshore, while its crew of Viking raiders attacked villagers somewhere along the north coast of England. As MacCurry pulled the picture frame forward, the safe was revealed. The double-sided key worked flawlessly. He turned the control handle and opened the safe's door. Inside it were several books. One was a massive diary that had "Lord Sunderland" emblazoned on it. Another was a journal with SSI & VTI inscribed on the cover. A third had "The Beaucatcher Club." All were written in English with gold lettering.

A jewel case held several Nazi war medals, ribbons including Waffen-SS lapel pins, two Knights Crosses with oak leaves, and an Olympic Marching Medal from 1936 with an inscription on the back: Das Fuhrer Adolph Hitler to Kommander of SS-Wiking - 1st Place.

Underneath them all, he discovered a folder with the words "The Last Will and Testament of the Viking, Horst Deeke," written in German. The next step would be the immediate problem of burying General Horst Deeke, code-named Lord Sunderland, and putting the rest of his assignment on hold for at least a few days while he looked over the layout of the island. He even thought he might have one of the Royal

Navy cooks come over from Road Town and prepare meals for the next several evenings, while he set up operations for the clean-up. Besides, that would give him four able pallbearers for the funeral, once everything was set to go. The colonel carried the contents of the safe to a large mahogany reading table at one end of the hidden library. The two brass lamps positioned on opposite flanks of the table seemed to provide ample light for examination of the books and documents.

He began first with an exquisitely bound gold and leather book that appeared to be the thickest. It was the personal diary of Lord Sunderland. As he opened the cover and viewed the inside sheet, he was stunned by the three lines centered on the page in German:

*Patton Mountain*

*The True Story of the Thermonuclear Bomb of the Fatherland  
A Final Confession of Horst Deeke*

Instantly, MacCurry's thoughts were drawn to a vision of the very first H-Bomb test in the Marshall Islands on November 1st, 1952. He knew that on Eniwetok, the first thermonuclear Hydrogen Bomb code named MIKE was exploded by the United States. He remembered the image of the *Life Magazine* front cover showing that initial plume as it created a fireball three miles wide and sixty-thousand feet high.

The article stated that the explosive force of that thermonuclear bomb was eight-hundred times more devastating than the first atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. He never forgot that.

"*Oh, my God!*" Stunned by this most incredible revelation, MacCurry shouted out loud at the enormity of his discovery. Could this known Nazi SS-General have controlled the keys to a bomb that would have instantly changed the world order in 1945?

For the first time in over a decade, Colonel MacCurry was nervous. His hands were even shaking from the thoughts and excitement running through his mind. His German language proficiency was good, and his verbal German was passable, but his translation skills might be put to the ultimate test with what appeared to be about a five hundred-page, hand-written document. This document just might reveal one of the greatest hidden enigmas of the Second World War; a record that very few, if any other than himself, would ever know about. This was a high priority clean-up mission, and nothing would be left to implicate the Crown when he was through.

He tried to assess the document. It appeared that the General, SS-Gruppenfuhrer Horst Deeke, had a decent handwriting style that he could read without too much confusion. That was a relief.

An official letter written by the Kommandant of the Gross Lichterfelde War Academy at Berlin in 1929, and a short biography of the general revealing his early background were clipped to the front of the document. They showed how he became involved in the Nazi hierarchy. His mother's family was called Elivagar, and they were from a small island called Leka, north of the city of Trondheim on the west coast of Norway. The Elivagars were considered to be



direct descendants of a Viking chiefdom on the island. Very few of their relatives practiced Christian religious beliefs. The mythology of the Norsemen seemed to be their singular faith as they went through life in a world of clear blue seas and white ice. Leka itself was a land of rugged fjords and landscapes, the midnight sun, and the flashing light beams of the aurora borealis. The cold northern seas around the island would have continually lashed the coast, while snow would have covered the ground most of the year. Sometimes, these people would have seen icebergs with seals or polar bears on them, floating down from the Arctic Circle near the island in early spring. Its verdant vegetation would have fed the island's few inhabitants in the summer months. Blue skies and perpetual light would have filled their brief summers, with ice and snow forcing them to become homebound or hardy cross country skiers in the long winter months in order to bring supplies from the mainland. Throughout the cold winters, the elders would have told the wonderful legends of their Viking past to the children as they grew up, imbedding in the young men the desire to be great warriors.

When Horst was eleven, he wrote, his father, Knut, heard about the Great War in Europe and decided to join the Army of Prussia. Upon leaving the island, Knut joined a group of recruits in Berlin, sending money and letters back to Leka, while on the weekends staying with the wealthy Norwegian Thorholda family near the center of the capital city. Knut's fearless, warrior-like style amazed many of his

superiors during the hand-to-hand battles against the Tsarist armies on the Eastern Front in 1915.

He was soon given a field promotion to the rank of Lieutenant, after saving a general staff officer from being killed during a raid on their headquarters encampment in Poland. His entire unit had been overrun, yet he fought off several Cossacks, taking their swords and capturing two of their officers. His tactics forced the enemy to withdraw, allowing reinforcements to help him recover the ground lost to the Russians. Then toward the end of 1918, he reached the rank of captain, leading raids against insurgent bands of communists who were trying to foment revolution in Germany after the war.

When he decided to leave and return to Norway, the commander he saved, General von Mannheim, asked him to join the Reichwehr, the Army of the Weimar Republic. Knut remained steadfast and returned to Leka to help his family. He did, however, agree to send his only son, Horst, to the Military Academy in Berlin.

Unfortunately, Rittmeister Knut Deeke's ship was sunk during a vicious wintry gale while crossing back to Oslo, and all on board were mysteriously lost in the depths of the North Sea.

Horst was heartbroken, but he vowed to follow the gallant lead of his father. So at nineteen, against the pleadings of his mother, he decided to join the German military.

Fortunately, the legacy of his father meant that Horst Deeke would rise quickly through the ranks even

during the peace between the wars. Like his father before him, he had refuge with the Thorholda family in Berlin. By 1927, after his mother died, Horst was given a minor posting in the Truppenamt, the name given to the general staff that Germany was forbidden to have by the Treaty of Versailles. He served as an adjutant to Colonel von Manstein and helped devise a plan for the Commander in Chief's mobilization of the army should Germany ever again face a war in Europe.

With his established expertise, Horst escorted von Manstein, who became the honorable father figure that Horst longed for, as they traveled around Europe visiting several foreign military facilities, learning new and better methods for future war scenarios. Those associations, along with his skills, were honed even more, until in 1932, the SS-Reichfuhrer realized his unique abilities and requested him for his own SS-Waffen staff in Berlin. From that day forward, Horst Deeke was considered the most seasoned military strategist on Himmler's staff, and his career took an immediate turn for even higher levels of responsibility once Herr Adolf Hitler took on the role of the Reich Chancellor and Fuhrer in 1933.

Colonel MacCurry's mind was running at light speed as it began to spin back in time to the years before and during World War II, when he knew this man had to be at the peak of his unimaginable power. As he turned the next page into the diary itself, Robert MacCurry was at once drawn back into Horst's past . . . deep into the early beginnings of an incredible story. It was a story flowing with profound

emotions and highly descriptive mental pictures carved from the mind of this obviously very cryptic and once powerful man, SS Gruppenfuhrer Horst Deeke.

His final mission had become a quest to dispose of one of the deepest secrets of the Second World War.

## **PART TWO**

### **Rising of the Valkyries**

**Back in Time: November 1938**

#### **Chapter 3**

##### **Sangerhausen**

Hitler's private Condor, a large, aesthetically elegant four-engine monoplane, touched down quietly in the early morning mist at the heavily camouflaged airstrip outside of Sangerhausen, Germany. The Fuhrer's special SS security team quickly escorted him into a Mercedes Command Car. They drove a short distance along a hard-packed gravel road bordered by thick Norwegian pines to the massive hunting estate. The Chateau's main building was sited directly over the underground facility entrance of Sangerhausen. Inside the massive estate, a special operations area had been set up by SS-Reichfuhrer Heinrich Himmler. Several men sat around a large rectangular table in the mahogany-paneled Renaissance library, anxiously waiting for the Supreme Commander of the Third Reich.

The Fuhrer's thoughts were as yet undistracted by the major war planning efforts of 1939, so his excitement about the preliminary Super Bomb plan made his mood almost joyful and exuberant as he looked forward to his meeting with the SS-Reichfuhrer. His delight was obvious to the group of men that stiffened to attention as he entered the room. Their positions around the table indicated their rank and the chain of command to the Fuhrer.

As he acknowledged them individually with a glance and slight smile, he turned to Himmler and extended his hand. "These facilities are much better than I expected, Herr Reichfuhrer."

The SS-Reichfuhrer quickly raised the Heil Hitler salute, and then shook the Fuhrer's outstretched hand. Then he began speaking.

"It is your brilliance and insight that has allowed us to complete it in record time, my Fuhrer."

Himmler had been building the Sangerhausen facility under orders from the Fuhrer for the past fifteen months. Now that it was landscaped and heavily camouflaged, this beautiful Renaissance hunting chateau of the ancient Austrian Empire was the most highly classified underground war facility in Nazi Germany. Even the Abwehr, Nazi Germany's Secret Intelligence Division, was unaware of its existence. Three of the men at the table were the team leaders of SS-Reichfuhrer Heinrich Himmler's assembled, ultra-secret SSI Team, Schutzstaffel Infiltration, and the trained espionage members from selected Waffen - SS officers.

The four German scientists on the opposite side of the table were the lead nuclear physicists of the ultra-secret "VTI" Gruppe, the Virus Technical Institute. They were members of the administrative scientists from several German industrial giants, now housed at Sangerhausen. They were assigned only one purpose; to develop and test a nuclear device for the Third Reich. Their salaries were financial grants provided by the massive German chemical cartel of I. G. Farben and Bayer's Frederick Claussmann, who had been secretly approached by the SS-Reichsfuhrer to assist the Reich on its mission for world supremacy in science. That effort had begun in earnest just after the Berlin Olympics in 1936.

The Fuhrer removed his gloves and sat down at the table head, while handing his hat to the attaché. The attaché then stored Hitler's accessories and backed out of the room silently, closing the pair of massive entrance doors.

"Well, gentlemen, what is the first step to gain the resources to complete this glorious Super Bomb for the Third Reich?"

SS-Reichsfuhrer Heinrich Himmler began first.

"If I may, my Fuhrer, let me first introduce Herr Doctor Ludvig von Messerstrich. He is responsible for the detailed assessment of the current shortage of Aryan nuclear scientists in Germany needed to complete the project that you so desire before 1944." The SS-Reichsfuhrer cleared his throat, knowing the Fuhrer needed full details.

"His objective is to maintain control over the key scientists now on the project, such as Werner Heisenberg,

and to add nuclear scientific resources to that team to meet the deadline you have set for us."

Hitler, with his amazing powers of memory for even obscure events, spoke again.

"Herr Doctor, I remember well the comments you made in Munich at the University in 1931, against the Zionist control of that faculty. Your Aryan blood and allegiance will serve you well in this matter today."

Doctor von Messerstrich, a long-standing Aryan chemist and nuclear physicist with I.G. Farben had been recruited for his allegiance to the Fuhrer. His administrative skill in getting the maximum results from his people in the shortest amount of time possible was his strength. Talent at diplomatic dialogue was also the reason that the SS-Reichfuhrer had selected him to speak first to the Fuhrer.

"My Fuhrer," von Messerstrich began, "it is with the greatest pleasure that I join you once again to ensure Germany's place at the top of the world's most powerful nations.

"What we are about to do will require five highly disciplined teams of scientists. We must create these teams from our own core of German scientists, but some must come from those scientists that originally developed these nuclear design theories. Some of these scientists that are experts in nuclear theories are Jews. They have left Germany for other Western European countries. Some are even now in the United States at various universities, paid for by Jews and philanthropists who own or run Zionist American industries."



Immediately enraged by the issue of Jews, the Fuhrer reddened in the face, then stood up and slammed his fist on the table top.

"Why do we need these filthy Jewish swine? This is an effort by the Aryan Third Reich to create an Aryan Super Bomb? How can we control this scum from taking our knowledge, our ideas, to Stalin or Churchill?"

The sudden outburst froze everyone in the room. After an unbearable silence, Hitler looked down at the table.

"What is your opinion, Herr Reichfuhrer?"

After allowing another pause to allow von Messerstrich or anyone else to respond, Himmler realized there was too much fear of reprisal in the room at this point, so he began first.

"My Fuhrer, from April 1933 to December 1938, the anti-Semitic Laws and Decrees of the Third Reich have effectively rid us of many Jews that were misdirecting our young Aryan students in our great German institutes and universities.

The decrees removed thousands of these useless socialist and Zionist rats, the supporters of communism in Leipzig, Hamburg, and Munich."

Himmler increased his tone of voice, as he looked to Doctor von Messerstrich to further help him emphasize this point, but the doctor didn't.

"As you are aware my Fuhrer, the purge of these scientists was administered by Admiral Wilhelm Canaris and his Abwehr Military Intelligence Division up until 1938."

Himmler knew it was not only Admiral Canaris and his Abwehr agents that had directed the sweeping purges and removals to forcefully drive out many of Germany's nuclear theoreticians. Even Heydrich's SD and Himmler's own Gestapo units were guilty of this flawed strategy, but he was not about to reveal those facts to the Fuhrer here or now. Himmler paused and looked to Doctor von Messerstrich to add to this critical point. Himmler clearly had no desire to suggest to the Fuhrer that Jews were now desperately needed by the Third Reich.

Doctor von Messerstrich took the opening. He began cautiously adding a few details of the importance of using Jewish scientists.

"My Fuhrer, it is true that many of the great minds of German scientific nuclear theory like Albert Einstein, John von Neumann, Leo Szilard, and the Hungarian-born Edward Teller were driven into the waiting arms of Britain and America as a result of that seven-year purge."

Hitler's eyes seemed to blacken, and a hint of sweat appeared on his collar as Doctor von Messerstrich continued.

"The nuclear knowledge of those non-Aryan scientists in the area of quantum mechanics and thermonuclear theories, gained first here in Germany at our expense, were years ahead of the United States and England."

Messerstrich paused, and Himmler interrupted his commentary.

"Now these countries can catch up to the position of the Third Reich, my Fuhrer!" The SS-Reichfuhrer loudly added.

Apparently Doctor von Messerstrich had already realized that Himmler would never make the next statement, supporting the use of Jews. He blurted his added response, supporting the SS-Reichfuhrer.

"My Fuhrer, we must have some of these non-Aryan scientists back in Germany, or at the very least working for us in clandestine ways in America or England to finalize our Super Bomb within the time table."

Hitler exploded: "How could Canaris and the Abwehr have let this happen?" Hitler continued to perspire around the neck, but paused to allow Himmler to address him and offer his solution. Himmler straightened and looked toward the Fuhrer, but lowered his head dutifully.

"My Fuhrer, I am always at your service for whatever solution you may choose. We at this table will correct the errors of the past, the errors of the Abwehr. With your personal authority, we will maintain complete control and complete secrecy from all others, including Herr Canaris, for this solution. The resources at this table will get this done quickly. Our SSI team is now ready to act in European operations, and that same espionage team is already working behind the scenes in America, without Abwehr's awareness.

They will extricate knowledge, provide counter-espionage, and remove resources from America to help us here in Germany. SSI will simultaneously extract support from scientists throughout Europe and from those that have families in our relocation camps or who are under house arrest awaiting the final solution."

Again, Himmler paused to observe Hitler's temperament. A glow had returned to the Fuhrer's face and a slight smirk to his smile.

"For now, these countries can catch up to us, but this scientific team seated here today and, of course, our SSI, will correct this very soon, my Fuhrer. Our greatest single strength now is Doctor von Messerstrich and his team with our control of vast amounts of nuclear weapons-making materials here in Europe."

Taking the lead Doctor von Messerstrich directed a sweep of his hand toward his scientists seated along his side of the table.

"My Fuhrer, besides our scientists here today, these nuclear assets include I.G. Farben and M.S. Schmidt's fifty-five-percent ownership of Belgium's refined uranium oxide assets now stored outside of Brussels. Germany also has control of the ownership of Norsk Hydro in Norway." The Fuhrer was almost hopping up and down in his seat as he listened to the potential of the German nuclear program. "This is the only known source worldwide, at the moment, for heavy water, scientifically known as deuterium production. As well, we have a scientific monopoly over a cyclotron purchased from France and soon to be shipped here to Sangerhausen."

After a few more minutes of reasoning and critical-timing details by both Messerstrich and Himmler, von Messerstrich added a final statement.

"All we need now is the immediate repatriation of twenty physicists and nuclear scientists located around Europe.

Then we will advance well beyond the Allies in England, France, or America."

