

# **PINK SNOW BERRIES**

Genetic Sexual Attraction  
The Last Taboo

a memoir

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ThaiSunset Publications

PINK SNOW BERRIES  
Genetic Sexual Attraction  
The Last Taboo

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Dedicated to Her and Our Adoring Children with Love.

Kirkland, Washington  
September 1992

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*Whatever lives long is gradually so  
saturated with reason that its  
irrational origins become improbable.*

Friedrich Nietzsche  
*Ecce Homo*

*We are a species among all the others, rather a special one, but one that will be judged, in the long run, like the others. We have no dispensation from nature; we are not cut loose from the requirements of natural selection; intelligence is not peculiar to us nor does it guarantee our superiority or our success; we must measure up or join her list of interesting but extinct experiments in living and reproducing. Our only uniqueness is that if we go, it will be in full consciousness of what we do; which is no compliment to our uniqueness.*

Robin Fox  
*The Red Lamp of Incest*

*Time and death and the space between  
the stars remain still larger than ourselves.*

African Genesis

## Epilogue<sup>1</sup>

She was dressed in white. Nothing was lacking. Dozens of guests, friends, a hundred red roses, and - alas! - that penetrating media.

"...until death doth you part."

The bells of the chapel in the vineyards above the sleepy village of Ligerz in the Canton of Bern at the foot of the Swiss Jura Mountains overlooking a placid slightly turquoise Lake Biel, began to ring as the final words were spoken.

We looked at each other, still in disbelief of our recognition and regained freedom that we had wished for in vain for over a decade and a half. We hugged for a minute, two, three. Not ever again would we let go of each other. Now that it was final, nothing – no bureaucracy, not the child snatchers from social services, no lawyers and false friends, our disrupted and broken careers or emotional hardships that had driven us apart – would ever be allowed to separate us. Our two boys, ages 9 and 11, were silently watching, beaming, and quickly embraced each other as well.

Our union had been sanctioned by what every woman craves for – recognition by the society in which she must live and identify herself much more than a man with his often abstract atheist mind – had given its skeptic blessing. The hidden maneuvers were over. We had left our lives in the underground and come out into the open to breathe again. Her friends embraced her, many from faraway Canada and the United States. Her German relatives from her mom's side were lacking. I didn't miss them, neither did she, actually.

The carriage drove us along the cobble-stoned narrow streets between vineyards that in were in full bloom in these early days of May, through little towns along Lake Biel directly to the cable car station in the city. The funiculaire rumbled gently up the steep mountain side to the village of Magglingen where another carriage took us in a detour past Châlet Alpina, where I had spent many a summer and winter as a happy boy visiting from war torn Germany, and then down the old

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<sup>1</sup> An epilogue or after word, as opposed to a prologue or a foreword, is a short passage normally added at the end of a book telling about a future event or conclusion. It was written in the fall of 1992. The events that followed took quite a different turn.

gravel road on which I had tobogganed in winter, past the bakery to the Hôtel Bellevue.

After entrées, a six course menu, drinks and wine à la discrétion, a modern jazz band began to play while we took a walk through the moonlit village, holding hands as we had always done, then joined our guests celebrating and sometimes dancing until the wee hours of the morning when daylight broke and the sun kissed the snow capped Alps in the East first with a hint of rosé that slowly turned to a deep red and eventually became a serene white.

In a landmark decision, the Family Court in Göteborg, Sweden, had agreed and sanctioned our dearest desire, the *status quo*, and the United States and our countries of citizenship, Germany and Canada, were held to give recognition by comity. We had ultimately made it – as in an Ingmar Bergman movie: My daughter and I had become husband and wife.

## Chapter 1

The call came early afternoon, on the day before this fateful Wednesday evening in the month of October 1981 and was put through directly to my office on the 18th floor of the Scotia Tower in Calgary, Alberta, Canada where I worked as a U.S. tax specialist for Touche Ross, the international accounting firm, one of "the big eight" at the time.

"Roland, we have an emergency. Sonja has had a nervous breakdown and has been hospitalized in Schopfheim since Tuesday," stuttered Hedy, my ex-wife. We had been divorced since October 1978 and Sonja, now seventeen, had been living with her since, along with my younger sons, Gerhard and Arno.

"But why...why didn't you call me," I answered worried to death about what had happened.

"I wondered if you approve that I sign the form that she can be transferred to the University Hospital in Freiburg's mental ward and be examined for the underlying causes. She's schizophrenic the doctors think."

I had to pause for a moment and take a breath, then think hard, form an opinion and come up with a ruling. With anything important such as this, Hedy didn't have the courage to decide what to do next.

"No, no Hedy. Sonja, no, she's not schizophrenic. I can't believe it. I'm coming, I'll get a flight out and be there in the morning to see for myself. Where is she now."

"Still in the hospital. But she doesn't want to come home."

"Have you been quarrelling?" I asked.

"Not exactly. She hadn't come home for two nights and when she did fell to pieces, and Dr. Stanat came and then the ambulance took her to hospital."

I saw her before me as a stubborn and steadfast, though lively little girl, and thought for a second. Sonja who had had tons of friends and acquaintances, all girls, only a handful of boys, something didn't click with the diagnosis.

"Of course they don't really know yet. They want to find out."

I checked the likelihood of the probabilities and then quickly decided.

"No, don't sign the form. Because the mental institution will only confirm something to her and really make her nutty. I'm coming. I'll call you back. Bye."

"You really don't need to come. I just want to know how you feel about it."

She was trying desperately to assume some responsibility, still putting the burden on me, though.

"No, it's alright. I'm on my way. Bye."

Four hours later Air Canada lifted off from Calgary to London Heathrow. We came in, as usual, an hour late and I made the short connection to Swissair's direct flight to Basel-Mulhouse in the other terminal with carry-on luggage only - I had learned to travel lightly. I got in just before dark and was met by the remainder of my family, deeply worried, depressed and almost silent. We embraced each other as usual and Hedy drove us through the international corridor in Alsace, France, through the city of Basel, past the Sandoz chemical and pharmaceutical company where I had worked during happier times, to the German border crossing at Lörrach-Stetten and up the Wiesental towards Maulburg.

"She doesn't want to come home and is staying at her girl friend's in Steinen," the village on the highway before Maulburg, said Hedy. Gerhard and Arno had been living with me in Calgary before I sent them back to Germany because the high school didn't satisfy Gerhard's advanced math skills, etc. Plus, I found, I was no substitute for their mommy.

"Well, then we'll pick her up anyway. I want her home."

"I don't think that's wise, considering her condition. Let's go home first and you can see her in the morning. Besides, you are all torn up, I would say."

"I want to see her first, and her condition. I don't want to go home first."

So it was. The boys followed me to the house as I rang the door bell.

"She's in her room," whispered her host mother, friendly but with a concerned smile. Why don't you please come in and take off your coat. These Germans are ever so formal, I thought to myself; part of why I had left the country and went back to America where I had spent my high school year as a foreign exchange student, and Canada where I found Hedy and Sonja was born.

"She is actually doing fine. Please sit down. I'll tell her that you are here."

Hedy put on a somber face and remained silent. The boys each took a chair and kept quiet. They were adorable sons, well behaved, smart, and deeply sympathetic with everything that concerned the family and now their sister's deplorable illness. It had struck them out of the blue like lightning.

I knew one thing. If there was any hope that she would be healed and be able to return to the Gymnasium, that rigid German academic branch of the high school system in which I had placed her and her brothers, it would only be through complete sympathy and affection, no inquiry, or tests or fussing with the

mother she had run away from. We had to let her come out of her distress all on her own good feeling. I was trying hard to overcome my fears of a failed academic education by relaxing completely and entertaining pleasant thoughts.

A minute went by, two, three and four.

"She's just putting on her gown. It'll be just a minute."

Sonja Ingrid, a virgo by her birth sign, born on a Sunday, my first child and only daughter, my pride and joy, who had been my star and the baby of the family and the possessive domineering grandmother who I disliked intensely, for five years until Gerhard was born. She had never quite overcome the shock and spent more time outside the family with friends and neighbors, particularly an old grandmotherly one who had pampered her with gummy bears, noodle soup and Sunday service at the local Catholic church. We weren't religious. I had always remarked, "you are other peoples' child" but failed to see that I was myself to blame for having, as she later said, abandoned her. And then our divorce. Oh, what had I done? Now we must harvest the wind that we had sown... Feelings of deep regret and remorse overcame me. I had destroyed our Sonja. I must be good now, very, very good and give her all my sympathy, the only cure. I had a deep mistrust of psychiatrists and psychologists, and thought many of them were more nutty than their patients.

And then she came with her long brown hair flowing down her back. A walking shadow dressed in a light rosé night gown that hang loosely around her shoulders all the way down to her ankles, covering most of her arms, and underneath it disclosed her youthful figure and well developed breasts. Her lips, well formed tipping upwards like her mother's, smiled vaguely. She came directly toward me, somewhat astonished to see a long missed friend. She hadn't been told that I was coming and looked at me in disbelief, bewildered, and I knew instantly that my poor daughter was ill, and needed help, but the doctors had failed her. She appeared so utterly helpless and at the same time immeasurably lovely. Her warm brown eyes searched for mine, almost destitute. Why had I left her to herself? Why?

I took her into my arms, gently but firmly with one arm, then holding her head against my shoulder and letting my hand touch the back of her head, flowing softly down her hair, and pulling her towards me. She had no strength left in herself, whatsoever, and let herself be supported while pressing her soft cheeks gently against my neck.

"So you are here, are you?" she whispered in a voice that revealed that she



was trembling inside.

We didn't let go of each other and I realized for the first time that Sonja Ingrid had become a beautiful and exceedingly soft young woman - so young and helpless and in so much trouble. She was disarming me who had always treated her with sternness and out of the distance. I regretted so deeply that I had, and repented, wanting to make good all in one moment that I forgot Hedy and the host mother, Gerhard and Arno, who were silently standing by watching the scene, saying nothing.

Yes, I had come all the way from Canada just to be with you, my love. And then we let go. She greeted her brothers with a familiar but quiet hello and I said softly but with longing:

"Sonja, let's all go home."

The host mother helped pack her things. Five minutes later we were in the car driving home the short distance of two or three miles. Everything is so near on the old continent. That evening until midnight I sat on her bedside and we talked and talked innocent chitchat about the village gossip and laughed. Sometimes she would get anxious and apprehensive, then grow silent and worried and when her voice failed her she sobbed. I held her hand or her head gently and closely against mine to reassure and calm her down. She talked disturbed about peace in the world, got excited about music. Would she ever be able to play the piano again?

"Sure you will, of course. Just get some rest now and sleep."

But she didn't want to, only talk and talk and talk. She was frightened but didn't say or even know of what. It was a bizarre situation in which I had no experience. But I knew one thing. I've got to get her out of here, this is not going to work at all and wrecked my brain what to do next. The doctor again? No. It had to be something pleasant which she enjoyed. I decided that we should all go to Zermatt for a week of skiing or how ever long she liked to.

She agreed, took a Valium pill and drank more water. She was always thirsty, it seemed, because she was sweating so much. Then she fell asleep and I collapsed onto the mattress that Hedy had put beside her bed and fell asleep myself.

She didn't look too much better in the morning and I didn't know if she could stand the four hour drive through the lowlands of Switzerland into the Southern Alps. At midpoint on the freeway near Spiez she became anxious and slumped in her seat so that I felt we had to turn around. But somehow the thought of going skiing must have kept her going. We took the car train through the Lötschberg

Tunnel to Goppenstein, drove down the windy road into the Rhône Valley, stopped at our familiar Gasthaus Germann and took a break for lunch.

At Visp we turned back into the mountains and as we gained altitude she seemed to feel better and breathe easier. By late afternoon, Sonja, her brothers and I arrived in Zermatt, immediately found a hotel where she went straight to bed and rested. The boys and I walked through the deserted resort village, found a Wirtschaft and ordered cheese raquelette with boiled potatoes, the standard native Swiss treat we had always enjoyed after our ski outings during the winter and spring weekends until I had left for Canada. I nibbled at the refreshing white Fendant wine and soon we returned to the hotel. She was still awake and ate some of the raquelette we had brought along with lots of fresh ice cold mountain water from the tap, and eventually took another pill. Then she fell asleep and the night went by without any incident.

The next morning at ten we walked to the gondola station and less than an hour later stood on the ski slopes of the glacier high above the village, some 10,000 feet above sea level, with a magnificent all round panorama of the Swiss and Italian Alps, the Matterhorn right in front of us, and began to test the new snow that had fallen overnight. The boys, 11 and 13, took off like Siberian huskies suddenly released from the leash, while Sonja began, first hesitantly, frequently stopping and resting, to work her way down the hills, avoiding moguls, then slowly gaining confidence and picking up speed.

We were all tender and friendly to Sonja. I could read particularly Gerhard's, her favorite brother's, deep concern and feeling in his eyes when he watched her. He was a loveable boy, so good looking and smart. Arno was refreshingly boyish, always ready for a giggle. Between the four of us we had a wonderful time, and after a week, Sonja had her strength back, a sun tan, a sound appetite and we could risk it, I thought, to go home.

On the day of my departure, which came as sudden as my arrival ten days earlier, when it was time to leave for the airport, something was holding me back. I didn't want to go, and Sonja clung to my arm as if she was saying, "why, why do you have to go now?"

As always, I babbled something that was supposed to make sense, and when I was in the airplane high above the weather pushing back to Calgary, Canada, for the first time I was crying for my daughter, the new woman in my life that I had re-found and helped cure of her sudden and sad illness. I didn't begin to understand it myself until months later that I had left my heart behind with her in

the little village in the valley of the foothills of the Black Forest Hills.

"Love is a sexual inflammation of the brain," our psychology prof at the business school in Pforzheim, Germany had said, where I had graduated nine years earlier.

But it wasn't sexual in the least, I thought. It was something deeper and yet, my daughter had become a beautiful and tender young woman, and I knew she missed me. It grabbed me inside, twisted and saddened me, but what could I do about it?

"You've got to be strong and press on regardless," I said to myself. But that didn't help, the longing and feeling of loss just wouldn't go away, not at home at night, not in the mornings or during the days in my busy office. It just remained in my belly, stubborn and relentlessly present.

Sometimes I thought to myself, "Have I fallen in love?"

"No, that can't be, not me. It'll go away."

But it didn't and a gloomy, hopefully hopeless feeling of dependency slowly began to grow in my heart like a tumor, ate away all my power of reasoning and began to devour me from within.

## Chapter 2

Calgary is a city like Denver. Not quite as close to the mountains, but almost, and also a mile high. In the fall the days are sunny and the nights crisp. There hasn't been a day in Calgary that sometime in a year it hasn't snowed. Now the Rocky Mountains in the distance from my kitchen window were snow capped, the leaves of the alder trees had turned yellow and town was expecting the arrival of winter.

Thirty percent of the population is of American descent - descendants of second sons from the plains that could not inherit the farm and moved on to homestead in Alberta. Calgary is the most American of all Canadian cities which is reflected in the accent, business entrepreneurship and comradery.

Gerhard and Arno had lived here with me for a few months and attended Cartright School, going to a private home for lunch and after school until I picked them up coming home from work, made dinner for them and played cards or read books until it was time to go to bed. Gerhard, who was an ace in math and the sciences at his academic high school ("Gymnasium") in Schopfheim, missed the challenge, but most of all, I sensed the young boys missed their familiar surroundings including their mother. I had legal custody under our divorce and custody agreement, notarized in Vancouver in 1977 and the court order, but I never enforced it.<sup>2</sup>

In early September, Touche Ross sent me to an in-house Canadian tax seminar, held at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. It was then that I decided to take the boys along as far as Toronto, rented a car and visited Niagara Falls, took the tour under the falls, and put them on a Swissair flight to Zurich where their mommy was to meet them.

I accompanied them as far as to the gate. It was a heart-wrenching farewell for us; we were so close to each other. Gerhard, my prince, had become ill with a

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<sup>2</sup> The agreement did not mention Sonja. During the divorce proceedings in 1978, Hedy had confided that Sonja was not my biological daughter which might have been a ruse to gain custody of her. We had married in of 1964 when she had missed her period and was pregnant. I relied on her statement without asking for particulars because I marriage was over and agreed that custody of Sonja should go to the mother. The Family Court in Saeckingen accepted and so ordered.

dangerous croup cough when he was two. My ear was tuned in on him and every time the attack started I would go over to his room, take him out of bed and lay him onto my chest until he fell back asleep. It helped, but the cure came only after a one month holiday in July 1970 at the French Atlantic Coast in Carcans-Plage in Aquitaine, a few miles north of the Bassin d'Arcachon, famous for its oysters. The iodine in the air coming from the sea water, recommended the doctor, would soothe and perhaps cure him. It did.

And Arno, my youngest, of course was the baby of the family - blond, light brown eyes, athletic and quick on his wits. The two were inseparable brothers. Arno's middle name, George, according to medieval German legend, means the brother of Gerhard.

Now I had sent them home. They arrived at Zurich-Kloten airport with two big Western cowboy hats on their heads on Sonja's 17th birthday, September 13, 1981. For the first time in my life, except for two years of bachelorhood in Zurich following my banking apprenticeship, I was all by myself in my adopted new home in the wide and open Canadian plains and was utterly lonely, without purpose in life except to earn a living and solidify my career as an international tax accountant. I didn't even particularly like tax, but had written a book on U.S. nonresident income taxation which elevated my credentials. I began to lose direction because inside of me my heart was homesick for my family in Germany, and now since the October trip, especially for Sonja Ingrid. Every time I thought of her, throughout the day, and particularly in the evenings at home, I sensed that I had been fatally wounded.

Three weeks later I was back on the plane to Zurich for Touche Ross. The oil business that fueled their business was slowing down and they agreed that I should go to Europe, see my old contacts and our affiliates in Switzerland and Germany to drum up business. They'd keep me on their payroll, all expenses including airfare were on me. But I also had a letter in my briefcase to 6,000 German investors that were being defrauded by a bunch of promoters from Munich, Germany whom I had worked for a year earlier, been paid hush money and quietly eased out of the firm. Their vice president of administration collaborated with me and upon departure at the airport handed me the investors' lists with names, addresses and the amounts of their investments, tax deductible as intangible drilling costs which were fraudulently inflated. For a \$100,000 investment, the German hopefuls received an immediate deduction of up to \$300,000. The loop hole was soon closed and by then retired doctors and dentists,

or their unsuspecting widows, owed huge amounts of back taxes to the minister of finance. And now the promoters were about to defraud them out of the remainder of their investment by combining their moonshine companies with their limited partnership funds and taking the newly merged company public of which the gangsters would then have majority control.

I decided to blow the whistle and make their scheme known to the investors, virtually all residents of Germany. The campaign turned out to cost me a number of subsequent jobs, my reputation and engulfed me in a series of never ending litigation, until three years later I decided to fight back in the Canadian courts, stalling their scheme from coming to fruition for years and keeping them and their dirty persecution at bay. The press covered the ordeal in great detail, but in the end the money power won. I went through a number of lawyers, some of whom were secretly bought out by my opponents.

"When you have stolen millions, it is quite easy to defend yourself," remarked one lawyer and a year later himself betrayed me. The oil business is a greasy business, they say, and Calgary was no exception.

In mid November 1981, Air Canada touched down at Zurich-Kloten airport, I went through Swiss customs without delay and boarded the shuttle bus that took me to the field where the DC-9's were parked that served the outlying cities of Geneva, Bern and Basel. After a twenty minute hop at cloud altitude, the plane landed at Basel-Mulhouse where Hedy met me, as so many times before, and whisked me through Basel and German customs to our old home in grandma's house in Maulburg.

It was early afternoon, but Sonja who I had expected to meet me there hadn't returned from school yet. She was late which remained her trademark throughout her life. I was so disappointed that I wrote her a note to the effect that I was sorry we hadn't met and that I had returned to Canada. "Fare well, and take good care of yourself."

When I heard her come up the stairs I hid under the couch in the living room. There was a moment of silence while she read my note and suddenly broke into loud sobs and tears. I couldn't keep quiet any longer and came out from underneath. She embraced and kissed me and we set there for a while looking at each other and smiling.

"Don't ever do that again," she said. "I really believed you had left. Don't do that ever again to me. I'm so glad you are here." I was happy to see her again after a month, and so was she.

The boys arrived and we had supper together. It was like good old times again when the family was still intact. We talked for hours, and after a couple of German beers and some wine I retired to her bedroom where, once again, my accommodation for the night was made on the mattress on the floor beside her bed. The house was built in 1954 at the site of an the old farm house. Hedy's apartment on the second floor had only two little bedrooms. Hedy took the living room and made her bed there, the boys occupying the other bedroom. It was in constant disorder with clothes, toys, books and school supplies scattered all over the room. Hedy was loathe in enforcing rules and order.

We had been a normal family. Arno was born after a reasonably rewarding banking career while I was back in business school. Hedy and I had a crisis in 1971 after a planned summer vacation on Playa America, south of Vigo, Spain, that lasted only a month because Hedy and I began to quarrel over who would have to do the household chores and the like. After returning home, I took off for Sweden, as I thought I was entitled to make up for what was left unfulfilled in Spain, and maintained a relationship with a twenty-five year old divorced Swedish woman for a couple of month until the rationalization set in.

Later we move to Vancouver, Canada for two years while I got my chartered accountant's training and passed the certified public accountant's exam in Seattle in November 1976. After returning to Maulburg at the end of July 1977, we started divorce proceedings, but continued to live near each other; she in the apartment in her mother's house and I in various locations in neighboring villages, taking jobs in North America, Hamburg and Munich and began to write my successful first German-American accounting book.

Hedy and I settled every major issue concerning the kids amicably. They didn't find out that we were divorced until years later. When Hedy told Sonja, she was shocked; the boys did not really take notice. Life continued almost in its old pattern and ways. Neither one of us, Hedy or I, entered into new relationships and we spent most of the weekends together as husband and wife, mother and father of our children, and even went on Christmas vacations to the Swiss Alps, to Klosters, Grindelwald and other places. We loved our European ways of dining out, going for long hikes through the country and mountains, and skiing on the weekends.

During the first days of my November visit, I typed six thousand addresses on envelopes, stuffed them with my newsletter and mailed it to the investors who had just returned from a general meeting in Munich to authorize the rollover of their

partnership funds into promoter-controlled corporate shares. It created a big bang and the phones in the promoters' office in Munich rang off the hook for days on end. My long journey against the underworld of tax deductible oil and gas investments, treachery, falsehood and deceit had just begun. It was to become a bloody nightmare until finally it ebbed down and was over, a good six years later through a decision of the Supreme Court of Canada in Ottawa, who declined to hear the case, confirming the Alberta Court of Appeal's decision that we did not have an arguable class action law suit, but that each and every individual investor had to come forward with his own complaint and claim. Mention was made that no Canadian had been hurt. I replied that Canada was a good country for foreigner promoters to take their investors to and lawfully rob them. His Lordship, the Appeal Court judge, delivering the reasons for judgment for the panel of three, had in effect said so.

The autumn days in Southwest Germany are golden days. Sonja and the boys were kept busy with school and homework. I saw them go in the morning and come back for lunch in the early afternoon. In the evenings, after supper, while the boys were playing soccer, or Gerhard in his room by himself and Arno bicycling with friends around the village, Sonja and I would take long walks through the alleys and into the fields, attend a concert in Basel or plain be together and make up for the neglect of the past. She was her lovely self, a growing up teenager fully aware of her new armor as a young woman, her smiles and charm of hidden promises. Off and on she kissed me softly on the mouth, and I had to hold back as saying I know, Sonja, where my place is in your life. But when we hugged, I could not hold back, and neither did she want me to. I realized she was possessive, and it pleased me but at the same time burned me up inside that she had chosen me as her target.

Her philosophy on life was refreshingly innocent. She wanted to be a musician, a piano performer, but at some point in time also a loving wife and mother of her children. Three, she said, would be appropriate when the time was ripe. Twice I accompanied her to the town of Wehr, Baden, where she took piano lessons from Frau Vorwerk, who had accepted Sonja after her affair with the piano teacher and become her grandmotherly-like idol who also had brought out the great violinist, Anne-Sophie Mutter also of Wehr, Baden, who had been discovered by the conductor of the Berliner Philharmoniker, the late Herbert von Karajan. After the lesson, Frau Vorwerk, who was in her early sixties, a well proportioned, well-meaning woman with oriental features and a very broad smile on her face,



would keep us for a Schnäpsli, usually a Jägermeister brandy. And Sonja was allowed to smoke here and did, the boxer dog "Boxy" looking on with his sad eyes, enjoying the company.

Frau Vorwerk mentioned one time when we discussed matrimonial relations - her daughter was going through a divorce - that in the ideal state, husband and wife should be as close personality-wise as possible. The age differential was not such a big factor, she said. Her late husband was twenty years older and they had spent a wonderful and rich life together.

Later, I had the feeling that she saw right through Sonja's and my façade and what our true relationship was. Unless I am terribly mistaken, I think, or at least I felt then, that she approved of it because she invited us often, and together, to her various garden parties. In return, we would take her out to dinner and she was glad to join us. Frau Vorwerk's opinions, particularly of Sonja's plans and career goals, had a formidable and reassuring influence on her.

Sonja had been put to the piano at age six because she was misbehaving in Kindergarten and I thought she needed additional chores to absorb her overflowing energies. The medicine, the piano, did do the trick until she was nine and somewhat disinterested because further achievement depended on her input, meaning at least an hour each day of rigorous practice. She shunned it, until I promised her a doll house for Christmas that would be bigger or smaller depending on the number of hours she practiced each day. We struck a deal. She determined it should have four floors with stairwells and real light bulbs, a kitchen, furniture and sweet little dolls to occupy it. The more she practiced, the higher the house rose. She saw me work on it, cutting out stairs with my hand saw, laying carpets, installing the furniture and connecting the lighting to a little transformer in the basement of her doll house. By Christmas it was finished and Sonja was over the hump with her piano practice routine, began performing at competitions at her school and elsewhere, and was proud of her achievements - and in love with her doll house.

We re-lived our memories of Vancouver, Canada, where she arrived when she was eleven and fully enjoyed the one and a half years at Glenmore Elementary School at the foot of the British Properties, Vancouver's nouveau riche and elite neighborhood in the mountains of West Vancouver where I had rented a house high on the hilltop for my family. And she was fond of her teacher, Mr. Arntsen, a native from Saskatchewan who brought his childhood memories into the classroom and shared them with his students. Sonja knew more about Saskatchewan than

her home province at the time, British Columbia, and had devoured books such as "Ann of Green Gables" and "The Little House on the Prairies." Her experience in Vancouver from Christmas 1975 to the summer of 1977 was a very happy one. After that I had lost sight of her. But now we made it all up and it was good.

After the mailing to the 6,000 investors was done and my visits to Touche Ross's offices in Zurich and Frankfurt had been concluded, it was once again time to say good-bye, not knowing when we would see each other again, and the hurting began. I remember vividly when we had said good-bye, squeezed and kissed each other, after Sonja and the boys had left for school, Hedy went with me to the car to take me to Zurich airport. I broke down into sobs, dragged my suit case down the stairs to the car and had a hard time regaining my composure. Hedy missed my dilemma entirely and just hurried busily along to make sure I didn't miss my plane. She was always like that and maybe that was the reason we drifted apart and divorced. There was not depth, no compassion in her that nurtured anything but her need for security. Sonja was very different, and I saw the woman growing up in her. Having to leave her without any prospect of returning made me utterly sad. The boys, who had been my stars during the past couple of years, had been replaced by a compassionate feeling and desire to belong to my daughter, Sonja Ingrid. I had no experience, no intention of any sort except to be with her and my family. I did not know at the time what it was that had bonded me, my relatively recent divorce which was in effect not even executed because Hedy and I still saw each other. I was like a leaf in a storm, tossed around and Sonja was too young to handle it either. We cried when we said good-bye, as we had never done before.

Hedy drove me along the Swiss autobahn to Klotten and accompanied as far as to the check-in counter in the main terminal. An hour later I was airborne back to London and Calgary, for no purpose at all. This, I knew was not going to fly and it didn't.

## Chapter 3

During the next few weeks I met with the German oil and gas company's vice president of administration frequently over lunch. In Munich, he said, the crooks of promoters were still trying to figure out where the leak was. I had formed a corporation under Canadian federal law and named it FORCAP Foreign Capital Investment Services Ltd. Investigating through lawyer friends and connections, the guys in Munich found out and their contacts phoned me. I began to give telephone interviews and a week or so later was summoned into the chief's office at Touche Ross.

"Did you write this information letter?"

"Yes."

"Your activity is incompatible with the firm's and we have been threatened with a law suit. I have prepared your resignation here. If you will sign it, we will forgive any advances and relocation expenses made to you."

I signed.

On December 10, 1981, I flew with a former land man of the German oil and gas company to West Virginia to look at his outfit and prospects. He wanted me to promote him in Western Europe. I saw gas wells being tested in the Williston Basin. The wells were shallow and not very long lasting.

A few days later I was back in Basel, not depressed in the least as one would suspect of a man who had just lost his job, but relieved that I had a valid reason to be back with my family. Hedy accepted the fact and I pitched my tent in her home, crowded as it was, for the time being.

I met with investment newsletter editors and other oil and gas promoters who were after my mailing list. The crooks in Munich reacted with a barrage of law suits claiming defamation, breach of trust, interference in contractual relationships, and huge sums of damages. I was defenseless without a lawyer, as is mandatory in the German court system. Legal aid was declined. Soon one default order after another was served upon me and it looked as if I, who had blown the whistle and spread the truth, had become its first victim. Costs were awarded against me and I was in danger of becoming a bankrupt. The truth stood on its head.

Sonja enjoyed my presence immensely, and I hers. We spent a lot of time

together, talking, walking, going to discos in Basel and the German border town of Lörrach. But also the boys, Gerhard and Arno, were happy to have me back.

When I went to Zurich for a business meeting, Sonja came along and we staid overnight at the Hotel Storchen on the Limmatquai. I had worked and lived in Zurich as a young banker from 1963 to 1964, and again from 1966 to 1967, and knew the town and its fun places well.

I walked with Sonja through the narrow alleys along St. Peter's hand in hand or with arms around each other's waists like lovers do in Europe. I had bought her a short black coat with red lining on the way home from the U.S. She loved it and wore it, the red collar turned up, with tight pants and chique boots that made her a little taller. Her dark brown eyes matched the coat and her brown hair flowed smoothly down over her shoulder. The young business partner, a short guy, Porsche fan and cocky, would have liked her for himself and remarked:

"You walk like lovers. Father and daughter. Incest, hey?"

That remark pierced me like a dagger right through the heart. Never would I, what was he thinking? I was only innocently in love with Sonja and both of us so glad to have found each other again. But? No, I should not torment myself, or her, thinking, let alone talking about the future, speculate, but enjoy the moment.

Christmas came and, as so often, I had rented a condominium in the Swiss Alps. A few days before Christmas Eve we packed our things and skis into my blue Opel and drove off to Saas Fee - Hedy, Sonja, the boys and I. It was going to be a wonderful two week holiday in the snow, and hopeful some sun.

We had rented two bedrooms in the upper floor of a modern Swiss chalet a couple of miles down in the valley from Saas Fee in Saas Almagell in the Canton of Valais, *Alpen Südseite* (Southern Alp) which has the more stable sunny and dry weather. Everything was supplied except the linen and towels for around \$50 a day. And there was snow, plenty of it and sunshine. We skied all day on the slopes of the mountains surrounding Saas Fee, enjoyed fondue bourguignon or cheese fondue and raquelette at night with dry Swiss white wine for Hedy and me, with Sonja participating.

Christmas eve and Christmas day passed. The boys were playing board games in the evening, Hedy doing her compulsory knitting and cooking, while Sonja and I roamed the busy town, went to discos, clothe boutiques and one little Fendant bar where used to hang out for hours, sipping on our white whine and gossiping. Back at the chalet we played bridge compassionately. We would stay up late, take a final walk through the old village, through the snow, the moonlight,

gaze at the stars and philosophize.

I would take her into my arms, first gently and then tight while she held me around the waist and shoulders. My lips would touch the soft skin of her neck, unable to resist her. I would hold her head with both hands and look into her searching eyes, our lips would touch very lightly, shyly, and, perhaps not knowing what was happening to us, we would kiss quickly and embrace each other for a long time and sigh.

Hedy noticed our happiness and the change in our behavior. One evening while we walked to the small store around the corner, walking behind us, she observed:

"You behave like a young couple in love. Could you stop that? What will the people think?"

Hedy and I had not been together for some time now. She became increasingly irritated and even feisty. Eventually, after an argument, she left for home and her mother. I drove her in silence down the valley to and the nearest train station in Visp. She didn't say good-bye. It was awkward.

What would she think, I thought. Love makes you blind, is a German saying. But was I? I read Arthur Rubinstein's memoirs years later, that Sonja had bought for us, where he told of the many women in his life. He wrote that the only reason he got married was to have a daughter who would truly be his, his very own woman in life, virtuously I trust. And he did have a daughter.

Now I know exactly why he said it. Relationships with other women come and go. But feelings of love towards one's own and only daughter are on an entirely different plane. The dimensions are of infinite affection and belonging that become torture if they go beyond acceptable limits of society's moral conception, because the fruit is the ultimate forbidden fruit - for the protection of the family unit, they say. But girls from age thirteen always tempt their fathers, as Sonja admitted to me ten years later. Although I had noticed it how she came out of the bathroom, her towel rapped around her so carelessly that one breast showed and her bum. But it didn't register with me then and stirred no emotions, although she had intended it, she said.

According to the theory of the father of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud, the earliest erotic impulses are incestuous in nature.

"Young boys unconsciously rival their father for their mother's affection, while daughters covet their father, a normal process in development known in boys and

girls respectively, as the Oedipus and Electra complexes."<sup>3</sup> If such earlier longings are suppressed, the possibility of the daughter replacing the mother as her father's lover can provide the motivating force for providing the emotional background.

The taboo has been Roman Catholic doctrine since medieval times. In the history of mankind, this was not always so. Although the Old Testament forbids love among relatives, it is silent on father-daughter relationships (Leviticus 18:6-18). The tribes of the Moabites and Ammonites are traced to an incestuous union between Lot and his two daughters (Genesis 19:30-38). After the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot's wife, disobeying the instruction not to look back, was changed into a pillar of salt while Lot went out of Zoar and lived in the hills with his two daughters. There being no other men available "after the manner of all the earth," his daughters got their father drunk [the excuse in the legend] and lay with him, one after the other. "Thus both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father." The oldest bore a son and called him Moab (me'abh, "from my father"), the younger also bore a son and called him Ben-ammi who became the father of the Ammonites.

In ancient Egypt all estates were handed down through the female line and husbands made over all of their property and future earnings to their wives at marriage. This gave rise to the consequence of incest. Various Pharaohs, the supreme rulers and chief priests of the national religion, all called Ptolemy, married sisters and nieces, all called Cleopatra, motivated by the desire to preserve the purity of the royal blood which was sacred and to keep the family's wealth in the family. The last by the name Cleopatra, herself the issue of at least eleven generations of inbreeding and a sibling partner, "began to swing back to exogamy [marrying out] with a vengeance - and with Romans to boot."<sup>4</sup> Nobility followed suit. The goddess Isis, the Great Mother, was the loyal sister and wife of Orisis. "As her husband symbolized the fertilizing Nile, she was the rich black earth, bringing forth from her womb the grain and vegetation which brought life to Egypt. In her lay the secret of the mysterious power of creativity from which sprang the earth and all living things. She was to Egypt what Kali was to India, Ishtar to Assyria and Demeter to Greece - the feminine principle of fecundity, prior to and in some sense independent of masculinity." She discovered the arts of agriculture.

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<sup>3</sup>Time Magazine. "What Is Incest?" August 31, 1992, p. 57

<sup>4</sup>Robin Fox. "The Red Lamp of Incest. An Enquiry into the Origins of Mind and Society." Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983, p. 17

"Isis was symbolized as a jeweled Mother of God and celebrated in late December at the annual rebirth of the sun. Her divine child, Horus, was displayed being nursed by his holy mother in a stable," writes William Cole.<sup>5</sup>

According to Japanese mythology, the world creators, Izanagi and Izanami, were brother and sister and invented sexual intercourse.<sup>6</sup>

The New York Times reports that "a dozen or so societies have been found that even countenance intrafamilial sex; the most recent discovery was in Malaysia. Here was a small nomadic tribe of ten families that had repopulated itself through very close incestuous breeding when it did not appear to be necessary."<sup>7</sup> And, according to James B. Twitchell, "in 1979, Joan Nelson startled the American Psychiatric Association by contending that there is a 'significant amount of consensual incest activity reported as beneficial,' and listed her own case as an example. Soon after that Professor LeRoy G. Schultz of the School of Social Work at the West Virginia University told an assembly of doctors and nurses at the national conference on Sexual Victimization of Children: Trauma, Trial and Treatment, that some 'incest may be either a positive, healthy experience or at worst, neutral and dull.' "Incest has its victims all right: they are the ones who are exposed. The shame they suffer is not natural guilt, but rather the effects of social banishment."<sup>8</sup>

To this day, native tribes in the Amazon jungle, I learned on TV, when the husband dies the oldest son takes his place, when the mother dies the oldest daughter becomes the new wife. Pope Gregor boasted that his two young girls were the children of him by his older daughter.

Today the incest taboo has lost the popular myth that surrounded it in earlier times - the myth, that the carnal relationship among blood relatives drains the gene pool, resulting in mental and physical defects in the offsprings. The scientific rationale behind the taboo has lost its significance as "modern genetics have found that such dangers are overstated."<sup>9</sup> It would take generations of inbreeding for

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<sup>5</sup>William Graham Cole. "Sex and Love in the Bible." New York: Association Press, pp. 167-168

<sup>6</sup>Carolyn S. Bratt. "Incest Statutes and the Fundamental Right of Marriage: Is Oedipus Free to Marry?" Family Law Quarterly, Vol. XVIII, No. 3., Fall 1984, p. 259, fn. 8)

<sup>7</sup>The New York Times, November 11, 1982, p. 15

<sup>8</sup>James B. Twitchell. "Forbidden Partners. The Incest Taboo in Modern Culture." New York: Columbia University Press, 1987, pp. 15-16

<sup>9</sup>The old taboo against linebreeding has lost its rationale in modern genetics - in the short run it does not weaken the hybrid but strengthens it ("hybrid vigor"). "The fact of the matter is that too much inbreeding is potentially as harmful as too much outbreeding - somewhere inbetween is optimal. In humans this seems to be about the level of second cousins."

such problems to surface regularly. A more important reason for the taboo is cultural: incest has been banned to preserve family harmony by keeping disruptive rivalries and jealousies at bay. It has also helped to strengthen kinship clans; by forcing members to marry outside the group, the clan expands its wealth and allies."<sup>10</sup> The heart of the family is not the bloodline but the emotional connection.

Sigmund Freud wrote in "Totem and Taboo" that the incest taboo implies that we subconsciously desire it ("Inzestwunsch"). The avoidance rules in Polynesia dictated that brothers and sisters were not allowed to meet, make no presents to each other, but could speak to each other from the distance. The rules were especially severe on Fiji. Freud wrote, "But we are perplexed to hear that these wild people held holy orgies where the prohibited groups of relatives sought sexual union."<sup>11</sup>

Sonja had turned seventeen in September, and was the sweetest thing that walked on earth. Her illness was behind her, she was lively, affectionate and so immensely lovely that all the time we spent together I had no power to resist her charms. The thought that I could not have her made me sad and depressed me. Why, I began to ask myself, why can this happiness not be consummated, why can't one love what one loves the most, why are we under a curse, not by nature but by society - a society that had become promiscuous highlighting individuals freedoms of all kind, adultery and abortion, anal sex and allowed gays to marry but ignored to address a natural desire that flowed from the heart, was honest and therefore true by making its consummation a crime? A crime against whom, the human beings directly affected or society's arbitrary rules? These thoughts began to depress me at night in my room which I shared with the boys after we had said good night, while she was all by herself in hers.

One evening before New Year's eve 1981, while I was lying in the other bed beside hers I broke down in tears silently and she noticed it, came over and hugged me asking what was the matter. I didn't tell her. It happened again the

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(Twitchell, p. 244)

<sup>10</sup> Time Magazine, loc. cit. But these reasons are all contested by Carolyn Bratt (18 Family Law Quarterly 257-309): "Incest statutes may actually increase the likelihood of deleterious recessive gene traits appearing in future generations. The gene trait, if severe enough, will eliminate itself from the gene pool when it is manifested in the homozygoteor rendering her or him sterile. If incest statutes prevent the coming together of two recessive genes in the present generation, the gene will be dispersed throughout the population in general." (p. 274)

"Today, Swedish law permits marriage between half-siblings, and French law permits aunt-nephew and uncle-niece marriages." (p. 258, fn. 2) "A survey of state criminal incest statutes in 1983 revealed that three states had repealed all criminal sanctions against incestuous matings and marriage: Michigan, New Jersey and Ohio." (p.284, and fn. 141)

<sup>11</sup>Sigmund Freud. "Totem und Tabu. Eine ?bereinstimmung im Seelenleben der Wilden und Neurotiker." *Written* 1912-13. Reprint. Frankfurt: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1991, p. 57



next evening, the boys were already sound asleep, and I said what it was. She must have known, because she said, "Let's sleep for now and I'll see you in the morning after the boys have gone skiing." She had had an experience with her piano teacher when she was only fifteen but he proved to be impotent that night, and she had had boy friends. Psychologically she was not, but biologically she was still a virgin.

We went to sleep, each in his own bed. In the morning I made breakfast while she staid in her room. When we were alone I found her in bed covered only with the bed sheet. Her face was rosy and radiated excitement. I came to her side and embraced her. Then she kissed me and we melted into each other for an hour, I think. To have her only once, I thought, would cement our bond forever, but then I could not let go and neither could she.

Our drama began that lasted for ten years and seven months; first secretly and then more and more openly, or rather visible to the outside world, a drama that brought unbelievable happiness and blessed us, but also cursed us.

According to a Swiss psychiatrist professor who counseled her seven years later the relationship was doomed to end in tragedy. I was intent to disprove him.

In the afternoon, after lunch, we took to the ski slopes above Saas Fee, testing our true element, working the moguls recklessly, schussing down to the bottom of the valleys and racing back to the chair lift for another run. I could not take my eyes off of her, and each time she returned my looks with a warm, asserting but also victorious smile.

Years later, Sonja admitted that once we had been together she could not get enough love. She was receptive, inquisitive and very, very playful, but at first still a real greenhorn. It had hurt a little physically, she said, at first, as always. As the days passed, that was soon overcome and a very deep sense of affection, love and belonging developed. We became inseparable in every respect and our relationship took on a new and deeper meaning. By the force of our engagement I was thrown out of my fatherhood roll completely, felt elegantly young and ecstatic, guarding her jealously. She enjoyed both the protection and the comforts of love but knowing of society's attitude agreed and pledged to keep it our secret, an undertaking which overtaxed her ability and was broken, not at first because she wanted to keep me by her side by all means, but in later years after Roy and Keith had been born.

When we returned to Maulburg, a few months later her mama confronted her with her suspicion. Sonja reacted almost violently, kicking her in the bum. Hedy

never even mentioned the issue again, considering it a private matter between Sonja and I until in February 1988, shortly after Keith's birth, Sonja wrote her mama from Kirkland, Washington and asked to be allowed to return home with the children. Permission was granted on condition that I become the outlaw, the condemned one who was not even allowed to visit.

## Chapter 4

During the months that followed, Sonja went back to school. She was in grade 11. We spent a lot of weekends together away from Maulburg, and at one time flew to Geneva and enjoyed the bustling international city. For three months we rented our own apartment in nearby Eichsel-Rheinfelden on the banks of the River Rhine bordering Switzerland where my sons Gerhard and Arno were born in 1968 and 1970, respectively. The apartment was so big and elegant that we could hardly furnish it. I was applying for a job in New York, then worked briefly for an oil and gas promoter near Frankfurt who transferred me to Zurich, Switzerland where I rented another apartment.

One evening Sonja went to a party in the house of one of her Gymnasium teachers to stay overnight. The thought of it drove me out of my mind and shortly after nine o'clock in the evening I picked her up and we left for our place in Zurich but got only as far as Baden in the Canton of Aarau, went to the Hotel Schweizerhof and spent the night there emptying all the champagne that was in the fridge and made love. It was an unforgettable treat. She was soft, tender and giving, and so lovely although she later said that she remembers the night with some disdain, but never said why. Perhaps, I speculate, because for the first time we enjoyed each other in the French way, among others. At three in the morning we both collapsed in each others arms and did not get up until noon the following day when the maid knocked on the door.

The feeling of excitement and joy of being together with her was heightened subconsciously by the sensation that she was my daughter, the forbidden fruit, but was also saddened by the realization that it had no foundation in the society in which we lived, had no future. And I sensed it all along, the moral aspect burdened her down too, after we had been together. While we were together we experienced a mutual harmony that I had never known before. The experience of union was as pure, clean and perfect as I had never imagined it could be. I became obsessed by the pain of losing her, had nothing on my mind when she was gone except when might she return. Drugs were taboo with us, but she was to me what heroin is to an addict. And still, to the outside world we had to maintain a posture of disinterestedness in each other and eventually, at least for the first couple of years, perfected it into an art form.

One of my favorite holiday destinations in Europe was the French Côte d'Azur on the Mediterranean. During Pentecost in early June of 1982, the boys, Sonja and I left for a ten day holiday in Saint Tropez. We found and rented a trailer in a campground near Pamplona Beach, spent the days on the beach and ate well and drank good French wine in the evenings. Pamplona Beach is the nudist paradise and Sonja seemed to enjoy the freedom of sunbathing entirely disrobed. She was a pretty sight with her long brown hair, even features and youthful firm figure.

When we got hot from the sun we dipped into the crystal clear warm sea, waded into the shallow water to get out of sight of the people on the shore and explored making love in the water. Throughout our years together, physically, Sonja remained to be so tempting and seductive that she would turn me on regardless of the circumstances; just the sight of her, her very peculiar unmistakable waltz of a walk and open, almost childlike appearance, her pretty lips and round features roused my passion and desires. That was the purely physical aspect which alone cannot sustain love and devotion for very long. More than anything I loved her as a person, as a genuine companion, although I learned later that I had some misconceptions about her fidelity which is understandable given her youth and thirst for life.

One afternoon she said she had arranged tutoring in physics in order to pass an exam and I saw it in her eyes that she was lying. I asked her about it and she got a little red in the face but stuck to her story. With a heavy heart I drove her to the bus station in Adelhausen and looked at her sitting down by the window as the bus drove off. She came home to our Rheinfeldern apartment and said they hadn't finished, the material was so much that she had to go again tomorrow afternoon directly after school. I didn't believe her but could not raise a valid objection. Who she was studying with. "Oh, a student you don't know," she replied.

She came home in time for supper and we had a couple of glasses of red wine. I confronted her with my suspicion that she had been with someone. Somehow, for the first time, an argument arose and she said that the English teacher had nicer hair than I, and eventually threw wine from her glass directly into my face. It left a red stain on the white wall. I played the incident down and it never reoccurred. The episode had a follow up with an unexpected turn two years later at the time of her high school graduation that occupied the school authorities for a year.

In June, Sonja accompanied me to Switzerland where I had an interview with a Frankfurt real estate company that invested heavily in United States property.

The job materialized and based on the prospect of having a regular income as of August, we took a trip to the United States and Canada via the "el cheapo" flyer at the time, Icelandic Airlines, from Luxembourg. Hedy and the boys drove us to the connecting bus in Basel to say good-bye.

When we arrived in Luxembourg the plane was delayed and we strolled to the restaurant where she saw a piano in the adjacent bar, set down and began to play. I remember we landed in Keflavik late at night but given the latitude of 64 degrees it was almost as far north as Fairbanks, Alaska was as bright as daylight. The old DC-8 had incurred a mechanical problems and was grounded until a certain spare part was flown in from Copenhagen, Denmark. Instead of bedding down on the floor of the terminal, we decided to take Icelandic up on its offer to show us the town of Reykjavik by bus including dinner. The bus cruised very slowly through the busy town, down to the harbor and eventually to a restaurant where they served us fresh cod and free drinks. We came back to the airport several hours later and after waiting another two or three hours finally boarded our plane to New York. They put us up in a hotel by the airport and the following day we watched the men's finals at Wimbledon on TV.

In the evening we boarded an Air Canada flight directly to Calgary, Sonja's birth place, picked up my '78 Oldsmobile Custom Cruiser that I had parked with friends in December following my termination at the accounting firm, Touche Ross, and began our tour of the West.

