It's Never Beautiful How We Love
by armitageadoration

Summary

Dr. Alexandra Kettler was the adopted daughter of wonderful Jewish family. Her life, while busy, was a happy one.

Because of her specialty in trauma and reconstructive surgery, she went to Europe in 1942 with a Red Cross unit to aid civilians caught in the war. With her medical knowledge and that she spoke several languages, she was an ideal candidate to go overseas.

Then her unit was hit with heavy shelling and fighting.

As she was being taken to a safer area by two Allies soldiers, her life would change forever. She happened upon an accident. The man she saved was among the most feared men in all of Europe. Was she going to be able to escape with her mind and body intact or would she suffer the fate of millions of Jews that came before her?

I in no way support ANYTHING to do with racist, bigoted, cruel views. I do not support any sort of nazism, be it from many years past or now.

I am a Jewish woman that has been studying forgiveness, love and happiness. So please please continue to the first page for more information.
PLEASE READ BEFORE STARTING THE STORY

First, I would like to say thank you to my maternal and paternal grandparents. I owe all four of you everything. If it wasn’t for you I would have died long ago. I was given and I returned unconditional love to all four of my grandparents.

I endured a horrific childhood up until the age of 12. Those Hallmark tv movies? One could have been made of my life. I was sold for sex until I was 12 by a non-blood relative. My mother and father were not good parents, which probably made me an easy target. My parents were divorced before I was 6 months old. I was dumped at my maternal grandparent’s home. Which was probably the best thing that ever happened to me in terms of my well-being.

I was raised by my maternal grandparents and my paternal grandparents had me on the weekends. With both sets of grandparents, I knew unconditional love. That is the only thing that kept me from using drugs, drinking (to excess), and doing all the wrong things.

Luckily, I did a lot to help myself. I have three degrees (two BS one MSW) and worked as a social worker and a therapist for a lot of years. I’m happily married and a Mother of Cats.

I had to go through a LOT of therapy. The sheer amount of therapy I have done? Scary.

I’m also Jewish.

I have been studying how love, happiness, and forgiveness change people for about 8 months now. I have been looking at this from a Jewish perspective. Eva Kor, Elie Wiesel and Simon Wiesenthal have been some of the greatest guides for me in the past 8 months and even before that.

If you wish to read something on this I suggest starting with The Sunflower: On the Possibilities and Limits of Forgiveness by Mr. Simon Wiesenthal.

I also love Man in the High Castle because Rufus Sewell is beautiful. I thought I was going to write a fanfic and it went sideways.

Anyway, back to love. Can love concur all? No. If that was the case, there would be no cancer or other potentially deadly illness. Can it change people? Yes. I believe it can. I know it changed me.

As a Jewish kid, you hear lots of information about the Nazis. You may not hear them again but you remember the whispered voices. You remember the rituals that go along with these talks, like spitting. You remember the unspoken sadness when you learn how many family members of yours died.

I remember the numbers.

I was born in 1973, so yeah. I remember. I remember going to shul and seeing my friends with their grandparents. On hot southeast Texas evenings I recall seeing shirt sleeves rolled up and the
numbers. I’m only 2nd generation American on my paternal side. On the maternal its 2nd and 3rd.

I remember a lot of things that I should have never had to learn. I remember being threatened by grown men to whip my ass when I was just a ‘tween’. I remember boys and men threatening to ‘fuck the Jew’ out of me. I remember my Magen David necklace that was given to me for my bat mitzvah being ripped off my neck and my ass landing in the dirt from a shove. I remember being in a hotel coffee shop getting coffee and the people around me were complaining about how many Jews were around the hotel. To my knowledge, there were not any obvious Jews. I didn’t see anyone wearing anything from jewelry to a kippah that marked them as Jewish.

Anyway….

If you go and look up a lot of the higher ups of Nazi Germany, a good number of them were outcasts of sorts. Himmler, Goebbels, Hitler, Heydrich, and others were not members of high society to begin with. They had problems.

Himmler was a nondescript little man that wasn’t good at anything much. Heydrich was accused of having womanly hips, being Jewish, and had a high pitched voice. Goebbels was short and had a club foot. Hitler supposedly had a love affair with his niece.

The common issue with all of them was that they lacked love in many ways, be it giving or receiving.

So what happens when someone is given a second chance? Not only do they love someone, that someone loves them in return. It’s more than love. It’s the care and affection that are freely given. Touch is savored and laughter is prized.

I remember sitting on the cusp of my soon to be teenaged years and making that decision. I could go out with my friends and score some smoke or I could stay in and do my chores and homework. Would I be a responsible person or a person that only cared about my own pleasure?

Best decision I made as a young person. I decided I wanted happiness. I wanted a family to be proud of me. So, that is what I did. It made my life wonderful. In spite of what people did to me, I lived an excellent life. I have an excellent and very happy life.

I chose happiness.

I chose to forgive those that I was able.

I chose love.

It made me think, who are some of the most hated people in the world living or dead? Nazis. If one part of these people had changed. Would they have done the same things?

If Heydrich didn’t marry Lina? If he wasn’t kicked out of the Navy? What if his parents had been warm and loving? Would he still have been the Architect of the Final Solution? Would he still be the Blond Beast?

And that is how the story came to life.

While many characters in this story were real people, please remember this is a work of fiction. Even the real people have been fictionalized. This is also a bit of alternative history. Heydrich didn’t ever have an Alexandra. He didn’t survive the assassination attempt.

If you want to know more about the real man I highly suggest Hitler’s Hangman by Robert
Gerwarth.

This isn’t a happy love story in my eyes. It’s a story of consequences, some good and some bad. It is NOT pro-Nazi. My Jewish, vegan, lefty, liberal, and bunny loving tree hugger self is anything BUT right wing.

Yes, there is a lot of sex in it. That has to do with the real Reinhard Heydrich rather than me just putting in sex scenes. Walter Schellenberg said, "Heydrich's only weakness was his ungovernable sexual appetite. To this he would surrender himself without inhibition or caution and the calculated control which characterized him in everything he did left him completely.

Also please note, even though Heydrich died in 1942 there are many things that simply cannot be proven. The quote by Schellenberg is one, just because someone says something that doesn't mean it is true. It also does not mean that it isn't true. A lot of documents and files were destroyed by the Nazis during WWII for all sorts of reasons. It is known that Heydrich was dismissed from the German Navy for example. The name of the girl or her father have not been found, to my knowledge, by historians.

There are all sorts of non-fiction books (supposedly non-fiction books) that are filled with information nobody else has found, differing in everything from the number of siblings Heydrich had to lurid details about his sexual conquests. There are even claims that drawings of him were cartoons of him back when he was still alive and are wrong. The artist is well known on DeviantArt and other websites. It is why I recommended the book Hitler’s Hangman by Robert Gerwarth. The author is a historian and professor.

This part of the story is complete. I’ll post a couple times a week. The part that is not getting posted is taking place in 2019.

If you have any questions please feel free to ask.
I remember it with perfect clarity.

It was 4 June 2007. I was at work when I got the phone call. My phone was in my work locker for god knows how long before I looked at it again. There had been a voicemail from my mother.

*Kadri, call me as soon as you get this please. I love you.*

I was sixteen and was working in Galveston at one of the surf shops. I felt so grown up that summer. My best friend was the daughter of my parent’s best friends. Kati’s mother was writing a book. So, she was staying in Galveston at their beach house because it was more quiet than at their actual home. Kati was one of seven kids. She and I were living with her mom. Since our families knew each other so well, my parents weren’t worried. It was only June and we were having a marvellous time!

I waited until I got into the car before I called my mom back. I was already at the restaurant where I was meeting my friends when I finally got through to my mother.

“Hi Mom! What’s going on?”

“Where are you sweetheart?”

I could tell she had been crying. “Mom? What’s wrong?”

“I hear your radio. Can you pull over darling?”

“I’m at McBlech, in the car and parked. What’s going on?” McBlech was the nickname of a fast food restaurant in town.

“Oma Elisabeth and Opa Reinhard passed away.”

“What?! How?!”

Oma and Opa were my great-grandparents on my Dad’s side that lived in Switzerland. They had met during World War II and had gotten separated due to an ugly fight. They found each other once again.

Their was one of those love stories that made you smile or die of sugar shock. Opa had turned 103 back in March and Oma turned 93 in February. The entire family had gone to Geneva to celebrate during spring break. It was a pretty big deal for us to all go up. Oma Elisabeth shared a birthday with me and my twin brother. Then Opa’s was exactly one week later.

“When Oma got up this morning Opa was having trouble breathing. She called for an ambulance and they got him to the hospital. He passed away sweetheart. There was nothing anyone could do. The doctors let Oma sit with Opa to say goodbye. When they checked on her a little bit later she was holding his hand. She had gone with him.”

I couldn’t help it. I burst into tears.

When my great-grandparents died it had been one hell of a shock. They had died within less than an hour of each other. Mind you, they had been quite elderly when they passed away. Still, I had never thought I would have been without them at the age of 16. Like many 16 year olds, I took
them for granted. I took most all of life for granted at that age.

I wish I hadn’t. I wish I had asked Oma and Opa a LOT more questions.

So, we went to Switzerland and did all the necessary things. We sat shiva, prepared to bury the eldest members of our family, and cried. Oh dear god there had been a lot of crying.

The worst was clearing out their home. So much of what I wanted to keep, I couldn’t. The exceptions were their instruments. Those I was allowed to ship home. My great-grandparents were amazing musicians. I played the cello like my Oma. I knew how to play the violin but I was never in my Opa’s league. He had taught at one of the finest conservatories in the world!

Even with the distance, Oma and Opa were my confidants. They were the ones I always went to for advice. I could talk to them about anything. They always knew the right thing to say so I talked to them often. I had always been close with both of them. I spent all of my summers going to Switzerland and Germany up until I turned 16. My brothers never wanted to go but I did. I loved being with them. Just the three of us would be there. Sometimes they felt more like my parents than Mom and Dad did.

When I turned 16, I got a job over the summer. It wasn’t anything exciting but it was a job. I had already known that I wouldn’t get to go to Switzerland that year to stay with them. My great-grandparents’ health wasn’t the best. Plus, we had just been over there back in March.

There were many pictures of my Oma from when she was a young woman. She was stunning. She was tall with beautiful raven hair. She eschewed the styles of the time and kept her hair long. My Oma looked like a movie star. Opa was the same. He had pale blond hair and was taller than Oma by only an inch or so. He always looked happy. They had married in 1943 and were still crazy for each other in 2007.

They were my role models in everything, even relationships. Mind you, so were my parents. There was just something so sweet about Oma and Opa. I never asked but I always thought it was because they had nearly lost each other in the war.

Opa called her his Schatzi. I think he always did. I rarely heard him call her by her name. There weren’t any pics of him before the late 1940s. He had said they had been destroyed in the war and the few they had taken had gotten lost or stolen in a move. Nobody really thought twice about it. A lot of things were destroyed in the war.

Oma had several nicknames for Opa. I think my favorite one was she called him her Beast. Usually he was called that when he was being ornery. She would just smile serenely when she called him that.

Dad took the summer off because of their death. Mostly because Papa Rainer hated to fly, so all of this fell on Dad to do. Mom helped out at first but she had to go back to work. David was busy in med school and Alex had to take geometry over again in summer school.

I still give him hell about that. My twin is an amazing surgeon. His mathematics skills are outstanding, except geometry. The man STILL couldn’t tell you what the Pythagorean Theorem was to save his life.

No matter, my life changed drastically without them. Even now? I miss them horrible. I would give anything to talk to them one more time and tell them I love them.
26 May 1942

A man was screaming. Everything was so loud. Why was it loud? Why was the man screaming? Alexandra struggled to sit up.

“Are you okay?” “Who are you?” “What are you doing here?” Three questions. Three different voices. What the hell? Where was she?

Had something catastrophic happened?

“Are you hurt?” “Do you speak English?” The questions. Why were there so many questions? A slap to her face and her head snapped back. Finally, she was able to focus.

“Young lady who are ya?”

“I’m Dr. Alexandra Kettler. I’m …” She didn’t have time to respond. It was now time to duck and cover her ass.

“Do ya know how ya got here lass? Wait? You a Doc? Like a real doc?”

“Yeah. I am a surgeon.”

“The ambulance got hit Doc. You are the only one we found so far.”

Alexandra nodded and watched a man die. It was enough to get her attention. Another man was being carried over to the jeeps. Slowly things began to make sense. She had joined up with the International Red Cross to provide aid to civilians.

“OVER HERE! I NEED A DOCTOR.” The medics waved her over.

“On it.” Alex yelled. She didn’t know what the fuck was going on but she still knew how to be a doctor.

Staying low, she ran over to where the wounded soldiers were.

A kit bag was shoved into her hands by someone and she looked down. Jesus, the kid really was a kid. He was eighteen but damned if he didn’t look twelve, she thought. Tourniquet, clamps, and she looked up. “Move him into the tent.”

What the hell? Finally Alexandra looked around, paying close attention.

Bodies

Lots of bodies.

Mangled flesh.

Smoke. Dear god so much smoke. She began to cough.

Blood. Lots of bodies.

Blood. Burning. Death. She knew what it was then.

The scent of death. She was surrounded by death.

Gunpowder. Bullets. Weapons. All of it had an ozone like scent.

Then there was the scent of death that layered on top of it.

“Life is hell at the front lines doc. It’s okay, yer with us. We are gonna get those fuckin’ Nazi bastards. AND get you and the guys outta here.”

The inside of the Portable Surgical Hospital was loud but there was everything she needed to work. She was scrubbing up to perform surgery in what appeared to be a war. Conversation was going on behind her. Questions and answers over and over again. Apparently, the small unit she was with had gotten hit. She didn’t remember it but right now there were more pressing matters at hand. She had a man’s liver in her hand. Right now people needed her. Surgery she could do. Figuring out where the fuck she was would have to come later.

“What’s a nice girl like you doing in a place like this?” The other surgeon looked at her.

“Suction. If this is where nice girls go. I am up shit creek when I get to where I’m going.”

He laughed “Where ya from?”

“Texas.” She looked at the man. “You?”

“Florida.”

“Here we are getting as intimate as anyone will ever be with this kid and I don’t even know your name. I’m Gibbs.”

“Kettler. I got the liver. You finish the lung?”

“I didn’t know they were letting women out this way.”

“Red Cross.”.

“I hate to tell you, you are the best looking thing in five hundred miles be prepared for a long list of offers.”

She chuckled. It wasn’t anything she hadn’t heard before.

“DOC!” Someone screamed.

It stayed like that for hours. Alexandra lost track of how many men she put back together. Finally there was a lull. The man that introduced himself as Gibbs stepped outside with her. He said nothing but offered a cigarette and a drink from his flask. She took both.

“I have no idea where I’m at.” She rubbed a hand over her weary face.

“Poland. We are a special group of ever so weary gents. I really am surprised they let a pretty gal like you out here this far. Them sonofabitch Nazis would eat you alive.”

She snorted. “I doubt they would like the taste.” She was used to the pretty gal bullshit.

“You had to go a good bit to get here. You are lucky to be alive and in one piece. Did you or Coles
“work on the Germans?”

“I did.”

“How did that make you feel?”

“Like a surgeon. No matter where these kids are from, everyone bleeds red.”

“Some of the younger ones have a hard time with saving the enemy. Kids?” He chuckled. “You even hit 30 yet?”

She was about to say something.

“Kettler?” One of the medics ran up to her.

“Yeah?”

“Come on, we are going to get you back to the 15th Field.”

“Good. Drive slow, I need a nap.” Field hospital? She wasn’t sure. Whatever it was, it had to be better than this.
Chapter 4

Alexandra was sound asleep in the backseat of the car. She was exhausted. Once the men had finally admitted to being lost, they switched out the jeep and found themselves and her some clothing that was not US military issue.

A loud noise and something lit up the sky in a shower of sparks and smoke. Alexandra was jostled awake because of it. While waking the stench of death came back full force. It would be days before it left her fully. The confusion of waking up held on to her for less than a second. After that, her body went on autopilot. Time to move!

The driver of the car and the other rider dove for cover, pulling her along with them. They didn’t need to pull her. When they went for cover, Alexandra was right with them. She knew this drill. Alexandra’s father loved doing survivalist training and taught the basics to all three of his children. He was a veteran from WWI and had been paranoid ever since returning home.

Everything sort of regulated itself to the background noise. It was warm, almost hot. The sun was shining. Public transport clanged its way near them.

Where the hell were they now? She turned to one of the men. No sooner than she did, the man fell on her in a small explosion of blood, brains, and skull fragments. She put her hands up immediately, hoping whomever wouldn’t shoot her. Where the hell was she? Jesus Christ, what country is this?

All of a sudden there was a man standing over her, screaming at her in German to move quickly. Both Alexandra and the driver moved as quickly as possible. It took her a moment to realize the man was a police officer and not a soldier. Did he think that they caused the explosion? Did they cause the explosion? Shit.

Someone appeared to be running up ahead. Alex realized that her processing was slow. Why was that man running? She shook her head, trying to clear the cobwebs out.

She and the driver had walked perhaps 5 yards when she stopped suddenly. A man was badly injured just a few feet from her. Blood. There was a lot of blood. The man on the ground seemed furious. It was obvious he was in pain but the anger was a good sign to her. He was fighting past whatever happened.

He had been the one running? HOW had he been running? The wound on his side was ugly. Again, she had no idea if he was the one that had been running.

She didn’t have time to puzzle that together right now. The fallen man had a gun. Kicking the gun out of the way, she moved fast. The man didn’t have a lot of time left if her initial assessment was correct. There was an opened med kit right by the man. Did someone already try to help him?

She moved to staunch the flow of blood from the man’s torso. Alexandra cut away at the uniform. It dawned on her that she may have just cut away an SS uniform. Whatever it was, she wasn’t too damned slow to recognize the large swastika he had on his sleeve.

Focus Alex. Focus.

The worst of the wounds were on the man’s left side. From the sound of his labored breathing and the nostril flares, she was fairly certain that the man had a collapsed lung. She didn’t have a stethoscope so Alexandra laid her ear to the man’s chest. At the same time she noticed the bluish
tinge to the man’s full lips.

Grabbing the medical pack that was just inches from her booted foot she went to work on the man. She did a needle aspiration and then placed a chest tube.

Alexandra worked quickly and within seconds the lung was re-inflated. Already he was breathing better but it wasn’t good enough. He was still fighting her. Fucking idiot. She yelled at him to hold his horses. He wasn’t going anywhere good without her. Then she yelled the same thing again, this time in German.

He looked at her with surprise. Alexandra didn’t even notice. The loss of blood and shock was slowly taking him to unconsciousness, but he was fighting it.

Go time girl, she thought to herself. Everything happening around her became background noise and nothing more. Alexandra kept her focus on the man.

The dullness from lack of sleep vanished. Alexandra’s mind began cataloging what needed to be done first and foremost to save the man’s life. Spleen, diaphragm, and the left lung all had injuries, it appeared. Broken rib and possibly ribs. Shrapnel. She wouldn’t know the full extent of his injuries until she opened him up.

But damn, the man was a mess.

Alexandra didn’t notice that the man’s eyes had opened ever so slightly. He watched her for a full minute before they closed once again.

Time was of the essence and she was going as fast as she could.

The wounded man was coming back around and kept trying to sit up. Every bit of Alexandra was fighting with him to save his life. Christ, he was an obstinate ass. She pinned the man with her leg and foot while he struggled.

Alex said something else to him but he yelled back. Not one to be outmatched at yelling she told the man in English and in German that she was a doctor. It quieted him down for the moment.

“Morphine, are you allergic?”

“No.” He slurred the single word.

“Good.”

His fingertips touched Alexandra’s wrist. “Danke.” The man whispered. Looking up at her.

The touch shocked her enough that she looked down. Her hand was gentle on his bare skin. She smiled gently at the wounded man. “You’re welcome. I’ve got you and you are going to be just fine.”