Hitler was still clearly seething about the Canaris situation. But he was at least energized. He looked up from his mirrored image reflected in the polished mahogany tabletop and directed his comment to the SS-Reichsfuhrer.

"And how soon can we get control over these filthy Jewish swine, Herr Reichfuhrer?"

Sensing the perfect opportunity to gain additional confidence and respect for his plan from the Fuhrer, Himmler decided to introduce the lead member of his ultra-secret SSI team.

Schutzstaffel Infiltration was the trained espionage and counter-espionage members he had personally selected from the Waffen - SS Division to carry out this assignment.

"My Fuhrer, the timing of events and control of these scientists is exactly our next step."

Himmler again rose from his seat and turned to his right.

The SS-Reichfuhrer squinted through the lenses of his pince-nez glasses, feeling a touch of moisture on his forehead. He had nervous tension due to the sudden mood changes of the Fuhrer, and he shifted from foot to foot while he spoke.

"Let me now introduce Standartenfuhrer Horst Deeke, who will explain our extortion plan for re-control of these scientists. Gehorsam zum Vaterland - Obedience to the Fatherland."

As he prepared to speak, a mature colonel of the Waffen-SS with the Knights Cross emblazoned around his throat stood

up sharply and quickly raised the salute to the Fuhrer stating, "Heil Hitler."

Standartenfuhrer Horst Deeke's strong Nordic and Aryan features were almost overwhelmed by the impeccable black uniform, SS runes on both collars, war ribbons with oak leaves, and silver wound medals acquired from the Spanish Civil War.

His solid, six-foot frame created an immaculate Nordic, almost god-like appearance. He looked as though he was at attention on a Berlin military review stand.

"As you are aware, my Fuhrer, no agency including Abwehr, has been concerned with the need to reacquire scientific assets lost from the Third Reich over the past ten years," Deeke began. "It is now imperative that we immediately implement Operation Gehorsam to gain the edge over England and America before they can viciously strike Germany with a Super Bomb themselves. Over the last five months, we have reviewed the strengths and weaknesses of our nuclear program and have found the following to be true."

Hitler was beginning to relax. He displayed his often hidden smile, lightening his demeanor, as the Standartenfuhrer's creative ideas and commitment to the project were unveiled.

"It is true, my Fuhrer, that Germany has the refined uranium oxide ready for use in the cyclotron being assembled here at Sangerhausen. As well, Germany has the only worldwide source for deuterium oxide, which according to one nuclear theorist in America, may hold an even

greater potential for our Super Bomb than our present assumptions."

The Standartenfuhrer then made two critical key points.

"The hard part is how to gain control of the researchers and their knowledge. First, we can easily extort allegiance from various non-Aryan nuclear scientists and theorists throughout Europe or in Germany through the use of our relocation camps. Some of their relatives may have already been detained there by Herr Heydrich's SD. However, the bulk of the nuclear scientific brain trust is now in America or possibly England as a result of the Abwehr's past blunder. So, how do we get to them?"

Clearly, Standartenfuhrer Deeke's considered his next point critical for all present to hear. He raised his voice slightly and used his right fist to emphasize his point.

"Foremost, we must understand that the holy doctrine of the entire nuclear scientific community outside of Aryan German control is Bolshevism: Bolshevism of the first order; idealistic Bolshevism."

The Fuhrer was suddenly both stunned and energized. And in that one second, he loudly blurted out his emotions.

"Continue, messenger of the Great Nordic God Odin!"

Now, fueled by Hitler's comment, an even greater passion gleamed in Standartenfuhrer Deeke's eyes.

"My Fuhrer, the majority of nuclear theorists and scientists in America are proven Bolshevik sympathizers and established Communists. But all of them have two core weaknesses: they follow the Zionist social pack of swine, and they are all pacifists of the first order. It is

therefore imperative that we quickly exploit these weaknesses and their allegiance to Bolshevism." For emphasis he added.

"My Fuhrer a unique moment of opportunity exists to use our SSI assets hidden deep within the American heartland. Our plan is to befriend, then lead, specific packs of scientists and Bolshevik Jews into our control. SSI teams disguised as Bolshevik sympathizers will methodically deceive and betray their leaders to uncover the American research work needed to finalize our Aryan Super Bomb. With your direction, my Fuhrer, SSI will assure the absolute world domination of the Fatherland."

Once again sensing an opportunity to gain control of the discussion, plus recognition for conceiving of Horst Deeke's radical plan from his Fuhrer, SS-Reichfuhrer Heinrich Himmler quickly spoke up.

"So you can see, my Fuhrer, our extortion plan is both ruthless and complex. The re-control of these scientists using Gehorsam zum Vaterland will require the resources of our private Reichbank in Switzerland and a special arrangement with Admiral Raeder and his Kriegsmarine. We will need a clandestine way to get absolute authority over at least two of Donitz's U-boats for transport of additional assets to and from America."

\* \* \*

As Supreme Commander of the Third Reich, two of the Fuhrer's greatest irritations were the constant infighting for Reichmarks and the coveting of authority over specialized military assets by his commanders. Of all of



his military commanders, Reichcommander Raeder of the Kriegsmarine was the most apolitical, neither extreme Nazi SS nor extreme Imperial Reichsmarine. The Commander was also the most determined to maintain correctness and naval purity. In this sense, he was also the most difficult of all to work with. A well-conceived subterfuge would be needed in order to gain his support for certain clandestine military activities such as this. But beside these obstacles, Raeder had appointed the most bull-headed Admiral the German Navy had, to control the U-boats of the Kriegsmarine. His name was Admiral Donitz.

And for the Fuhrer, all of this meant that he, not the SS-Reichfuhrer, would be burdened with several extensive political meetings to conclude this matter. At least until some success in building his Super Bomb had been realized. Motivated by these thoughts, he finally blurted out.

"Stoppen Sie! This discussion must end, now!"

Clearly stunned by the Fuhrer's sudden change of mood, the SS-Reichfuhrer Himmler addressed the Fuhrer in a conciliatory voice.

"My Fuhrer," he said trying to comfort his ego, "would you like to meet again this evening after cocktails? I know this meeting has been extensive!"

Hitler rose from the table and all present immediately stood up to attention awaiting his next course of action. Again, he addressed the group.

"I am satisfied with this meeting up to this point. But we will clearly need more time to consider all of these implications."

Eyeing Himmler he then firmly stated, "Herr Reichfuhrer, you will meet me in my quarters after the luncheon to outline some issues that must be resolved, before we take any decisive action overseas."

At that exact moment, Hitler's attaché suddenly re-opened the pair of massive mahogany entrance doors, as if on cue. The Fuhrer then added a last statement, directed to the scientists at the table.

"Gentlemen, by my unlimited powers, you will now have the resources needed to complete this glorious Super Bomb for the Third Reich. But with caution, I warn you! Your debt will be to me and to me alone, to your Fuhrer. That debt will be to have this device ready for use, when I need it!" He looked harshly at each chief scientist. "To that repayment, to that purpose, you will all be personally liable for the just rewards of das Vaterland! But also to the vile vengeance of my SS, if that task is not accomplished!"

Hitler turned without another word, and then walked out of the meeting, leaving the group clearly bewildered. He hoped his final ominous words would remain frozen in the individual minds of each man left staring, as the massive doors of the conference room closed behind him.

\* \* \*

It was not until the following morning that the SS-Reichfuhrer Heinrich Himmler called for Standartenfuhrer Horst Deeke to report to his beautiful eighteenth-century Austrian Empire antechamber on the upper floors of the Sangerhausen chateau.

The dramatic room provided a stage for Himmler to set the mood for the next step in the transformation of the team. As the Standartenfuhrer entered and walked toward the SS-Reichfuhrer seated at his desk, Himmler assumed an attitude of relaxation in contrast to the tension of the day.

SS-Reichfuhrer Himmler had a bottle of Couvoisier sitting on a small refreshment table to his right and a half-filled Venetian crystal glass in his left hand as he acknowledged the Standartenfuhrer's entrance.

"Standartenfuhrer Horst Deeke, reporting as ordered Herr Reichfuhrer. Heil Hitler!"

"The Fuhrer and I had a wonderful evening last night," Himmler began. "The Valkyries must have been singing in your ears, Standartenfuhrer, for we spoke of you often." He paused to watch Horst standing before him.

"Moments ago the Fuhrer left our flughafen for Berlin, but our meetings late yesterday and last night were very successful. He dictated these orders to my secretary this morning."

The SS-Reichfuhrer gazed through his tight little lenses, while hinting the admiration of the Fuhrer. He dramatically lifted the document over to Horst Deeke.

"Herr Deeke, you should be truly proud of yourself. The Fuhrer himself has authorized your promotion as my Third Deputy Adjutant, with equal powers to my highest commanders and fully charged with all operations and resources necessary for the completion of our Aryan Super Bomb.

"Furthermore, to enforce this authority of the Fuhrer and myself as SS-Reichfuhrer, I hereby promote you to SS-

Gruppenfuhrer - Major General. Your responsibilities now will be to add to your SSI team and to complete the Fuhrer's weapon on time. With your new authority, any Waffen-SS and Wiking-SS asset along with over a thousand million Reichmarks of the Third Reich will be arranged for you to accomplish your goals.

"I have also instructed my First Adjutant to establish a permanent address for you at the Reichschancellery Offices below mine in Berlin. However, your locations will always be ultra secret due to this new arrangement."

Horst Deeke's eyes surged with supercharged energy as the SS-Reichfuhrer continued. Then in an instant, Horst appeared shocked into a new reality as he began to read the finer details of the Fuhrer's order document handed to him by the SS-Reichfuhrer. Their eyes met, and Himmler could see that Horst now understood why the SS-Reichfuhrer was drinking so early in the morning.

The SS-Reichfuhrer noted, "The SS-Gruppenfuhrer Deeke shouldn't waste too much time now." Himmler smiled and added smoothly, "You are now personally charged with the success or the failure as alluded to by the Fuhrer yesterday, of this entire project. In addition, with that document signed by the Fuhrer himself in my presence, you have absolute authority to acquire any German-controlled assets you need to get it done by the designated time."

Horst Deeke addressed Himmler in a deep but cautious voice. "And just when does he want it, Herr Reichfuhrer?"

Himmler gazed through the moisture building on his glasses while lifting the cognac-filled crystal to his nose to

enjoy its aroma. Then he instantly downed it in a single motion. The heat of the Couvoisier caused the Reichfuhrer to cough intensely before he began to speak.

"The timing will depend on many factors, SS-Gruppenfuhrer, but for now, only Odin and Thor hold the knowledge of our future course. Like Aryan Vikings, on a misty fjord far from your homeland, you will know that course just as they. Your forefathers and those of SS-Wiking could smell their way to those earthen shores of England and Russia in ancient times past. Now that will include the world."

The Norse Gods were the SS-Reichfuhrer's favorite analogies for offering his views of the Reich and the Deity of Hitler himself. His philosophy and views of all future events, including his predictions, were not simply the result of the ever-decreasing line of cognac in the nearby bottle. Actually, the ritualistic runes were on all Nazi officers' uniforms besides the SS. Pre-medieval Viking and Nordic warriors often held his interest well into the evening during discussions with many of the top echelon of Hitler's inner circle and, of course, the Teutonic Knights: the SS-Gruppenfuhrers of the Third Reich.

Himmler had negotiated and the Fuhrer himself had authorized the promotion. Horst would be the Third Deputy Adjutant, for one purpose: he would be the opferziege, the sacrificial scapegoat, if all was lost. Himmler was sure that Horst knew well the power of the position and its potential penalties. The man had been an SS Black Knife himself. Now he was in a position to make all of it actually happen, if he could. He was now an SS-

Gruppenfuhrer; Kommandant of all SSI Operations and SS Wiking Kommandos.

Awareness transmitted itself between the two men's eyes, and Horst ceremoniously took his leave of Himmler.

\* \* \*

As he entered his personal chambers that night, Horst began to reflect on how it had come to all this. He began to muse on his past. . . the deep past of SSI's beginnings; the earlier times with Himmler, with Günther, and of course with his ultimate passion, the beautiful and brilliant Heidi. She was his precious Valkyrie, now using her beguiling charms and cunning to gain a foothold in the American culture, for the goals of SSI.

His mind seemed to transmigrate back in time, to the place where it had all began: a place long-ago recorded in letters, conversations, and memories, that now would both drive his ambitions and haunt his heart forever.

## Chapter 4

### The Crossing: January 1933

Only a week before their Atlantic crossing from Copenhagen, on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 1933, Günther Anderssen and Heidi Winters were in Berlin as the special guests of the SS-Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler. Together they were attending a dinner in honor of the newly appointed, forty-three-year-old Chancellor of Germany, Adolf Hitler. At their table were two other military officers selected by the Reichsführer to entertain the young lady while Günther was busy meeting elsewhere with Himmler.

One of the officers, an attaché to the SS-Reichsführer, a handsome young SS-Hauptsturmführer, and captain in the newly created Waffen-SS, sat across from the beautiful young Heidi. SS-Hauptsturmführer, Horst Deeke's Norwegian name, his blond hair, and his deep blue eyes truly captivated the young Heidi from the moment she saw him. He was obviously a purely Aryan man with his impeccable black uniform and his gold SS runes gleaming at her from both his collars. He only had one medal on his uniform, but she could tell from his solid male frame that he must be from the perfect Viking warrior stock her uncle had told her about. "*The New Reich of Germany would be built from these men,*" he had told her many times before.

Waiting for the right moment, she spoke to him just after her Uncle Günther excused himself from the group and entered a nearby room guarded by two SS-Rottenführers of Himmler's own personal bodyguards.

"So, where are you from, Captain?"

Seemingly uninterested and somewhat formal, Horst replied quietly, "My home now is here in Berlin. But I was born on the Island of Leka, north of Trondheim in Norway, Fräulein."

\* \* \*

He could see that she was already a very beautiful young lady even at sixteen. And he knew from the dossier, Himmler had given him to review, that she was also unknowingly hand-picked for one of the SS-Reichsfuhrer's future assignments; this young fräulein was one of the Fuhrer's prospective breeding stock. In fact, her dossier indicated she had tested at the top of the intelligence scale for young people at her age level. Her only flaw seemed to be her desire to humanize less unfortunate races, such as the Jews, Gypsies, and Coloreds. The dossier stated it was clear that she was much too forgiving of these sub-human races. She would likely be sent to a Nazi Youth re-orientation program in the near future. She needed to see the shortcomings of these races, including the threat they posed to the future of the Reich.

It seemed that Himmler was seriously concerned about this flaw in Heidi, but her uncle had assured the SS-Reichsfuhrer that it was merely a stage of her youthful adolescence. It was as a result of her broad exposure to other European nationals during her travels with him that had caused the problem. It would soon be corrected.

Horst gave her a frosty smile intended to hide his knowledge and interest.



\* \* \*

Slightly taken back by his surprised formality, Heidi then decided to redirect the same question to the more jovial-looking, lower ranking officer beside him.

"And you, Lieutenant, where are you from? And what does that SD on your arm cuff mean?"

SS-Obersturmführer Claus Prien was a round-faced, friendly young man. He was a little overweight, but rumored to be quite effective in his interrogation squads. Prien had just joined the most aggressive man in the Third Reich next to Hitler himself, SS-Standartenführer Reinhard Heydrich.

Colonel Heydrich's SD Units or Sicherheitsdienst and better known as SS Security, Intelligence and Interrogation Police had just broken away from Admiral Canaris' Abwehr Espionage Unit that year. As a result, SS-Standartenführer Heydrich had begun to create his own fiefdom directly under the SS-Reichführer Himmler with his own select people. The SS-Obersturmführer Claus Prien had recently become one of those specific people.

Appearing amazed that the young fräulein had even realized he was at the table, with an Aryan example like the captain beside him, the SS-Obersturmführer Prien responded back to Heidi with obvious excitement.

"My home, Fräulein, is near Leipzig in the town of Hale, where as you may be aware, the Director of the SD, SS-Standartenführer Reinhard Heydrich is from. I'm also a musician, just like the SS-Standartenführer, but of course, I'm not as proficient with classical instruments as he is. And, regarding your question about the SD emblem on my

cuff," he paused to see if she was watching, "this is the newly created Division of SS-Security and Intelligence that will assist the Fuhrer in the further protection of das Vaterland, Fräulein!"

The conversation continued back and forth between them for a while, until Horst Deeke was called away to a staff meeting of the SS-Reichsfuhrer's other high-level attachés. So when the real object of her interest left the table, Heidi simply ceased her attempt to impress further the SS-Oberstrumfuhrer. Then, quickly excusing herself, she walked off to another table of young ladies. The young fräuleins always had interesting things to talk about, like their own mysterious loves and maybe even some more background or details on her newly discovered SS-Hauptstrumfuhrer Horst Deeke.