In British Columbia we stopped at several hot springs, ate well and staid at motels on the way. We drove south through the Canadian Okanagan Valley and crossed into Washington State at Oroville where I had bought 200 acres of undeveloped property in the form of a mountain along Highway 97. We spent a day or two at Palmer Lake and continued on south to the county capital of Okanogan, a town that would play a fateful roll in our separation on August 10, 1992. We got her a learner's permit so she could drive the car.

The trip along Stevens Pass to Kirkland, Washington turned into a crash course in driving instruction. In Kirkland we practiced parking and backing up and three days later she took the road test. Tears were flowing down her pretty cheeks when she returned with the stern lady inspector from the Washington State Patrol. I tried to comfort her and asked her to show me the test record slip to see what the mistakes were that we needed to iron out, but to my surprise she had passed.

"What are you crying about, Sonja?" I asked in amazement, "you passed the

test."

"Oh, I don't know," she said, "I feel so bad because I made so many stupid mistakes."

I couldn't help it but chuckle and took her head into my hands - she always liked to be comforted by holding my hands on her ears, as did her son Keith born six years later - then I gave her a hug.

"Go wipe off your tears and stand in line to have your picture taken."

She did and when she had her permit in her hands she smiled and was happy. I had a co-driver for the 3,000 mile trip back to the East Coast. It was a lovely trip, though a hurried one because we had only allowed ourselves three weeks so that I would be back in Frankfurt in time for my new job.

We took I-90 east over Snoqualmie Pass, through the wide open Columbia Basin, past Spokane and Coeur d'Alene into Montana and then turned off at Bozeman heading for Yellowstone National Park. We stopped at Mount Rushmore and the Black Hills. On my way home in December, I had bought her a gold ring made from Black Hill gold at Stapleton airport in Denver for Christmas that she now wore. I sometimes thought to myself, "Sonja, is this your engagement ring now or your wedding ring?"

Through the wide open stretches of the Dakotas along Interstate 80, often she would lay down on a sleeping mattress in the back of the station wagon, her head right behind the driver's seat and nap.

It was quite hot and humid and we decided to have a picnic at a lake in a state park outside Fairmont, Minnesota. The water looked so inviting that we decided to go for a dip. Sonja is a water rat and swam way ahead of me enjoying herself when, all of a sudden, I heard her screaming and splashing in the water as if she had been bitten by a shark.

She dashed back to shore and as soon as she began to have firm ground under her feet started to reach into her bathing suit to try to remove something that was obviously biting and scratching her. She had a bunch of small but agile black fish flopping around in the bathing suit that she had scooped up while she was swimming through some weeds. I quickly took her by the hand, led her out of the water onto the grass and in one swoop tore the swimming suit down to her knees. There she stood stark naked and bewildered, rubbing the black fish off her body that had held on to her skin, then covered her breasts with one arm and her privates with the other because the neighbors on the other picnic table were watching the scene and having a field day before I could roll her into a towel. We

laughed about this notable picnic for many years to come every time we talked about our great American tour of 1982.

I remember stopping for gas in Fairmont and was keeping my eyes open for a motel. One advertised frivolous waterbeds and when I told her what they were for it wetted her appetite and she agreed to try it out. During our first years together, Sonja never made any moves on her own but waited until she was asked and invited. She might have looked at our relationship with a sense of guilt, but it vanished when Roy was born in September 1985 and we had become a family. We stopped at Rochester, south of Minneapolis-Saint Paul for another night and then drove nonstop straight through to my former foster parents in Wayne, Pennsylvania, where I had lived as a foreign exchange student from Germany and graduated from high school.

She had visited before as a little girl but I showed her around a second time, being quite attached to both the place and my former foster family. We swam at Martin's Dam, went to Valley Forge and the Art Museum in Philadelphia, then drove along the New Jersey shore to New York and saw a performance by the Netherlands Dance Ensemble at Lincoln Center. Sonja was still taking ballet lessons in Lörrach, Germany once a week and enjoyed the performance immensely. The Big Apple intrigued her to a point but we both agreed that it was not a city we would ever want to live in. And we haven't to this point, although I had many job opportunities but declined each time in favor of the Basel, Switzerland region or the Seattle area in the evergreen playground of the Pacific Northwest.

I was able to hold on to the real estate job near Frankfurt for only a couple of days, then left for Antwerp to pick up my car that had been shipped from New York and took Sonja back to Maulburg. She enjoyed travel immensely but couldn't cope with relocating and was happy to be back in her familiar environment and school.

A financially difficult time followed when I refused to pursue my career goals as a C.P.A. and financial man, passing up a number of opportunities in order to be near her. I had formed an investors' group, sent out newsletter to keep the 6,000 Germans informed about what was happening with their Canadian oil and gas investment. Contributions for the common cause started to come in, never enough to hire big time lawyers, but too much in the way of interest and support to simply walk away from it. I could charge my time against the fund at \$25 an hour plus expenses which helped to keep me afloat financially during the next three years.

When the promoters in Munich, headed by a German lawyer who had written his Ph.D. thesis on company law, filed their sixth law suit against me seeking an order to compel me to renounce my allegations, I scraped up my last resources, found an attorney in Munich and began the long and drawn out process of resistance in the German courts. The case was moved from the civil to the commercial chamber all the while the file filled up with affidavits, exhibits and briefs to become a stack two feet high. The judges began to sit on it until they were transferred to another court. No one wanted to touch the complicated and convoluted issue until sometime in 1988 both sides agreed to lay down our arms and have the case closed. Costs were left wherever they had fallen.

Sonja took ballet lessons once a week from a strict former prima ballerina of the Berliner Ballet in Lörrach and piano lessons from the vivacious widow in Wehr, Frau Vorwerk. Most of the time I drove her to Lörrach and run some errands and pick her up afterwards. I also drove her to her piano lessons in Wehr, watched her perform on the grand piano in the large living room upstairs and often fell asleep which was not perceived as a compliment by either her or the teacher. But I did explain that her music made me feel so comfortable and relaxed that, knowing all of her pieces inside out, I simply dozed off. She was always the last student in the afternoon. Afterwards we always settled down in the living room with a German herbal schnapps, a couple of Jägermeisters, which Sonja enjoyed greatly because at her piano teacher's was the only place where she was allowed to smoke.

Frau Vorwerk, the widow of the former chief executive officer of the large Swiss chemical and pharmaceutical company's German operation, was a true Berliner and very supportive of Sonja as one of her best students.

"Na, Sonjalein," she would say, "wie geht's?" and when she responded with some positive news would add, "Das ist ja prima!" Well, Sonja, how are you? That is wonderful!

Never did we speak to her about the relationship between Sonja and myself, although I am positive that Frau Vorwerk, who had lived through wars, devastation and had a great tolerant outlook on life, knew exactly what the situation was. Often during these get-togethers we were joined by her son, an entrepreneurial type with fleeting success, and sometimes by his Korean wife who had a difficult time adjusting to the rather strict and regimented German way of life.

No outstanding events in 1982 or 1983 rekindle my memory. On the first day of school in September '82, all of sudden she made a fuss about driving her to school in my Oldsmobile station wagon. She said everybody would look at the car



because it was so big for European standards. I was offended but drove her anyway. I picked her up from school conspicuously often for a dad. Parents in Germany seem to be more involved with their kids than in America, and nobody ever mentioned or hinted a thing.

During July of '83 Sonja, the boys and I packed the wagon and drove off through France to the Atlantic Coast to our old hideout - Carcans Plage. Money was scarce but we went anyway, pitching a tent far enough in the pine forest just behind the big sand dunes that we couldn't be seen by the fire chief who checked the area regularly for wild campers. It was a wonderful vacation. We cooked our own meals. Sonja's specialty was tomato salad with lots of onions. We used the tailgate of the station wagon as our dinner table, sitting on a wooden fence for a chair. No comfort, but quite functional.

The Atlantic ocean in July can still be quite cold but also invigorating. We made camp fires in the sand, gazed at the sunset and at the stars at night. It was all very relaxing. If we wanted to be intimate we had to take a blanket and go deeper into the underbrush of the sandy pine forest. She was lovely, just nineteen, fun loving and full of life and ideas. Many times I could have held and kissed her, but with her brothers around had to keep my distance. I envied the young couples who showed their love and affection for each other openly, and so must have Sonja.

We took long walks away from the village along the beach. Just a quarter of a mile out it was fairly deserted and people sun bathed and swam in the nude. So did we.

On the way home we drove through north central France, visited the magnificent Loire castle, Chambord, and arrived at Paris' Place Clichy and Mont Martre in the most formidable thunder and rain storm I had ever experienced. We were sitting outside under the canopy of a restaurant at the square where painters perform their "art" for the tourist trade, when it thundered and came down in buckets. We all enjoyed it. Since we had spent our last dimes on good food and drink, I had no choice but drive the big Olds through the night, took a little nap en route on a city square and arrived early in the morning back at home.

In the spring of 1984, I enlisted Sonja's help in mailing a newsletter to the 6,000 investors, which was always a huge task of having to write it, have it printed, put labels on the 6,000 envelopes and stuff them. I was always very agitated to get the letters out. She came home from school and sat down at the kitchen table with me and began to help, though somewhat unwillingly. Then she

picked a fight and left the house. She didn't show up for dinner that evening and after nine I took the bike and rode to Schopfheim looking for her in a pub where she sometimes went with school friends. I must have just missed her and a lean tall boy called Jazzy. Desperately, I checked a few other places and then phoned her girl friend who told me who she could be with. I had a bad night and early in the morning located her by phone at Jazzy's.

"Why didn't you come home last night, I have been looking for you everywhere," I said.

She gave some excuse and said that she would be on her way. When she arrived in Jazzy's car at about seven in the morning, looking amorous at her friend who wanted to accompany her upstairs to our apartment, I locked the door behind her and got into a fit. She ran up the stairwell but I caught up with her becoming physical. Hedy heard the commotion and inquired what was going on. I settled down, feeling utterly devastated and depressed. Sonja went into hiding at her grandma's downstairs and said she didn't want to live upstairs anymore but make her bed downstairs.

I protested and said that I would not live there anymore under these circumstances. Then she decided to come upstairs again and admitted that she had slept with Jazzy. I was jealous beyond description and had a sick feeling of emptiness in my stomach. She said that wouldn't see him again because it had only been a fling of a night. She had had her period anyway and didn't enjoy it. They had been drinking and that's how it came about. I should have looked for her earlier, she said, and she would have returned with me. That was that.

Hedy noticed my emotional upheaval and mentioned that it appeared to her that I could not live without Sonja.

Sonja's graduation came up at the end of May 1984. The graduation dance and festival was to be held at the new city auditorium in Schopfheim and Sonja was to perform Liszt's "Grande Valse Brillante" on the grand piano on stage.

Two days before the event she became restless and slept very little, but the last night she didn't sleep at all and smoked heavily. We talked until two in the morning and became so heated up with desire that we made love to each other. She kissed me passionately, aroused and stimulated me again and again wanting to make endless love. At four in the morning I was utterly exhausted but she would not sleep, but put on her clothes. We went on a walk through the sleepy village along the flowery meadows. After the sun rose over the hills like a red gloomy ball, we went home and bedded down for a couple of hours.

During the night while we were talking, she said that she had been intimate with school staff. Upon my insistence she admitted that she had been together with her English teacher, a thirty-five year old wiry blond guy with fiery blue eyes whom I had always disliked intensely.

Weeks earlier, after noticing that he was eyeballing Sonja at the tennis court while she blushed, I had phoned him up and said that Sonja was off limits. He took it as an offence and called up Hedy to protest my behavior. Hedy told me about it and thought I was overreacting. Now Sonja had conceded, as she could never keep a secret for very long. They had met when the teacher's wife was out of town, twice during the so called physic's tutoring. And she gave me particulars. He had invited her home after school to talk over what he called "her problems," then opened a bottle of champagne and got intimate. Sonja being as curious and nosy as she was went along and soon after got in bed with him. The following day I spotted the teacher at tennis play with his wife, walked up to him and slapped him in the face and then left the tennis court saying, "Don't ever mess with my daughter again."

His wife was outraged because he would not defend himself. A year later, following an investigation by the school board through the criminal police, he admitted the incident, was dismissed from public service and his wife, who used to be Sonja's senior friend and also a teacher at the same high school, divorced him.

Sonja was a reasonably good student but not outstanding enough to make it into medical school where I wanted her.

I had long decided to return to North America and so it was reasonable that she should apply to the University of British Columbia's School of Music in Vancouver as a piano performance major, the boys would follow whenever they graduated; Gerhard in 1987 and Arno prospectively in 1989. Sonja took great pains in preparing her audition tape with four pieces, one by Johann Sebastian Bach, whom I despise to her great chagrin because he is too methodic and mathematical for my taste, a piece by Mozart and "Général Lavine" by Debussy as well as the "Grande Valse Brillante" by Franz Liszt. Sometime in March she, or rather we, sent the application off with the standard recommendations, and then we waited. I got the good news over the telephone before her acceptance letter had arrived and Sonja was exuberant and proud at the prospect of becoming a university student in Canada, the country of her first citizenship. My oldest child had made it into university, a comforting and consoling thought for any parent. Hedy agreed, and even grandma acknowledged the accomplishment. In the

peasant village of Maulburg, to be a university student meant both prestige and status.

On one of my trips to America for the oil and gas investors, I had shipped the car back to Port Elizabeth, New Jersey, driven it as far as Bragg Creek outside Calgary, Alberta and parked it with friends. Final good-byes to the family and the old continent were made in July. We took a plane from Basel to London-Heathrow and flew on in an old beat up Air Canada DC-8 to Calgary. We emptied my mini-storage with beds, blankets, dinner table and kitchenware that I had left behind in December 1981 and drove West through the Canadian Rockies to Vancouver. After paying first and last months' rent for an apartment on the ninth floor in Mackenzie House on Toronto Road in the University Endowment Lands, money became scarce. Sonja's student loan would become available in September and hopefully a job for me, although I only made half hearted attempts at finding one, spending my time, instead, with Sonja on the beaches and a trip to Northern California and Crater Lake in Southern Oregon. We took a youngster along for the trip from a friendly German family who had flown in for a three week holiday, an eighteen year old with a learning disability who had become a gardener back home. It was an awkward vacation, a little drab in spite of the nice sights we saw.

Sonja was assigned a practicing room at the School of Music and went daily to maintain her level of performance. My company was no substitute for the family and friends she had left behind and she became homesick. After a month in school I noticed that Sonja was actually quite depressed and I feared a relapse of mental problems. She talked about Germany again and about Dvorjak who had emigrated to America from Russia and written the wonderful music "From the New World." He too had returned to Russia because he was homesick, she said.

I thought about her situation for a week and in early October 1984 related to her that I had decided we should head home again. At first she pretended to resist, but then all of a sudden burst into tears and I saw that a huge unbearable burden had been taken from her shoulders. She began to smile and make concrete plans. The Conservatory in Basel was both our idea for a reasonable continuation of her piano performance career, not culminating in a university degree but something close, a teaching certificate which would enable her to give lessons.

With our last dollars I bought two Pan Am standby tickets from Seattle to London at \$300 a piece, with barely enough money left over to buy train tickets from Victoria Station to Basel. Professor Silverlan gave Sonja permission to

withdraw from her studies. Then we stashed the contents of our apartment into and on top of the station wagon, sighed a big sigh of relief and drove South to Lake Stevens, Washington to park the car with a friend who had taken the C.P.A. course with me back in 1976, Tom and Helen Graham. The Grahams could use the furniture for their own house and growing family. Helen drove us to the Seattle-Tacoma airport and we had a good flight back to London. A minute before departure, all of a sudden Helen was in the plane and handed Sonja her purse and her travel bag. This would not be the last time that Sonja forgot or lost her wallet, I.D. and belongings.

I remember the crossing from Dover to Ostende on a hydrofoil. It raced through the waters of the channel, almost flying compared to the regular ferry boats, and we had to buckle up in our seats. Sonja loved it but got rather sick once we disembarked on the other side. We made it only as far as Brussels staying overnight at a hotel near Bruxelles-Midi. Once in Basel SNCF, the French railway station, we took a cab and drove to Maulburg. It was supper time as we burst into the kitchen where Hedy and the boys were sitting around the dinner table. We hadn't told them that we were coming and Hedy, as much as she was overjoyed of having her daughter back, had great resentments about our return.

By special permission of the director, Sonja was allowed to audition as a late applicant at the Conservatory of Music in Basel on October 16, 1984, and was immediately accepted. She had friends there and quickly made new ones. The following three years, overall, included some of the happiest times in her life, as she later confirmed. She had not the slightest idea then, in October 1984, nor did I, that in eleven months she would be a young mother and have her own family.

## Chapter 5

After returning from Vancouver that summer, I had a dream which was confirmed, if one can say so, by my aunt Liselotte's own premonitions. In my dream, I will never forget, it was autumn and Sonja and I were going for a walk, arm in arm, in the afternoon sunshine along a high street lined with big trees, brown leaves strewn heavily on the ground, toward a low stone wall where we stopped and looked down at the city. She was wearing a long plaid brown skirt and a matching jacket, I had my old brown leather coat on and brown boots. And she had a baby. I think she was pushing a stroller. We were in love with each other, talking amicably. I woke up with a deep feeling of joy and happiness, but kept the dream for myself.

While we were in Vancouver, Hedy had taken over Sonja's bedroom. Now Sonja made her bed on the living room floor while I made mine in the boys' bedroom. After everybody was asleep I would sneak over to her and we would be together for an hour or so. More often I would go over in the early hours of the morning, open the door very slowly and quietly when the sound of the door was muffled by a car driving by on the street outside. Some times we would be together when she came home early from school and no one was in the apartment. Those occasions were rare. She always wanted to be asked in advance, never came to me on her own initiative, except that night before her graduation ceremony. Usually she would say, "Not now," and then stipulate a time and stick to it.

We both kept good track of her menstrual cycle and counted her fertile days. When it was dangerous I used a condom, but one night when she was hot and responsive I felt the condom, "Lord's Love," rupture but could not stop. It happened at 6:30 on a sunny Sunday morning on December 2, 1985, first day of Advent.

The day sticks in my memory because Sonja had found out that the film "From Mao to Mozart" with Isaac Stern was playing in Basel. We counted our money, took the train to Basel and saw the film which impressed her, then went to the Art Museum to see my favorite impressionists, Gauguin, Van Gogh and Dufy, as we did on a regular basis, and then financially broke decided to walk the fifteen miles back to Maulburg. We had hiked a lot together as family when she was little.

We got home late in the afternoon, utterly exhausted and hungry.

A week or so later I noticed a change in Sonja's facial expression and that her breasts had become somewhat fluffy. I thought immediately that she was pregnant, but did not say anything that might irritate her. After she was two weeks over her period which never happened before, she came to me and told me about it. Still, I did not say anything, but wasn't torn either or upset, neither was she. We decided that she should see a doctor and made an appointment with a gynecologist in Schopfheim.

I remember the cold day in November as if it was yesterday. We rode our bikes together the two short miles to town and while she went upstairs in the new building of the Deutsche Bank for her appointment, I waited quietly in the lobby downstairs, certain of what the diagnosis would be.

About an hour later, Sonja came down the stairs and I saw it on her face. It had no expression, she was stone face. The ultrasound had confirmed it. She had just turned twenty two months ago and now she was pregnant. We rode our bikes back to Maulburg in stupefied silence, taking the back roads through the farm fields, went upstairs and sat down in the living room. I sat next to her and held her. There was no resistance, but no response either.

Outside it began to snow the first snow of the season. Thick heavy flakes were trickling down from a low cloud cover, and in an hour the mountains to the north and south of the narrow Wiesental valley that surround Maulburg, the Scheinberg and the Dinkelberg, were covered white. The weather provided a perfect setting for the gloominess of our situation, but the whiteness of the landscape gave it an appearance of hope.

I asked Sonja to go for a walk and she agreed. We took our bikes and pushed them up the Dinkelberg. I tried to instill some hope in her and comforted her, but I can't remember what I said, except that it was a natural occurrence and not the end of the world for a girl her age and that I would support her all the way. She never even brought it up, as I had expected, that the problem was that I was the father. And there was no mention of abortion either. None.

I assured her that I would do everything in my power to help raise the baby. If I could promise that she would have her own apartment soon and be able to finish her music degree, then she would have the baby.

I was overcome with both joy and relief about her courageous decision and embraced her. She returned my embrace and we just stood there for a long time holding each other in the sluggish snow on a dirt road between the old apple

orchard not far from uncle Hans Brunner's farm house. I couldn't believe it that Sonja would have our baby and thereby confirm our love forever. We agreed that under no circumstances would we tell anybody to avoid legal complications. She almost kept the promise, but leaked word to her mother on the day that she left for America, in mid June, but did not say who she was pregnant by. Hedy was dumbfounded because she thought Sonja had only gained a little weight which was nothing out of the ordinary.

Back in November, Sonja had only one concern. Would the child be normal or rather deformed and idiotic as the preconception went under which she was raised? I reassured her that according to my information that was a myth but that I would research the matter and let her know immediately.

The following week I spent endless hours in the University of Basel's medical library, went through the card index and looked up books, reports and discussion papers on the subject. There was not much written about it, but medically I was confirmed there was no reason why the child should not be entirely normal so long as its parents were. Most cases of abnormality, I read, occurred in ghetto type neighborhoods of low income and asocial families. In all cases the children were only retarded because the parents were.

My greatest fears were roused by reading that the state authorities usually interfered by apprehending the baby and giving it away for adoption. If I did not act, our child would automatically become a ward of the state and the traumatic affects on us would be that it would break us. Criminal charges against me would be almost automatic, the maximum penalty being three years imprisonment or a fine for me, two years for her or a fine (§173 of the German Criminal Code). The period of limitation was five years, i.e. the period for prosecution would end in December 1989.

I read that if the father was not named by the mother, the attorney general's office was mandated by law to investigate and force the mother to reveal his identity. I got scared.

As a way out of the dilemma I decided that Sonja should go to America, give birth to the child there and bring the baby back as a United States citizen on a U.S. passport which would be the only identification needed to register him or her as a resident, as required by German residency laws, without the necessity of revealing parentage, thus operating as an effective shield against any investigations by the state. It worked and there was never any question or investigation launched by the Germans.



The little apartment in Maulburg was definitely overcrowded and I decided to rent an apartment for ourselves near the Swiss border so it would be easier for Sonja to commute back and forth to the Music Conservatory. Hedy came along for the common interview with the landlord who understood that she was my wife. On February first, 1985, Sonja and I moved into a modern apartment on the third floor in Inzlingen, Germany a few hundred yards away from the idyllic Swiss town of Riehen in the city canton of Basel.

I landed a job with a Swiss-American real estate investment firm in Zurich, Switzerland to build up their German sales force and was given a red Volvo as a company car. After interference from the crooked oil and gas promoters in Munich, I was terminated but found a continuation job with a German lawyer in Basel who had set up his own private investment company and put me in charge of oil and gas projects planned for the United States and Canada. I knew he was possibly acting for the Munich promoters who had decided that I was better controlled in a stable job than allowed to move around and continue to do damage to their image because our lawsuits were still going strong. Later events confirmed my suspicion and the minute I settled with the promoters two years later, I was also out of a job in Basel.

Our apartment at Riehenstrasse No. 107 was a comfortable and bright place. Sonja's piano that I had bought for her in Basel when she was six, a fifty year old Wohlfahrt made in Biel-Bienne, Switzerland, stood in the living room. We had two bedrooms, a built-in kitchen, a dining area and a small balcony looking out over cherry trees, cow pastures and a wooded hillside. When spring came, the forest turned first to light green and day by day to a darker and richer green. When the cherry trees came into bloom, it was a truly paradisiacal setting.

In the German tradition, we took endless walks through the village and up through the hills, fields, meadows and forests. We could walk to Riehen and be at the street car stop in half an hour. The Swiss and German customs officers soon got to know us and we never had to show identification or open our bags for inspection. After I lost the red Volvo, I bought a used one from the local dealer.

Inzlingen had two grocery stores, a plush restaurant in the old water castle at the top of the valley, a cafe and another restaurant only a block away where we ate when we didn't feel like cooking. As time moved on Sonja began to make plans for her baby, bought a tub, began to assemble baby clothes, toys and to decorate her bedroom for the new arrival. Her spirits were high. The happiest time in her life had just begun.

Every night we went to bed together, usually in my room. She would cuddle in my arms and we would sleep side by side until the morning. After a while, I got so used to her that I couldn't fall asleep if she wasn't there, and vice versa, innocently of course. We were in total harmony with each other. Soon she felt the baby move and would get all excited, take my hand and hold in on her belly.

"Feel it right here. Now, it just moved. Feel it?"

I would hold my ear to her tummy and hear a gurgling sound which could also have been a bowel movement. Eventually her tummy bulged.

During pregnancy, Sonja became even prettier than she already was. Her facial expressions became more even, round and quite relaxed, had a lot of depth to it. She hardly gained any weight and it was not easy to detect that she was pregnant until well into her sixth month, except that her breasts had grown considerably losing some of their former firmness.

She imparted the news to her new friend and neighbor, Ruth, who shared the happiness and excitement, herself a mother of two young children, a five year old boy and a two year old girl.

In our discussions, the fatherhood issue never came up again. It became irrelevant as the only one and big occasion that every woman longs for drew nearer. To the contrary, the idea of her new family all of a sudden included me, whereas before we had lived side by side but more on a day to day basis, never quite certain or knowing how much longer it would last. I knew one day she'd come home with a boy friend and that would be the end of my love affair with her. The thought always saddened me deeply, but now there would be a future at least for another year or so. The way it turned out, seven more years less one month to be exact.

During April 1985 I stretched my feelers out to Tom and Helen in Lake Stevens, Washington, a caring couple of astute practicing Christians. I told Tom that Sonja had become pregnant and to avoid the gossip of the town if she could spend the summer vacation with them, deliver the baby in August and return to Germany in September. The return call took came in a day. Tom and Helen knew Sonja and were excited about having her visit. A stone fell off my chest as one hurdle had been taken, one corner on our rocky road negotiated successfully.

I bought the ticket well in advanced and on Saturday, June 29, 1985, we drove north along the Germany autobahn to Frankfurt's Rhein Main Airport. I found it hard to say good-bye. We hadn't been separated for over five years, but I knew that I would see her in a few weeks on my way home from a business trip to

Vancouver, Canada and Midland, Texas. At the airport I could accompany her as far as to the passport checkpoint and then went outside, turned on my jet stream radio and listened in on the conversation between the tower and the pilot. Air Canada 847 pushed back from the gate on time at 4:25 PM but was directed to a parking area where all the passenger had to disembark and identify their baggage, a precaution taken during the time of high terrorist activity and bomb scares. She was over two hours late taking off and I drove home with feelings of loneliness but also joy that she the time would near when Sonja would have our baby.

Sonja called the next day and described the trip to me. She almost had to disembark at Calgary where the plane had made at stop because she was so exhausted, but muddled through and was now fine.

"I love you," she said before we hung up. I felt good and began to concentrate on my work, firing off another circular letter to the 6,000 German oil and gas investors. The boys came over during their summer vacation and we watched German tennis star, Boris Becker, on TV win his first trophy at Wimbledon.

Three weeks later I left for Calgary to attend to the oil and gas litigation and on my way to Bakersfield, California, on an errand for a German tax practitioner, made a stop at Lake Stevens to see Sonja and the Grahams, making another stop on my way back. I felt that Tom thought it was unusual how I looked after Sonja but he didn't say anything.

"You are a real German," he said. I answered, "Yes," and he left it at that.

On Sunday afternoon August 18, 1985, only a week away from her predicted due date, the day before my departure while the Grahams were out, Sonja led me into her room and said good-bye to me in the most tender way that a wife could to her husband; but very, very careful. By now she was quite heavy, and a little blown up in the face. I didn't know that she was in danger from toxemia and could have lost her baby because it was not treated. Her young country doctor in Marysville was obviously inexperienced.

I flew home on Monday and took Gerhard and Arno on a hiking trip by train to Sweden. We went as far as Ostersund in central Sweden and then spent a week in a youth hostel at Fiskebäckskil on the North Sea. After August 25, I called Lake Stevens every day and during the first days of September got quite worried that the baby was late. I urged Sonja to induce it, but Helen kept answering, "They come at their own sweet times."

On September 10, finally, I learned that Sonja had been rushed to the

Hospital because the vital signs had stopped and that labor was induced immediately. She had had slight contractions all night. I called the hospital immediately, was put through the maternity ward asked the patient's and the doctor's name.

"Yes, we have her here. She has delivered," was the answer. Then they put me through to Sonja's room. Exciting seconds passed. Sonja came on the phone.

At 2:55 AM Pacific Daylight Time (or 11:55 Central European Time), on Wednesday, September 11, 1985, Sonja Ingrid had given birth to a baby boy. He was 50½ centimeters long, weighed six pounds and one ounce, and had a lot of dark hair. She told me that the nurse had said that he had lost a good two pounds during the previous week - and almost his life. Our first son. Sonja was so full of joy, happy and in love with the little one, "the prettiest baby in the whole wide world."

A tidal wave of love flowed between us as we talked and she described the event of his birth, her feelings and the new meaning and responsibilities of her life. Two days later the Graham's threw a lawn party with a lot of colorful lanterns for her birthday. Sonja had turned twenty-one.

Her letters kept pouring in on an almost daily basis and they said it all:

"Today I have decided that his middle name should be Lars, a Scandinavian name which means "beloved." His first name, Roy, meaning "little king." My little bird is becoming cuter and more loveable every day. I don't have any problems that others have reported about their babies. I can look at him and by his facial expression know exactly what he wants. He listens to every sound, particularly music... You should see his little hands and long fingers that reach for everything and are constantly moving, except when he is hungry and during the first minute I put him to my breast. Then he clinches his hands to a fist until he releases them and reaches for my fingers or his other hand. He has large feet and toes, and even the nurse noticed it... I am glad to be his mother and wish to make his life as pleasant as possible...my first son! Next year at this time - 1987 at the latest - I wish to be pregnant again and in my first month, but married. I don't think it's nice to have a bunch of children, all from different fathers - one is never a real family - furthermore, it is against my principles."

"Roy is just taking an afternoon nap which gives me kind of a break. I even managed to practice the piano yesterday and today for a while. He's getting more enjoyable every day. Of course he sleeps a lot and eats like a horse whenever he can. Besides he's starting to make a different little face each day. He's just sooo

cute and smart too! Sometimes, whenever he's awake, I take him to the bathroom with me and he watches me brush my teeth, etc. with big brown eyes. Once, he even dozed off in there when I took a shower and he fell asleep. He's such a good baby. And he really deserves the name Roy Lars! Well, those days are going to come to say good-bye to everybody in Lake Stevens for quite a while, and I sure hate to leave. This summer of '85 was the best I've ever had in my entire life and I want to say thanks to you too. Thank you for supporting me the way you are. See you soon. I love you. Sonja."

We talked over the phone almost daily. A week after Roy's birth Sonja admitted she had the baby blues. I day later I received instructions to buy baby oil, cotton balls, vitamin pills, milk and blankets and rearrange the furniture for their arrival. She had her baby shower on Helen's birthday, September 23rd, and left on Air Canada 848 on Friday, September 27th, when Roy was just two weeks old.

I was at the Rhein Main airport in Frankfurt hours before her timely arrival at 2:05 in the afternoon, listening intently to the tower on my jet stream radio. It was a sunny Saturday afternoon and I had taken the train, leaving the car at the Basel train station, because it was more comfortable for the baby, I thought.

There was an air balloon show over downtown Frankfurt, when I heard Air Canada 846 making its first announcement to the tower and receiving directions for the approach and landing. The tower told the pilot about the balloons over the city and to make sure to avoid them. He answered in his stoic and professional aviators' voice: "Thank you, I got 'em." Twenty minutes later the L-1011 Tristar with the red maple leaf on the tail landed safely on the runway and taxied to the gate.

I rushed inside the terminal building and stood by the international arrivals checkpoint. The first person to come out was my former boss from Calgary, senior partner John Collins from the accounting firm Collins Barrow, who had hired me in 1975 and who I worked for a little over a year before I took the CPA exam in Seattle and passed it. He did not notice me, and I let him pass.

Sonja was never the first to arrive anywhere and today was no exception. Then I spotted her in her olive color corduroy coat, travel bag over one shoulder, holding a little bundle rapped in a blanket in her arms. She came toward me all smiles and happy, kissed me on the cheek and slowly opened the blanket.

"Isn't he sweet?"

"Oh, look at him," I said, "cute little boy" and kept looking at him and looking

at him. Actually he was ugly like all newly borns, Sonja herself as a baby was no exception. Then I grabbed her bag and we proceeded on to customs and eventually to the train station to take the shuttle to Frankfurt Hauptbahnhof and onwards to Basel on a speedy Intercity express train.

We celebrated her return and the new arrival of baby Roy with a bottle of dry French white wine that I carried in my bag. Inadvertently, the bottle fell to the floor as the train put on the brakes, spilling its contents on the floor and ran along the length of the rail car. It began to smell like a good old German Weinstube. Every time the conductor passed through to check the tickets of the passengers who had just boarded, he raised his head and sniffed the air, saying "Ah!."

Back home in our apartment, a totally new and happy feeling of young family with child gave way to the previous solitude of just her and me all by ourselves. Sonja was busy with nursing and changing his diapers.

On October 6, 1985, she wrote a letter back to Tom and Helen in Lake Stevens:

"Today is Sunday and I've already spent a week in Germany... Roy and I had a great flight to Frankfurt. Roy was sleeping most of the time during the flight so I got to rest too. They showed the movie "Places in the Heart" with Sally Fields. It's a great movie but I didn't watch it since I have already seen it. My dad met us in Frankfurt at the airport and was really excited to see little Roy. He likes him a lot and says that he looks like me. So after that we took the train to Basel (three hours). It seemed to go on forever. I was so tired when we got home... My dad is a lot of help now with the cooking and shopping."

Friends dropped in and Gerhard and Arno came for a visit. We hadn't told Arno and when he stepped into the living room to say hi to Sonja, he saw the baby, looked at her and asked in disbelief:

"Is this yours?"

She said "yes" and Gerhard and I chuckled. Arno to this day is Roy's greatest supporter and fan, and always grabs him and swings him around whenever they meet. Of course, he is now in the know, treats him as an uncle should, whereas in fact he is also his older brother.

## Chapter 6

During the fall of 1985, I was back and forth for several weeks between Europe, Canada and the United States including Hawaii, but home for Christmas. Sonja had resumed her studies at the Conservatory on October 14 when wee little Roy was only a month old, placing him with a young mother a couple of houses down the street, Frau Kemmerling. Sonja pumped off what milk she had left in the morning and put it in a bottle for Roy and rushed home in the early afternoons to pick him up and breast feed him. After a few months she weaned him.

When Roy was about half a year old, every time she dropped him off began to cry and reach out for her; but she had to push him back, there was no alternative, it seemed to her if she wanted to finish her degree. I think what really happened was that she hardened to him, since she did it so often it had an effect on her, and a devastating one on him. To this day, Roy is insecure and sometimes acts it off by aggressive behavior while in reality he is a deeply devoted, understanding and very sensitive boy. When he was only six weeks old, he developed a rare form of skin allergy, an anti-epileptic was discovered in small concentrations in his urine. We had no idea how it got there. Eventually the diagnosis was revealed as "Erythema anulare centrifugum." Large parts of his body were covered with red round circles of irritated skin. Eventually it went away.

When he was a year old and ran a fever from a cold, Sonja went outside with him in the cool autumn wind, held him on his arms and gossiped with the neighbors while he was scantily dressed. When she finally came upstairs with him he fell into a fever shock. I put him in the car immediately and raced off to the Children's Hospital in Basel. On the way there he fell into a coma and Sonja was out of herself. It was in the middle of a rain storm, the fuse blew out on the fan and the windshield wipers would not run. I had to lower the window and work them by hand, go through a red light and made it to the hospital just in time. Once there he was reanimated and an hour later two nurses held the little child down on a table while the doctor extracted spinal fluid from his vertebra to test if he had been brain-damaged. We were told to wait outside to avoid the screaming because the extraction had to be performed without anesthesia. I was devastated and had a fit with Sonja and her elusiveness in caring for the child. First signs of my dual roll as her companion and parent with authority of supervision began to

set in and it made her angry.

We staid home for Christmas, but thoroughly enjoyed our new family, had an eight foot American style spruce lit on the balcony with colorful electric bulbs as early as late November which was noticed by all of the villagers who passed by but frowned upon it as being too early in the season and too trashy. We liked it because it put us into the Christmas spirit, also lighting the living room without having to turn on the bright lights. We overloaded the tree with angel hair, lots of tinsel and big red artificial apples. Germans to this day enjoy real wax candles on their tree, erect it indoors only a days before Christmas and don't light it until Christmas eve. We passed, I guess, as expatriates, Yanks or Cannucks, but were accepted as such.

During all of the remaining year of 1985 and throughout 1986, Sonja, Roy and I lived exactly like any other family. We went for walks, to concerts in Basel by hiring a baby sitter, took weekend trips to the Black Forest, skied in the Swiss Alps in winter, including an Easter holiday in the village of Frutingen together with the boys, and plainly enjoyed each other's company while watching Roy first crawl, then walk and eventually learn to talk.

Sonja had not the slightest misgivings about that fact that she lived with her dad, and I was exceedingly happy hoping it would last forever which I knew full well was wishful thinking. We shared our household chores. I did most of the shopping and cooking while she did the laundry and was preoccupied with Roy when she got home from the Conservatory, piano practicing and homework. Every now and then we went to Maulburg for a visit with Hedy and the boys who seemed to accept the new reality and became attached to her little grandson, nephew or brother, Roy, just like any other grandmother, uncles or brothers would.

When Roy learned to talk he was taught to call me "Opa," meaning grandpa in German while Sonja called me "Papa," and friends and the neighborhood accepted me in my adopted roll. It was a well functioning façade outside our home, but indoors we behaved, in every respect, physically and emotionally, like husband and wife.

In June 1986 I rented an apartment in Marbesa, Spain, a neighboring village to the famous resort Marbella on the south Mediterranean coast where Adnar Kashoggi, the Saudi Arabian entrepreneur had his huge and guarded villa. While the boys and I drove the thousand miles south through France, past Barcelona and Valencia, making an extended stop in Granada to visit the Moorish Alhambra, Sonja and Roy took a plan from Basel directly to Malaga where we picked the two up on



our way to our resort destination. After the two relaxing weeks were up, we drove south to Gibraltar and then crossed over to the cool Atlantic side and staid a few days in the fishing town of Terifa, a windy place and a playground for windsurfers. Particularly Arno fell in love with the town of Terifa, but didn't have a surf board yet. I promised to take him back some day now that he is an ace in the sport and a frequent visitor to the Columbia Gorge at Hood River Canal, Oregon.

We drove back through Sevilla, the beautiful medieval town in Southern Spain, by-passed Madrid, did not find the Spanish Basque Coast on the Atlantic all too exciting and headed for the French Atlantic. On the road, Roy was sitting in his baby seat in the back holding hands with Gerhard and Arno who were usually sitting to the right and to the left of him. He was a sweet little boy, only ten months old. We passed into France and ended up in the town of Hossegor on the Atlantic, a place much like Carcans-Page which we knew so well, only a hundred miles to the south. I can recommend it to the distinguished traveler, not the tourist, without even the slightest reservation. It's a place with long endless beaches, an animated ocean, endless sunsets, good restaurants and hotels where the French congregate but not too many foreign tourists. We staid for ten days. The summer of 1986 was going to be our last on the old familiar continent of Europe for some time to come.

## Chapter 7

During the first months of the new year, 1987, I filed college applications for mechanical engineering for Gerhard with colleges and universities in the United States and Canada. To CalTech, Stanford, UC San Diego, Dartmouth, Harvard, MIT, Princeton, Trinity at San Antonio, Texas, and Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, and to McGill in Montreal, Queens at Kingston, Ontario and the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. I had planned my travels during the previous months to visit each one of them except Trinity in San Antonio and reported back to him. He was accepted at all of the Canadian universities and half of the American, except the ivy leagues. Swarthmore, the Quaker College, had the best financial offer and that is eventually where he went beginning in September 1987 following his graduation from Gymnasium in Schopfheim with very high marks as the second best of his graduating class.

Sonja, it turned out, had been missing a vital course in ear training at the Conservatory of Music in Basel and could not graduate until Christmas of '87. One afternoon on April 17, after she had come home from the Conservatory, we had been reckless with our standard precautions and she became pregnant, but was not depressed in the least but rather delighted at the prospect of a sibling for Roy at exactly the time she had planned it two years ago. I was in great joy and made plans to take her along with the rest of us, back to America. She agreed.

While I was on a trip to Munich for a job interview as a financial controller with a large construction company for its extensive U.S. operations and phoned home, Sonja acted strange and I had the feeling that something was going on that she didn't want me to know. Her behavior became aggressive when I came home and I decided to take Roy, Gerhard and Arno along for a two week vacation at Saint Tropez without her. She did not protest and said that a brief separation would be good for both of us.

We stayed for only a week when she revealed to me on the phone that a friend from the Music Conservatory by the name of Peter Hörr, a cellist, was with her in our apartment in Inzlingen. I called again the following evening and learned that she was going to see a doctor about an abortion. I broke camp and three hours later all of us were on the freeway north, drove all night and made it to Basel and

Inzlingen in the early morning hours. A couple of phone calls here and there and I had located Sonja at her boy friend's house, talked to the landlady and met Sonja in the hallway looking tired and clinging to her lover.

She agreed to come home and we had a discussion about her affair. Soon after she took Roy and left, first for the Kemmerlings and then to her mama, letting me know that she was not coming back, going to proceed with her plans and live with Peter from now on. He had already met Roy a month earlier while I was in Munich and, she said, they liked each other.

A fierce battle began, one I had never fought before in my life, first against Sonja, then her mama who was all for it that our relationship end and the baby be aborted, and then with Gerhard who supported her "under the circumstances," as he said, after learning for the first time that Roy was my son.

I was out of myself, wanting to save the baby and have Sonja and Roy back, an almost insurmountable task now that she had found new and young love.

Somehow I found out who her psychiatrist was without whose blessing a German doctor could not legally perform the abortion. I talked to him without revealing my position, but later learned that Sonja had babbled and he already knew. He was courteous and heard me out. By coincidence I found out on the day that she was going to have the final appointment with him, rushed to Lörrach and found both Hedy and Sonja sitting in the waiting room.

Now something wonderful happened, a miracle that I am still wondering to this day how it came about. When Hedy saw me coming into the waiting room, she was shocked, moved nervously about on her chair and told Sonja not to listen to me. Sonja glanced at me with a defiant look on her face but not entirely unfriendly. All I said was that I hoped she knew what she was doing and that it was devastating not only to her, but also to Roy and me as well. That is was all quite unnecessary and even against her own convictions as a pro-lifer. All of a sudden, Sonja reached for her purse, pulled out a present and gave it to me, her mama looking on with sheer amazement. It was a wooden trap with a marzipan mouse in it. On the plastic cover was a sentence that said: "Watch out, trap!." I accepted it, thanked her and left.

At home I called Frau Kemmerling and asked her to go and see Sonja in Maulburg to have a word with her. The Kemmerlings were Roman Catholics. Then I phoned Tom and Helen in Lake Stevens, Washington and described what was happening, asking them to phone Sonja and talk her out of the abortion. Tom said the least Sonja should do was let the baby live by giving it away for adoption.

With influences upon her from all sides, Sonja swayed for another day or two and then called me to announced that she had changed her mind and was going to have her baby. She imposed a couple of condition, spoke of adoption and said that after the baby's birth it was necessary for us to split so that she could be independent and have her freedom, but she would not give up Peter with whom she was deeply in love. I agreed and she returned the following day with Roy to our apartment in Inzlingen. It was a very close call and thanked the Lord.

A few days later I went to the Music Conservatory and met with Peter who was three years younger than Sonja, a kid just out of high school. We met in the court yard while Sonja was waiting in the cafeteria. I asked Peter:

"How strong is your love to Sonja?"

"What love?" he replied and that pretty well ended our conversation.

A few days later, Peter left early for home and his summer vacation. He wanted his freedom more than he wanted to live with Sonja and care for Roy. It tore Sonja to pieces and our relationship was over, it seemed. She stigmatized me as the paternal interfeerer, and I couldn't really deny it. When you're sixteen, I knew, the only way you can get your love back is to take it. The old wisdom doesn't really change with age. I was forty-seven and Sonja twenty-three.

One morning, on June 23, 1987, I found a note on the breakfast table with the headline "PLEASE READ BEFORE BREAKFAST":

"Dear Papa, I am presently torn by so many things and also memories, that I simply have to write you, since I am not in a position to talk with you about it - let alone discuss. Please understand and accept or try to it. This letter is bitter but true. Please trust me, I mean it completely seriously.

And now once again about the future, if one looks at it philosophically, the fourth dimension (the future also belongs to the time):

In the situation in which I am presently in, I must first of all think of Roy and myself and of the small life [Keith with whom she was two months pregnant] that will one day become a human being.

Papa and this is also my future; understand me correctly. If you really do, you will probably also understand it sooner or later. If not, then all well made-up beginnings of June 22nd will

'tragically erode in the sand.'

A barrel can flow over, but think about it that a barrel without a

bottom is not a barrel.

Now I have finished [to say] the truth and have been somewhat relieved from my heavy parcel [burden].

Please, Papa, understand all this in the right sense and most of all don't turn it yourself into the wrong light. You know that your perhaps fatherly words hit me at the moment like poisoned arrows into the heart (especially when they are excessive..).

Now I have written and relieved my heart. Hopefully you have not torn this up in anger.

Know also one thing: I am your only daughter Sonja Ingrid, who loves a son Roy very much and has decided for herself, together with a for you still strange human being, in favor of an 'unkown' life [Keith]. This human being, Peter [Hörr], is very dear to me, which I wish to stress this to you five times a day - although I think very much about and with him.

I appreciate your plans for the future in every respect and am very pleased [she draws a heart here]. We don't want to ruin them again. Please.

Nevertheless, I really love you and we are also very close to each other. Also, since a long time, I am once again convinced that you, although many times I could not stomach it, are THE FATHER WHO I NEED, RESPECTIVELY WILL NEED IN THE FUTURE. We can discuss everything after breakfast. Yours truly, Sonja xxxxxox"

Typically, I forgot the letter and carried on with our lives as usual. Perhaps it was the best way to deal with the issues, her pregnancy, and our plans to return to America. In the long run, as her wishes to come to a resolution continued, my attitude to maintain the status quo, proved a grave and disastrous error.

It took only a week for our relationship to normalize. Once Peter's spell was broken, Sonja and I became our old selves again, but the grudge against me lingered on, at least in her memory.

Another interview in Munich came up with a large German chemical company that was looking for a controller for their operation in Oregon. Sonja wanted to come along for the trip and we took off with Roy along the Swiss autobahn to Vaduz, then crossed into Austria, drove through Innsbruck, back into Germany and up north to Munich.

We had a lot of fun on the way, stopped at little towns, ate well, took a gondola to a mountain village, Pettneu am Arlberg, and staid there overnight at the

Bergrestaurant Lavenar at five thousand feet above sea level and at a Lake near the German border where we swam in the nude since we forgot to pack our swimming suits. It was a brief vacation and we made love in the mornings and evenings while little Roy was sleeping.

I was relieved and exceedingly happy to have Sonja back. She began to forget Peter and years later told me that he was definitely not the man she was looking for, or even wanted, let alone spend the rest with her life with. Female realism or was she protecting her pride? And she was glad, she said, that I intervened so that Keith would live; Keith who had turned into a jewel of a boy.

We only had a couple of weeks to pack and leave for Seattle, Washington. It was not easy to get space on Northwest Airlines for all five of us, Sonja with Roy, Gerhard, Arno and myself. One day in the middle of July 1987, Hedy and the children took the train to Rhein Main Airport in Frankfurt while I drove ahead in the car with much of our baggage including the boys' Peugeot bikes and skis and what have you. It was a sad good-bye for Hedy who instilled in me her great concern that I really look after all of them without fail. I promised and believe I delivered.

We flew nonstop to Minneapolis-St. Paul, cleared customs and immigration and then flew on to Seattle, Washington where we were met by our old friend, Gordon Smith, who had rented a room for us at an airport hotel. Leaving Germany was easy, but we had no home yet but plans to move on to San Diego, California where Sonja had been accepted as a music student by the University of California and Gerhard as an engineering freshman. I had accepted for him both at UCSD and Swarthmore, just in case San Diego would not work out because it required a lot more money and I was not sure that my new money book would find a publisher, which, of course, it didn't.

I got the Olds from Tom and Helen's where we staid for two days and then moved to Gordon's in Kirkland for another two nights before locating and renting a vacant house in a cul de sac at the bottom of Finn Hill near Lake Washington, moved in immediately and made it our home for the next one and a half years.