Another man appeared abruptly, he was breathing hard from running. Was this the runner from before? Did it matter? He too was wounded but they seemed to be minor injuries, at least compared to the man she was working on. He started to yell at her as well. Alex shot him a look of annoyance and went back to work on the badly injured man.

Hearing one of the two men with guns tell her to hurry, she responded rather pleasantly in German with something akin to would you kindly fuck off I’m very busy right now. Thank you.
“I need an ambulance.” She yelled at the less injured man. “I need to get your buddy here to a hospital.”

“Come on big guy, cooperate with me and it will all be good. I got ya. Be a good boy and I'll waltz at your daughter’s wedding.” The words were more of a murmur. She had found it helped her concentrate and provided focus to a hurt soldier if she kept up a warm chatter.

Packing the wound, the man looked like he would make it to a hospital at least. Alexandra had forgotten the second man with a gun when she stood. She felt the metal against her temple. Swallowing down the twisting fear and anger, she politely told the man again they needed an ambulance.

Whatever gunman yelled, it was too close to her ear for her to understand exactly what he was saying. Luckily the hospital was only about 3 minutes away. A delivery van was flagged down to get the wounded man out of the street. The injured man was unable to sit, so they put him in the back of the van.

The man with the gun and yet another swastika rode in the back with the injured man and Alex. He watched her like a hawk.

Cradling the man’s head in her lap, she looked him over for other signs of trauma. His hand reached for hers, and held it. He was injured and frightened. Alexandra stroked his check gently. He looked up to her and their gazes met for the first time.

The man thought she looked like an angel with her cloud of dark hair and bright blue eyes. He brought her hand upwards to his bloody lips and kissed her warm skin.

“I trust you.” He whispered.

There was something strange about the man. Alexandra had no idea how or why but she had a feeling this man would end up making quite an impact on her life.

Odd.

Alexandra used her body to brace him from the erratic movement of the van. She was being jostled around like mad but she was able to protect the man. When he cried out she kissed his forehead and curled around him. He looked at the young woman without her noticing. He noticed that she was beautiful, exquisitely so. She sang softly to him while she protected his body. It wasn't anything but an old folk song. Still, it made the man relax. He was able to close his eyes and focus on her voice. There was something about it that comforted him. Her voice reminded him of sitting near the fire. There was something husky in her voice that reminded him of the warmth of a tender touch. Finally they came to a stop. At the hospital, two men with a stretcher got him out and into the hospital.

Alexandra stayed with the large Nazi, monitoring him. He clung to her hand with fear in his eyes.

“My name is Dr. Alexandra Kettler. I’m a trauma surgeon from the United States. I swear on my own life that you will have the best care given to you.”

The man looked at her with a smile. She noticed how handsome of a man he was and blushed brightly because of it. The man chuckled softly upon noticing her blush. He didn't know why she was blushing be he hoped that it was something good.

She was monitoring his vitals by hand, still.
With his condition worsening, she hopped on to the gurney that he was on. With nothing more than the kit bag, she started preforming the surgery kneeling over the dying man in the hallway.

Since nobody was doing anything, Alexandra barked out orders for what was needed. She wanted blood and to get him typed for his specific blood.

The sight of the swastikas everywhere made Alex scowl. She didn’t have time to see the least. This man needed to be in an operating theatre ten minutes ago.

Right now, he was unconscious but she knew that could change in matter of seconds.

Who the man was couldn’t be a concern for her. This was when she was often called callous. She wouldn’t take personal interest in a patient’s life. That sort of thinking, to her, killed people.

Alexandra knew she was working in less than ideal conditions but it would have to do. There was no way this man was going to die. He would not die on her watch that was for goddamn sure.

Cursing, his heart rate was dropping.

“If I have to walk a goddamn road of fire in my bare feet to the gates of hell, you are coming back with me my friend.”

The operating theatre was made ready immediately. Hopping down, Alexandra had managed to get her hands somewhat clean but nowhere near what she was used to when they moved him to the table. She was in her element. Trauma surgery such as this was her forte.

For as young as she was, Alexandra Kettler was a gifted surgeon. She had started to revolutionize how reconstructive surgery was handled.

Alexandra scowled at the fact that there were armed guards in the OR but there wasn’t much she could do about it. She did make them stand far enough back that they didn’t interfere with what passed as being sterile.

She barked orders at the doctors and nurses assisting before realizing her mistake. Alexandra was speaking English again. Promptly switching to German, those around her listened. The doctors and nurses moved swift and smooth with the patient. When Alex needed something she asked for it, rather than have a tech or another surgeon try to anticipate. As she often did back in her own country, she commanded the procedure. What she didn't realize, Alexandra was not supposed to be there.

All in all, she ended up removing the tip of the fractured eleventh rib, sutured the torn diaphragm, repaired the damaged lung, inserted several catheters, and removed the spleen. The spleen was in vile shape. It contained grenade fragments and upholstery material. Alexandra found it odd that she had to remove what looked like horsehair as well. There were no horses even near the accident. Wait? Was there? She didn’t know.

Everyone was speaking German but this wasn’t any part of Germany she knew. Okay so, what? Austria? Somewhere else? Germany? Switzerland? She had no idea.

Once the surgery was finished, Alexandra stepped back with her hands up. Showing that she didn’t have anything that could be considered a weapon, she turned to one of the armed guards to say something. Before she had a chance to speak, a hand went over her mouth and nose. It didn’t take long for the chloroform to work.

When she woke up, her head hurt something awful. Coughing, if she had been nearly anywhere else she would have thought she had smoked three packs of Lucky Strikes, unfiltered. Gross.
Alexandra wondered if it was possible to ask for a razor to shave her tongue.

Trying to clear her throat, Alex was met with a slap to the face. It wasn’t overly hard but it did get her attention. She went to rub her face and realized she was tied to what felt like a chair.

“Christ. If this is what y’all do when I save a life damn good thing I didn’t kill anyone.” Her tone was conversational, but in English. She was rewarded with another slap.

The blindfold was pulled off. Alexandra looked to the man before her. He was possibly the most boring looking human she had ever seen. His face was non-descript. He wore brown slacks and a white shirt. Shoes were cheap and brown. The same went for the glasses. There was nothing about him that was remarkable at all. Well, except the swastika pin on his ever so brown tie.

“So you are the Admiral of the Swiss Navy? A pleasure.” In German she sounded even more snide than normal.

“What does that mean?”

“Really the humor is totally lost when I have to tell you.” She sighed dramatically.

The man started to say something but she interrupted him. “We really need to get you on a show. Your fashion sense is abysmal. Truly hideous look for a human. Your hair shouldn't match 90% of the clothing you are wearing.

This slap across the face left her seeing stars. The man did however walk out of the room in a rage. That was too fucking easy, she thought. And maybe a little too much fun.

It was about another hour when she saw yet another Nazi. This man was a dapper looking in uniform. “Good evening Doctor.”

“Hello.”

The man watched her like a snake watching a mouse. She would have told him that he was the mouse in this game if she got free but since he was remaining polite, Alex would do the same.

“We have your paperwork. I saw that your name is Alexandria.”

“No. My name is Alexandra.” She knew it was a trick. Is it a Nazi requirement to take Interrogation 101?

“My apologies.” He smiled.

She did not. Instead, she gave a nod.

“Doctor, there is much confusion regarding you.”

“Oh?”

“How did you come upon an attempt on a man’s life?”

Don’t roll your eyes. Don’t roll your eyes. Damnit. I rolled my eyes. Fuck. Sighing. “I was asleep in the backseat of the car. I honestly don’t know.”

“Well then, what was an American woman doing with two soldiers?”

She rolled her eyes again. “I came here to help civilians with a Red Cross unit. The unit was hit.
Some soldiers found me. They were trying to get me somewhere so I could go home. I believe that they had gotten lost but since I was asleep I am uncertain if that is the truth or not.”

It was the same story the man that was with her told.

“Since you know my name, what is your own?”

“You may call me Walter.”

“Thank you Walter. So now what?”

“That is dependent on you.”

“Oh do tell?” Do not use sarcasm. Repeat NO SARCASM. I haven’t called him Wally yet. Shut up brain.

“If your information checks out, then you will be released. If it doesn’t, well……”

“Very well.” Good god. “How is the patient doing that I worked on?”

“Why do you wish to know?”

“I performed surgery in the field, in a hospital hallway, and in an operating theatre. Call me curious.”

“It is my understanding that the patient is doing well.”

“Good.”

Pulling up a chair across from Alexandra the man studied her intently. “You are being much better behaved than you were earlier. Why is that?”

“Call it a quirk, but I find slapping someone in the face to be a poor start to polite conversation.”

“I apologize. That should not have happened.”

“Thank you.”

The questioning went on for nearly two days. Someone was in the room with her always. Although they didn’t necessarily speak. If she started to nod off for any reason, the nonspeaking person woke her up. While the threats were there, she was never touched sexually. Actually other than waking her up, she wasn’t touched at all after the slaps.

However, they did deprive her of food, water and sleep. Alexandria realized that she would probably have admitted to BEING Hitler if that was what they wished of her. Thank god for her own innate stubbornness. It helped her not say anything stupid.

She began to wonder how she would look with that idiotic mustache. What was that gross little name they used to call it? Alex remembered it from a long ago history class. Rotzbremse or something like that? It meant snot brake. She might have been getting a tad loopy. It made it hard to respond seriously to the questions.

Most of what she told them was the truth about how she had gotten there. She had been part of a Red Cross unit and had gotten hit. Since she was a doctor and multilingual, she was an asset. She didn’t admit to where she was found or anything of the like.
She did remember tidbits from the paper and the television on the Nazi Party. Then she began to contemplate why it was called a party. This certainly was not her idea of a party. Where were the drinks? No snacks? Alexandra realized the food and drink deprivation might not have been the worst idea on their part but they wouldn’t get anything that sounded sane out of her.

Once they decided that Alexandra was at least harmless, they gave her food and water. She was permitted to sleep after that. What no one said, was if she hadn’t have saved the life of the Obergruppenführer, she would have forfeited her own life for his. They didn’t have to say it. She knew just by how most of the people looked at her.

“Good evening.”

Trying to sit up, she turned to the accented voice speaking English. “Where am I?”

Alexandra sounded calm but her mind was screaming once again. Being an American with a bunch of Nazis didn’t sound like a good idea. Being a female American with a bunch of Nazis sounded even worse.

“You are safe.”

“That doesn’t answer my question.” She snapped.

The man chuckled softly. “You are American.”

Alexandra just gazed at the man with indifference. She was ready to murder for coffee.

“It shows. Seeing how your own clothing is filthy, there are clean ones for you.” He indicated with nod the small pile at the foot of the bed. “Get dressed. There is water for you to wash up with. I will be right back.”

Well, he isn’t wrong. I am filthy. Alexandra thought. The clothing she wore was covered in now dried blood. There were pieces of brain or skull left on her. She kept on her own bra but used the clean underwear that was given to her. She ripped the elastic off of her old underwear. You never know when it would come in handy. There was a small bit of water. Alex used it to wash her face first. The rest came by way of an old sing-song. Pits, bits, and under the tits. What am I 12 again? She scowled at herself.

She went over the seams of every piece of clothing, even her bra. She checked her boots with a critical eye. Paranoid much Lex? Nope, just read too many spy novels and read far too many mystery books. With that she had a vision of a Nazi serial killer. STOP IT BRAIN! I need to get out of here.

The pants looked like US GI fatigues. She thought it was odd but she didn’t dare think about where they might have come from. The long sleeved shirt was soft cotton that lacked anything to tell her if it was military issue or not.

She had been wearing her jump boots when everything went sideways. Now she was damned grateful to have the boots. She could run in them better than she could a pair sneakers Alexandra had just tucked the t-shirt in when the door opened.

“Would you like something to drink?” The man looked her over from head to toe at least three times.

“Yes.” She paused, frowning. “Please.” She never believed she would have to say please to a Nazi. Not only did it leave a foul taste in her mouth, it left Alex even more irritable.
The man poured them each a cup of water. Alexandra took a careful sip and looked around the room. It was a room. That was about it. There was a shelf built into the white painted wall. The cot she had slept in was against one wall and a chair that the man sat in on the other. It was more like a small closet.

“So what is an American woman doing in a war zone? Comforting the soldiers?” The man smirked.

Without even thinking, she spat the water at him and the tin cup was hurled directly at his face.

“I’m a surgeon asshole.”

Coolly he took out a pristine handkerchief and mopped the water off. “Do not lie to me. I am the only thing that stands between you and death.”

“Given that I have already performed surgery on one of your buddies, I’m fairly certain that shows proof I am a surgeon. How long have I been unconscious for?”

“24 hours.”

“What?”

“You were not harmed in any way.”

“Lucky me.” She snapped. “I got to go through that PRIOR to my nap.”

Fucking hell. What was happening? It made her head hurt further. Even being up for 48 hours wouldn’t have made her sleep that long. She had done it plenty of times before. Alexandra figured she had been drugged but with what she didn’t know. That bothered her more than anything.

“You are very lucky. It could have been much worse. The man you saved? He is an important official and a personal friend of mine.”

“Happy to have been of service, I suppose I will be leaving now. Ciao.” She stood up.

“You know that it is not that simple. You helped one of our men, why?”

“I’m a doctor, that’s why.” Why would anyone ask such a question?

“We would not have done the same for you, most likely. Although, you are quite lovely. A man of a certain rank may have wished to keep you as his concubine.” The man’s eyes raked her from head to toe. He stood up as well.

Keeping her eyes on the man, she sighed and shook her head. “Okay Dr. Freud. We can back away from everything revolving around sex.”

“Do I look like a Jew?”

“No, of course not. You don’t look that intelligent.”

He hit her first in the gut and then slapped her face. The only thing that stopped him from doing something worse was a promise made. He had promised the man Alex saved he would not harm the American doctor.

What the fuck is it with short Nazis slapping me in the face?! She half stood with her head down and hands on her thighs. She was furious.
“Impertinent whore. You don’t know when to shut your mouth do you?” Reaching over he tucked a lock of her hair back behind her ear. “You are a pretty thing. That might serve you well.”

Alexandra considered for a half second biting him. There was a momentarily thought of Nazi cooties right before she dashed forward as quickly as possible. She caught the man in the gut with a shoulder. The momentum slammed him into the wall.

Immediately, she threw an uppercut to his jaw. She hit him in the diaphragm as hard as she could with the heel of her hand. Turning swiftly Alex moved and dashed a foot to the side of his knee. Her attack happened fast enough to drop him and make the man hurt. She was ready to run when she opened the door.

“Goddamnit.” There were two men right outside the door. Not just Nazis. She got Nazis with guns. Alexandra turned back to the man she attacked.

He laughed and stood up. “So pretty little concubine, why did you save him?” He pulled the door shut behind her. “I do believe I shall enjoy my time with you.”

Concubine indeed. “Really? That’s all you got? You need to take a remedial course in Evil Henchmen. You are about as lame as Goebbels.” She curled her lip in disgust.

The man narrowed his eyes at the last part but ignored it. “Why did you save him?”

“Oh for the love of god. Don’t you have someone else to annoy?”

“Answer me or I shall let the guards have a little fun with you. Well, it would be fun for them that is.”

“Alright Practice two things in your dealings with disease: either help or do not harm the patient. While that is not part of the Hippocratic Oath, it still from Hippocrates. Someone harmed the patient. I was going to help.” She smiled coldly. “Let’s play a game! I will use treatment to help the sick according to my ability and judgment, but never with a view to injury and wrong-doing.” ……

Alexandra Kettler recited all of the words of the Hippocratic Oath perfectly without breaking eye contact. “Your turn. Can you say the same and mean it?” After everything, she was baiting him now.

He ignored the question. “We found your papers. I saw that your last name is German.”

“That is because my family is from Germany. You realize your redundancy, yes? I have already gone through all of this.”

“You will go through it again with me. Your name is also a Jewish name.”

“Don’t you have paperwork or rounds? I don’t know about you but I don’t have time to chit-chat when people are sick. Oh and aren’t many German names also found on Jewish people?”

“Jews are not people.” He growled.

She rolled her eyes. “I am not doing this.” She threw the door open again.

Two men that were armed stood outside the door still. She spoke in English. "Hi. Excuse me. But could like one of y’all mind getting a manager for me? I would really like to speak to the manager. The service here is shite.” Rolling her eyes, Alexandra sighed. “Yeah, didn’t think so. No wonder
the stereotype of Nazis is that they have no sense of humor.” The door was closed.

“You aren’t marked as a Jew on your paperwork.”

“That is because I am not a Jew. I’m an atheist.” Technically, it was the truth. She did consider herself to be an atheist. She wasn’t born Jewish but she had been raised such. Alexandra also was well aware how Jewish laws worked. She wouldn’t admit that tidbit to any German in this damn nightmarish hellhole

“Your heritage?”

“Not Jewish. Catholic. As for what country? Germany, as I said before, hence the name.” Mostly the truth. Alexandra’s biological parents were from Germany and they were Catholic. Her adoptive parents were of German descent as well.

“But you are not Catholic?”

“I believe in science, not fairytales.”

“I see. Recite one of the prayers?”

Shit. “Hail Mary? Our Father? Act of Contrition? Or will any old prayer do?” Alex was hoping like hell he didn’t call her bluff. She might get most of Our Father right. Might. Hoping like hell? She might have grinned a bit at her own joke.

“How is the patient I worked on doing?” Sighing, she sat back down. Alexandra was trying a different tactic.

“Why do you care?”

“Do I need to recite the Hippocratic Oath for you again?” How much trouble would I get into for popping this guy in the mouth? What if I did it with a brick? Two bricks?

“He is doing well.”

She nodded. “Is there somewhere I may wash up further Dr. Krueger?”

The man look stunned. “How did you know my name?”

“First, you just confirmed it. Second, well…” She tapped her own chest in proximity to where his nametag was on his lab coat.

Angry, Krueger yelled in German for one of the nurses to take Dr. Kettler to wash up and to give her some items that she would need such as soap and a comb. Alex realized wasn’t sure that the man knew she spoke German, as they had been conversing in English. He wasn’t in the OR was he? She couldn’t remember.

While she was cleaning up, Dr. Krueger went to talk to the patient. The patient gave orders that EVERYONE in the hospital should refer to him by his Christian name, Reinhard, or by his rank. There would be no exceptions. The unknown American woman was a puzzle. The driver that had been in the car with her had given a similar story to the one she told. Alas, the driver was no longer among the living to further corroborate anything else the American might say. Krueger had not been joking about there being someone of high ranking that wouldn’t mind having her as a concubine. There was quite a list already.
The nurse looked at the tall American with sympathy and helped her clean up.

“What is your name?” The nurse spoke slowly in English. “I’m Gerda.”

“I’m Alexandra, Alex. I speak German.”

While Alexandra scrubbed to remove the blood from beneath her nails Gerda brushed back her long black hair. She was trying to find something to tie it back with when she was given the elastic from Alex’s underwear.

“You are very pretty Alex. Please be careful. It might not be safe for you here.”

Gerda looked concerned for her. She dotted some of her hand lotion on the pretty American’s face. Her fingers were gentle as she smoothed it over her skin and brows. The American would be sought after with those blue eyes of hers, she thought.

“What’s wrong Gerda?” Alex smiled softly.

She whispered to Alexandra. “No. Don’t smile. That will get you noticed. You are far too pretty to be here Alex. Girls like me can hide easily. You cannot. You are tall and a doctor. These men? Not the patients, but the doctors. They will hurt you if you are not careful. The man you saved? So will he. He is cruel and vicious. We best get you back. This is my last day here Alex. Good luck to you.”

The nurse wasn’t wrong. Alexandra was tall. She stood nearly 6’2 in her bare feet. Although tall, she didn’t have a stocky build like some tall women. She was willowy. Her older brother often teased her about looking like a weasel. David said she was long and slender but that didn’t make her any less vicious. His pet name for her was Weez.