\* \* \*

Günther Anderssen had left the dinner early for a clandestine meeting arranged by Himmler himself. That meeting was designed to launch a Special Espionage Unit for future Operations in the U.S. directed only by the Fuhrer. As Günther entered the secured meeting room, Himmler greeted him and began reviewing the trip plans. To his surprise, upon orders from Himmler, two other gentlemen were also in attendance from the Montebatten und Reich Bank in Zurich, Switzerland. They were to turn over a double-keyed suitcase to Günther. He was now the newly designated American Director of the Fuhrer's SSI, Schutzstaffel Infiltration.

Günther's undercover police work in the years following the great war and his recent training of Himmler's SS Ultra-Secret Espionage network in Germany had made him the perfect choice. Within his double-keyed suitcase, were detailed assignment orders to establish specialized American-based operations using SSI operatives, bound only to the SS-Reichsfuhrer Himmler. A special false bottom in the suitcase held twenty million British pounds sterling. Himmler's primary directive from Hitler was straightforward but deadly. It required that Günther's new American SSI network had to be totally self-sustaining and extremely covert. It would grow from Günther's seeds.

They had to be so well concealed from all other Nazi spy operations, like the Abwehr, that the Fuhrer's closest core leaders of the German Reich had absolute deniability of its existence. So for propaganda reasons and ultimately, Hitler's personal protection from possible future charges of war crimes, they could easily be designated as German-American renegades and not members of any German operation or the Nazi Party itself. They were on their own, but they were also very deep undercover.

SSI would only be used in future operations of the utmost needs of the Fuhrer himself, as the SS-Reichsfuhrer Himmler put it. The true enigma with this arrangement, however, was very real to Günther Anderssen. He knew, of course, that the Fuhrer's personal Waffen-SS assassins could at any time find and annihilate them instantly. But that would happen only if something went wrong, or if anything they did implicated Germany's leaders.

Given this broad mandate by the Fuhrer and orders taken directly from the SS-Reichfuhrer, Günther could call his own shots and freely make all decisions, until the time came for his SSI operatives to be activated and utilized. Even so, with the burden of all this in his conscience, Günther's first American SSI operative would be his own little blond niece; Heidi Winters, at her tender age of only sixteen.

Heidi had been orphaned upon the death of her American mother and German-born father in 1929. She was returned to Germany and, as her only living relative, Uncle Günther had become her guardian. As a result of Günther's work, Heidi was raised exclusively around adults and slowly became aware of Uncle Günther's relationship with the Secret Police. Her maturity and intelligence amazed her uncle as she developed an incredible interest in his work. Because her English was as impeccable as her High German, she was frequently introduced, in jest to his associates, as his future American spy child.

Heidi was constantly moved around with Uncle Günther on his European assignments, and she quickly began acquiring other language skills in French and Dutch, in addition to dialects of Danish and Norwegian. Her bond and allegiance to Uncle Günther grew very strong during these travels, and she relied on him for everything. Heidi naively admired her uncle for his achievements within the SS and his new assignments in Himmler's Schutzstaffel Infiltration. She never really knew the sinister things he was actually responsible for. To her, it only mattered that he gave her

the family that she so longed for at that delicate time in her life.

For Günther, however, she was a critical tool in his own future with Himmler. He knew her father's Aryan bloodline had made her a perfect example for the Third Reich's youth to look up to. As such, he had no trouble convincing the SS-Reichführer Himmler that Heidi was the perfect instrument to serve him in carrying out their flawlessly planned subterfuge for SSI. Himmler had always admired the concept of pure Aryan families and now together, Günther and his niece could carry his ideal into America's heartland for the sake of the Reich.

With Heidi joining him as his young innocent, Günther could believably maintain an upstanding image in his new home. His cover would assure the Führer he would always be ready and waiting undercover when future covert operations needed to be activated.

Their trip to New York had to begin in Denmark.

Fictitiously, it was Günther's home country. They had to use that fact to establish their detailed cover and to protect them from detection from within by Germany's own Abwehr agents. The Abwehr was already thought to be partially infiltrated by British doubles and clandestine Soviet Bolsheviks.

To maintain his subterfuge, Günther had decided to book the outbound trip from Copenhagen via Brest, France on the great White Star Line's Olympic.

Günther had always loved the folklore of great passenger ships of the seas and had often excited Heidi with stories

of the Titanic. Yet she had no idea that Olympic was a sister to the Titanic. The Harland & Wolff shipyards in Great Britain had decided to build three Olympic-class super liners, the first of which would be the Olympic. The keel was laid in December 1908, and three years later, she set sail on her maiden voyage. In March 1909, however, the keels were laid for two more of these grand ocean liners. One was the Britannic, but the ship of true tragic folklore was the Titanic and on her maiden voyage, she struck a massive iceberg and sank in the cold dark North Atlantic, late on the night of April 15, 1912.

Günther explained to Heidi that after an investigation of why the Titanic sank, a lot was learned about her construction flaws. Work was put on hold for completing the sister ship, Britannic, for over a year; while as a further precaution, the Olympic was immediately recalled to Liverpool, where she was completely refitted. New watertight bulkheads were built to extend all the way up to the main and top decks. Even the hull was re-fitted with a double skin of steel.

All of this work was easy to do on Britannic because she was still in dry dock under final construction.

Unfortunately, the Olympic had to be taken out of service and was forced to remain in port for over six months before she was able to return to sea.

The Britannic, on the other hand, set sail in February 1914 and made several uneventful Atlantic crossings. Near the end of the great war, however, a proud German U-boat Kapitänleutnant of the Kaiser's Reichsmarine, sunk the ship

on a misty November day in 1916. In the end, ironically, the first ship of the three great liners of the century became the last to survive.

Now, after twenty-one years of service and over three-hundred crossings of the Atlantic Ocean, the White Star Line's Olympic, the last surviving liner of the trinity, was about to receive two passengers: Günther and Heidi were about to set sail on their own portentous journey deep into America.

## Chapter 5

### The Arrival

It was mid-afternoon on February 10th before Günther Anderssen and Heidi Winters finally arrived at their destination. They had chosen an overnight Pullman car attached to the Southern Railway's Carolina Crescent. The Atlantic crossing had been completed in seven days and after two more days on the train, they were now beginning to show the extreme fatigue of their trip. Günther had made extensive plans before the trip through his bank contacts at the Montebatten und Reichbank in Zurich to have a discreet local banker in Asheville, a small town located in the North Carolina mountains, make arrangements to assist him with his massive investments.

As expected, one of the associates at the bank and his secretary were on hand to greet him and Heidi as the train arrived at the small, but private Biltmore Station.

A colored Southern Railway station porter placed the removable steps on the platform under the car's exit door as Heidi started to jump down, with Günther just behind her.

"We're so glad to finally meet you both, Mr. Anderssen." Bob Moseby slurred his words in a lazy drawl, typical of the mountain accents found in the region. Bob reached out and grabbed for Heidi's hand, helping her down the steps. In childish amazement, she looked around at the old English-styled Station House.



In a clear attempt to imply that the little town had as much sophistication as the larger towns in the South, Moseby added, "We were concerned that we had come to the wrong station. You know, of course, that we have two stations here in Asheville."

Günther returned his welcome in English with an undefined European emphasis in his response.

"Truthfully, Mr. Moseby, I really had no idea that this little town was large enough for even one railway station!" "Now that's a real hoot, sure 'nuff, Mr. Anderssen!" Moseby replied, as he reached out to shake his hand. "A little town like Asheville here, with two railway stations. Well, actually, this here place is called Biltmore. It's an independent village from Asheville . . . built by the great Vanderbilt family back at the turn of the century. Their people were originally from over in your neck of the woods, I believe, Mr. Anderssen?"

Günther quickly responded to see where he was going with this so-called friendly repartee.

"And where, exactly, do you think I'm from, Mr. Moseby?" After a short pause for effect, while looking at Heidi's long blond hair, Moseby turned back to Günther.

"Why, I suppose y'all are from Holland or such, Mr. Anderssen, is that right?"

Realizing he probably meant nothing from the remark, Günther made light of it. He laughed and moved Heidi along the station platform toward the luggage cart.

"Well, now Mr. Moseby, at least you're on the right continent. Heidi and I are from Denmark. It's actually a

bit further north and east than Holland and a lot dryer there most of the time. We don't need dykes to hold back the North Sea, like they do around Amsterdam and the lowlands of the Vanders people, as you now call them. The American Vanderbilts, I believe?"

Bob Moseby was quickly tipping the porters and pointing out the location of his car for them to load Mr. Anderssen's luggage.

He replied, smiling at Günther.

"Well now, that is funny how we tend to forget how many countries there are over there across the Atlantic. But Ursula here, Ursula Vidda, comes from that part of the world herself; she can probably even speak a little of that Danish, Mr. Anderssen."

Suddenly, Bob Moseby's secretary, who had been silent, became animated. She spoke with an obvious Scandinavian inflection in her precise English.

"As you know, Mr. Moseby, my mother is from Norway, not Denmark; however, I can speak a little of both."

At that moment, the youthful Heidi surprised everyone and turned to greet Ursula in perfectly accented Norwegian.

"It is a pleasure to meet you, Miss Ursula!"

Just as quickly, Ursula looked directly at Heidi and spoke in a soft Norwegian tone to address both her and her Uncle Günther.

"And it's a very great pleasure to meet you both, Heidi!" Seeming frustrated at his lack of linguistic ability, Bob Moseby hastily jumped into the conversation.

"Hey! Hey now, y'all! That's enough! I give up! I can't figure out what y'all are saying or what's going on here. Ursula, you've got to switch them back to the local talk around here or we're never going to get them to where we're supposed to be by sunset."

Günther then jumped in and responded with a sense of satisfaction at the bank's effort to make them feel comfortable.

"Well, I must say that I am rather impressed with the international diversity that you and your bank have presented to us already today, way up here in the mountains of North Carolina. And Ursula is truly a refreshing surprise; I believe we are really going to like this place after all. It feels a little bit like home already!"

Günther turned to Heidi, who was now somewhat relaxed and clearly pleased that she had found a female friend to talk to.

"Am I correct, Heidi?"

"Absolutely, Uncle Günther. I do like Asheville. It's rather beautiful up here, almost like the fjords of Norway with these big mountains all around."

Bob Moseby was now smiling with self-satisfaction as he stood at the rear bumper of the big, black, impressive 1932 Buick that probably belonged to an officer of the bank, Günther imagined. He was pleased to be receiving such VIP treatment.

The porters had now finished loading the luggage into the trunk, and Heidi had already joined Ursula in the back seat. They seemed to be deep in conversation, but in

English this time. Mr. Anderssen stood at the open front passenger door and waited, while looking off in the far distance. He seemed to be thinking about something important, as he looked to the mountains west of Asheville and the distant peak of Mount Pisgah. The soft orange and red clouds were beginning to form in a distant sunset over the purple hillsides, now starving for sunlight.

\* \* \*

The bank's president, Mr. Leonard, had been told by his Swiss bank contacts in New York, that people with this much wealth would seldom come to the financially depressed little valley of Asheville these days, at least to live permanently.

Mr. Leonard had also advised Bob before he left, "*These people and this situation is a real opportunity for the bank, so don't blow it.*"

Bob Moseby had been an officer of the Western Carolina Industrial Bank & Trust for the last two years, and Mr. Leonard had finally begun to give him a longer leash with certain customers. This customer, though, was very significant for the bank's future portfolio and very special for his own career. Bob knew that, ever since 1929, independently-owned state banks in the general area of Appalachia and in particular western North Carolina had been struggling to restructure and build back from the ravages of the Great Depression. Only federally chartered banks and a few small state-chartered banks survived, and the still under-capitalized WCIB&T was one of those.

Now, with Mr. Anderssen's arrival and his potential investments, Mr. Leonard's WCIB&T might just have the financial strength to compete with the bigger state and federal banks out of Charlotte and Raleigh.

In fact, Mr. Leonard had told Bob that with Mr. Anderssen's help, they would soon have money to loan, for the first time since he could remember.

Only time would tell, Bob reflected silently, if the WCIB&T would become a big player with these new funds for business development in the local economy. At least now they had a chance, though. With this new financial strength, Asheville's local politicians could begin to attract more Government Work Projects from Washington into the region, to further raise the living standards. He was still deep in these imaginings when Mr. Anderssen suddenly broke into his thoughts.

"How soon can we get going? I need to freshen up and make a few calls before the operators at the hotel go home and close down the switchboard around here."

"Oh, you won't have to worry about that up at the Grand Park, Mr. Anderssen. They burn the lights all night at that first class hotel. You can call to New York for as long as you like. It's got the best of everything for special folks like yourselves.

"We do get a lot of high rollers up here in the summer season, and the Grand Park or the Battery Place Hotel has to keep 'em happy. They've got the best facilities in the entire western region of the state right here. And Mr.

Leonard has personally made sure y'all have everything you need during your stay at the Grand Park Inn."

The porters collected their tips and closed the trunk as Bob moved into the driver's seat, turned to Heidi and Ursula in the back seat, and spoke.

"Well, we're ready to go, y'all."

Mr. Anderssen entered the car and both men closed their doors as Moseby put the big Buick in gear and moved away from the Biltmore Station.

They turned and headed across the empty railroad tracks and up the hill along Biltmore Avenue as the lights of Asheville's downtown cityscape came into view. The car continued on for several more minutes and onto Charlotte Street before they could glimpse the looming lady in the distance.

On a gradual hillside just above them, the Grand Park Inn came into full view, while the boundary of sunlight and clouds seemed to open up for her, then fade into a misty purple.

Finally, much higher up the hill, they arrived at the hotel's vantage point. Its cherished overlook allowed the last moments of light in the western sunset to be seen over Mount Pisgah, then in an instant, it was night in the valleys all around Asheville.

Günther and Heidi were home, at long last.

## Chapter 6

### The First Year

Even though the Grand Park Inn was initially only a temporary home for their first few months in Asheville, it grew to almost nineteen months. But plans were soon evolving for a permanent location for Heidi and Günther. The Inn, of course, remained a beautiful place to stay while the detailed and constantly modified designs were set in motion to establish Günther Anderssen's elaborate home site in the mountains above the city.

During the early spring of 1933, several lavish parties at the Grand Hotel had allowed both Günther Anderssen and little Miss Heidi Winters, as the maids and bellboys around the hotel's grounds liked to call her, to develop a curious group of very rich friends and politicians from around the region.

One such man, Edward Wellington, was introduced to Günther by Mr. Leonard as the grand, Art Deco architect of Asheville. He quickly became an associate. Flush with Günther's investment money, the Western Carolina Industrial Bank & Trust and Mr. Leonard were freely loaning money to build new commercial and industrial projects all over Asheville and the mountain area around Buncombe County. The building trades, especially Wellington's architectural firm, were direct beneficiaries of this financial windfall. The tract they purchased for the Anderssen estate was forty-four acres, high atop Sunset Mountain, facing eastward toward the Atlantic coastline of North Carolina,

below which the Grand Park Inn was located. Mr. Anderssen had stressed that the home's front windows must catch the morning sun. That wasn't the real reason, though. Only he knew that secret. It was to receive radio signals from off the east coast with more clarity.

Wellington complied and faced the main house toward the Chunns Cove Valley, rather than viewing it to the west and down to the valleys on the Asheville side of the great mountain. It was to be hidden on a majestic ridge, referred to as the Ridge of Patton Mountain.

The chateau was to be like a stone medieval fortress within a grove of tall Norwegian pine trees strategically arranged to surround the main house. In between these times, Günther Anderssen continued to develop business associates throughout western North Carolina and the southeastern states, eventually expanding into the Midwest, as the year progressed. He was able to find and become especially friendly with several banking groups in the areas of north Georgia, northeastern Alabama, and eastern Tennessee that were highly segregationist and clearly anti-Semitic.

In fact, two particular banks located in east Tennessee had board members that were secret leaders of the local Klan. As such, they had their own private detectives or security police, as Günther was told, to assist them in protecting their regional areas from the influx or increased influence of undesirables: Coloreds or Jews. These so called enforcers were purposely not active members of the Klansmen in order to avoid the attention of the FBI or other federal



agencies placed as government watchdogs on the Southern boys.

But in all cases, once these bankers confidentially understood Günther's position and the kind of assistance that he could offer their banks, he was carefully brought into their closest trust. They freely offered the services of their covert enforcers for any special situations that might develop in the near future. Their focus was in particular the Knoxville and upper east Tennessee regions, but if the need arose, any nearby areas within the Southeast were accessible.