Two weeks later we left Kirkland for a ten day vacation in British Columbia's alpine Chilcotin Lake region, camping out on pleasantly warm Lake Horn. At night the coyotes howled from the forests across the lake and flocks of honking Canada geese flew by giving us the feeling of true nature and wilderness. A vacation in the remote outback has the added advantage that, once the initial supplies have been bought, one cannot spend any money on things not needed because there is no store, pub or entertainment facility to spend it at. Gerhard and I took a helicopter

ride up an 8,000 foot mountain yielding a fantastic view of the coast mountains and British Columbia's highest peak, Mount Waddell. The ride took only five minutes, the hike back down several hours over meadows and along creeks. We made a lot of noise to avoid bears, particularly grizzlies that were known to be in the area. The only way to escape a bear attack, I had learned, was to either play dead and let the bear hide you for later consumption or run down hill as fast as you can because the bear with its short front legs and longer hind legs has a hard time following.

Back in Kirkland, Sonja made application for the University of Washington's Department of Music, auditioned and was accepted for the winter quarter beginning in October 1987. On the first day of September Gerhard left for Philadelphia to begin at Swarthmore College as a freshman. It was an emotional farewell at SeaTac airport, as we had never really been separated before as a family. But he was going to visit at Christmas and, of course, all next summer.

We didn't have the phone connected at our home and one afternoon in mid-October, Gordon knocked at the door of our house and said that the medical center in Chester, Pennsylvania had phoned for me to I give my okay for a cat scan for Gerhard who had had an accident. I followed Gordon home in my car and talked to the doctor immediately. Gerhard had collapsed after jogging with a headache, had been rushed to the medical center after spending a few hours at the college's infirmary waiting for the college's doctor to come by on her routine visit. After conferring with the neurologist it was thought that he might have suffered an aneurism, the rupturing of an artery in the brain which the cat scan should help locate. If I could come. When? Immediately. Should I be prepared for the worst? Yes.

I drove home and told Arno who had just come back from school. Arno didn't say a word, but when I went into his room to say good-bye, he was lying on his bed with his head in his hands crying.

I was on a Delta flight to Atlanta a few hours later, landed in Philadelphia the next morning and was in the hospital's emergency ward at about seven.

I was scared, very scared and found it hard to control my emotions as I had learned Gerhard's condition was one of life and death. I didn't go to his bedside immediately but watched him from a distance for a couple of minutes until he spotted me and waived me towards him.

"My condition isn't that bad," he said. "They're running all kinds of tests on me," and so on. And he described how he had jogged in the afternoon because he

didn't have much sleep and wanted to invigorate himself. Then, all of a sudden he felt this excruciating pain in his head, sat down for a little while and walked to his room. When the pain did not subside, someone called the guard for him who walked him to the infirmary. Gerhard never took pills, not even for a headache because he said it was the result of unnatural behavior and would go away if he corrected it. Thank God.

After a few hours the nurse was about to release him but took the precaution to wait until the doctor showed up later in the afternoon who then talked to the neurologist at Chester Medical Center who properly diagnosed his accident and had him rushed over by ambulance.

After that brief description, I went back to the front desk where the neurologist had arrived and received a full description of the severity of Gerhard's condition. The bleeding in his brain had apparently stopped and the blood had clotted or else he would be in a coma caused by the blood pressure on the brain. The difficult task of stabilizing him was to administer enough fluids to his body that his brain would not suffer a seizure resulting in permanent brain damage should he survive it, but not so much that the artery would start to bleed again. It was a delicate balancing act, but if no operation was done, Gerhard had only a few days, perhaps only hours, to live.

I pleaded with the doctor to move in immediately, but he was in favor of stabilizing my son first and running another more precise test to better locate the exact spot where the damage was. This was done in the afternoon. A thin tube was injected into his arm, passed up through the main artery close to his brain and then radioactive fluid was injected and several X-rays taken. I accompanied Gerhard to the radiology department. He was so relaxed as if nothing could disturb him, typical of my favorite prince. It was a painful procedure that took almost two hours and when it was over Gerhard slept for a few hours in his bed in the emergency ward.

The neurosurgeon saw me again and pointed out the risks of an operation, but since there was no other alternative if Gerhard was to live, I pleaded with him to proceed with the operation immediately.

"Please give me my son back," I said. "I will take care of him if he is disabled. Don't worry about the risks of that. Just give me Gerhard back alive."

Doctor Chitale agreed to put Gerhard down for seven o'clock in the morning. I looked at his hands, the important tools of the surgeon. He was an East Indian from Bombay who had taken his medical education and training in the United



States. His hands were fine and delicate and his facial expression absolutely calm and reassuring. He was in his early thirties. I had full faith and trust in his ability, he shook hands with me and I thanked him. The necessary authorization forms were signed, also by Gerhard, and then I went to see him. I told him it was going to be tomorrow morning. He knew and smiled at me. I adored my nineteen year old boy and held his hand for a long time, trying to smile whereas inside I was sobbing and crying.

Gerhard had always been my prince, so loving in his manners, so pretty in his appearance and so smart in everything he did. He had always been at the top of his class and now had made it into an elite American college. But now this.

The hospital assigned me a visitor's room in a dormitory next door where I was told to go and get some rest. The staff must have worried about my own condition and sent a counselor, a woman about my age, who engulfed me in a lengthy conversation hoping to get the worries off my chest. As always when in trauma, I had stopped eating and sleeping. I staid and watched Gerhard for a few more hours until well after midnight, went to my room and actually slept until four when I went back to the emergency ward. Doctor Chitale had already been there himself, I was told. Gerhard had had a reasonably quiet night. I followed the monitor above his bed and his vital signs and quickly learned to read them. They were not always stable and I was praying that the doctors would come soon for him and perform the inevitable, my only hope for him.

In the cafeteria I met the other neurosurgeon, a younger American doctor, Dr. Dunton, who did his internship at the hospital. He related to me that he had been called in unexpectedly last night to take over the night shift, would go jogging for half an hour and then assist Doctor Chitale with the operation.

Oh God, I thought, he isn't even rested.

"We'll look after Gerhard," he assured me. "Don't you worry," shook my hand and left hurriedly.

At seven o'clock in the morning Gerhard was wheeled to the operating room and a long, long agonizing wait began. I went outside for a walk and returned to the waiting room, went outside again and so on. The operation had been explained to me. He would be anesthetized, his hair shaved and a hole drilled into the side of his head above his left temple large enough to enter the brain and clip the artery which had ruptured at one location but had also bulged at another. The rupture was caused by a defect in the muscle that lined the artery, a condition that he was born with. I had suspected that the college to work the students too hard

so they didn't get enough sleep, but apparently that was not the cause of the problem.

Gerhard had undergone several operations as a child and a teenager along the center lines of his body including his teeth. The Good Lord must have been sleeping on the job when he made him, an otherwise perfect boy, I thought to myself, and this should be the last of a series of surgical corrections.

The hours went by slowly while my thoughts were with him every minute. I had lunch, a salad and soup that was all I could eat. It was a warm Indian summer day and as I walked outside I thought of all the things we had done together, of his childhood, when he first crawled then walked and talked, his first school day and our vacations in the Alps and on the beaches in France. Gerhard always held the family together. When I encountered marital problems with Hedy I once put the rather harsh question to him when he was only five:

"Who would you rather live with, Mama or me?" And he answered with the wisdom and understanding of an adult:

"None of us shall live alone." I had choked when I heard it and never asked him the question again.

He was his brother Arno's best friend, tutored him, explained things and as a child played with him all day long. He seldom had a bad temper, except for a short moment when he had good reason to be angry. He was a mellow little fellow, very round and good looking, and so smart.

The reality of the situation ended my recollections abruptly and I went back into the hospital, pacing up and down in the waiting room, sitting down in my chair and getting up again the next minute. It was now three o'clock in the afternoon and I began watching the door, jumping out of my chair every time a nurse came in. The room got crowded with a lot of family members all waiting for news from the operating room. Patients were limping around with legs or arms in a cast and I wished Gerhard's case would only be like one of theirs, a bone fracture or something less life-threatening.

At around four thirty in the afternoon a nurse came in and was looking around until she spotted me. Then she came directly towards me, looked at me sternly and then released the news:

"Mr. Haikel?"

"Yes."

"The operation has been successful. The arteries have been clipped. Your son is in the recovery room. You can see him in about two hours."

No greater gift in the whole wide world, no sweeter words could have ever been spoken to me than these. I forgot exactly what I said to her, except "thank you, oh thank you, thank you so much." When the nurse had left I sat down in a chair, buried my face in my hands and cried. When most of the backed-up emotional stress was released, I went outside into the warm autumn sun and praised the Lord. I was going to get my boy back!

Then I went to the phone and called Gordon collect and asked him to see my family to break the good news.

Gerhard was not wheeled out of the recovery room until about eight o'clock in the evening, his head was almost completely wrapped in bandage and there was bandage around his right arm where the intravenous tubes fed him fluids from the container hanging above his head. His eyes were closed, he groaned now and then, turned his head frequently and then moved his arms about as if trying to get up and walk away.

I looked at him with love and pity, sat down and watched him until it was midnight and then went to my room and caught a few hours of sleep. Although he was out of the immediate danger zone there was still the great risk that his brain might fall into post-operative seizure. He was given lots of fluids and medication to help prevent this from happening.

I slept irregularly, woke up every hour and went back to his ward very early in the morning. It took another hour until he began to open his eyes a bit, still moving his arms and groaning. I gave him bits of ice and he sucked them up eagerly. His face was a pale white and his dark beard was starting to show. He looked a very, very sick boy, but there was now hope that he would be well again soon.

Two days later, in the evening, I went to the airport. Finally, Hedy had arrived. She was so slow in making preparations, reservations and get her ticket that I began to wonder what her real relationship to our children was. When she came through the gate towards me she stretched out her hands and greeted me with a joyful smile. I failed to understand her completely, thought she missed the gravity of the situation. But that is how she had always been, quite aloof and somewhat self-centered.

Gerhard recovered and it appeared, as the doctors confirmed, that he had suffered no side effects or brain damage but was going to be able to resume his studies at Swarthmore College. I talked to his guidance counselor who expected him to take the rest of the year off and return the following fall. But, after talking

to Gerhard, I was convinced that he was hoping to return as soon as clinically possible. His math prof, Professor Maurer, visited, and as it turned out Gerhard was back at the college three weeks later. He had to take a depressive, Dilantin, to prevent seizure which gave him some headaches and made it hard for him to think. I spent the next three days at my foster mother's home in Wayne where Hedy and I were given separate rooms. Margaret drove both us of back and forth the twenty miles to Chester every day untiringly, cooked for us and entertained us when we came back in the evening. As a medical technician specializing in brain research, she explained to us in great detail what had happened and gave us emotional support and comfort.

Gerhard had been very, very lucky she said repeatedly. I bordered on a miracle that the visiting doctor at the college in the afternoon, several hours after his collapse, consulted the neurologist at Chester Medical Center and did not return him to his dormitory where he would most likely have died a few hours later. That students complain of headaches is a common occurrence which could have easily been passed up by the advice, "Go and have a good night's sleep and if it doesn't get better, call me in the morning after nine."

I flew back to Seattle as soon as Gerhard was better, while Hedy staid on another week while Gerhard recovered. The trouble was getting him to eat again because he had been on intravenous for so long that he had lost all appetite for real food. Hedy and I had to almost force it upon him to get his stomach working again, first with ice cream and pudding and then with real solid food.

The medical center and I had thought our insurance was covering the bill. In the end, they only paid about \$10,000 of the total bill of \$24,000. For the nine hour operation and the nightly visits, Doctor Chitale sent me a bill for only \$5,000 that worked out to an hourly rate between the two doctors of around \$100 an hour. I thought that was very decent. Any lawyer charges more for the less stressful job of reviewing documents and filing papers.

## Chapter 8

Sonja, Gerhard, Arno, Roy and I had come to the United States in July 1987 with only \$15,000. I gave \$6,000 to Gerhard as parent contribution towards his tuition, room and board at Swarthmore College which left us with \$7,000 that were gone by Christmas.

Sonja had become friendly with woman next door, a minister's wife. Before we knew it, a big box of food was left at our doorstep. The local food bank gave us Christmas presents; a small camera, board games for Arno and Gerhard, a monstrous turkey and two colorful patch quilts. Gerhard arrived on a Northwest free flight for which I had accumulated the mileage.

For three months, Sonja had commuted to the University of Washington by bus, a forty minute ride to, and sometimes over an hour from. She was getting quite heavy and at Christmas was glad that the winter semester was over. She and Roy had their own bedroom upstairs to the back, while I had the front room and Arno the basement bedroom next to my office. At night after everyone had gone to bed, with regularity my door would quietly and slowly open and she would come in, lay down by my side, put her arm around me and one cross one leg over mine. I would turn towards her and hold her head with my hand over her ear the way she liked it. After a few minutes of breathing each other's air she would whisper, "Do you want it?"

Her belly was now so big that it almost hurt me as she lay on top of me and pressed her's into mine. I could embrace her fully this way and move my hands along her spine and, if I was exited, bite her softly in the ear. She was marvelous, as always, even in this late stage of her pregnancy. We had complete harmony and usually came to our climax together at the same time, unless she was too tired and didn't want to.

Afterwards, we would just lye there next to each other, looking each other in the eye, embrace and exchange a kiss. I was so very deeply in love with her and our relationship so satisfying and complete that I refused to think that we would ever part and go our own separate ways. She had spoken of it sometimes, but our love had endured the test of time, of six years, and I was reconfirmed it would not end tomorrow. And that is how I fooled myself.

By Christmas 1987, Sonja had assembled a large circle of friends, mostly from the minister's wife's, who were eagerly awaiting the arrival of her second child. In the town of Snohomish, half an hour's drive to the north, her midwife was ready who had helped her deliver Roy two years ago. She had made one trip to the University Hospital in Seattle in vain, but the second time Sonja's contractions did not stop and on January 8, 1988, our second son was born, a big baby weighing over eight pounds. As usual, we didn't have a name for him and wanted to look at him first and, according to my myth, wait and hear from himself until he told it to us by whatever means including our own imagination. The name Andrew came up. One day at the store I stopped at the name tag display and the first tag that struck me read "Keith." Sonja liked it. We knew a few people by that name who were all agreeable types. That is how Keith Andrew got his name a week or so after he was born.

Keith was heavier at birth than Roy because Sonja was under good professional prenatal care. He had a long nose and dark brown eyes like his brother and, in fact, all of us. Sonja said how pretty he was.

Sonja began to broach the subject of wanting to return to Germany along with the children. I respected her wish but we didn't talk about it for two weeks until one day she said she was going to fly back in mid February and, for the time being, stay with her mama until she found a place for herself. She would finish her degree at the Conservatory of Music in Basel.

By now I got really worried but she allayed my fears of separation by promising to return after completing her degree if by then I had found a job for her.

One morning, at the end of the Christmas holiday, I took Roy along to the local Payless store to look for a couple of picture frames. The air inside was stuffy and all of a sudden I found myself weak and gasping for air. I put Roy into the push cart and headed for the door but it wouldn't open. I got dizzy but eventually made it to the other door and got out into the open. Then I sat down on a pile of firewood holding my head and trying to breathe deeply when a lady came up to me and asked if I was alright. I answered no, I wasn't and if she could go and get me a glass of water. She did and said told me that she was used to this sort of thing, her husband had broken down and that it was best that I let her call the ambulance just so that they check me out. It would make me feel better that way. I agreed and lay down on the concrete.

Roy climbed down from his cart and lay down beside me, copying me. One

ambulance came and then another. They checked my pulse, took a reading on a portable cardiograph machine, asked me if I took any drugs, then gave me oxygen, lifted me onto a stretcher and into the van. During the ride to the hospital I heard Roy crying "Opa, Opa." He was sitting on the front seat and began to raise hell over the separation from me.

At Evergreen Medical Center's emergency ward in Kirkland I was put on oxygen, given intravenous fluids, and connected to a cardiograph. It was beeping frantically. The doctor said I had a dangerous irregular heart beat. Minutes later Gerhard arrived with Sonja. She scolded me for drinking too much and took Roy home.

Slowly my strength came back and after two hours I was released, told go home and take it easy, quit drinking and consult with a cardiologist which I never did.

I had a reoccurrence a year later when I tried to walk up a hill and pick up my car from the garage, had to abort the walk and barely made it back to the apartment. The problem went away after a few days of rest but resurfaced a third time in Vancouver during the early summer of 1990. I think it was stress-related and after cutting down on red wine quite drastically, taking things as easy as I could, and going for walks more regularly, it went away and hasn't reoccurred since.

On the day of their departure I drove Sonja, Roy and wee little Keith to SeaTac airport and almost missed her flight because my watch had stopped. I accompanied them to the gate where some friends were waiting and had already given up that she was going to show. Roy, only two and a half, was absolutely quiet and did not say a word as I wheeled him into the plane in his stroller. In fact, he seemed stunned as if he understood what was going on inside of me. He was stone faced when I hugged him. I choked as their Northwest 747 disappeared in the low cloud cover that hung over the Seattle-Tacoma airport. A very sick feeling crept up inside of me.

At home, when Arno returned from school, we sat down together in complete silence while the realization sank in that we had just lost our family. Home is where you find family, friends and contentment. Now our home was empty and slowly I slid into a severe depression that lasted for over two months until their return.

At first I lost all interest in cooking supper or preparing food for us since I couldn't eat. Then I sought the company of friends who knew us just to talk about

Sonja and the children and in this manner recreate their presence. But I kept on thinking of nothing else but Sonja and Roy, and, of course, Keith to whom I had not yet bonded. When I woke up at night the new reality hit me with all force and I found it hard to go back to sleep. Arno missed Roy most of all.

A week or so later, Sonja's letters started to arrive, one after the other. She described her new life in Maulburg and school in great detail, wrote about nursing Keith and how she got to know him better every day. Sonja and Roy had flown back to Germany on the return portion of their round trip ticket and I too still had mine. One month went by, six weeks, seven weeks and then I wrote Sonja and called, telling her that I planned to come for a visit.

Her response was devastating. She gave me a straight "no" for an answer. When she realized how it hurt me she took it back and said she was sorry, but "nothing can reverse a spoken word." Then she began to reason. There was no space for me in her mama's crowded apartment, she had no time, it would cost too much money of which she and I had little of, and so on et cetera. I sensed that she was hiding something from me and lying because she didn't want to hurt me. The real reason was, as I found out later, that her mama had imposed the restriction on her return that under no circumstances would I be welcome so that Sonja would have an opportunity to break free of me. My visits would not be tolerated. I have the letter now, but Sonja kept its existence a secret from me, as secrecy and double dealing have always and remain to be her trademark, moving along the path of least resistance. I got Hedy on the phone and she said quite sternly:

"You are not welcome and don't you think for a minute that you can shack up in apartment."

I am a born rebel and adversity has the effect of spurring me on. I let Sonja know my time of arrival and once in Frankfurt called her again to say when the train would arrive in Basel Badischer Bahnhof. Three hours later, a week before Easter, there she stood on the platform as the train pulled in with Roy by her side.

We embraced as always and said hello. I remember Roy was so happy, overcome with joy, that he ran ahead of us as best as he could as we walked through the underpass to the commuter train to Maulburg. He just ran for joy as he still does today when he feels well and is relieved and happy.

Sonja let me hold her hand, but often withdrew it. I felt slighted and asked her what the matter was.

"You can't stay at Mama's apartment, you know. At first, when you called



and said that you come, Mama did not want to allow you in at all, but I made a deal with her. You can come upstairs, see Keith and me for half an hour. Then you have to leave."

"What?" I asked, leaning forward and looking her straight in the eye in disbelief. "When are we going to see each other and where?"

"Well, I thought you can stay at the Goldene Wagen guesthouse. I have already called and reserved a room for you. And then you can pick me up in the morning for a walk."

I was speechless and sick. So mama and my daughter had agreed to lock me out after we had lived together for six years, gone through thick and thin together and had two kids together.

"Whose orders are those?" I snapped embittered.

"Nobody's," answered Sonja evasively.

"You must understand that I am only a guest myself. It's Mama's apartment and grandma's house."

"Grandma's got no say in the matter. Mama's paying rent, it's her apartment. I'm not going to obey her orders. I've come all the way from America to visit you and I want to see you and our kids but not on her conditions."

The train screeched into Maulburg station and came to an abrupt stop. I carried Roy down the steps. We walked side by side down the platform and through the narrow back alleys between the farm houses to the linden tree and grandma's house. Sonja unlocked the door and I went up the stairs with a heavy heart into Sonja's old room. She took Keith out of his crib and I could see him for the first time since she left Seattle.

Keith looked really cute with his warm brown eyes. He had become a pretty baby and I could hold him. I squeezed him gently and gave him a kiss on the cheek. The smell of baby oil made me happy. Then I gave him back to her as we set down in the kitchen I took Roy on my lap.

We talked intensely when all of a sudden the door opened and Hedy came him. Grandmother was visible in the corridor, sixty-five years old, a bow-legged farm woman with a long skirt and the standard apron, gray-blackish hairdo and forbidden look on her broad and coarse iron face. The kids called her "Oma Kessler," pronounced in local dialect, "OOhmmaa Chhäässlre."

They said my half hour was up. I said I wouldn't leave, that I refused to follow oma's silly command and such garbage. One more time Hedy asked me to leave and made a motion pointing to the door, but still I wouldn't react. Sonja

watched in silence.

"*Yo, denn muesch halt Polizei aruefe,*" snapped Oma. "Well, then you have to call the police." She was an old and obedient German, always submissive to and cooperating with authority as most Germans do. Here Sonja learned a lesson for herself, as I was to find out years later.

Ten minutes went by when I heard two pairs of heavy boots stomp up the stairs and enter the apartment.

"Good evening. Are you Herr Haikel?"

"Yes."

"Well, the landlord, Frau Kessler, asks you to leave the house. I suggest that you go and make no trouble. It would be in your own best interest, we really think you should."

The two police in green uniforms were as nice about it as they could. For a moment I thought of telling them that I was entitled to visit my own kids, Roy and Keith, but then decided against it and went downstairs onto the sidewalk. The police left and the door was shut. I began to pace up and down the sidewalk in front of the house, having no need or reason to go anywhere.

It was dark by now and a cold drizzle began to fall. I felt sick inside, not angry, but desolate and empty. It was an injustice and a total disgrace. Hedy should at least have been up front and told me while in Chester, Pennsylvania after Gerhard's operation of what her position was. Instead she pretended good company as if there was no problem whatsoever. The same with Sonja. I would not have let her go with our children under these circumstances, and she knew it.

After a while I rang the door bell, but no one answered. Once or twice Sonja came to the window in the stairwell between the first and second floor, opened but said that she could not come downstairs without offending her mother and abuse her hospitality.

I said, "Come on down and bring the children. We can stay at the Goldene Wagen together."

"No, I can't," she answered and the window closed again.

I had just flown across the Atlantic through one night and saw the prospect of going through another without a bed. Hedy and Sonja, and for course Oma, must have observed me from behind drawn curtains with the lights out in their rooms. I began to throw little stones against the windows upstairs, rang the door bell once again and was brought warm tea. My old Volvo was parked in front of the house and I opened it and sat down in it turning the motor on and the heat.

At around midnight I pressed the door bell again and asked for a blanket and a pillow. Hedy brought it down, I reclined the front seats and bedded down in the car for the night.

The neighbors who knew me well from the many years I had lived there noticed the arrival of the police and watched the scene that was unfolding before their homes, speculating about what was going on.

"Herr Haikel just got back from America and has to sleep in his car. Oh well, we've got to watch this one..."

A game of psychological warfare begun.

At six in the morning, just after feeding Keith, Sonja came outside and brought me coffee. She put all of the blame for the absurdity of the situation on her grandmother who had threatened to disown Hedy and take back the promised inheritance of the house if she allowed me back into the house.

Sonja said we could go for a walk later in the morning and so we did with Roy on foot and Keith in the stroller. I was glad to see her, hold her hand and talk to her. We went for an hour or so. Then she returned home but came out again in the afternoon for another stroll through the village, along the tennis courts and the sports arenas.

During the evening of the second day after dark the window in the stairwell opened and Oma Kessler stuck her head out. She just stood there with Roy in her arms and stared down at me not saying a word. I looked back at her in disgust and she kept on staring and kept on staring me down as if she was saying and indeed did relate to me:

"Roy is now mine. I will hold on to him as I have always held on to what is mine. You are never going to get him back. From the start, I never liked you or accepted you as one of ours, Michel. You are a no good for nothing. Everybody knows that. Go away. Roy is mine, can't you see, mine, mine, mine... Go away. Go away. Go!"

The scene lasted a good twenty minutes. Then the window closed and I stood there, once again, all by myself.

I spent another night in the car until Sonja agreed to leave with me and our children for the weekend in the near Black Forest Hills. We got a room at the Pension Kropf in Hofen next door to where I used to live for two years. I knew the owners well. Our room had a small kitchen and fridge. I bought food and drink at the local store to set the stage for a happy weekend but it turned out very melancholy. Time and again I tried to rub it into Sonja to resist her grandma and

leave, but in vain. The second night Hedy appeared and Sonja went outside to a car where Hedy's companion, a Yugoslav at about the same age, was waiting. She came back half an hour later. I knew that I was the object of their discussion.

On Monday morning we took a taxi to Maulburg and Sonja went back into hiding at her mama's in her grandmother's house. Three generations of women who possessed and controlled my two children. I became depressed once again and all sorts of plans and anger crossed my mind. I felt devastated and cheated. Again we went for a walk in the afternoon. Eventually, Sonja agreed to leave Maulburg for a week, take the train to my mother in Kassel and talk things over to come to some kind of solution. In return, I spent the night at the Gasthaus Wiesentäler Hof in Maulburg. The next morning I walked the hundred yards to the house and Sonja came outside. We agreed that I should go and buy the tickets at the train station while she would pack a few things and get the kids ready. I was relieved at the prospect of taking a five hour train ride together and spending a week with her and the children.

When I came back and walked to the car I found a note on the front seat. Sonja wrote that she had decided that she needed some time for herself to think things through. Nothing else, not when or where we would meet again. The note closed with the demand that if I was interested in ever seeing her again I should respect her wishes and not go and look for her. So she knew what my reaction was going to be and forewarned me.

I had the hunch that Hedy's Yugoslav friend was behind it all because he was the only one who had a car and Sonja had not left by train if she had left at all.

My Volvo's license plates had expired and so had the insurance. Still, I started the motor and drove off towards Bernau in the Black Forest Mountains where I knew the Yugoslav, Grgur, lived and operated a sort of condominium hotel, suspecting that Sonja and the children might be there. Sure enough Grgur and Hedy were there but Sonja was not. We had brief discussion and it was disclosed to me that Sonja was staying with friends somewhere in the wide expanse of the Black Forest - Grgur motioned to the South - and was receiving counseling from a psychiatrist.

After I left I went searching, stopping at all conceivable places looking for her and the children. Three days later I located her at a psychiatrist but was a few hours late. Hedy and Sonja had just left. The psychiatrist, a professor at the University of Basel, led me into his practice and began to talk.

"There is no hope," he concluded, "your relationship with your daughter will

end in tragedy."

I was out of myself with pain and feelings of desolation when I left his practice and drove away. When I tried to call Sonja, Oma Kessler answered the phone and said that she wasn't home. And then she added:

"The people in the village are saying that the children are by you. That is incest," and hung up on me.

Later in the day I got a hold of Hedy who agreed that Sonja would call me back at a certain restaurant in Bernau and so she did. By now my hopes were shattered and I was on my best way to become a nervous wreck.

"When can I see you again?" I asked pleading with her.

"I don't know."

"Where are you?"

"I can't tell you and stop looking for me. I need more time to come clear with myself," she answered trying to evade the issue.

"But I can't live on like this. You left Seattle in February and did not tell me anything about this. How can you do this to me. I will not go back but stay around and look for you. I have to see you again, you know that. So when are you going to come, please come."

The phone was right in the dining room by the wall and the waiters started to look over to me as if saying, put down that phone and stop making a fool out of yourself. But I didn't care. Sonja agreed to call me again in an hour. As always, she had to discuss it with her mother. We had lived together all these years, had two lovely children together, and she had to discuss it with her mama whether she was going to see me or not. It was disgusting.

An hour or so later, one of the waiters came to my table and pointed toward the telephone. It was Sonja alright.

"I can have Grgur drive me and the children to your Gasthof Schwanen in Bernau tomorrow after lunch. I can only stay for two hours but you have to promise that you will return to Seattle without any further delay or conditions of wanting to see me again."

She had me in her hands. I agreed.

I slept a little easier that night but woke up rather early, had breakfast and then took a walk through the village counting down the hours.

At two o'clock in the afternoon Grgur's red Volkswagen Rabbit arrived with Sonja and the children in the back. I had to pay him fifty marks on the spot for gas or whatever and he said that he would be back in two hours sharp and not a

minute later. Grgur was a cheap skate and when Hedy heard that he had extracted a fifty mark fare from me she got very angry with him.

I lifted Roy up and carried him on my arms while Sonja pushed Keith in the stroller. We went for a walk through the snowy village. Keith, now twelve weeks old, had put on a lot of pounds and lay there in his stroller with his round face and big brown eyes, a lovely and content baby. I loved him. A deplorable feeling of sorrow and hopelessness overcame me that he should be banned from my presence and home forever and that I should be unable to see both him and Roy grow up. Roy was two and a half and also a sweet little boy with blond hair.

There was not much to talk about as Sonja already had my commitment. How cruel of Sonja, I said, to separate me from herself and our children not because she wanted to put right what was wrong according to the moral biases of society for which she had no regard, but so that she could "gain her freedom and independence," as she put it. But how independent was she really at her mama's and grandmother's house, hiding herself and our children behind their shield of animosity against me, denying even the emotional bond that had developed during our six years together between us and Roy who had known no other dad than myself? For what, I asked, but received no answer.

My throat closed up when the door of Grgur's car was shut, the same the car that nearly killed him in a head on collision a year later. He survived as a cripple but lost everything including Hedy.

I walked back into my room, packed my things and returned the key to the front desk. Then I got into my car and drove off towards the autobahn. A few miles before Maulburg I decided to stop at Hedy's house and get a couple of books out of the basement that I had left there a few months earlier when we all departed for America under happier circumstances.

As I pulled up in front of the house, Grgur's car was already standing there, the doors of the car and the house wide open. Sonja must have arrived just a minute before me. When I rang the door bell Hedy came downstairs and was shocked to see me. How could I have guessed where Sonja was? To her relief, I got my books and left a minute later.

I drove north on the Autobahn to Karlsruhe and then west to Hauenstein where I staid with a tax practitioner over the weekend discussing our a joint U.S.-German tax practice and publishing plans. I wrote Hedy a long letter accusing her of being a snake who at first wanted to eat the egg and after I prevented it of taking possession of and hiding the chick that had hatched - Keith. Then I called a

life-long friend in Switzerland, Regeli, who had become a psychologist and asked if Sonja and I could come for a visit. I said that Sonja had some problems, would like her opinion but gave no specifics. She didn't ask any questions and agreed instantly.

On Monday morning I drove south again, slowly in the right lane where all the truck traffic was, thinking and, since a long time, praying. I prayed that the Lord may help me find Sonja and convince her that the trip to Switzerland was necessary for both of us to regain some control over our lives.

By the time I reached Maulburg it was early afternoon and, as I had prayed, I found Sonja taking Roy and Keith for an afternoon stroll near the sports arenas. I stopped the car right next to her. She too stopped and as I stepped out of the car I had an emotional breakdown. I said that I cannot live on like this and that we have to get together and talk serious business, suggesting that Regeli had agreed to receive us if she would only take the time and come along with me. When? Right now!

Sonja is a young woman of instant decisions, if need be, for better or for worse. She can also take turns of one hundred and eighty degrees.

"Okay then," she replied. "Just allow me to go home, pack a few things and leave Mama a note. Come to the house in ten minutes and wait in the car."

"No tricks, Sonja, please?"

"No, I won't trick you," she replied and I believed her.

Ten minutes later, as promised, I picked her and the children up and drove south crossing the border into Switzerland taking the Swiss autobahn towards Bern but turning off at Solothurn and proceeding to Biel where Regeli lived. We arrived late in the afternoon just before dark but Regeli was not home. I left a note and drove towards Magglingen where her mom had a *châlet*, the *Châlet Alpina*. I phoned again but Regeli was nowhere to be reached. Sonja and I decided to take a room in Evillard, half way between Magglingen and Biel in the Jura mountains overlooking Lake Biel. By now it was dark, quite cold and it began to drizzle. Still, it was a heavenly feeling to be together again with Sonja, at least for a night or two. No time pressures of when she would have to leave or be picked up. First she fed Keith and then we went downstairs to the restaurant and had a good evening meal with white wine and ice cream for Roy.

Why had I ever let her go? Of course she had lied to me about her mother's decision of no contact. We had never been separated before except for a week a year ago after her affair with the music student. Roy was obviously pleased that

we were all back together again.

Regeli called the following morning, met us at the hotel and took us to her apartment in her parent's house on Lake Biel. She was eleven years younger than I and we had known each other since childhood. At age twelve, her parent's had put her into a boarding school. Her correspondence with me revealed that she was homesick. When Sonja was about the same age and unruly, sometimes I threatened her with prospects of the same fate but never carried through with it. I remember how homesick I was when my parents went on a summer vacation and put me into a summer camp with virtually nothing to do except brood and count the days when it was going to be over and I could return home.

It only took a minute to explain our situation to Regeli to put her in the picture. Regeli was not in the least surprised. It seemed that she already knew and looked at the children. We talked for two hours and then had lunch together in her kitchen.

One answer of hers in reply to Sonja's question whether it was alright for us to live together or even be in love was, "Sure, why not, if the feelings are real." The straight forward answer took Sonja by surprise. Society's opinion was all she cared about? She had no scruples of having my children and, in fact, after having Roy openly said to me that she wanted another one a year later, but not later than 1987. Her wish had become true.

"Is it lawful?" Sonja continued.

"In Switzerland? Sure," replied Regeli ignorantly, "but you are better off living in America. It is a more open society. That's my opinion."

We left Regeli feeling a lot lighter and relieved, and so decided to spend another few days together in Switzerland before I had to return her and the children to Maulburg. We drove back into the Jura mountains and found an inn in a little village some four thousand feet above sea level, L'Auberge de la Crémerié in Mont-Soleil.

The snow was still deep on the meadows, the days were sunny, the nights clear, crisp and starry.

Being together again as a family was exactly the medicine we both needed; for Sonja to escape from the turmoil and pressures of her grandmother's house, and for me to pull out of despair and depression.

But still the uncertainty of our future lay heavily on my soul. My feelings were a mixture of extreme happiness and deep, deep sadness for fear of losing her again. During the day we went for extended walks through the village and in the



evenings we played bridge with a passion and sipped on our white Fendant wines, smoking quite heavily.

Keith, being only ten weeks old, slept a lot. One afternoon while Roy took his routine nap, we all went to our room and rested. After a while I asked Sonja if "she wanted it." She remained silent for a minute or two then turned toward me with a smile. She must have entertained the same thoughts.

"Why not?" she replied, got up and locked the door. Then we took our clothes off. She came to me and we embraced. I kissed her on the neck and let my hands run down her back and embraced her again. She was hot and ready and so was I. For nearly four months we had practiced abstinence and our pent-up desires were longing for release. She took my treasure gently by the hand. It went in easily, but still I was surprised to notice how tight she was, almost as tight as the first time on that morning before New Year's eve in Sas Almagell seven years ago. She said pregnancy does it. I had forgotten.

We began to make love in an ecstatic way of seeking each other, closer and closer. She let all of her reservations and artificial inhibitions go and took me on a wild ride of joy and ecstasy across meadows, fields and over fences accompanied by the music of Schubert's 9th symphony, the unfinished one, resounding in my inner ear as we rode towards our orgasm together in complete harmony and mutual fulfillment. As always, shortly before we came to our climax, her skin gave off her peculiar and sensational odor that smelled so familiar and was exclusively her own. We had our culmination at the same time, together, and trembled as all of our built-up tensions that had accumulated over months of anxiety and false rhetoric gave way to a warm and open feeling of deep and uninhibited love and affection.

Then she relaxed completely and began to hold me tight, not wanting to let go and kissed me. Her hand moved gently through my hair as she looked at me with her mellow brown eyes and we rubbed our noses together, grinning. I could not let go of her either and squeezed her again and again, covering her with a shower of wild kisses. I don't think I had ever been happier and more in love with my Love or any woman in my whole life as I was then. We got underneath the sheets, our arms around each other, and slipped away for a snooze until Keith made himself know.

She took him out of his crib and put him between us. Then she gave him her breast and he suckled away with great appetite. She had lots of milk and the little one drank it up eagerly making small squeaking sounds as he swallowed but did

not open his eyes.

Wasn't she nursing us all, physically and emotionally with her out-poring of love and generosity? She was at the center of our joint mutual bonds and I promised myself that I would always hold her high, love and protect her, my only Love and mother of our children. She was so young - just twenty-three - so beautiful, so tender, and so giving. I was so much in love with her that nothing else, nothing, mattered as long as we and the children could stay together.

"Sonja," I said, "I never ever want to lose you again - ever," and kissed her behind the ear and embraced her.

"I know," she answered returning my embrace.

Keith lost his hold on her breast and began to whine. She quickly put her nipple back into his mouth and he kept on drinking until he was full and satisfied.

At night, after she had fed Keith and Roy was sleeping, she turned the light out and slipped back between the sheets with me to resume where we had left off in the afternoon for a long and enduring ride well into the night. We fell asleep in each other's arms, exhausted but happy and deeply satisfied until the early hours of the morning when Keith, once again, made his unrelenting wishes known.

Our reunion was now complete and turned our melancholic holiday into a mutual adventure of rediscovery, of renewing the bond that had kept us together during all these years, our love for each other, our "mutual dependency," as she sometimes chose to call it.

Sonja called her mama on the phone and suggested that I meet with her outside of Maulburg in Steinen to see if a way of softening her stand was possible. Sonja returned from the telephone and I saw it in her face that it wasn't going to be good news.

"Mama doesn't want to see you. In fact the whole village is talking about us and the children. Oma is intent on going to the police in Schopfheim and report you."

"In that case, Sonja," I said, "I can't go back to Germany for a while. Damn it. Why does she have to do that?"

The prospect of renewed separation just after our reunion hang over our heads like a black cloud and began to depress us.

"Let's go to the Canadian Embassy tomorrow and see if they can't fly us to Vancouver," I suggested. "They're obligated."

Money was scarce. I only had a couple hundred francs left.

Sonja must have had the same thought, as often. Next day in Bern the

Canadians said "no way" without seizing our passports, issuing a travel document instead, and putting us on a repayment plan, but not do anything for days until we had exhausted all avenues of raising the funds from our relatives. I said we'd think about it and phoned my brother in Gifhorn, Germany, told him of our situation and asked him for a loan.

Hans-Georg was somewhat shocked at first when I revealed the truth about the children and my fatherhood. But after I called back an hour later, he had spoken to his wife and said he would wire the money immediately by postal express.

We spent the night at the Landgasthof in Wangen near Olten and continued north to Riehen the following morning. The money was there for us at the post office. Relief was in sight. We slipped across a section of uncontrolled border into France - just in case - drove north through Luxembourg, bypassing Brussels and were at Ostende by nightfall, a beautiful city, I found. The ferry took us and the car across to Dover and at three in morning I got a room at the Penta Hotel at Gatwick Airport. After a couple of hours of rest and a phone call to Northwest Airlines, I changed the last of my Swiss francs into pounds sterling and had just enough to buy our return tickets home to Seattle.

The minute the 747 lifted off from the old continent I took a deep sigh of relief, looked at Sonja and the children and squeezed her hand. She held it and squeezed me back. A seemingly small change of circumstances had turned our whole situation around. For the near future, at least, we would be together again. As it turned out, another four and a half years. Many a marriage doesn't even last that long. I held Sonja's hand and hugged her, and she returned my love with smiles of affection, leaning her head against my shoulder and later rolled up on the seat, putting her head in my lap for a well deserved snooze during the movie.

She was twenty-three and a half, at her loveliest and the mother our two children. And she was coming home. What more could I wish for.

In the airplane, Sonja wrote her mother a brief note, saying the Oma's involvement had made her stay intolerable, that mama should have stood up against her for once instead of being intimidated. She closed by saying that it was better for her and the children to return to Kirkland and work things out from here. She closed by writing:

"Thank you for having us for these two months. I enjoyed my stay with you except for the ending."

Arno met us at the airport and was beaming as he took his little brother and

nephew Roy into his arms. Once again our home was filled with the familiar noise of children at play, piano music and, most of all, family.

## Chapter 9

My memories of the spring and summer of 1988 in Kirkland are very fond and happy ones. My love to Sonja had become one of complete devotion bordering on total submissiveness. One afternoon when she was lying down on the couch and resting, I sat by her side and hugged her. That is when she said:

*Du himmelst mich an, nicht wahr?* You revere me, don't you. And I answered unswervingly, looking her in the eye:

"Yes."

She pulled me toward her, gave me a kiss and held me tight cheek to cheek with her arms around my neck. I had succumbed to her completely and made a vow to myself to never be overly critical again of her or scorn her, no matter what the circumstances; but, unfortunately, my promise did not last as long as it should have.

Roy saw our unity and contentness. It made him happy and free. Children a very sensible barometer of their parents' emotions, I thought. Quarrels and tensions make them insecure as they begin to blame themselves for failing. That should always be remembered.

Soon after I realized a change in Sonja's attitude toward me. She said she didn't want to have me anymore. Then she admitted that she had been talking to the preacher's wife about our relationship, and upon further inquiry said that she had told her everything about my fatherhood of the children.

I got very upset because she had promised on the plane back to Seattle that she would not reveal it again to strangers. She had broken her promise only one day after we had arrived, she said, because her friends wondered why she had returned of her own free will.

Then she said that she had received an offer from a church friend and her husband to move into their house with Roy and Keith and occupy the basement suite. It was only a block away and we could continue to visit each other regularly.

Sonja got very involved with religion and went to group meetings once a week to which I was also invited, coming along two or three times out of respect for Sonja. The topic was "repent." Norman, the preacher, approached me and offered counseling so that I could be integrated into the church. I made my philosophy known that I too believed in the Supreme Power but did not want to be

organized and have mind put into a straight jacket or have my thoughts regimented by a rigid dogmatic faith dictated by a group of superiors. Whether I believe in the Bible? I said yes, I liked Ecclesiastes, but no for the rest. To me, I said, the bible was a creation of mankind to satisfy its craving for a cult, a ritual, nothing more, nothing less. Out of curiosity I agreed to a meeting with Norm and when the church friends heard about they jubilated.

We met one sunny afternoon on the porch of his house and Norman began to try to indoctrinate me. He began with his usual view of the world, of Christ our Lord, and so on and then went directly to the subject of his concern.

He said that technically it was possible to have sex with a goat but the question was whether this was right. He went on to draw parallels to the relationship between Sonja and me without ever mentioning us by name or identifying us too closely. The conversation lasted about an hour when I broke it off and thanked him for his time and effort. I would not be coming back to him.

Throughout the next couple of days the phone rang all the time with members of the church calling for Sonja.

"The Lord has told me to call you," they began their conversation and then talked to her about everything under the sun, always urging her to come to their meetings or home to see them.

I saw what their strategy was and explained it to Sonja, first in a casual way and when she seemed to resist me more sternly and sometimes with anger that these people were trying to muddle with our lives in much the same way as Oma had done in Maulburg. Still, on Sundays, I accompanied her and the children to church and went along with her to the discussion groups after church and during the week. But there I did not remain silent as I used to but began to take them up in the arguments.

If there was a Lord who created the earth and the universe, to put his words down in a two thousand year old black book called the Bible, this was heresy that did not do justice to His magnificent creation. They were constantly collecting money for new buildings, but to construct impressive structure to worship Him instead of spending the money on the poor to help ease their misery was only satisfying the priest's ego but not following His word. And so on and so forth.

On May 1, 1988, I wrote a letter to Norm, telling him of my orientation and also that I did not feel any guilt about the way I conducted my personal life. I wrote:

"The eternal questions of who we are, where we come from, and where we are going have concerned me during my entire youth. Now that Sonja has shown tendencies of faith in Christianity, I have again studied the issue by going into myself and also reading Christian literature such as the Bible and in particular works by Plato, Aristotle, John Dewey, E.M. Cioran ("The Temptation to Exist"), and - most rewarding - by Horace M. Kallen ("What I Believe and Why - maybe"). I have also visited the Unitarian-Universalists and Society of Friends.

"In summary, I believe that I know nothing. I have no answer to the three basic human questions - and if you feel you do, you are, perhaps, fortunate, because your findings give you peace and purpose in life. As for my part, I find great peace in my ignorance, however strange such a statement may sound. Let me explain:

"Since I cannot verify through examination (or even reason) the source of what has been given to us (life, the paradise I call earth, family and friends) and the donor, if there is one therefore remains anonymous (like true donors are), there is no one I need to go and thank for other than trying and be very much aware that the gift received is an extremely precious one. To live this life is purpose and fulfillment enough and it would be unwarranted to ask the unanswerable question of what comes thereafter. If, as I suspect, life begins and terminates right here on earth, that is fine with me. I have no fear of returning to dust - I am not as important to the earth and universe that my mind (or soul) should live on forever. It also is part of this wonderful matter which only exists here on earth - as far as I know. When it vanishes as in old people who have become feeble in their mind, it is because this matter has become weak and fails to function before it dies off. I will make room for the young as life perpetuates itself on this crowded earth.

"My faith is rooted in humanism and I reject a theory (also called a "mystic cult" in the literature) that gives unverifiable though consoling answers to humanity's questions because I see great danger in its practice:

"For one, I feel that since we have been equipped with a brain and the power of reason, there is no need to adhere to revelations in the Bible but to structure our existence in accordance with the needs of society. (The ten commandments - except for the first - are such rational discoveries or plain truths about unharmful coexistence.) Martin Luther's great achievement than was that we are allowed private judgment, that faith cannot be a closed system of dogmas.

"For another, Adam and Eve's sin in the garden is not mine or my children's.

The whole concept of sin lets Christians run the everlasting obstacle course that will never release them as free and creative intellectual beings with all the pleasures found in learning and discovery that leads to knowledge. The word 'repent' annoys me. True, I have broken the rules and laws of this society often and in such ways that Christians under their concept of sin would see no solution other than to repent. I understand. If I were a Christian, I would be forgiven through your savior, eventually. For my situation such a prospect solves nothing, because I would still live in shame - and I do not -, and I should repent - where as in fact I have been 'blessed,' to use a term from your vocabulary.

"And this leads me to a comment on where I had to break with your Church: Sonja chose to seek 'advice' on her life, which also concerns me, without my knowledge. Should she have fallen for the movement, then my relationship to her (and her children) would have been on her new terms. While I am generally quite liberal where the faith of any one is concerned, I will not let my private life become a matter of discussion by a third party without my prior consent; let alone see third parties' rules and codes of conduct become imposed upon mine, or superimposed. When it is - as I felt - heavily solicited even, I become reactive.

"Forgive me if you can.

"Another observation that I wish to make is this: At the Northgate Church, I believe it was on Sunday, May 1st, pastor Harmann struck out against humanism in a very offensive way and advocated the religious school. I am myself a former student of such a school in Germany and Switzerland and - perhaps as a result - chose to have my own children educated in the secular system. For two reasons: No. 1 is that the public system is paid for by our involuntary tax dollars and to further its theory I was not going to be double-taxed by the 'church.' Aristotle wrote on this point that 'the whole city has one goal, [and] it is evident that there must also be one and the same education for everyone, and that the superintendence of this should be public and not private...' And before coming to this conclusion, Aristotle argued that 'a state is not an artificial trapping imposed upon natural men, but manifestation of human nature itself...defined by nothing else so well as by participation in judicial functions and political office.'

"Malcontent with our system therefore calls for political interference through our democratic process rather than by side-stepping this responsibility and creating an expensive school for our children - each according to his faith.

"No. 2 is that students from church schools see the real world from splendid isolation and are programmed with dogma well before they even have a chance to



reflect and evaluate. I don't think that the world's philosophies have all gone bankrupt and the Christian cult has survived and carries the only relevant truth to the exclusion of all the other. On this point Cioran writes: 'If most all the mystics had their contentions with the Church [undoubtedly referring to the Roman Catholic body], it is because they had too much talent; the Church demands none, and insists upon obedience, submission to its style.' And in fact most intellectuals seem to prefer to be free-spirits, uncommitted to the constraints of organized thinking. Constrained thought cannot lead to the happiness of discovery and learning, can it?"