As the nurse walked her back to Dr. Krueger, Alexandra paid attention to every detail.
Chapter 5

“You look much better Dr. Kettler.” The smile didn’t reach Krueger’s eyes. Those cold eyes had another story to tell. They devoured every inch of her. The man’s cruelty longed for a willing victim. He would not find that in Alex.

“Thank you. Since this is obviously an actual hospital and not a field hospital, could you perhaps tell me where I am?”

“Prague. This is Bulovka hospital.”

“Thank you.” This polite shit has got to stop. Well, how about we get out of here alive first, eh brain? What the fuck am I doing in Prague?

“The patient would like to speak with you.”

“Well, I suppose. It’s not like I have a busy schedule.”

The man was in one of the luxurious private rooms. Now that he wasn’t fighting her, Alexandra noticed that he was indeed handsome as she originally felt. But he was not so in the traditional Hollywood sense. He watched her with a similar curiosity that she looked him over with. The patient’s breathing was a bit labored. She wasn’t surprised given the injury to the lung and diaphragm. She noticed the flicker of pain in his eyes but overall he looked to be doing well.

Dr. Krueger introduced the man simply as Reinhard and Alexandra as Dr. Kettler. Another man was shown in the room. He was introduced as Dr. Gebhardt. Krueger stayed in the doorway. Alexandra thought that wise.

“Ich danke Ihnen Frau Doktor Kettler.” The patient pronounced each word slowly with the hope she may understand him.

“Gern geschehen.” Alex realized that the patient didn’t seem to remember that she spoke German to him in when the accident happened. “I speak German.”

The smile was about all she could manage while bile burned in her belly. The injured man frightened her. It wasn’t that he appeared to be a threat but Krueger had told her he was a high ranking official. By the room alone, she would have guessed that.

He reminded Alex of a lion. Part of it was how his facial features came together and part of it was something entirely different. There was something about him that told her he would play with his kill long before actually killing, just like a cat.

Granted, the same had been said about her before as well. There might have been more truth to that than she cared to think. Alexandra was known to have a tongue sharper than any scalpel.

“May I check your wounds?” She could tell her German sounded odd to the men because of her accent but the doctors and patient seemed to understand. The patient seemed pleased with hearing her speak in his native tongue.

“Yes.”

Reinhard smiled. Her accented voice was warm and husky. It reminded Reinhard of sitting before a fire, drinking hot mulled wine, soft kisses on bare skin but most of all he thought of sex. It wasn’t
like being with a whore in a brothel. Her soft voice was that of lovers expressing their unconditional love to one another. His mouth twisted into a smile. She was truly lovely.

It was obvious she was fluent in German but it was not her primary language.

“Thank you.” She smiled.

Meticulously she checked the patient over after washing her hands. She was concerned about sepsis setting in and the horsehair was still bothering her. Taking a seat next to the patient’s bed, she asked him a few questions.

“Am I hurting you at all?” She smiled softly.

“Around the incisions, yes.”

“Do you have any new pain?”

“No doctor.”

“What of allergies?”

“No.”

“Do you have any questions for me?”

“How long until I get to leave?”

She chuckled and smiled gently. “That depends on a great number of factors. You will be here for about six weeks would be my best estimate. I’ll do my best to make your stay shorter.”

“That is not soon enough.”

He watched her closely. Reinhard noted several things about the young woman. She had confidence in herself. This Dr. Kettler knew what she was doing. He remembered that from the accident. She was feisty and she had the same confidence there as she did in the hospital room. She was also stunningly beautiful by his estimation.

Her mouth was full and mobile. She smiled often and it wasn’t due to discomfort or nervousness. The woman didn’t hide behind a smile. It was genuine. He estimated her to be about 21. With her dark hair and such fair skin, she captivated him. It was her eyes that made him smile. Alexandra had the brightest blue eyes he had ever seen. Oh yes, she was quite pleasing to look at. Although, 21 was very young to be a doctor. He realized that she had to be older.

He smiled. Reinhard remembered the comforting kiss she had pressed to his forehead.

Also, the woman paid attention. To everything. Even though her attention was on him, she knew the conversation going on behind her. He wouldn’t be surprised if she knew every word he said AND what the other two men said.

Reinhard was an astute judge of character. He watched the way the three doctors interacted. It was amusing to him. Krueger tried to throw his weight around. Gebhardt seemed to need to feel superior to the woman. Interesting.

Krueger was attracted to her and he didn’t like that he was. It made him angry. Reinhard could imagine it would make Krueger angry. His thoughts on women were that they had no place working outside of the home. Nurses were fine, until they found a man to marry them. This woman
was too much for Krueger. She was too intelligent. She was too knowledgeable. And she was far too beautiful. It made Erich Krueger wish to hurt her.

Gebhardt had originally ordered that no surgery be performed until he arrived. The American bypassed that order without care. Reinhard wondered why.

Reinhard had forbidden anyone from doing harm to her. Having known Erich Krueger since they were both young, he also knew of the man’s peccadillos. Krueger was a sexual sadist. It had gotten so bad that he had to make Krueger go elsewhere to find his fun. The people here had seen what he was capable of with their daughters just twice. It had been bad enough for Reinhard to forbid it.

Gebhardt on the other hand wasn’t attracted to her. Did he want to impress her? No, that wasn’t it. Then what? Was it simply because she ignored his direct order?

“With an injury like the one you have there is a high chance of infection. I would rather be safe than sorry. Speaking of, Dr. Krueger? I want to put the patient on a therapeutic course of penicillin. That way infection does not start.”

Dr. Gebhardt answered the question. “As you can see the patient is doing fine. He is in no need of anything extra.”

Rising, Alexandra tipped her chin upwards and placed her hands behind her back. “Dr. Gebhardt, I did not ask for your opinion nor do I need it. Why? Because you are wrong.”

She stood a good bit taller than either Krueger or Gebhardt and used it to her advantage. It made Reinhard smile. He was known for doing the same. Then he realized Gebhardt’s problem. He felt threatened by the American. Especially since she thought herself better than he was.

Reinhard had to force himself not to smile. She had already show herself to be far more competent of a doctor than Gebhardt was. The oily little man seemed to know that there was nothing he could do to make the woman look twice at him. So, he was going to cause her problems.

“No. It is nearly impossible to obtain. We use sulfonamides when we can.” That time Krueger responded.

“Has he had any?”

“No, as you can see he is doing well.”

“I told you that there is no need.” Gebhardt snapped at her.

“Dr. Krueger, give him the sulfa and get him some penicillin. These wounds can easily become fatal.”

“It’s a waste of medications.” Again it was Gebhardt.

Closing her eyes, Alex counted backwards from 10.

Then she tried 20.

She was dangerously close to losing her temper. “Please excuse us Reinhard.” She walked out into the hallway with a look on her face that told the men they had best follow and now. She shut the door behind them.

“Look, as far as I am concerned I’m the one that performed the surgery. I’m the physician in
charge. We do it my way. Furthermore, why would you care if it is a waste? It is standard precautionary treatment. Dr. Gebhardt are you trying to kill the patient? Is there a reason you wish death upon this man?”

“Of course not!”

“Then do NOT argue with me. Other than the two days that I was temporarily incapacitated, I have followed through with this patient since I saw the damn grenade explode! I performed surgery in the field, hallway and in an operating theatre. If you think you know better than I do? Well then you are a fucking imbecile as well as a dullard.”

“Young lady, if you are even a doctor….”

“If you don’t believe that this patient is in danger of infection then go ahead and sign his damned death certificate. I dare you to hand that over to him and tell him why you are balking at a course of treatment that is standard in operations such as the one he has had!”

“Dr. Gebhardt, I believe Dr. Kettler is correct in this situation.” It was killing Krueger to say that.

“I am the personal physician of Heinrich Himmler and I out rank you young lady.”

“I don’t care if you were the personal physician of God, Satan and fucking Hansel and Gretel. Given the fact I don’t even live on this bloody continent? I give no fucks what your rank is. I removed small fragments of shrapnel and hairs from along the large intestine. I ran the bowel three times to make sure I got all of the nicks. This man had gastrointestinal perforations. He is going to end up with an infection unless we stop it before it starts. And that is assuming that it hasn’t started. I’ll will be more than happy to make a bet with you that it already has started.”

“Young lady, you need to mind your manners.” Gebhardt growled.

Alexandra snorted. Peering down at the short man, she leaned in. “Give me one good argument of why you do not believe that the patient needs something to stop the infection that isn’t just your broken record of he doesn’t need them. Come on! I’m waiting!”

Karl Gebhardt stared at Alexandra. His face was turning red.

“So your reason is that you are an ignorant man that should have never been given a degree to practice? Thought so.”

“Erich, Karl.” That was all the patient said through the closed door.

Kruger frowned. “I need to make some calls.”

Gebhardt smiled cruelly. “Hold your tongue young lady.”

“Get bent you smarmy little toad. Oh and that is Dr. Kettler to you, Karl.”

Krueger walked back to the other doctors. “It will take 24 hours to get it here. I am not responsible for the quality.”

“That’s fine. I can check it myself.” She walked back into the patient’s room.

“My apologies Reinhard. You shouldn’t have witnessed any of that.”

“No. Do not apologize to me for looking after me. Is it true what you said?”
“I said many things but if you are asking if you have a high chance of infection? The answer is yes.”

“How do you know this but the others do not?”

“This is my specialty. All I do is trauma surgery or reconstructive surgery after trauma. Do you have any questions for me?”

“How close was I to dying? How close am I still to dying?”

“That is not something I like to answer but you were close. I originally thought you had phrenic nerve damage. Luckily, you didn’t. I still think you run a high chance for an infection. Which, with your wounds, would most likely prove fatal.”

“Meaning?”

“The phrenic nerve is a large nerve. It originates at the C4 in the neck…” She put her finger at the back of his neck. “…I am touching the C3-C5 vertebrae right now. It travels along this path.” Alexandra traced the finger down between his lung and heart to the diaphragm. You need it to breathe. As for the infection, when debris gets in the wounds it can cause infection if not taken care of properly. You are more at risk than others may be because of the nature of your wounds. The perforations on the large intestine, specifically. The debris from the detonation of the grenade has put you in a higher category.”

“That’s amazing.”

“The human body is amazing.” She smiled.

“Is there much need for a surgeon like you outside of war time?”

“Trauma is just a bad injury. It doesn’t have to come with war.” Hope I said that right in German. Yeah. I think so. “You can have trauma being hit by a car, or in a sporting accident.”

“Ah, I wasn’t thinking.”

“It’s okay. You can blame it on the morphine.” She gave him another smile. “Anything else?”

He shook his head.

Alexandra started to walk away when the man she only knew as Reinhard grabbed her hand. Turning, her brow raised and she tried to smile at the wounded man.

“Thank you doctor.” His English, while accented, was perfect.

“You are very welcome.” She spoke English in return.

The smile that the patient gave her was lovely and warm. She still felt fear rise up in her before realizing the patient was the first person to speak to her with consideration besides the nurse.

Reinhard watched her leave. Dr. Kettler was walking a dangerous path by fighting with Krueger and Gebhardt. She must be somewhat naïve to believe that there wasn’t a chance that the two men would hurt her. They were not permitted to physically do so, but there were other ways to do damage. Or was there something about her that he didn’t know?

There was something that he didn’t know.
Alexandra was a brawler. She loved to fight. That didn’t mean it needed to be a physical fight. Although, she did enjoy sparring. Arguments, debates, and discourse, she loved it all. She was taught the value of confrontation and did not fear it at all. Unfortunately, most of what Alexandra enjoyed came with rules. There were certain steps that were followed. She was unused to the way these men played.

As she was walking out, someone entered the room of the man Alexandra saved. It took her a moment or two to realize that it was a woman. There was something about the woman that was off putting and Alex didn’t know what. The woman looked to be angry about the man being in the hospital she thought, before shrugging it off. She decided it was none of her concern.

Krueger cornered her immediately.

“Where did you learn?” He shoved her into one of the empty rooms, closing the door.

“Where did I learn what?”

“German!”

“At home growing up.”

“What sort of American speaks German at home?”

“The sort that are immigrants.” She shot back. “Besides, how do you know English?”

“I do not trust you Dr. Kettler.” He didn’t answer the question.

“Good. Let me go.” She turned and moved to leave.

Grabbing her arm, Krueger shoved her against the wall. “Oh no. You will not be leaving any time soon.”

“So I am a prisoner?”

“No, you are just a special guest. A very special guest.”

Trying to keep her temper in check, Alexandra changed the subject. “Answer me something?”

“Perhaps.”

“Why was I digging what looked to be horsehair out of the patient?”

Krueger gave her what could only be called an incredulous look. “The seats are stuffed with horsehair.”

Alexandra was given civilian clothing and all the necessary items to live – such as shelter and food. It was obvious the clothing was at least second hand, if not fourth or fifth. At least the clothing was clean and fit well enough. She donned the white coat like the other doctors. As each day went by, the other staff members began to welcome the strange American.
Chapter 6

Alex was coming down the hallway when she saw a crying little girl sitting on a wooden bench outside one of the private rooms next to Reinhard’s. The child appeared to be roughly 5 years old. The little girl was trying so hard not to cry but it just wasn’t working.

Kneeling down on the hard and cold floor, Alexandra stopped to check on the little girl.

“What’s wrong sweetheart?”

The child stared at her, not knowing what to think. “Are you a nurse?”

“No, I’m a doctor.”

“Girls can’t be doctors.” The crying was lessening now that the little girl had something else to focus on.

“Well, I am not from here. Maybe that’s why?”

Finally the child smiled. “What is your name?”

“Alexandra, most of my friends call me Alex. What’s your name?”

“May I call you Alex? My name is Margarethe.”

“Yes you may. You have a beautiful name Margarethe!”

All of a sudden, from the room a woman called out Margarethe’s name. Immediately, the child burst into tears.

“Why the tears Margarethe?”

“My Daddy is in there and he is going to die.”

Alexandra was the surgeon for that patient, Herr Mayer. He had some horrible facial injuries that took several surgeries to repair. Once the man healed from his surgeries, he would be fine. There would be very little visible scarring even. Almost all of the distortion he had was due to swelling currently.

“I promise. Your Daddy will be fine.” She dried the tears of the little girl with a clean handkerchief.

“How do you know?”

“I’m your Daddy’s doctor. Would you like for me to go in there with you?”

“Please?”

Alexandra rose back to her feet and picked up the little girl. Margarethe cuddled in close to her, laying her head on Alex’s shoulder. They went into the hospital room.

“Margarethe!”

The mother started to scold the child and apologize to Alexandra for Margarethe having bothered
her. Alex smiled and gave her head a tiny shake.

“I was telling the beautiful Margarethe that her Daddy will be just fine. He just has to heal.” She had already told the parents that days ago.

“Will you sit with Papa liebchen?” Her father asked.

Quickly Margarethe began to chat happily with her father. Quietly, Alex asked the mother if it was okay to give the little girl a candy. Once permission was given, Alexandra gave little Margarethe a lollipop. So many of the men that were patients on the floor that she worked were fathers. She made sure to carry a pocketful of candy at all times because of it.

“Margarethe, your Daddy should be going home tomorrow. That is good, yes?”

“Thank you Alex.” Margarethe beamed happily up at Alexandra.

“You are most welcome. You enjoy your lolly. I shall see you later.” She gave a warm smile to the parents and went to the next room to check on the patient Reinhard.

“How are you feeling Reinhard?” Alexandra sat on the chair beside the bed. There was a wrinkle of concern on her normally smooth forehead. Reinhard did not look well.

“It hurts.”

“Worse?”

He nodded.

“I hate to do this but I am going to make it hurt even worse. I need to poke and prod you for a moment. I promise to reward you when I am done.” Her smile was wry.

“Are you going to kiss it and make it better?” He tried to smile.

“Sorry but no. You will get medication at least.”

Alexandra was as gentle as she could be. Yet, she saw the pain in his eyes.

Her fear was coming true. He had an infection. “I’ll be right back. I need to get your medication.”

“Doctor might I see your hands?”

The question made her pause. “Of course.” It was an odd request but she saw no harm in it. She held out her hands palms upwards. Reinhard noticed her fingertips on her left hand and smiled. That was what he had felt.

“Thank you.”

Dr. Gephardt stopped her in the hallway.

“Can I help you?” She had not the time nor patience for the smarmy git.

“What did you do to him?”

“What did I do to whom?”

“The patient, Reinhard.”
“I just examined him and I am getting ready to give him his medications.” Christ what was it with Nazi doctors that piss me off? Oh right. That whole Nazi thing. Who knew? You and every other sane person on the planet Lexi.

“I shall supervise.”

“You are more than welcome to. Reinhard is getting more penicillin and another dosage of morphine.”

After getting what she needed, Alex noted the little troll of a man holding the vial of penicillin.

“I should destroy this!”

“You are going to waste that much money by destroying a much needed drug?” The little shit was more than a touch daft. It was taking everything Alexandra had not to punch the man.

“You gave Reinhard the infection to run tests!”

“Projection much?” She was a pacifist in many ways but given a gun, she would have killed the toady man on the spot. “You do anything to that vial, I will rip off your fucking arm and beat you with the mushy end. When I am finished doing that? I will shove your hand so far up your ass you will be licking the shit off of your fingers for years to come.” She leaned in slightly. “Yes. Oh yes. I will enjoy doing it.” Alex smiled when the man stormed off. Still, he listened. The penicillin was in her possession.

The penicillin had cost an arm and a leg but it was better than costing a man his life. Walking back into his room, Alex noticed that Reinhard looked far too amused for a man in a hospital bed.

“Is everything ok?”

“Yes.” He didn’t elaborate.

“I do apologize for hurting you.” She smiled gently. “It will get better.”

“When I collapsed, I remember seeing you.”

“I’m afraid it wasn’t my finest hour.”

“You had two different men pointing guns at you. You didn’t even flinch. I thought perhaps you may have been the Angel of Death.” He looked upon her with smile. “It turned out that you were my Guardian Angel.”

“Neither angel nor devil I’m afraid.”

“Dr. Kettler, I am unable to believe that. You had a hulking SS man standing with a gun trained on you and if I remember correctly you said something akin to kindly fuck off that you were busy to him.”

Wincing, she chuckled. “You are correct. My apologies. I have spent much of my time in the company of battle scarred military surgeons that would rather tell you to sod off than say hello.”

“How did you manage that?”

“My father, my uncles, my grandfathers. There are a lot of battle scarred military surgeons in my family.”
“Are they serving currently?”

“No.”

“What is your first name Dr. Kettler?”

“Alexandra.”

“Thank you. I was curious.”

Reinhard studied her. She really was beautiful. She appeared so delicate. He would almost say that she was fine boned. Except, that implied that she was fragile. He was fairly certain she wasn’t fragile. Her lips! Full and soft looking, the way the curved upwards made her always seem like she was smiling. Maybe she was?

The American doctor was soft spoken most of the time. He was pretty sure that both Gebhardt and Krueger took that as a sign of weakness and a lack of confidence. They were both wrong. She was soft spoken because people listened. There was no reason for her to raise her voice.

Her skin was pale. It made her dark hair stand out even more. She wore her hair long but tied up appropriately. Reinhard had seen it down a few times. It gave her a mysterious air. Women didn’t wear their hair like that. He was fairly certain that they never did during his lifetime at least not in public. Perhaps that was because she was American? It didn’t matter, it just made him enjoy her all the more.

Having heard the stories of how she commanded the operating theatre and how she held herself when he lay in the road dying, she was a worthy opponent for anyone. Several of the men that were at the hospital recovering had tried to flirt with her. She was gentle with them in saying no and still got her point across. Reinhard was fairly certain that some of the doctors had tried as well.

He had heard that there was a list of other high ranking men that wished to have a go at her. Reinhard was certain that it was either Krueger or Gebhardt that had snapped photographs of the American. Someone was taking bids to determine who would have first go at her.

Whomever won that, it wouldn’t matter if she was willing or not.