As time evolved, Günther's travels continued to be carefully planned to disguise any clandestine meetings with Americans sympathetic to the new Germany under Hitler. These contacts allowed him to develop a network of potential agents and government moles that could later be used for future SSI activities. Although the calm before the storm in America made everyone upbeat in the revitalized communities around the Southeast and in particular, Asheville, Günther knew that events on the continent of Europe were now evolving at a furious pace and principally within Germany itself. But Americans, as a whole, were very complacent about events in Europe and for the most part remained isolationists toward the rest of the world.

Looking back, 1933 had been a very momentous year for Günther Anderssen in America, while the new Chancellor, Adolf Hitler, continued his consolidation of power within

Germany. Horst Deeke had written Günther regularly on the great changes taking place in Germany.

The Communists had been rounded up and arrested by the thousands after the Reichstag fire on February 27<sup>th</sup>, and Goering and Hitler had agreed to withdraw Germany from the League of Nations, clearly allowing them to expand the German Reichwehr and the Luftwaffe.

Now, because of mounting political pressures and Hitler's need to consolidate the party, Horst had told Günther that a major planning meeting for SSI operatives in Germany would take place in Berlin sometime in May. Günther knew that very few people in the world and especially in America understood what was happening by the middle of 1934 to make it the final turning point for Germany. But Horst had told Günther it was coming. So, by early July 1934 a secret letter arrived revealing the outcome.

Horst explained the situation to Günther within the detailed document sealed in a secured pouch, delivered to Asheville via Günther's bankers from Geneva, Switzerland on July 3rd, 1934:

*"First and foremost," Horst wrote, "the Fuhrer wanted German Austria returned to the great German Motherland. Dollfuss, the Chancellor, had to yield or Germany would make him yield in the most absolute way. The Fuhrer then stated to us boldly: **Austria and Germany must be one.**"*

Günther had known that Chancellor Dollfuss of Austria had only recently signed a pact with Hungary and Italy's Mussolini. They called it the Rome Protocols, which

suggested that all three would protect each other in the event of a threat to any one of group.

Further, Günther knew at this stage in Germany's evolving power, that Italy, although a dictatorship, was still refusing to join Hitler in his future plans for Europe.

Horst's letter then added a second key point in his detailed description: *"The Fuhrer then slammed his hand on the table and stated to all of us. . . It is clear to me and all of my true SS supporters here in this room and elsewhere that we cannot continue to allow the Brown Shirts of the S.A. to expand their own form of social revolution in Germany any further. Roehm must be stopped, now!"*

Horst emphasized, *"We all knew that Hitler's conviction was final, as he raised his voice and again shouted to make his point of merging the pre-Wehrmacht armies of Germany. . . Roehm has now recruited and built a force of over three million S.A. members. These men must be merged into the Reichwehr, and our own SS should continue to be used to control all of those armies.*

*Otherwise, they themselves will make a conspiracy against us. We must act first and without clemency. They have gone beyond pillaging just the Jews and the profiteers as we had planned. Now they are willing to destroy our core supporters, the lifeblood of das Vaterland.*

*They see their revolution as a never-ending process, attacking the privileged classes and established society of German bankers and industrialists, people that will assure assets and support for das Vaterland's future growth over all of Europe."*

Günther Anderssen had known Roehm well. He had been Hitler's Chief of Staff of the S.A. The Brown Shirt Army of Germany for seven long years had been his domain. They had been together since the beginning of the Munich Putsch. Now, as he read Horst's details, Günther realized what had driven Hitler into his rage: the Fuhrer had lost control of his own man and possibly the entire Nazi Socialist Party. Something drastic had to be done.

Finally, Horst explained, *"The possibility even existed that certain members of the German Parliament at the Reichstag, besides the old German Military of the Reichwehr, might try to side with Roehm, just to destabilize the Fuhrer at the moment when he was most vulnerable. We all knew that it was not just the S.A. and the army that had to be under Hitler's absolute control, but this event would now force the total annihilation of all his enemies and everything must happen with simultaneous precision throughout Germany, in one night. And so, on the night of June 25th, 1934, the Reichwehr Generals, right up to General von Blomberg himself, were told to confine all German army troops to their barracks until further orders from the Fuhrer. Ammunition and weapons were issued only to SS Sturm Troopers and SS Black Shirt Regulars, just as my own SS Kommandos."*

Horst then got very specific. *"Events on the 29th moved very quickly and actually set everything in motion. First, I and my kommando-trained SS Sturm Troopers flew with the Fuhrer as security to Godesberg, where we met with Reichsminister Goebbels. Upon our arrival, Goebbels falsely*

*informed the Fuhrer, as we had planned, that an impending mutiny was underway in Berlin and that a Brown Shirt rising was taking place under command of Karl Ernst, Roehm's next in command, in Bremen and Hamburg.*

*At this point, we began our hasty journey with the Fuhrer to Munich. At 0400 hours, the Fuhrer, his immediate staff, and myself with a small SS Kommando unit arrived secretly at the designated airstrip near Munich in Hitler's long-range, three-engine Junkers JU 52. Prior to our arrival, however, the Fuhrer had instructed Reichsminister Herman Goering to take control in Berlin and SS-Reichfuhrer Himmler to suppress any insurrection throughout the populace of Germany. The Fuhrer and my twelve-man SS Security Squad, along with Reichsminister Goebbels and myself, quickly drove our convoy of three bulletproof Mercedes Command Cars to the Brown House in central Munich. After summoning the leaders of the local S.A. to his presence, the Fuhrer had me secure them and place them under arrest. Another plane arriving at the airstrip at 0430 hours brought my additional, heavily armed, twenty-man SS-Wiking Kommando Unit. Then together we all proceeded with two more armored vehicles to rendezvous with the Fuhrer's convoy for his protection on the trip out to Wiessee.*

*Once there and without incident, Roehm and his personal staff were arrested and returned by us to Munich for imprisonment. Sometime after noon, the full-scale executions were ordered by the Fuhrer.*

By the time it had ended in Munich, Berlin, and Hamburg and throughout the rest of the Reich, twenty-four hours later, I estimated between five and six thousand S.A. Officers were murdered. Ultimately, the Brown Shirt leaders and the previous Chancellor of Germany, Herr Schleicher, his wife, Karl Ernst, and finally Roehm himself were assassinated. Reichsminister Goebbels called it, **'The Night of the Long Knives.'**

Without any prior knowledge, it was simply a massacre that ended the moment we brought the Fuhrer by air back to Berlin at about 0100 hours, on the morning of July 1st. Later that afternoon, the Fuhrer, again as we had planned, appeared on the Balcony of the Chancellery to greet the massive crowds that had been gathering all day, as word spread throughout Germany. I'm sure you heard something on the radio over there in America; we made certain that every world news service agency had their mikes turned on for him.

You will probably see the movie newsreels in a few days, since we had news cameras rolling and made sure that his appearance was purposely disheveled. Then he began. He was magnificent as he triumphantly spoke in the most compelling argument imaginable, while everyone listened in awe." Horst then gave Günther his own personal account that the world press had failed to see, as the Fuhrer spoke:

**'It was truly the defining moment of the German Third Reich. . .**

**Yesterday, some that were among us tried to take the Reich and destroy it.'**

"Then, the Fuhrer paused purposely to get just the right intonation, as he raised his voice even higher, Günther," Horst wrote.

**'Today, the Reich stands, as it will for the next one thousand years.'**

"Sounds of the crowd's acclamations were deafening," Horst added, "as the Fuhrer's beloved Berliners standing below in the streets saw him clearly as the intended victim, but now also, the victorious savior of Germany."

**'The necessity,'** Hitler stated as he looked to the cameras for effect, **'for acting with lightning speed meant that in this decisive hour for Germany, I had very few men with me.'**

"His timing was perfect as he waited for just the right moment to continue."

**'Although only a few days before, I had been prepared to exercise clemency, at this hour there is no place for any such consideration. Mutinies are suppressed in accordance with laws of iron, which are eternally the same. In this hour I was responsible for the fate of the German people and thereby I became the Supreme Adjudicator of the German people.'**

"Again I watched him," Horst stated, "like the statue of a Roman Dictator, as he paused to hear the roar of the crowd."

**'I did not wish to deliver up the Young Reich to the fate of the Old Reich. I gave the order to shoot those who were the ringleaders in this treason.'**

*"The deafening yells and cheers became an almost continuous sound. He concluded in his strongest voice:*

*'In the end, I further gave the order to burn out, down to the raw flesh, the ulcers of this poisoning of the well in our domestic life and of the poisoning of the outside world.'*"

As the letter ended, that story of the events stuck like the long knife itself in Günther's mind forever. With the Fuhrer now in absolute control of the military and the government of Germany, he would no longer be needed there. From now on, he would live in America to make SSI's dream become a reality. Yet somehow Günther knew, deep in his heart, that he would probably never see his beloved Germany ever again.



## Chapter 7

### Crystale

By the end of their first year in America, Heidi had turned seventeen. Evolving her own unique blend of behavior at the Grand Hotel, she began showing an eagerness for their new lifestyle, entirely separate from Günther's. She even began to develop close friendships with several members of the Big Bands that rolled into town, playing for the summer season parties she loved so much to attend. Her beautiful, long, silk dresses from Paris and her sophisticated European dance styles caught their attention, as she immediately became the newest debutante of the Grand Park Inn.

Occasionally, when she would sneak in during band rehearsals, the white band members would dance with her, showing her the sleek new steps and moves from the new age of swing dance they'd learned in the big American cities, far to the northeast.

A twenty-two-year-old professional dance instructor from New York had been hired by the management in March of the following year to help the Grand Park during its upcoming tourist season for the summer of '34. The new arrival, Crystale Marsalis, quickly became Heidi's newest confidante, and her story became one of Heidi's favorite legends.

It seems that Crystale's mother and her true father had a clandestine marriage, quickly annulled at the request of her father's family by the Catholic Church, just after

Crystale was born. Her mother, Renée, had been a beautiful dance instructor at the notorious Lido Nightclub in Paris. Crystale's father, Fajardo Peron Munoz, on the other hand, was an outwardly reserved professional politician stationed in Paris. Fajardo, working for the Imperial Embassy of the King of Spain, had instantly been seduced by her mother, Renée.

Then without his family's permission, he clandestinely married her that year in France. Other circumstances forced the Spanish King to recall him.

So after the annulment, Renée was left alone in Paris without a primary source of support to care for her baby, Crystale.

Due to her limited financial situation and her constant work at the nightclub, the child was brought up in the seedy underworld of Paris street life. Up to the age of six, Crystale grew up and actually fell in love with the bizarre world of her mother's life. It was finally the pressures of Fajardo's family in Madrid, besides some ransom money offered secretly to Renée, that ultimately persuaded her mother to relinquish Crystale to her father's family. Unhappily, Crystale agreed. It was then that she began her privileged life in the massive family hacienda in Madrid, Spain until the day she was sixteen.

Her father's infatuation for Renée, however, had never abated. Then, unexpectedly, on her sixteenth birthday, her father decided to return to Paris, reluctantly agreeing to allow Crystale to accompany him. It was billed as a short diplomatic trip, but the Lido in Paris became his first

stop. He stayed all night at the nightclub, drunk and mesmerized by the exotic Renée. But in the melee of his passion, he had forgotten about his innocent daughter, Crystale.

For the next several nights they frantically searched for Crystale, but it was too late. She had met a very unusual mulatto-colored man from America. He was an accomplished jazz musician named Bébe Marsalis who had come to the Lido on a summer fling. Crystale was immediately infatuated and stayed with him in his hotel room until Renée found her lying nude in his bed, some days later. When Crystale tried hopelessly to have her mother explain to Fajardo that she wanted to stay in Paris, for just a few weeks, he refused to listen. As she expected, her father threatened to force her to return with him to Madrid. In pure rebellion, Crystale then chose to marry the young colored musician. It was simply to spite what she felt was evil about her father, even though she didn't really love Bébe.

Faced with his child's ugly rebellion and pressured by the king to return to Spain himself due to civil unrest, Fajardo sadly chose to disown Crystale to avoid any further embarrassment to his proud Spanish heritage and that of the Munoz family name.

Crystale, confused and disillusioned with both her father and her mother, left Paris and went to New York with her new husband.

Open intermarriage was considered illegal at that time in America. Crystale was forced to become a professional dancer at the famous Cotton Club of Harlem in downtown New

York in order to be near Bébe. One night after a violent fight with his band, Bébe left Crystale for no reason. After that, she began touring the county with various big city swing bands, just to stay even financially. At twenty-two and after six long years on the road touring, with many one night-stands, Crystale Marsalis was ready to settle down to her new, more sedate, lifestyle in the mountains of Asheville. Now, she would be known only as Crystale, and Heidi had become the perfect friend to make all of that happen for her.

By the end of the summer tourist season, in the early fall, Heidi and Crystale had become dance regulars at the evening parties that filled the schedule of the Great Inn. Crystale's New York-styled silk dresses were cut to above her calves and were body hugging; they immediately influenced Heidi to adopt the look. She had said to Uncle Günther, when he questioned her, that she wanted to accentuate her dance moves more freely.

That year, the management had booked six top entertainment groups including Tommy Dorsey, The Sentimental Gentleman of Swing, and his incredible fourteen-member band. The Dorsey band alone attracted high rollers from as far away as Chicago and Atlanta, while both Heidi and Crystale got to know most of the band's best musicians and singers over their three week stay.

Then, on the last weekend in September, a Kansas City-based band caught everyone by surprise. The management at the Great Inn had booked them because the band's own nightclub in Kansas City had been shut down by the local police for

two weeks, and they were trying desperately to fill in. It was the last major dance weekend before the season ended, and as usual on the appointed welcoming afternoon, both Heidi and Crystale, adorned in their sleek silver ballroom dresses, were on hand at the front lobby to welcome them. Heidi saw the three gleaming Chryslers first, as she and Crystale ran across the pavement bricks of the hotel's massive automobile entrance to greet them. Heidi rushed to beat one of the Inn's colored doormen, who knew both the girls well and whisked out of her way, as she quickly dashed past him. She wanted to be the first to greet the renowned band members and made it to the front passenger door of the first black car, which gleamed with freshly polished chrome flowing down its body.

As she gripped the door handle and opened it, without any thought, she immediately hugged a big man as he emerged with a surprised smile spreading from ear to ear.

"Welcome to the Land of the Sky," were her excited words as Heidi stepped back and realized they were all colored men.

Crystale, having run up at the same time, shouted even louder, "Oh, my God, it's The Bennie Moten Band! Wow, are we in for some great cutt'in butter swing tonight, Heidi!"

By this time, everyone was emerging from the cars as the emotional welcome had them curious as to what all the commotion was about. Then the big colored man, still holding his smile from Heidi's enthusiastic hug, added:

"I guess this must be the finest welcome I've ever had, by two of the prettiest white ladies I believe I've ever seen."

Suddenly, both of the Inn's uniformed colored doormen, realizing the situation in front of them, ran to the driver of the first car and begin an animated argument that they were purposely trying to keep muffled from the girls. Immediately, Crystale picked up on it, as Heidi just watched in amazement. Fifteen of the most well-dressed colored men Heidi had ever seen stepped carefully out of the black cars and onto the pavement of the Grand Park's main auto lobby. Crystale then looked at Heidi in disappointment.

"They can't get out of their cars here, Heidi, they're colored. They will have to use the lower entrance for the hotel employees, and they can't walk through the hotel's lobby either."

Heidi had always thought swing bands were only made up of white people, and she had always loved the jazz music on the radio, but she was not aware that most of her favorite sounds were actually from colored bands. Now, that fact suddenly became her reality, as she shouted to both the hotel's uniformed doormen.

"Stop! You are not going to humiliate this wonderful band! Do you hear me?"

People near the lobby entrance were now beginning to accumulate in curiosity near the main entrance as they tried to see what was going on. Just then, Sammy Sinclair,

the assistant manager, flew out between the massive double doors of the hotel and quickly ran over to Heidi.

"Miss Heidi, please?" He begged her emotionally. "The hotel has special rules for this kind of matter, and we must follow them. These are colored men, and we will take very good care of them at the lower entrance, but not here at our main guest entrance."

Heidi quickly snapped back at him, in direct contrast to the little Heidi he had known up to that moment.

"What are you saying, Mr. Sinclair? That these men can't receive the same treatment that all the white swing bands that we've had all summer long, have had?"

Heidi spoke almost in tears; she was so impassioned.

"Every time this season, Crystale and I have met them, right here at this lobby entrance. We have never had a problem before, and now you're going to send these men down to the back door! Just because of their skin color? I can't believe the cruelty of your actions, Mr. Sinclair!"

Sammy was stunned, but he tried to hold his composure as the entire band began slowly getting back into their cars to comply with the doormen's animated instructions.

He tried to speak calmly, as she glared at him.