I mentioned in my letter that I had been blessed. A few days later Norm called me and asked what I meant by the word "blessed." I had the feeling that someone else was listening in on the conversation as a witness. When I said that I did not wish to elaborate any further he began to accuse me of acting like a sexual deviant who needed psychological counseling. At that point I reminded him that I had put my trust in him and his office as an ordained minister, that I had felt that our conversation was privileged and that he should respect my views rather than come down hard on me and begin to accuse me of criminal wrong doing. I had the hunch, somehow, that he was going to denounce me or do something of that nature. But nothing happened. We continued to greet each other across the fence or when we ran into each other in the store or on the street. In November we moved and I have never seen him again, or his agile wife who I always thought of as a fast talking solicitor rather than a woman.

In the end, Sonja agreed to stop participating in the church's activities and discontinued to see her friends from the church. But it was not enough, I had to tell them on the phone when they kept calling, one on one, that we had decided to lead our own lives free from their influence and meddling. They wanted to hear it from Sonja direct and she told them in less harsh words the same thing. Eventually the message sunk in that we had been a bad investment. We still said hi to the neighbors but that was all.

I suggested to Sonja to try the Unitarian Church downtown by the Lake in Kirkland. We went a few times and she began to like their open ways and attitudes. Quite a few members were atheists. It was a strange setting in a way, but the weekly ritual of going to church, of singing and being with friends was important to Sonja. Soon she was absorbed by the choir as an accompanist. The choir leader was making eyes at her, and she seemed to enjoy that too but told me she wasn't going to be interested and that I had no reason to be jealous which,

obviously, I was.

In June Arno graduated from Juanita High School. He had skipped grade eleven after a lengthy discussion with his guidance counselor, a very supportive and interested woman. I had spent days preparing him for the Scholastic Aptitude Test. He scored with good marks in the upper 700 percentile and was accepted at the University of Vermont, Washington State University in Pullman and Texas Tech, but neither university would extend financial aid since he was a nonresident alien without a green card. As a Canadian citizen, I knew that he would receive all the financial support at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. We applied at the last minute and he was accepted.

In July, Gerhard arrived from Swarthmore and one of Arno's old pals flew in from Germany. The house was quite full now and busy. The boys were yakking well into the nights and sleeping-in through the mornings. We went to Denny Park on Lake Washington a lot. Arno had bought a surf board from a school friend and became fascinated by the new sport and quite good at it. Later in the month the boys borrowed my Olds wagon, packed two tents and left for the lakes east of the mountains for a week long vacation. Sonja and the children went along.

Finally, I had some quiet time to begin translating my new 1988/89 U.S. federal income tax book from English into German, a monstrous task worse than writing the original English version. Tom Graham, my C.P.A. friend from Lake Steven, had invested \$18,000 for my living expenses and an advertisement campaign which brought in only one hundred orders. I was going to be broke again, but nevertheless continued with the project hoping that funding would come from some source once I had finished, and it did. The book was printed in late fall and made it to market by direct mail advertising and by mailing it to tax practitioners and several hundred American subsidiaries of German firms. It received favorable reviews in professional magazines. The proceeds kept me in funds well into the spring of 1990 when I published an updated version incorporating the drastic income tax changes of the 1990 Tax Reform Act and the new German-American income tax treaty. It too proved a financial success but not a major break through. Money remained scarce and required, as always, a balancing act; but we managed to survive without hardship.

After Arno's friend had returned to Germany, Sonja, the children, the boys and I took weekend trips to the Olympic peninsula and Mount Rainier. On the first day of September, Gerhard flew back to Swarthmore and a few weeks later we drove Arno to Vancouver to begin his engineering courses at the University of

British Columbia. It was an emotional farewell. Arno was nineteen but had never left the home before. Two months later found a honey, exactly as he had planned. Our house had been put on the market for sale. In November, Sonja, the children and I moved to a cozy apartment at Juanita Beach on Lake Washington. I got an assignment with a small construction company for a month, installing a computerized accounting system, then took a job with a Bellevue, Washington regional accounting firm for a few months.

Sonja seemed happy and content with the children at home but began to make plans to return to university to get her music degree. She would have had another year to go at the University of Washington, but for tuition reasons we decided to have her apply in Canada at the University of British Columbia, and as a back-up at the University of Victoria in the province's capital at the southern tip of Vancouver Island. We took a long weekend vacation in both cities where she auditioned and was accepted. She decided on UBC. After another gorgeous spring and early summer at Kirkland, we drove to Vancouver on July 1, 1989, where she had been assigned a townhouse in the university's family housing in Acadia Park. I brought her the Steinway upright piano a week later which I had purchased in May of 1988 after her return from Germany.

The prospect of her new life as an independent young mother, I thought, would make her happy. But I was wrong. Sonja talked of freedom and independence a lot, but saying it and really accepting the burden of carrying through with all the risks were two totally separate things. So far she had been supported by family, never held a job except the occasional one for a week or two, and was given everything she needed and wanted. More importantly, she was not of an independent mind but a follower and easily, too easily, leaned on others for direction and guidance; in the past on me.

When Sonja differed she became rebellious, but because I was so firm and outspoken in my own convictions and she was not, or did not have the mental power, she often resigned and began to make secret plans. Her strength lay solely in the artistic and intuitive world; there she excelled like no other. When she thought she could be both, she crashed.

With hindsight I regret that I always fell back into my fatherhood role rather than trust her judgment and allow her to learn from her own bad experiences. Of course, I meant well and she knew it but for her that was not the issue.

Beneath all of her argument I sensed that she wanted a family of her own and a husband. It worried me for two reasons. First, the thought of separation from her

and the children saddened me beyond description. Second, I knew that she had the propensity to enter into new relationships too easily, too openly, without giving it enough time to be sure, especially when she was mentally stressed. She was an open almost child like woman and men had been hitting on her all the time. She was vulnerable, but as long as I was in her house she knew that she had little chance of building a relationship, but without me she was lacking the necessary support on which she depended. So she continued our relationship of mutual dependency.

While I was kind and so obviously in love, she did not mind it and actually reinforced me. When we quarreled as happened more frequently now, she acted rather violent and quite often with unnecessary harshness and retribution. She could afford it, she thought, because I was hers with safety. That is when I tried to distance myself from her and reject her rudeness because I knew that if I lost her respect and succumbed to her dictates everything would be lost, she reminded me that she would blow the whistle and go tell about our incestuous relationship. It gave her power over me.

In the end non of us came out a winner. When our quarrels for supremacy where over, as happen in any family, we returned to the familiar mode of man and woman, as the parents of our two adoring children whom we both loved with all our heart. After the battle, she would come to me and embrace and hold me for a minute or two. We always reconciled and nothing changed in our love relationship. It was this along with our mutual bond with the children that kept us together; but I was literally hooked on her and she knew it. I also knew that if she wanted to terminate our relationship all she needed to do was go and tell about it. And she knew that I knew, that she had a certain power over me which I could not evade or resist if I wanted to continue to live together with her.

Off an on, I thought about my catch twenty-two situation but concluded that it should continue and run its course as long as it lasted. Every time I went on a trip and was away for a few days, we talked on the phone and I realized how much I loved her and needed her. Under the circumstances I was even happy. In all truth, most of the time I think I really was.

## Chapter 10

After Sonja and the children had left for Vancouver, I staid in our almost empty apartment for another month, occupying myself with a new book on money, banking and the national debt. But whenever I turned the computer off the feeling of emptiness and loneliness kept creeping into my soul. It was so quiet around me and every time I cooked supper for myself I ended up with nothing but leftovers, still cooking for the four of us. I visited with my C.P.A.-friend Gordon frequently who lived only a few blocks away. His house was humming with activity and family visiting at all times of day. Every now and then I would hug one of his grand kids and discovered myself trying to make up for the loss of three year old Roy and one and a half year old Keith.

Every Friday afternoon I left Kirkland and drove north to Vancouver to Sonja and our children, returning on Monday morning somewhat reassured and peaceful. But come Wednesday, the old feeling of pain, anxiety and loneliness overcame me and I had to force myself to keep busy with my work. I studied and wrote frantically well into the nights just to escape from reality. I called Sonja every day, or she called me, and we thus bridged the physical distance between us until the weekend came along and brought the much needed relief.

During the third weekend of July, I decided to stay in Kirkland to finish off an important chapter in my book, when I sensed in Sonja's voice and language on the telephone that she spoke irrationally and that something was wrong with her. The symptoms of her former mental disease were back, I was sure of it.

I called Arno and asked that he go over to her with his girl friend, Carol, and check if everything was okay. Arno called back and said that Sonja was argumentative, wanting to do everything her way while the household was in total disarray, a mess, and Keith screaming.

Upon my suggestion, Arno bought booze and we hoped that Sonja would get tired enough to go to bed and sleep off her anxiety, but she didn't. Instead she got drunk and staid up all night regardless.

One of Sonja's problems was that she was trying to wean Keith because she said that continuing to breast feed him was too much of a drain on her, but he resisted. None of the tricks of putting a distasteful ointment on her nipples to keep

him away had worked. Additional pressure came from the UBC's registrar's office who demanded that Sonja produce a transcript from the University of Washington in order to be formally registered. The UW on the other hand refused to issue the transcript without full payment out of state tuition of several thousand dollars which were in arrears. I tried to make a deal with them but failed.

On Sunday evening, after Arno and Carol had spent the weekend at Sonja's house, Arno said that he had enough and needed to go home to recover for a while. I agreed to come to Vancouver and take over. When I arrived I found the house in the exact deplorable condition that Arno had described over the telephone. Sonja was relieved to see me, came to me and embraced me. But I saw that she suffered from tremendous mood swings, being euphoric in one minute and becoming angry and almost violent the next. At night, Keith screamed so much that I was about to take him to the hospital telling Sonja that she was the problem. Just as we arrived at the emergency entrance, he gave up and fell asleep exhausted.

Still, Sonja would not go to bed but stay up all night and keep busy for no apparent purpose or reason. She was restless, smoked heavily and hyperventilated all the time. In the morning she slept for an hour or two but got up abruptly and continued her business of talking irrationally, pacing through the house and smoking.

In the afternoon I suggested to her to drive to Cypress Bowl, a provincial park four thousand feet above West Vancouver with a magnificent view of the city and the surrounding islands. She agreed and we hiked for a few hours, but her strength wasn't there and she had to sit down and rest a lot. I was hoping that she would burn off a lot of excess oxygen in the thinner air as she had on the glacier above Zermatt when she was sick in October of 1981, eight years earlier. It seemed to work, but on the way home in West Vancouver, I was careless enough to leave her and the children in the car while I went to the liquor store for a bottle of wine for the evening, and when I came out Sonja and the children were gone. I panicked.

First I rushed to the nearby park on the beach where I suspected her but she wasn't there - or I didn't see her as it turned out. Then I thought that she had tricked me and took the bus home. So I rushed home and waited for an hour but nobody showed. Then I drove back the ten miles through the city and across Lion's Gate Bridge to West Vancouver and checked the park again thoroughly but to no avail. In complete resignation I drove back home and when still she did not

show phoned the West Vancouver police and asked for help.

They asked me to describe the children and after I had done so confirmed that they had them in custody. An elderly couple had turned Roy and Keith in after they had been found wandering in the park crying for their mommy. I gave the police a full description of Sonja and drove back to West Vancouver to the police station to pick up the children.

When I arrived I was led into a room and Roy and Keith were brought to me. It seemed that I could take them home, when a police officer came in and said that Sonja had been located and brought to the police station but refused to see me. The officer my said that she had abandoned the children, gone into the water in full clothes and began to walk through the streets aimlessly until the patrol car spotted her and brought her to the station. She was in a state of delirium and obviously needed rest. I told him that she hadn't slept for a number of days, had just moved to Vancouver and encountered problems with the university's registrar. He seemed to accept my assessment and it seemed that I could take Sonja and children home within a few minutes.

After a short while the officer returned and asked where the father of the children was. I replied I didn't know. He left the room and returned a few minutes later repeating his question and said that Sonja had disclosed to him that I was the father of her children. Again I declined. He left a third time. The minutes passed and finally he came back saying something to the effect that I had to reckon with the law, that I should go home and that Sonja and the children would be placed in the care of the social services people for the night. He promised to keep the three together, but as it turned out that was a lie.

Roy clung to me and said that he wanted to go home. He was pleading and would not let go of me. Two police officers, a man and a woman, had now surrounded us and they pried Roy lose. He was crying frantically, reaching out for me and calling "Opa, Opa", the German name for grandfather. But the iron gate closed behind me, and Roy and Keith were carried away by the police.

I felt angry at Sonja for breaking her promise in spite of her repeated assurances, for running off and creating the nightmare. I didn't believe that she was so ill that she had lost all control over herself but that a lot of ill will on her part was involved as well. Why, I asked, why did she do this to me and the children. Why didn't she tell me what she wanted. We could always agree on a plan, but this was absolute nonsense. Would I ever see the children again? I went

back to her house, packed my bag and left for Kirkland, Washington, partly because I was scared of the allegations that Sonja had made. And then I began to miss her and the children, and as always, depression, fear and despair set in.

I phoned around in Vancouver the following day and learned that the children had been apprehended by Social Services and put into a foster home while Sonja was placed in the mental ward of the Vancouver General Hospital for what was diagnosed as a psychotic break. My first concern was for the children. I located the social worker in charge of the case and had a series of lengthy discussions with him. Alan Lawson, a man with a distinctly British accent, seemed sympathetic to my case.

Before Sonja and I had left Switzerland in April 1988, we had been to the American Consulate where Sonja executed two sworn affidavits. One attesting to the fact that I was the natural father of Roy and Keith, and one consenting to my petition to the Family Court for King County in Seattle that I be appointed legal guardian for the children.

Mr. Lawson was interested in seeing the document, the one appointing me legal guardian. It did not tell him of the existence of the other. He also asked for copies of the children's birth certificates. I brought him to agree to put the children in temporary custody with me and recommend to the Vancouver Family Court to pass an order accordingly. The hearing was scheduled within the seven days required under the Family and Child Service Act.

On the day of the hearing I went back to Vancouver, the order was passed. To my amazement the order stipulated that Sonja should have no access or visitation rights with the children. I was going to ignore it. After Arno and I had been cleared by the Vancouver Metropolitan Police as having no criminal record and Mr. Lawson had inspected Sonja's home as a suitable residence, a week and a half after their apprehension, on one sunny morning Mr. Lawson, a man in his early forties with a ring in his left ear, carried Roy and Keith back to the house. The moment Roy saw me he reached out and whined "Opa, Opa." I took him into my arms while Arno took Keith and held him tight.

"Two happy kids," said Mr. Lawson as he departed. But Roy looked perturbed and shocked. In the afternoon I took the children to the hospital to visit Sonja. I found her under heavy sedation, so heavy that she could hardly walk. I talked to the doctor to stop it. He had an interview with me in the presence of a woman assistant and soon after hearing me on Sonja's childhood began to question me about the paternity issue, revealing that Sonja had told him that I was



the father of the children. The discussion ended when Roy began to clean off his desk and get into all sorts of mischief. In the afternoon I took the children back to Kirkland into our old apartment. I had not moved to the new one yet and they enjoyed being back in their familiar and secure environment.

My next task was to get Sonja out of the mental hospital where I knew from the horror stories reported in the press that they could keep her for a long, long time to come. Canada's provincial mental health acts, as well as the child protective laws, are a piece of Nazi legislation giving the state the absolute power over the patients (or children) with hardly any recourse to the courts. Treatment included electric shocks for those who didn't want to obey orders and became rambunctious. After a few days in Kirkland, I returned to Vancouver with the children and began to visit Sonja regularly. There seemed no improvement in her condition, she lost all resistance under the heavy treatment and said that she wanted to stay as long as necessary. She began to make friends among the patients. Every time after I visited, I talked to the head nurse and tried to get a hold of the doctor to tell him to stop the drugging. Eventually I hired a law firm who visited with the hospital's staff twice, and apparently under the pressure of a legal investigation and the inconvenience this would cause, Sonja was released after three weeks and returned home. A further week of recovery and she almost seemed her usual old self.

Unfortunately, she had seen her guidance counselor at the university when she was already crazy while I had warned her not to go. Was the university going to keep her or ask her to withdraw?

I made an appointment with Professor Roeder at the School of Music, a young Ph.D. from an American Ivy League university and explained Sonja's circumstances to him and how, under the pressures of relocating, having to care for the children as a single parents, the uncertainties surrounding her registration and financial pressures, she was pushed to the point of exhaustion. Apparently I convinced the professor that there was nothing wrong with her mental state and if given a lighter course load during the rest of the summer - she needed to make up a course deficiency in order to continue in the fall - she would be fine and able to complete the curriculum. Professor Roeder rejected my request for a lighter course load but seemed very sympathetic to Sonja. He said he would give her a chance. Sonja passed the courses with a grade "B" and was finally registered following a meeting with the assistant registrar based on a strong recommendation from the chairman of the music department.

Sonja agreed that the problem with the children could reoccur and that I should have a legal status to protect them. On July 27, 1989, I petitioned the Superior Court of Washington for King County for legal guardianship over the children. A Guardian Ad Litem was appointed, interviewed me, Roy, Keith, and Sonja who consented to my appointment. On September 8, 1989, the Court made the order and Letters of Legal Guardianship over the persons and estates of Roy and Keith were issued to me.

No mention was made by either her or me concerning the fatherhood of the children as the birth certificates clearly stated under father "none named." But I was required to published a legal notice in the local Seattle paper notifying anyone who had an interest in the proceedings to come forward and address his or her concerns to the court. No one came.

While I was in Kirkland, Sonja said, that a divorced forestry Ph.D. with two children had made advances to Sonja, had come to her house, but been turned away as she felt he wasn't her type of man. Subsequently he went out with a lady from Germany, Rina, who lived a couple of houses away from Sonja, was also divorced and had two girls with her. The relationship lasted for only a few months. Philip became known as a notorious skirt chaser.

At the end of September I vacated my apartment in Kirkland, Washington and moved to Vancouver into Sonja's home. The house was quite comfortable and compared to other student residences I had seen, sheer luxury. It had a fair size living room with a porch, a kitchen and a dining room. Two bedrooms and the bath were upstairs. Sonja took the larger of the two increasing the living space by taking the door out that separated the bedroom from the little study where we placed Roy's bed. I took the smaller bedroom, put in book shelves and two tables; one to study and the other one for my computer. For the first few months I slept on cushions on the floor and later bought a hideaway bed from a neighboring Japanese family who were returning home to their native country.

I had watched the Acadia Park's new residences under construction during our first visit to the university two years earlier. There were a number of rows of townhouses, about eight to one block with large green areas and play grounds forming the impression of a self contained small village. There was a store and a pub by the name "99 Chairs." I hardly ever went there, neither did Sonja, but the neighbors' husband, a man from east of the mountains, an alcoholic of sorts and his friend who was Sonja's new girl friend's husband, frequently the place almost nightly trying do drag me along but were unsuccessful. For the next two years,

Judy who was on the two year teacher's training program, became Sonja's best friend. The two stuck their heads together daily to the point that it began to annoy me. Whenever Sonja was gone without leaving a message, I knew almost always where to find her. She was hanging out at Judy's, many times on her porch behind the house, smoking.

Surrounded by water, Vancouver can be a pleasant place during the summer. It is never too hot, the mountains rising immediately to the north from the city. The city is probably one of the more European places in all of North America and has experienced a very large influx of immigrants, particularly from Asia. When I first came to Vancouver in 1974 I did not notice it, but by now about ten percent of the population was Chinese, the majority from the British crown colony of Hong Kong.

When summer was over, on October first at the latest, the rains set in and would last practically uninterrupted all winter until March and sometimes April. It was overcast for days on end and the absence of light was something I was not used to and found very hard to bear.

We enrolled Roy and Keith in one of the ten day care centers. Keith was only two years old and took his absence from his family quite hard. It was easier with Roy but he too had initial difficulties settling in. During the following year the two brothers were together in one day care and bringing them in the morning seemed less of a problem. But still, I always felt that basically it was wrong for a mother to pursue her career goals while the children were of tender age and I kept mentioning this to Sonja who seemed to have no scruples whatsoever. Often, in the early afternoons, I stopped my work of researching and writing and went to pick them up and bring the children home. We divided up our house chores in that we shared in the cooking about fifty/fifty, did our shopping together at Safeway's a mile away into town. Sonja did hers and the children's laundry, while I washed my own because otherwise it was too much for her and I never knew when I was going to get my clothes back.

To augment her income and because she enjoyed it, Sonja started to give piano lessons, initially to three young boys and girls from the area, slowly expanding to eight as her reputation grew. She could probably have had as many as twenty students if she wanted to so good was she with the children. Several times throughout the year she arranged performances in her home as she was used to from her own childhood, particularly at Frau Vorwerk's. The parents came to hear their children at play, stay around for another hour or two at coffee, tea

and pastry.

Gerhard came for Christmas, as usual. We took several short trips throughout the year to Whistler resort, visited Kirkland together a number of times, and now and then attended a concert at the Orpheum Theater in downtown Vancouver. It was a busy time with her courses and my revised U.S. federal income tax book which was printed and distributed in early 1990. It left me with an income that lasted until May the following year. Sales trickled in throughout the year, first by filling last year's orders and then by random mailings to the subsidiaries of Germany companies in the United States. After the tax book I turned back to my money book on banking and the national debt, spent hours researching the history and economic concepts in the university's magnificent library and started my own personal library of some three hundred books wherever I could find and acquire the literature, much of it at Shorey's in downtown Seattle and some second hand book stores in Vancouver. Whatever I could not buy, I borrowed from the UBC Library and photocopied it so that I had ready access while I worked at home and was able to mark the text for later citation.

From September 1989 through May 1991, my relationship with Sonja proved rather stable. We had been together now for eight years going on nine and knew each other's thinking, emotions and personality intimately well. Whenever she went some place she left me a note letting me know when she was going to be back, what I should get from the store or prepare for dinner. When I was in Kirkland, if I didn't call she would. We spent most of our spare time together and with the children who began to call me "Daddy" on their own initiative. I did not resist them. For one thing I was, for another they had a genuine need for one. I felt that the neighbors began to raise eye brows and a year later with Roy's overly inquisitive school teacher. But I put the interests of the children first and then cared, if at all, about what other people were thinking.

Whenever Sonja devoted herself to play with the children it was a wonderful sight to watch. She was calm and warm, and both of them clung to her and adored her. The other side of the coin was her absent mindedness. She found it difficult to control the children, give them direction and they often did too much as they pleased. She had no sense for timing, was always late at class, somewhat slow coming home and took forever to put the children to bed. We had many arguments over her time management and her forgetfulness. With hindsight, I think that I should have been more forgiving because those were small matters. As long as the two of us worked together we could manage easily. Wherever she

slipped, I would pick up. But as with any marriage, the relationship suffered under the pressures of the routines of the day and also our attempts to keep up with our own expectation level. I allowed myself to get caught up in all the distractions and to forget the promise that I had made in May of 1988 when Sonja had returned to Kirkland from Maulburg and turned a seemingly hopeless situation around.

In the big context of things, I believe, people eventually have to go and do the things they have to do, but they never take the direct road but take the side roads and back roads instead, moving in zigzags. As I tried by all means to control her movement, I was only burning myself up needlessly. With hindsight, it did not really matter whether Sonja was late, whether she forgot the odd piano student and did not show up for the lesson, or spent her money on needless things, or day dreamed, failed a course or got an excellent mark, so long as the achievements and failures evened out somehow.

There were continuous squabbles here and there. I expected much of her, but she knew that I was always there, so she took things easy. Together we were a functioning team, there was no need for me to get upset as I did, but rather accept the effort of the team in which I was only the other player or vice versa.

Our conflicts were annoying to Arno who moved in with us in September of 1990 and staid until May 1991 when he and Carol took an apartment not far from the university near Alma and West Broadway a block away from MacBride Park.

Arno did not understand that underlying all our apparent daily differences was my commitment to Sonja, and a very deep love experience that always allowed me to forgive when the day was done and start anew the following morning.

Sonja was the same way. She could never keep a grudge alive for more than a few hours and often we wondered why we had had our differences and why we had acted them out to begin with. Since we were family, father and daughter, the barrier of respect was quite low and we knew we could say and do things that would break couples of separate origin apart. But we could also forgive each other quite easily without losing face or falling into disgrace in the eye of the other.

I maintain that I could sense her feelings and even understand and read her mind more quickly and with greater precision than she could formulate it in her mind and say it in words. When I failed to act upon her attempt of deception it was not that I did not read her but that I ignored the signals because I did not want them to be true. The same when she did the terrible thing of separating me from the children in August 1992. I knew she was thinking of doing it, but I did

not want to listen to the hints she gave me because I was blinded by hope, wanting another result and thereby falling into her trap which became actually my own trap. And then I rose and complained bitterly like cowards do, always putting blame on the other instead of subtracting their own faults first and carrying the remaining burden with dignity.

I have often been asked the question: "If she does all these things to you and you complain so bitterly about her, how come you still love her as much and as deeply as you say you do?"

There was no contradiction. I was really blaming myself by putting the blame on her because I was a coward, or at least a hopeless choleric, and because I thought I could change her by airing my views, where in fact, throughout these years, she had more or less remained her solid self but I had failed in my attempts to manipulate her. I had become my own victim.

In the larger context of things, if people truly love each other, if their hearts are open and free, there is no law in the world that can stop them from acting out what the mind has already premeditated and carried out in thought. The physical consummation is only an external form of what had, has and is taking place internally. And no law can prevent what people are feeling and thinking, of what is taking place in their souls. To prevent the physical execution of thoughts and feelings would mean to pervert these emotions, always provided that they are genuine.

My love to Sonja released an energy and transformed it into two new human beings; first Roy and two years later Keith. They turned out to become normal and happy children. The incest prohibition that was created by man in order to preserve the family had no application to Sonja and me because we were the family; there was no other. The genetic rationale also proved unsubstantiable. After Roy was born and with him our new family unit, it took on a life of its own and we simply forgot society's prohibition, felt it was unjustified and basically false. But we were never set free by society, and that part bothered Sonja to some extent, but she was able to cope with it as long as her career moved forward, the children grew up and our relationship remained harmonious.

Every time Sonja encountered problems I was the cause because I failed to reassure her of my love and instead allowed myself to be caught up in the day to day struggle and routine of maintaining control. By asserting too much control, in the end I lost it, a truth that a psychologist in Bellevue, Washington pointed out to Sonja when she went for a consultation in May of 1992. I thought it applied to her

but failed to recognize that it was not so much her problem as in actual fact it was mine. I had become a very poor listener.

Sonja wanted to be free although she had no idea what freedom was and as it turned out went from one dependency straight into another. What she meant by freedom was freedom of choice among the dependencies. I knew that I was living on borrowed time, but I only hastened the end by trying to prolong it instead of allowing our life together to come to its natural fruition.

Sonja wanted to be with me but not quite in the same way that I wanted to be with her. I felt that if I did not watch her close enough I would lose her. I failed to heed the old saying: "If you love something, set it free. If it comes back it's yours. If it doesn't it never was."

Gerhard's graduation was at about the same time as Sonja's and I decided to travel to Swarthmore for his, instead of staying in Vancouver for hers. She understood and supported me, but I think it also hurt her although she did not admit it.

At the end of April 1992 I drove my old Oldsmobile east along I-90 and three and a half days later pulled up into the parking lot behind Gerhard's dormitory at the college. He graduated with high honors as the second best student of the entire engineering class, missing the Rhodes Scholarship by a hair to a female student, a real plucker as he said. He was admitted to the honorary society, Phi Beta Kappa. After the emotional graduation ceremonies were over, we visited my foster mother, Margaret Smythe, in Wayne, Pennsylvania, then dropped his belongings off at Princeton University where he had been accepted into the doctoral program, and drove to the New Jersey shore for a few days of vacation. I flew back to Seattle while he drove the car back to Vancouver because he had never seen America from the ground.

When I returned to Vancouver after a ten day absence in early June, Sonja related to me that she had gotten to know a young music student, a piano performer in his second or third year of doctoral studies. After a while she admitted that she was in love with him and it obviously showed on her face and in all of her manners. He had come to the house while I was gone, they had been intimate but not consummated their affair. She said that she wanted to be sure this time before she went any further, but I did not believe her.

His name was Brandon, he was about the same age as Sonja and lived only a couple of blocks away from us in the single student residences in Acadia Park. Roy described him to me as having curly hair and being not very tall but about

Sonja's height of five feet and couple of inches.

My immediate reaction was that of a jealous husband. Sonja had not told me anything when she had taken an interest in him in as early in February when she insisted to go to a concert. She did this in a very shrewd way by saying I had my choice of either letting her go to a party or to the concert, and, of course, I thought the concert was more appropriate because I was going to be stuck baby sitting the children. It was Brandon's presentation, a part of his doctoral program. What also hurt me was that she used my absence to entertain him in our home much in the same way that she used my absence in Saint Tropez in the spring of 1987 to invite Peter Hörr into our home and go to bed with him.

I tried to get in touch with Brandon but he was not interested, so I wrote him a letter. He did not answer at first but did answer to my second letter about a month later. He said that he had decided that Sonja was not going to be a part in his life and that he would stop seeing her from now on. He needed a lot of time for himself, said Sonja, and obviously had consulted with his mother before reaching the decision. Sonja was saddened by losing her love, while I was happy retaining mine. She later told me that she had gone to student counseling at the university and complained about my interference, revealing our true relationship. The counselor said that there was nothing he or she could do. If she wanted results she would have to go to the police and tell them.

For one thing, Sonja was not ready to do that and hurt me. For the other, she still needed me to look after the children so she could carry through with her demanding twelve month teacher training program which would begin in the fall and take every drop of blood and energy out of her, so her friend Judy had told her before returning to Silvertown in British Columbia's interior.

During the month of July, Sonja took two summer courses and left the children in day care. It was a terrible decision on her part and quite egotistic. The courses, an Orff and a Kodaly music course, were not required in any of her programs but she argued that it was good for her and she needed the experience. The Canadian Orff Society had selected her as their favorite student and paid for her tuition. She could not afford to disappoint them, so she said. In the end I was stuck with the children because I could not bring myself to dump them at day care every day during the heat of the summer when most other children enjoyed the privilege of a summer vacation with their families. After a week, Sonja saw what she had done and offered to break off the course, but then it was I who told her to carry on but not do that kind of thing again.



When it was over we had two weeks left for ourselves and went to the Columbia Gorge at Hood River where Gerhard and Arno where windsurfing, did not like it there and returned home via Washington, spending two days at a lake east of Yakima and the rest of our so called vacation at home in Vancouver. It was a poor start for the new winter and spring terms, but Sonja promised that we would make it up by going to Hawaii over the Christmas holidays, provided she could save enough money to pay for the trip. And indeed, she opened a separate bank account and put all of her income from piano teaching into it until I eroded the money by using it to meet printing expenses for my new money book which appeared at the end of December, hoping to recover it by projected sales of a couple thousand copies. The sales never took place but we almost went to Hawaii regardless, if the events had not taken an entirely different turn during the middle of the next summer.

## Chapter 11

Roy had turned six in September 1991 and was enrolled at Queen Elizabeth Elementary School on 16th Avenue in Vancouver. It was a year premature. According to the old German rule not one tooth had come loose and he could not tie his shoe laces either. But he wanted to go and retaining him in Kindergarten did not seem to be a good idea either.

Keith, just three and a half, moved on to another day care called Tillicum because his old spot had been filled. But he did not like it. There were no friends that he knew, no brother and a rather strict and removed group of care givers. He lasted a month until I took him out and asked for his transfer to another facility which seemed to appeal to him. The transfer was refused on grounds of lack of notice. I took the day care to court, had a hearing in which my application for an injunction was denied, and settled for Keith to join the first days of January 1992. He staid home with me, learned to entertain himself while I worked, and counted the hours until it was time to pick up Roy.

Sonja had a heavy course load in her teacher training program and took a short teaching practicum in December at an elementary school in town. I kept asking her why she took so many teaching courses when she revealed that she had changed her mind and did not want to become a music specialist but rather a class room teacher, but decided not to tell me about it because she knew I was against it.

My father had been a teacher and all three of my brothers were teachers and married to teachers. By experience I knew full well how demanding class room teaching was, the daily preparations and the total presence in class for six or seven hours each day.

"Sonja," I said, "you are not cut out to be a class room teacher. Not only will it drain you but keep you away from what you really want to do - teach music."

At her practicum, teaching class all day on her own, she was under observation not only by the class room teacher but by a guidance counselor from the university's department of education. She nearly failed it but did not tell me about it either. But it did not escape me how agitated she had become, staying up longer and longer hours each night preparing for classes and courses. Many times after midnight I had to go downstairs into the kitchen and virtually turn the light

off. If she didn't have enough sleep she would soon collapse and become ill again. It wasn't worth the gamble. Sonja tried to protest at first but soon seemed to agree. She had to learn to work faster which was entirely against her nature.

On the weekends she continued to teach piano lessons which left little precious time for house chores and relaxation with the children and myself. She kept up the pace right through March when her extended thirteen week practicum began.

At the same time I was preparing a video tape for the Louis Rukeyser show broadcast weekly by Maryland Public Television whose producer had taken an interest in my new book, "Money Crisis - U.S.A. On Money, Banking, the National Debt, and Gold." Harry Schultz of Monaco, the eccentric international newsletter writer, had provided the foreword and followed up with a recommendation to Louis Rukeyser.

I had practiced filming outside with Arno all weekend and desperately needed Monday, March 9, 1992, off to prepare my final version. But this was also Sonja's first day of practicum and by arguing her point she prevailed. I had to stay home while the university's day cares were on strike and look after Keith, after driving Roy to school as usual.

In the evening after dinner I sent Roy to his room at a seven thirty, but he came downstairs again because Sonja had told him so. A minute later we met on the steps of the stair well and clashed, first arguing then pushing each other. I had opened a bottle of white French wine and Sonja had participated drinking it but could not tolerate the alcohol. The scene became a little nasty but lasted only ten minutes. Eventually, Roy and Keith were put to bed and we settled down, she preparing for classes and myself watching TV.

When Sonja came downstairs for breakfast the next morning she flashed a blue shining black eye that I hadn't seen the night before. I knew she bruised easily but this one, no this hadn't happened last night or else it would have shown between the three hours before we went to bed. I was speechless.

"Put some make-up on it, your going to school aren't you."

No, she was going to call in and stay home. She later told me that she spoke with the class room teacher, Sylvia, and said that she had an assault. She earned her sympathy immediately and was urged to take all the time off that she needed to recover.

An hour or so later, the German lady from down the street, Rina, called and asked if she could have a letter sent to my fax machine. I said that I was in the

midst of preparing a video and she agreed to have the fax sent early in the afternoon. But a short while later while I was taping my speech, I heard the phone ring but decided to ignore it. All of a sudden Sonja opened the door and said there was a fax coming in for Rina and that I should activate the fax machine. My tape was ruined after I had been more than half way through. I would have to start all over again. I lost my temper and scolded Sonja for coming in and interrupting me. Then the fax came and after it had come out I grabbed it and flung it down the stairs when the door bell rang. Sonja didn't want to answer and said I should, but I refused.

After a while I realized that Sonja had left with Keith. I tried to finish the tape but could find my calm to do it. Another hour went by and Sonja hadn't returned yet. I knew instantly that something was going on, packed my old tape, wrote the accompanying letter and wrapped it. Two and a half hours later, just as I was trying to step out the door and drive to the post office in Blaine, Washington to express mail the package, there were several hard knocks at the door. As I opened two Royal Canadian Mounted Police stepped in, demanded my identification, hand-cuffed me and led me away into their vehicle.

I was brought to the local station, charged with physical assault on my daughter, and finger printed. I was able to make two phone calls before they led me into a cell. Sonja answered the first one, refused to come to the station and get me out by recanting the charges, the next one was to Carol, Arno's companion, to tell her to get Arno at the university just in case I needed help. I spent a half hour in the cell and was brought to the Provincial Court House in Richmond about ten miles away from the University Endowment Lands.

After another hour in a cell I appeared before a justice of the peace, charged by crown counsel with physical assault and released on my own recognizance to appear at a specified date for a hearing. Crown counsel requested and the judge gave the order of no contact with Sonja, directly or indirectly, and ordered me to stay away at least two blocks of her residence on 2512 Melfa Lane.

I took the bus back to town and went straight to Arno's house. He had come home when he heard the news from Carol and was expecting me. There was no question in my mind that Sonja had malicious intent. I knew it was Rina who had pushed her, but still, if she didn't want to she didn't have to go to the R.C.M.P. and have me arrested. After all we had settled last night. I did not remember having caused her black eye. We weren't that violent. Had she added to it in the morning to find cause to start an action against me? Possibly because

Sonja could move in secret ways, I knew that from the past.

Arno called her and said what he thought of her action putting me out of commission at a most vulnerable time. After five years in America I didn't have a break-through and the Rukeyser show provided that chance in a life time that every writer was dreaming about. What in the world was she doing?

Sonja came over to his house the following day and every day thereafter. She told me that she seen crown counsel at the provincial court house the day after she reported me, the next and the following day to have the charges dropped but was always met by this wall of disinterest. They wanted more information, better reasons.

I asked her the first evening she came if she had said anything else and she answered with a flat "no." The following evening she began, first hesitantly and than in greater detail that she had been asked the question who the father was of her children and that she had answered in a cursory way that it was me.

"What have you done," I snapped, "you told them, you told them against all previous promises and undertakings to be quiet about it once and for all? You did that? But why, Sonja, why, why?"

She tried to talk herself out of it, saying it didn't really matter that certainly the charges were going to be dropped if she insisted and that the matter would be over and done with in a short while. I couldn't agree less.

We were standing at MacBride Park in Vancouver, a block from Arno's place. The children were playing and I looked at them in disdain, thinking oh boy, now the heat is going to be on them. Social Services would be informed and they may just snatch them.

I went home rather gloomy, kept awake during most of the night and the following morning prepared a notice of motion, advising crown counsel that I would ask the court to dismiss the charges on the basis that they were frivolous, vexatious and abuse of the process of the court. Sonja came in the afternoon and signed a statement witnessed by Arno that there was no assault on my part and that, if she had suffered any harm it was of her own doing because I had acted in self-defense. I went to the court and filed it the same afternoon. I gave crown counsel two clear days and when my motion came to a hearing, Judge Groberman asked that Sonja be present and adjourned for another couple of days.

On the way out of the court room I had a word with crown counsel and learned that they were concerned about Sonja's allegations regarding my paternity. They said Sonja definitely needed help no matter what the outcome of the assault

case would be.

This was at about noon. I drove off immediately, picked Roy up at school and went to Sonja's school where she was teaching and told her that in my opinion according to what crown counsel had told me I believed the children to be in danger of apprehension. She came home with me immediately, quickly packed a suit case, went to Rina and got Keith. Then we drove to Roy's school, picked him up and drove south of the border to Washington State.

While we were in Kirkland, Arno called and said that an R.C.M.P. officer had appeared at his home and asked if he knew where Sonja was, that she had been reported missing and asked where I was and what type of vehicles we were driving. Arno gave him the information.

I took Sonja to the local police station to report herself. They checked the files and said: "No Sonja Haikel is reported missing in Vancouver."

Then Sonja called Rina and learned that she had reported her missing. "Don't get involved anymore in my life, Rina, please," she told her. Rina agreed but did not keep her promise. Instead, she called Social Services and said that I was seen pulling Roy by the hair and that Roy grew pale when he saw me. I did not find this out until two months later. There is a saying in German:

*Gott bewahre uns vor Sturm und Wind  
und Deutschen, die im Ausland sind!*

God protect us against storm and wind and Germans who are outside the country (meaning "abroad").

At the day when my motion was to be heard in court, Sonja appeared and was asked if she wanted her daddy back. She affirmed and said that there was no assault. The judge varied the order and I was able to return home after about a week of absence.

But crown counsel's words stuck in my mind. They had said that Sonja needed help. It could not be forced upon her but Social Services could be alerted and snatch the children under the wide powers of the Superintendent of Family and Child Service in the Family and Child Service Act. The mother could then be forced into cooperation and submission before she would ever see the children again. Therefore, Sonja and I felt that the children should not return to British Columbia until I had my trial and hopefully the case was dismissed so that Social Services could not claim violence in the home.

The trial was set for April 1, 1992, and while I prepared myself, spending hours on end in the university's law library, Sonja attended to the children in

Kirkland. We took alternate turns so that she could continue her demanding practicum.

I had studied all of the defense strategies. On April 1st, Sonja and I drove to the Richmond court. As we entered the building, the lady officer from the R.C.M.P. who had taken down Sonja's police statement approached her expressing her sympathy and saying that she was always available for her if she needed help. She was pregnant in her ninth month, a heavy ordinary looking woman. Sonja did not continue the conversation and simply moved away. Then crown counsel approached her for a pretrial discussion. Sonja told him that she would only talk in the court room in front of the judge. He let her alone. When my case was called, Sonja came into the court room and took the witness stand.

The main point that turned the whole issue was whether or not Sonja accepted the police statement on the witness stand. I had briefed her, of course, and pleaded not guilty. Then it was crown counsel's turn to ask Sonja questions. He began by asking Sonja what event had brought her to this court today, trying to get her to talk. Sonja was not willing to cooperate. She answered the question concerning the police report by saying that she did not accept it.

At that point Judge Groberman said to crown counsel:

"Witness hostile, you may cross-examine."

Sonja answered many of the subsequent questions by saying, "I don't remember" and "I forgot." The judge then said:

"Witness lying," and turning to crown counsel, "is this your only witness.

"Yes."

"Case dismissed."

I had prepared for an hour long trial and brought along a number of exhibits which I had intended to enter. I looked at the judge in disbelief. He looked back at me and said:

"You may go. You may go."

Sonja and I left the court house and on the way home I said to her:

"If you wish to apologize now for what you did, I will accept."

She looked at me for a minute and then said:

"I apologize, Papa, for having done this to you. I will never again go to the police and report you only because we had a quarrel."

"Fine, Sonja, I accept."

Then she leaned over and put her head on my shoulder. I put my arm around her and hugged her as best I could from my position in the driver's seat.

In the afternoon I drove down to Washington and brought our children home. Roy and Keith had been away for over two weeks and felt happy to be back, sleep in their own beds and play with their own toys. Roy is very sensitive to change and hates to move and relocate as much as his mommy does. The children jumped on their bikes and circled around the block until it was time for supper. It was a wonderful feeling to be reunited and to be family again. After the children were in bed, had their standard two good night stories and hugs, Sonja and I sat down in the living room and looked at each other with relief. No, she reiterated, that was a stupid thing of her to have done. But if she hadn't gone along with Rina, she explained, Rina would have reported the incident to Social Services to come and get the children. She felt pressured if she didn't want to lose them, she thought. "Always other peoples' girl and a follower, aren't you?" I thought to myself but didn't say anything.

Rina (short for "Katharina Gemeinhardt," literally translated "Katharine Meanhard") had come to Canada from Germany as a wild nineteen year old runaway from home and had married a man to get her immigration visa, divorced him and married an alcoholic in Bella Coola, a fishing and lumber town up on the Northwest Coast of British Columbia and had two daughters by him. She had divorced him too and spoke extremely crudely and cruelly about him. She was to give him a pair of concrete shoes for Christmas, she had said one day, so she could throw him into the ocean. I saw the poor man visiting his two daughters now and then, and he did not strike me as a violent and insensitive person but to the contrary one who was most likely suffering under Rina's heavy handedness and rudeness. Rina had a house guest by the name of Denise, a cold divorced woman in her early thirties from Golden, British Columbia, near the Alberta border. The two seemed to reinforce each other and I have reason to believe that Denise had also reported me to Social Services echoing Rina's wild and off the wall allegations of child abuse.

During the months of April the sixty job applications that I had mailed out for Sonja to the music departments of West Coast colleges and to Rudolf Steiner Waldorf schools came to fruition and Sonja received two invitations for interviews. One from a Waldorf school in Keeau near Hilo, Hawaii, and another from Carmel, California. She tried to get leave from the university's department of education but was turned down. After lengthy discussions between myself and the head of the department, Sonja was allowed two days off in April to fly to Hawaii, and decided to use the Victoria Day weekend to visit Carmel.



I made the airline reservations for her, bought the tickets and drove her to Seattle in mid-April. The children accompanied us to the airport and to the gate to see their mommy off. Of course they wanted to go along for the trip but were promised that if she got the job, we would all move to Hawaii.

Three days later I picked Sonja up. She talked about her experience on Hawaii the whole three and a half hours of our trip back to Vancouver and was excited about the prospect of teaching grade three and living in paradise. She brought a few postcards including one to Arno showing a waterfall on the road to Hana on Maui:

"How about a bath? Or quick shower or both? This is Maui of which I am just seeing the airport and mountains in the distance. Looks cozy with the villages on the foothills - reminds a little of Switzerland. The big Island [of Hawaii] really is beautiful and I have seen only a small part of it (Hilo and area).

"The spirit here is great and things have gone very well. Will find out in 2-3 weeks. The vegetation in the country is so luscious, almost sensory overload for such a quick dip [meaning to say, "such a short trip"]. Aloha - Sonja"

The staff had been wonderful and warm, she said, the children loved her, and she had received hints that she would get the job. "See you in August," they had said when they saw her off at the airport. I followed up with a thank you letter to the personnel administrator, De Bora Taube with whom I had talked on the phone concerning immigration formalities and flight schedules. We became quite friendly. Six weeks later Sonja was offered the job but in the end, in spite of her previous euphoria, did not take it.

## Chapter 12

Wednesday, May 6, 1992, was a sunny day in the often rainy city of Vancouver. Sonja had left early for University Hill Elementary School, riding her bike down the hill. She was now two months into her practicum with one month to go before she would go to Sacramento for a week long seminar to prepare her for the job in Hawaii, if she would get it of which she was certain.

I had driven Roy to school, as usual, after preparing his lunch and on the way home dropped Keith off at his day care, staying around for a while until after ten or fifteen minutes he would rush up to me, give me a kiss on the cheek and release me. Sometimes, if he did not want to go we made a special deal that I would pick him up early, depending on the severity of his objection either before lunch, after lunch or after nap time. If I didn't have time to stay at the day care or pick him up so that he would have to wait for mommy to show, I needed to tell him well in advanced, at least the day before, and remind him again before I dropped him off. That way, I never had a problem with him, except that sometimes he bargained for an inexpensive toy in exchange for his promise not to fuss. It was usually granted.

On this day I got home at around two in the afternoon with Roy and had also picked up Keith. To my surprise Sonja was already there.

"You are home early," I said.

"It's Wednesday. We always get off early."

"I know, but not that early," I replied. "What's the matter? Did they let you go, are you fired?"

"Come into the living room. Sit down, sit down, I've got to talk to you. I need a cigarette," she urged and went into the living room.

"No, I don't want to sit down. Just tell me, right here, what's going on?"

She wanted me to sit down by all means, but I didn't. Then she wanted to smoke. I got her a cigarette, she lit it, took a deep breath and puffed out the smoke in front of her and sat down.

"I've had a visit from Social Services at the school today." And then she paused. I knew immediately what that meant. Crown counsel hadn't given up. The case of worst scenario for which I had prepared in my mind was on. I let her finish. That same Peter Lowson, if I remembered who he was - I did - had

come into her classroom unannounced after speaking to the principal obtaining his permission. He had taken her out into the hall and said that the department had concerns regarding the safety and well-being of the children since they had received a number of reports that there was violence in the house. In addition, there was the still unresolved paternity question. When he had left Sonja came home immediately.

Roy was in the house with us and I said to Sonja:

"Go get Keith, I'm waiting in the car for him. We're going to Washington."

At first she didn't want to go but then realized the severity of my assessment. We agreed to meet at a golf course on West Marine drive from where I would phone Mr. Lawson and then take the children back to Washington State into safety, while Sonja would follow in the other car after she had packed the children's clothe and a few toys.

Ten minutes later I drove off and half an hour later met Sonja at the agreed spot. I went to call Mr. Lawson, but said if I didn't return within fifteen minutes she was going to drive to Blaine alone with the children and wait there for me or until she got word from me.

The phones were occupied and I had to wait an agonizing ten minutes until I could make my call. Mr. Lawson started the conversation by demanding particulars about my date and place of birth, residence, citizenship, and where I was calling from. I asked him what he was up to because I had called concerning his visit to Sonja's school. He stated that he wanted to interview the children and if we were going to be home.

"No, Mr. Lawson," I said, "I have the feeling that it is better if we talked to our lawyers first. They will then contact you."