He squashed that immediately. No one was to touch Dr. Kettler. Reinhard felt that he owed her that much at the very least. Also, if the Americans ever found out that something so brutal happened to one of their doctors and a female doctor at that? They would seek out justice in the most barbaric of ways.

Alas, it never occurred to Reinhard that his own barbaric ways made his signature a weapon.

Granted, Reinhard would have tried flirting with her himself if it wasn’t for being in a hospital bed. The woman intrigued him greatly.

Alexandra did not fit in at the hospital he noticed. Her looks set her apart from the other women. Her confidence set her apart from everyone. Reinhard did not consider that a bad thing. She wasn’t arrogant or well she only became arrogant with Gebhardt. He was certain she did that on purpose. He was entertained by the thought she enjoyed poking the man.

It quickly dawned on him that it was possible that she thought Krueger and Gebhardt were lesser doctors than she was. He had to admit, if that was the way she thought, Dr. Kettler wasn’t wrong. They were nowhere in her league as far as he was concerned.
What amazed him most was her kindness. He heard earlier when she stopped to check on the child. This American treated everyone with kindness and respect with the exception of Gebhardt. That didn’t mean she didn’t argue with people or disagree. If someone had a need and she could fill it, she did. Reinhard saw it countless times with Krueger even. She was polite to most everyone and her kindness even made the cynical Reinhard smile. An elderly man was in the hall earlier. He was one of the Sudeten Germans and he needed assistance. The doctors ignored him. The nurses ignored him. Alexandra had just came out of surgery and she stopped. The man needed a kind ear and someone to administer a simple medication to him. He sat down the hall with tears flowing and still nobody stopped but her. It took maybe fifteen minutes of her time.

Oddly enough, it didn’t matter that she was considered ‘the enemy’. The other members of the medical staff were impressed by her work. Plus, her patients fared better than anyone else’s. Reinhard wanted to know more about her. One thing he did know, even though she was kind and gentle – Dr. Alexandra Kettler wouldn’t hesitate to gut a man if she needed.

Reinhard heard of how many times she stepped up to the men that tried to take advantage of her or the other female staff members. Krueger was furious that two of the orderlies were out of commission due to broken hands and wrists.

“Dr. Kettler? Did I hear right that you threatened to rip off Gebhardt’s arm and beat him with the mushy end?”

After a blink of surprise, Alexandra started to laugh. “Yes. It is true. I also told him I would shove the arm so far up his ass that he would be licking shit off of his fingers for years to come.” She had no idea why she admitted that last part.

He laughed and shook his head. “Will you tell me why?”

“He threatened to destroy a much needed medication.”

“You are serious?”

“Yes I am. It’s over now, thankfully. Rest well soldier. It should be easy going from here.” She smiled.

“Doctor, I have one more question.”

“Yes?”

“Do I get a candy too please?” He was teasing her again.

Alexandra laughed warmly and handed him a lollipop. “Just don’t tell. I don’t have enough for everyone.”

Reinhard popped it in his mouth after removing the wrapper. “I’ll keep your secret.”

About ten minutes after she left, Reinhard heard both Krueger and Gebhardt talking about her. It was amusing to him. These two men were angry because she outclassed them. They were also furious because she made them look like fools. He made a call to have Gebhardt sent back to Berlin. Himmler could keep his pet physician.

It was perhaps a few days later that Alexandra saw the woman again. Once more there was a stern expression on the woman’s face. It could just be worry, the man had nearly been killed. Still, the woman was irritating as hell.
The woman stood above the seated Alex with her arms crossed over her chest.

“It will just be a moment or two. We are almost done.” She tried to smile. The woman’s expression never wavered nor did she say anything.

She was going through strength functions and reflexes with Reinhard. If the woman was trying to be intimidating, it wouldn’t work. Alexandra was not easily intimidated. As a matter of fact, she found it to be quite funny. Alex grew up with three generations of German Jewish women. You aren’t easily guilted nor intimidated after family dinners every week for 20+ years.

Since arriving Prague, she had a gun held to her head, had a man’s brains end up all over her face while she was still talking to him, performed surgery not even knowing what country she was in, and been interrogated by Nazis. Like a look would even phase her after that? Alexandra was fairly certain Hitler could waltz his arse in and yell at her and she would tell him to take a number.

The days turned into weeks and finally the weeks turned into a month. Alexandra was kept busy. She was housed with the unmarried nurses in a dormitory. She however was kept alone and her windowless room had a guard outside the door.

The only enjoyment Alexandra had was talking to the patient she knew only as Reinhard. While she realized that he would see her dead more than likely if he knew that she was raised by a loving and caring Jewish family, his kind demeanor made her forget she was somehow in a place that was so deadly she had to watch her every word.

One afternoon, she knocked on the door to his room. When he bid her entry, she smiled hearing the music playing from a radio.

“Bach. Very lovely.” She smiled.

“Do you know which piece?” He challenged.

“Cello Suite No. 1 in G major, BWV 1007.”

“Very good! You Americans are more cultured than I was led to believe.” Reinhard smiled while teasing her again. She was a good sport and seemed to enjoy his sense of humor.

Helping him sit up, she laughed and shook her head. “You should have picked a more difficult piece if we were going to play that game. But, I wouldn’t go that far, Reinhard. My parents however put a heavy emphasis on the arts when I was a child and for my brothers too.”

“Mine too. Did you enjoy the education?”

“Very much so. My father wished that I would have gone on and played professionally. I am sure you are able to guess what career path I chose instead?”

“You did not answer my question Doctor.”

“Tenacious like a lion you are!” She smiled. “Now? No. I don’t have that sort of time to practice. Then? I didn’t think I was but others did.”

He chuckled softly at her answer. The music changed on the radio. “What of this one?”

“Oh that was sneaky. Oh so very sneaky. Strauss but this is Richard and not Johann II.”

“Piece?”
“A Hero’s Life. When I was a child I thought this would be the piece that could play in the background of my life.”

“What do you mean?”

“You know how a movie has music that sometimes follows the actors? A Hero’s Life would follow me. It was just a silly thing when I was a child.”

“Hm. I wonder would be the song to follow me?”

Alexandra was warming the stethoscope in her hands and had to stifle a laugh.

“You thought of a song didn’t you?”

“Yes.”

With a stethoscope to his back, she ordered him to breathe in and out. His lung function sounded good. Since he was given the penicillin, Reinhard was making a speedy recovery. The last of the drains had been removed. Alex was pleased with how well he was doing.

“What is the song?”

“No. I cannot. That is too embarrassing and it was merely in jest.”

“I swear to you. I will not be upset. Tell me? Please?”

“Johann II’s Wine, Women and Song.” Alexandra’s cheeks flamed red.

“That is a very good waltz. I am most pleased with your choice.” He’s blue eyes twinkled with merriment at the younger woman. “I assume that I will remained scarred?”

“They will fade, of course. But the answer is yes, you will always have the scars. It’s okay though. Chicks dig scars.” The last three words were in English.

“Baby chickens make holes in scars?” He looked appalled.

She laughed and shook her head. “My apologies. The saying means that women find men with scars handsome.”

“Is it true Dr. Kettler? Do women like scars?”

“Some do, yes. I know a healthy number of women that rather like the mensur scars now that I think of it. How do you feel about a short walk Reinhard? Perhaps sitting outside for a little while?”

“Will you be coming with me?”

Alexandra’s brow creased briefly. “I had not planned on it but I can if you would like.”

“I would like that.” He stood to pull on a dressing gown and offered his arm. “Shall we?”

Taking the man’s arm, they slowly walked down the hall. Reinhard and Alexandra went outside on to the veranda. Helping settle him in a lounge chair, she put a lightweight blanket over his legs. Summer was in full swing now and the weather was warm with blue skies. He was slightly winded but not so much that she was concerned, given his injuries.
“Sit with me fraulein?”

“Only for a few moments. I have rounds to make or Herr Krueger will beat me senseless.”

“I will keep him away from you, not to worry.”

“Thank you, but I don’t like to make bets when I am not sure I will win.”

“How do you ever know you will win?”

“Count the cards, say a hail Mary, and count them again.”

He laughed. “I did not realize you were so tall.”

She laughed warmly. “I get that fairly often, believe it or not. People don’t seem to realize I am tall until they stand next to me.”

“You could dance with me. It gets painful having to lean down all the time.”

“Does your back hurt often?” Her smooth brow furrowed with concern.

“Only when I dance with short women.” He winked. “You said your parents made you learn the arts, what string instrument do you play?”

“How did you know I played a string instrument?”

“You answer first?”

“I play the cello mostly but also violin, guitar, and a few others. I can sing, well sort of.”

“How? When I asked to see your hands once before. You still had callouses.” He smiled happily. “I play the violin, mostly. Since we have no instruments here, will you sing for me?”

“I’m afraid I don’t know many songs.”

“Please?”

“Oh, let me think.”

Mozart’s Voi Che Sapete was acceptable for a contralto, so she sang a few lines. Reinhard applauded wildly as did several other men that were sitting out in the sunshine. She blushed profusely at their applause but took a good natured bow.

While they applauded and some of the men snuck glances at the young American doctor, they said nothing. The men knew who the other patient was and would say nothing to the doctor outside of their own medical concerns. It was obvious that Reinhard was interested in the woman. The Obergruppenführer was not one to trifle with, especially when it came to women.

“I would not have thought you to pick such a piece. Do you speak the languages of operas?”

“It wouldn’t have been my first choice but it was the only one I could remember that was suitable for my voice. Most songs are for sopranos. I am fluent or close to fluent in Italian, French, English, and of course German. I can get by in Russian. I can speak other languages but they are not for operas.

“How?” He was shocked
A very long story short? German and English were spoken at home. The rest? I traveled quite a bit or I took classes in school.”

“That is marvelous! Where are you from doctor?”

“Houston, Texas. What of you?”

“OH! Where the cowboys and Indians are?” He smiled widely. “I am from Halle. It is near Leipzig.”

Perhaps from days long since passed, it is not much different than Berlin now. Although, Berlin is much prettier.”

“You have been to Berlin?” He was surprised.

“Yes. When I was still a girl but I have traveled extensively in Germany.”

“You are STILL a girl! I am old enough to be your father.”

“I don’t believe so. I’m 28.” Alexandra knew he was prying. She also knew he was 10 years older.

“Well, I am old enough to be your older brother then.” He smiled. “Where is your favorite place to go?”

“The museums and the opera houses. Germany for me was always about music and art. Or did you mean place as in cities? Bremerhaven or Munich were my favorites when I was a child. My heart has always been in Berlin at the opera. Alas, I have not spent any time here in a while.”

“When you finally let me leave this place you should permit me to take you to Germany and show you some things you would not have seen as a child.” The offer was sincere. There was something about his young doctor that made Reinhard want to know how she saw the world. So much had been added in Germany over the last decade and he wished to be the one to show it to her.

“Well, hopefully when you are ready to leave, I will be ready to go home too.”

“You have become such a part of this hospital doctor, I didn’t think of you leaving. You have a German heart. You are the reason for *Auslandsdeutsche*.”

“I suppose I do. My grandparents were born here.” Her brow furrowed for a moment. “Foreign Germans?”

“Yes, in the most literal of the term. You have the right to claim German citizenship if you so wish by our doctrine. Do you know what made them leave?”

“My grandfathers both were offered prestigious positions in the US. One as the head of a department in a hospital and one at a university.”

“My parents both taught at a conservatory.”

“How lovely! You know what I do, obviously. At least most of it.” She chuckled. “What sort of work is it that you do Reinhard? If I am allowed to ask.”

“You may ask me anything fraulein. Me? Ach. Just an old paper pusher. I sign things and get it off my desk only for more things to come in.” He smiled at her. “I only know most of what you do? Please explain?”
“I have a degree in law as well.” She smiled sheepishly.

“Law and medicine. That is most unusual. Why did you go into law as well?”

“Insomnia.” She answered truthfully.

Gephardt walked out. He paused just long enough to find where Reinhard and Alexandra were sitting before walking over.

“Coming up behind you is Dr. Gephardt.” Reinhard spoke quietly.

Alexandra crossed her eyes and sighed heavily. Reinhard had to try desperately not to laugh. He was enjoying himself.

“Reinhard. Doctor.” The unpleasant little man spoke.

“Karl.” She refused to give the man any title even one as simple as Herr. Which was better than giving the man a rude gesture like she considered. How well did the middle finger translate into German? How about stabbing him in the thigh with a pen, does that translate well?

“Karl, you are more than welcome to return to Heinrich. I shall be leaving soon. Thank you for your service.”

“Thank you Sir.” He was glad to leave.

Alexandra paused to do a quick check of her patient. “On that note, we best get you in. I am not sure which of us is fairer skinned but I would hate be the cause of your pain because I let you get a sunburn.

“I believe it is you doctor. You are far fairer than I. Will I be leaving soon since I said it?” Reinhard spoke softly. His comment was not about her skin color either.

“You really do not wish to be here do you?” Alex smiled. “If you have somewhere to convalesce, then yes. You won’t be able to do everything for a while so you may need to have a nurse with you. Do you live near?”

“It is no fun lying in bed by myself. Will I be able to return to my duties soon?”

“You are a cheeky one!” She chuckled. “I believe so. Perhaps part time in the next few weeks and full time after that. My best guess is full recovery in maybe two months.”

“Thank you doctor.” The smile he gave was genuine. He wanted to spend more time with her.

It was a couple of days later that Alexandra noticed one of the nurses seemed off. It wasn’t until later in the day that she got a good look at the younger woman. She was wearing makeup to try and hide some of the bruising.

“Emma, come here please.”

“Yes Dr. Kettler?”

“What happened?”

“It was nothing, I fell.”

“No, you did not. That sort of bruising does not happen in a fall.”
Emma started to cry which startled Alexandra.

“Come, let’s go to my office.” She wrapped her arm over the girl’s shoulder.

Alexandra shut the door and made the young woman a cup of tea with one of the immersion heaters. Handing her the hot tea, she took a seat next to crying nurse.

“Emma what happened?”

“I met a man who I thought was a gentleman. We went out and…. ” She couldn’t finish what she was saying and started sobbing once more.

“Was it someone from the hospital?”

“No ma’am. He was a soldier. He seemed really nice but….”

“You didn’t want to do something and he tried to force the issue?”

“Yes ma’am.”

“Did he succeed?”

“No. He was interrupted.”

Alex nodded. “You don’t need any medication or anything?”

“No. He just got rough.”

“You need anything, you let me know.”

“Yes ma’am. I just….I wish I could have stopped him before he did all of this.” She pointed to the bruising on her face and neck.

“I can teach you how. Tonight when we return to the dormitory. Anyone else wishes to learn, I will teach them too.”

“You know how?”

Alex nodded. “I had two very large brothers that made sure I knew how to take care of myself.”

“Thank you Dr. Kettler.”

“Emma? What was his name?”

“Eichel. Henning Eichel.”

“Thank you Emma. I’ll see you this evening. If you need anything, please come to see me. Or if you see him again out somewhere.” Alex smiled gently. She mentally filed away the name of the man. If he ever needed her services he wouldn’t be happy with how things turned out.

Alexandra had just changed from the surgery scrubs back into her regular clothing. The day was done and she was ready to head to the dormitory for supper and to help these girls out a bit. It still bothered her that the young nurses had to deal with so much. Granted, it wasn’t a surprise. She had heard it fairly often.

“Dr. Kettler?”
The voice brought her out of her reverie. “Yes? What might I do for you Reinhard?”

He had just returned from a walk. The nurse was still standing with him. “Is something bothering you? You look out of sorts.”

“I’m fine, thank you.”

“Do you have time to answer a couple of questions?”

“Yes, of course.” She took his arm from the nurse and walked back with him to his room. After getting him situated in the bed, she sat down on the rolling chair. “What might I do for you?”

“When will I be released?”

Rolling to the end of the bed, she picked up his file. A quick glance at the folder and she hung it back up. “Today is Tuesday, by the looks of things you should be going home on Thursday barring nothing happening. And you already have a nurse set up to help care for you.”

“Thank you doctor. Now what is bothering you?”

“It is of no concern. One of the nurses was roughed up by a soldier.”

“Pardon?” His eyes turned cold.

“A nurse went out with a soldier. The man bullied her and then hit her.”

“Why?”

“She said no.”

“I see.”

“I don’t.”

Reinhard arched a brow at her, waiting for Alexandra to continue.

“A real man never tries to force himself on a woman.”

“You would have fought back, yes?” The fact she would protect herself pleased him for some reason.

“Fought back?” Alexandra chuckled softly. “No. I would have removed his penis and scrotum. They would have been immediately sewn to his forehead. He wishes to act like a dickhead, I will make him one.”

Reinhard laughed. “I will miss you Dr. Kettler. You made my stay most pleasant and far more interesting.”

“Thank you Reinhard. I shall see you tomorrow.”

Alexandra left and went back to the dormitory with the ever present guard. After a light supper she showed the women how to protect themselves in ways that took virtually no instruction and nothing but less than average strength to do.

While she was busy, so was Reinhard. He found out the name of the soldier and made a call. “Eichel. Henning Eichel is his name. Take care of him.” He didn’t do it for the nurse.
The daytime nurses and Alexandra had already left for the evening when Dr. Erich Krueger stopped by to speak with Reinhard.

“You need to be on guard with that woman Reinhard!” Krueger scowled.

“She is a pretty girl that I am enjoying flirting with Erich.”

“Have you told Himmler or anyone of her?”

“No. A doctor saved my life after an attempt on it and I was lucky she was there. What is there to tell? Besides, Gebhardt was here. He will tell Himmler. Can you imagine what he will tell Himmler?” He grinned.

Krueger chuckled. “Reinhard, there is trickery with this woman. No American woman would be this far into our territory. The Americans don’t use women in such a way!”

“Erich, what is your actual reason to dislike Dr. Kettler?” Reinhard was weary of this nonsense.

“Reinhard, she knows things nobody else does. That is impossible. There is some sort of deception involving her.”

“I shall keep a close eye on her for the two more days I am here, old friend. Now go, give me some peace and let me sleep. I am sure your wife and children would like to see you for a change.”

Morning came quickly and it was one of those days that kept Alexandra busy until midday. As Reinhard would be being discharged the next day, she took the time to have lunch with him outside on the hospital grounds.

“Do you play any sport Dr. Kettler?”

“Currently? No. I do back home.”

“What is it that you play?”

“A little of everything, I love sports. Tennis is my favorite. Probably fencing would come second. I also enjoy rowing, running, shooting sports, skiing, horseback riding, rodeo and swimming. Do you play any Reinhard?”

“Really? I knew you to be a fencer!”

“Why do you say that?”

“You have the build for it but it is more because of your personality. What type? I am fairly well rounded but I do epee and sabre better than foil.” He eyed her appreciatively. “You and I do enjoy some similar sports. Tennis is amongst my favorites too. But what is rodeo?”

“I can do all three but foil and sabre are what I do most often. Although, I am better at sabre. As for rodeo? It’s a competition. A lot of it is from the working practice of cattle farming.” She couldn’t think of a word for ranching in German, farming worked right? She explained barrel racing, roping, and riding to him.

“It sounds dangerous!”
“I suppose some of it is, especially bull riding.”

“Have you ever ridden a bull? Why would anyone ride a bull?”

“To compete? No. I am not sure if women are even allowed. I have done it though.”

“Why?”

“To prove that I could.”

“Where did you do this at?”

“Home. My brothers did it too. Speaking of, are you excited to be returning home?”

“No. I will not see your pretty face every day.”

“Thank you. You are far too kind.” She smiled warmly at him.

The breeze caught the hem of her skirt blowing it high up her legs. It exposed the tops of her stockings. Quickly, she pushed the skirt down and held it. Teaches me to wear a skirt. Damnit. Horribly embarrassed, she turned a bright red and started to speak quickly. “I am so sorry Reinhard that was unex-“

One of the men being pushed by a nurse in a wheelchair shouted something to Alexandra, which she didn’t understand. It was a vulgar remark that didn’t translate well.