"Miss Heidi, I only work here. This is the policy of the hotel. It's a tradition here in the South to enforce social separation of whites and coloreds. I'm sorry we didn't have time to tell you they were a colored band before all this happened. It's so embarrassing, ma'am. I may even lose my job over this. Miss Heidi? Please don't make it any worse?" Crystale came over to Heidi before she could speak.

"Hey, kiddo, he's right. We really don't want all these wonderful band members to get in any more trouble with the social misfits that make these crazy rules. Let's just go downstairs and give them a bigger welcome. What do you say, *mon Cherie!*" Crystale then looked at Mr. Sinclair as she added, "Besides, we love old Sammy here, and he could get into some very serious trouble with the head manager on this one, so why don't we let it go?"

By now over fifty guests were filling the porch area and milling around the main doors, waiting for someone to do something or at least resolve the obvious colored incident. They had overheard it all. Heidi looked around and decided finally to change her tone. She watched the cars begin to drive off to the lower parking entrance before she looked back at the hotel's guests and spoke.

"Crystale, who was that happy faced man I gave the big hug to, anyway?"

Crystale clearly excited to tell her, just smiled.

"That, young lady, was the man that wrote 'One O'clock Jump.' That was Count Basie! The absolute smoothest and easiest keyman in swing or jazz, for that matter. You just wait 'til tonight; he's going to rock this place into heaven! And Sammy here owes me a dance. Right, Sammy?"

"Yes, ma'am, Miss Crystale," he answered in renewed relief, "and you can be sure I'll be there tonight to pay up, come hell or high water!"



Realizing the crowd was about to leave since everything appeared to go back to normal, Heidi made one last gesture, as she caught everyone's attention.

"Hey, everybody, we were just welcoming the band for tonight! It's Bennie Moten and Count Basie, so get ready for one of the best swing and jazz bands you've ever heard. Personally, I just love them!"

As Heidi turned back to watch the last car drive away, someone back behind her in the now shrinking crowd at the doorway started clapping. Then several others joined in. Suddenly, everyone turned back towards Heidi and began clapping for her too. A tall man in the back of the crowd then shouted at the top of his voice.

"Bravo, young lady. That was brilliant and very brave of you! Bravo!"

Others echoed his feelings and joined in shouting.

"Bravo for you, Heidi, Bravo!"

Heidi simply turned back to them, slowly admiring their response to her innocent action with the coloreds. Then she gave everyone her now famous, Grand Park Inn dance floor curtsy and bow.

That night, all at once, it became clear in Heidi's mind: a dream that she would eventually use to create her own masterpiece, a nightclub and a dinner club that would rival even the Art Deco clubs of Paris and the Big Band dance halls of New York. Her club, she envisioned, would be smaller than the massive dance halls, hosting only the best sounds in swing and jazz, eventually becoming the center of her social world. She would call it "The Beaucatcher,"

after the nickname used for the girls with a floozy curl on their foreheads, while working the speakeasy clubs and dance floors in the 1920s.

It would be a "fun" name, The Beaucatcher Club, but it would be a much more sophisticated club than the '20s speakeasy clubs, with a beautiful view and surroundings to honor this pristine valley in *the Land of the Sky* she had now adopted as her own. Heidi knew she could create a truly renowned nightspot here in the mountains that would make it the choice of the rich and famous from all over the South, including any of Günther's friends that joined him from Europe.

Count Basie and Heidi became fast friends that evening. First, she reintroduced herself and made sure Sammy got all of the band members separate lodgings at the dormitories, down the hill from the main hotel. The facilities were humble, but acceptable. They had often been used by out-of-town employees, hired in the mid-summer rush.

Heidi also persuaded her special friends in the hotel's maid service to put a welcoming fruit basket in every room, plus some fresh bed linens. By the time the early rehearsals were finished, everyone had been introduced, and the evening was beginning to turn into the best event of the season. The hotel's ballroom filled up early after the dinner hour. At nine o'clock that night, the place was packed with hotel guests and the elite of Asheville.

Only those that could afford the price of admission to the last gala event of the Grand Hotel's regular season were admitted. The elaborate chamber was awash in glittering

ball lighting and soft ambient light beams from the Art Deco sconces, spaced a few feet apart, midway on the twenty-foot walls, while shimmering lighting accents flushed downward into the spacious dance floor from the high ceiling. It felt like the intimate atmosphere of a large nightclub, yet its massive hardwood dance floor, with starched table linens and decorative table lamps all around the wide perimeter, made it easy for everyone to move freely and have a good time. Thick drapes covered the massive windows that looked out on Mount Pisgah in daylight on the west end of the room. The stage was almost a surreal arena, filled with two opposing grand pianos and orchestra stands for all the instrumentalists, including a microphone for a young colored girl, a singer named Billie.

The rhythm section was clearly the heart of the Bennie Moten and Count Basie band. Real style dancers just loved Basie's smooth keyboard arrangements as he played that easy swing. And while Bennie was a piano player himself, he clearly recognized the big man's talent. So Basie worked the keys and it was clearly understood by all, that the Count's arrangements drove the band. Heidi would always watch the drummers closely in the swing bands that had visited the hotel over the past months, because good dancers relied on those guys to carry the right feeling. She and Crystale both disliked the heavy thumping of the bass drum that had been typical of most bands during the summer. But the Count's drummer, Jo Jones, was a master of the light relaxed, fluid and shimmering wave of percussion that the girls needed to show off their legs and their

dance steps. Jo even told Crystale, he'd once been a tap dancer himself. Because of that, he knew just how to get the best out of his two high hats as he rode out the big cymbals, so the band's soloists could slip in and they would, talking to the dancers with their saxophones and trumpets, whenever they felt like it.

Heidi saw this as pure artistry at work, as she and Crystale would move from one partner to the next; doing jitterbugs with their hips and swingeroos with their legs, as the men on the sidelines would call out and yell, while they watched the true dancers in envy mov'in out. The girls would show their new partners moves and sometimes they would learn a few themselves, as some of the band members got out on the floor for their Kansas City dance solos. It was an incredible evening, and even Uncle Günther, who had just arrived back from his long trip to San Francisco and the West Coast that afternoon, came down for a final Lindy Hop with Heidi just before it ended after midnight.

\* \* \*

Günther hadn't been able to sleep that night, as he tried to adjust back into the Eastern Time Zone from his extensive journey to the West Coast and the Midwest by train. His mind drifted back to that ominous letter from Horst; a day in Berlin five months before, when he had sat back in his adopted lounge chair in the hotel suite and relaxed in thought.

The three objectives that Horst had outlined in his dispatches on July 3rd that year had actually come to pass, as Günther had foretold they would. The Night of the Long

Knives had consolidated Hitler's power with the Reichwehr and its generals, merging them with the Brown Shirts to become the new German Wehrmacht.

The SS Sturm Troopers and SS Black Shirt Regulars merged into an even stronger and more virulent SS organization, adding to the Gestapo's power under the Reichfuhrer Himmler, to fully control all elements of the military, domestic, Juden concentration camps, as well to protect the Fuhrer above all else.

The Reichstag and Parliament were now under the absolute domination of Chancellor Hitler. Although Hitler's original rise to power had come from the people freely electing him, he had always lived under the influence of the right wing coalition to maintain his control. Now, even that was dismantled. The old democratic republic had died with Marshall Hindenburg earlier in the year.

The new Nazi order embraced all of das Vaterland now. The hearts and minds of all of its people were under the control of one man. The Fuhrer had become the absolute sovereign over all Germany. But the last element of the three, Günther thought, in the Fuhrer's mind, was his most precious.

It was Austria and, although it was yet to merge with das Vaterland, the events directed by the Fuhrer and Himmler in July had assured the eventual success of that goal in the very near future.

Günther had been informed through covert communiqués from Horst early on July 26th that a clandestine group of his SS Kommandos, disguised as armed rebels, had successfully

assassinated Austrian Chancellor Dollfuss inside the Austrian Chancellery. Once his replacement, the pro-Nazi Rintelen, established his own prerogatives, Günther knew it would only be a matter of time before Germany and Austria were re-united, at long last.

Finally, feeling the physical effects of Heidi's last gala event, the draining activities of his travels, and a sense of comfort in knowing das Vaterland's future was in powerful hands, Günther adjusted his position in his soft, leather chair, drifting slowly off, into a deep relaxing sleep.

Only one small thought niggled at his mind underneath the powerful sense of reassurance he enjoyed. That was Heidi. She was a bit of a wild card at this point. She was dance- and jazz-crazy, and he had heard rumors of her standing up for the equal treatment of the black swing band members, and the applause she had received for doing so. Heidi was too compassionate toward those who did not fit the Aryan ideal; he knew that about her.

Well, she was young, he reassured himself. He would have to help her understand. She would outgrow this youthful phase, but he worried about her exposure to American culture.

Somehow, he would have to solidify her to Hitler's vision of racial cleanliness. Oh, well, he thought to himself, drifting off, she is young. There is still time to mold her.

## Chapter 8

### The Move

Their new home was ready by the end of October, and the move from the Grand Park Inn was well underway for Günther and Heidi. It was sad leaving the beautiful lady, as they often called the Great Inn, but it was even sadder that Crystale's contract was up, and she might not be back until the spring. In Heidi's mind, she might be lost forever. All was in readiness on October 15<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Edward Wellington and his staff at the architectural firm personally awaited the arrival of Günther and Heidi at the chateau on the mountain top for their final walk through before it was turned over to the excited pair. The engineers and several managers from local tradesmen, plus their suppliers, were also on the premises to demonstrate the special modern appliances that Günther had requested for the chateau's functionality.

Mr. Wellington had his architectural team consider many eventualities for the property. As such, he'd arranged a complete external support system ensuring the chateau would be fully independent of any local electrical or water utilities, if the need arose, considering their isolated location on a mountain ridge high above the city.

Prior to 1934, even telephone service had not arrived at the uppermost levels of Patton Mountain. A special diesel generator system and radio transmission shack had been designed at the rear of the chateau to provide direct

communication to Asheville's fire and police stations down below, in case of emergencies.

Further assurance for their safety was derived from the fact that the single-lane Towne Mountain Road in front of the estate had been freshly paved before the winter set in, from Asheville to the Blue Ridge Parkway's eastern entrance.

Günther Anderssen and Heidi Winters stood in anticipation at the auto lobby entrance of the hotel as Bob Moseby and Mr. Leonard drove up in two of the bank's brand new black Buicks, to escort them.

Behind them, the hotel's porch was lined with well-wishers for the send off. Their friends at the hotel, from managers to house maids and doormen and even the hotel porters, stood at the ready to see off two of the hotel's most celebrated and long-staying guests.

In the background, even further hidden by the crowd, stood Crystale beside two packed suitcases. She was sad and clearly beginning to contemplate her own future, back on the road again, with one night stands and without the close companionship of her Heidi.

Just then, realizing there was plenty of room in the transport caravan provided by Uncle Günther's bankers, Heidi made up her mind. Günther had already entered the first car with Mr. Leonard and waved a farewell as the door closed. But Mr. Moseby was still waiting for Heidi, as she turned and ran back to hug Crystale.

"Crystale, you're coming with us. No excuses!" Embracing her, Heidi clutched the open-mouthed girl tightly, as tears



welled up into her eyes. "I love you, doll! You are the closest friend I've ever had, and I need you to help me convince Uncle Günther to build my dream club."

Crystale was shaking and clearly beside herself with overwhelming euphoria and surprise.

"Oh, Heidi, I love you too, mon Cherie! And nothing else in this world would make me happier than to be with you and to see your beautiful dream finally realized."

Almost on cue, Sammy Sinclair appeared out of the crowd and stooped down to pick up Crystale's bags. Then he turned to Fletcher, his head porter.

"Here, Fletcher, load these into that black Buick for Miss Crystale."

Fletcher jumped forward and replied with a tone of excitement and real respect for his manager.

"Yes, sir, Mister Sammy."

Bob Moseby, realizing what was happening, ran back and opened the car's trunk, glancing as if to see just how far ahead Mr. Leonard was.

"Hey, Miss Winters," he exclaimed with a sense of urgency, "We had better get going if we want to keep up with your Uncle. He's movin' away fast."

Heidi grabbed Crystale's hand and waved to their friends, as Crystale turned back to Sammy in her own sultry style.

"Thanks again, old friend, and you know where you can find me if you ever get hungry again for another real slow dance partner."

Sammy was almost blushing, obviously aroused by the invitation he had clearly hungered for ever since meeting

Crystale. Everyone knew he had drooled over her, but nothing had ever happened between them.

"You can bet on that, Miss Crystale!" he stuttered, "I will definitely come look'in you up, once I get a day off from the head manager."

Crystale laughed and then winked at him while turning back to Heidi, who was now in a state of energized excitement. They ran hand in hand for the open door and into the backseat of the Buick. Just as they jumped on the seat and before Mr. Moseby had made it around, after closing their door to the driver's side, Heidi whispered searchingly, "And what was that all about, Crystale?"

Crystale turned and looked deeply into Heidi's eyes.

"Well, remember that night we enjoyed the Count Basie dance so much? He pushed into me so tight during those slow dances, well, I knew exactly what he was dreaming about! And believe me; he is really big down there."

Moseby had just entered and was cranking the starter, as she quickly finished.

"Heidi, my love, don't you worry even the slightest about that boy. I can assure you, he's never had a woman yet and between you and me, we could really make him hot, when you feel the time is right, that's all."

Heidi spoke softly, as a small line of tears ran down her left cheek. Crystale took off her neck scarf and patted it gently.

"I really do love you, Crystale. You know that, don't you?" Heidi then took a breath and added, "And I will do anything you ask me to do, as long as you will continue to love me,

even including making nookie with Sammy, if that will affirm my love to you."

Again, Crystale searched deep into Heidi's eyes.

"And I love you too, very much, Heidi. But you have much to learn this year, my young calico, and I will be there to be your expert teacher."

Heidi turned and looked out her side window as the car lurched forward and out of the hotel's grounds on to its upward climb toward the Town Mountain Road.

Heidi stared for a moment at the crowd waving to them from the hotel lobby as they pulled away, her thoughts became blurred with infinite future possibilities. Had she made the right choice in bringing Crystale deeper into her own life and that of her uncle, knowing full well how complicated the mission for das Vaterland might become? She could now feel Crystale's breath along her neck and her hand, gripping hers even tighter, as she came back into the moment and turned to face her.

At that moment, Heidi was completely sure of what she wanted. But just to confirm it, for both herself and Crystale's absolute knowledge, she stretched forward to kiss Crystale's cheek, just as the car hit an awkward turn in the road. With her alignment slightly off and her forward momentum still in place, Heidi and Crystale's luscious lips collided with the passion of sex-starved lovers.

\*

\*

\*

That moment remained unbroken as Mr. Moseby recovered the car and then quickly glanced into the rearview mirror. He had already given them several glances before, as he rushed up the mountain road, carefully driving through curves to catch the tail of the other Buick. Viewing what he assumed was their unbridled desire with his own eyes, he mistakenly reacted out loud.

"Uh, oh, I'm sorry!" he offered, somewhat embarrassed that he'd caught the two of them in such a strange and now very arousing embrace. Then, realizing his predicament and hoping they hadn't seen his glance, he decided to add a second thought.

"Holy Cow, now that was really a switchback! These curves up here are the most difficult on the whole mountain, Miss Heidi."

Heidi responded, obviously not knowing what he had seen, as she sat back looking directly into Crystale's large, beautiful eyes.

"We're okay back here, Mr. Moseby! Just keep up the good work, and don't worry about us."

Then she smiled, as she heard Crystale's reaction:

"We're definitely going to be just fine."

## Chapter 9

### The Chateau

High atop Beaucatcher Mountain, a single lane road winds even higher for about twenty miles toward the eastern entrance of the Blue Ridge Parkway. For two years, Günther Anderssen had been building his estate, located on a forty-four-acre reserve along the uppermost ridge of this route called the Towne Mountain Road. There he had created a large stone and brick mansion carefully hidden within the trees just below the crest of the great mountain overlooking the valleys around Asheville. Surrounding the entire estate was a fifteen-foot stone wall with black iron spikes strategically mounted across its thick, three-foot top, adding an ominous medieval look to the overall appearance. A single gatehouse entrance was set back from the main road in a hidden cluster of winter pine trees. Various support structures for guests, servants, auxiliary power, security, a water cistern system, and a small dormitory for his guards were also located on the property. The main house, which they called *The Chateau*, could not be seen from the road below, due to the massive stone wall protecting its perimeter. Even peering through the wrought iron guard gates would only expose the closely planted mature Norway Pines that hid the actual mansion's grounds from view. The Chateau itself had a dark and sinister look to its exterior design due to the limited use of windows, thick landscaping, and mossy blackstone covering the walls.