Sonja was still outside about to leave. We drove away from the golf course and stopped a mile along Marine Drive at Balsam Park. The minute the children were on the swings and we sat down, Sonja mentioned to me that a police car had pulled up on the other side of the park and was observing us. I glanced over the back of my shoulder quickly and my heart sank.

"Let's pretend he isn't there," I said. "Give me a cigarette. Don't look at him, just ignore him." After a while I asked her again. He was still there, and a couple of minutes later - still there.

"Damn," I said, "I hope he doesn't wait for the Social Services to show up. I wish we had gone straight to Washington."

After half an hour, all of a sudden, he disappeared. We took the children

into my car in a hurry and rushed for the border. There was the usual line-up. But in five minutes I was past the stone next to the Peace Arch that said: "Jefferson Davis Highway. Donated by the Daughters of the Confederation." We had made it to the States and out of Social Services' jurisdiction. The sign to the right read: "Welcome to the United States."

At U.S. Customs and Immigration, I showed my passport and visa, holding Roy's and Keith's American passports in hand. The officer looked into the vehicle and asked if these were my boys. I said, "yes." All of a sudden, lively little Keith started to babble and repeat what I had told him why we were in a rush.

"The child snatchers are after us, but we are faster."

The officer looked at me and said:

"What is he saying?"

"Oh, he's just babbling about a movie he's seen."

"Okay, go ahead."

Half an hour later Sonja arrived but the Chevy's stickers had expired. She was pulled over and had to go inside. I quickly put the stickers on that I had bought in the meantime at a nearby insurance office and went in with her. She had a U.S. car and driver's license but Canadian passport. That's why they pulled her over. I went to the counter, claimed the car as my own and showed my Treaty Canada visa. The customs officer did not understand why I was called in and motioned me over to immigration. I was totally calm while waiting, knowing that U.S. Immigration did not have the power to extradite the children, who are born U.S. citizens, back to Canada. Immigration took my passport and left the counter but came back ten minutes later.

"Thank you for your patience. We didn't know what your exact status was." It said it right on my Form I-94. I don't know what was really the matter.

We drove off or rather home to Kirkland. Sonja drove back the following day to continue her practicum while I staid a day longer and prepared a notice of motion, filed it in Vancouver Family Court, returnable in three days, asking the court for an interim injunction against the Minister of Social Services and Housing/Superintendent of Family and Child Care to leave the children alone until August 31, 1992, when the family would permanently return to Washington. Sonja joined in the petition.

On the day of the hearing, Sonja was in Kirkland looking after the children. Social Services were represented by counsel, a short cock-eyed lawyer with a clump foot. He seemed mean, raised the incest issue and applied for a warrant to

search the premises for the children. I lost my application and he got his. His closing remarks were:

"If we see a picture on the wall with Mr. Haikel beating the children, of course..."

That is where I lost my calm and accused him of unprofessional conduct and other things. The Family Court judge declined jurisdiction in the matter of my petition and referred me to the Supreme Court of British Columbia in Vancouver. Two days later I filed my petition there, Sonja once again signing her joinder but I did not file it.

The hearing was on May 20, 1992 in front of the Honourable Mr. Justice Shaw. A cross-motion was filed by Social Services asking for an order that I advise them of the exact whereabouts of the children and deliver the children for examination. During the lunch break I typed a motion asking the court for an order finding the children not in need of protection. When counsel on the other side saw it he sighed. Justice Shaw went through every aspect of the motions in great detail and patience, pointing out that the incest allegation had nothing to do with the safety and well-being of the children and that there was nothing in the act that would compel me to present the children or tell Social Services their whereabouts since I had already advised the court that they were in their home state of Washington.

Both of our applications, Social Service's and mine, were dismissed. I should have stopped right there and waited out the summer with the children in the safety of Washington State. But instead I filed a motion in Court of Appeal. It was heard, was adjourned, and again adjourned because I failed to appear. Meanwhile Social Services had a rehearing and obtained an order from Madame Justice Gill of the Supreme Court ordering the production of the children at Social Services' Alma Street office. Justice Gill orders a full blown trial. I did not show produce the children, saying that the Minister/Superintendent had lost jurisdiction because the children had returned to their home state in the United States where they are citizens and that U.S. constitutional law as well as Washington law pertaining to legal guardians prohibited me from extraditing the children to Canada.

This was the end of my legal proceedings until on August 7, 1992, Sonja changed sides and pulled an unexpected trick on me and the children.

## Chapter 13

During the month of May, 1992, I spent all of my time with Roy and Keith alternating between Kirkland and Lake Stevens, always hopeful that I would get the desired relief from the courts so that we could return to Sonja in Vancouver. Roy suffered more than Keith. Back in Vancouver, anytime we were gone for more than an hour he would come and say to me, "I want to go home." Now he didn't have a home because Sonja had betrayed us. I was very bitter and let Sonja know it every time she came.

"How could you have done such a dreadful thing. What for?"

"It is also your fault," she used to counter. "It takes two to fight."

"But I'm not alluding to the assault issue. That's over. Case dismissed. What I'm accusing you of is that you exceeded the reasonable means of getting even with me by also denouncing the children."

With consistent regularity I received no answer because she didn't have one.

"I have learned my lesson, now," she used to say. "I will never - ever - do it again." I knew she was lying and I hated her for it. Since her performance let a lot to be desired, she resorted to lies and secret plans in order to get way. She had no backbone, leaned on others and was a follower. Additionally, she had a latent genetic mental disorder. The worst was yet to come.

"I don't really believe that, you see," I said. "You have done it so many times and said it was the last time. You will do it again a seventh time, an eight, and a ninth, always."

She would look back at me in anger and remain silent. It bugged me that she could have a nice home, a roof over her head, a comfortable bed, a shower and all the amenities of a true home while we where unable to rent a decent place because we were out of funds.

The other thing was that I really missed her steady company. She was always gone and saw us only on weekends, or, only if I had a court date took a day off during the week. But she had already been absent so many times that she couldn't afford it anymore. So, sometimes she sent Arno who had lost his summer job and had plenty of time at his disposal to pitch in. She began to abuse him and Carol too when she moved.

In early May Sonja phoned Hawaii from Birch Bay and proudly broke the news. She had gotten the job as grade a three teacher at the Malamalama School at Keeau, Hawaii, was going to go to the seminar in Sacramento in July and another one in Honolulu and start her new job the first week in September. I had nothing to present her as a gift, so I wrote her a little postcard, picked a couple of wild flowers and hugged her. "How wonderful," I said. "We are going to out of the woods soon."

"I told you that I was going to get the job, see?" she said triumphantly. "You didn't believe me, but I did. Wouldn't it be funny if I didn't pass the teaching practicum but unlike anyone else had a job?"

"Indeed," answered, "that would be funny. Have you thought of throwing in your towel now at the university, enjoy your summer and then go to Hawaii all relaxed and ready?" Of course I was only testing her reaction. "And the children would like it too."

She said it was a distinct possibility, but no, she might want to return to Canada one day and then couldn't teach without the certificate.

"You have said earlier when Social Services showed up, that your kids come first. You were willing to drop out of the practicum in order to be with them."

"But not now," she answered. "You have an obligation too, and you're here now."

"But I wasn't the one who did it to them, Sonja. You went and started the whole ordeal for them, and for me."

Every time we broached the subject my bitterness returned and I could not hold blaming her again and again. She told me she didn't want to hear it anymore because she couldn't change it. Then I replied what she meant by "hear it" while I and the children had to "endure it." Wasn't that worse. She could at least hear it. What I was really fishing for was a sincere apology from the heart. But it never came and it couldn't come because secretly Sonja had already planned her next move, a blow even worse than the first one. In the context of her plans, an apology would have been a lie and she wasn't going to lie more than she necessarily had to, so she thought.

I was too naive and dumb to pick up on it until it was almost too late. But then again, didn't she say we should all go to Hawaii, though not live in the same house. I should see the children grow up and be near. The thought and her suggestion had always hurt me very deeply. I felt like the employee who was terminated and retired after ten years of faithful and devoted service. I was in love

with her and she gave me notice so that someone else could move in and take my place and inherit my children.

"Her old-maid fear, the rose falls of the bud," I thought to myself and told her. But she said that wasn't it. And then she said, "You're my father."

That was it, irrefutably so. It hurt but I had to agree and I did, but didn't really want to answer her. So I said, "I know."

Every time she visited during these weekends we were starved for love. She made no bones about it and went straight and directly down to business. One night I was tired from walking the long beaches of Birch Bay with the children, watching over them and then, perhaps, having had a little too much beer and wine. When I heard her familiar, "Do you want it?" I suggested the following morning, but a minute later the mere thought of her seduction made me change my mind and rejuvenated me. She was wonderful, romantic and so alive. She could hardly ever reach her culmination in the standard position. But tonight she did, and with what force and fervor.

There is this age factor with people, including women, I thought. At age seventeen or eighteen they are so beautiful but emotionally immature that making love to them takes on a very mild form of masturbation. As they mature love becomes more of a mutual exchange. At age twenty-seven, I found, generally speaking a woman is her loveliest emotionally, by temperament and physical strength. And at twenty-seven, Sonja was at her prime. I had sensed it for a year that she wanted another baby, but there was no way I could be involved unless I was reckless, unfortunately.

Women over thirty. Something takes place inside of a woman that I have never been quite able to identify or understand. Age makes some women lovelier or more loveable although not prettier. With others age more quickly, a process which is compounded by their own anxiety.

Distance makes the heart grow fonder. After Sonja and I had been intimate, I always felt my strength come back and was able to forgive her and contend myself. I mentioned to her that at all times there are millions of people on this earth living in refugee camps, starving or fleeing their homes because of war. We had to suffer and endure none of that, but experienced merely an inconvenience for a limited period of time, another couple of months. She agreed but urged me to rent a house, something permanent. I thought something to the effect like, "Serves you right. You did it to us and now to yourself."

I did not pick up on her concerns that when she had to leave the house in



Vancouver she needed a firm roof over her head, instead of camping on a lake or renting a cabin. I had forgotten how hard she took relocating. In the end I shot myself in the foot because my attitude only reinforced her by planning her next moves in complete secrecy.

A week or so after she received the news from Hawaii, one Monday afternoon the landlord, Bill, came over to my cabin and said to call Sonja at home. I rushed to the phone booth at the beach and dialed her number. She answered in her familiar soft voice and came directly to the point:

"I was summoned to Dr. Craig's office this morning for a conference and have been terminated by the department of education for failing the practicum. I have had a lengthy discussion with my guidance counselor who was quite concerned how I would take it. I'm going to have to go back to the school and pick up my things tomorrow morning and also return the art work of the children that I have reviewed over the weekend."

I had expected that this may happen, and in fact Sonja had alluded to it herself a week earlier. Her dismissal did not come as a complete surprise.

"When are you going to see us, then?" was my immediate next question. Perhaps she was surprised that I did not begin to criticize her or offer consolation.

"Tomorrow afternoon, I think. I have to recover and get used to the idea. You know, they have so unfair, and Guillian [her guidance counselor] admits it."

"In a way you're fortunate, Sonja, that they told you now rather than a year into your teaching career. You don't even want to teach public school. I know it hurts, Sonja, and I don't think they were fair to you either. Maybe they're even paying you back, a sort of revenge, that you prevailed over Dr. Craig's objection and went to Hawaii. Did you tell her you got the job?"

"No. But they've been asking me a number of times and maybe I should have told them. They might have allowed me to finish."

She was trying to rationalize, trying to take it with dignity. But I did not feel sorry for her because she was not a class room teacher in public school. In Hawaii, in the little country village of Keeau it was a different matter. I believed she had every chance in the world of proving herself there, provided she was not bogged down with house chores and the children during her first months or year. I had offered to take the children for another year to give her room to breathe.

"It will all work out in the end, Sonja," I said. "Don't worry. I lost jobs before in my life, but you've never had the experience, you've never suffered any real losses. This is your first. Take it easy. They can't take away from you the

experience that you gained, regardless of whether you're going to be certified or not. See, without your teaching experience you could not have taught in Hawaii when you visited and got the job there. Most of those who now graduate at UBC will be unemployed because B.C. is not hiring. You're the lucky one after all. I believe in you, and I love you."

I went back to the cabin where Roy and Keith were playing, sat down and began to worry anyway. It depressed me that Sonja had failed. A year was wasted, and what a difficult year it had been. But she's going to Hawaii, ah, Hawaii, paradise. We'll all go and enjoy it, enjoy life from now on. The hell with worrying. I grabbed a beer from the fridge, sat outside on the picnic bench, lit a cigarette and let my dreadful thoughts go up in smoke. The sun was shining mildly on the long beach, the water and the mountains in the distance. Roy and Keith were at play. The thought that Sonja would be coming tomorrow instead of on the weekend filled me with joy. We would have almost a month together before she would go to Sacramento, and another two weeks afterward before we would leave for Hawaii. The children hadn't seen much of her during the past six weeks and it would be good if she showed for an extended vacation with Roy and Keith now that the hassle in Vancouver was over.

Roy and Keith were a joy to have. At low tide we walked a mile out on the warm sandy beach. The water was only a few feet deep and very warm. While Roy began to shiver after a couple of minutes of swimming in the water, rapping himself into a towel and trembling, Keith could stay in a very long time. He had more fat on him.

At home, I had started to take notes of the children's quirks, especially Keith's witty questions and remarks. One went like this:

Keith: You don't want to have a birthday so you don't get older?

Me: Yes.

Keith: You don't want to have a birthday so you don't die?

Me: Yes.

Roy: Dying is the saddest part of your life.

Keith: If Daddy dies, someone can have his car?

While I was reading, the children somehow moved to the subject of parentage.

Keith: Grandpa?

Roy: Daddy?

Keith: Who's our grandpa?

Roy: He's here.

Keith: So it's Roland?

Roy: Yeah.

Keith: So not everybody has a grand-dad?

At another time Keith remarked: " What is a plug for? So nobody plays with the drain at night?"

On May 12, 1992, on her way from Vancouver to Birch Bay, Sonja got stuck at the Peace Arch border crossing. She drove our other car with Washington license plates and when she showed her Canadian passport the examining officer became suspicious and had her pull over and go inside the building for an inspection.

They asked Sonja for the keys to the car but she refused because she wanted to be there when they went through it which really antagonized the officers, a very aggressive inspector by the name of Woods with whom I had had difficulty myself over ten years ago, and his supervisor, Mr. E. Martinez.

After waiting around for over an hour, Sonja finally gave in when a female officer arrived and threatened to take the keys from her. The officers went through the car and came back with the letters from the school in Hawaii which they took as proof that Sonja was going to immigrate to the United States and accept a job without proper documentation or authorization. She had disobeyed my advice to apply directly for a Treaty Canada visa because she felt the Hawaiian letter had been improperly drawn up. Eventually Mr. Martinez let her go, handing her a proper Form I-129 to apply for an H-visa which he said could be done within a few weeks, since preferred treatment would be given to Canadians. But he retained her passport just to be sure.

Sonja arrived in Birch Bay four hours late and I scolded her for changing her mind and not following my advice as agreed. I drove her back to the border and she walked across to Canada where Arno picked her up and went through customs with her again. In lieu of her passport she a copy of her birth certificate. Two hours later Arno and Carol arrived with Sonja and a bottle of champagne. They had secured a Treaty Canada visa, valid for one year which gave her time to settle the immigration formalities. I was absolutely pleased but before participating in the celebrations I asked Sonja's permission to give her "a spanking," which, of course, wasn't meant to be taken seriously.

On Sunday evening, Sonja returned to the border and asked for her passport but it was locked away in a safe. She was told to return when Mr.

Martinez would be in. The following evening she met with him, but instead of returning her passport he served her with a notice of exclusion. Now she had a case against her that would go before an immigration judge in Seattle and, in the meantime could not return to the United States. Sonja came back to the car where I was waiting with the children and we returned to our cabin in Birch Bay.

I drove to Seattle twice during the following week, got a copy of the Immigration Act and Regulations and began to devour them, spending a good three days familiarizing myself with the law. I concluded that she was in deep trouble and decided to make a last ditch attempt to appease Mr. Martinez and have the case against Sonja dropped.

Finally, after two lengthy meetings, he agreed to receive Sonja, promised not to arrest her and return her passport if she provided proof that she was following through with the H-application. Ten days after the mishap, Sonja had her passport back and the following day was free to return to the United States and be with our children.

This was the day that Sonja's mama arrived from Germany for a three week visit. When she arrived at Birch Bay to see Sonja and the children she broke in tears. It was a very emotional reunion. She saw Roy and when Keith came to say hello, she burst out and said: "Oh, isn't he sweet." The little boy, I thought to myself, who she wanted to abort five years earlier had turned into a precious little grandson. But that did not remove the grudge she firmly held against me. No, not a dent. She returned to Vancouver the following day, after baby sitting the boys together with Arno, while was in Los Angeles for a job interview as senior vice president, finance, for a large German travel organization.

I had sent out six hundred circular letters to American subsidiaries of German companies in selected states on the East Coast and the West Coast shortly after Sonja had failed her practicum. She was absolutely against it then, saying we would all go to Hawaii together and what I was doing was only a waste of money. I had to push her out of the car as I drove off to Kirkland to print out the letter. What a fool I had been. She really intended that we remain a family, though not necessarily under the same roof, but near each other and I had turned her down. An unforgivable mistake of mine, as it turned out. I tried so hard to provide for us in case she failed, but I also sent a clear signal to her that I did not trust her ability to provide for herself and the children.

The past several months had been one disaster after another. We could have dealt with the influences from outside, her failure at the university and even

the persecution from Social Services. But to be harsh with her, in spite of my righteous anger, instead of loving, forgiving and caring was a mistake from which I should not recover. She withdrew more and more and began to execute her secret plans, and I was dumb and reckless enough not to see what was coming.

## Chapter 14

After my lease was up at the cabin in Birch Bay, on July 4, 1992, at noon, Sonja left with Gerhard for Vancouver while I watched the fireworks with Roy and Keith, camped at the State Park, got rained out and left early in the morning for Pearrygin Lake State Park near Winthrop, Washington, east of the North Cascade Mountains. Usually it's a lovely drive past New Halem, the town at the bottom of Diablo Lake Dam built by Seattle Light & Power, then up five thousand feet through magnificent mountains and over Washington Pass and down to the Methow Valley and Winthrop. Because it was night and raining I did not see much of the country side. The children were sleeping in the back.

I got into Winthrop at around eight and was the first at the lake side park to claim a campsite.

Sonja began to get busy in Vancouver packing and cleaning out her house because she had given notice as of July 30th, rather than August 31st as planned if she had survived her practicum. A week later she came to visit with Gerhard for a couple of days, but left again a day early on July 10th, so that Gerhard could help remove my things and drive the Chevy to Kirkland with it. I didn't trust Sonja and told her this later, which again perturbed her. When we parted I did not say good-bye to Sonja, neither did she to me. She sensed that I slowly had my fill of baby-sitting while she continued her program in style.

Gerhard performed as promised and left on a Continental flight from SeaTac two days later. The children staid at Gordon's and Kathy's while I saw him off at the airport. Sonja was now all by herself in the house, but made little attempts of cleaning it out. I presume she spent most of the time visiting friends and saying good-bye. She had a problem with relocating. She loved travel but hated to move. In the end the chore of moving fell upon Arno and Carol, the task cleaning out her Augean stable.

I talked to Sonja on the phone daily, and always she wanted to speak to the children as well. They were there to say hi to their mommy.

The day before she left for Sacramento, she received a letter from UBC' Faculty of Education of July 13, 1992; a devastating letter of dismissal. The Director of Field Placement and Research, Charles Ungerleider, wrote among

others:

"Your Education 418: 'Extended Practicum (Elementary)' at University Hill Elementary School was terminated prior to completion by the mutual decision of your school advisor, the school's principle, the faculty advisor responsible for supervision you practicum, and the program coordinator...

While your performance was not without strengths, your practicum record indicates that your performance was in need of improvement in many essential areas, including instructional planning, delivery and classroom management...

Your letter of June 19, 1992 to Dr. Craig requests a deferment. In it you described the period of your practicum as 'the most difficult in your life,' indicating that legal proceedings were initiated during the first weeks of your practicum concerning matters of custody of your children. You indicate that the proceedings led to absences from the practicum, emotional upheaval and stress.

I do not think there is sufficient grounds for granting a deferral. First, a number of the deficiencies in your performance as a teacher were evident during your two-week practicum in December..."

The letter closed by saying:

"Your practicum performance raises the question of your suitability for teaching. I strongly urge you to review the responsibilities which teachers have and seek counseling regarding the match between your capacities and those required of teachers."

What a blow to an aspiring student just a week before completion! Sonja kept the existence and contents of the letter to herself. I found it two weeks later in her belongings in Sacramento.

The night before she left for Sacramento by train, Sonja confronted me with an ultimatum. I was to promise to buy her the ticket to Hawaii which she had booked for herself to leave alone on the 19th of August.

Yes, we would have a three week holiday together after the seminar in Sacramento. I said, I would check with Hawaiian Airlines in the morning and most likely I would buy her the ticket. That wasn't good enough, I should promise. She claimed that she had only found out about the special \$335 offer hours earlier and if she didn't buy her ticket within 48 hours the fare would be \$250 higher. I said I

couldn't promise, but that most likely meant most likely. What irked me was that she had made her plans single handedly, and they did not include Roy, Keith or me. I did not confront her then. It sunk in after I had hung up. I didn't like it one bit.

This was on Wednesday evening. She had returned from Arno and Carol after midnight. No doubt, she hadn't slept much, rose at five in the morning and left the house at six to catch the bus which took her to the Amtrak station in Seattle, rode all day and the following night and got into Sacramento at around six Friday morning. She got a ride into town with a lady who she had met on the train and then took the bus to Fair Oaks where she met a Waldorf School teacher who took her to the Rudolf Steiner College and the private residence on Bannister Road where she was going to stay for the next nine days of the seminar.

There was a get together in the evening. No events were scheduled for Saturday. Sonja rose early in the morning and got busy by writing her grandmother in Kassel, Germany an emotional letter. The following is a translation:

"Dear Grandma:

In my thoughts I am so close to you since our talk last evening on the telephone. I would also like to tell you that I think and thought of you often.

Grandma, when I was a little girl you gave me so much along on my way and so many dear childhood memories are connected with you...walks through nature, recitations of poems (Goethe, Schiller, Morgenstern...), Saxon jokes, visits to the art museum, talks and more. I am deeply indebted to you for it and thank you with all my heart.

It is still early in the morning, about seven o'clock. A pleasant breeze comes into our room from the outside. A large deciduous tree rustles its dress and besides the morning concert of the birds one can hear the automobile traffic and now and then an airplane in the sky. We live here directly above the school, respectively the Waldorf School is situated at the foot of a hill toward the river bed. Tomorrow my Danish room mate who lives in Wisconsin and our hostess and I will go into the river for a swim. Actually, Anne-Marie and I wanted to go directly after class today, but I will rather wait until Ruth (my host) will accompany us since there are some undertows and she knows the water. If the stream is too strong one can



simply dip the feet into the cool and the legs, cool off arms and face.

It is hot here and dry. Most the time a wind blows. Yesterday the heat and this dryness was really a little new and one needs some time to get used to it.

The college is much smaller than I expected and is quite nicely situated. It consists of several small buildings with a green area in the middle. Somewhat aside from it is a beautiful garden with areas of cut long grass, huge sun flowers, roses and other flowers, dark green water melons, beans, tomatoes, celery and more. Really nice to see something like this. The colors and smells are gorgeous and [it is] good to know that people of the earth can live here.

In Hawaii - the area where I will be - one can also have a garden and a big advantage compared to here is that the soil does not need to be artificially watered. Nature looks after it. It is on the Hilo side (Hilo is the most experienced [sic.] town on the East side of the big island Hawaii) very green and has a high humidity. On the other hand the Kona side (West) of the island, which lies about 2 1/2 hours by car away has white sandy beaches with turquoise green warm sea. When I was there end April/beginning May, I also saw the country side around Hilo, since there was not enough time left and I also have taught in the first and second grade for observation and talked to parent groups - apart from the long teachers' conference and the interview for over two hours. There are many wonderful things to report about Hawaii later, it is heavenly there.

Affectionately yours, Sonja"

On Saturday evening I tried to call Sonja in Sacramento from the pay phone at Pearrygin Lake State Park but she wasn't home. I called again at a quarter to eleven but she still wasn't back. Ruth said she would switch the phone over to her room if I wanted to call later.

"You can call anytime you like," she said.

Sonja and I hadn't been on the best of terms and had hardly seen each other for some time. For one thing her mama had visited, then there was the incident with immigration, and I was slowly getting fed up with taking care of the children while she carried through with all of her programs and having a good time, regardless of what she had done to us. Now that she wasn't even home late at night I got jealous thinking she might have found a friend and having a good

time with him while I was all alone here. Inside of me, I began to miss her in spite of the anger which I showed on the outside. I didn't sleep well and at a quarter to six in the morning crawled out of our tent and went to the pay phone to call her.

She answered and told me about her trip and about the college. Then I asked her: "When did you get home last night?"

"I don't know. I didn't look at my watch," she replied.

"What did you do?"

"Oh, we had classes until ten and afterwards I played a little piano for my friends."

"I called twice, the last time at a quarter to eleven, when did you get home?"

Again she said: "I don't know, no idea. I didn't look at my watch."

"Sonja," I said, "you are taking a holiday away from the family and having a good time, aren't you?"

"What?" she gasped, and I thought she was pretending to sound astonished.

"You know what? I am coming down to Sacramento and I'll bring you the children because I've had about enough doing all the work for you while you goof off. You probably have a boy friend with you while we are waiting here for you until your program is over and it just drags on and on and on. I don't like that, you know?"

And then I hung up on her.

I hadn't planned at all to say what I did, it just came out with a burst of anger because she was so evasive. And I had not planned to dump the kids on her while she was at the important seminar so she could teach on Hawaii. This too came out completely unplanned, employed as a weapon because I felt helpless and wanted some consolation from her but instead got angry when she talked about herself, took her own program so seriously and showed no interest in how I was faring with the children. No recognition or thank you for doing this for her. I knew she was an egotist and it bugged me immensely.

Back at our campsite I began to clear the picnic table and take down the canopy. When the children woke up we went to the lake for an early morning swim, then I took down the tent, packed everything neatly into our station wagon and at around eight left the campground. I drove east to Twisp, got two hundred dollars out of the cash machine and then proceeded east through the narrow valley and south on Highway 97. Roy and Keith were excited about seeing their mommy again. We arrived in Wenatchee at noon where I called Sonja.

She was in her room and answered the phone immediately. I confirmed that I was on my way to her but she began to plead with me not to come which only infuriated me. I said that I was offended by her rejection, that I was bored at the park and felt like going on a trip. She asked where I was and I said close to the Oregon border, somewhat overstating my position. And then I hung up on her, introducing the bad manners that she would later turn on me.

Sonja staid home that day while her new friends went on a tour of the old town of Sacramento. She wrote her grandma another letter:

"Today is Sunday. The introduction to the course that beings next week - no, actually tomorrow - begins in a few hours. It is afternoon.

The last two days were so full...intensive, stimulating and full of learning.

Now there are four of us in our room - now our little group is complete. Two women already knew each other and are talking lively. Virginia is resting on her mat and I am lying here on my bed.

Above my head, at the ceiling - I don't know that to call it in German - blows a small ventilator. Once again, it is hot and dry outside, but pleasantly cool in the house.

I have staid here today because it is good to digest what has happened in Sacramento. And, as you know, I have a lot else to think about, so that I will avoid new stimulations from outside. For about two hours I have plaid the piano. It so happens that I have the possibility to play music - sometimes in the evening after 'class' or rather seminar.

Now my letter is short today. It is not easy to concentrate at the moment.

Oh, I almost forgot - can you send me a copy of the prayer that you recited back in Inzlingen, soon? It is the other version of the "Lord's Prayer." I have written down the Lord's Prayer and think of it often. It gives me much strength in these difficult times and sometimes rest.

For now best wishes, dear Grandma, from your Sonja"

I drove south along Highway 97 through Ellensburg, Washington, crossing the Columbia River into Oregon at Pendleton, continuing through the arid farmlands of eastern Oregon in the afternoon heat and reached Weed, California at around nine o'clock at night. We made Redding, California by eleven and I called

her from a pay phone at a closed gas station off I-5 at eleven.

She wanted to know where we were and I told her. We should go to a motel and get a good night's rest, she said, and talk again early in the morning. She still didn't want us to come. Once again I was offended and felt rejected. I asked her why but didn't get a conclusive answer. Then she talked to Roy for a long time and later to Keith who ran all over the place and was hard to get to the phone. At last I got to talk to her again and said that we'd continue on to Sacramento and would be there at around three in the morning.

I gassed up and drove back onto I-5, going fairly slow because I was tired, keeping myself awake with coffee, coke and smoking with the window open while the children were sleeping in the back. Roy woke up and set next to me on the front seat. He was hungry, he said, and I stopped and bought us hamburgers at an Arco AM-PM station. Every time he saw the red and blue sign he said he wanted a hamburger, two for ninety-nine cents, with all the trimmings.

We reached Sacramento at two in the morning. It took me another hour to find the college in Fair Oaks and shortly before three I pulled up behind Ruth's brand new and large house on Bannister Road and Fair Oaks Boulevard. Sonja heard us. I got out of the car and walked around the house. A door in the back was open with a screen and I spotted her shoes outside. Two minutes later she came outside in her long white night gown, walked toward me and said hi. Then we embraced each other for a minute or two. To my happy surprise she seemed glad to see me, then walked over to the car and peaked through the window. Roy woke up, recognized her and smiled, then went back to sleep.

Sonja motioned to the back of the house and whispered that we should step over to a wooded area next to a new construction site away from the house because the girls inside were sleeping and might wake up if they heard us.

I said that I hadn't planned to drop in on her but when she was so evasive on the phone Sunday morning I got jealous and restless and could not resist the idea to go for a trip, to come and see her.

"Oh, you are not going to drop the kids on me?"

"No," I whispered, "I am so lonely up there in Winthrop, I miss you so much, Sonja, it's become unbearable. That's why I'm here."

Then I took her into my arms and squeezed my head against hers. We held each other like this for a long time and all the tension that had built up inside of me slowly dissipated.

It seemed strange that all of sudden she had changed her attitude. But this

was nothing new and happened before back in 1988 in Maulburg, when at first she resisted my coming, but once I was there changed one hundred and eighty degrees after we had made love to each other in Mont-Soleil, after a four-month abstinence.

I longed for her as she stood there in her white night gown, her soft brown hair gently falling over her shoulder, and hoped it would be the same again as then. I could have taken and made love to her on the spot outside, as we had often during the warm summer nights in Europe, but I held back. I really had not been nice to her when we parted and said that I was sorry.

"I know you have to come and visit, it has to be. We have a strong mutual dependency of each other. I'm glad you're here now."

She hugged me again and gave me a kiss. I took off my jacket and put it on her because she was shivering. Then she began to talk about how wonderful the people were at the college, how much she already learned from them. For the first time in her life, she said, she had heard a real lecture rather than the stiff and formal rhetoric at the university.

I said to Sonja that I would find a motel for us and asked her to spend a night or two with us, for the children's sake and because I hadn't had her for two weeks now. At first she said she couldn't do it, what would her room mates think, they were a close group and she wanted to be with them. But after a while she agreed and said she'd spend two nights with us and the rest of the seminar at Ruth's.

I felt relieved and happy that she wasn't going to avoid me. We had spent about an hour outside before she went back inside and I crawled up on the front seat of the car and immediately passed out and fell asleep. At six thirty in the morning someone woke me up and said I was parked in a private driveway. A man in his fifties with coat and tie said he gave me five minutes to move the car or else I would be towed. Then he drove off.

It was Monday morning. I was so drowsy that I couldn't think. Then I started the car and moved it to the parking lot of the park adjacent to the house and went back for another snooze. At eight o'clock I went over to the house with Roy and Keith. Sonja introduced us to her room mates who left for the college immediately. I could use her facilities and shave before she left herself. We would have lunch together at the college.

"Don't come up to the campus. Wait here until I come and get you, okay?"

She looked lovely in her long new flowery skirt and her yellow short sleeve

sweater as she walked away and disappeared around the corner of the dirt road leading up to the Rudolf Steiner College. I had the true feeling that she was happy to see me and the children again who danced around and clung to her. Roy had missed his mommy so much although he never admitted it, adding later, when Sonja did not want to come back to me, "I want to live with you." I knew full well that it was his mechanism of defense that spoke, not his true feelings towards his mommy whom he adored.

People say we live in male society. I reject that notion. In business, the military, and politics, true, there the bulk of leadership jobs are held by men. But does that really mean that men hold the power? Behind every successful man stands a woman, it is said. Behind every happy child stands his mother. In ancient society' such as Egypt, the wealth was passed down from generation to generation through the female line, not the male. Men had to surrender all of their property and future income to the wife in the marriage agreement. In the smallest unit of our society, the family, no doubt the mother is at the center of the emotional bond which makes up the family. She gives birth to the children, nurses and raises them and is the reason why he goes out into the abstract and unemotional work place to earn the income to support her and their children. No, the man is not at the center of power in society, it only seems so. It is the mother with her great capacity for suffering, for devotion and for giving who holds the reins. The Italian word, "la mama," says it all, is not only a word but a concept, the foundation of our own existence.

The feminist movement, today, striving to rock men of their pedestal is led by female "men," no different from men themselves, emotionally, though not physically.

Women say that men are brutal. Family violence proves it. Men are physically more powerful, no doubt. But when women lash out, their means of lies and deceit can be ten times more brutal by exploiting men's emotional weaknesses than a man could ever hurt a woman physically. Women can be tough as nails, especially American women. They call it 'retribution.'

Sonja often said, no matter what she did and where she went, it wouldn't take long and I'd follow her. Usually I tried to reject the idea so as not to lose my pride and self-esteem by exerting self-control through rhetoric and actions. But all the while, I believe, she saw right through me. She knew it all the time deep inside, even when we were quarrelling, how much I loved her and how much my emotional and physical well-being depended upon hers and her presence, as did

Roy's and as did Keith's, our children's. Perhaps not at first as much, but as soon as Roy had been born and we had become a family, was I and were we hooked on her.

Shortly after twelve noon, Sonja came to the park, picked us up and took us to the college. She pointed out the wild flower and vegetable gardens, took the children by the hand, showed them around and introduced us to a few friends. The meal was vegetarian and quite bland. I saw that the doors on the buildings had the same form with cut-off corners that I knew from the Anthroposophist' headquarters in Dornach, Switzerland, the "Goetheanum" and the Waldorf School in Kassel where I had attended. Childhood memories of parental prohibitions, of dogmatic sectarianism and endless fights and discussions with my elders came back and haunted me. I told Sonja to take it all in with a grain of salt, to take in only what she thought she could need at the Malamalama School in Hawaii and to ignore the rest. But that is not Sonja's way who is not the most independent and critical thinker, but an unconstrained intuitive copyist, all feeling and little thinking, quite different from the rebel that I was, and maybe still am. She made argument against, concluding that I didn't understand the movement. The hell I didn't, I was raised in it. Once again, quite unintentionally, we had our controversy.

In the afternoon I drove through town looking for a reasonable motel and eventually found one quite nearby on Folsom Avenue. Our room on the ground level had two double beds. The back door led to a lawn area. Roy and Keith went straight for the pool and loved it. It must have been well over one hundred degrees outside and the sun was beating down as in a desert. I put a shirt on the children to protect their skin from the penetrating radiation. It got cooler quickly as soon as the sun set. At ten o'clock we drove back to Ruth's house at the bottom of the hill from the college and waited for Sonja. She was the last to arrive, got her bag and sat down in the car as we drove east on Fair Oaks and then south on Sunrise Boulevard to our motel. On the way she praised the teachers. She said:

"When you teach, you really have to be in the subject and live it so it radiates out and engulfs the children. It takes a lot of detailed preparation and energy out of you. I learned and experienced this today, the best lecture I have ever heard. The professors at the university are always so remote. They know nothing."

I was glad to hear how enthusiastic she was and felt more reassured than ever that she was going to be a good teacher in Hawaii whereas before I had had

hidden reservations whether she was going to make it at all. And she wanted so much to teach. Sonja was going to have a rich and fulfilling career after all. The thought of it made me happy.

In our room after Roy and Keith had fallen asleep and I was fighting myself to stay awake, knowing that Sonja was waiting, I moved Keith gently from her side onto my bed and lay down beside her. She had already undressed and lay naked between the sheets. I slipped my pajamas off and took her into my arms. We embraced and just lay there for several minutes in silence.

"I'm tired," she whispered, "have me any way you wish."

"So am I," I replied.

I knew I should have waited until the morning before coming over to her, but now I couldn't wait. I was too excited and eager to be with her. She responded kindly and eventually got turned on herself.

After we relaxed I could not let go of her and kept hugging her, looking at her, taking her head in my hands and kissing her. And I told her:

"I have never in my life driven fourteen hundred miles nonstop just to be with a female."

"A female?" she scoffed.

"I didn't mean it, Sonja," I said. "I love you so much that I can't get enough of you. I don't know what it is with me. You are like my other half."

She embraced me and said the assuring words, "I know."

Afterwards I put Keith back into her bed beside her and had a knock-out of a sleep until Tuesday morning.

I woke up early, around six, went over to Sonja and kissed her gently on the neck. She opened her eyes, looked over to the children and then slid out of bed onto the carpet and a couple of blankets that I had spread out. She hadn't had her orgasm last night and, in fact, not for two weeks. Now she was excited, hot and ready. Our best moments in bed together were always in the mornings when we were rested.

She came on top of me and we got into each other in a wild and ecstatic way. After all these years together we were intimately familiar with each others feelings and emotions and by experience gained a very assured and refined technique. But more importantly, I felt that she loved me and showed it each time after she had her orgasm, usually together with mine. Then she lay her head upon my shoulder, moved her hand gently through my hair and kissed me on the ear. What would I give for these moments? What every man gives who's in love.



Everything. Never did the thought surface in me, or that I could detect in her, during these moments that we were blood relatives and that society would reject us. Society was hundreds of miles away, their prohibition a faint notion while we were so close to each other. That is how it always was. In our minds we were innocent; our experience was genuinely true and real. And our children were the proof and manifestation of our love relationship, so pretty, so happy and healthy, and they were ours.

I knew that Sonja would have other men after me and the thought of it made me infinitely sad. If they'd find out about the tenderness that she had shared with me for over ten years, how we had loved our children and each other, it would take a very tolerant and sincere husband to deal with his alienation, and Sonja could not change that no matter how caring and loving she became. She would never be completely his. And she had said it to me and again a few days later:

"You know, the problem with you is that I can never divorce you."

I didn't answer her because I knew she was right. All the actions that she subsequently undertook to break free of me, I began to say to myself, must be seen in this light; her violence, brutality and cruelty were only admissions of her insecurity and of the fact that she cannot break free of and kill the past unless she breaks me first, kills and buries me by the worst of all punishment - no contact. To try and do that, however, as much as her false new friends advocate it, is not truly her way because to maintain it over long periods of time would alienate her from her roots, break and kill her too, psychologically.

In a moment of despair I had said to her one day:

"I should never have come to you from Calgary when you were in trouble. I should have let your mama deal with it alone." I was alluding to her breakdown in October 1981.

"But then Roy and Keith would not be here," was her straight forward and surprising answer.

Sonja sees our past in quite a realistic way, of a practical necessity and guilt-free. 'Then Roy and Keith would not be here.' Those words keep resounding in my ear time and again. Roy who came on his own, and Keith whom she wanted. And they two are now inseparable perpetuations of our love, who love us back, and love and need each other. Before there can be incest of the body, there must be incest of the mind; but that is not covered by the prohibition. The Lord has not forbidden us to love each other. The prohibition is entirely man made but

has lost its genetic rationale. Offsprings in the first generation down are completely normal if their parents are. The taboo is man's self-created moral response.

What was man's response when we dropped the A-bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, or killed a hundred thousand young thirsty, starving and thereby defenseless men in the trenches of southern Iraq during the Gulf War in only one week, never to come home again to see their families. In war, victory is the only horizon. Nothing has value; that is the standard. In peace, it is the status quo. That is the other standard.

Today, I understand, my children are receiving psychiatric counseling, and are eventually being told of their so called "criminal" origin. The moral dragon of society is spewing its fire and trying to devour them because their existence, though innocent, is a danger to his own double standard.

Oh, Sonja, what have you done? Why? For whose sake, but surely not your own? You are a mountain of stability when you are well (the Greek word Sonja meaning rock), and a shining light (Ingrid) if you want to be. But now you are confused, acting deranged and in anger. Why? You are the product of love as are our children. Why the anger when you do not and you cannot harbor any hate but only love?

You say it has to be, but I say it does not. There is another way, the one we had agreed upon that allows you and me to live, which continues to include you and me; none to the sole exclusion of the other; and still gives you freedom.

You will come to that realization, unmask your false friends and find your true self again, soon, I pray; before they have devoured you, before they have devoured our children. Of this, my Love, I am *certain*.

## Chapter 15

The subject of her departure for Hawaii came up. No, she didn't want to go alone, it only seemed so. I had misunderstood her, she said, but she lied. Now that I had caught up with her in Sacramento she was faced with the need for an answer but didn't have one. The Hawaiian school had suggested that she come all by herself, or otherwise have someone to help her, to be free to learn the ropes of teaching because she had no experience. I said that I'd be available, either in Hawaii until I got the job in Los Angeles, or take the children to L.A. until she was ready, say around Easter 1993 or even as late as next summer. I reminded her, however, that she had promised us and the children remembered that if she got the job, we would all fly to Hawaii together.

Sonja came up with the idea of going to Hawaii all by herself again, that after ten years it was my time to take the children and that she would be present and help select the foster mother who would run my household. But if I were not willing or able to take the children, she would find a nice couple who would, in other words give the children away for adoption. I answered, "Over my dead body."

"Remember when we dropped you off at SeaTac?"

"Yes," she replied.

Somehow she did not want to participate in coming up with a solution so I said to her:

"I will think hard about it all day and let you know in the evening how we could do it."

After I had dropped her off at the college on this Tuesday morning, I took the children to one of the water reservoirs that surround Sacramento, to the Folsom Lake State Recreation Area. The water level was way below the dam. It hadn't rained for years, I was told and the city and all of California was headed towards catastrophe. The sun was beating down mercilessly so that we staid for only an hour and then went to check out the campsites around the lake for I had intended, and Sonja had suggested, that we stay as long as the seminar lasted. Ruth had phoned around but all of the private residences connected with the college were full, including her own.

We saw Sonja at the house that afternoon. She went inside and asked Ruth for something, then talked to her on the porch for half an hour although she knew we were waiting.

"I know, you're always in a hurry," she said when she finally came out. I felt slighted and she knew it but did not seem to care. I detected a determined

rudeness in her manners but did not realize that it was part of her plan that she had formulated in her mind of abandoning us, or at least me. Of course, our motel, the El Rancho Cordova, was quite reasonable at the preferred rate of \$35 at night. I decided to stay there because the children enjoyed the pool more than a lake. That afternoon Roy learned to swim freely of his own, without his arm floaters and was proud of it.

The temperature must have reached one hundred and five that day, so we staid around the pool and only left it to buy a plastic batman at the Payless Store across from the intersection, it had to be the white one, that Keith was fantasizing about. Roy wanted one too but instead decided on a complicated board game. He took forever to make us his mind and changed it frequently.

We picked Sonja up at ten. This time she came immediately instead of letting us wait. We went back to the hotel and after the children were asleep she came over to me and lay by my side. She was tired she said and so was I, but she still wanted it and we had our climax together.

I know, in spite of all the literature and hearsay to the contrary, that women need men just as urgently as men are accused of chasing women. Sonja had admitted it to me more than once, that her physical needs for tenderness and intimacy were ever present but that this should not lead me to conclude that she always loved me as I loved her. It hurt me deeply to hear that, but it also gave me hope that she would not simply ignore me and walk away so long as she got what she needed, and I what I needed.

In the morning, it was Wednesday, July 22, 1992, I had ran out of condoms and we began to calculate whether it was risky or not. She said it was her eighteenth day, and risky it was, but she agreed to make love anyway.

She took off her nightgown and lay there, so pretty, her breasts firm and full and her legs slightly parted. Oh, was she ever so seductive. I caressed her and kissed her neck, but she had never wanted foreplay but rather move directly to the act. I had lost a lot of weight through the turbulent times and the stress of the past three months and found that I had more endurance and strength now than before, never applying my full weight on her but keeping myself in a kind of suspended pushup position, resting on my elbows while holding her head with one hand and her shoulders with the other. It went in easy and she responded vigorously.

We made love as if it was never ending but throughout I had the intuitive feeling, somehow, or the foreboding that it might be the last time. The feeling of sadness was emphasized by her absent mindedness. I could feel that she was not really there in spirit, though very much alive physically. When I finally came I shook and trembled and felt that she did not like that. She did not come to her climax this time and I felt like I had taken something for myself from her.

After the children awoke and we had taken our showers and dressed, I

found Sonja was talking funny. She was laughing at one minute and got serious the next. I was shocked and all of a sudden worried that she might not be able to continue her seminar which would mean the end of her Hawaiian job. We had a cigarette outside on the lawn and for some reason, I forgot the details, she stretched out her hand to me and said we had a deal. Of course, I took hand and squeezed it as she had want me to, but I remember it was quite unnecessary.

She agreed that we should meet for lunch in town and have a real meat dish rather than the vegetation food at the college that always left her hungry and that she should skip a class so that we could meet and talk for two hours before I would leave. I felt my continued presence might only upset her. It later proved to be a grave mistake.

We went to a Mexican restaurant nearby and I realized that she was edgy and not really there. Afterwards we went to a park and sealed our agreement that we would all fly to Hawaii on August 3rd, only ten days away and have our holiday there before her school started rather than wait around in Washington. If I got the job in Los Angeles I would leave October 1st, if not, I'd find something in Honolulu or even in Hilo. I had a Hawaiian C.P.A. license since 1978 and it was current.

I had arranged with Albert Schiel, a neighbor where I had my Hawaiian acreage, to reserve his rental house for us which was only a mile or two from the Malamalama School. We would have enough money to pay the airfare, first month rent and have about a thousand dollars left over until her first pay check would come in.

We on a bench in the shade while the children were playing in the park and I asked her at least three times:

"You're not going to change your mind after I've left, are you?"

"No, I won't," she said repeatedly.

She was going to participate in an art class Saturday afternoon and then take the eleven at night Amtrak train back to Seattle and the bus to Vancouver, clean out her house, have a yard sale and meet us in Seattle the day before our departure.

She seemed calm now and collected. I was happy. At around two in the afternoon we left the park. In the car I gave her the check for Saturday's course fee and mentioned briefly and with a chuckle that she could make it up at Hapuna Beach on the Kona side of the Big Island. She knew what I meant but gave me a look that seemed not so pleasant. It irked me but I didn't register that she had really answered with an unequivocal "no."

That afternoon I got as far as Cormick and checked into a neat little motel with a pool on Main Street, run by a couple from France. While the children were splashing in the pool, I had a pleasant and interesting conversation with an elderly widow from Eugene, Oregon who was traveling in the other direction to see her son in Ocean City in Southern California.

At the children's request, we spent the next day, Thursday, at the Cormick public swimming pool, went out for supper and then drove east to Black Butte Lake, another one of California's many reservoirs, and camped out in a state park. The night was warm and the sky full of stars so clear and near that Keith noticed it and asked me many questions.

I had talked to Sonja from the pool in the afternoon when she mentioned that she would like to fly to ahead to Hawaii, be welcome by the school's reception committee and meet us at the Hilo several days later. I didn't like it.

She sounded deranged again asked me where she could go to get cigarettes. I told her and we agreed to talk again the next day at five.

On Friday I drove north on the I-5 past Redding and at around two stopped at a pool in Ashland, Oregon. It was not quite as hot here as in California. The pool was heated and the children swam for a couple of hours until it was five, the agreed time to call Sonja in Sacramento. She wasn't home and I told Ruth to let her know that common courtesy dictated to at least leave a message. I would call again at six but she still wasn't there so I left the pay phone's number and said that I would stay around until she returned my call.

The call came half an hour later. I sensed immediately that Sonja had her mental problem back. She talked absolute nonsense, said she was thinking of taking the month of August off to go to Germany and see her mama, friends, help in the world peace movement and come clear with the cultural differences between Europe and America that had bugged her for so long and that she had never had a chance in her life to clear up.

She said that she had had her hair cut to shoulder length, that she had planned it a long time ago and felt better now. I felt pain in my stomach at the thought of what she had done, but it was her hair.

"Sonja," I said, "I think you have your problem back, I sensed it Wednesday morning. You know, I think it is best that I drive back to Sacramento and pick you up Saturday morning. You are not okay."