Standing swiftly, Reinhard glared at the man. The man in question realized gravity of his error seeing Reinhard. The man’s life was saved only because of Alexandra. Reinhard didn’t wish to upset her because otherwise he would have gotten one of his men to execute the bastard.

“What did he say?” She asked quietly. The anger flowing off of Reinhard was tangible and it was more than a little frightening. He had always been the jovial sort around her. It was the first time that she was frightened by him.

“Nothing that should have ever been said in front of a lady.” He offered her a hand up. “Shall we?”

She took his hand and stood. Reinhard being a gentleman, he tucked Alexandra’s hand around his bicep.

“I do apologize for almost exposing my…….” She frowned. “I don’t know the word. In English it would be knickers or panties.”

He smiled and whispered the word in her ear.

Alexandra turned red and laughed. “I can honestly say that is the first time in my 28 years that I needed to speak about underthings in German.”

“Your accent has improved while speaking German fraulein. Did you realize that?”

“No, actually I didn’t.”

“Hearing you speak is quite pleasing to the ear. There is a lilt to your voice that sounds beautiful.”

“Thank you.” She blushed.
“Is your accent common for America?”

“I have what is called a Texas drawl. It is common to only Texas. When I speak some words they are more drawn out and I don’t enunciate certain letters at the ends of words such as the G.”

“Say a phrase in your normal American voice please?”

“I’m going to get my dog.”

To Reinhard it sounded soft and flowing. Her accent wasn’t thick but it certainly was there with Ahm goin’ ta git mah dawg.

“Can other Americans understand you?”

“Yes. I actually try to not to speak with an accent. It still takes effort to do, alas.”

“Will you say the same phrase without your natural accent in English?”

“I’m going to get my dog.”

“I can still hear it, but it is very slight.”

“One of the things my father is fond of saying you can take the girl out of Texas but you can’t take the Texas out of the girl.”

“I believe I understand this. I notice when you speak English some of what you say has more of a British sound to it. No, that isn’t correct. Some of your terminology is more British sounding.”

“I went to school in England up until I was 14. I still spend around two weeks out of the year there now.”

“Why?”

Her eyes widened just enough that he noticed. The flush of warmth on her cheeks and the way her lips parted showed a hint of her embarrassment.

Reinhard was enchanted by her already but here in the moment she exposed herself in a way he didn’t understand.

Any other person she would have turned away from. Another person would not have gotten the truth from Alexandra. There was some reason that she felt compelled to show to this man more. This was a man who she wasn’t even permitted to know his name and he was given a glimpse of her that no one was ever shown.

“Why did I go to school in England? For a better education. There are a lot of barriers when it comes to educating women. Why do I go to England still? To see places that I feel like I should know, but don’t. I wish to do the same with Germany when it is safe for me to return. The United States is a young country and my history is not there. My history resides here and a small bit in England.”

Reinhard knew he would miss her greatly. “Where does your heart lie?”

“Germany. It always had. I spent most summers here until I went to medical school.”

There were SS men everywhere that evening. She couldn’t even walk down a hall without running into several. Alexandra suspected it had to do with Reinhard leaving the following day but couldn’t
fathom why all of the men were there.

She could feel her own panic rise with all of the men that were swarming. They didn’t bother her, thankfully. At the very most they uttered polite words excusing themselves as they had to edge by her in the halls.

Then she saw the large SS man that held a gun to her head when she was trying to stabilize Reinhard in the middle of the street. Immediately, she turned and went the other way. She made it to her office unscathed and locked the door behind her. Alexandra waited for her own panic to dissipate before she went back out.

The following day found Alexandra in one of the offices that was often used for privacy. Something was amiss with one of the men. Nothing she was doing seemed to help. She was at the point of considering doing a type of nerve block. Frowning, she went through the man’s complete file page by page to see if she could find anything. This was not the one kept in the patient’s room. This had the entirety of the patient’s medical history that they were aware of. Once she returned the file, she sought out Dr. Krueger with the problem.

“Dr. Krueger, nothing we do is working for Herr Weber. I would like to schedule an x-ray after going through his file. I believe…..”

“You did what?”

“I went through his file.”

“Who gave you such permission?” Krueger’s lip curled in anger. He had not given her permission to go through patient files.

“That is where we look first for information on a patient. We keep giving the man morphine but that is only a plaster over the wound, not a cure. I believe…..”

In his anger, Krueger backhanded her. The sheer momentum and surprise of the attack drove her into a partially closed door. He grabbed her by the lapels of her now blood splattered lab coat. With fury in her eyes, she did not cringe from the man. Swiping the blood off of her face with the back of her hand, Alexandra pushed Krueger away. She drove a left hook and then a right into the older man’s jaw.

She spat blood at Dr. Krueger who was laying on the floor. The only thing that kept her from kicking him in the head was her own morals. She had enough of the man’s constant abuse. When it turned physical, so did she.

“Dr. Kettler!”

The door had been to the room Reinhard was getting dressed, as his sick room was already being cleaned. Reinhard had seen almost the entire thing.

She looked up at the sound of her name. Alexandra’s jaw was locked tight in anger. Blood still flowed from her nose. She could feel the swelling on her cheek and was fairly certain it was going to bruise.

After barking out a command for Krueger to get out of his sight, a calmer voice was used for Alexandra. “Schatzi, come sit.” With a clean handkerchief he mopped the blood off of her face. While cleaning her up, he gave orders for an ice pack, medication and water. It was retrieved in seconds.
“Come home with me. You may take the place of the nurse. After I am able to be alone, I will make sure you return to your home in America. Would that be satisfactory to you?”

“Will your wife mind another woman in her home?”

“My wife is no longer with me.” Which was true, Lina had returned to Germany with their children.

“Oh. I am so sorry. I…..I’m sorry.” That must have been an older sister that visited.

“Will you?” His voice was gentle.

“I’m uncertain if that is improper……”

“Not to worry Dr. Kettler. You will be given your own rooms. A nurse would have been given the same, I assure you. You are a doctor taking care of a patient.” He leaned in to whisper softly. “I will no longer be here to keep Krueger in line, it will be safer for you to go elsewhere. If not with me, I will find you another place to go. I am sure Berlin could use a doctor such as yourself.”

The thought of being inside Germany terrified her even more. “Well, I suppose I have a new employer. Thank you.” Alexandra felt like there were razor blades in her belly.

“Come, we will leave at once. I will have someone clean out your room for you and stop by with your belongings later today.”

Reinhard escorted her to the lobby of the hospital. Four men in uniform met them there. Her blue eyes widened as all the men addressed him as Obergruppenführer. Alex took a step back without realizing it. The four men were all wearing the uniform of the SS. When she moved their eyes focused on her with blank expressions. All of a sudden she felt as if there was acid in her veins. Screw you razor blades, acid takes first place. Jesus.

“Do not be afraid Dr. Kettler. They are my men. You will be treated as a lady should be treated and in accordance to your status as my physician. They know what happens if they do not.” He gave her a teasing smile.

While the smile was kind, it chilled her. What was she getting herself into? Alexandra felt he wasn’t actually teasing.

There were two more men outside waiting. Making sure that Reinhard and Alexandra were comfortable, two men got into each of the three cars. After the assassination attempt was foiled, the Germans were not taking chances with the Obergruppenführer and his companion.

He sat in a shadow with an arm across the back of the seat. Reinhard knew she was apprehensive and spoke in warm but low tones to ease her concerns. One of the men said something that took his attention away from Alexandra for only a few minutes.

When finished, he realized that she was curled up under his arm, sound asleep. Reinhard hoped it was because she was comfortable with him. Although, he realized that she had been given medication for her pain earlier. Something told him that Alexandra would not fall asleep around someone that she didn’t at least trust somewhat. He smiled looking at her. A few stray hairs were tickling at her cheek. His touch was gentle when he tucked them back.

Truly, he was unable to help himself. For a few moments he did nothing but watch her sleep. Even in sleep the corners of her lips were unturned into a gentle smile. For such a strong and capable woman, she had a sweet innocence to her as well.
They would not be going to his regular home in Prague but one up and out of the way. The hidden villa was much smaller and less opulent than he was used to, but much more private as well. Reinhard had used it many times for ‘private parties’. Private parties was a tidy euphemism for some of his overnight trysts. Over fifty kilometers outside of Prague, it was well hidden on the hillside.

As so not to wake her, he spoke quietly to his drivers. The younger of the two was tasked with having his sister purchase a complete new wardrobe for the doctor. The sister was one of the secretaries in Reinhard’s office. The older of the two would need to go out the following day to pick up a list of provisions that were suited to the doctor’s taste as well. Other than the six men that were to be arriving at the villa, no one would know of his whereabouts outside of the Führer and Himmler. Even his wife was not to be told where he was.

Leaning back, Reinhard closed his eyes briefly. The two men in the front seat of the car glanced at one another. They had never seen the Obergruppenführer like this. Oh yes, he was a ladies man. They had taken him to brothels countless times and seen him with plenty of other women. It was nothing unusual to see him with multiple women at a time. There were many ladies to share his bed whenever his wife was not with him. While the women were not treated poorly, they were never show much consideration either.

And now? He was showing more consideration to the young doctor than he normally did his own wife.

Reinhard was known to be a cruel and callous man outside of his immediate family and the few colleagues of equal or higher rank. He was considered a man of few words and fewer smiles. Even the Führer called him the Man with the Iron Heart. The Butcher of Prague seemed as if he was smitten with the American woman. The two men in the front seat were concerned for Dr. Kettler.

He hated to wake her but they had arrived. Rubbing her bicep lightly, he whispered. “Wake up, wake up, the rooster’s crowing!”

“Rooster?” She looked confused for a moment. “My mother’s was wake up, wake up, its morning.”

“Welcome home Schatzi. This is where we shall be staying.”

Alexandra was a woman of means. Going back to at least her great-grandparents, they were a family of professionals and so was she. All but one family member had become doctors, be they MD or PhD. The one that wasn’t a doctor had been an extremely talented and accomplished musician.

Money had never been a concern for them. Although she was not yet 30, she had accumulated quite a bit of personal wealth on her own. Still, the size of the ‘small villa’ was daunting for even her. It was at least 5 times the size of her own quite spacious home.

There would be a maid, Hedda. The six men would be staying as well. Four more would come later today Reinhard told her.

He was enjoying showing Alexandra the villa. Truly, it was small by the standards of the home that he and his wife occupied in Prague. He enjoyed the way her eyes lit up with delight at the design and architecture.

The ground floor was elegant and quite formal. There was a ballroom, several formal dining rooms of ever increasing size and more meeting rooms than most large hotels. The staff bedrooms and
their living quarters were also found on the first level. Upstairs was more of a regular living space, although still quite formal. The upstairs and downstairs could be used as two separate homes, if need be. Actually, the upstairs could be sectioned off into two homes and the bottom floor into one.

While he didn’t mention it, what Alexandra might have considered a basement was actually an underground bunker.

His men made themselves scarce as did Hedda while they walked around. It was only when the pair slipped outside on to the large upstairs deck did the men start to prepare the upstairs living quarters. Reinhard had ordered a few things brought in from his home and others to be purchased in town. The items were being put away.

Alexandra was leaning on the railing. With her chin tipped upwards she caught the scent of the fragrant flowers near. She had a look of complete and utter bliss. The breeze caught her unbound hair and blew it back. Reinhard smiled, watching her. She was extraordinary. He had to stop himself from visualizing her in bed at the peak of passion.

He busied himself opening a bottle of wine. It was a local variety. Reinhard didn’t care much for the Czech wines himself but he remembered overhearing her speaking with someone at the hospital about enjoying trying local tastes. This was a Moravian Pinot Noir. After letting it breathe, he poured them each a sample.

He couldn’t help but watch her try it. It made him smile as her expression changed. “What do you think?”

“Different than what I am used to.” She took another small taste. “Hmm, more acidic that normally what I find in a Pinot Noir. It isn’t something that I would want often but I like how it is different. I wouldn’t mind trying to cook with it at all.”

“What would you make?”

“For a main dish, something with a good hearty tomato sauce, like a pasta dish. Or I would use it for a very sweet cold dessert to balance the flavor.” Alexandra looked thoughtful. “I think I would try the dessert first, do a good reduction and drizzle it over something sweet and cold.”

His hand, itching to touch her, plunged into his trouser pocket so that the temptation would not turn into actuality. He would not be that rude to her. The thought did make Reinhard smile. Any other woman he would not care, with this one he wanted it to be mutual.

“You are a woman of refined tastes.” Surrounded by the trees and at the higher elevation he pointed to a spot between a pair of trees. “Can you see it Dr. Kettler?”

“Reinhard?” Her blue gaze cast upwards to him. “Why do you not call me Alexandra?”

“You have never invited me to.” While he smiled, the tone was serious.

“My apologies. That was quite rude of me to not say such. Would you please call me Alexandra? Or Alex?”

“I would be honored to, Alexandra. Thank you.” He tried her name on his tongue for the first time. Reinhard decided that he like the way it felt.
“Can you see it Alexandra?”

“Its water! A lake?”

“It’s a hot spring and a good place for a swim.”

“How lovely! Do you swim?”

“Yes. Do you?”

“Yes. Where I live there is a lot of water. I love swimming needless to say.”

“I shall have to take you over there.”

“Not until you get your lung function up higher.”

“Yes, Doctor.” He chuckled. “I am glad you are here with me, Alexandra.”

“Oh?”

“I will not be so lonely.” He admitted. Normally he would never let anyone see that part of him.

“Flattery kind Sir. Flattery. Alas, you may still be. I am quite boring.”

“Somehow I doubt that.” Oh how he wanted to hold her in his arms! “How close to the sea are you in America?”

“Well, it isn’t the sea. But….” She brightened. “Do you have paper and a pencil on you perhaps?”

Reaching into his pocket he handed her a small notebook and a pen. “Will a pen work?”

“Yes.” Alexandra sketched out a quick shape of Texas. “There. This is the shape of Texas. This part here is the Gulf of Mexico. It is open water that leads out to the Atlantic Ocean.”

“Where is it that you live?”

“This is where Houston would be. It takes about an hour to get to the beach from my home.”

“Where is your favorite place other than your home city?”

“In the US or outside of the US?”

“Both?”

“Austin is right here. I just love all that goes on there. It’s the capital and a college town. Right here….” She drew a squiggly line. “…..is the Guadalupe River. We go tubing down there. It’s by a town called New Braunfels.” The way she said it sounded like N’Brawn-vulls

“There is a city called Braunfels in Texas as well?”

“Yes, but it is New Braunfels.” She looked a tad sheepish. “My accent caught me again.”

“Is it like the one here? Have you been to Braunfels in Germany?”
“Only once. My grandparents took me to see Schloss Braunfels. I always wanted to meet Ottmar Gerster and hear him play, but I never did.”

“What is this tubing you speak of?”

“The inner tubes in tires? You get one and put air in it. We float down the river in them. It’s the most fun after a good heavy rain when the river is running faster.”

“I have to say you have some strange past times in your country.”

It made her laugh hearing that. “I cannot say you are wrong. We are usually drinking heavily while doing that.”

“You like to live dangerously.” He chuckled when she nodded. “What of outside of the US?”

“That is much more difficult. Honestly? Berlin or London. Music, museums, the stage. Even when I am not at my home, those are the places where I feel most at home. What of you?”

“Anywhere I can ski.”

“What type of skiing?”

“I don’t understand.”

“Snow or water?”

“I have never water skied. I have seen it done once. Do you ski?”

“Yes, both water and snow.”

“Is there a lot of snow where you live?”

“Occasionally we will get flurries but other than that, no. In the summer it gets to be over 37 degrees Celsius on a regular basis and it doesn’t get much below freezing in the winter.”

“Tell me of yourself? You true self.”

Would she become the woman that would tame him? Was it possible to tame him? Reinhard was not a foolish man. He knew he was feared and not liked. It hadn’t bothered him since his days in the Navy. How did this unusual American become an exception to that? Not only did she like him, she cared. He could see it in her eyes and the way she smiled.

He was curious to know what she saw in him that others did not. Reinhard was unaware of how different he was in her presence. Others didn’t see the same as Alexandra did because he never showed that sort of consideration to another person, ever.

He wanted her desperately. He wanted to know her touch. He wanted to know those sweet sounds that would pass her lips when she found the ultimate pleasure with him. Would her body arch towards his? Reinhard would never force his touch upon her. He could not do such a thing. Especially not to her. To be seen as lesser in her eye? It would kill him.

Even in the hospital he had dreamt of her often. In his dreams, she would reach for him in the dark. Her body would curl against his, seeking his familiar warmth. In those dreams she gave herself to him fully. And he reciprocated. How could he not?

Reinhard already loved her. He knew this. If only she would permit him to show her his love.
“What would you like to know?”

“What is your nickname, if you have one?”

“Alex. Although my brother Alexander calls me Lexi. I won’t even go into what my other brother calls me.”

“Lexi?”

“Alexander also gets called Alex so he started calling me Lex or Lexi. If I haven’t mentioned it, please know, my brother is a wee daft at times.” She smiled warmly, happily. “What of you?”

“No. No nicknames for me.”

“I shall have to remedy that.” Alexandra studied for Reinhard for a moment. “I dub thee Löwe. You still remind me of a lion.”

“Still?” He nodded. “Lions are rather ugly beasts.”

“The first time I saw you in the hospital bed, you reminded me of a lion. I disagree! I find them beautiful and fascinating. Lions are strong, noble creatures. Besides, I am the one giving you the nickname. Your point of view matters little.” She smirked.

Shaking his head, Reinhard started to laugh. “You are a feisty one.”

“Oh you have no idea.” She smiled happily at him. “When I was just about ten years old my father was doing something in Africa. He was helping teach at one of the hospitals. We were taken out to this beautiful lodge in the middle of nowhere to live for the year while we were there. It was over an hour drive for my father to go to work. There was a lion that would come near but not anywhere close enough that we were in danger. I loved watching that lion. One moment he would be just like a giant house cat and the next he was the King of Beasts.”

“You weren’t afraid?”

“No. There was a gate around the lodge that kept everything but birds out. The lodge master had two pet cheetahs that I loved to play with.”

“You played with a cheetah?” He was dumbfounded.

Alexandra laughed warmly. “He had found them when they were just cubs. A poacher killed the mother and almost got to the cubs. They were both pretty badly injured. They were only about a year old then and were still healing. So I would walk with them and play with them. I got scratched a couple of times but nothing serious.”

“What sort of books do you prefer? There is a grand library here. I must apologize, I didn’t get to show it to you. The men were having a meeting and it was unavailable at the time.”

“Don’t laugh please.” Alex had turned a bright shade of red. “For fiction I like thrillers, mysteries, crime, and spy. Non-fiction I like far too many to name.”

He smiled broadly. “Those are my favorites as well. Do you have any that you prefer?”

“I love Sherlock Holmes. Let’s see, Alexander Wilson I have enjoyed. Oh! The Saint series. I can’t recall the author though.”
“Leslie Charteris.”

She beamed brightly. “Yes! Thank you!”

“Turn about 90 degrees to your left if you would be so kind Alexandra.”

“The roof you see? Those are the stables.”

“There are horses here?”

“Right now? No. There will be later today or tomorrow. It makes it easier to patrol the area. Since you said you liked to ride, I arranged for two more horses to be brought up so we may ride together.”

“Reinhard! Thank you!” She had to stop herself from throwing her arms around his neck.

They were both laughing when one of the men walked outside.

“Obergruppenführer? Everything is finished.”

“You and the others are dismissed for the night.” He didn’t take his eyes off of Alex.

Watching the man go back inside, Alexandra frowned. “Is that safe?”

“I do not understand.”

“Someone tried to kill you. Is it safe to have dismissed the guards?”

“Are you concerned for me Schatzi?”

“Yes. Of course.”

“There are guards here. My men will be staying downstairs. While my men can be guards there are ones here that is their primary job. I am perfectly safe. As are you.”