At over a mile above sea level, the entire estate offered an interesting possibility which Günther had already foreseen; with a powerful radio transmitter, a direct line of radio waves could travel unimpeded directly to the far eastern Atlantic coast of North Carolina on a clear night, without detection and without a bounce of its signal. Here at his hidden mountain chateau, the enigmatic Günther Anderssen would soon begin arranging meetings with a limited amount of very rich and powerful people within the region or brought from abroad for short stays at the estate. Then, without interference, he could begin cultivating the key alliances designed to build the blueprint of his American strategy for SSI.

The first car to arrive for the official walk through was Mr. Leonard's. The Pinkerton guard at the gatehouse recognized the bank president and immediately motioned them through and onto the serpentine gravel driveway that climbed up to the main house. Crunching along on the white gravel stones, the car's tires ground their distinctive sound as the vehicle slowly made its way upward until they arrived at the rear motor entrance of the Chateau. Mr. Edward Wellington and his architectural firm's staff were waiting there, along with several engineers and construction managers that had worked on the project for the last two years.

Mr. Wellington was all flourishes as he ran to Mr. Anderssen's door and greeted him.

"Günther let me personally welcome you home!"

"And, my distinguished friend," Günther replied in his typically reserved manner, "it is so good to finally be home in this superb architectural masterpiece."

It was almost noon before Mr. Wellington's staff and the others on hand had thoroughly detailed every conceivable nuance of the estate to Mr. Anderssen. During that time, Heidi and Crystale had arrived and were welcomed by Mr. Wellington's senior interior designer, Mrs. Judy Knox. With Judy's assistance, Miss Winters had gone about selecting two of the most exquisitely decorated bedrooms on the second floor of the main Chateau for herself and her first guest to the estate, as she had introduced her friend Crystale.

Mrs. Knox had spent the last five months working with Mr. Anderssen at Mr. Wellington's direction to select the massive furniture inventory and appointments for the main house and the various support facilities at the estate. Her most impressive work, however, was Günther's library and cigar smoking room. The room was designed with a cluster of Moroccan leather settees and lushly upholstered easy chairs for his male guests. Its walls were lacquered with antique-gold bas-reliefs, depicting ancient Norwegian Viking ships in various battle scenes.

Günther had personally selected over five thousand book titles that were now in place in the massive library shelves with their own rolling ladder assembly made from imported dark mahogany woods. The combination room, as Mrs. Knox called it, also had its own bar and guest restroom, including a small bedroom with a second bath area off to

one end. It was added specifically by Günther so that he could easily accommodate a special guest, or even himself, if he chose to stay downstairs for the evening.

Alive with the rustle of fine china and silverware and the buzz of conversation, the Chateau's grand dining room was filling for the first time with the welcoming party and Mr. Anderssen. It was clear that Mr. Wellington's staff had thought of just about everything. And with the estate's project budget coming in at a cool million and half dollars, this was by far the largest private home contract in his firm's history.

Just to ensure the success of the gala welcoming party, Mr. Wellington even had requested one of the top high-end catering firms from Atlanta, Gayle Darling & Company. Gayle Darling was in her mid-thirties, but her experience level was very diversified, Mr. Wellington had assured Günther. She had lived in France when she was in her teens and had worked at the Tour D'Argent, the Silver Tower on the Left Bank of the Seine and probably the most famous restaurant in all of Paris.

In her late twenties, Gayle had returned to New York and became the pastry chef at one of the most famous German restaurants in America, Lüchows on East 14th Street.

Now, Miss Darling brought along her favorite three-piece classical musical ensemble to complete the effect of her celebrated cuisine, plus something very special Mr.

Wellington had personally suggested just for Günther Anderssen: his favorite styled schnitzel *a La Lüchow mit Kartoffel Klosse* - veal cutlets with potato dumplings. From



that day forth, she had Mr. Anderssen around her little finger.

As the violinists accompanied the pianist on the Chateau's newly tuned Grand Steinway, creating a soft, melodious background, Heidi and Crystale entered from the main hallway's staircase with Mrs. Knox trailing behind them.

"Ah, there you are, my sweet little darling," Günther announced as he spied her, purposely interrupting a boring conversation with one of the senior construction engineers reviewing the complex details of excavating the building's granite foundation. "It's time for the lady of the estate to be toasted, my dearest Heidi."

"Hear, hear!" Mr. Leonard exclaimed, overhearing Günther.

"It is with my greatest pleasure that I welcome you to your new home, Miss Winters."

At that moment, the beautiful young duo came into full view for all to see.

"And, my dearest, I see you have added even more beauty to our homecoming luncheon with the lovely Miss Crystale here," Uncle Günther added, as he winked to her in approval of her decision. Within the past few days, they had agreed to arrange the clandestine recruitment of Crystale.

Günther's American SSI operation at that point, in late '34, had only a few very close confidants in the U.S., and those were primarily pre-identified German or even Nazi sympathizers. Günther had fully explained to Heidi during the past year that her own progress as an agent had to include the recruiting of others.

He had further said to her, "Heidi, the complex process of developing your own network might require you to use more than just psychological methods to gain their deepest personal allegiance. You may even need a commitment that imitates true love. To prove that to them, you may be required to use promiscuity to gain their deepest confidence."

He knew Heidi had already begun that process with Crystale. "I have some exciting news, Uncle!" Heidi exclaimed in a shy, innocent tone. He assumed this was for Crystale's benefit.

"My dearest, what would that be?" Günther replied, knowing full well what she was about to reveal to him.

Once she and Crystale were finally beside him, she softly spoke to him in an apparent confidential whisper, while all the time clearly making sure that Crystale was just near enough to overhear her imploring request.

"Do you remember the project we discussed earlier this year; the one about the private Continental-style restaurant that you were planning to open next season on the mountainside near the Grand Park Inn?"

Günther grunted, "Uh, yes of course, dearest." He looked at Crystale while listening to Heidi's soft whispers. He clearly observed from Crystale's posture that she would be willing to do just about anything to get him to agree with Heidi, as she gave him a very sultry, come-on look.

"Well, Uncle," Heidi became more animated, as she spoke very delicately, "I want to expand that idea into a complete restaurant and nightclub. And Uncle Günther, I

want Crystale to stay on with us over the winter to help us design it. She would manage the nightclub with me, and we could find someone here locally to manage the restaurant."

"Ah, my dear, what a set-up you have made here with Crystale!" He smiled at both girls, as he replied, including them both in his response. "It seems it would be rather impossible for me to turn you both down, now that you've brought all your ammunition to this party."

Heidi's smile and eyes were lighting up her face, although she looked a bit puzzled over what he meant by all of her ammunition.

"So you are in agreement, Uncle Günther?" Heidi reconfirmed. "Crystale can stay with us, and we can pursue the nightclub, then begin looking for a chef or restaurant manager after the first of the year?"

Günther looked at her quizzically. He now knew she had forgotten to read the letter he had sent Mr. Wellington instructing him to bring that special catering group of his up from Atlanta for the official open house and walk-through gala. The plan was that if all proved successful, that group would be offered the management position at the new restaurant, if, of course, everyone agreed that their cuisine was as terrific as the social crowd had raved about in Atlanta.

"The letter, my dear," he urged her. "You never read my letter to Mr. Wellington, outlining our plans for the official walk-through party?"

"Oh. No, you're right, I didn't see that!" she stated, looking somewhat off-balance as she glanced at Crystale.

She looked concerned at his agitation, as well she might be since he was always precise in everything he did, and she knew he expected the same of her. He had often told her: *"Nothing must be left to chance, get access to all, knowing all information is critical to making the correct decision. This is the attribute of a truly professional agent; never trivialize that."*

"Well, then, my dear," he then surprised her with a smile, rather than the expected admonishment for her oversight, "you must immediately get over and meet Miss Gayle Darling. Try out some of her succulent canapés and hors d'oeuvres and help me to make a decision this afternoon."

Heidi and Crystale discreetly looked back at each other. The probable chef or restaurant manager was right here with them today, and what a catch she would be since she was known to be the talk of Atlanta's Top Social One Hundred. Günther shrugged. As Mr. Leonard has let him know, money talked in these parts and anywhere in the southeast, for that matter. In times like these, the man with all the money got to take home the prettiest things, no questions asked.

"Oh, Uncle Günther, this is fantastic! I can't thank you enough for inviting them."

Heidi looked like her mind was racing in overdrive, as she smiled that conniving look at Crystale, who gave her the same look back. They looked like they were looking forward to making Miss Gayle Darling into a true co-conspirator in their new nightclub and private dinner club concept.

As both girls headed off to the Chateau's massive kitchen, Günther couldn't help but think that at last the American strategy for SSI was beginning to evolve. His design of a perfectly innocuous, private social club would gain him access to agents or information vital to the final solution for Germany.

## Chapter 10

### Building the Legacy

Up from the city's lights and concrete skyline, rising high along the western wall of Patton Mountain, was a singular vantage point that gave a magnificent one hundred and eighty-degree view of the entire valley of Asheville, all the way to the top of Mt. Pisgah, nestled in the far western mountains.

A single lane road flowed up the mountain from the main streets of the town. Built to gain access to one of the city's water reservoirs on top of the mountain, the road worked its way past the construction site and further upward in tight curves and switchbacks every few hundred feet. It was there at this site, on a cold morning, in late January 1935 that the first shovel of dirt was turned over for what would eventually be known as *The Beaucatcher Club*. The planning and design for the combination private dinner club and entertainment nightclub actually began in earnest soon after Heidi and Crystale set their sights on recruiting Gayle Darling. Gayle and some top chefs hired from the Atlanta area would assure the club's success. And, as Günther had promised, money would not be a problem in putting this project together. In addition, Mr. Wellington and his architectural firm dedicated two senior architects and three top construction engineers to the effort the moment they saw Günther's five-million-dollar budget. The intent was to place the whole effort in motion for a projected mid-summer opening, but the deadline was

contingent upon the fact that only the finest workmanship and construction methods would be used, even if that meant moving out the completion date.

Mrs. Knox, Wellington's senior designer, dedicated her newest hire to the project, a commercial facilities designer named Millicent Edmonds. The thirty-year-old Miss Edmonds had gone to USC on the West Coast to get her degree and had recently completed a new Art Deco-styled nightclub in Beverly Hills. Almost at once, she became the most influential advisor to Heidi and Crystale in the overall plan. The girls' other cohort, Miss Darling, would come up from Atlanta for kitchen and dining area planning sessions with her chefs, staying at the Chateau a few days every other week. That way she could continue her weekend catering business, until the facilities were ready for fully training the restaurant staff.

Throughout February and March, the Grand Park Inn also became a hang out for Heidi and Crystale, as they recruited some of their favorite department managers, dining room servers, busboys, and a few housemaids to provide a range of services for the club.

By May, the main building was taking shape, concrete foundations had been laid into a vertical cut on the mountainside, and three levels of reinforced concrete floors over a storage basement had been poured. Steel support beams for the roof were lifted into place while a pad for upper level access and automobile parking was graded onto the five-acre location.

It was an afternoon in early May, when Günther arrived to meet with Edward and two of his senior architects, Mr. Davis and Mr. Wolcott. Heidi was already at the site with Gayle Darling, discussing the proposed dining room modifications with Miss Edmonds.

A new chauffeur, secretly assigned by Horst Deeke from SSI operations in Germany, cautiously opened the rear door of the Cadillac Touring Sedan for Günther.

"Heidi, my darling, I have some exciting news," Günther exclaimed, as he exited onto the parking lot overlooking the vast construction site. The twin municipal buildings of downtown Asheville gleamed in the warm, sun-drenched valley, about three miles away.

"Oh, Uncle Günther, I'm so glad you're back!" Heidi exclaimed happily, as she and Miss Darling casually walked to the newly waxed sedan. Heidi stood almost a foot taller than Gayle, who was a diminutive woman at barely five feet that had already proven she was nothing but pure energy, just waiting to turn his dinner club into to her future chef d'oeuvre.

Like a child in pure anticipation, though, Heidi was wide-eyed, in wait for what Günther was about to reveal.

"Remember I had discussed Germany's problems in securing the Olympics for 1936, in Berlin?" Günther announced while opening his briefcase. "Well, it's on!"

"Wow, that's terrific news," she reacted, while holding back her full excitement for what she knew might prove more sensational, because Uncle Günther often loved dramatic surprises.



He then pulled two large ticket envelopes and a new Danish Passport from within a leather pouch and held them out to her.

"And, I've booked two First Class cabins on the most beautiful ship in the world, the brand new French liner, Normandie. It's not only the newest ocean liner, but it's the biggest and fastest ocean liner in the world now, my dear; across the Atlantic in less than five days."

"Oh, my God!" At once, she was truly animated, as she jumped forward to hug him and kissed him on the cheek.

"That's the most wonderful gift, Uncle Günther; you are so good to me."

"Unfortunately, my dear," Günther said, sounding foreboding as he lowered his voice for effect, "I will not be able to join you on this trip." He paused, "But I do have a fairly nice alternative for you."

"Oh, no, Uncle Günther," she tried to seem sympathetic, as she held back even more excitement, "I so wanted you to show me Berlin, like only you could do."

"Well, my darling, it isn't to be this time. So, I've decided to give my personal set of first class tickets on this awe-inspiring ship to your good friend Crystale. You and she can together have the experience of a lifetime." Heidi had read him perfectly.

"Oh, my God, Uncle Günther, you're extraordinary!" She knew he was going to do it, but she was still even more animated than the first time, as she latched around his neck, hugging him and kissing him repeatedly on the cheeks.

"Crystale is going to go crazy with excitement, you know that? What a gift you've made us!"

"Here now, take these, my dear." He again handed her the two large ticket envelopes. They read: *NORMANDIE, 'O Ship of Light - FIRST CLASS CABIN*. Inside they held her new Danish passport, plus a second set of envelopes that read *BERLIN Olympics - August 1st, 1936*.

"Be sure and keep them in a safe spot, Heidi. These events are over a year away. And before this summer's out, they will be golden."

"Oh, I will, Uncle Günther," she reacted, firmly stuffing them down into her large handbag, "you can be sure of that!" For the next few minutes Günther organized some other items from his briefcase and then turned back to Heidi and Gayle, as the two of them were still gushing back and forth about Heidi's newest surprise.

"So, then, bring me up to date." He began more seriously.

"What's been going on here with the club's progress, Heidi?"

"Well, Uncle, we have just decided on the greatest improvement, and Mr. Wolcott says it can be managed with very little change."

"And what is that, Heidi?" he asked, as he bent down and lifted two more files from another case on the car's rear floorboard.

"Gayle and I agreed," she began, exuberant with their new solution, "that all arriving guests should enter the club directly from the parking level. You see, Uncle, automobiles are modern, and clearly the future of America

and all of our arrivals should be able to enter at the upper level directly from their cars. Then they simply step down from there, right into the dining area or the dance floor."

"I see. And what about the elevator idea you were pushing last week? That's modern too, isn't it?" Günther exclaimed, seeming to understand their modification, but wanting her full disclosure.

"Well, we want that too, but for a different purpose. In fact, what the new plan has become incorporates Miss Edmond's ideas from Hollywood. It's like a theatre in the round, Uncle Günther."

Just at that moment, a beautiful young lady walked up beside Heidi. Günther was immediately struck by her looks and thin legs. She was as tall as Heidi, a bit older, but clearly had no breasts. Yet in her case, breasts didn't matter, as her blond hair, jade green eyes, and the chiseled features of her face held any observer spellbound in her gaze.

"And I suppose this is Miss Edmonds from Hollywood, then?" Günther was obviously interested in the young beauty.

"Oh, I'm sorry, Uncle Günther. You're right; this is Mrs. Knox's new commercial designer, Millicent Edmonds, from Los Angeles."

Millicent quickly spoke, correcting the introduction, as she extended her hand to shake his.

"Well, actually, I'm from Asheville originally, Mr. Anderssen, but I've spent the last eight years on the West Coast. And now I'm back!" She paused for just the right

effect. "Guess I was just homesick for these luscious green mountains all over again."

Günther seemed to hold her hand a bit longer than the typical time for a professional handshake. He seemed to be lingering over her flawless complexion and delicately long fingers.

"You appear to be of Scandinavian extract, Miss Edmonds, is that correct?" Günther was obviously taken, and Heidi didn't miss a beat in recognizing his interest.

"She is, Uncle Günther!" Heidi injected. "And, I've invited her to dinner tonight at the Chateau, so she can tell you all about herself. Sammy Sinclair and Crystale will be joining us too! And I think she has finally recruited him as an assistant manager for the club."

"Once again, my darling, I can see that you and Crystale have everything moving along quite nicely now."

Günther smiled his maximum approval to her. A glance at one another underneath their eyelashes confirmed that both Heidi and Günther knew that several midnight visits to Crystale's steamy little boudoir over the past two months had certainly not hampered Mr. Sinclair in making his decision to join them. Then looking back toward Millicent, Günther renewed his discussion with her.