"If you do that I will do something very drastic. You can't drive around like you do and subject the children to the dangers of the road. Don't you dare do it. I warn you."

"No, Sonja," I replied, "you are not well and I want to be there when the Seminar ends. Don't worry about the children, I've never driven more careful than when they are in the car. I'm coming."

"I warn you, don't." And then she hung up on me.

I had feelings of remorse. Perhaps I should not have come to see her in Sacramento, but to leave her now in her condition? Was she able to make it to the train and get back to Seattle, or would she get off at some forsaken place in between and wander around or even fly to Germany?

Roy and Keith had bargained for another toy and I drove around through

Ashland in circles trying to find a toy store. I was tossing the idea back and forth of whether to drive back to Sacramento or not. Another night on the road, three hundred miles, no sleep. Hell! But the children would sleep in the back and what are a couple of hours on the road, nothing, compared to the safety of being there and seeing to it that she came home intact.

I gassed up at an Arco station off I-5, told the children that we were going to pick up mommy and went down the on-ramp heading south up the pass towards California.

"To Sacramento again?"

"Yes," I replied.

"Are we going to stay at the motel with the pool?" inquired Keith.

"Yes, we can," I said. "We'll have to see, but we'll go to a pool, don't worry."

The children were satisfied and continued to play intensely with their new toys as they always did.

It was now seven in the evening and I stepped on the gas cruising at the speed limit, raced up Siskiyou Pass and down into Northern California, stopped at the agricultural inspection station and continued south through the mountains passed Yreka, Weed, Dunsmuir and reached Redding by nightfall. Shortly after midnight I pulled up beside Ruth's house on Bannister Road and shut the motor off. Inside Sonja's room a light went on for a few seconds. She had looked at her watch to see what time it was but did not come out as she had done last time. I had a pretty sick feeling in my stomach, smoked a couple of cigarettes waiting if she changed her mind and then curled up on the front seat and slept irregularly until six thirty in the morning when the garage opened and Ruth said good-bye to her husband.

She was surprised to see me and asked if I wanted her to get Sonja. I said yes, I would and she went quickly inside.

Five minutes later Sonja came out in her white night gown. She did not look right at all, a mixture of sorrow and fatigue was on her face. She was trembling and I knew that she had not slept for a couple of nights, the way her disease usually started. I was leaning against the car. She came to me and put her arms around my neck. We embraced. She was breathing heavily and began to cry but did not say a word, neither did I.

Then she looked through the rear windows at the children and sighed, a few tears were rolling down her cheek. One more time she came to me and embraced me tenderly. As she walked back to her room I pleaded:

"Would you get your things and come out before the children wake up?"

She stopped for a moment, turned toward me and said with a stubborn voice: "No!" Then she turned back to the house and disappeared around the corner.



I waited a couple of minutes, went to the front door and rang the door bell. Ruth came out and said:

"Oh, I thought you are talking to Sonja. Where is she?"

"Ruth, she went back inside and I think I might need your help. Sonja is experiencing a reoccurrence of a form of psychotic break. Do you have sedatives in the house, Valium, Librium?"

She went back inside saying she might have some from the time when her husband went through his divorce. But all she had was a muscle relaxant. She went to talk to Sonja and then came back.

"I've talked to her, she's taking the pills. She is totally out of it. What are you going to do, take her home?"

I said I would if she would help me. Sonja didn't want to come out and it took quite an effort on Ruth's part to get her into the car after she had locked the doorstop her house. Sonja was always trying to get back in under some pretense. She was hungry and wanted breakfast.

"Just keep on driving, Roland. There are drive-in restaurants on the way so she doesn't have to get out of the car."

I was afraid she was trying to run away. Once on the freeway, Sonja began to talk to the kids, complain about hunger and talk crazy. I said we would take it easy on the way home and stop at a couple of nice resorts. It would be a fun trip. An hour out of Sacramento, in Arbuckle, I stopped to get some cash but there was bank machine. It was very hard to get Sonja back into the car. An hour further north, in Cormick, I got the cash and went to the restaurant for lunch. Sonja ordered a big fish plate and went to help herself to the salad bar. She went to the lobby to smoke a cigarette but all of a sudden disappeared.

I jumped into the car and drove along the street to the nearest intersection and then back. Keith had come out of the restaurant, crying. The waitress said she had seen Sonja walk off in a southern direction. I gave her twenty dollars, put the children in the car and drove across the fields when I spotted her standing by a bush picking flowers.

"Please don't do that again, Sonja," I said, "please."

She looked at me absent-mindedly and got back into the car.

What I should have done then was bring her to a hospital and make sure she got treatment and sleep, but instead, in my stupor, I went back on the freeway and kept on driving north. It was very hot. Some miles out of Reading she was playing with the new skirt that her mama had brought her and it blew out of the window onto the freeway. I recovered it in a somewhat risky maneuver and continued north into the mountains. We stopped for at a minimart rest stop and got a few cokes and snacks. Once again she took forever to get back into the car, instead sat down on a bench and said after a while why we were sitting here all that time.

Was it foreboding or exhaustion, I could not hold my tears back at the thought of Sonja's intention of running away. She noticed it and started pushing pillows in my neck, for what purpose I didn't understand. Then she said that I could always count and depend on her, she would always be there if I needed her. She put her head on my lap and stuck her feet out of the window into the wind. I squeezed her and moved my hand through her hair. She seemed calm and content now.

I stopped in Weed looking for a pool, but it was full of old ladies and closed to the public. At around two in the afternoon we reached Yreka and went directly to the public pool. Sonja went in with her light summer clothes, splashed and swam around and came up to me to say thank you for teaching Roy how to swim. She seemed relaxed now, almost content, but all of sudden kept reminding me that her train left at eleven tonight and that we should be heading back to Sacramento. I told her that we were three hundred miles north and driving back to Seattle and that she would arrive only a day or two later. She didn't answer.

After a few hours she we went outside into the park and she hid among the bushes until Keith found her an got her out.

"What are you doing in the bushes, Mommy? he asked her and smiled.

She played with the children for about an hours while I was lying down in the shade taking a rest while keeping an eye on her from the distance. We had a few sandwiches and smokes and then went to look for a motel. When the first one was full, she stomped her feet on the ground, protesting vehemently that I took so long. She refused to spend any more time looking for one. When I got firm with her she apologized for her behavior.

Eventually we found a motel. It had a pool and once she dove right in. We went for a long swim before taking our things out of the car into our room, a large room with two twin beds. She insisted on having her own room but agreed to share ours when I promised that I would not touch her.

In the pool I showed Sonja how to do the butterfly and immediately she copied me and moved through the water with such grace and power that I thought she was surely going to be better after a good night's rest.

We went for dinner to an expensive, excellent Swiss restaurant across the street. She had put on the earth colored dress that her mother her given her for a present and looked adorable and lovely, although she was still talking crazy, left the table about five times and went to the lobby for a smoke. She ate well, filet mignon stake, and had two drinks, but all of sudden the steak knives were gone. She had brought them to the front desk and protested that they were weapons that had no place at the table where her children were eating.

A rock band was playing next door in the bar and when we got up from the table she wanted to go in by herself and come back to the hotel later. It took all of my effort of convincing her otherwise. We brought the children to bed, she put on

her night gown and I my P.J. Then I set down beside her and we talked. She smoked heavily in the room which she never did when the children were present, and she didn't want to go to bed. She said she couldn't sleep. Then she began to perform a dance and I copied her movements while she directed. It was a bizarre scene which I kept on hoping would soon end, but it didn't.

We talked about a lot of things. At one point Sonja said that we had failed the test. We talked about love and she said she had needed it as often as I but had never admitted it.

"What turns you on?" I asked.

"Oh," she said, "just talking about it."

I said that I was going to abide by my promise but if she wanted it all she would have to do was say so. I was ready and I knew she was hot too. We were standing by the window, she in front of me looking directly into my face. Then she came close, tip-toed and kissed me on the mouth. I felt like taking her into my arms and holding her, making love to her all night long as we had done the night before her high school graduation when she had the symptoms and was insatiable. But I kept to my undertaking instead and suffered. It wasn't right to make love to a deranged woman who had lost her self-determination.

Sonja said she felt hot and wanted to go to the pool, dive in and come out as a mermaid. Her love of last year, Brandon, would be standing by the pool side waiting for her. She said that all the time since last summer she was still in love with only him. After meeting him she would dive back into the pool, come out again as herself and come back to the room.

I said that wasn't a good idea and wouldn't let her.

After three in the morning we ran out of cigarettes and she demanded that I go get some along with some brandy. We were sitting on the floor, across from each other, and I said:

"Look, Sonja, I know of your illness, but I also know if you want to flip out of it you can if you want to make an effort. There is no Brandon here in the hotel, you are making all this up."

She became angry. When she settled down she agreed to go to bed and try to catch some sleep. She lay down and wept, said that she was afraid and scared of the future. I sat by her side and held her tight, stroked her hair and hugged her. Eventually I went to bed myself but was careful not to fall asleep before she did.

Suddenly she got up and complained loudly that there was too much tension in the room and headed for the door. I stepped in her way and she began to wrestle with me. Roy woke up, sat up in his bed and watched us in amazement. When I refused to let her out saying that she was deranged and needed rest, she went to the window, opened it and was waiting for someone to come by whom she could call for help. Unfortunately, I had ripped out the telephone cord when

she tried to dial 911, instead of letting the police or whoever arrive to bring her to a hospital.

When she saw that I wouldn't let her go, she gathered up her clothes, went into the bathroom and got dressed. At that point I gave up, handed her the wallet that I had been hiding, gave her the passport and all the cash I had - fifty dollars - and said that once she felt better she should return. I would keep the door open for her all night. Roy set up straight in his bed with wide open perturbed eyes and saw his mommy leave without saying good-bye. Keith was sleeping.

As I followed her down the stairs outside to the parking lot by the pool, she stopped and came toward me to embrace me. I wanted to hold her so bad, but instead, I said:

"Don't. You don't really mean it, you're faking it."

She picked up her bag and walked toward the 24 hour Shell station next to the motel. I went upstairs and a minute later downstairs again to buy cigarettes. She was inside the store, saw me enter and moved away. I couldn't find my money and asked her if she could give me two dollars.

"It's in the bag. Help yourself."

I couldn't find it, asked her again and got the same reply.

Five minutes later when I came back to the store she was stepping into a taxi. I told the driver that she might still be able to catch the train for Seattle that had left Sacramento at eleven at night, but he said there were no trains in Yreka although I was sure I had heard them all afternoon, the nearest station would be Dunsmuir. Then they drove off into the night.

I went back to Roy and Keith and thought what I would tell them when they woke up. At first I had a totally empty feeling, not giving a damn what she did. But then it overcame me. I buried my head in my hands and broke out in tears. But the worst was yet to come.

## Chapter 16

I told Roy and Keith in the morning that mommy had left and that we were going to look for her in all the hotels in town. We had breakfast across the street and then went on our tour. She was nowhere to be found. Then I called the taxi company. Yes, they had had a pick up at four in the morning for Dunsmuir. The driver, Harry, had radioed that he had left Dunsmuir several minutes after six for Sacramento. No doubt, it was Sonja. If she didn't have the money up front, it was company policy Harry could not drive her. Was he the type of guy who took other favors in payment? No, absolutely not. He had been working for the company for a long time and had six children from two wives.

Nothing I could do now, put the children into the car and drove slowly north towards Oregon. But I stopped at a rest stop near the Oregon border and decided to call Ruth and advise that Sonja was coming. Ruth notified the police of Sonja's condition and that she needed help urgently if they found her. After that I we talked every hour on the hour. At about two in the afternoon Sonja had jumped the taxi at Fair Oaks and Sunrise and disappeared in the woods barefoot, leaving behind her wallet, identification, passport, train ticket and bag. The taxi driver later told me, that Sonja had asked him to pull up by a mini mart but when he stopped he disrobed herself completely so that Harry got scared she might call out "rape," ("I'm pulling a fast one," she had told him, said Harry) and called the police. When he came back she had put her clothes back on and disappeared. The fare was \$2 a mile for a total of \$500. During the whole trip she had told him that she was a peace activist and would pay him upon arrival.

The next that was reported was that Sonja had been seen acting strange at Pennsylvania Avenue and Fair Oaks Boulevard. I wrecked my brain to give Ruth hints where she might have gone, down to the river, the park, College campus, of course, or the house under construction next to hers. No news during the next few hours. Ruth said the night was going to be warm if she had to sleep outside, but most likely she might have been picked up by a guy trying to hitch hike. He might be buying her food. But hopefully she did not end up down town and be abused, because Sacramento was also a rough place.

In the meantime I was back in Ashland with the children and as it got dark and no news from Sonja, I decided to return to Sacramento a third time and participate in the search. Roy and Keith had no objections, got into the back of the car and played. At eleven o'clock sharp, just as they were going to close, I got a room at the El Rancho Cordova in Sacramento, but went back into the car and drove to the Rudolf Steiner College after calling Arno and telling him what had happened.

First I went over the college campgrounds with my flash light, looking into every bush and corner, then checked all the parks in the area, the 711 and Circle-K stores showing Sonja's picture to the night clerks leaving five dollar bills and asking to give her what she wanted but call 911 immediately. Then I checked a couple of bars, drove to the local police station which was closed, and eventually to Pennsylvania Avenue where she had been seen acting strange. It led directly down to the banks of the American River. A couple came up from the river and I asked them if they had seen Sonja showing her picture.

"It's a treacherous river," the man said, "with a lot of undertows. We have about twenty-five drownings here every year."

"Where do they find the bodies?" I asked.

"Oh as far away as [and he mentioned the name of the place] ten miles down the river."

I went back to the hotel thoroughly torn and depressed at the thought that I had lost my daughter. It was the most terrifying feeling I have ever had in my life, similar to when Gerhard was on the operating table five years ago. Why had I let her go? I would give anything if only she was found alive.

The phone rang. It was seven in the morning. It was Arno.

"Sonja has called..." I didn't hear what he was saying next. I choked up entirely and burst into tears of relief at the news.

"She was in good hands and going to fly to Germany with the help of the consulate. She didn't want to say where she was but I heard some voices in the background. Sounded like a hotel lobby or something."

I called Ruth immediately. There's no German consulate in Sacramento, she said, the nearest representation is the consulate in San Francisco. I said that I'd call them immediately if she called would call the police in San Francisco to send a dispatch to the German consulate and take her to a hospital. The embassy took the information. I said I had her passport and would pay for her plane ticket if only they would occupy her long enough but by no means turn her away. I should come right away.

We got to San Francisco three hours later. The German consulate is a red brick palace on Nob Hill with a high iron fence around it. Nobody had showed, they said, except a policeman looking for Sonja. Had she called? No. I was asked to identify myself and hand over Sonja's passport so they knew what she looked like. But I didn't suspecting from their reactions that they knew where Sonja was. Indeed, they did, as I now know, but didn't want to tell me, following instructions to take her passport and forward it to her.

I waited around for an hour until the police came to take my report for a missing person. Since she had called, however, she wasn't missing.

Roy was not behaving very well and antagonizing Keith. In the consulate, he had rolled on the floor and jumped Keith. Then the supervisor came and eye-

balled the children. I got scared, said that I was legal guardian, was going to take them for lunch and then find a hotel room. The two talked for a minute and said okay, there's nothing they could do. I was glad to be let go now, took Roy and Keith by the hand saying that the child snatchers were watching us, which they did. Both of them behaved immediately and we walked down the street. One of the cops passed me and hollered:

"Know where the restaurant is, Mike?"

"Yes, I've been told. Thanks."

Then he drove off. We got a room at the Nob Hill Motel and waited all afternoon and evening for news.

Arno called again in the morning and said that Sonja had phoned to say that she had turned herself into a mental hospital in Sacramento but wouldn't say where. She said she was fine.

I checked us out at drove back to Sacramento and off the first main intersection following the Hospital sign. I was told Sacramento only had one mental hospital and that it was a few blocks on down on West Dorchester Boulevard. A woman was at the front desk when I asked to see Sonja Haikel. They're not allowed to give out that information, but the lady went down a list and I spotted her: "Sonja Haik 206A." I was handed a sheet with visitor's information and told to come back at seven o'clock in the evening. We checked ourselves in again at the motel and came back at seven bringing some clothe along from her bag that I had gotten from the police. The earth colored dress was among them which she wore when she left the motel in Yreka. In other words, she had changed clothe in the taxi, and most likely the driver Harry had already been paid in kind.

The children and I were led into the large dining hall. The man at the door asked politely:

"Who are you coming to see?"

"Sonja Haik," I said, using her newly adopted but false name.

"Just a minute, I'll get her."

We sat down at a round table and a minute late Sonja came in. When she saw us she broke into deep sobs and covered her face with her hands. She took the children on her lap and held them for a long time. When they jumped off, she turned toward me and looked at me with a faint and distant smile. She wasn't there yet, I thought, but so much better than when I last saw her.

She said right away that she had told the staff who I was in relation to the children. I wanted to leave immediately because she had once again broken her promise, but she begged me to stay so she could see the children.

Then she described her ordeal to me in great detail. Harry had driven her up to Mount Shasta because she wanted to see it. She was surprised to hear that I knew she had jumped the taxi without paying the \$500 fare.

She said it was almost impossible to walk barefoot on the hot sidewalks so she decided to go down to the river and did jump in. When she returned to the bank the place she landed was covered with rocks so hot that she could not walk on them, so she took some clothe off and put in front of her, taking one step and picking up the clothe behind her and putting it forward. She cried out for water but there was no answer. Eventually she decided to go back into the river and was picked up by a couple of rafters. They looked her in the eye, decided that she was on an LSD trip, put a life jacket on her and dumped her in a corner. When she realized that no help was forthcoming, she took the life jacket off and jumped back into the river. With all her power left in her she made it to the banks and collapsed. She remembered she said that she was surrounded by a lot of faces and was brought to the Crisis Center by an ambulance, strapped to a chair and put in chains. At three o'clock the following morning she was brought here. She said that I had been at the Crisis Center, hadn't I, and that I had been filming her in Yreka.

"Every time I have these crises," she said, "I think you are filming me, or someone is filming me. I am the performer and the whole thing is not real but a movie."

She said she had been diagnosed as bipolar, the new word for "manic-depressive," a genetic mental disease. It was caused by a chemical imbalance in the brain, she said, and could easily be treated with Lithium.

When the visitation hour was up she hugged and kissed the children and said we should come back the next evening at seven. I agreed and asked her to embrace me. She did, two times, but because she had told the staff about our relationship I did not dare to show my affection, whereas in fact I could have just eaten her up, so glad was I to see her and see that she was going to be back in this world.



## Chapter 17

California's mental health laws do not permit a hospital to keep a mental patient for more than seventy-two hours without a court order. Sonja had been taken in on Sunday afternoon and should, therefore, either be released on Wednesday or detained for a longer period in which case I wanted to be present at the hearing. I would find out during visitation hour in the evening.

At noon, while I was at the motel pool with Roy and Keith, the receptionist came and said that my daughter had called and would call again in ten minutes. The children complained bitter at having to leave the water. Then the phone rang.

She didn't even say hi or how are you, no niceties, and went straight to business.

"Have you packed the things that I put on the list?"

"Yes," I replied waiting what came next.

"Then bring them over right away. If you don't, I can't be released today and have to wait another day. Drop them off at the front desk and say it's for me," she dictated in a stern and demanding voice.

"When can I pick you up?" I asked.

"You can't. I don't want to see you."

"Where are you going to go?"

"It's my business. Bring the bag, my wallet, my passport, everything. I expect you here in ten minutes or else..."

Then she hung up.

I didn't like the threat and thought for a minute, should I go at all or should I just ignore her. Of course, I went.

Roy and Keith came inside with me as far the reception area when a nurse came out with a serious look on her face and introduced herself. I handed her Sonja's bag and said the police had turned it over to me. I showed her the wallet and train ticket. She was nervous and grabbed it.

"Is the passport inside?"

"No," I said. "I don't trust Sonja. I don't want her to do stupid things like flying off to Germany. She's not well yet, you should know that. I want to see Sonja and spend a day or two with her sorting things out."

"She doesn't want to see you and we have no influence over that," she replied.

"Maybe you could talk to her and tell her that the children and I have gone through hell after she ran away in Yreka. They want to see their mommy too."

The nurse went inside and came back with her supervisor five minutes later. Yes, they had talked to Sonja but there was nothing further they could do or

wanted to do. The passport, please. I said no.

Another ten minutes went by then Sonja appeared, surrounded by the two nurses and three or four men in hospital uniform. They looked like wrestlers. Sonja looked pale. Her face was of stone. No spark, no warmth, absolutely cold. In a mechanical voice she said to me:

"I demand that you return my passport to me."

One of the wrestlers went beside me and said in a stern voice:

"Do you have her passport?"

"Yes, but not here," I answered.

"Where is it?"

"It's in my motel room," I lied.

"We give you twenty minutes to go and get it. If you don't we'll call the sheriff. It's a federal offence to retain someone's passport."

I said I would, but needed thirty minutes. Sonja wanted me to leave the children. I said no, this is a mental institution and not a day care, took the children by the hand and quickly left for the car, telling them child snatcher after us, hurry up. They did.

As I drove away through the parking lot, I heard a siren and as I drove up the on-ramp to the freeway heading east, a police car followed and then passed me and drove about five car length ahead of me. Near the Zinfandel exit I moved into the right lane and so did he. As he turned off onto the street, I went straight and back onto the freeway and kept on going for a couple hours, using side roads and Highway 88 until we came to Nevada. With foresight, I had already checked out of the hotel.

We continued north through Carson City and Reno, a few miles east on Interstate 80 and then north through desert country cutting back into northern California at Alturas and into Oregon toward Klamath Falls. Highway 97 was blocked because of forest fires, so that I had to take the windy road west to Ashland before getting back on Interstate 5.

The drive through Nevada along Lake Placid through the sunset was gorgeous. The children saw a lot of animals, deer and bunny rabbits who came running onto the street and into the light. Eventually my horn went out. At one time when Keith came from the back and slid onto the front seat beside me, when I looked forward again, a fully grown brown cow was slowly moving across the road twenty feet in front of the car, but somewhat to the left. I barely missed it.

At Alturas the only gas station open at midnight was a gas bar. Two police cars were parked outside and my tank was empty. I waited on a side street for a while and then took a heart, drove up to the station and filled up for exactly twenty dollars. One of the cops came out and drove away without looking at us.

I figured Sonja would be on the train the left Sacramento at eleven at night, the only train of the day, arriving in Seattle at six thirty in the afternoon the

following day. We made it to Seattle by three in the afternoon and waited around the train station, exited to meet mommy and hopeful talk her out of running away like she was and coming with us. Arno had said he had called her Swiss friend and asked if Sonja was coming. Eva, the serpent, said it was a secret which depressed Arno. He was upset about Sonja's secretness for telling others before the family would know. He and Carol had spent days cleaning out her apartment and moving her things into storage. She had been using and abusing him.

The train was delayed, first one hour, then two and then three. Finally at nine o'clock it pulled in. Two busses were waiting outside but Sonja did not show. I went outside the terminal several times to go inside the buses while Roy and Keith were holding hands standing on the side walk. One of the buses bathrooms was locked all the time and I suspected Sonja was hiding inside. When the bus left, I went to the car and drove north on I-5, passing it and hoping to be at the border before her and intercept her there. I was out of myself with pain, feelings of rejection and betrayal.

"I know, Sonja, you want to break free, but why in this fashion?" I thought to myself. "What are you up to? Why are you throwing everything away like you do? You are not your old self now, you are still very, very ill."

At the Canadian border at Blaine the water pump of my Olds finally broke and made a noise like a Diesel truck. Against all precaution I passed into Canada and was pulled over by the inspector. He hadn't seen the children in the back, but told me to park in one of the spots underneath the canopy. I was scared they might apprehend the children, that my car was on the look out list, and instead of parking as directed I drove straight ahead a few yards and took a sharp left back to U.S. customs. Someone let me into the line-up and we were back on U.S. soil. The lady inspector asked with her monotonous voice:

"Why did you go into Canada?" Obviously Canada had called and reported the incident.

"I made a mistake," I replied.

"What were you trying to accomplish?" she continued.

"I was trying to see if my daughter was on the bus," I replied without hesitation.

"Okay. Thank you."

Eventually the bus pulled up, first at the duty free store and then at Canadian customs. I could peak through the bushes from the U.S. side's parking lots in back of the forwarding agencies. Sonja was not among them.

I parked my car in the new shopping mall and curled up on the front seat for a couple of hours of sleep, got up at six and began to dismantle the water pump. The Napa store had a replacement and at ten in the morning the car was back in running condition. All the while the children behaved wonderful, played around the car in the little shade they could find and seemed very sympathetic to

me. They had picked up on what had happened and said "Mommy has tricked us again."

We spent the rest of the day on the beach at Birch Bay, camped in the garden of Jake's Beer Bar beside the cabin that I had rented for a week in May and called Sonja the following day at Eva's.

It was not a very pleasant conversation, but she agreed in principle to come to Birch Bay and see us, provided I gave her the passport first before shaking hands. She seemed somewhat confused still. It was Friday now and the weekend was coming up. She said, maybe Monday would be a good time because she had forgotten the Lithium prescription at the hospital in Sacramento and needed a new one from UBC's family practice. We agreed to talk again at six in the afternoon on Saturday. I sent the passport to her by courier and she had it an hour later.

I drove to Gordon and Kathy's in Kirkland and called in the evening as agreed, but she wasn't there. Eva's man, Guy, a physics doctoral student from Montreal, said that she had gone out with a friend for the evening. Finally, at ten I got her on the phone. She seemed relaxed and said we could meet on Tuesday afternoon, perhaps, if she got the medicine in time. She didn't want to come on the weekend because she needed to recover, she said. Later in the evening I talked to Arno who said Sonja had been to his house for an hour. She had said that she was still in love with Brandon, did not want to take the children away from me because they needed me and I needed them. Then he said that he would tell me a secret if I promised not to tell anyone or else the channels of communication would be closed.

"Okay, what is it?"

"Sonja has a boy friend," said Arno.

I was so stunned that I didn't know what to answer, so I said:

"Oh, she does, so soon? I hope it goes well this time."

I knew that she was vulnerable when she was ill and her urge for love was heightened, throwing herself at anyone who would take her, but I hadn't expected this to happen at all. Inside of me I was bleeding and hurting. Now it was all over with us.

I talked to Sonja again on Monday. She said that she was going to speak to Social Services to make a deal with them if she presented the children for examination, and that she was seeking legal advice. Okay, she would come to Birch Bay on Tuesday afternoon. We agreed to talk again at noon before she left.

The following day at Birch Bay she said that she would only come if I let her take the children back to Vancouver. "You can't have the children, Sonja. How are you going to make a deal with Social Services after I have battled them in court and they wouldn't budge, not an inch? I don't trust them."

She would come to Birch Bay, see me and talk for only half an hour. I was out of myself and told her that she had promised us a vacation but betrayed us.

If you want to come for half an hour only, I think you do more damage to the children than good. It'll only confuse them. Think about it."

"After what happened in Sacramento," she replied, "we can't go on a vacation."

"Nothing happened," I said, "that you didn't do to yourself. But you promised us a vacation," I insisted.

"Yes, I did," she answered, "but not with you."

I was devastated.

I told her that I would leave now for the Okanogan and would be in touch by phone. You should meet us there and spend the promised vacation with us. We could sort things out, discuss her future plans and mine, and strike an agreement that we could live by.

"I miss you, Sonja," I pleaded, "and so do the children. Why don't you come? You don't have to be scared, I won't touch you."

Then she talked to Roy for a good five minutes. At the end of the conversation I heard Roy say:

"Why, mommy, why? Why don't you want to live with Roland anymore? Why?"

So she was priming him, our sensitive and vulnerable boy of six years of age, who was missing his mommy more than anyone, and who she had dumped in child care when he was only a month old. She was cruel, selfish and egotistic. She also spoke to Keith briefly who filled her in on all of the things he had seen and we had done. Would she bring him a present when she came?

We left for Pearrygin Lake State Park, driving through the mountains of Washington pass toward Winthrop. It was a beautiful sunny day and not too hot. If only Sonja would have been with us, it would have been the start of a perfect holiday. But this way, it was a sad, sad trip. All along the way I had a gloomy feeling in my stomach as if I should vomit. There was no hope, it seemed, it was over.

But why, why did she have to do it in such an inhuman and brutal way? We had lived together for ten years and been family for seven, had two lovely and adorable children, Roy and Keith. What promises did the new man hold for her whom she had only known for a few days and had now moved in with, a thirty-one year old assistant professor of statistics of all subjects, a Quebecker like Guy, Eva's man. I was disgusted as much as I was depressed.

By way of inquiry I found out who the new man was and called him at his office at the university. He was surprised and said that he couldn't talk to me, then hung up. I followed up with a fax telling him that he had picked Sonja for his summer bride but was in fact abusing her illness and that he should let her go to attend to the needs of her children. Sonja saw the fax and protested vigorously.

I talked to her on the phone daily, and also with Arno who warned me that

Sonja was up to something mean and that I should leave Pearrygin Lake with the children. All the time, Sonja said that she might come for a brief visit, but not until she had recovered, then she said she needed more trust in me, and finally she said that she needed guarantees, always forestalling.

On Friday noon I called her. She answered the phone direct instead of her inquisitive man. I said that I was so down that I didn't know what to do. In the evening, ten minutes to ten, the park ranger came to my tent and said that Sonja had been trying to get a hold of me. She would call me at the pay phone in ten minutes. The children were asleep in the tent as I went up the hill and waited by the phone. It did ring and Sonja was on the line.

"I am coming to see you on Monday," she said.

"Why Monday, why aren't you here right now."

"Oh, I thought you were going to be happy that I'm coming," she answered in a disappointing voice. "Did you know that Germany has a heat wave?" She was making pleasant conversation.

"Why Monday, why are you not coming tomorrow?" I asked her, pleading with her.

"I need the weekend off, Papa. Monday is soon enough. Be happy and look forward to it."

"How long are you going to stay?"

"That depends how it goes," she replied.

"Give me an indication, how long you are going to stay. You're not bringing the guy with you, are you?"

"No. I don't want a confrontation. I'm thinking of a couple of days, maybe until Thursday."

"Good."

"Would you mind if I brought him?"

"Yes, I would. That would not be right, Sonja. Come alone, Arno will drive you, I'm sure."

"Okay."

"And one more thing, Sonja, you've got to promise me. No tricks."

She answered, "No tricks."

I went back to the tent feeling relieved. She would come after all and we would have a few days together. The moon was gaining and would soon be full. Its soft light illuminated the lake and the hills around the park. If it weren't for her new man, Jean Meloche (I pronounced it like "Maalox"), I could have been truly happy. I lit a cigarette, opened a can of beer and sat down at the picnic table thinking about our past.

Sonja and I have gone through rough times before, I thought, but I've always been able to turn things around. Eventually, the realization had always sunk in and she had returned, gave birth to Keith, went back with me to Kirkland,

pulled out of her mental illness in July 1989, and graduated against all odds with a Bachelor of Music. Perhaps there was a chance this time as well. I shouldn't give up and surrender, as Churchill had said to his troops in their darkest hour during World War II:

"Never surrender, never surrender, you never surrender."

At two in the morning, Arno rattled at the tent. He and Carol had left at eight in the evening to be with us and spend the weekend, just to be sure everything was alright. He had been alarmed by my phone call, he said. Then he crawled into the tent that I had set up. I heard him talk to Carol for a minute then fell back asleep myself.

The children and I talked to Sonja again the next evening. She spoke to Roy a very long time and again and again he asked her this "Why, why, why?"

I questioned him what his mommy had said that he asked "why, why, why," but he refused to answer saying that he had forgot, didn't remember and so on. He covered for her.

I got angry with him and said:

"I have all this trouble with Mommy and you won't even tell me what she said to you. How can I ever figure her out?"

He took a step away from me and as we went back to the tent Roy staid behind the pushes and hid. Several minutes later, while I was sitting at the picnic table in deep thought, not paying attention, all of a sudden saw him sitting in front of me and looking directly at me. He didn't say a word, just looking. I felt so sorry for what I had said because he had the saddest eyes in the world that I have ever seen.

I realized what I had done, that he was blaming himself for my distress. I took him into my arms for a long, long time and gave him a bear hug. He allowed it willingly, then went back to Keith relieved and ran across the lawn playing.

We had a pleasant weekend together with Arno and Carol, considering the circumstances and swam a lot. They discussed my situation with Sonja and seemed quite sympathetic, saying it wasn't right how Sonja was doing it, but that I should understand that she also needed her freedom now. I agreed, but not in this manner by going into hiding with a new man. Was she going to follow through with her career and go to Hawaii? Carol didn't think so and in fact the college in Sacramento had called the school in Hawaii to tell them that Sonja could not teach. Hawaii, the wonderful prospect for her of building a new life, of something she always wanted to do, and in paradise, was out. It was a sad ending, I thought, and all because she had tried to execute her secret plan, to rebel and became ill over it, or rather let herself fall into her presumed safety net of illness that entitled her to be helped.

That girl of mine had absolutely no class, still I loved her. Makes two.

I called Sonja again on Sunday evening. When I asked how she was, she

said, "I am very, very nervous." She shouldn't be, I said. I would be as kind and polite as I was in Yerka. But I didn't pick up on the signal that she was really trying to send me. She was deceitful and also a liar. I should have known that, but not entirely so if I only tried to read her between the lines. I didn't as my receiver was jammed with emotions over her arrival.

Monday, August 10, 1992. In the morning I took the children to Winthrop shopping, bought lettuce, fresh green beans, new potatoes and ham which I knew Sonja liked. Also two bottles of dry Spanish champagne, some wine and imported German beer. I started to prepare dinner at noon and then phoned Arno.

"Sonja is driving herself to Winthrop. I've offered to drive her, but, of course, cannot beg her. She'll leave at two in the afternoon, she said, as agreed."

I called her number at two. There was no answer. She must have already left and be on her way.

An hour later, the children and I drove east across the pass as far as Marblemount to meet her half way and see if she was really alone or with the guy. I later found out that she spotted us but went into hiding to avoid me until I left again to return to Winthrop.

We were back at Pearrygin Lake at seven thirty and went for a swim. Sonja didn't come and I began to have a gloomy feeling that we had been tricked.

Finally, the children and I sat down at the picnic table alone for dinner when Keith said he had spotted a police car. "Two police cars," exclaimed Roy, got up from the table and was watching them proceed slowly along the road in our direction.

I've had intelligence training and knew instantly what was going on, but was too stunned to have any emotions. I never thought family could do that to each other. But I should have known, Sonja has always been and remained other peoples' girl. First Kramer's, then Rina's and now Maalox's and his ruthless lawyer's.

The police pulled up into our drive way and got out of the car.

"Are you Roland Haikel."

"Yes," I said standing up and looking directly at them.

"We have a foreign order," and he came over and read it to me while Roy and Keith were standing there glued to the ground not knowing whether to run away or whether to cling to me.

I said I had letters of guardianship over the children and went to the car to show it to the officer. But he kept pointing to the pieces of paper he had in his hand and said that I should not interrupt him. He read out loud:

"In the Superior Court of Washington for Okanogan County.

In Re: The Matter of

Sonja Ingrid Haikel, Petitioner, and



Roland G. Haikel, Respondent.

Upon the ex parte application of the petitioner...

This Court orders that that the Order entered August 7, 1992 [three days ago, Friday], in the Supreme Court of British Columbia, Cause No...., be given comity by this Court;

This Court orders that the Petitioner shall have sole guardianship of the two infant children, namely Roy Lars Haikel, born..., and Keith Andrew Haikel, born....

And this Court further orders that the Petitioner shall have sole custody of the said two children...

that the Respondent shall have no access to the said two children...

that the Respondent be restrained and enjoined from having any direct or indirect contact or communicating directly or indirectly with the Petitioner or the said two children...

that the Defendant shall not attend at or within two blocks of the residence of the Petitioner and/or the two children...

that any law enforcement officer having jurisdiction within the State of Washington take all steps necessary to remove the said two children from the possession of the Respondent, Roland Haikel, and deliver the said two children to the Petitioner, Sonja Ingrid Haikel forthwith...

that the Respondent forthwith surrender to the Petitioner both children's passports."

"These are the child snatchers," I said to Roy. "They have caught up with us because Mommy has tricked us again."

I followed the police cars with my children down to Winthrop. Roy was waving at me through the rear window all the way. In town, the police allowed me to hug Roy one more time, and to hug Keith.

Roy did not say a word. He wasn't smiling and he wasn't crying, just stunned.

"At least, you are going to see Mommy again," I comforted him.

He answered: "Yes."

Then it was Keith's turn. He gave me a bear hug. He squeezed me around the neck so tight as he had never done before.

"When am I going to see you again, Daddy?" he asked.

"Probably at Christmas," I answered.

I saw Sonja's U.S. attorney, showed him my letters of guardianship and told him that Sonja had just returned from a mental hospital in Sacramento, that he was acting reckless by turning the children over to her. He answered in cold blood that I needed a lawyer. I said the same thing to the police officers, a man and a woman. The man answered that he was acting under court orders and was in contempt of court if he didn't.

Then he drove off towards Twisp, Roy and Keith in the back. I found a phone and tried to get Judge James Thomas on the line, but his private number would not answer. Another two hours and Sonja and her man would be across the Canadian border. It was game over.

The car's V-belt had snapped on the way back from Marblemount to Winthrop a few hours earlier. Had I listened to what Mr. Olds was trying to tell me, this might not have happened. I should have left Winthrop when Arno had told me.

Replacing the belt took an hour, then I drove back to the park, took down the tent and cleaned the table in the bright light of a full moon, my moon it was supposed to be, I thought. I was so much in shock that I had no feeling, no sorrow, no remorse, nothing, just a deep, deep feeling of emptiness as I have never had before.

Shortly after ten, I drove up the road toward the exit of the park. The gate was closed but I could open it. The countryside was bathed in soft white moonlight. The air was balmy and warm. The crickets were chirping. This was going to be my evening to see Sonja, my Love, again after all the turmoil of the summer and disaster in Sacramento...

I stopped the car and fumbled through the bulk of papers that were attached to the court order. There was a Canadian order exactly the same, handed down and filed on Friday, the day that Sonja had phoned and said that she was coming. "Oh, I thought you were going to be happy that I'm coming," her words resounded in my ears. "No tricks." "No tricks," she had answered.

There was a Petition for Enforcement of Foreign Order:

"The children's welfare might be affect...Roy and Keith Haikel" their address being Vancouver. What a lie!

"In violation of the order of the Supreme Court of British Columbia dated August 7, 1992 [Friday], the Respondent [myself] has taken custody of the minor children." What a lie! I had no knowledge of the order and had guardianship, which wasn't mentioned, and custody of the children since May 6th at the latest. Lies, nothing by lies - typical of Sonja! Woman!!!

There was a statement of claim and attached to it an affidavit with Sonja's familiar signature at the bottom of the third page. I read:

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

BETWEEN:

SONJA INGRID HAIKEL,

PLAINTIFF,

AND:

ROLAND G. HAIKEL,

DEFENDANT.

*AFFIDAVIT*

I, SONJA INGRID HAIKEL, of the City of Vancouver, in the Province of British Columbia, MAKE OATH AND SAY AS FOLLOWS:

1. THAT I am the Plaintiff herein and as such have personal knowledge of the facts hereinafter deposed to save and except where the same are stated to be made upon information and belief, and where so stated, I verily believe them to be true.
2. THAT the Defendant is my natural father.
3. THAT when I was seventeen years of age, my father forced me into an incestual relationship with him at a time when I was suffering a nervous breakdown. The relationship resulted in the birth of our two children, namely ROY LARS HAIKEL, born XXXX XX, 1985 and KEITH ANDREW HAIKEL, born XXXX XX, 1988. The Defendant overwhelmed me with his domineering personality and I had no power to resist him. He has maintained the domination for the last ten years through psychological pressure and physical assaults.
4. THAT on or about May 6, 1992, the Defendant took the children to the State of Washington, U.S.A. to avoid a Court Order that the children be produced for examination by a qualified social worker on behalf of the Superintendent off Family and Child Service.
5. THAT the Defendant has advised me on numerous telephone calls that he will never let me see the children again and will remove them completely. He has made numerous suicidal threats and has advised me that he cannot take the stress of taking care of the two children. However, he refuses to return the children to Canada.

6. THAT the Defendant made me sign a document giving him legal guardianship of the two boys three years ago, which was done without any legal advice and while I was under his domination.

7. THAT I have a Bachelor of Music Degree and I am well able to take care of the children. I realize that they will need professional help to deal with the incest issue. I have also sought psychiatric help to deal with this problem.

8. THAT it would not be in the best interests of the children to remain in the custody of the Defendant having regard to his present emotional instability.

9. THAT I know it is essential to the interests of the children that my sexual relationship with my father end forever.

10. THAT I have a sincere relationship with Jean Meloche who is a Professor of Statistics at the University of British Columbia and who is emotionally and financially supporting me through this ordeal.

11. That it is my intention to cooperate fully with the Ministry of Social Services and Housing in working through this crisis and in the future to ensure that the children's interests are protected.

SWORN BEFORE ME at the City of )  
Vancouver, in the Province of )  
British Columbia, this 7th )  
day of August, 1992. )  
)  
)  
Richard K. Hertsen )  
\_\_\_\_\_)  
A Commission for taking )  
Affidavits in British Columbia )

*Sonja Hake*<sup>12</sup>

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SONJA INGRID HAIKEL

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<sup>12</sup> Whenever insecure and apprehensive, Sonja could not write her name right but misspelled it.

## Chapter 18

Where had I wronged her? No doubt, after all the trouble during the year 1992 with Sonja - taking care of the children, attending to Keith while day care was on strike, getting her a job, fending off her assault charges in court and protecting the children in Washington State against the threat of apprehension by British Columbia's Social Services, including the three court cases (Family, Supreme and Appeal courts), her breakdown in Sacramento, hiding in Vancouver with new boy friend - this August 10, 1992 was my absolute Waterloo. She had whipped and beaten me, taken the ones I had lived for - our children - in a most dishonest, deceitful and cruel way. I had not known that side of my daughter before.

Love makes you blind, goes a German saying - particularly new love like hers - but not a brutal monster, as I had called her after our incident on March 9th that involved the RCMP, the police, her police. No doubt, she had learned from her grandma and mama in Maulburg. Now she taught me what a real monster was.

One can have trouble with the mother-in-law and ex-wife, but daughter, lover and companion as well was a bit much to stomach. But that was exactly the gist of her attack - incest.

It was around eleven when I opened the gate at Pearrygin Lake State Park and slowly drove through the moonlit country side, past another campsite, down to Winthrop. This was going to be our night under a full moon, to discuss our problems, have a glass of wine, smoke and make pleasant conversation. After all, what could I do about the new guy, Mehlochs. Nothing much, unless she didn't really love him. Knowing Sonja, this would hardly be the case. But still, she might come around and be intimate with me. She could take 180 degree turns, I knew, and had done it in the past. But now? Was it all over?

I was still too numb to have any feelings, too much in shock. When a bullet strikes you, I've heard, or a sharp and pointed knife cuts right into your flesh, that's how it feels - no pain whatsoever.

My first thought was to simply resign. From all my family. Drive west, take I-5 south and spend some time in Southern California until the job became available on October first. Eventually, I thought to myself, they will try and make contact with me. Why should I chase them. It would indeed have been the best move, because the other alternatives I sought produced nothing, except burn me up inside.

I took it easy over the pass and through the mountains. The drive usually takes two and half hours. After an hour or two, remorse set in, then guilt, then feelings of desolation and finally despair. I could not keep my mind from

remembering the expected, our evening and a couple of nice days on the lake together, my hopes for turning the situation around as I had done so many times successfully in the past. I began to panic. New guy, the kids, court order and incest charges. No doubt, she was hoping that based on her criminal incest charges I would not pursue the court action and try to get the kids back, but rather resign and walk away. Lady, I determined, you are going to find out that a German can fight, take his risks and chances and go after you.

At Burlington I missed a turn and instead headed straight into town. At one o'clock in the morning by now, there was little traffic but I had seen a car that I thought could be her's and Mehlochs's with the kids. An old souped up Plymouth Charger was ahead of me, moving along very slowly. I passed him in a 35 mile and hour zone. The next minute he charged passed me and cut right in front of me, stepping on the brakes. I tried to pass him again, he veered to the left, blocking the passing lane. I tried to go back into the right lane, he move ahead of me. A car came toward us and I used the chance to quickly move into the passing lane. The Plymouth charged ahead with exhaust roaring. As soon as the oncoming vehicle had passed, he stepped on the brake and repeated his blocking maneuver. My Olds wagon had excellent road control and I had done a fair amount of civil racing myself. At this time, given the mood I was in, I challenged the Plymouth and soon we were roaring and screeching through the sleepy town of Burlington at up to seventy miles and hour, from right lane to left and going through red lights. Twice the other car charged ahead, the driver jumped out and gave me the ugly sign. I wouldn't stop. Eventually, at the I-5 exit, I passed him on the right, made a screeching U-turn and barely made it onto the on-ramp, leaving him behind hanging on the curb. I got behind a truck and watched my rear view mirror intensely. The Plymouth with the two red necks inside might have been low on gas. They were gone. I proceeded north through Bellingham and up to the Canadian border, crossed without incident and knocked at my son's, Arno's, apartment at two in the morning and told him what had happened.

We talked for about an hour, quietly, while his girl friend Carol kept on sleeping. Arno had a hard time believing what his sister, Sonja, had done. He let me get off my chip what I had to articulate and did not say much except shake his head now and then.

I fell asleep instantly but woke up several times during the night feeling nauseated, powerless, angry, betrayed in love, the whole panorama of emotions one could think of. Of one thing I was more and more certain: she picked a fight and that's what she was getting. I would not allow her to first abuse me, then steel away hiding with friends, and on top of the injury add insult by taking our children away from me in a legal covert action. I'd get even, one way or the other, no question.

But, in the morning I made the first mistake, got the legal form from the

stationary store in Vancouver and filed an "Appearance," thereby attorning to the jurisdiction that had interfered with Sonja's and my adopted jurisdiction of King County, Washington, the one she had even named in her complaint (Statement of Claim) - Kirkland, Washington. From now on I'd be served with any pleadings but forgot that she had the kids and did not need any additional orders. The onus was on me to prove her wrong. But filing the appearance, I agreed to her forum. In a court of law I soon learned, it is not so important what one says or does but how. The courts always grant their privileges to the one who is faster on the trigger. Obviously, I had been sleeping on the job although Arno had warned me that Sonja is up to something mean. I was so sure of myself that in Washington, where I was legal guardian of the children and had now reestablished residence, that I would have to be served before she would obtain any remedies that she might have. I was a fool for acting as my own lawyer. And more was yet to come. But, as Churchill had proven in World War II, one can lose every battle and still win the war. Plus, I still believed in her, in our love, in our common commitment to the emotional well-being of our children who loved both of us. No, I would soon find out, not with a woman "in love," or who thought she was, seeking shelter at the same time. Women equate the two, compromise and make amends - I call it prostitution of their ideals. Sonja, who had lost everything, clearly did not have any. But she was not raised that way and would soon come to her senses. Wrong again.

All day long I stood outside on Arno's stairwell, smoking away and thinking. In my mind, I saw Roy waving at me from the back to the police car as I had followed him down to Winthrop, and Keith, "when I am going to see you again, Daddy?" I choked, again and again. And Sonja's assurances in the car between Sacramento and Redding on our way to Yreka: "You can always depend on me. I will never forsake you." Oh, woman. I looked at her picture in my wallet and was instantly in love again. What have you done? Why, why, tell me, why?

At six in the afternoon, Carol came home and we set down for dinner and talked.

"Just last Friday, the day after her return from Sacramento, Sonja was here," said Carol.

"How did she appear to you? Was she alright, or still crazy?"

"She seemed okay, not a hundred percent, but you know."

"What did she have to say," I inquired eagerly.

"Well, she accused you of cancelling her flight to Hawaii on the 19th of August without asking her."

"But I only rebooked her so we could all travel together as she had promised us if she got the job."

"That's not the way she sees it," objected Carol.

"But we had agreed to fly together," I protested, "she had agreed in the

park before I left. She said three times that she wouldn't change her mind."

"Well, when she was here, she was still very confused about what she was going to do now. She buried her head and said, 'I can't take the children away from Roland because he needs them and they need him.'"

"Are you willing to state that in an affidavit to the court," I wanted to know.

She would, she said. Arno repeated that he had warned me not to stay at Pearrygin Lake, that she was up to something mean. But I hadn't listened.

"You know," I said with compassion, "I still love her. I was waiting for her to show so that we could talk, and be together with the children as she had promised. That's why I waited."