“Thank you.”

“I do have a question for you.”

“Oh?”

“Do you wish to cook for us or shall I bring one in? While I am very good at eating, my cooking is terrible.”

“I am a perfectly capable cook. Although my tastes might be a bit different from your own.”

“Do you know German dishes?”

“Of course. You should have seen my Oma’s kitchen. It is where I learned to cook.”

“What is your favorite dish to make?”

“For just home comfort food? Schnitzel. But not my grandmother’s recipe. My Uncle Koenraad’s is the best.”

“What of something fancier?” He was curious.
“It would depend on what you would mean by fancier. For a large gathering of friends and family? Sauerbraten with all the fixings. Something elegant for a formal dinner? Let’s say a 3 course meal? A creamy sauerkraut with duck confit to start with. Veal chops with fennel and figs and accompanied by roasted fingerling potatoes. I would most likely add another vegetable depending on what was in season. Dessert? Plum tarts and chocolate torte. Of course everything depends on the time of year, availability, and such.”

“I am impressed! Can you cook all of those? If you would please, make a list of what you might need in the kitchen tomorrow.”

“Yes, I can. They are all family recipes. Oh I can? Very well. Tacos for dinner it is!” She smiled.

“What is a taco?”

“You will just have to try it.” Nope, not going to explain that one.

“Very well. Now, I have a surprise for you.”

“Oh?”

The tie Reinhard was wearing was removed. He used it to blindfold Alexandra. Opening the door he gave her directions. “Step forward. Not to worry Schatzi, I am right here. Turn to the right. Now back up.” When the back of the chair touched her legs, he gave further directions. “Sit. There. Perfect. Keep your eyes closed while I remove the blindfold.”

Doing as she was told, she sat patiently until he told her to open them.

On a stand to her left was a cello and a guitar. Across from her was another stand with Reinhard’s violin.

“I thought perhaps we may play together in our spare time.” For the first time since they met, he sounded shy. “They have both been tuned but I am certain you will wish to do more.”

“Reinhard ……” She was in awe.

“Nothing says that two musicians cannot share their instruments.” The truth was he had purchased both instruments for her.

“Thank you.”

“Alexandra, will you play your favorite piece for me?”

“Yes. Which would you prefer first? Would you get more wine while I make sure they are tuned for me and practice a little bit, please?”

“Cello please. Of course.”

Alexandra smiled when Reinhard returned with the wine. Taking of a sip of the wine, she began to play. Alexandra combined some of the works of Mozart, Chopin, Debussy, and Tchaikovsky seamlessly.

“That is like nothing I have ever heard before! It was wonderful!” He clapped his hands together. “I had no idea you were so talented.” He beamed at her from just a few feet away.

“Thank you.” She blushed. “Can you play Bach's Erbarme Dich?”
“Yes would you like me to?”

“Please?”

In the moment when Reinhard’s bow touched the strings, they were both transformed. Alexandra sang to the music he played. When finished, he stared at her in wonderment.

“Your voice. Your voice is one of the most beautiful I have heard.”

“Thank you Reinhard.” She bit her lower lip.

“My father would have enjoyed hearing you.”

“He liked opera?”

“He was an opera singer and a composer.”

“Oh! I know you said that he had a conservatory but I didn’t realize……”

“Play again would you?”

“Uhm. Yes.” She smiled at him. Switching out the cello for the guitar, she played and sang to Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy.

Laughing, he applauded. “Your singing is easy to understand, even speaking in English.”

“Thank you. Your English is quite good. Where did you learn?” She smiled warmly at the man.

“Not as good as your German is, but thank you. Tutors and school. Have you committed to memory a good number of songs?”

“Yes.” She smiled sheepishly. “My tutors were very strict about that. Will you play for me?”

“But of course. How could a man deny a lovely woman music?” He began to play Puccini’s Vissi D’arte.

The man before her played like nothing she had ever seen or heard before. His expression changed as he played. The man Alexandra had come to know as Reinhard was nearly always on guard, wary even. In a split second he became the man he may have been if it wasn’t for the two world wars. She gave him a standing ovation when the music stopped.

“Reinhard. That was phenomenal. Would you play it again for me, please?”

“How could I deny my most lovely doctor?”

When he started to play again, it was with his eyes closed. Taking that opportunity, Alexandra left her seat to take another behind his shoulder. Leaning closer, she sang softly.

Vissi d’arte, vissi d’amore,

non feci mai male ad anima viva!

Con man furtiva

quante miserie conobbi aiutai.

Sempre con fè sincera
la mia preghiera
ai santi tabernacoli salì.
Sempre con fè sincera
diedi fiori agl’altar.
Nell’ora del dolore
perchè, perchè, Signore,
perchè me ne rimuneri così?
Diedi gioielli…

When Reinhard stopped, he turned to her with wonderment on his face. “You are a rare woman
Alexandra. A very rare woman indeed. And you are next.”

She laughed warmly, sitting back down. She picked up the guitar this time and smiled. “This one
normally is more than just a guitar but I think I can pull it off. My mother used to sing this to me.”

First Norn was a female being that controlled what happened to humans. It was a part in
Götterdämmerung by Wagner.

“You took that literally didn’t you Schatzi?”

Alexandra was trying hard not to laugh and was blushing because of it. “Yes, my poor parents. I so
wanted to be one of the Fates. I suppose I achieved my dream. I hold the lives of people in my
hands.” She mused.

Once more, Reinhard ached to touch her.

With the music, Reinhard laid his heart out to Alexandra. He played a piece that was composed by
his father, Reinhard’s Crime. He felt that he was committing a crime by wanting this beautiful and
talented woman. The song was from Amen an opera written by Bruno Heydrich, his father.

It was fitting. Reinhard would have gotten on his knees and begged God for a chance with
Alexandra.

“That was beautiful.” Alex looked upon him with awe. “Simply beautiful. I have never heard it
before.”

“My father was a composer. It was a piece of his.”

“Thank you.”

“Whatever for?”

“Sharing that with me. I’ll remember it forever.”

Reinhard watched her. There was a warm blush to her cheeks. Her full mouth was slightly parted
and was smiling. Alexandra was absolutely radiant, he noticed. It was because of the music he
played. If there was anything that made him appreciate the American woman even more it was her
obvious love of music. “It is your turn.”

She exchanged the guitar for the cello. “I am not sure if I am able to still do this. It has been a few months.”

Closing her eyes, Alexandra counted back from five. This was a difficult piece. She had practiced it for 15 years on a near daily basis. Almost immediately Reinhard knew what she was playing. Paganini’s Caprice 24 was considered one of the most difficult pieces to play – on any instrument. He picked up his violin and waited. He listened to where she was at in the music and started. They began to play together.

They were both out of breath when they finished. Their cheeks were ruddy and their smiles were brilliant. It was the eyes that gave them away. Anyone who would have gazed into either Reinhard or Alexandra’s eyes would have sworn they had found the ultimate of bodily pleasures together.

Although they never touched one another and were fully dressed, in some strange way, that person would have been correct. The shared passion that they had for music transformed them both.

Reinhard made himself busy putting away the violin for the night and Alexandra followed his careful lead. He burned to kiss her lips, to taste this strange but wondrous woman that was so near. He felt that there was a crackle of electricity in the air. Neither knew what to do or say but they had no desire to part from each other’s company. Reinhard started to stand, hoping to draw her into his arms and just hold her for a moment in time.

He was about to take her hand in his when they were interrupted.

“Obergruppenführer, there is an important phone call for you.” The young man was praying that Reinhard wouldn’t be angry. To be the victim of his wrath could be costly.

He responded with a sharp nod to his subordinate but to Alexandra he smiled. “I’m afraid duty calls.”

“I could try to forbid you to take it seeing how you are still injured but…..” She smiled and clasped his hand in both of her own. “Thank you for allowing me to play and letting me hear you play. You are magnificent. It was one of the most magnificent nights of my life. Good night Reinhard. I shall see you in the morning.”

“Good night Alexandra. I hope your dreams are sweet.” And of me. Of us.
The following morning found Alexandra in the kitchen making breakfast. She had made a syrup with local berries and sugar then strained it. The sugared berries were then combined with plain berries and tossed with just a splash of vodka. It was a typical brunch item that Alex enjoyed after a night of drinking when she was younger. The rest of the menu included French toast, porridge, eggs, sausages and fresh baked breads.

Dressed comfortably in the only summer dress she owned, Alex went to set the table outside. Coming back in there was a large man dressed in a SS uniform. Outside of the man’s size, he almost looked like a boy playing dress up. His face was so youthful appearing.

“Dr. Kettler?”

She recognized him as one of the men that drove her and Reinhard to the villa. “Yes? I’m sorry. I don’t believe I know your name.” Well, that’s embarrassing.

“Klaus Fischer, doctor.”

“I’m sorry once again. I’m not sure how to address you.”

“You may call me Klaus if you like Dr. Kettler.”

“Thank you. What might I do for you?” She smiled.

“Would you look at my hand doctor? It is quite painful.”

Turning the stove down, Alexandra washed her hands. “Please sit.” Seeing that the man looked apprehensive, a gentle hand was laid on his shoulder. “Klaus, if having you sit isn’t allowed I will take the blame. As a matter of fact, I am telling you to sit down.”

“Thank you doctor.” They were not permitted to sit in the upstairs living quarters without explicit permission.

She checked over the man’s hand. It was fairly obvious that he had dislocated his finger. “What happened?”

“I tried to catch something that fell and missed.”

“Ouch! I don’t think it is broken. The problem is that I can’t tell that for certain. Your best bet would be to go to a hospital and have an x-ray. What I think is that you have a complete compound dislocation of the middle phalanx upon the terminal phalanx of your middle finger.”

“What does that mean?”

“You dislocated both joints in your finger. Is this your dominant hand?”

“No doctor.”

“Well that is good least.”

“Dr. Kettler can you fix it? Please?”

“Ahh. Let me get my kit bag. I need to reset it and bind it. After I’m done you need to put ice on it
for 20 minutes every hour.”

After getting the bag, injections were made to help with the pain and to relax the finger some. Alexandra started talking to the young man about the day. It was a further distraction when she asked questions.

“How old are you Klaus?”

“Twenty-eight Doctor.”

“Ahh! You and I are the same age!”

Before the man realized it, she quickly reset the finger. Klaus let out a yelp that was more of surprise than actual pain. The pain resolved itself quickly. She placed his hand over top of her own to examine it carefully again. With gentle patience, she took the time to carefully splint and bind it.

Reinhard, who was just waking, heard the yelp and came running out. Alexandra didn’t notice it but he was armed. Fury turned his blue eyes to ice when he realized that Klaus was sitting and she was holding on to his hand.

Klaus Fischer dropped his hand and stood up immediately. He saluted and greeted Reinhard. “Obergruppenführer.”

“Good morning Reinhard.” She smiled warmly. “Your man Klaus dislocated his finger, I just reset it for him. I hope that is not a problem.”

“No.” He said gruffly. “The noise, I was concerned.”

“Obergruppenführer, my apologies. I didn’t wish to leave the grounds without notifying you. I asked Dr. Kettler for help instead.”

“All is well Klaus. Go back to your duties if Dr. Kettler is finished.”

Klaus looked down to Alex.

“I’m finished. Don’t forget to ice it. Make sure the ice is separated from your skin by cloth or something similar. If it continues to bother you, come back and see me immediately. Actually, see me in two days no matter what.”

“Thank you Doctor.” He left quickly.

“Hungry?” Alexandra rose from the chair.

“Famished.”

“How do you take your coffee?”

“Just a dollop of milk.”

“If you would like to go out on the deck, the table is set. I shall bring you breakfast.”

“I should be doing this for you. You are my guest.”

“I am your employee. You asked if I would mind cooking and I do not.”

“Thank you fraulein.”
“Uhm. Do I need to feed your men? I made more than I probably should have because I wasn’t
certain.”

“They have their own kitchen downstairs but I will allow them to come up for their meal as well,
this time.” The consideration she had for his men pleased him greatly. She might have called
herself his employee but she acted as if his men were guests. Interesting.

Getting him settled outside with coffee and the paper, Alexandra went downstairs to tell the men to
come up.

“Gentlemen, permission has been given for you all to come up for breakfast. I wasn’t certain if I
needed to cook for you as well, so there is plenty.” Alexandra felt somewhat silly. “Whenever you
wish, please come up. The table is set for you inside. Not to worry, we will be dining outdoors so
as not to bother you.”

The look of shock crossed each of the men’s faces and they turned to each other. They politely
waited for the unusual American woman to go back upstairs before going up themselves. The
French toast was common for the men. Yet, not the way it was made by Alexandra. They were
used to a more of a savory dish. The cinnamon, fruit and vanilla added was quite different. All of
the men enjoyed it. Even if they hadn’t, they wouldn’t have complained. This was so far out of the
norm for any of them. There were used to the Obergruppenführer’s wife who rarely acknowledged
any of them. The rare times that she did, the men were ridiculed.

Alexandra had also told Hedda that she may join. The maid declined, having already had eaten.

Reinhard was known as a despotic leader. His style of leadership was tyrannical. Although, he also
led his people by example. The codes that he followed were expected to be followed by his men.
Under normal circumstances something like this would never had happened. Under normal
circumstances, Reinhard and Alexandra would never have met. His delight with her company
trickled down to his men. The men knew this and were grateful.

After breakfast, Reinhard and Alexandra basked in the warm sun while enjoying each other’s
company.

“I still feel like I know very little of you Alexandra.”

“What would you like to know?”

“Are you married?”

“No. I never have been married either. Unless you consider that I am married to my job.” She
flashed a little bit of a smile. “I think you are also married to your job Reinhard, yes? If you are
trying to puzzle out if I have been with a man before, yes. You?”

“I am no virgin either. But I have not been with a man.” He managed to keep a straight face.

The response startled her into silence before she started laughing. It was such a happy sound, it
made him smile broadly in return. She was so different! With her, nothing had a political meaning.

She didn’t wish for power or money as so many women he knew did. Nor was she needing to use
him to climb the ladder socially. It was unusual being near a person that wanted nothing from him
other than friendly conversation.

“What would you like to do today?” He asked.
“You need to rest. You have done enough in the last 24 hours.”

Rolling his eyes dramatically at her, Reinhard shook his head. “I do have paperwork I need to do.”

“As long as it doesn’t raise your blood pressure.”

Alexandra rose and started to gather up the dirty dishes while he swatted her hands away playfully. She cooked so he would do the dishes. Anywhere else, he would not even have thought to clean even a single dish.

“Now see here Obergrapffenführer Reinhard.” Alex stood with her hands on her hips giving him a look.

“It is Obergruppenführer Schatzi.” He chuckled. “You would be much more imposing if you weren’t trying not to laugh.”

“Obergrup ….Can you repeat it for me please?”

“Obergruppenführer” He spoke slowly this time.

“Obergruppenführer?”

“Very good! Now as your reward, the dishes are mine!”

She rolled her eyes dramatically at him that time. It caused them both to laugh.

When they walked back inside, she was surprised to find that the informal dining room table was scrubbed clean. The dishes were done and put away. There weren’t any leftovers.

One man remained, he took the dishes from Reinhard’s hands. Quickly, those dishes were done, dried and put away. The man thanked both of them profusely and pressed a folded note into Alexandra’s hand.

“What did he give you?”

Opening the piece of paper, Alexandra didn’t just smile, she beamed happily. It was a thank you signed by each of the men. Many of them had written a short personal note as well.

“This was very sweet of them.” She showed the note to Reinhard.

They were treating her beautifully, which pleased Reinhard. What he didn’t realize was because of the pretty American his mood was much more pleasant. It made their job much easier.

While he gathered the necessary materials needed to do some of the paperwork, Alexandra curled up in a chair with a book. He stole a glance, studying her. Would she be so playful with him if she knew who he was? Granted, even if she knew his last name, she wouldn’t know anything about him more than likely.

“Enough.”

“Pardon?” Reinhard looked up.

“You were permitted to leave the hospital with the idea you would have a nurse to help you. I hate to tell you, I am worse than any nurse.”

“Did you just give me an order?” He was surprised to say the least.
“Yes.”

“I’m used to giving orders, not taking them.” His tone was mild.

“So?” She stood up, waiting for him.

“Tyrant.” He shook his head.

“Yep.” She grinned. “I just want you to rest for an hour. “

“You going to rest with me?”

“I’m not the one that had extensive surgery.”

“You are the one that did the extensive surgery.”

“Too true.” She began to walk outside on to the large deck.

She set him up in the lounge chair in the shade.

“I’ll be right here if you need anything.”

He didn’t realize how tired he was until he was laying down in the warm sun. It took him no time at all before he was asleep.

Reinhard was dreaming.

*He was in a forest of trees and chasing after Alexandra. He could hear her laughter up ahead of him. Then it was gone. Reinhard spun around, trying to find her but could not.*

*He called out her name. And then he did again. And again.*

“I’m right in front of you like I always have been.”

*Turning around once more, there she was.*

*She kissed him then. Her soft lips welcomed him home. Home?*

*Yes home. Home was wherever she was at.*

*They were now on an old iron framed feather bed. Her slender body beneath him, he couldn’t believe it. Her skin was luminous and with his touch it was even more so.*

“I love you” He breathed. “Oh how I love you.”

*Brilliant blue eyes brightened further at his admission. She kissed him again and whispered softly.*

“I love you. I will love you long past eternity. Reinhard, you are my One. In life and in death there will never be another man that I shall love as I love you.”

“I don’t deserve you.” He looked upon her with fear and pain.

“This isn’t about deserving Reinhard. This is about our hearts finding each other. Deserving something is of little consequence in the long term. “

“You cannot love me. You shouldn’t love me. I am a monster and not a man.”
“I fear no monster. Especially one that was created in a laboratory such as you were.”

“What do you mean?”

“I mean that you are already loved by me and you cannot change that my Reinhard. You deserve love and happiness more than most people. Your life was forged by the folly of others and not by your own hand.”

“I’m afraid.” He whispered.

“Do not be afraid my beloved. You have nothing to fear. I’ve had you from the moment we met. When you are afraid you have all of my strength bound to you. We will weather the storms together while bound heart and soul to each other. Remember I swore to you that I wouldn’t let anything happen to you. Believe in that promise Reinhard. Believe in me. In us.

He was about to ask her a question when he woke up abruptly.
"Alexandra?" His voice was thick with sleep.

"Hmm?" She looked up from the book, sliding a bookmark between the pages.

"Come here, please?"

"Is something wrong? Are you in pain?" Moving from her chair to the lounge he was sitting on, her brow furrowed. Her hands were gentle as she checked him over.

The touch was brief but he savored it like nothing else. Gently, Reinhard picked up her hand and kissed the knuckles. "Do you mind sitting with me please?"

"Of course not." She smiled softly and started get up to grab a chair.

His hand circled around her wrist when she went to move, Reinhard tugged gently. "Don’t go. Sit with me please?" He moved over so she could sit too.

"Bad dream?"

"No. Actually no. It was a lovely dream."

"Good." She smiled warmly.

Reinhard looked up. Her smile made him smile in return. "It did however leave me questioning something. You have been so very kind and generous with me. I cannot thank you enough. From what I have been told, Americans hate us. I am curious to what does your country say about Germans."

"There is a lot of propaganda on how the Nazis are the enemy. There is much the same about the Japanese as well. Actually, what there is about the Japanese is worse than Germans. What of here?"

"It is more about the troops and the American leaders than the civilians." The term Nazi annoyed him. Reinhard realized she may not know that Nazi was not a term used by the Germans. "What do you think?"

"Reinhard, my bloodline is no different than your own. I do not like war but there is nothing that can be done of it. I hold no hate for the German people. How could I? While I was born in the US, I am of German decent myself. My father was geneticist. He traced our own history back until the 17th or 18th century. My bloodline is German I will admit that I would be terrified to meet Adolf Hitler." She remembered quite well finding out about her birth family and her adopted family. It was all very Germanic.