"So tell me more about this new Hollywood design concept, Miss Edmonds?"

"The Romans and Greeks actually originated the concept, Mr. Anderssen," Millicent replied to him, with a warm, almost submissive look now that she had gained his full attention.

She then placed her briefcase on a nearby work table, removing a design blueprint.

Quickly, in one motion, she retrieved a pair of stylish black reading glasses, and she began going over the meticulous layout map.

"With this concept, you get the best of three worlds," Millicent continued. Her glasses made her appear more professional, rather than a trendy New York fashion model. Heidi thought, "*He's clearly smitten,*" as she watched Günther closely survey Millicent's narrow hips. She hated that they were just as thin as hers. And of course, Crystale had already pronounced them Calico Hot and had wanted to know, if Millicent enjoyed Sheba nookie, just like she did, from time to time?

Whenever Crystale wanted to make Heidi jealous, she would always find some new dish to upset her with, preferably without bubs, just like Millicent. Now Heidi was sure, Crystale planned to make Millicent her latest tasty little Sheba.

"First, the new design," Millicent explained with an air of technical smoothness that easily held Günther's full attention, "has ten, one-foot-high, semicircle concrete tiers or levels, set at a width of ten feet wide. Each of them are wide enough to hold Gayle's intimate dining tables near the front edge of each tier, while still leaving an open corridor along the back edge of each tier for traffic, guests, servers and busboys. This way it can be functional without too much crowding of the intimate dining atmosphere of the guests."

"So, if I am to understand this, Miss Edmonds," Günther asked, as he looked carefully at the blueprint," the existing three-floored, reinforced concrete building now in place will not need any major restructuring?" Then he added for more clarification, "And, of course that being the case, we would not need to add more money and time to the project, to meet our completion date, correct?"

"Mr. Anderssen," Millicent smiled demurely towards him. Heidi enjoyed their interplay while listening to Millicent's reasoning for use later. "That's true, but let me continue through the three primary advantages, before I clarify costs and time."

"Very well then, Miss Edmonds, carry on." Günther said, clearly more comfortable now, in her ability to work through those problems later in the discussion.

"Entrancing is enhanced first," she continued, "since that is the immediate impression your patrons, excuse me, club members, will experience as they enter the main lobby and descend step by step to their designated private dining tables or down further to the actual dance floor level, where smaller intimate floorside cocktail tables will be located around the main dance floor."

Heidi couldn't hold back her enthusiasm.

"Isn't it great, Uncle Günther, how Millicent thinks of all these wonderful ideas? With her latest tier idea, nothing will hamper the view from each guest's table either."

"Yes, it is, my darling." He respectfully offered back to Heidi. Heidi saw him take the opportunity to glance at the way Millicent's summer weight silk dress was clinging to

her thin thighs and luscious legs as she turned away to listen to Heidi. He was probably imagining what she might be like in his bedroom with her soft body straight from the Nordic gods, a perfect blond-haired Valkyrie, surely with the same young and wild sexual appetite that both Heidi and Crystale displayed. He had never touched either of the girls, but Heidi could imagine he wanted a beautiful young vixen to complete the image of his own respectability. This one, properly cultivated, would certainly be wonderful to experiment with for him, Heidi thought.

\* \* \*

"Next, the ambiance is enhanced." Millicent didn't miss a beat, after allowing Heidi just enough time to strengthen her credibility with Günther. And God only knew, Millicent thought to herself, her career had now boiled down to money and power, but not necessarily in that order. Her personal sacrifices were not even an issue anymore, since she had already prostituted herself to enough LA power brokers and sugar daddies to get named to the FBI's list of LA's most screwed vamps. Hopefully, at last with Heidi's help, one or both of her goals could be attained with this project sometime soon. Millicent regarded the situation a bit longer, while looking at Mr. Anderssen, as she considered her own Scandinavian ancestry. Knowing a little about this older man from Heidi's earlier comments and a few secret conversations with Crystale, she thought that he could certainly become a very fortuitous friend, as she personally cultivated him in a more private way.

"The physical array of the site is clearly the ultimate element of the club's ambiance. And as club members enter at the upper level in the late afternoon or evening, the impact of the massive curved panoramic view of the city and the western mountains will leave them breathless, either in sunset or when the twinkling nightlights come out. They can watch it all through the club's thirty-foot-high windows. And with no orientation, to either ground or sky, *The Beaucatcher Club* members and their guests will feel as though they are floating on a grand entertainment ship traveling along into the night's starlit sky."

"Absolutely incredible!" Günther exclaimed out loud. "You should be in our government's propaganda offices in Washington, my dear, Miss Edwards. That was brilliant."

\* \* \*

Heidi, now knowing things had been moved up to a higher level of agreement by secretly using Millicent to make the plea to her uncle, was elated as she spoke.

"See, once again, Uncle, Millicent's experience in the high end Beverly Hills club scene and particularly in Hollywood's glitzy nightlife has without any doubt, made her ideas the grandest yet, don't you think?"

"Absolutely, Heidi," Günther replied.

Then Gayle Darling added, "You're exactly right, Heidi!"

Up to now she had been listening only, so her words had just enough emphasis to let everyone know that she also was in agreement with both Heidi and Millicent. "*The Beaucatcher Club* will certainly be," Miss Darling added, "with Millicent's new modifications, the most magnificent



of all modern private dining and nightclubs anywhere in the country, much less the Southeast." Then, before anyone could continue, she added further credibility to her comments: "And I can assure you, ladies, I've worked for quite a few of the best, over the last twelve years." "And that you have, Miss Darling!" Günther added, winking at her in a way that came right from his real heart; it sprang from the gastronomical love of Gayle's specialized, Lüchow-trained German and Scandinavian cooking.

She had upon his personal request, yielded her time to train Günther's own house chef, Rolf Christensen, who had himself been trained in Copenhagen at Belle Terrasse. Rolf had told Günther that he was amazed at her expertise in technique and presentation.

Indeed, her well-crafted philosophy of gastronomy had shown brilliantly on the occasion of Heidi's 18th birthday dinner, with over seventy-five guests at the Chateau.

"Great food must be the nectar for all human senses . . . taste above all, then smell, sight, touch, but even the sound must become a musical harmony . . . the goblets, the wine and champagne bottles, the plates, the silverware and, of course, the snap of freshly laundered linens, as each new table is carefully prepared for the next welcomed guest," she had said.

Millicent respectfully waited to speak, as she observed Miss Darling with a sense of awe. Gayle had a profound reputation in the art of fine gourmet catering and dining in the Atlanta and, of course, other areas.

"Finally, the flow of operations," Millicent began again, moving to her conclusion with a simple rationale that made perfect sense to everyone, particularly Mr. Anderssen. "It must evolve from the perspective of the club's patrons and guests, not from the perspective of the support services." Günther was mesmerized by Millicent's jade green eyes accented so perfectly by her body-hugging green silk dress that played so perfectly with her soft flesh tones. The more Heidi watched her, the more she wanted to learn from her. Now, she could view her technique first hand: Millicent was clearly captivating Uncle Günther in a way she had never seen him respond before. This woman was so smooth, Heidi thought, almost like a professional twist, as Crystale had suggested only last week, particularly with the way she could handle a man with ease, appearing so delicate and submissive to them. Heidi wanted that kind of style too, so scrupulously she began recording in mental pictures, every move Millicent made throughout her pre-arranged spectacle. A spectacle, Heidi thought, that she had obviously rehearsed and played back many times before, but with other commercial projects from her past in California.

"As guests arrive in their separate cars," Millicent continued, "the valets at the security booth will greet them at the top level automobile welcoming area; next, as they walk in at that same level, they are handed off to either the dining hostess or the club's concierge at the grand entrance."

Then, as they wait, if that is required, they can see the spectacle of everything in the entire club, from either the vantage point of the waiting area or while having drinks in the Main Bar located alongside the waiting area at the upper level."

Heidi watched her subtle movements, as Millicent maintained eye contact only with Uncle Günther and always at just the right moment, seductively holding his attention. She would turn her neck and use a sultry movement of her hand to smooth her long blond hair back over her right shoulder. Even the breeze from down below the hillside seemed to be at her command, as it tossed blond strands against her face or twisted them seductively, encircling her exquisitely formed neck.

"From there," Millicent seemed to speak softer and only to Günther, "they can look down and enjoy the breathtaking panoramic view; the orchestra playing down below centered against the massive windows on the opposite side of the main floor, and even the dancers moving seductively to the swing beat on the dance floor itself. Along each of the ten tiers below them, they will be able see other guests enjoying the chic ambiance of the club at their own intimate dining tables." Millicent now seemed to sense that Heidi was not just watching her, but observing her closely for a reason. She shifted her direction without warning. Suddenly, Heidi realized she had turned directly facing her. The effect caused an excited thrill to run deep within Heidi's thighs as she bit her lip and looked shyly into Millicent's beautiful, seeking eyes.

\* \* \*

Günther caught the look they gave one another for that brief instant. He became incredibly aroused at the thought of both these sexy Valkyries making love to each other in the Chateau's upper guest bedroom; a place that only he knew had a secret viewing mirror and chamber along side the massive low profiled bed, the bed, on which the well-endowed Mr. Sinclair had enjoyed unbridled excitement with Miss Crystale's lithe little body, as her supple hips would thrash about. Indeed, Günther had heard everything, even her groans of obnoxious French phrases like, "*Je suis montee au cheval, mon amour,*" which would spew hoarsely from her lips.

Often, he had wondered if she was extra loud on purpose, just so everyone in the Chateau could hear them. But that was okay too, since it meant that sometimes one of the other vixens prowling around might join in at any moment with them. Maybe tonight would become one of those evenings to remember, he mused, as Millicent began to wrap up her presentation.

"Everything, from the way that the Maitre d 'Roitisseur introduces himself, the arrival timing of servers and support personnel at the newly set up tables, and even the way the orchestra arrives and leaves from breaks will be a scripted flow of perfectly harmonized events. So what do you think, Mr. Anderssen?" Millicent inquired.

Her well-organized but somewhat long-winded justification ended, leaving Günther hypnotized and without words.

Just at that moment Mr. Wolcott and the construction engineers came in, no doubt wanting to get into the act and, of course, get a better look at the high-heeled dolls entertaining the "Big Boss," as Mr. Wellington liked to affectionately call Mr. Anderssen, walked up.

Pausing to regain his business composure, Günther finally answered Millicent.

"It's all quite incredible, as I said before, Miss Edmonds!" He looked to Heidi, as again, he was distracted by the little shiver she experienced while discreetly watching Millicent's hair blowing freely around her delicate neckline. Heidi was unaware that he had noticed it.

Millicent took no action to push her hair back in place. She was waiting for Günther's reaction.

"Let me take some time to think about all this," he added, winking at Heidi. "And in the meantime, I need to review other engineering issues with Mr. Wolcott and, of course, Edward who is also coming to finalize some things with me today. As soon as they are finished here, I'll meet all of you up at the Chateau for cocktails. And we can have another of Rolf's incredible dinners together. Then I will give you my final decision. How does that sound, Miss Edmonds?"

\* \* \*

Everything had gone just perfectly, Heidi thought. All Uncle Günther really wanted to do now was to see how that choice little calico might fit into his future plans, as

soon as she had a few drinks in her and she saw the inside of the Chateau's upper facilities.

Heidi also knew Millicent was going to get a personal tour of Uncle Günther's incredible library with his Scandinavian art treasures and engravings and, of course, his Legends of Viking Valkyries, that he loved to tell about, once he had downed one or two shots of his favorite cognac or scotch.

"That sounds great, Uncle Günther!" Heidi interrupted before Millicent could try to mount another argument, possibly forcing a decision now rather than waiting until later. But Heidi had other plans and certainly lots of experience with Uncle Günther's habits, including his perversions.

"It's settled then, Heidi," Günther replied. "I'll see all of you and especially you, Miss Edmonds, at the Chateau, dressed for the occasion, I'm sure, by about six o'clock." Then Günther added, as he gave his private signal to Heidi to get things moving along for tonight's special entertainment plans, "And, Heidi, why don't you take my Cadillac now. Max can take you and the ladies on up, while I continue here for a while."

"I would love to come along, Mr. Anderssen," Gayle Darling quickly interjected, "but I have plans already in Atlanta tonight, so I must be leaving right away."

"Of course, my dear. I understand, Maybe next time?"

Günther reacted. Heidi saw him try to hide his relief that she was not joining them. She was known to have a conservative nature. Then he turned back to Heidi and added:

"Just send Max back for me in about two hours, Heidi. I need some time with the architects and engineers to clear up some other matters and make sure some particular design issues I personally have, are addressed."

"Okay, Uncle Günther." Heidi answered softly.

At that, Max instantly seemed to appear and offer his support. And in just a few minutes, Heidi and Millicent were comfortably seated within the lush leather interior of Günther's Cadillac sedan.

"Goodbye, Uncle Günther, and thanks again for my wonderful gift!" Heidi shouted from her open window, waving to him as the two beauties gained the full attention of most of the younger males, now purposely watching from the upper construction level.

\* \* \*

The car turned up the hill and was out of sight by the time Günther had turned back to the waiting group of men.

Jack Wolcott held up his comments until he was sure that Miss Darling had gone.

Then Jack spoke, "That's one fine-looking group of ladies you have there, Mr. Anderssen," he gushed, as Günther turned to greet them both.

"Yes, you're quite right about that, Mr. Wolcott. I just hope that we're making the right decision giving them as much leeway on this project as I am." Günther seemed to confide to him as he walked back to the newly poured reinforced concrete wall that would eventually protect the parking lot and the upper levels from ground erosion.

"I completely understand your concern, Mr. Anderssen" Mr. Johnson, the project's senior structural engineer added as they all walked together in a slow stroll over to the embankment. "But that lady, Miss Edmonds, spent over four hours here earlier this morning with both my top construction men. And I'll be damned if they both said they could do that change with hardly any bother at all. As a matter of fact, that design will even be able to leave the elevator in place. We can still feed all three floors with the new Otis front and rear access door system, set in the upper level lobby. And although the tiers come down almost a full story, the underside of those units in their modular design, as she suggested, can include offices in the taller zones and storage units in the shorter zones on that second floor. All in all, Jack and I both agree, it will really set the place off pretty dramatically. I'd say it's probably the most creative layout we've seen since we started up here in the Asheville area."

"Well, gentlemen, I certainly hope you're both right." Still, Günther felt relieved now that they had added their optimistic opinions.

"Okay, gentlemen, let's go over some of those special design changes I wanted," Günther remarked, as he headed down the concrete steps to join the engineers already at the lower construction level. "And let's review those arrangements that will be needed to finish out the kitchen level too, once Miss Edmond's new modifications are in place."



Günther stopped and looked out over the hillside toward the cityscape of Asheville. He drifted into thoughts of their future in America once again. The idea of his growing flocks of young, attractive Mata Haris that soon might be in place offered unlimited potential for SSI's operations. And he realized that some of them could be used without ever really knowing they were his clandestine operatives. That was the way these things worked out.

Even more surely now, he knew these beautiful and exotically seductive women would soon be SSI's keys to gaining secrets and knowledge from the deepest levels of America's future war machine. Exactly what that would be was yet to be determined, but extracting information, including the psychological and emotional warfare these women could inflict on vulnerable men or women, once their tasks had been defined and put into motion, would absolutely devastate certain people's lives.

However, until the clouds of war in Europe had fully formed in their proper place over the next few years, no specific course could be set for his growing SSI arsenal. Yet war was as certain to Günther as life itself. His main fear now was how Heidi might react under fire.

## Chapter 11

### Swingtime

Heidi and Crystale were shocked to hear about the bandleader Bennie Moten. Moten's drummer Jo Jones had called them from the hospital in Kansas City very upset. He had told them Bennie went in for what they thought was going to be a simple tonsillectomy operation, but he didn't make it.

With building delays throughout August and September, the whole entertainment plan was falling apart. There were only three weeks left before The Club's grand opening, and things were looking pretty bad. Suddenly, two days later, Count Basie himself called Heidi back and said he wouldn't let her down. He'd formed a new band, and he assured her that he would personally make the gala weekend date on Friday, October 11th.

Basie had taken the remnants of Moten's best musicians and quickly put together a nine-piece group with the drummer Jo Jones, Walter Page the great bassist, and the infallible guitarist Freddie Green, besides several others from Bennie's band. The moment the local radio station W8XOS was informed of these changes, they requested to be on hand for the club's opening gala. Maybe finally, Heidi could get enough publicity to salvage at least a remnant of the quickly ending tourist season in Asheville.