"You care more for her than you care about the children," said Arno. He had a point and I began to explain our full relationship of intimate association with her, detailed where necessary to put the point across. Arno and Carol did not know it had gone to such extent.

"You have in effect been commonly married, then," interjected Carol. "She has been of consenting age. You have two children. When I first heard about it, I blamed you. But now I am beginning to understand. She cannot put blame on you. She knew what she was doing."

"That is really not the point, Carol," I said, "because we wanted this family, when Roy was born at the latest. There is no one to blame, because nothing has happened. There's no victim. I am grateful for the children, for the time I spent with Sonja. I love her so much, you understand, I would do it all over again in spite of the hell I went through, because it was heaven at the same time. Where there is light, there is always shadow, the very essence of light's absence."

No, Carol did not understand. She was still looking for the guilt and who was responsible.

"What are you going to tell the children?" she wanted to know.

"That I am their daddy. They already call me that and love me as I love them. What else am I going to say? What do you want me to say?"

"But you are also their grand-dad, how are they going to take that?"

"They know that too. Children accept real life the way it is. Psychiatrists would first have to make it a problem for them, and then have them undergo therapy to correct it. They make trouble to have a job and correct it. The children, all they care about is love from their parents."

"But you know," Carol was insisting, "society is not going to accept that."

"The hoot with society. We are society too," I exclaimed.

"Yes, I wish, Sonja wouldn't have started it. That was quite unnecessary. You could have come to an arrangement rather than this."

"What is she going to tell the children? That she is really Roy's and Keith's sister, not mother?" I queried.

"I never thought of that aspect, because we always look to the father as the



offending party. But, of course, she was a consenting adult," answered Carol.

"And what are you saying, Arno," I asked.

"I am their uncle," he answered dryly, "and that's how I've been treating Roy and Keith." Arno likes things simple, not complicated. And he gave me a straight-forward answer.

Carol was a medical secretary with the bone marrow transplant section of the University Hospital and had a few medical dictionaries. She had read about Sonja's condition as a "bipolar," manic-depressive. The treatment with Lithium gave me hope that there might not be a recurrence, but when I read the material I realized that this was not necessarily the case. Was what she had done the result of euphoria/depression after all, rather than a carefully planned and executed maneuver of breaking our relationship and end up with the kids? Why would manic-depressive people be so deceitful and mean? I concluded that she let herself fall into the safety net of a sick person, because, as I later found out by talking to the cab driver Harry who took her and drove her the three hundred miles from Yreka to Sacramento, she appeared quite normal, though a little strange with her ideas of peace and unity in Europe. Harry would neither confirm nor deny that he received sexual favors. Consequently, I'm inclined to believe that he did and so does the Sacramento police as a reason for not pressing grand theft charges. Harry had been paid in kind(ness). Sonja was able, at least for a few hours, to slip out of her condition. She was not really mentally ill; she knew how to make us believe that she was and then added what simulation she could muster. That is not to say that she was normal either. With her, one just never knows because she is secretive and deceitful, herself a snake which she despises with a passion. She had sent me a "Dear John" letter through the courts because she shunned the argument that might have arisen had she spoken openly.

These thoughts made me exceedingly mad, but the next minute I began to miss her, miss her so much that it threw me into the severest depression that I have ever experienced in my life. Arno and Carol began to mock me about it.

"*Du steigerst Dich richtig hinein*," said Arno. You are really working yourself up.

"It's gone so deep for so long," Arno, "you don't have any idea what it's like," I answered. True, no woman had ever left me. I had no experience in heart-ache. My psychology was complicated by the fact that Sonja was also not only the mother in my new family, but my daughter in my old. Our double bond had been cut. The hurting came from two sides.

On the following day I drove to Kirkland to type my response to the show-cause order which was going to be heard in Okanogan on August 18th and a motion returnable in Supreme Court in Vancouver to set aside the previous ex-parte order and be reinstated as guardian for the children.

I poured my heart out to Gordon and Kathy who seemed sympathetic.

Kathy insisted that I should let Sonja go. I had no choice in the matter, I said, although my heart was still attached. But Sonja should not have taken the kids and excluded me, giving me no access, allowing no contact, no communication. That was clearly wrong, she said. Her granddaughter, Marquita, had been taken away by her natural father in the same covert fashion. I remember her moaning and groaning that went on all through the night when I visited last October and had told Sonja about it who was shocked, or seemed to appear to be. Now she had done it herself, ruthlessly.

I typed up a ten page position paper with lots of exhibits, a motion to set aside the ex-parte order, a draft order, the same for Vancouver and drove back to Winthrop, had the papers stamped in court, served on the other side for two clear days' notice, and the same in Vancouver. By the weekend I was back in Kirkland and on Monday drove to the hearings.

I arrived in the late afternoon on Monday, August 17, and saw signs all over the town of Okanogan, Washington: "Re-elect [James] Thomas," the man who had signed the Okanogan County's court's order, "by comity." The Judge Clarence Thomas and Anita Hill affair came to my mind by hearing the name again that had been televised during last year's U.S. Supreme Court confirmation hearings, leaving a bad taste in my mouth.

On the morning of the hearing, I woke up early and went to the court house. At half past eight an old beat up turquoise pick up truck pulled up behind the court house and parked at a reserved spot. Two wooden boards were stuck on each side of the back reading "Re-Elect Judge Thomas." The truck stopped, the door opened and a rather plump fifty year old man dressed in a black robe dismounted from the driver's seat, slid on to the pavement holding a brief case one hand, waltzed toward the back entrance and heaved himself up the steps and entered the building.

A clerk dashed by.

"Was this him? The judge?" I asked.

"Sure was," she replied with a grin on her face.

I had missed the opportunity of taking his picture. Too bad.

Court started on time with only a handful of parties and their lawyers present. While I waited, sitting behind Rolf Borgerson, Sonja's lawyer, a colleague came up to him and thanked him for the check.

"We should have another case going real soon," I heard him saying. Lawyers cant loose, can they, so long as they got a client under their jig saw. Pathetic, I thought.

Soon my case came up. Whether I had any legal training. No. The other side was allowed to open by telling their story. The thrust of my rebuttal which almost won the judge over was that the Vancouver order was also granted ex-parte. Judge Thomas did not know, did not know that I had legal guardianship

from a Washington court in King County, my and the children's residence. I began to breathe easier, but then I got it full bore and hammer:

"The real issue in this case is the allegation of incest, your Honor."

He looked down at me from the bench, taking in every word Borgerson had to proffer and I could see it in his eyes that it was game over for me. Order confirmed. Good-bye. The judge had not read my submissions because I had overlooked to serve him with an office copy three days ago. The lower courts are fairly close to where it's happening. Shoplifting, speeding tickets, assault and other misdemeanors and felonies. They have no sympathy for love gone wrong, especially one between a father and a daughter. The word "incest" is mentioned and the verdict follows, instantly. How could I have thought that I had a fighting chance of winning?

"Oh, Sonja," I thought. "How cunning of you to hide behind the allegation of incest while demanding to keep the fruits of our forbidden love, the children, all for yourself? What justification do you really have?" None, of course, except the sympathy of a molested child which she was not in the least, but a consenting adult. The courts today do not differentiate between child molestation and consensual intimate association. The minute the word is mentioned, it's all seen as one and the same thing which it clearly is not. In Okanogan, at least, I had failed.

In a somber and melancholy mood I took my leave from this beautiful city in the arid part of Washington and drove north on Highway 97 past the two hundred acre mountain north of Ellisford that I had once owned before the German oil swindle had gobbled me up, crossed over into Canada at Oliver and Osooyos and proceeded westward along Highway 3 to Vancouver.

Same thing there, except the real treat was that Sonja showed up in court. She looked so pretty in her new dress, shoulder long hair and calm facial features. I'm sure she was on barbiturates, drugs to calm her. I was sitting in the last row when the door opened and she stuck her head in looking for me. Then I saw her lawyer. A tall, long-faced fellow with a high hook nose. In Huttingen, Germany we had a village idiot called Paule. He always shook his head while he walked and greeted everyone on the way, villager or stranger. Herdsen turned out no Paule, but an emotional, outrageous advocate. He raised the incest, domination and abuse allegations to a shrill and bizarre issue. It threw the judge.

Once again, my objection that this should not cloud the issue of child custody went totally unheeded. His Honor, Justice Cooper, a referral judge from Canada's Okanagon, confirmed Justice Fraser's August 7th order, added costs and more stringent requirements than were in the original order. Sonja's mate was all of a sudden included, though a third party, actually. No-contact, no-communication, police mandated to arrest me on the spot. Sonja had lied about my encounter the previous day with R.C.M.P. when I was spotted near her man's apartment, which was not mentioned in the order. She said in an affidavit that I

had said to the R.C.M.P. that they could not arrest me. A total lie. Herdsen was behind it, I'm sure. When I saw them sitting side by side and whispering, I thought of cab driver Harry and the way she had won his collaboration. Pathetic.

Sonja turned her head and looked over to me, time and again. I had lost a good thirty pounds over the ordeal of the past four weeks. Arno said that I looked my old self again as in photo albums of the past. We had to move to another court room and during the intermission Sonja went outside for a smoke. Herdsen was afraid that I would bump into her and tried to chase me off:

"You stay here," he commanded, shouting at me. "Don't go out there."

Then he literally ran through the court hall and stormed outside looking for her. No question, I thought, this guy is "nuts." My own lawyer had a similar experience with him when he asked for negotiated visitation rights. Just asked. Herdsen blew his top and verbally insulted him. Sonja said to my mother, when she tried to mediate, suggesting to Sonja to change lawyers, that he was "very good." But she did not pay his legal fees. Her new man, the stats prof, did. Sonja's great on the old OPM-program. Other People's Money, before she dump's 'em. I've known her for twenty-eight years and should know. But she can also be generous, I should add, when and if she can. For her, money is just another commodity, used to be spent into circulation, not hoarded. A real artist that way, a spend-thrift and a free spirit, except for her sometimes pious and religious inclinations. But none today, for sure.

On that afternoon I went back to Arno's and Carol's, depressed but still happy to have seen her again. I was still in love with Sonja. Compulsory and compassionately. She was still so much a part of me that often through the day I thought I should go to the phone and call her and then realized that I couldn't. It didn't hurt so much as it felt downright saddening. My emotions were a mix of fever and homesickness. I had never experienced it before, and it remains the condition to this day. It just will not go away. The same with my longing to hug Roy and Keith. Cruel woman! No heart, no modesty or humility, only egotism. Sonja says: "*Es muss sein.*" It has to be. She's become a robot, and I'm sure it's part of the Lithium treatment that affects her emotions, killing off all good ones that she normally has. Today she has none. Emotionally she's dead timber. I could overhear a conversation she had with Arno. We were all wondering.

"He who builds a high fence invites destruction." Proverbs 17:19. Sooner or later, Mehlochs will come to the realization that he is the next victim that she sucks into her black hole. She may be affectionate and adaptive now because of necessity. But the longer and harder her effort the greater her retribution later when the rebel comes out in her. After all, she's my daughter and I should know my own kind. Manic-depression is a genetic disease. It's not curable but can only be treated. The demands she makes on her own can be accepted and forgiven by her own. Strangers won't put up with it for very long. Four months, a year, while

the physical attraction lasts. That's max. Unless the man is impotent and seeks a meek and submissive woman - for the moment. She's child like, often, open and accessible, even soft and tender. But underneath her skin the rebellion is brooding. When she lashes out, there's no holding back.

Lawyer Herdsen accused me of wanting Sonja back. Millions of divorced husbands and wives want their spouses back. I'm no exception. Seven years, she said, and we'll come together again. She borrowed the seven-year-cycle theory from the Anthroposophists in Sacramento. During the first seven years she was my unquestionably adorable star. Then we moved apart, a process that was completed at age fourteen, she says. We began to move together again and at twenty-one she had Roy (three times seven years). At twenty-eight it was time for a break-up again which would last until she's thirty-five. Then, she said, we would move toward each other again until she's forty-nine and I am seventy-three, if I can stand it. I have heard of the seven-year cycle from my Anthroposophical parents.

The year 1992 did not see the end of our intimate association. There were similar episodes before. Each time, her relations turned out to be of a fleeting nature. Because one bond cannot easily be substituted for another, especially when there are children. "Bonding is too serious for us promiscuously to transmute one tie of great intensity into its opposite..."<sup>13</sup> As to incest? It can be learned. Just as kinship which is not biological; it is learned.<sup>14</sup> After a ten-year time span, I cannot bring myself to think she hasn't. The scruples which she presently displays to have her way are a smoke screen to gain legal collateral advantages.

"We are geared to learn some things much more readily than others - given the right input of information - and some things scarcely at all. And the motivations (or emotivations) that we learn most easily are those that have got us here."<sup>15</sup> We easily learn fear, aggression, love, language, incest avoidance, attachment, and altruism. We also learn to categorize, interdict, exchange, and make rules..."

Sociologists see the justification for the incest prohibition in the force by which it leads the child outside the family to form new alliances, rather than risk the implosion of the natal family directed back on itself.<sup>16</sup> Sonja cannot be daughter and wife in one family unit, goes the argument. Family roles are exclusive. Effectiveness is mentioned. I can only agree - within *one* family. The father-daughter family was dissolved when I divorced my wife over three years before

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<sup>13</sup>Lionel Tiger/Robin Fox. "The Imperial Animal," p. 117

<sup>14</sup>Twitchell, p. 255

<sup>15</sup>Robin Fox. "The Red Lamp of Incest." Page 174, citing S. Diamond and D. Blizard, editors. "Evolution and Lateralization of the Brain." Ann. N.Y. Acad. of Sci., vol. 299 (1977)

<sup>16</sup>Twitchell, p. 254

Sonja and I formed our intimate association which grew into a new, our own family. There is no dispute with traditional theory here, that one of the rationale's behind the taboo is the protection of the family unit. To the contrary, by invoking the taboo, Sonja is destroying our family unit that was functioning well, produced healthy offsprings, and sustained them emotionally and physically. She ventured out, trying to create a new unit, is restless. For her it is only a matter of variety, not necessity as she argues, but augmented, perhaps, by her mental condition, and not *vice versa*, as the persecuting and, maybe, prosecuting authorities may wish to make her believe. In their desperation to assert control over our association, regardless of her choice that she once made voluntarily, and without regard to the emotional bonds that are now broken, which they perceive as a threat to society, they resort to the most elemental of human mechanisms: They name it - incest.

But naming it does not change its origin, the deed. "We must bypass the gospel according to St. John and disagree that 'In the beginning was the word [the name].' We must go to Goethe's Faust for *Im Anfang war die Tat* - 'In the beginning was the Deed.' The final words of *Totem and Taboo*.<sup>17</sup> She was all deed, and the deed bore fruit and it was good. The words, her lies, came after.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Fox. "The Red Lamp of Incest." P. 169

<sup>18</sup> "Allzuweit dürfen wir unser Urteil über die Primitiven auch nicht durch die Analogie mit den Neurotikern beeinflussen lassen. Es sind auch die Unterschiede in Rechnung zu ziehen. Gewiss sind bei beiden, Wilden wie Neurotikern, die scharfen Scheidungen zwischen Denken und Tun, wie wir sie ziehen, nicht vorhanden. Allein, der Neurotiker ist vor allem im Handeln gehemmt, bei ihm ist der Gedanke der volle Ersatz für die Tat. Der Primitive ist ungehemmt, der Gedanke setzt sich ohneweiteres in Tat um, die Tat ist ihm sozusagen eher ein Ersatz des Gedankens, und darum meine ich, ohne selbst für die letzte Sicherheit der Entscheidung einzutreten, man darf in dem Falle, den wir diskutieren, wohl annehmen: Im Anfang war die Tat." (Freud, "Totem und Tabu," p. 217)

## Chapter 19

I spent Christmas Eve 1992 in a dimly lit cell in the basement of the Provincial Court House in Richmond, British Columbia. My crime? Four letters to Sonja, two of which went to her attorney, Herdsen, as allowed by his Honor, Judge Groberman, in the bail order of November 10. The other two were unauthorized. "Glowing love letters," Madame Justice Boyd had called them at my access hearing on December 17.

There was also a video of our favorite movie that I had sent to her, care of Mehloch's apartment on campus at the University of British Columbia: "High Noon" with Gary Cooper and Grace Kelley. I had bought it for myself and as an impulse bought a second for her and mailed it, without a note, just gift-wrapped. Last Christmas, Sonja had given me Grace Kelley's biography and I had read it cover to cover. Now, Herdsen called sending of the movie "a threat," the press reported, and crown counsel wanted to detain me.

One of the letters suggested to Sonja a meeting in Basel between her and her mother on the one part, myself and someone I would choose to stand by me, on my part. This now was the answer. At first, Judge Groberman did not want to let me out without someone coming and putting up bail. I quickly grasped the severity of the situation, asked to speak to my counsel for a minute and told him to plead with the judge that this was my most difficult time in my entire life, that I was suffering under the separation from my family and had not seen the children for over four months, but intended no harm or mischief by sending Sonja her most favorite movie.

What must go through a judge's mind who is asked by the crown to sentence a man who had sent his daughter a love letter and a Christmas present. Outrage at the incest allegation? He's judged worse cases of vandalism, wife beatings and even murder. But now it was Christmas Eve, the wife and turkey were waiting, perhaps the grandchildren and a scotch on the rocks. Who knows? The judge looked tired, indeed, he's had his fill for the day, the month, the whole damned year. I had seen him in better spirits when he first heard my case, moved swiftly and generously giving me access to UBC, and at the end said, "he can avail himself of the world," meaning I was free to travel while on bail.

The judge bought my counsel's plea and released me on my own recognizance, increasing bail without surety or deposit from \$1,000 to \$3,000. Another hour or two went by until the justice of the peace had drawn up the new bail order. As I was led up the stairs to her office, it was almost six now, Madame Holt was already standing at the counter, everybody else had left the office.

We knew each other, she looked at me sternly but not unfriendly and read

the new order out loud, where I could not go, whom I could not contact, and if I violated the order I could be arrested as I have.

As I signed, I said, "Silence is virtue, but do you know what caused it all?"

"Oh, I'm not going to get into this now," she replied.

In anger I added, "This is no different than the old Soviet Union, isn't it."

The sheriff lead me to the door, we wished each other merry Christmas, and as I walked to my car, I lit a cigarette and glanced at all the Christmas lighting at the shopping center next to the court house, heard the people converse and giggle, and thought to myself, "first Christmas alone, ever. Why? Why? Why I, not she. What have I done worse than she?"

Nevertheless I missed her, missed Roy's sad and mellow looks and Keith's refreshing quirks and comments. They must be filled with excitement by now, my sweet little boys, staring at the Christmas tree and the presents beneath them, but not to be opened until after supper. It was our family tradition to have "Pasteten filled with small chunks of veal or chicken meat and peas." Sonja being the house wife she would surely follow the old tradition, with the new guy, the substitute father of my darling boys. I deep feeling of despair overcame me. I lit another cigarette, duMaurier, my favorite Canadian brand, and drove "home" to the apartment where PJ Mora had given me shelter since mid October. But he wasn't there. I sat in front of the television sets, CNN with fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Somalia and politicking on my left and the CBC with Christmas caroling on the right, both on at the same time, took one of the last cheap American piss beers from the balcony and continued to smoke. At about ten I was sufficiently drunk to find my way to bed, put the blanked over my head and fell asleep.

Jose had picked me up at the airport the night before and told me that the blue boys from Vancouver police had been at his door two days earlier. There was a break-in next door, they said, and wanted to talk to him. But he did not open the door and said he hadn't heard about it. They knocked again and said they wanted to talk to him.

"Okay," he said, "talk to me, I'm listening," but still would not open his door.

"Is Roland Haikel home?" they asked.

"Oh," Jose replied, "why didn't you say so?" and opened up. They asked if I was home. No. Where I was. Out of town. When I would come back? I don't know.

I was scared when I heard about it and the next day called my criminal lawyer, Harry Stevenson and eventually got a hold of him by insisting this was an emergency. We agreed to meet at the Richmond court house after lunch. He was called to be there on behalf of some juvenile young offenders. When we met, he told me about the charge and said nobody was going to be looking for me during the holidays but that eventually I would have to face the charge because a warrant for my arrest had been issued for bail violation. The crown wanted to have me



detained, not again released on bail. If I wanted to come in. I said I did. Minutes later I was arrested by the sheriff, read my rights and led to the cell in the basement. The ordeal lasted five hours.

The worst about thing about arrest is the knowledge that a warrant out for you, not the actual arrest itself but the fear of being arrested. Once in the cell, there is nothing you can do about it and rationalizing sets in, but also despair, because I did not know if and when I was going to be released.

I guy in the neighboring cell was stirring. He started to cough and groan that I thought he might have a heart attack. Then he began to call out: "Guard...guard!"

No answer. A television set was blaring away somewhere in the distance behind. The door in the hall way to the guard's quarter stood half open. I heard voices resounding from the concrete walls but could not make out where they were coming from. Did it matter? No.

The guy to the left of me, behind a stone wall so that I could not see him, began to yell. Then, "damn!" Eventually the guard came. A mean and tall fellow of about fifty plus with a pot belly. He cursed the inmate who cursed him back. Eventually something was brought to him on a long blue electric cord. A telephone? Could be.

I was standing up all the time, staring through the iron bars into nowhere.

"Who was the real prisoner?" thought I. "Those who brought me here or I who had to endure it?"

Incest was non of my problems, but theirs. They had to come to grips and find a way to deal with their consternation of judging me, judging us including Sonja and our beautiful little boys. We had nothing to do with their plight, their false virtues and corrupted ideals of love, righteousness and justice. We hadn't harmed anyone except their taboos which they did not understand themselves, where they came from, why they were imposed on themselves let alone us. Except that we had violated them.

And Sonja, or Sunny as we used to call her with affection and belittlement, Sunny, what are you trying to accomplish with all these bizarre proceedings? Of course, I knew. First of all, as a follower that she is, she fell pray to the advice of a ruthless and vexatious lawyer who twisted and turned the truth whichever way it suited him to meet his ends, but one who had lost all of his professional calm and cool about it to the great consternation of his colleagues. Second, because she knew how much I loved her and she was afraid that she might once again succumb to my love for her and continue our life together, because it was comfortable when we were nice to each other, because there was bonding, pair bonding, even love and, of course, our adorable sons.

She speculated, I am sure, that if only she keeps me out of her life long enough, I will give in, begin to go my own ways and eventually forget. She does

not know that the loss of a loved one, an extra close relative, two in effect, three, is something the heart will never forget. And, indeed, not a minute went by that, when the mind was idle, I was not thinking of her. All the time, no matter where I was. All the time. Mood swings made it worse, the feeling of abandonment, the stubborn terror she exercised over my soul, reinforced by her victories in court, pronounced by hard nosed judges without feeling, without compassing or the slightest idea of what we were and are. Cynical bastards who began to control my life, run it from the impersonal office at the bench in chambers at the downtown Vancouver court house. Assembly line operation. My case was heard for twenty minutes, an hour at the most, and Herdsen prevailed with his attacks so tainted an false but successful. I had beaten Sonja, abused her for a decade in kept her in captivity, he said, the liar. My attorney was so overwhelmed that he could not react quick enough to disprove him. And again came the verdict: "No access." Another two weeks, three, a month to wait for the next appearance in appeals, in trial or criminal court. Round and around and around, but "no access." I became more angry and determined as time went by to go for it all the way, to attack the charge head on by raising the constitutional question, but I found no lawyer t listen to me and therefore I ventured out to do it myself and the minute the news his the press, all attention was on my case. All of the sudden, my plight became newsy.

But what had we done, Sonja and I, or I alone? Incest among consenting adults is a victimless event. As in the book and movie Lolita, she had emerged completely intact and healthy, even married and pregnant; he was destroyed and tried for having murdered her new lover. But no crime in our case other than the trespassing of a historical taboo. The past shall not bind the present.

"To successfully challenge the constitutional validity of s. 155 we have to lead some evidence," said one Vancouver constitutional lawyer to me, considered my case and then declined taking it. My best evidence against the biological-hereditary rationale were Roy and Keith themselves: good looking, healthy little buggers. Especially Keith. Smart, witty and likeable, a real winner.<sup>19</sup>

No, if anyone was trapped, it was society itself in its own taboo, and the state apparatus engaged set against me in the name of peace and justice. It was their nightmare, not mine, and I was going to prove it.

I had just returned from Los Angeles from an interview with a film producer who was interested in turning my story into a two hour mini-series. I was picked up by a limousine and whisked to the company's plush headquarters in Burbank, California.

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<sup>19</sup> Roy and Keith were put into a foster home at age 11 and 9, respectively, by Social Services, with consent of the mother stating that she did not want to raise children from an incestuous relationship. They both finished high school in Vancouver, BC. Roy earned a Judo Brown belt, and Keith became a high school football star competing in the in selection for College Scholarships. No evidence of deleterious genetic defects, whatsoever. [Comment added 2009]

"Have blood tests been taken of you and your daughter?"

"No," I answered.

"What if they turn out that she is not your biological daughter?"

"Then there would be no crime, no story, the whole thing would collapse instantly," I replied.

This was exactly the point. Sonja and I are ordinary people, equally situated like all other couples living together, had obviously loved each other and as a result had two healthy kids. The crime of incest has three basic elements. First, the partners must stand in the prohibited blood relationship of parent-child, grandparent-child, or brother-sister. Second, they must have had sexual intercourse to the slightest degree, meaning penetration whether or not seed was emitted, and third, they must have known about their relationship. The fourth element which serves as a defense against incest is restraint, fear or duress, usually applied, I surmise, by the female against the male.

So, my alleged crime was only knowledge. As long as I did not submit to blood tests, how could I know? All of mankind commits adultery, but when I married her mother she was already pregnant. Worse, yet, one of my brothers was around and my lawyer had warned me if I submitted to blood tests and Sonja was his child the test result would show me as the father because my brother's genes were potentially no different from mine, in principle at least, and the test results are not that accurate unless he too was tested.

How much of the crime of incest is based on definitions and knowledge, rather than on the hereditary-biological and other rationales, is demonstrated by the following example:

If A and B are brother and sister who love each other and have four offspring, C, D, E, and F, all offspring are siblings to each other of criminally incestuous origin. If C loves D who gives birth to G, and E loves F who gives birth to H, then it follows that G and H are first cousins who may legally marry each other without any shame and guilt of incest and have ten children. No one will dispute, however, that the two first cousins by definition, G and H, are also highly inbred, both having the same great grandparents, grandparents, A and B, and parents who are siblings, and that their children I to R should be an excellent copies of themselves and look alike, no outside genes having entered the family for four generations.

A-----B

C-----D    E-----F

G-----H

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I J K L M N O P Q R

If knowledge of our blood relationship alone can lead to a crime, whether we actually are or are not being irrelevant, then I was no differently situated than Galileo, the Italian astronomer and physicist who was condemned for heresy by the Inquisition for failing to conform his knowledge to orthodox Roman Catholic thinking that the world should be flat. His crime was the knowledge that it was round. It took the church 350 years to finally admit that he was right and vindicate him. Only recently, about a month ago, Pope John Paul made headline news by admitting to the fact that the church had been wrong. I had decided I should not wait that long and challenge the constitutionality of the incest taboo in the courts.

## Chapter 20

On November 12, 1992, after asking my civil counsel again and again about bringing the Constitutional challenge, I caught Lorne MacLean in what he later called a weak moment and he agreed that I could file it, but on my own. I did not wait a minute, crossed over to the court house in Vancouver and did so. A week or so later, after the news had made the press ("The man who wants to legalize incest," wrote the Vancouver Sun and published a weekend extra)<sup>20</sup>, he made me take his name off the document that in fact I had signed myself by filing another paper in court and serving it on the Attorney General of British Columbia and on Herdsen saying that I was acting on my own behalf. I am sure that Lorne regretted his cautious move, possibly dictated to him by his partners in the law firm, because it brought him invaluable free advertisement and publicity, and Herdsen too.

On the day after the news, Herdsen appeared on national TV and charged me with brutality towards Sonja. Asked by the interviewer how Sonja would cope with the ordeal, he replied:

"She is gaining her strength back now that she is free of his clutches. What can you do when your legs are in shackles and you don't have the key to free yourself?"

What he was really aiming for is building a case for Section 155 subsection 4: the defense of "restraint, fear and duress," a flat out lie if there ever was one. Sonja had admitted in her police statement that I had always been very careful in asking her consent, and sometimes, she said, she did not refuse — like three times a week over a period of ten years makes 1,500 times! No question to the reasonable man, she was a conspirer at best not a victim. She was a high school graduate from the rigorous German academic branch, a university graduate, had taken women's studies at the University of Washington three years earlier, and teacher training in Vancouver and still said she was a helpless victim with shackles on her legs and in my clutches? Come on, Herdsen...

Lorne MacLean had resisted all along to counter Herdsen on the incest charge and restricted himself to the fact that I was a good father, proven by numerous affidavits and Dr. Alvin Chandler's report following his clinical interview in May.

"There is no question, he is a good father and entitled to see his children,"

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<sup>20</sup>I found the headline revolting, and many readers must have felt likewise. It has never been my intention to "legalize," to promote incest. The CBC asked me about it and I replied that incest among consenting adults was a matter of personal choice and should be taken out of the criminal code.

he kept repeated. I disagreed with his approach, called it too defensive and asked him time and again to lower himself to the trenches in which Herdsen was operating and start calling Sonja a liar. He did not, and neither did I get access, "because of the seriousness of the allegation," the judges kept saying again and again. It was time to take out the main charge, attack it in its validity where it was most vulnerable: under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Canada's equivalent to the U.S. Bill of Rights.

What tipped me in the right direction, I think, was an article by Professor Carolyn Bratt in the fall of 1984 edition of the *Family Law Quarterly*, entitled: "Incest Statutes and the Fundamental Right of Marriage: Is Oedipus Free to Marry?"<sup>21</sup>

I had called up Professor Bratt and asked her if she knew of any developments and literature in Canada. She didn't, but I was lucky digging through the cases in the law library at UBC and was particularly impressed by the recent decision of the Supreme Court of Canada in the *Butler* case.<sup>22</sup>

Professor Bratt had concluded: "The state interests supposedly served by prohibiting certain marriages as incestuous are either not legitimate state objectives or if they are valid state objectives, incest statutes are an impermissible means of effectuating those interests. Therefore, as applied to adults, incest statutes fail to pass constitutional scrutiny."

This was in 1984. Eight years later, Justice Sopinka, for the Supreme Court of Canada, said in the *Butler* pornography case, quoting Wright J. from the court down below: "...I am unable to conclude that the depiction of the human body or any of its parts, no matter how explicitly presented, or the visual presentation of masturbation, group sex or other heterosexual or homosexual activity, including incestuous relations, *prima facie* relate to sufficiently specific concerns which are pressing and substantial in a free and democratic society to justify restricting or limiting the basic freedom permitting them to be expressed."

Sopinka J. was addressing the constitutional freedom of expression, as restricted by the public morality standard. I added the freedom of choice in mating, the right to procreate affirmed in the Supreme Court's decision in *Re Eve*.<sup>23</sup>

During a trip to Los Angeles in late September and early October, I had stopped at the University of California at Davis and browsed through its extensive law library, digging up cases and articles, also stopped at the Stanford University's bookstore and at the University of Southern Oregon's Ashland library. Each time I found more and more material that denied the government's right to interfere in love relationships among consenting adults, including those who stood in the

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<sup>21</sup> 18 Fam. LQ 257 (1984)

<sup>22</sup> *Regina v. Butler* (1992), 70 C.C.C. [Canadian Criminal Cases] (3rd) 129.

<sup>23</sup> *Re Eve* (1986), 31 D.L.R. [Dominion Law Reports] (4th) 1.

proscribed blood relationship as defined in state incest statutes.<sup>24</sup> And this was exactly the position Sonja and I had taken all along. We felt no guilt, shame, but were, of course, cautious in avoiding any suspicion that might result in confrontation and debate. But now, Sonja had officially taken the public view. One reader wrote the Vancouver Sun:

"I can't help but feel that for all the smugly self-righteous propaganda arrayed against him, Roland S. is morally courageous in his legal battle against section 155 of the Criminal Code. To any fair-minded person, it is clear that Roland S.'s daughter is exploiting the social prejudice that equates incest, as it once did homosexuality, with child molestation. The freedom to have unconventional preferences should never be conditional upon what the majority in society is mentally or emotionally comfortable with. Psychologist Roland Elterman is needlessly alarmist in making his point about the dangers of incestuous relationships (Experts Say Incest Dangerous, Cannot be Defended, Nov. 21). Even if incest were legal, I still think it would be extremely rare for such marriages to occur." Robert S. Smith, Vancouver.

There were others that said neither Sonja nor I should have the children, that I had been abusing my authority over her, etc. pp.

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<sup>24</sup>I found particularly helpful and motivating in my defense, Sigmund Freud's book, "Totem and Taboo" which I devoured in the original German version.

Sigmund Freud (1913). "Totem and Taboo." A.A. Brill, transl. 1918. Reprint. New York: Vintage Books.

Robin Fox (1980). "The Red Lamp of Incest: An Inquiry into the Origins of Mind and Society." Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983.

Robin Fox (1967). "Kinship and Marriage. An Anthropological Perspective." Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Lionel Tiger and Robin Fox (1971). "The Imperial Animal. New York: Henry Holt and Company.

## Chapter 21

On July 11, 1992, Mrs. Candace Bernardes, 43, of Sao Paulo, Brazil rewarded her teenage son, Emilio, 17, for his straight "A" high school graduation with a trip to Thailand. There, before a judge in a flower-bedecked chapel, the mother fulfilled her promise and said her vows to her lover of four years, her own natural son. "Then the happy couple kissed tenderly and departed in a chauffeur-driven limo for a two-week honeymoon at a luxury hotel."<sup>25</sup>

The defiant bride, the wealthy widow of super-rich Brazilian coffee tycoon offered the following comment:

"We're rich and we don't have to follow everybody else's rules."

Since their marriage, the couple has been snubbed at charity galas, cocktail parties and been dropped from invitation lists right and left. "Still," reports the tabloid, "the devoted couple say they'd marry again in a minute – because they are passionately in love with one another."

"I think, my mom is very sexy," said Emilio. "She's been the girl of my dreams for years – ever since we started being intimate when I was 13. I've wanted to marry her for as long as I can remember, but she wouldn't agree until I finished school. She told me if I made the honor roll in my senior year she'd marry me. I made straight A's."

According to the newspaper, Thai laws do not expressly prohibit incestuous marriages. "I've been married twice before and I loved both my husbands very much," said Candace. "But the love I have for Emilio is something very special. He is both my husband and my only child – he's my entire world."

On my return flight from Frankfurt to Seattle, on September 11, 1992, I happened to find a smoking seat in the back of the plane next to a divorced woman from the state's capital, Olympia, Washington, of about the same age. She was an interesting woman, full of vigor, and I returned frequently from my front seat for a smoke, more often than I would have otherwise, just to continue the conversation. As all people, who have had a deep rooted and genuine experience in which they have been hurt – my own wounds were rather fresh – I could feel her uninhibited desire to communicate.

How many children I had, she asked.

I answered "five."

She had two and had had an affair with a beautiful eighteen year old friend of her son. It lasted six months until his family got involved and broke up the relationship. She had been abstinent for over three years, and still, she said, every

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<sup>25</sup> Cover Story, "Weekly World News," October 27, 1992



time she had been intimate with someone else, all she could think of was him.

"I have deep scars inside," she said and looked at me to test if I understood.

"I believe you," I said. "The mother of my four and six year olds was only twenty when the first one was born, I was forty-five."

It seems just as common for older women to fall in love with younger men as *vice versa*. The far greater part of intrafamilial relationships, however, is between father and daughter.

Professor Robin Fox explains why.<sup>26</sup> The incest prohibition, writes Fox, is primarily directed against the young male who is torn in two directions, to displace the older man or men and have free access to the women, and to *be* the old man himself. Initiation ceremonies are the social expressions of the taming of these emotions, which are not free creations of the intellect. "The brain is geared, wired, or what have you, to produce them..." "In some sense, then, we reproduce the evolutionary drama of the primal horde." "The young male meets his first trial of equilibration with those older males and females that he finds himself among and who are defined as having power over him (males) or being forbidden (females)." Guilt and inhibition are easily learned and provoked to prevent "turning their sisters into wives." But what about the daughter, a female under his control, who by now he regards as a means of exchange and alliance by marrying her out.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Robin Fox. "The Red Lamp of Incest." Chapter 6, "Alliance and Constraint," pp. 161 et seq.

<sup>27</sup> "The theories presented in Freud's Totem and Taboo help to explain the motivations behind the attitudes in Oedipus Tyrannus. Freud holds that all human males innately harbor not a natural aversion to incest, but the opposite: an instinctive sexual attraction to the mother. He says, "[The experiences of psychoanalysis] have taught . . . that the first sexual impulses of the young are regularly of an incestuous nature" (Totem and Taboo, p. 160). He also asserts that each male harbors ambivalent feelings towards his father. On one hand, he loves, looks up to, and respects his father. On the other, with the awakening of sexual feelings which initially naturally fix themselves towards the mother, he comes to hate his father as a rival and oppressor. Combining these results of his pioneering psychoanalysis and the theory of the "primal horde," based observations of the social structure of the higher apes, Freud suggests an explanation of the source of the taboos against incest and parent murder. At the dawn of humanity, people lived in groups dominated by the most powerful male, the father, who held a sexual monopoly over the group. When each of his sons grew to an age where he would challenge the father's authority in order to get a piece of the action, so to speak, the father drove him away from the group. After several sons had been so treated, they decided to cooperate in order to overthrow the father and get the females, their mothers, for themselves. With their combined strength, they killed the father. However, the hatred they felt towards their father now gave way to their other feelings towards him, and they felt guilt for their actions. They were also faced with the probability of subsequent conflict between each other as each tried to take the murdered father's place. So, as Freud writes,

"What the fathers' [sic?] presence had formerly prevented they themselves now prohibited in the psychic situation of 'subsequent obedience' which we know so well from

"There is technically no reason why he should not have sex with her and then marry her off," writes Fox. "This is the commonest form of incest it seems on a worldwide basis, and it accords with our theory that it should be." "[O]ur society's demography is unusual...We keep young adults as children much longer than is the norm for human society, which is why societies like ours may have more problems with father-daughter incest. But not only that. It may be just as difficult to make over the protective feelings felt toward the daughter after a period of long nurture from childhood into sexual feelings. In the same way, it is difficult to make over the asexual brother-sister feelings in cases where natural avoidance has occurred. Very generalized bonds of this kind – very diffuse bonds, that is -- seem hard to convert into something radically different. (Fathers and sons do not seem to work well as partners, nor old teachers and pupils as colleagues either.) But there is no question that with the father and daughter there is much more room for variability. It is here however that I would see Lévi-Strauss's argument at its strongest. The daughter has been reared for all those years as a potential wife for *another man*. This must have a powerful effect in restraining the father..."<sup>28</sup>

The mother, on the other hand, who has nursed and suckled the boy, has a strongly sexual, bodily relationship with the boy, but is under the control of another man. ("In many societies, mothers stimulate the genitals of their babies to calm them.") Although the lactation period "reverberates" throughout the males' life, the cards are heavily stacked against the son's chances.<sup>29</sup>

The equilibration process is not so strong in females as it is in males, writes Fox. "If there has developed a natural avoidance with the brother, then there will be few sexual feelings, of course; the same may be true between mother and sons. There is unlikely to be so strong an avoidance between fathers and daughters, and in this case where there is most incest, there is also perhaps least guilt --least inhibition -- on the part of the girl. It is hard to say, but some observers believe that even where the relationship is socially tabooed, a girl can enter it without guilt or psychological damage, which often follows only on discovery when she learns of the shame attached or is treated as a *problem* by social workers, psychiatrists, and the law. Evidence is thin, but theoretically, we would not expect as much inner conflict with the young female as with the young

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psychoanalysis. They undid their deed by declaring that the killing of the father . . . was not allowed, and renounced the fruits of their deed by denying themselves the liberated [mothers]. . . .Whoever disobeyed became guilty of the two only crimes which troubled primitive society" (T&T, p. 185)."

*Sophocles' Oedipus: Trapped by Taboo* by Ari Kandel at  
[www.columbia.edu/itc/lithum/gallo/freud.html](http://www.columbia.edu/itc/lithum/gallo/freud.html), retrieved and added 27 July 2009

<sup>28</sup>Robin Fox, p. 163

<sup>29</sup>Fox, citing Earl Count's "memorable phrase"

male."

At the time of this writing, I have not had the chance to talk to Sonja, as often as I have requested it. During all of our past ten years together, she had no guilt, but now invokes the incest taboo in her court proceedings to gain collateral advantages against me to recreate her nuclear family with another man -- whom she says she loves -- by "going and getting the children." It may well be, I almost insist it is the case, that social workers and her psychiatrist are now putting her through the mill of the old cliché -- reinforcing guilt in order to bring home to her the taboo. She is not of great independent mind and may already have accepted it and, against her most inner feelings, began to hate me.

"If, then, we put the problem of incest motivations in the context of the equilibrational process, we can see how the various relationships and the varying motivations make more sense than if we look at them as products of the nuclear family. Even if there were no nuclear family, where it exists, simply concentrates all this turmoil onto the little groups of actors who must play out the equilibrational drama amongst themselves first and in the wider society later. Nor does it do us much good to concentrate on taboos and injunctions and sanctions generally... These too are highly variable. The red lamp glimmers in our heads and hormones if anywhere, not in our laws. We have allowed incest, even encouraged it, but this is consonant with the theory. It will depend on how we juggle the categories of marriageable and unmarriageable, and who we decide has power over whom. There is no automatic universal horror. Sometimes, groups decide to do the reverse of exogamy and *not* to exchange women (castes, for example), and this can be carried all the way to marriage with the sibling or the daughter. It is rare, but it happens. What the equilibrational wiring does is make it easy to prevent it from happening, and most circumstances conspire to ensure that in most cases, where natural avoidance is not working, the equilibrational process will step in and do its work. By and large, incest will not happen, regardless of the laws of exogamy, the rules of marriage. Exogamy is certainly not necessary to guard against incest -- it might or might not have that effect. But then neither is the incest taboo, so called. Simply to forbid is not enough. The two processes of natural aversion and inhibition under equilibrational pressure will do it."<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Fox, pp. 164-165. Fox continues and comes to the conclusion that "it is all the work of the mind":

"The taboos, the red lamp that has gleamed so temptingly for all those students of human nature, are perhaps best regarded as expressions of anxiety in circumstances when incest wishes have been provoked in the face of either a motivation of avoidance or of inhibition. We do make it difficult for ourselves, but that is the human way. It is why we are more interesting than animals. It is why we have taboos at all. It is all the work of the mind, and if the process I am describing here has produced the brain [favoring procreation by the males who by way of equilibration were best able of balancing their alternatives], and if the brain is the organ of the mind (as legs are the organ of walking or the genitals of sex), then this process must have produced the mind, which

In his work entitled "Sex and Family in the Bible and the Middle East" (Garden City, New York: Dolphin Boos, Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1959), Anthropologist at the Theodor Herzl Institute, Raphael Patai, writes:

"In the Biblical story relating the origin of mankind, we are told that 'Cain knew his wife and she conceived and bore Enoch...' (Gen. 4:17); that to Seth, the third son of Adam and Eve, 'there was born a son...' (Gen. 4:26); and that after Adam begot Seth he 'he begot Seth he 'begot sons and daughter...' (Gen. 5:4). The unspoken implication therefore is clear enough: the sons of Adam and Eve married their own sisters. From the laconic, terse statement it would appear that neither the narrator of this story nor his audience regarded brother-sister marriages as incestuous... According to a legend to a legend contained in the Talmud - that vast post-Biblical repository of Palestinian and Babylonian Jewish lore, law, and learning - a girl, destined to be his wife, was born together with each of the sons of Adam, thus to ensure the propagation of the human race. Yet, of course, brother-sister marriage was regarded as incestuous by the Jews of the Talmudic period (first to fifth centuries A.D.), just as it was in the days of the Hebrew monarchy when the Levitical code was written (Lev. 18:9; 20:17). It is interesting to note that the same folk belief is still current among Egyptian fellahin: according to their stories, too, whenever Eve gave birth to a son she also gave birth to a twin sister, and later Adam married them to one another. Needless to say that brother-sister marriage has disappeared from Egypt with the introduction of Islam.

"But, to return to the Biblical account of the origin of the human family, ten generations after Adam, the Deluge reduced mankind again to a single man and woman and their descendants. The Noah story names only Noah and his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, their wives remaining nameless. This is not unusual in other Biblical and later Middle Eastern genealogies either: only descent in the paternal line is considered important and worthy of mention. The male descendants of the three sons of Noah are enumerated (Gen. 10), and again their wives are nowhere mentioned, but since the only women available to the

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produces totems and taboos among other things. Is it again producing what produced it? And is this the link between incest, totemism, taboo, and exogamy that has eluded us so far? If so, the fading gleams from the red lamp may illumine the darkest corner of all: the nature of the human mind."

At the beginning of his chapter, "Alliance and Constraint," Robin Fox offers two citations. One from Claude Lévi-Strauss:

"The emergence of symbolic thought must have required that women, like words, should be things that were exchanged."

And one from Sigmund Freud:

"The result (and therefore the purpose) of these arrangements cannot be doubted: they bring about a still further restriction on the choice of marriage and on sexual liberty."

grandsons of Noah were his granddaughters, it follows that they could have married no one else. In the third No hide generation all the individuals were either full siblings or paternal cousins. Therefore any grandson of Noah must have married either his sister or his father's brother's daughter. These two types of marriage were, in fact, common in Biblical times, and the latter of the two has remained the preferred marriage in the Middle East to the present day."

"In general it can be stated that marriage outside one's own group was frowned upon, discouraged, forbidden, and not infrequently severely punished, occasionally even with the death penalty." "While Moses was exonerated by God for his marrying a non-Hebrew woman, an Israelite prince of his days paid with his life for a similar offence. Zimri, the son of Salu, a prince of a father's house among the Simeonites, brought a Midianite woman, Cozbi, the daughter of Zur, into his tent. He did this publicly (Num. 25:6), and this circumstance, as well as the fact that both were princely houses of their respective peoples, leave little if any doubt that this was an actual marriage. Yet an outraged priest, Phinehas, a grandson of Aaron, drove into the wedding tent and killed both Zimri and Cozbi (Nu. 25:8)."

"A comparison of the attitude of the ancient Hebrews with regard to in-group marriage with the one prevalent in the Middle Eastern folk societies in recent times clearly point up the presence throughout thousands of years of a basically identical outlook. Marriage between equals remains the ideal, and the concept of equality is ideally confined to close relatives in the first place, and to other members of one's own in-group in the second."

"What these stories do is to attribute to the original human family the traits characterizing the structure and the functioning of the family as known to the storytellers themselves. And what is equally interesting is the fact that the same features have remained the characteristic traits of the Middle Eastern family down to the present day."

Initially, the endogamous family, the preference for marriage of close blood relatives, was a sheer necessity that later became a traditional preference. Descent being recognized only in the father's line, matrilineal, a current Arabic proverb says: "In descent people rely on the father and not on the mother; the mother is like a vessel that is emptied." In a quarrel or feud between the father's and the mother's family, a man is expected to support his father's side against that of his mother. The father is the lord and master of his extended family and has the right even over life and death of the members of his family, as he did in Roman and Germanic times. He controls all property of the economic unit. He can have more wives, and if he can afford to, slaves who are quasi members of the family, often as close to their owner as a son or brother, and not infrequent even more loyal and faithful.

"We are conditioned by our upbringing and early socialization to regard with horror the idea of sexual relations between first-degree relatives. A study of other

cultures, however, reveals that this is by no means universal in mankind. The early history of mankind contains many instances that first-degree blood relationship was not regarded as an impediment to marriage.

In ancient Egypt, the Pharaohs married their sisters or half-sisters as did the Ptolemies. Under Roman rule marriage between full siblings and half-siblings occurred frequently among Egyptian peasants and artisans. According to Diodorus, sibling marriage was not only permitted but was considered an obligation for Egyptians.

"In certain Pehlevi texts of ancient Iran, dating in their present form from the sixth to the ninth centuries A.D., marriages between siblings, as well as between parents and children, are defended and advocated, as they are in the later years of the Sassanian dynasty and in subsequent centuries. By the fifteenth century A.D., however, marriages between first-degree relations is mentioned in Iranian sources only as a long-extinct practice of the past." Abraham and his wife Sarah were half-siblings. David's son Absalom cornered his half-sister Tamar in his room, Tamar entreating: "Nay, my brother, do not force me... do not thou this wanton deed... I pray thee, speak unto the king, for he will not withhold me from thee" (2 Sam. 13:12-13). The meaning is clear: if Ammon were to ask David for Tamar in marriage, the father's consent would be forthcoming. Ammon, disregarding Tamara's plea was killed by her full brother, Absalom, not for the sin of incest but for refusing to marry her. (2 Sam 13:23-29). "As late as in Talmudic times the view was still held that for the Hebrew patriarch the most suitable choice as a wife was a sister."