"I would feel the same of your Roosevelt or Patton. Although, I do believe that the Führer would find you as I do."

"As I have never met Roosevelt nor Patton, I cannot venture to say what they would think. What do you mean that he would find me as you do?"

"He would see you for your brilliant mind, your kindness and your beauty. You would make him laugh. Your talent would impress him. Our Führer is a fan of the Wagnerian operas. To hear you
sing would make him believe he had heard an angel.”

“Flattery Obergruppenführer. Flattery.” The thought of Hitler finding her amusing made Alexandra feel queasy. To perform in front of him? She probably would opt for death first.

“I didn’t realize your hair was curly.” She brushed one of the curls back and it sprang forward immediately. It made her smile widen.

“I never liked the curls.”

“I think they are quite lovely.”

“Thank you.” He looked away for a moment.

“What’s bothering you Reinhard?”

“I don’t know. I feel restless.”

“Hm. Scoot forward just a bit would you please?”

“My apologies, I take up a lot of room.”

“So do I. You aren’t too much taller than I am.”

Alexandra slid behind Reinhard. “Lean back some and relax.”

Startled Reinhard moved forward instead.

Alexandra blushed brightly. “I’m sorry. I didn’t think to ask if you wanted me to give you a massage. I’m so very sorry Reinhard.”

She thought he didn’t want her to touch him?! Reinhard almost wanted to laugh. He was so afraid of being forward with her. Not to mention, he was afraid his awkward body could hurt her. All he wanted to do was touch her.

“Schatzi, no. It’s not that I don’t want you to, I was afraid of hurting you. Will you please continue? Please?”

“Of course. Can you make yourself comfortable and rest your head on my chest or shoulder?”

Alexandra and Reinhard both moved. He made himself comfortable and she supported him where she thought he needed it. She warmed up his skin with strokes of her fingers. He was certain that her tender touch was the most gentle he had ever been touched with. It was then that Reinhard remembered how she stroked him gently to help calm him in the back of the damnable delivery van.

“Alexandra?”

“Yes?”

“What did you do to keep me calm in the van?”

“I tried to make you as comfortable as possible and protect you from the movement of the van. Why?”

He remembered. She braced him with her body and lovingly stroked his cheek. Whispered words
were a promise of something that he could not remember. He looked upwards to her, in awe.

“Will you sing for me?”

“Of course. Anything you would like to hear?”

“Whatever you would like to sing.”

Alexandra began to sing the contralto parts of Königskinder. While she did that, she methodically worked from his sternum upwards, including his face and throat. Her hands went just below the shoulder blades. There she worked out the little knots that tended to form. She worked from there back up and around. Alexandra worked from his the shoulder down to his hands and then back up. When she finished, he was asleep. Smiling gently. She leaned back in the chair and let him rest.

In the privacy of the villa, it was easy to forget she was in Nazi territory and taking care of a Nazi. She knew that he was a high ranking official, Krueger told her as much. That was all she knew. Desperately she wished to ask how he truly felt about the war and the Jewish population. Alex knew she wouldn’t get an honest answer. If she did, it could prove deadly for her.

Alexandra was comfortable with him sleeping like he did. His weight was pleasant against her smaller frame and oddly familiar. She wasn’t sure why. Most likely from the ride in the back of the delivery van, she thought.

Reinhard did not nap long. When he woke, his face was turned to her full breast. Immediately, Reinhard went rigid.

“What’s wrong?” She laid a hand on his bare arm.

“What happened?”

“You fell asleep during your massage. How do you feel?”

“Better. Much better actually.” He immediately sat up. “Did I hurt you?”

“I am not fragile.” She smiled. “And you did not hurt me in the least.”

“Alexandra, I did not mean to take such liberties with you. I am very sorry.”

“Please turn around?” When he did, Alexandra laid her hand to his cheek and smiled. “You did not do anything wrong. I had you lay like that against me because there is not a proper set up here for that type of massage. I would have not wanted you to fall and hurt yourself. I’m the one that is sorry. I should have warned you.”

“Thank you Schatzi. I feel better now. I don’t have that restless feeling any longer.”

“Good.”

The day passed quickly. After resting, Reinhard did his bit of paperwork and then Alexandra made him work in a different fashion. This was to strengthen his body and lungs. They did it outside as was her preference. She didn’t tell him what they were doing, but it was basic yoga. She wore shorts that had been converted from pants and one of his undershirts. She ended knotting the shirt in the back so it wouldn’t rise up on her. It ended up showing several centimeters of her bare stomach.

When she had walked outside, Reinhard looked quite surprised at how she was dressed. Up until
this point, she had maintained a rather modest look about her. Alex was fairly certain he would have a heart attack if he saw some of her clothing. Texas was hot. It was very hot and very humid. Alexandra wore as little as she could get away with. He probably turn her over his knee. However, she was not certain that if he turned her over his knee if it would be for her punishment or his pleasure.

“I don’t believe this nonsense is working Doctor.” He looked grouchy.

“I swear it does. It can help you concentrate if you learn to meditate with it but it will give you more flexibility and strengthen your body no matter what."

He made a sound of disbelief.

“Watch and learn Reinhard. Watch and learn.” She took the time to stretch before beginning.

Standing with her feet together, Alexandra slowly bent at the waist and brought her hands to the floor. With hands flattened, she rose to her toes with care. Tilting the pelvis, her long legs moved slowly into doing a split upside down. The movement was slow and methodical. One leg rose and toes pointed to the sky. The other leg followed gently afterwards.

Her legs came together now. She held the position before changing to another. One leg bent at the knee and then the other. Finally, the lower half of her body was in a lotus position while she was upside down.

Her lean body stretched back out. Within a blink of an eye, she bounced downwards. To Reinhard it appeared that she landed in a pushup position. Hands in front of her body now and pelvis against the floor, her torso bent back. She stayed that way for about thirty seconds.

Her body curved into a backwards ‘C’ and at the same time her legs moved up until her feet touched the back of her head. Once more she dropped and moved her body in a different way. Stretching fully, Alexandra brought her hands down to mat.

“Put your hands on my back on either side of the spine. Gently. Just lay them on me.”

She went through a similar routine once again. Each time the pose changed she would have him move his hands to a new area. Reinhard marveled at how strong she was. He could see and feel the strength in her body. He was fascinated how the muscles rippled beneath the skin with the movement. He had never seen a woman’s body like hers before.

That wasn’t to say he had not been around or even competed with extremely fit women. He did put together the Olympics after all. Women tended to be soft or overly muscular for his taste in fairer sex. Alexandra was the perfect combination to Reinhard.

Standing back up, she looked at him. “Put your hands on my hips to follow me with your body then when my arms raise follow my movements. Do long deep breaths and hold the breath for four beats. After the four beats release it slowly.”

Carefully and slowly Alexandra took him through several stretching poses. Reinhard had been a hospital bed for too long and this would prepare him for more work that would be needed to help him strengthen his entire body.

“Try it on your own now.”

Noticing some errors in his posture, she physically corrected him. With a hand at the top front of his pelvis and another at the bottom curve of his buttock, she shifted him.
“Does that feel better?” She smiled.

“Yes.”

She did the same to his foot and thigh this time. For about 30 minutes the two of them went through gentle stretches and holds. Her hands guided his body with knowledge and ease.

“Good job!” He had just finished. “Do you understand?” She stood naturally once again.

Pulling back, hands were shoved into pockets quickly. He was aroused and his hands trembled after touching her in such an intimate way. Her touching him in a similar fashion made it worse. Reinhard knew that it was a teaching moment from her and nothing more.

What he was craving was something far too intimate to mention.

“If you will excuse me.” The words were gruff and he immediately walked away from her.

Frowning, she was confused. Alex gave a bit of time alone before following him in.

“Reinhard?”

“Yes?” He looked up from the paperwork.

“May we speak for a moment?”

He simply nodded.

“Uhm. Americans are much more forward than Germans, I believe. If something I do bothers you, please let me know.”

“You did not bother me Alexandra. We are just different.” He smiled gently at her.

“Perhaps you should find a German nurse to help you? That way you will be more at ease.”

“You wish to be away from me?”

“No, not at all. I enjoy your company greatly. I am just afraid that I may be doing you more harm than good and I do not wish for you to be uncomfortable.”

“Alexandra? Are you afraid of me?”

“I feel like I should be but no. I’m not afraid of you.” Alexandra’s voice was soft.

“Why feel like you should be?”

“Reinhard, you are a Nazi and I am an American.” Did I mention I am Jewish?

“Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei, the term Nazi is not one we use. It is more of a slur here.” He corrected her gently. “Besides, we are both still human.”

Alexandra’s skin paled further. She looked startled by the revelation that Nazi was not a term that the Germans used. Swallowing hard, her eyes were wide. She was frightened.

“I am so sorry. I didn’t know that at all. I didn’t mean to insult you.”

“I figured you did not know. It is okay Alexandra.”
“Reinhard, what if I was a Jew? Would I still be a human?” This is what will get me killed, questions.

“Jews aren’t the same as you and I.”

“I think they are.”

“Why?”

“Biologically we are identical.”

“It is not just the physical that sets them apart, it is the mental.”

“Mentally, in many ways we are products of our environment. You wouldn’t be the same man if you had been raised in Denmark, for example.”

“My core beliefs would be.”

“No. Not necessarily.”

He patted her thigh. “Not to worry, I will get some books for you to read. So that you understand better.”

She wanted to scream and cry. How could such a kind man believe that Jewish people were horrible? It made no sense to her. It made Alexandra ill to know he would hate her family. Even so, part of her was drawn to him.

Alexandra felt utterly lost for the first time. There was a chasm between them. Even for as close as they might seem, she felt that if she reached out her hand would never find his. And if he knew the truth, he would snuff out her life.
Chapter 11

After supper, Reinhard found some of the books he wished Alexandra to read within the villa’s library.

“These two can help begin your education, Schatzi.”

She felt ill as the books slid into her hands. Fear now choked her heart and soul. What if she tossed them to the side and refused? Was it worth her life?

“Thank you.” She spoke in hardly more than a whisper.

When he went back to work Alex decided to rifle through the books to see if there was a way to simply debunk them. Immediately she noticed that so much of the information was wrong. Was it because they didn’t have the proper testing materials? Or was this all much more sinister? Alexandra didn’t know. Eugenics was a mere mention in a class of her teens. Her father explained why it wouldn’t work after that. With her cheeks burning, she knew she needed to get away from any prying eyes. This was all too much for her to digest.

Setting the books down, she walked outside. The night air was cool but not cold. Sitting down as far away from the door as she could, Alexandra wept in silence.

It was nearly 30 minutes later when Reinhard had walked out looking for her. His eyes scanned across the veranda twice before spotting her.

He moved quickly and knelt beside her. “Schatzi? What is wrong?” Anger automatically brewed in Reinhard’s gut. Did one of the men say something? Or worse, try something?

“The books Reinhard. The books. There is so much anger and hate!” Her arms wrapped around her stomach as she tried holding herself in check.

Sitting down, he nudged her closer and wrapped his arm around her shoulders. “You don’t have to read them. I didn’t realize the material would bother you. I’m sorry Alexandra.” He truly hadn’t meant to upset her.

“Bother me? I’m not sensitive to things like that Reinhard. That is how I was able to get you from the street to the operating theatre while I was covered in the brains, blood, and skull fragments of another man that was shot in the head when I asked him a question. What I read was repugnant to me Reinhard. Please understand, I did not grow up with this information. Why? It has been proven wrong many times over.”

“These are new publications Alexandra. I didn’t know about the man next to you. I am so sorry. Was he a friend of yours?” He did not realize it happened just minutes before she began to help him.

“Reinhard, please understand this is my own father debunked this ages ago. This is all wrong. Race is not real. It is a construct of society. If we could tell a person’s race so easily by looking at them then why do you have to label the Romany, Jews, and others?”

“Because so many are mischelinge.”
“Mixed?”

“Yes.”

“We all are mixed of some sort.”

“Explain yourself.” The words were terse.

The sound of his voice made her wish to draw back and end this conversation, but she couldn’t. No, she easily could but she would not.

“Reinhard, I don’t know how to make you believe me. I swear by what I am going to tell you. Selective breeding does not work. You are actually more likely to get less biological fitness than more.”

“Why do you think that?”

“I don’t think that, I know it. First you aren’t going to be able to stop people from having sex and getting pregnant. You and I are from different countries but my ancestry is from here, just as yours is. So let’s say we both carry a disease but because it has to come from both of our parents, we don’t have any symptoms but the likelihood of a child of ours to have said disease is high.”

“But we don’t have a disease.”

“I was just using us as an example.”

“I don’t understand fraulein.”

“Let me show you how I learned.”

Alexandra pulled out the shopping list she had in her pocket and the stub of a pencil. She drew the Punnett Square and used the typical bean study with yellow and green beans.

“Does that make more sense?”

“Yes, it does.”

“It’s not just genetic either. So poor people are more likely to stay poor because of bad genetics?” She knew she was pushing her luck.

“Yes. They tend to be less intelligent than others.”

“Reinhard, it isn’t true. It SEEMS that way because they have less advantages than someone from a middle class or even wealthy family. They have less access to nourishing food, books, schooling and such. You take two babies. One was born to very wealthy parents and the other was born to very poor parents. Switch the children. Let the poor people take the wealthy baby and let the wealthy take the poor baby. The likelihood of the poor but now wealthy infant growing up to be a well-educated productive member of society is just as high as the wealthy but now poor infant growing up to be a poor person lacking education. It has nothing to do with their genes.”

His brow furrowed as he looked to her.

“Reinhard there is no scientific definition that holds up about race. Race has changed its definition in every country to the benefit of those who wanted to define it differently at that time. There is absolutely no science behind it. I swear to you that I am telling you the absolute truth. I would bet my life on it.”
“I think it would be better that we didn’t speak of this any longer tonight.” He touched her shoulder. “Come, let’s return inside.” He helped her up and went indoors.

“Reinhard, I didn’t mean to upset you.” A chill ran down her spine and left her feeling somewhat afraid, again.

“Alexandra, you did nothing to upset me. You are an intelligent woman. To try to curb that would stifle the true you. I would not do that.” Inside, he poured them each a glass of wine.

“What is this?” She asked as he handed her the glass.

“Spätburgunder. You may know it as Pinot Noir.”

“Thank you. You remembered.”

“Of course. Come sit with me. Let us relax for a little while.”

She nodded. They both came together to sit on the sofa.

“Liebchen, I enjoy your company and I am glad to have you here. I mean that truly. We may not always agree but I am more than willing to listen to your opinions. I enjoy leaning how you think.”

“I feel the same way. I enjoy listening to you. The way you process information is outstanding.”

“My voice does not bother you?”

“Of course not. You have a lovely voice.”

He searched her face. He didn’t believe she was telling the truth. Then something Reinhard saw in her eyes made him believe her. “Tomorrow or the day after I will take you to the spring. Even if you won’t permit me to swim, I would like to show it to you.”

“I would like that. I would like that very much.”

“As lovely as you are, inside and out, I am surprised you haven’t married yet.”

“I haven’t found the man that could put up with me yet.” She was serious.

He chuckled. “I am not sure if that is mankind’s loss or great fortune.”

Her laugh was lyrical and she shook her head. “What? I haven’t driven you mad yet?”

“No. And with your wit and sense of humor, you are a lovely distraction.” He returned her smile. “What I mean is that you are refreshing to be near. How do you Americans say….You find no need to put on airs.”

“I probably look like a peasant to you.” The old summer dress and her lack of shoes did give Alex that sort of look. Her jet curls were left down and spilled around her. Even Alex knew she looked like a peasant.

He laughed. With the turn of her head, Alexandra’s hair had spilled over her shoulder. Reinhard stroked his fingers through her slightly wild tresses. It was so soft to the touch. He had to stop himself from running his hands through it more.

“You look beautiful. With you I am reminded of Eir.”
“Eir?”

“She is either a Goddess or a Valkyrie, depending on which tale you are told. Eir as a Valkyrie chooses who would be slain in battle and who would live. You chose that I should live. Eir as a goddess is similar and both are associated with medical skill.” Refilling both their glasses Reinhard looked at Alexandra. “If you were in your own home right this moment, what would you be doing?”

“Hmm. What time is it?”

“1900 hours.”

“Much would depend if I worked and if I was working the following day. Most likely, I would have just finished eating. I might be reading a book or have gotten my cello out to play something. There would be music on. If I was off work the following day I may go to a bookstore or the cinema. That is assuming I was home. Some days I am still at work.”

“Who would you go with?”

“Most likely I would go alone.”

“Why alone?”

“I’m quite solitary in my down time. I am around people all day long so I like my own company as a way of relaxing. What of you?”

“I would be at work still. Do you go out with others?”

“Sometimes. I have a few close friends that I go out with on occasion.”

“I have an idea.”

“Should I be worried?” Alexandra looked at him with curiosity.

Taking her hand, Reinhard ran downstairs with her. None of the men were present so Reinhard gave a nod and dragged her to the ballroom. He went around turning on the lights.

“You said you can dance but can you follow, Schatzi?”

“I most certainly can but I am not exactly dressed for dancing.”

“Your clothing doesn’t matter.”

Reinhard started the music playing with a grin. Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy brought the ballroom to life along with Alexandra’s laughter.

“I can Lindy with the best of them Reinhard! Try and keep up.”

They switched from the Lindy to the Foxtrot and then to the Charleston. There was one last record that could be found. Holding out his hand, he smiled gently.

“Dance with me one more time tonight Schatzi?”

Alexandra said nothing. She accepted his hand instead. Around the ballroom, just the two of them dancing in the night. Waltz of the Flowers playing on the record player, the debate of earlier was long forgotten.
Tipping his head downward, the words became a whisper against her skin. “You dance beautifully Alexandra.”

“Thank you. Now may I have the next dance?”

“There are no more records.”

“I can sing.”

“It would be my pleasure.”

“This is a simple slow two-step.”

Alexandra sang to him. Her lips were just a feather kiss away from his ear as they took another turn around the dance floor. He could see her being a sprite in one of Shakespeare’s plays the way she moved. He couldn’t believe how magical she felt and made him feel.

“That is a beautiful song. Do you know how to play it?”

“Yes.”

“Would you teach me?”

“It would be my pleasure. It can be done as a duet as well.”

The dance was over. Yet, they stood there still holding on to each other. Unable to do anything else, Reinhard kissed her cheek warmly.

“You are opening my eyes to so much Schatzi.”

“Is that a bad thing?”

“I do not think so.”

“What sort of music was that?”

“It’s a popular genre back home. It’s called country western.”

“It’s lovely.”

“Some of it is.”

“It’s not nearly as lovely as you.” He let a single fingertip trace Alex’s jawline before remembering himself. Stepping back suddenly, he smiled and looked away. Reinhard began to turn the lights off. “Go back up, I will be there shortly.”

“I’ll wait for you, if you don’t mind.”

He studied her for a moment before responding. “I don’t mind.”
Chapter 12

She was still smiling from dancing when Alex returned to her room. Having not had a reason to go back in there most of the day, she discovered that the bed, floor, and almost every space available was covered in bags containing clothing that had been purchased for her. Confused, she started looking in the bags. Shaking her head and backing away, it was far too much. She wasn’t going to be here that long.

“Reinhard!”

He came to the door. “Yes?”

“What? Why?”

“You needed clothing.”

“But this is so much. Too much!”

“Do you not like it?”

“All of it is beautiful.” She paused. “Thank you. You are spoiling me.”

“You need to be spoiled, Schatzi.” He smiled at her.

She placed her hands on his shoulders and kissed his cheek. Her breath was warm and sweet when she whispered thank you in his ear.

“I look forward to seeing you in everything. May I come in?”

“Of course.”

With the door opened, he sat on the bed in Alexandra’s room. They spoke while she started to put everything away. The very top shelf of the closet was high enough that she couldn’t quite reach it even while standing on tiptoe.