The station manager, Bill Murray, loved Basie's Swing style and wanted to be the first radio station in the country to broadcast the new Count Basie Swing Band live. The

broadcast would stretch all across the Western Carolina Mountain regions and even down into the rest of the southeast, around Atlanta.

At long last, Heidi had things again moving flawlessly. The final opening date had been reset several times due to landscaping and final interior detailing problems, when Günther advised the girls of his plans to attend the World Series with two of his new scientific associates from Detroit.

On that Monday, October 7th, four days before the Grand Opening, the Detroit Tigers won the World Series. Goose Goslin's single hit won the final game, with two outs and only one man on base in the bottom of the 9th inning. Günther loved American baseball and was ecstatic about the Series ending in only six games, but the Tigers had been great all that year. Winning the Series had just capped off a great season for Detroit.

It was Wednesday afternoon when he finally arrived back in Asheville at the Biltmore Train Station, and both the girls came down to welcome him. They couldn't wait to tell him the good news about the new band and the added publicity the local radio station manager had offered them at no cost.

Crystale pointed out that even though the summer and fall season was over, the slower winter season would allow the club to hone its operations smoothly for the upcoming year. Using locals around Asheville to become their mainstay membership would at least hold them until April. Everything

was now in readiness for the Gala Opening Night Celebration.

The girls were wearing new sable mink jackets Günther had brought from New York, as they arrived at The Beaucatcher Club in a 1935 black Chrysler sedan. Max had been selected to escort them down, with little fanfare, at about five o'clock.

Both girls had chosen long, svelte, satin dresses for the opening. Heidi's was black and bare-shouldered. Perfectly smooth, it contoured down to her small waist and narrow hips. Because of the weather, Crystale had chosen a warmer, elegant, high-neck style having full-length sleeves, but a very sexy open back that draped down to her hips in black coloration. She wanted a more conservative look so she could work the front entrance area, welcoming guests at the arrival concierge, and still get some time on the dance floor later. This late in the season meant that the mountains would be chilled with early winter weather. The women guests would be dressed far more extravagantly for dining and later swinging on the grand dance floor of the club than would be the case in the warmer summer months. A lot of pre-planning and preparation for regional membership development by the girls and the staff, plus some well-written publicity in the Asheville and Atlanta newspapers, had gained strong interest from the elite for the Grand Gala Night. Gayle Darling's society following in Atlanta alone had filled two private Southern Railway Pullman cars with new club members staying over in local hotels, just to sample her cuisine and dance in the

starlight one last time, before snowfall might hamper their weekend soirees up to the mountains.

To assist in the process, Günther had also arranged for two temporary limousine firms to be added to the Asheville scene from Charlotte and Atlanta; plus, some of the VIPs had even brought their own personally chauffeured cars for the event.

Night came early, and the chilled air allowed the stars to be seen from the mountain side as cars and limousine shuttles started arriving from the area hotels at about six that evening.

Sleek socialites were everywhere. A constant stream of the beautiful and rich began arriving near the club's brightly-lit entrance. Limousines were backed up almost a quarter of a mile down the main road by seven. And although the process inside went smoothly, the parking area was already overfilling.

\* \* \*

Günther himself arrived from the top of the mountain and got caught in the jam, as he got out and quickly joined a couple nearing the front gallery. He had recognized them from a private Biltmore Forest party only a month before. The couple was typical of the May and September romances that seemed to be the latest trend with Günther's wealthy associates around Asheville. She was a young woman about twenty-five, blond and wearing a short cape-like jacket with a long silk dress fit to every curve on her thin body, while he was in his fifties wearing a dark suit and heavy overcoat.

Bill Waterman was exuberant as he recognized Günther extending his hand as he spoke.

"Günther, what a beautiful event this has turned into, although a bit crowded out here with all these limousines, but that's money for you!" He laughed and Günther joined him.

"I'm so glad you could make it, Bill," Günther replied, equally energized by the excitement at the club's main lobby entrance, "and who, may I inquire is this lovely creature you have with you, my friend?"

Waterman had worked for the government in Washington for years as a civil engineer and had been divorced for about ten when he actually went independent and hit the big time. Massive government construction contracts and the Tennessee Eastman contract for their production facilities in Kingsport, Tennessee had grown his engineering firm into the largest U.S. government sub-contractor in the Southeast.

Cash rich over the last few years, Waterman had built his second home near Asheville; a ten-thousand square foot mansion in Biltmore Forest. As events permitted, he'd divided his time between Washington, D.C. and his southern base here in the western Smokies.

Bill answered, clearly proud to introduce his latest doll. "Günther, this is my new executive assistant, Miss Diana Morgan. And she's one hell of a swing dancer, I might add!" Günther couldn't help being distracted by her appearance, now being fully exposed as she shed her small jacket, exposing her creamy, soft, shoulder flesh. They quickly

moved through the doorway. Her dress was cut just like Heidi's, but the rounded tops of her breasts swelled so close to its upper edge, that it looked like her nipples would pop out and smile at him at any moment.

"Christ, just look at that," Günther thought, as he became focused on how sexy she was. Covertly, he scanned down to her narrow hips. Just the inward slope of her abdominal muscles alone made her seem like a lascivious animal wanting to run naked and breed with the first erect male she could find. No wonder Bill was so proud of himself.

"My extreme pleasure, Miss Morgan!" Günther stated, as he nodded and caught Crystale's presence out of the corner of his eye. She had seen him and was rushing up to hug him, while they were relieving their coats to the assistant hostess. Günther continued, "And you, being a dancer, young lady, let me introduce our own in-house dance professional here, Crystale!"

"Günther, you've arrived at the perfect moment," Crystale exclaimed. She hugged him and was also drawn by the vision Günther had just experienced with the arrival of Miss Morgan.

"Crystale, I want you to meet Diana Morgan and, of course, my good friend and colleague, Mr. Bill Waterman."

"Yes, Mr. Waterman, it's a pleasure to meet you," Crystale said first, while saving her best intro for the young lady.

"And Miss Morgan, what a stunning gown you're wearing; my God, it must be a Paris designer original. It's so beautiful with your petite figure and an incredibly perfect fit."

In alternating responses, both Bill and Diana returned trite introductions back to Crystale. But Miss Morgan revealed the true depth of her intellect by adding a condescending remark.

"That's so sweet of you, Crystale and it is of course, a Yves Saint Laurent couture original. Bill and I picked it up this summer in Paris, after our trip on the maiden return voyage of the French liner *Normandie*."

Crystale didn't even flinch at her smug assertion. A glance at Günther told him she knew this gal was way out of her league, yet it was obvious Miss Morgan didn't realize it. Crystale turned just enough to add Günther into her view, while still keeping her eyes focused on Miss Morgan's erotic body.

"Everything is moving flawlessly, Günther," she added, clearly smiling brightly at Bill and Diana Morgan in tow with him. "And Heidi's out on the dance floor below hosting the hors d'oeuvres and complementary drinks to the overflow crowd. There are several new members still waiting for their tables."

Günther turned and saw Heidi down on the main floor, while on the bandstand several members of Count Basie's group were playing some soft background music just to soften the initial dinner atmosphere. The main Basie Band would begin their planned Swingtime arrangements, to be broadcast live, at around nine that evening.

"That may be true in here, my dear," he remarked, "but the crowd building up outside is what I'm worried about."



Günther was serious as he began his inquisition for an alternate plan of action.

"How fast is Darling's crew getting people to their tables and serving them?"

"I'm not sure." Crystale answered cautiously. She knew Günther could get testy if he didn't get the exact answers he needed. "But they seem to be getting the tables filled smoothly enough, Günther. And you know how fast Gayle is in the kitchen. There must be more than a third of the guests seated and starting their appetizers or at best into their second courses."

"Why don't you have the concierge and the valets do a count of the overload, Crystale, especially outside in the waiting cars?"

Günther was anxious for her to get started as he added, "Also, have your assistant contact the two main hotels that are feeding the overload and put them on hold until we can get the traffic outside back under control."

Günther then returned his attention to Bill and Diana.

"I'm so sorry for this, Bill. As you can see, it seems we have overreached our resources for the moment, and I don't want anyone disappointed with our service, especially on our Opening Night."

"Don't worry about us, Günther," Bill Waterman reacted in support of his effort. "You go ahead and get things under control; we'll catch up to you later."

"Tell you what, Bill. Why don't you and Miss Morgan take my private table for the moment and use that as your base?" He

snapped his fingers at Sammy Sinclair who had just looked his way. "Sammy here is the club's operations manager." Sammy was able to negotiate a path to Günther, as he quickly seemed to realize from Günther's expression the importance of these guests. "And he knows just what to do, Bill."

In a flash Sammy was beside him.

"Yes, sir, Mr. Anderssen, good to see you again!" Sammy reported in almost a military-like manner, clearly remembering just how Mr. Anderssen preferred his managers to react when VIPs were in earshot. "And just how can I help, sir?"

"Escort Mr. Waterman and Miss Morgan to my personal private table, Sammy," Günther directed, as he prepared to join Crystale in relieving the current problem. "And get one of Gayle's people to set them up with whatever they need." "Why, of course, Mr. Anderssen. I'll get right on it!" Sammy was quick, as he turned to the couple.

"Right this way, please, Mr. Waterman." And in an instant, he had them headed down to the lower levels and Günther's private table overlooking the main dance floor.

Günther immediately made his way in the opposite direction to the elevator. He wanted to further check on the kitchen, as he looked back over the gathering throng of guests and tried to analyze the situation inside. There were clusters of very well-dressed men and women together, but no one seemed left alone.

"Things were okay in here," he thought. Each cluster seemed alive with conversation, champagne, mixed drinks, canapés,

and of course, Gayle's incredible selection of continental hors d'oeuvres in their hands or floating by on the uplifted hands of the club's deftly skilled servers, reacting to every nuance of need. The scene was just right, as Günther entered the warm elegance of the club's single mahogany paneled elevator, custom designed with dual opening doors, front and rear.

As he entered, two servers quickly slipped by him on both sides. They exited with more of Gayle's culinary delights. And there, standing to the right of the door against the elevator wall panel was Fletcher, in his smart new blue uniform with matching cap.

"Gooood evenin', Mr. Anderssen," Fletcher offered respectfully as he greeted him. "And, what floor do you need, sir?"

"Oh, Fletcher, it's good to see you again!" Günther replied, relieved that they'd hired a reliable man from the Grand Park Inn to operate this newer Otis model. "Better get me down to see Miss Darling!"

In seconds, Fletcher had closed both doors.

\* \* \*

Unfortunately, because of the exiting servers blocking her entry, Heidi had just missed getting on the elevator with Günther. Neither had seen each other.

Impatiently, Heidi waited for the elevator to return. A concern was building in her mind as she observed that very few men under thirty were in the club. In fact, very few were actually under forty. It was obvious that the privileged, moneyed type club members present were the

older, more established males, the so-called sugar daddies. The younger men around the bar were simply decorations for the dolls.

"Heidi. . . Heidi," someone from the concierge desk called to her, as she started to push the button again to get Fletcher back up to the top level. She turned to see who it was. "It's me, Crystale! I need your help, Heidi." Crystale called to her, slightly louder than the volume level of chatter filling the nearby Main Bar area.

"Hey, Good Look'in, what's up?" Heidi replied in the local style she was slowly starting to assimilate. She abandoned her wait and began slithering quickly along the backsides of two gray-haired gentlemen.

Both turned, obviously enjoying what they felt, as each one parted away from their space and the ladies they were talking to, letting Heidi through. Before she could reach Crystale, however, she spied a champagne glass on the floor dangerously near a female guest's foot. As she turned to retrieve it, she caught both gentlemen smiling at her in complete enjoyment of her bare-shoulders and the obvious exposure of her cleavage to them as she bent in their direction to snag the dangerous object.

"Are you two gentlemen enjoying yourselves, tonight?" Heidi quipped in an obviously playful way, looking up at them before seductively rising to walk over to Crystale.

"I most certainly am, Miss Winters," the taller one said, as he admired her luscious exposure, while addressing the other gentleman. "And you, Alfred, what do you have to

say?" He continued smiling directly at Heidi, as his friend responded.

"Time of my life, Frank. Time of my life, I must say, Miss Winters. And I expect to have at least have one dance with you tonight, Miss Winters, just like the old days at the Grand Park Inn?"

"And so you shall, Mr. Daniels," Heidi replied unabashed. "Just look me up when I get to the dance floor after ten." Crystale was grinning at her when she finally got to the desk.

"You still have that incredible charm, my sweet." They both laughed. "And ever since you met Millicent, I think your techniques with men have almost doubled in effectiveness." "You're right about that!" Heidi softly replied to her, so as to not attract too many ears of her nearby employees, all of whom were now desperately trying to solve Günther's overload concerns. "So what's the problem, Crystale?" Heidi questioned, as she redirected the conversation.

"Günther says we're overloaded outside and somehow; I've got to stop or at least reduce the current stream of cars filling the parking lot. According to Gerald out front, they're almost a quarter of a mile back down the mountain and half way onto College Street."

"Oh, my God." Heidi was shocked as she half-laughed back at Crystale. "This is over the top. Are we a hit? Wow!"

"Well, what do you suggest we do?" Crystale was frantic. "I'm out of ideas, except for trying to stop the incoming flow of cars and limousines for the time being by calling the hotels."

"I have an idea," Heidi confided. "But I'll need a full length coat to pull it off in those freezing temperatures outside. I only brought that short jacket with me, Crystale."

Crystale looked at her coat-check gal.

"Missy, didn't I see someone walk in with a full length White Russian Mink coat about ten or fifteen minutes ago?"

"Yes, ma'am, Miss Crystale!" Missy replied excited. "And it sure was a beauty. Hung it myself just to get my face on that fur."

"What do you think, Heidi?" Crystale turned back to Heidi with a sly look on her face. "Think we could pull it off?"

"Where is the guest now, Missy?" Heidi looked into the crowd as she spoke.

"We had a table all ready for them, ma'am." Missy added, as if she knew she was going to be in on some secret conspiracy, regardless of whether or not she wanted to be.

"And they went down almost right away."

"Okay, Missy, let's do it!" Heidi looked back at her and Crystale. "If the worst happens, let me know. I'll enter from the outside into the back elevator door. That way it will look as though we were bringing it up from a secure vault or something."

"Sounds good to me, Heidi. Go get the coat, Missy!" Crystale ordered.

The girl was back, and Heidi was out the main lobby doorway in moments, with her pumps clicking against the concrete. The wind was blowing, but the white sable was snuggled around her as she located Günther's chauffeur, Max.

"Got an assignment for us Max!" she said, grabbing the door of Günther's black Cadillac sedan roadster and breaking his concentration on a new Marvel comic book he'd been reading. "Somehow, we've got to get these cars blocking the mountainside under control. Either they will have to back up, turn around, or simply leave their cars in place while we chauffeur them back to their hotels for the time being. What do you think Max?"

"We can arrange that, Miss Winters, it's not a problem." Max replied, obviously unperturbed with the task. "Let's go!"

Within less than an hour Max and Heidi had cleared up most of the bottleneck and satisfied a few willing guests with a special offer; that they would get the same complementary drinks, the same hors d'oeuvres, and the same complementary entertainment arrangements as tonight on another occasion if they would just go back to their hotels or homes tonight. On Saturday night, they could return, beginning at five o'clock, rather than six. That way, if they got to the club on time, they would be the first to be served and seated in the dining room for the evening.

Heidi personally guaranteed it by signing their private invitations on the back. She then added her special comment and signature, noting that they would be admitted first.

By nine that night, as the Count himself likes to say in his exuberant deep voice, *"Everything's copacetic and the place's really percolating with daddies, dolls, and dames!"*

The upper bar was filled with cigarette and cigar smokers and beautiful young ladies enjoying the sounds of champagne bottles opening and glasses clinking together, while at each level couples did the same at their private tables. Everything worked together in that special harmony that Gayle Darling had said must overwhelm the senses.

The conversations were buzzing. Ladies had their after dinner drinks, and men had their booze. Now it was time for the real Swingers to come to the dance floor, as the radio announcer tested his mike for the third or fourth time, tap, tap, tap . . . Suddenly everyone was quieted by the announcement.

The new Count Basie Band - playing for the first time anywhere in America - emerged in single file from behind the bandstand. They had marched up from a hidden staircase beginning at the lower floor in the rear of Gayle Darling's kitchen.

The Swingers and Skirts went wild with screaming and shouting as the trend immediately overtook even the most docile club members. The opening number, "One O'clock Jump," filled the dance floor, and even the radio announcer was having trouble getting the band's sounds over the air with the crowd volume at such a frenzied level. And that was just the first night of many weekends all winter long, as *The Beaucatcher Club* of Asheville became the hottest private entertainment nightspot anywhere south of New York City.

**END OF 9.1.2024 - PRE-RELEASE TRAILER VERSION**