Lot and his two daughters escaped from Sodom and lived in a cave in the mountains (Gen. 19:30-38). Each gave birth to a son, Moab and Ammon who became the ancestors of the Moabites and Ammonites to his day. "What is significant in this story - aside from the highly exceptional circumstances - is that there is in it no expression at all of disapproval. Irregular as the union was, it served a commendable purpose, the propagation of the race."

In a direct continuum with the story of Lot's daughters comes a South Arabian tale concerning Bu Zaid, the greatest medieval legendary hero of the Mani Hillal tribe. The story summarized by Bertram Thomas tells of the procreation of a desired heir in an irregular union, regarding the act as justified by the noble purpose that it served:

"Bu Zaid had a wife but did not allow himself complete coition with her, and so he suspected that the two sons she had borne were not his but another's. The tribe perceived that they did not resemble him and also had their suspicions, so came privately to Bu Zaid's sister and said that Bani Hillal must have a son from the loins of Bu Zaid. Wherefore one night she went secretly to her brother's bed and he, not knowing her in the darkness from his wife, lay with her. And as he was about to withdraw himself prematurely, according to his habit, she jabbed him with

the bodkin that she had kept in her hand in readiness for this moment. The shock achieved its intent and in the fullness of time she bore a son, who came to be known as Aziz bin Khala, Aziz, son of his uncle. And Aziz grew up into a strong youth, endowed with courage and other virtues."

"While the medieval Arab mentality thus saw no sin in an occasional union of brother and sister, in pre-Islamic Arabia it was legal for a man to marry his half-sister or his own daughter. According to Rizkallah, there were four types of marriage among the pre-Islamic Arabs, and one of them was that of a man with his own daughter or daughter-in-law." Frequent marriage between first-degree relatives fell into disuse by the end of the period of the Hebrew monarchy, "but we have no way of gauging the extent to which it was practiced while it was still regarded as legal and after it became regarded as an incestuous union."

Cousin marriage is still the preferred form of marriage in the Middle East to this day. If paternal cousins marry, their children are the offspring of the same grandfather both through their father and their mother. It is said that such marriages are designed to preserve property in the family unit, as even that part of the family property which is inherited by the daughter remains in the family. But there are more important motivations:

Cousin marriages are more stable. There is a pre-existing similarity in outlook and personality determinants and a much smoother adaptation to each other in the extended family than can be the case in an out-group marriage. Also, the tie of blood is likely to attach to husband and wife, and affection conceived in years of childhood is the best basis for a lasting conjugal love upon reaching maturity. "Yet another motivation for cousin marriage is the desire that the marriage partners should be equal in status. No one is closer in status than children of two brothers, therefore they are the most suitable mates." An Arab proverb says: "He who marries his *bint 'amm*, his father's brother's daughter, celebrates his feast with a sheep from his own flock." A Moroccan proverb says: "Marrying a stranger is like drinking water from an earthenware bottle (that is, one does not see what one drinks), but marriage with a *bint 'amm* is like drinking water from a dish" (that is, one can see what one drinks). The English saying, "Marriages are made in heaven" has its counterpart in a Persian proverb, which, however, refers only to cousin marriage: "The marriage of cousins is tied in heaven."

"The sentiment complementary to the preference for close in-family marriage is the objection against marrying non-related, and especially foreign, men or women. This feeling, amply attested in the Bible and powerfully alive in conservative sectors of the Middle Eastern peoples to this very day, is expressive of the conviction and the experience that a person with foreign more must be a disturbing factor in the extended family setup. The foreign bride who upon marriage becomes incorporated into the extended family of her husband is felt by the latter as an intruder and as a disruptive force."

"If the wife is from a different family, and even more so if she is from a different village or tribe, the husband cannot be sure that the interests of his father-in-law will always harmonize with his own. Contrary interests, especially if they lead to mutual raiding or warfare, place the wife in a difficult, and at times tragic, situation whereby the inner cohesion in the nuclear family of the husband and also in the extended family of which she is a member may be weakened." "Close in-group or in-family endogamy is to this day the prevalent practice in all social strata in the Middle East, with the exception of those exposed to modern Western influences."

"The jurisdictional history of incest is almost as uneven as the biblical treatment," writes James Twitchell.<sup>31</sup> Until the times of Henry VIII the church was the "undisputed arbiter of such internecine crimes, but when Henry VIII wished a divorce from Anne Boleyn he had no specific church doctrine to support his case." He had broken with the church, the "laws of custom" were repudiated but nothing substituted in their place. Although Henry was himself "the descendant of a consanguineous line mixed since the offspring of Charles the Bald," in his desperation he charged that "Anne was the willing, even eager, recipient of her brother's sexual advances." Anne, charged with treason, adultery and incest, was beheaded, and so was her brother George for mentioning in public court that his sister had told him that Henry was impotent.

In the 1560s Archbishop Parker promulgated a *Table of Kindred and Affinity* which were enacted into law (25 Henry VIII c.22). Queen Elizabeth, Anne Boleyn's daughter, repealed the death penalty for incest and changed it into a fine, but a generation later, during the Commonwealth (1640-1660) it was reinstated "in order to destroy this monstrous sin." This was repealed under Cromwell during the Restoration and by 1835 restored to the sovereignty of the church as the punishing body of such offenses (5 and 6 William IV c.54) which treated incest as an act of sacramental transgression, not of physical violation. "The sin was to marry your kin, not to rape her. Again, here is the careless distinction being made between incest and exogamy. So the punishment was, as far as the ecclesiastical courts were concerned, annulment and only then possible penance. Furthermore, in the few cases that were ever brought to court, penance was usually waived after full court costs had been paid."

As a result of aggressive lobbying for the rights of victims of child abuse, "the state finally accepted responsibility for both categorizing and enforcing family boundaries." Legislation was introduced, first in 1903, and then in 1908, incest once again became a matter of the public courts, first as a function of "individual rights to bodily privacy and then of public moral standards."<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>James B. Twitchell. "Forbidden Partners." Page 130

<sup>32</sup>James B. Twitchell, pp. 132, 140



Twitchell goes a step further and says that it is tempting to "ascribe the zigzagging of jurisdictional authority...by view[ing] child abuse in Marxist terms of exploitative economic systems. For the poor incest is denounced since it disrupts the cohesion of inexpensive labor; for the ruling class in which incest is unacknowledged, but accepted, it becomes a means of preserving and augmenting family capital. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century social stability was to a considerable degree the result of manipulation of proletarian family life by the lord of the castle, town father, priest, and family patriarch. It is a perverse testament to the class oppression that social stability should result. Of course, by the late 1840s the social fabric was unraveling all across Europe..."

Before the legislation could be implemented, City Corporations, the Privy Council, the House of Lords, and numerous Royal Commissions, were compelled to study the modern phenomena of urban orphans, child exploitation, housing codes, and life lived on the city street rather than in the country. Unmentionable acts "done in secret" were made known by committees of men of the aristocracy "that had made many of these selfsame acts a method of class protection, a way to ensure purity of blood and passage of possessions...Incest was too gross an act as part of the human condition, and so it was explained away as the result of the slum itself; too many people in too small a space.. Incest was thought to be a function of proximity."<sup>33</sup> As part of the general outcry over child exploitation, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children inundated Parliament with statistics, and in 1903 concern was transformed into legislation and the first laws prohibiting and punishing incest were passed. In 1908, the Incest Act (8 Edward 7 ch. xlv) defined both the act itself (usually the female victim, but excluding stepchildren) and the punishment (imprisonment of up to seven years, no less than three). "The social crusade against sweatshops, prostitution, drunkenness, gambling, and other 'sins of the flesh' had drawn its dragnet around child molestation as well and forced an unwilling, and as it would turn out, largely powerless state bureaucracy to resolve this unmentionable problem of the working class."<sup>34</sup>

At the same time, art culture, the private aristocratic culture, began to show interest in sensationalizing the act as a new subject of rebellious independence by way of protest literature -- family romance run amok -- opposing the cozy artificial world of the Victorian family: "The golden haired child becomes the little monster; the insipid prim, wholly domesticated maternal figure becomes a new Messalina; the stern or indulgent father not only seduces but is seduced by his sexually satanic offspring."<sup>35</sup> "In one of the watershed works, *Philosophy in the Bedroom*

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<sup>33</sup>Twitchell, p. 138

<sup>34</sup>Twitchell, p. 141

<sup>35</sup>Twitchell, p. 176, quoting from Henry Miles's "Forbidden Fruit. A Study of Incest Theme in Erotic Literature." London: Luxor Press, 1973, p. 9-10

(1795), the Marquis de Sade set the direction for the flood to come. An old roũ, Dolmance, explains life's nuisances to the ing nue, Eugenie:

"Can one so regard Nature's gentlest unions, the very ones she consistently prescribes to us and advises most warmly? Just think, Eugenie, how, after the vast afflictions our planet at some time knew, did the human race perpetuate itself, if not through incest? Do we not find the examples and the very proofs in the books which Christianity respects most highly? How else could the families of Adam and Noah have been preserved? Look closely at universal customs: everywhere you will find incest authorized, even considered a wise law, proper to cement family ties. If, in a word, love is born of resemblance, where can it be more perfectly found than between brother and sister, father and daughter? Incest is banned from our midst by an ill-founded policy based on the fear that families might become too powerful. Let us not so deceive ourselves as to mistake for natural law that which is dictated only by selfish interest or ambition; let us delve into our hearts -- it is always there that I bid pedantic moralists to go. Let us but question this sacred organ and we shall discover that there is nothing more exquisite than carnal connection within the family. It will not do for us to be blind to a brother's feeling for his sister, or a father's love for his daughter: in vain shall they disguise their feelings behind a mask of legitimate tenderness -- the unique sentiment in them is the most violent of lovers, the only one that Nature has planted in their hearts. Let us therefore double, nay, triple these delectable incests and fearlessly multiply them: let us give ourselves and the object of our desires, the greater pleasure there shall be in enjoying it." (pp. 28-29)

"This is the vintage hyperbole of pornography, the ultimate transvaluation of family sex -- the very health of the family *demand*s incest. One hears the same Sadean argument not just through nineteenth-century pornography, but in twentieth-century sexology as well," writes Twitchell. This is, after all, the argument of the 'pro-incest' lobby carried to the nth degree. The nuclear family needs the cement of sexual contact. Iconoclasm [the ridicule of traditional institutions] in the service of liberation is a narcotic to contemporary Western imagination."<sup>36</sup>

In *Forbidden Fruit* (c. 1905), the mother delivers the message to her son, young Percy:

"...but Percy, never a word to anyone if you love me; this is so

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<sup>36</sup>Twitchell, p. 179

naughty, so wicked to do."

"Naughty? Wicked? How can it be so to play with my Mama?"

"Fathers or mothers must not have their children like this, nor even brothers their sisters; it is thought awful, called 'incest,' in fact. The clergyman would say we were cursed -- but that is all nonsense. We know better; it's their business to call everybody sinners." (p. 87)

In *The Romance for Lust* (1873-1876), in four volumes on 611 pages, the author sets forth an "almost obsessive dedication to all the forms of incest *except* that of actual mother-son.

I was conducted to my room and left alone to recruit my forces with a good night's rest. I may here incidentally mention that it was a rule of Uncle and Aunt, very rarely departed from, to send their favorites to their lonely couches as a means of restoring their powers, and reinvigorating them for daylight encounters -- both the dear creatures loving to have the fullest daylight on all the charms of their participants in pleasure, at the same time yielding an equally undisguised inspection of their own...

I slept on this occasion with a deep and continuous slumber until I was awakened by my uncle who came to summon me to the arms of his wife who, in the splendor of her full-blown charms awaited me in her own bed, naked as the day she was born. Her arms outstretched, she invited me to the full enjoyment of her glorious person. My uncle drew my night shirt over my head, and in a moment I was locked in the embrace of that superb creature. We were both too hot to wait further preliminaries, but were at it in furious haste, and rapidly paid our first tributes to the god of love. My uncle had acted as postillion to both of us...this double operation made the dear lascivious creature spend again in a very few movements, and giving her hardly time to discharge, I fucked on with double force, and with a prick as hard as wood, as fast as I could work. This furious onset, which was the most exciting thing she knew of, rapidly caused a third discharge. To prevent my own prick from spending too quickly, I held somewhat back; then again we went at it fast and furious, and the dear lustful creature, with cries of joy, spent again with me, and fainted from excess of pleasure..." (pp. 64-65)

The hero "steam-engines his way through the entire family, missing only his mother and ending finally by marrying his daughter":<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Twitchell, 181

"Now in my old age, she is the comfort of my life and the mother of my beautiful son whom we have named Charlie-Nixon, in memory of both of my adored first wife and my guardian, through whom he will inherit great wealth. The dear little fellow is now eighteen years of age, handsome, well grown, and very well furnished, although not so monstrous in that way as his father. His dear mother has initiated him in every delight, and he has all the fire of lust that his older father had before him...We are thus a happy family, bound by the strong ties of double incestuous lust." (p. 70)

Twitchell concludes that in all these literary scenes, it is not incest that is desired, but the taboos, any taboos that can be broken to extract the forbidden excitement. Incest is one the chosen paths to titillation not because of its sexual but social force and power.

## Chapter 22

Incest among consenting adults is a victimless crime. Why, then, is this intimate association – not child molestation -- a punishable offense under the criminal codes of so many states and countries? Well, it isn't. In the United States, the states of Michigan, New Jersey and Ohio have repealed their criminal incest statutes. Abroad, Sweden, France and Belgium have also, and, as we hear, in Thailand incestuous relationships may be blessed by the bond of marriage.

Professor of Law at the University of Kentucky, Carolyn S. Bratt, has published the results of her research into the legal aspects of incest in an article that appeared in the fall 1984 issue of the *Family Law Quarterly*. It carries the provocative title, *Incest Statutes and the Fundamental Right of Marriage: Is Oedipus Free to Marry?*

The author leads the reader through the history of the taboo, its rationale being the three objectives of (1) the hereditary biological function of protecting the gene pool, (2) the religious and public morality function, and finally (3) the protection of the family unit and children function. Throughout the text she examines the issues in their legal context and exposes them to a series of test by scrutinizing their validity in the light of civil liberties guaranteed in or protected by the Constitution.

She begins with the observation that "the mere word *incest* triggers strong feelings of revulsion in most people. Therefore, any *a priori* labeling of a marriage as incestuous tends to preclude objective thought about the permissibility of the particular form of the marriage prohibition issue. Such revulsion stems largely from the confusion of incest with sexual abuse of children. This confusion is not limited to the general public, but extends to the courts as well."<sup>38</sup>

Incest itself symbolizes conflicting images of "sacred" as well as "unclean" and forbidden. In Sophocles' (c. 496-406 B.C.) version of the Oedipus legend, Oedipus discovers that he has killed his father and married his mother, he is blinded, his wife-mother Jocasta commits suicide, and their four children die. In the much older Homeric (c. 8th century B.C.) version, on the other hand, neither Oedipus nor Jocasta are punished. "Similarly in Biblical literature, the incest condemnation found in Leviticus [which is silent on the father-daughter

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<sup>38</sup>Ninety-four percent of all cases involved "father-daughter, father-adoptive daughter, or stepfather-stepdaughter sexual relationships. As these figures indicate, state incest statutes have been utilized primarily for prohibiting and punishing sexual abuse of children...The rightful condemnation of the intrinsically abusive nature of adult-child sexual relationships must not be used to shield incest statutes prohibiting marriage between certain adults from an objective evaluation." (pp. 257-258)

relationship] is not visited upon Abraham's marriage to his half-sister Sarah; to the contrary, the marriage is blessed. The incest motif itself persists as a *tradition*." [Emphasis added.]

"Any examination of contemporary incest statutes as a limitation on the right to marry... myths and half-truths about the genetic effects of incestuous matings on the offsprings... although directly contradicted by current scientific knowledge... once one recognizes these analytical difficulties — reflexive fears, shifting definitions of incest itself, ambivalent attitudes, and facile underlying generalizations -- one can begin to rationally evaluate the validity of state incest statutes in the light of the constitutional right to marry."

The constitutional right of privacy, protecting individuals from bodily restraints and freedom from unreasonable government searches and seizures against unwarranted state intrusion also includes a right of privacy in matters of procreation. "The Constitution limits the power of government to determine who may bear children and to interfere with an individual's choice to have or not to have offsprings.<sup>39</sup> Even the government's power to define what constitutes a family is circumscribed by the constitutionally protected right of privacy.<sup>40</sup> At the heart of the right of privacy is the right of choice in marriage and family relationships.... [T]he liberty guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment 'denotes...the right of the individual to marry, establish a home and bring up children.'<sup>41</sup> In *Griswold v. Connecticut*, the U.S. Supreme Court said that marital privacy is a "privacy older than the Bill of Rights"<sup>42</sup>...It went on to describe the right to marry, to raise a family and to have marital privacy as being 'of similar order and magnitude as the fundamental rights specifically protected [by the Constitution]...The Supreme Court in *Paul v. Davis*<sup>43</sup> characterized the privacy cases as involving the individual's independence in making certain kinds of important decisions --'matters relating to marriage, procreation, contraception, family relationships and child rearing and education.'" "Any court decision involving a claim of an impermissible state intrusion into the protected area of choice requires a sensitive balancing of the competing individual and state interests."<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>*Skinner v. Oklahoma*, 316 U.S. 535 (invalidated a statute which allowed sterilization of habitual criminals). But see *Buck v. Bell*, 274 U.S. 200 (1927) (upheld a statute which permitted sterilization of mentally retarded persons.) "Re Eve" in Canada which denied courts to authorize non-therapeutic sterilization on mentally retarded incompetents; legislation subject to scrutiny under Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom, 31 Dominion Law Reports (4th) 1.

<sup>40</sup>*Moore v. City of East Cleveland*, 431 U.S. 494 (1977).

<sup>41</sup>*Meyer v. Nebraska*, 262 U.S. 390 at 399; and *Skinner v. Oklahoma*, 316 U.S. 535 at 541.

<sup>42</sup>381 U.S. 479 at 486.

<sup>43</sup>424 U.S. 693 (1973).

so on. It<sup>44</sup> Bratt, p. 265. "This 'liberty' is not a series of isolated points pricked out in terms of the taking of property; the freedom of speech, press, and religion; the right to keep and bear arms; and is a rational continuum which broadly speaking, includes a freedom from all substantial

To make the choice of a marriage partner illegal, incest statutes are a direct, substantial, and intentional intrusion subject to the same rigorous scrutiny used by the Court in *Zablocki v. Redhail*.<sup>45</sup> "One must critically and sensitively examine both the state's asserted interests in prohibiting certain marriages as incestuous as well as the relationship between those state interests and the means the state uses to effectuate them...[O]nly a statute narrowly tailored to accomplish such a purpose is permissible."<sup>46</sup> Each state interest must be analyzed as to its legitimacy and its importance, drawn from such disciplines as genetics, psychology, psychiatry, sociology, and philosophy with particular attention given to whether a less burdensome means is available to the state to accomplish the purpose, whether a statute is overbroad or under inclusive in light of the asserted government purpose.

The genetic rationale advanced in support of the incest prohibition stems from the misconception that consanguineous matings cause genetically defective offsprings. Each cell in the human body contains twenty-two pairs of autosomal chromosomes and two sex chromosomes for a normal complement of forty-six chromosomes, one chromosome member of the pair from each parent. The genes positioned along a backbone of deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) of each chromosome carrying a total estimated 10,000 to 100,000 genes per set of forty-six. Each gene has two possible representations on a chromosome pair (e.g. one for blue eyes and one for brown eyes). If the genes are at one particular location are of the same form, the individual is characterized as homozygous for that gene, if different heterozygous. Some traits represented in the genes are dominant (brown eyes are), some are recessive (blue eyes). A person carrying both genes will have the dominant brown eyes.

Turning to the issues of deleterious genes passed on to the offspring, on the average each human carries between one and five deleterious recessive genes. These deleterious genes usually do not show up in the offspring unless by a union of spouses who both carry an identical recessive gene which will be passed on to the offspring in the double dose necessary for expression of the trait associated

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arbitrary impositions and purposeless restraints...and which also recognizes, that a reasonable and sensitive judgment must, that certain interests require particularly careful scrutiny of the state needs asserted to justify their abridgement."

<sup>45</sup>434 U.S. at 386.

<sup>46</sup>To date, however, the courts' treatment of challenges to state incest statutes...are instructive only as examples of how a court should not examine the claim that an incest statute impermissible intrudes on the individual's right to marry...Judicial unwillingness to examine closely challenges to state incest statutes may have a pragmatic explanation. The courts have just so much political capital at any given time, and the judiciary is unwilling to expend it on the invalidation of incest issues. Therefore, the issue of incest statutes as impermissible infringement on the right to marry may have to have to be raised again and again until the judiciary is ready to address it." (Bratt, p. 26, fn. 57)

with that recessive gene.<sup>47</sup> "The increased expectation that a recessive gene trait will occur in the offspring of incestuous unions is not proof of the *adequacy* or *permissibility* of a genetic justification for incest statutes [emphasis added]. The same construct of model is applicable for any recessive gene trait, whether it is a "good" or "bad" trait. If a person possesses a "good" recessive gene trait, then, consanguineous matings increase the probability of the manifestation of that trait in the offspring, and incest statutes impede their manifestation. More importantly, forbidding consanguineous matings to prevent the manifestation of deleterious recessive gene traits is, at best, incremental in effect and many impede the achievement of that objective. For example, it would take the sterilization of 200 generations of all albinos (those who are homozygous for the recessive trait causing albinism) to reduce the proportion of albinos in the population to half the present frequency.<sup>48</sup> As incest statutes forbid only matings within the prescribed classes, the elimination of any recessive trait carried in the heterozygous state would take even longer. Incest statutes may actually increase the likelihood of deleterious recessive gene traits appearing in future generations. The gene trait, if severe enough, will eliminate itself from the gene pool when it is manifested in the homozygote by killing the homozygote or rendering her or him sterile. If incest statutes prevent the coming together of two recessive genes in the present generation, the gene will be dispersed throughout the population in general...Some state statutes require marriage license applicants to undergo genetic screening for certain traits<sup>49</sup> ...but do not forbid those found affected" on the basis of the genetic probability of producing affected offspring, but do forbid consanguineous marriages regardless. The genetic dangers of consanguineous matings are exceeded by the genetic dangers involved in the matings of other social populations. "As these more dangerous matings are not prohibited on genetic grounds, neither should incestuous marriages," but to the contrary, if a person possesses a "good" recessive gene trait which she or he can pass on only through consanguineous matings, then incest statutes impede their manifestations. In conclusion, there is no scientific genetic justification for incest statutes.

The state has the coercive power to encourage the procreation of biologically and socially desirable population (positive eugenics) and discourage the procreation of inferior populations (negative eugenics). But the state's interest in diminishing the social cost caused by genetic diseases through negative eugenics is

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<sup>47</sup>Bratt, 271, quoting from E. Murphy & G. Chase, PRINCIPLES OF GENETIC COUNSELLING 21 (1975), p. 215.

<sup>48</sup>Bratt, p. 274, quoting from Golding, "Ethical Issues in Biological Engineering, 15 UCLA Law Review 443, 473 (1986).

<sup>49</sup>Bratt, p. 276. E.g., Alaska Stat. §§25.05.101-.181; Arizona Rev. Stat. Ann. §§36-797.40 to .44; Illinois Ann. Stat. ch. 40, §§204-05; Indiana Code Ann. §31-1-1-7; Kentucky Rev. Stat. §402.310-.340.



more compelling than its interest in propagating superior qualities through positive eugenics.<sup>50</sup> Statutes which limit the pool of potential mates are a limitation on procreational choices and thus an exercise of negative eugenics legislation to be examined as such. "Using the state's power to guard the integrity of the gene pool for future generations is a philosophical choice which is not dictated by contemporary scientific understandings of genetic inheritance in humans." Science does not purport to supply a social definition of social and biological legitimacy of the philosophical principles, so that one must doubt the efficacy of incest statutes as the chosen method of state intervention. "Initially, there is a question whether it is a proper governmental function to protect the gene pool of the future at the expense of the procreational choice of its presently existing citizens."<sup>51</sup> Negative eugenics require the presence to bear the burden of what may be reaped in the future. The relationship is not at all clear, and certainly less clear than our moral obligation to the present community. "...[I]ndividual rights, as reflected in increasing judicial sensitivity to procreational choice, are at odds with eugenics concerns of strengthening the physical and mental qualities of the race."<sup>52</sup> As each person has between one and five deleterious genetic traits, as a logical corollary of using the state as the guardian of the gene pool, compulsory genetic screening could be required by all would-be-matings. "This kind of intrusion would be felt by everyone."

At one time, involuntary sterilization statutes applied to confirmed criminals, epileptics, moral degenerates, two-time sex criminals with moral depravity, three-time sex criminals with moral depravity, syphilitics, drug fiends, prostitutes, twice-convicted felons, and many other classes defined by characteristics which are not even genetically transmissible. The concepts of "genetically defective" and "socially undesirable" are value-laden terms without any objective content. The state's legitimate social interests are better served by regulating known environmental factors (mutagens) which cause congenital birth defects, by nutritional programs for pregnant women and infant children as well as pre- and postnatal medical care,

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<sup>50</sup>Bratt, p. 276, citing Vukowich, "The Dawning of the Brave New World - Legal, Ethical, and Social Issues of Eugenics," 1971 U. Ill. L.F. 189, 222. E.g., North Dakota Cent. Code §14-03-07 (1981): "Marriage by a woman under the age of forty-five years or by a man any age, unless he marries a woman over the age of forty-five years, is prohibited if such a man or woman is institutionalized as severely retarded." Fourteen states have statutes permitting sterilization for the mentally ill or mentally retarded. (Damme, "Controlling Genetic Disease Through Law," 15 U.C.D. L. Rev. 801, 830 n. 140 (1982) and statutes cited therein.)

<sup>51</sup>Negative eugenics raises the question of "whether it is one of the attributes of government to essay the theoretical improvement of society by destroying the function of procreation in certain of its members who are not malefactors against its laws..." *Smith v. Board of Examiners*, 88 A. 936, 965 (N.J. 1913).

<sup>52</sup>Bratt, p. 277, citing *Roe v. Wade*, 420 U.S. 113 (1973); *Eisenstadt v. Baird*, 405 U.S. 438 (1972); *Griswold v. Connecticut*, 381 U.S. 479 (1965); *Skinner v. Oklahoma*, 316 U.S. 535 (1942).

and state intervention on behalf of abused or neglected children.

The incest taboo in America has been shaped particularly by the religious beliefs of Judaism and Christianity. "If state incest statutes are merely examples of secular enforcement of particular religious tenets, then the statutes violate the constitutional prohibition against the establishment of religion since preservation of divine law is not a permissible basis for state legislation. Religious influence on American civil and criminal incest statutes appears in the definitions of incestuous relationships. The proscriptions in the statutes derive largely from the religious history of incest in Europe generally, and in England specifically." "The Church of England's definition of prohibited marriages served as the basis for American incest statutes...[and] was received as part of the common law of this country."

On the morality issue, the general societal aversion associated with incest is often stated as a reason to permit the prohibition by statute. "The public morality argument equates morality with the social views of the majority. Such a definition eliminates reason, impartiality, and objectivity from the identification of legally enforceable moral views and is fundamentally incompatible with accepted theories of American constitutional law...Moral convictions, when enshrined in legislation, cannot be accepted as self-certifying, but must be able to withstand an examination of their underlying justification. Otherwise, there is an unavoidable circularity. The act is immoral, and therefore, the statute is moral."<sup>53</sup>

One justification of characterizing incest as immoral is the argument that it is "unnatural." The prohibition is not natural but mandated from above. Law prohibits it, but nature continues it. There is no universal definition of "unnaturalness." In view of the cross-cultural and transhistorical variety, "an act against nature should not be so dependent on time and place for its definition." In *Totem and Taboo*, Sigmund Freud proposes that the earliest human sexual impulses are incestuous in nature.

Professor Bratt points out that the arguments proffered for legislative justification based on the "self-inflicted harm" and "protection of citizens from public exposure to revolting behavior" -- as in the sale of pornographic material or street solicitation by prostitutes -- are impermissible because the relationship of the parties must first be known. John Locke claims that incest is an idea.<sup>54</sup>

"An objective, reasonable person, not the reasonable person possessing

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<sup>53</sup>Bratt, pp. 285-287. "Using this framework, an incest statute is a legitimate legislation of morality only if society's judgement of the immorality of the act is based on rational, objective, and ascertainable criteria. Without this kind of showing, the majority's perceptions of the act as immoral cannot sustain such restrictions on the exercise of the right to marry."

<sup>54</sup>"To know whether his idea of adultery or incest be right will a man seek it anywhere among things existing? Or is it true because anyone has been witness to such an action? No; but it suffices here that men have put together such a collection into one complex idea that makes the archetype and specific idea, whether ever any such action were committed in *rerum natura* or no." (John Locke, "Names of Mixed Modes and Relations.")

particularized knowledge, is the standard for determining when the state can legislate to protect the sensibilities of the public."<sup>55</sup> If the state can prohibit conduct simply because the public is repulsed when viewing it, "an interracial marriage is certainly more apparent to the public than an incestuous one, and at one time excited the same sort of repulsion in the majority of the public."

The protection of the family unit generally, and of children particularly, is often raised as another justification for incest prohibitions. Although intuitively appealing, they do not withstand analysis. There are other statutory provisions that deal with child abuse that are better suited to reach this problem than the incest prohibition which infringes upon matters of choice in marriage.

Researcher see the incestuous behavior within a family as a symptom, not a cause, of a disorganized and nonfunctioning family. The sexual abuse of children is abhorrent, but official discovery and punishment of the symptom usually ensures that the family will fail, and if it results in incarceration of one or both the parents or the removal of the victimized child, the family unit is irretrievably broken. "The stigma associated with the labeling of the act as 'incestuous' affects the victim, if not the perpetrator, for into the future." "R.E.L. Masters postulates that the damage resulting from a violation of the incest prohibition is not a direct and inevitable consequence of the act. There is nothing 'essentially' harmful about adult-adult sexual intercourse with a close relative. The behavior is damaging because it is so strongly prohibited. Sexual exploitation of children is traumatic regardless of the relationship of the child and the perpetrator. However, Masters believes that such exploitation is made worse by loading on it the guilt over 'incest'."<sup>56</sup>

If the primary justification for incest statutes today is that they protect the family [peace and encourage intrafamily trust] and its ability to socialize the child, that need dissolves once the children are grown. Therefore, incest prohibitions which forbid marriage between adults who happen to stand in a particular relationship to each other cannot be supported by this rationale. Because such prohibitions infringe upon the right of adults to marry the partner of their choice, the state must establish more than a speculative relationship between a lifetime prohibition and the goal of facilitating the family's functions in order for them to withstand judicial scrutiny." "[W]hen incest sanctions are applied to private conduct of consenting adults, there is no legitimate state interest at stake and, therefore, no legitimate state interest is furthered."<sup>57</sup>

Professor Bratt concludes her study by stating: "The state interest supposedly served by prohibiting certain marriages as incestuous are either not legitimate state objectives or if they are valid state objectives, incest statutes are

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<sup>55</sup>Miller v. California, 413 U.S. 15, 24 (1973) (relating to obscenity).

<sup>56</sup>R.E.L. Masters. "Patterns of Incest." (1963), pp. 175-99.

<sup>57</sup>Bratt, pp. 290-293.

an impermissible means of effectuating those interests. Therefore, as applied to adults, incest statutes fail to pass constitutional scrutiny."

## Chapter 23

Was it chance that I survived while millions perished during the Second World War? As a child, the Anglo-American bomber trains flew over my house with punctual regularity each night for years on end, it seemed. Was it chance that I escaped an airline crash over Shannon, Ireland, as a teenager by switching planes? Was it chance that I married rather young, that my children arrived, among them Sonja Ingrid, that she fell ill from manic depression (bipolar), that I was abroad but came and fell in love with her? That it lasted so long as I had never hoped in my wildest dreams, and that our marriage was blessed by the arrival of our lovely boys – not one but two?

I doubt that all of these events were pure chance. There were too many variables that could have manifested themselves and destroyed me, us, our togetherness at any moment but didn't. In a way, we lived on the edge of society, but then we were fully aware of union in the midst of it. My own mother who visited us on several occasions said: 'Sonja is your wife.'" Our lives bustled with activity, achievement and, of course, the occasional distraught. In the end, we were not conquered from without; we fell from within. Was it inevitable?

Asking the question implies the answer. Yes, perhaps it was bound to happen. And no, because it isn't over, yet. When is it over? What over, the alliance society disapproves of it? It isn't illegal anymore, though uncommon. It isn't over until it's over; when we die. Why? Because in our unholy association the actors are family. Friends, false friends, who intrude come and go, but family is forever. Sonja with Roy and Keith, and her other children, of one part. Roy and Keith, of the other. Roy, Keith and I; and, finally, Sonja and I.

This multitude of bonds cannot be extinguished, neither by the single handed determination on the part of the mother, Sonja - the Plaintiff mother - nor by court order.<sup>a b</sup> [footnotes added 2009] It can only end as stated in the vow "until death doth you part."

In the meantime, as Sonja said herself that fateful night in Yreka, California: "My problem with you is that I can never divorce you."

You are a part of me which has is both, a blessing and a curse.

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<sup>a</sup> John and Jennifer Deaves, father and adult daughter, were released from custody by Judge Millstead 20/3/08 in the District Court, Criminal Jurisdiction, Mount Gambier, South Australia on condition that they refrain from any further sexual activities for three years. Source: The Daily Telegraph at <http://www.news.com.au/dailytelegraph/story/0,22049,23497199-5001021,00.html> retrieved 2009-07-03 :

R v JOHN EARNEST DEAVES AND JENNIFER ANNE DEAVES

HIS HONOUR IN SENTENCING SAID:

John Earnest Deaves and Jennifer Anne Deaves, you are related as father and daughter. You are aged 61 years and 39 years respectively.

Each of you has pleaded guilty to two counts of performing an act of incest with the other. The charges are representative of a course of conduct that spanned seven years. Your relationship produced two children. The first child was born in 2001 but died a few days after birth due to a congenital heart disease. The second child was born in May last year.

The first count of incest is based on the act of sexual intercourse that resulted in the conception of the first child. The second count is based on the act of sexual intercourse that resulted in the conception of the second child.

Mr Deaves, you married Ms Deaves' mother approximately 40 years ago. She divorced you when you were serving a sentence of imprisonment for armed robbery. At the time, Ms Deaves was about three or four years of age. Ms Deaves' mother did not encourage subsequent contact between you. As a result, you had little contact until about 2000. By that time, you, Mr Deaves, were living with your child and wife, at Yongala, in South Australia, and you, Ms Deaves, were living with your former husband and two children in Sydney, New South Wales. Those children are now aged 9 and 14.

Apparently both marriages were strained. You, Ms Deaves, decided to go and stay with Mr Deaves for a short while to give you an opportunity to assess the future of your marriage. During the stay, which lasted for about three weeks, the two of you became attracted to one another. However, no physical relationships developed until later that year, when the two of you took Mr Deaves' children on a trip to Dubbo. Following that trip, the two of you ended your marriages and commenced living with one another.

Each of you say that the other has provided care and affection that was missing in your marriage. Mr Deaves also provided your children, Ms Deaves, with a loving father figure that your former husband failed to provide. You also say that although you are father and daughter, that you were virtually strangers when your relationship commenced and that the relationship was one based on mutual love and respect.

Ms Deaves, you have also assisted to care for Mr Deaves. He has been in receipt of a disability pension since 1996 due to a back ailment and also currently suffers from diabetes, depression, mild heart disease, high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

After the relationship commenced you moved to Rockhampton, Queensland, where the first child from the relationship was born. You then moved to Port Pirie, South Australia.

You were still residing at Port Pirie when the second child was born. You then moved to Bordertown. After the birth of your second child, the Department for Families and Communities South Australia were informed of the relationship.

The police subsequently investigated the matter. When interviewed by police you both made full admissions. You deserve credit for cooperating with the police and for your early guilty pleas.

Since these charges were laid, the Department of Family and Community Services has obtained an order that your three children, Ms Deaves, be under the care and protection of the Minister for a period of at least 12 months. They are currently in foster care. You hope that you will be able to regain custody of the children in the near future.

It is to be observed that it was a condition of your bail, Mr Deaves, that you not have contact

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with Ms Deaves or the children. This order has exacerbated your depression and caused you to attempt to commit suicide on two occasions. You both say that you accept your sexual relationship must end, but hope that you will be able to continue to support one another and the children.

Whether either of you will be allowed to have contact with the children in the future is an issue for the Department of Family and Community Services. However, there can be no question that it is essential to impose a sentence that impresses upon you that a resumption of your incestuous relationship is unacceptable. Such conduct involves a breach of the criminal law.

As counsel submitted, the present offences are atypical instances of incest. This is not a case where a father has violated his daughter and used his position of authority to take advantage of her powerlessness. Rather, this is a case of a mutually consensual union, formed by adults, who had previously had little contact.

However, the offence of incest exists not merely to protect children from sexual abuse. In my view, other relevant factors include: the need to prevent the high risk of congenital defects of children born of incestuous relationships; and to prevent children, who are brought up in a family unit founded on an incestuous relationship, suffering psychological harm and social stigmatisation. Those factors assume significance in this case.

I take into account, Ms Deaves, that you have no prior convictions. Mr Deaves, you have a number of convictions but they are quite old and, indeed, in my view, quite irrelevant. On 15 October 2007 you, Mr Deaves, were convicted in the Magistrates Court of failure to comply with a bail agreement. You were placed on a bond to be of good behaviour for 12 months. That offence involved you breaching a condition of your bail agreement, that you not have contact with Ms Deaves.

In relation to you, Ms Deaves, I am required to sentence you for the same offence. That charge has been called up from the Magistrates Court.

I turn to the sentence I must impose. In relation to each of you, I impose a single sentence pursuant to s.18A of the Sentencing Act. Because of the consensual nature of your relationship, the fact that it did not involve any form of exploitation and your early guilty pleas, good reason exists, in my view, to record a conviction against each of you, but discharge you upon entering into a bond in the sum of \$500 to be of good behaviour for three years.

The bond will be subject to the following conditions:

1. That you appear before the court for sentence if you fail during the term of the bond to comply with a condition of the bond.
2. That you be under the supervision of a Community Corrections Officer and obey that person's lawful directions.

I will not make it a condition of the bond that you not see each other. In my view such a condition would be unfair. However, you must both understand that if you breach this bond by engaging in further sexual activity or by breaching the bond in any other way, you will be required to appear before this Court to be sentenced for the present offences and for the breaching offence. I want to make it plain that the single sentence I have imposed applies to all matters.

Are you prepared to enter that bond, Ms Deaves?

PRISONER JENNIFER DEAVES: Yes.

HIS HONOUR: Mr Deaves?

PRISONER JOHN DEAVES: Yes.

MR VIGAR: There is one thing I would like to say in relation to your remarks and it is perhaps to correct a misperception; that Ms Deaves' children are with her, they have been returned.

HIS HONOUR: Sorry, I didn't realise that, I thought they were still under a care and protection

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order.

MR VIGAR: No, they're not, they have been returned to her, that was a short time after that. I perhaps didn't make that clear in my submissions to you.

HIS HONOUR: Thank you for drawing that to my attention, Mr Vigar.

MR VIGAR: I don't think it has any bearing on the sentence.

HIS HONOUR: No, but thank you for drawing that to my attention.

AS TO EACH ACCUSED

BOND ACKNOWLEDGED

MS ANNELLS: Perhaps before Mr Deaves and Ms Deaves leave, there had been some mention in submissions that your Honour was considering ordering a continuing suppression of names in this matter to protect the child of the relationship. I was unsure whether your Honour had given further attention to that.

HIS HONOUR: Mr Handshin, what do you say about this? The child is not a victim in the usual sense of the word but I did raise with counsel on the last occasion that publication of her name may have an impact on her and whether there was a basis or justification for suppressing her name. If her name was suppressed, there would have to be suppression of the names of the parents.

MR HANDSHIN: Yes.

HIS HONOUR: What is your attitude to such an application? Would you like to think about the matter?

MR HANDSHIN: It would seem to me that there is at least the possibility of the child incurring some undue hardship if the names are published. On that basis, your Honour could make a suppression order under sub-s.(b) of s.69A of the Evidence Act. I accept that any such order would logically extend to the suppression of the parents' names.

In the circumstances, it is a matter of weighing up whether potential hardship to the child outweighs the public interest in open justice.

HIS HONOUR: The child is only one-and-a-half now?

MR VIGAR: That's correct.

HIS HONOUR: It is likely that by the time she's grown up, this matter, for want of a better expression, would be dead and buried.

MR HANDSHIN: I think, in those circumstances, my submission, without having a further opportunity to consider it, would be that, although there is the remote possibility of some future hardship to the child, it is not immediate enough to amount to undue hardship for the purposes of s.69A.

HIS HONOUR: There are two other children though; they're 9 and 14. Would you like an opportunity to consider the matter? I presume you're making an application, Ms Annells?

MS ANNELLS: I don't have instructions to make an application, I was just inquiring as to your Honour's thoughts given it was raised in submissions.

HIS HONOUR: I raised that for counsel's consideration, I would not make an order unless there is an application.

MS ANNELLS: No, I don't have instructions to make an application.

HIS HONOUR: In that case I will not make an order for suppression.

Case adjourned.

### **Jenny Deaves: Why we went public**

This week has been unbelievable, hectic and stressful. But we have no regrets about going public. Public reaction has been varied.



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We have had support and, of course, we've had the expected negativity.

We wanted to open some eyes and make people realise that genetic sexual attraction is out there and it's happening. And we feel we have achieved that.

However, there have been downsides. And we now wish to clarify misleading information in the media since our interview with *60 Minutes*.

**Death of our first born child:**

We have never hidden the death of our son, Jackson, who was born in September 2001. He lived for 4 days and was not stillborn. Jackson died of Tetralogy of Fallot (a congenital heart defect). Many children each year are born to normal families with this problem. John had a child to Joan McNamara (Jenny's mother) who was born in 1966 and also died of this heart defect.

There is also another member of the family who had a child with this heart problem. It's the male who carries the gene and not the female. So although John has it and I am his daughter, I do not carry the gene. Jackson's death has absolutely nothing to do with the fact that John and I are related.

**Court proceedings:**

There are many comments being made that John and I should be charged and thrown in jail. We have been through court proceedings and have been given a \$500 three year good behaviour bond. The only stipulation on this bond is that we do not engage in sexual intercourse. We are abiding by this ruling.

**The welfare of our children:**

It's been reported that our children are suffering as a result of our relationship and should be removed. How can someone say the children are at risk without meeting them, without actually knowing the family?

Our children were assessed by Families SA and the Child Protection Unit when we were arrested. They were found to be in no danger of physical, sexual or moral abuse. They were meant to be removed for a minimum of six weeks but instead were returned in three weeks.

**Contact with each other during earlier years:**

There has been a lot written about John and I having contact before we met in 2000. We have never denied that we had contact before we met in 2000 but this fact seems to have got lost in the media hype. We acknowledged to 60 Minutes that we had brief contact when I was a teenager.

I attended a family party to celebrate John's marriage to Dorothy Deaves in 1984. This was a one-day party at John's brother's house. I then visited them for a brief holiday when they lived in South Australia and then again when they lived in Alice Springs. The holiday to Alice Springs was taken with my ex-husband Raymond. During this time there was also occasional letters back and forth.

The portrayal by certain media that we 'knew' each other is incorrect as these were only brief

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holidays with no father/daughter bonding. This lack of father/daughter bonding has been reinforced by my mother, Joan McNamara who states: "But he was never a father figure to her at all.....she never bonded with him."

We also want to point out that no physical relationship occurred between us till the year 2000.

**The Future:**

We have gone public with our story in order to bring awareness within society of Genetic Sexual Attraction. We are currently planning a genetic sexual attraction foundation in order to promote research on GSA and to offer support to those that experience GSA. [Now online at <http://www.geneticsexualattraction.com/>]

We do plan to move on from Mount Gambier, not because we are trying to hide from anyone or anything but because of the fact our car was vandalised. People obviously know where we live and they could do this sort of thing again. Hopefully not again, but you never know.

Source: 60 MINUTES BLOG–AUSTRALIA AT <http://sixtyminutes.ninemsn.com.au/Blog.aspx?blogentryid=87058&showcomments=true> 11/04/2008

<sup>b</sup> The couple appear to have confessed to a crime under South Australia's Criminal Law Consolidation Act:

72—Incest

Any persons who, being related, either as parent and child or as brother and sister, have sexual intercourse with each other shall be guilty of incest and liable to be imprisoned for a term not exceeding seven years.

Indeed, they were actually convicted of this crime this year and were sentenced to a good behaviour bond. But there's a major problem here: Australia's toughest human rights law, the Human Rights (Sexual Conduct) Act 1994 (Cth), which says:

4 (1) Sexual conduct involving only consenting adults acting in private is not to be subject, by or under any law of the Commonwealth, a State or a Territory, to any arbitrary interference with privacy within the meaning of Article 17 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Those who recall the debate about the Commonwealth law in 1994 will also recall that the question of adult incest was very much discussed at the time (though, alas, the relevant discussion in the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee, not to mention the explanatory memorandum to the Bill, do not seem to be available online. The internet, it seems, only began in 1995.)

Section 4 and Charter s. 13(a), of course, both promote the privacy right in Article 17 of the ICCPR. However, importantly, in stark contrast to the Charter, the Commonwealth's Act overrides all other laws (with the likely exception of subsequent Commonwealth laws, but those don't seem to be in play here.) Moreover, the Act cannot be retroactively repealed (thanks to a High Court decision about s. 109 of the Constitution, which governs the interaction between

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federal and state laws.) So, if s4(1) overrides the South Australian law on incest, then not only did this couple act lawfully, but they also can continue to do so - despite the bond - at least until the Commonwealth parliament repeals or amends its Act.

Libertarian Alliance, a British thinktank, argues: "consenting incestuous behaviour is no business of the state. It is up to individuals to make their own decisions." ("Argument: Consenting adults have a right to engage in incest" at [http://wiki.idebate.org/index.php/Argument:\\_Consenting\\_adults\\_have\\_a\\_right\\_to\\_engage\\_in\\_incest](http://wiki.idebate.org/index.php/Argument:_Consenting_adults_have_a_right_to_engage_in_incest) retrieved 2009-07-04

"Neither us is satisfied with anything less than the total possession of the other."

"I love you," my father says. "I need you."

"I need you, too," I whisper. Please don't make this the price, I beg silently.

"What are you afraid of?" he asks.

I am afraid that whatever he wants, I will give him.

Kathryn Harrison. 1997. "The Kiss. A memoir". New York: Random House. Avon Books paperback printed June 1998, pp. 101, 107

"In olden days, one suspects, she would have simply been called a whore and a witch and promptly dispatched to the nunnery or the stake. Apparently, though, such words--and such solutions--are no longer feasible."

"Although "The Kiss" is certainly about incest, its central relationship is the one between Kathryn and her mother. (In fact, the affair is not actually consummated until fairly late in the book, although we know of it from the start.) And the maternal relationship depicted here is almost as disturbing--if not quite as transgressive or deranged--as the paternal one. Harrison's mother (who, like her father, is never named) is an unfortunate, and dangerous, combination. In part, she is negligent (she moves into her own apartment when Harrison is 6, leaving her daughter, who is then raised by grandparents, to gaze at a beautiful frock and wonder, "If a dress like this was not worth taking, how could I have hoped to be?"); in part, she is cruel (she has Harrison deflowered by a gynecologist--while she watches). Not surprisingly, her daughter grows into an equally unfortunate, and no doubt more dangerous, mixture of obsequiousness--she is "the thin girl, the achiever, the grade-earner, the quiet girl, the unhungry girl, the girl who will shape-shift and perform any self-alchemy to win her mother's love"--and rage. Harrison makes clear that she enters the relationship with her father in part to get back at her mother, to break both her mother's heart and will. And it works: The book, and the affair, end with her mother's death from cancer at age 43."

Literary review of Kathryn Harrison's autobiography, "The Kiss" (Random House, 1991) at <http://kathrynharrison.com/thekiss.htm#interview> retrieved 2009-7-4