Reinhard stepped up behind her. Just a couple centimeters taller, he eased the bag onto the shelf.

“Thank you.”

“Are you always like this?” He rested his hands on her hips.

“I don’t know what you mean by like this.” She looked over her shoulder at him.

“Other than when I thought you were going to beat Erich Krueger half to death and earlier tonight, you always seem happy.”

Turning to face him, she started to laugh. “Yes.”

“Why?”

“Well, I am happy. I am enjoying spending time with you.”

“There is more.”

“Isn’t there always?” She grinned and picked up his hand. Alexandra led him to the center of the
room. “Sit down with me? I’m not sure how to explain it. My parents and grandparents both had an interesting outlook on life. Actually, it was my great-grandfather that explained it the best. Nothing should be so terrible that you cannot forgive. That doesn’t mean it is easy to forgive. It doesn’t mean you have to forgive. It’s just that you can forgive. Without forgiveness hate breeds deeply. When I was old enough to truly understand it, my outlook on life changed. Then it changed further when I realized I am also responsible for my own happiness.” Sliding to the middle of the bed, she laid down on her side, looking at him.

“I still don’t understand.” Reinhard mirrored her, laying down as well. It made him happy she was so relaxed with him. He would have never laid on a bed with a woman he wasn’t having sex with. He wanted to think it was an invitation but he was fairly certain it wasn’t. Still, he was enjoying himself with Alexandra.

“Forgiveness was not just for those that have done something wrong to us. It is for ourselves. If I forgive someone I am no longer the victim in the tale. Forgiveness lets go of negative emotions such as vengefulness, you lose the desire to punish the offender disproportionately. Forgiveness is freedom. Take for instance Krueger. He physically hurt me but I have forgiven him for doing such. That doesn’t mean I won’t be wary if I am ever around him again. It doesn’t mean I have to like him. However, by forgiving him I feel no reason to seek revenge. Instead, I am here and enjoying myself with you.”

“But shouldn’t compensation be given? Where is the incentive for someone not to do something if they aren’t punished?”

“I didn’t say that they shouldn’t be punished or fined. You don’t seek something that is too harsh for a minor crime. If I bumped into you while walking to the kitchen there isn’t a need to have me killed for something so minor.” She smiled. “Someone committing rape, murder, arson or any other major crime, should be punished appropriately. I think it depends on what it is. More serious transgressions like someone destroys your home, yes. You need a place to live. That is why money is often exchanged in those circumstances. It is also why laws exist. You steal from your neighbor you are punished by the law.”

“Is that how as an American you can be sitting next to a National Socialist? Or as you say a Nazi?” Alexandra cringed. “I am sorry for insulting you like that before. I really had no idea.”

“Schatzi, I was teasing you.”

“Does Nazi have another meaning?”

“Yes, it’s an old word for a backwards peasant.”

“Reinhard I swear to you, didn’t know that. I apologize.” Apologizing for Nazi? AGAIN? Good god Alex. What have you become?

“I didn’t think you did. Do you forgive me of my transgressions?”

“I don’t know what your transgressions are.”

“There are more than I care to count. If you did, could you forgive me?”

“Most likely, yes.”

“Would I be able to forgive yours?”
“I don’t know. Perhaps? I really lead a quiet life. So I would guess that you could.” Hey can you forgive me for being raised by the most loving and caring family ever? Oh and they are Jews. That whole Jewish thing is bad right?

“If forgiveness is key, how did you know how to strike Dr. Krueger?”

Alexandra laughed “I have two brothers. They sometimes forgot I was a girl.”

“They treated you poorly?”

“Oh no! My brothers are wonderful men. We are all just very physical, especially with sports when we were young. Not to mention, we were all very competitive with each other in sports. We used to practice boxing in the backyard. They weren’t always aware I wasn’t as big as they were. So I learned to fight a wee bit dirty. When we were young and learning how to fence we would practice two on one. I would be in the middle and my older brother would be in front of me. My younger would be behind me. It was great for practice and anticipating different moves.” She looked thoughtful. “I think you and my younger brother would get along quite well.”

“You boxed with your brothers?” He looked scandalized. “Are they bigger than you? Why do you think I would get along with him?”

“Both of them weigh a considerable bit more than I do and are quite a bit taller. They teased me calling me the runt of the litter.” She smiled. “He’s a very talented violinist just like you. You both enjoy the same sports. You both have similar personalities. There is a joke in the United States how everything is bigger in Texas.”

“Is it true?”

“Most of the time. You would fit in well.”

Reinhard smiled hearing how he would fit in. “What of this you are responsible for your own happiness?”

“It is similar. I don’t blame others for if I am unhappy. Something I did brought me to the place where I have become unhappy. More often than not I can change that. There are exceptions, of course.”

“So even though you wish to go home, you are happy here?” Reinhard smiled gently while looking at her. He wanted to touch her so badly.

“Yes. Your men have been kind to me. You have been so very generous and kind with me. I enjoy our discussions. Yes, I want to go home. But there is so much to be happy right here and right now about, I would rather be happy. I’ll go home eventually.”

Reinhard turned to his back, considering what she said. His entire life was driven by different forces. It ran the gamut of wishing to be popular among his fellow cadets to holding immense amounts of power. He was never really happy because it was always work. You never knew who would stab you in the back or who would go straight from the front. He hadn’t had friends because he thought that it was too dangerous. Because of it all, Reinhard never truly stopped to enjoy himself.

Even the sports he played were not enjoyed for the sake of playing. He always needed to be the best, especially in the sports that he didn’t excel in.

Alexandra watched him closely as he puzzled through what she said. “What makes you happy
Reinhard?

He looked to her, thoughtful. He realized he had no idea what actually made him happy. He had moments of happiness but it was always pushed aside for something else. He evaded the question. “You are a strange and interesting woman Alexandra. What are the names of your siblings?”

“You keep saying that and I keep denying it. Eugene is the eldest. Alexander is the youngest.” She noticed her didn’t answer the question but she wasn’t going to push.

“How much of an age difference?”

“Eugene is 7 years older than I am and Alexander is 4 minutes younger. He’s my twin.”

“I had not realized you were a twin! Are you both very much alike?”

“Too much alike, according to everyone that knows us. We look alike, our personalities are very similar. I tend to be more temperamental than he is. Alexander is fairly unflappable.”

“Your older brother and I share a name. Eugen.”

“Reinhard Eugen?”

“Reinhard Tristan Eugen.”

“A handsome name for a handsome man.” She smiled

“You find me handsome?” He was quite surprised.

“Yes, how could I not? The first time I truly saw you, while you were in the hospital, you reminded me of a lion. Noble, graceful, strong. I wasn’t sure if you were going to bite or purr. That is how you got your nickname from me.”

“What do you mean truly saw me?”

“The first time I saw you I was too intent on saving your life to actually pay attention to your handsome visage.”

“Would you prefer me to bite or purr?” He laughed softly. “Thank you.”

“For?”

“Saving my life. Saying that I am handsome.”

“Reinhard, you are handsome. You are a very attractive man.”

“I have always thought I was odd looking.”

“Only when you make silly faces at me.” She batted her lashes and then made a silly face at him. Laughing, he made a silly face at her. “What is your middle name?”

“Elisabeth.”

“That is the same as my mother’s name.” He eyed Alexandra with amusement.

“That is odd. When is your birthday? Mine is 28 February.”
“7 March. The fates are teasing us I believe, fraulein.”

“It certainly seems that way.”

“I must go. It is time for my call. I bid you good night Alexandra Elisabeth Kettler.”

“Good night Reinhard Tristan Eugen.”

The calls had taken hours and now he was unable to sleep. Reinhard kept thinking of her.

There was a time in his past when he dallied with more than one woman. Not to say that he still didn’t dally around with women that were not his wife, it was just never anything serious. Sex was one thing. Falling in love with another woman was scandalous.

How he felt about Alexandra wasn’t just scandalous it was insanity.

In the past, he made promises two different women. Lina had the most to offer. Plus, he thought himself in love then. He may had been. Who knew now? No matter what, Lina was the reason behind his successes.

Did that even matter?

He wasn’t unhappy in his life but he wasn’t happy either. Lina wasn’t the warmest of women but he knew that before he married her. It had never been a problem. The differences that he could see between Lina and Alexandra? The two women were polar opposites in every way he could fathom.

Rubbing his jaw, perhaps if he could coax Alexandra to his bed it may make it where he would lose interest? It would be just like the girl he had been sleeping with when he met Lina. He wanted to laugh at the thought. He knew better than that. The girl he had been sleeping with? He never had any interest in her BUT sex.

Alexandra? He wanted to know everything he possibly could about her. He wished to share things with her that he would never have dared to with anyone else. That was something he had not realized. He trusted Alexandra fully, even more than he trusted his wife. Reinhard had never known the full trust of another human being. It was something he had always craved but he knew better than to trust. So why did he trust the American doctor?

And yes, he craved her most intimate touches as well. How would her lips feel against his? Was she passive partner or aggressive one? He suspected it depended on the situation. Could she welcome a man such as him? How could she with all of his flaws? His damned voice and hips being the most noticeable of them all. Could he bare his soul to her?

She was so beautiful and so talented. To him, she was the personification of perfection.

Sighing, he threw the bottle he had been drinking from into the fireplace. The sound of shattering glass against stone felt good. So did the whoosh of the flame when the alcohol hit.

The bottle shattering woke Alexandra up in the middle of the night. Although, she had no idea what the noise actually was. She was more than a little bit afraid when she stumbled her way out into the main rooms. Walking into the sitting room, she could feel her heart thudding in her chest from apprehension.

The night had gotten chilly so Reinhard had built a fire it seemed. The smoldering embers cast the room in strange shadows. When she turned to move, it was just by happenstance that Alexandra bumped into Reinhard’s legs. He had been sitting there, lost in thought.
Neither was expecting the other and she squeaked in surprise after running into his legs. Reinhard stood up swiftly and the motion knocked her to the floor. Immediately, he knew it was her. Dropping down to his knees, he checked to make sure that she was not hurt.

“Are you unharmed Schatzi?”

From what remained of the fire and the moonlight filtering into the darkened villa, he could see the nightgown she wore.

The diaphanous material outlined the fullness of her breasts and the soft swell of hips. Her long black hair was tousled from sleep. Unbound, it was like a moving shadow around her. Seeing her as such, it made him smile. Alexandra Kettler looked beautiful, even on the floor as she was.

“Alexandra….” Her name was a whisper on his lips.

Unable to resist, he pulled her close.

How often had he wanted to do that since he laid eyes on her? How many times did his own frustration wake him in the hours long after midnight because he desired her so? And now, she was here. Reinhard feared her. He feared her rejection even more. It would take little from her to be able to wound his heart.

He shouldn’t have done it.

He had sworn to himself that he wouldn’t.

Yet, to resist such an opportunity seemed impossible. He kissed her. Fully expecting for her to slap his face, he was surprised when it did not come. She yielded to his kiss, so much so that he could feel it. When her soft full lips parted beneath his own, Reinhard already knew that he loved her.

His heart was pounding in his chest so hard he was sure that she could feel it. Slender arms were around his shoulders with her fingers tangled in his short hair. He groaned against her lips. He had wanted her before but that want had now changed into a need.

Reinhard prayed for the first time in over a decade.

She leaned back into the bearskin rug before the fire, pulling him with her. His body covered her own. Yet. His passion quickly turned into embarrassment. He was mortified when he realized that she could feel his erection. The embarrassment evaporated when she pressed upwards to him with rolling hips. Her body moved like a dancer’s would. It made him hold her that much tighter.

He broke away from their kiss. Her eyes opened and watched him. She smiled up at him and he couldn’t help but return it. When his lips touched the hollow of her throat, he felt her gasp of pleasure. Nearly two months of wanting this woman, he was stunned.

This time it was she who initiated the kiss. She teased him with little nips of her teeth and flicks of her tongue. Oh! The sounds she made! When his fingers drifted across her hard nipple, he couldn’t help but smile at her sweet sighs of pleasure. Slender hands pressed against his upper back. His weight rested at the apex of her thighs. The nightgown had risen upwards, baring her legs. He could take her……

No, not here. Not like this. She was worth far too much to him to be treated like a harlot.

Reinhard wanted to love her as she deserved. He wanted to touch every bit of her silky skin. Lifting her gently, he carried her in his arms. Even then, he could not tear his eyes from her.
They walked to his room just like that. A booted foot kicked the door shut behind them. Helping him undress, she stroked his chest with a gentle touch. Her soft mouth, which he had claimed mere minutes before, kissed along his collarbone. When his own breathing quickened, he heard her soft sigh of delight.

He didn’t want to stop to remove the nightgown she wore. Reinhard was afraid that if he did it would break the spell. The breeze from a partially opened window made the nightgown billow around her. He smiled and traced his fingertips along the fair skin of her upper arms. A tug to one strap of the gown and he needed to see more of her. A kiss was pressed against her skin and slowly Reinhard and the gown traveled downwards until it dropped to her feet on its own.

He knelt at her feet and looked upwards in awe. All the weeks that had passed with him wanting to know her fully. To see her standing there bared to him, was worth the wait. The fullness of her breasts and the swell of her hips accented how small her waist truly was. It made him feel if he could span her waist with his hands.

Strong hands stroked up her legs, noting that they were silky smooth. His lips pressed right above her short pubic hair and continued upwards. When he found her lips once again he couldn’t believe this woman was willing to accept him. Did it mean she could love him as well? That was almost too much for him to hope for.

While the exact words were never spoken, Reinhard had been told his entire life that he was not worthy of love.

Alexandra swept her fingers over his arms. She traced a single fingertip over his skin in wonderment. Pulling away from the kiss, she moved behind him. A trail of kisses started near the base of his spine and traveled upwards. Reinhard shivered with the new sensation. She pressed to his back and her hands found his chest. Fingertips slid lower to trace along where his scars were.

“You are magnificent.” She whispered.

They were not just words spoken, but words meant. He felt the words in what was left of his heart and soul.

Turning, he guided her towards the bed. Once they were both comfortable, his fingers traced across her full mouth. A flick of her tongue tasted the tip of his finger. Reinhard couldn’t help but chuckle. He noticed that there was a bit of the devil in her blue eyes.

That generous mouth closed around his finger to suckle gently. A swipe of the tongue across the pad made him groan. It was her turn to chuckle. Lips traveled now to his nipple. A kiss placed there was tender at first. Then perfect white teeth nipped around the areola. Unable to control himself, his hand tangled in her hair. Alexandra didn’t let it stop her from sliding down further.

A silken cheek brushed his hardness. It was such a light touch that it caused a shiver of pleasure to race up his spine. Pressing upon his hips, Alexandra shifted him to his back. She caught his gaze easily and held it while her lips caressed his cock with kisses.

Holding him gently, her tongue swiped across the tip – tasting him for the very first time. Cerulean blue eyes said everything and nothing when she began sucking at the thick head. Alexandra was slow and so very careful with him. Reinhard realized she was just teasing, that this was just the barest of foreplay. Those eyes promised so much more.

Reinhard’s hands now gripped the sheets. He was unaware that he tore the expensive linens so enraptured watching her was he. Yet, it was the soft sweet sounds that whispered along the shaft
that made Reinhard tremble like never before.

He would have never thought that she would want him.

“Come to me Schatzi. Kiss me again.” The words were a soft plea.

With a slow blink of those eyes, she lavished kisses against his hardness with a smile. In every movement she made while crawling back up the length of his body, he could see the sinewy strength that she possessed. Alexandra may call him Lion but here and now she was the predatory one.

Kissing him as asked, she whimpered softly against his own full lips. Reinhard was raised in the modesty of Germany and Alex in the not nearly as strict rules in the United States. The difference between the two was noted. In the brothels, women were paid to perform what wives refused. The whores never did it with enthusiasm or such unbridled pleasure. Alexandra was an entirely new experience for him.

To try and take the upper hand back, he swiftly moved her to her back.

Happily trapped beneath him, Alexandra arched up to kiss him again. His hand captured and cupped around her breast. They both were slow with the exploration of each other’s bodies.

Although he rarely showed it now, Reinhard was very self-conscious with women. He had learned to hide being self-conscious around others, but it was still painful. It would be days later before he would realize he had not been that way with her. Her exploration of him was such a pleasure, he didn’t think to be self-conscious. Alexandra enjoyed him fully. What he considered flaws she lavished with the same sweet attention she paid to all of him.

His large hand reached under and squeezed her bottom. She bit his shoulder playfully when he did. Reinhard was a large man. Tall and thick bodied, most men were at least several centimeters shorter than he. He had used his size to intimidate others so many times in the last 10 years. Now Reinhard was afraid of hurting her.

“I’m not fragile. I won’t break, sweet Lion. I swear to you.” The words were a quiet whisper from her lips.

Had she read his mind? Or could she simply tell by the look on his face? He didn’t know and frankly didn’t care. She knew him well enough to see that in him. That was all that mattered to him.

The look in her eyes said to him what he had always wished to hear. Without a word whispered, he knew she belonged to him alone. That realization hit him hard. He knew this was where he was supposed to be, where they were supposed to be. Alexandra had been his destiny.

When he entered her, a gasp of pleasure was felt against his lips. Alexandra slid a leg up and it curled over his back. Once more he feared hurting her. The fear went away when she turned the tables on him. It looked like it took her little effort when she flipped him on to his back.

With her hands on his chest, she lay against him. Reinhard was shocked when she not only kissed him but whispered against his lips about how wonderful he felt. Pulling back, she sat up. Her eyes stayed intent on his own.

Grabbing hold of her hips he thrust upwards and kept thrusting only to see her tip her head back with pleasure. Letting go of her hips, he sat up while staying inside of her. His own body trembled when Alexandra kissed him again. The sinuous way that she was able to move was a surprise.
Hard tipped nipples rubbed against his chest. Reinhard cupped his large hand around her breast while his lips found the pink tip.

Their lovemaking was slow so that they may savor each other in a way that was fresh to both of them. All they knew was each other. The sun had been up for hours when, with passions sated, they slept peacefully together.

It was several hours later when Reinhard woke with a start. What a dream he had!

Only when he tried to move did he realize it was not a dream. Alexandra was curled up against his side. Her cheek rested over his heart with her hand pressed against the center of his chest. The movement caused her to stir and curl in tighter against him. Kissing her forehead, Reinhard was truly happy.

The kiss was just enough to make long lashes flutter and eyes open. She smiled up at him.

“Good morning Reinhard.”

“It is a very good morning indeed. I thought you were but a dream.” He whispered.

“Not a dream.” Her voice sounded sleepy still.

“I best make sure.” Pulling her up on top of him, it pleased him to hear her laugh.

It pleased him even more when she kissed him with a beaming smile.
Chapter 13

The lovers had fallen back to sleep together. Hours later, Alexandra had awoken first. She didn’t move or open her eyes this time. The guilt of having sex with a man that was a Nazi was ripping her gut in two.

She betrayed her family. Alexandra betrayed the people she loved most in this world. She betrayed the people that loved her most and took her in when she was an unwanted infant. Tatti. Mama. I am so sorry. I am so very sorry.

Alex didn’t realize she hadn’t called her father Tatti or mother Mama since she was barely more than a child.

Reinhard was often the one who gave her the only kindness she was ever offered while at that hospital. Alexandra had earned the respect from most of the doctors and nursing staff but that didn’t translate into kindness.

How was she going to face her parents and grandparents ever again?

All human life has value. That was what she was taught by her family. Did her family think Nazis were human? Yes. The Nazis had done some inhumane things but they were still human. She remembered the tale of an American Nazi.

A man ended up in the ER.

Papa was working then. What had happened? Alexandra was pretty sure it was a car wreck. The man wanted to leave. He didn’t want the ‘Jew doctor’, her grandfather, touching him. All of a sudden the man had sudden pain in his abdomen. Supposedly it was the worst pain ever. Papa knew what had happened. They got the man to the OR and sure enough, Papa was right. Aortic rupture. He saved a man that hated him. He saved a man that thought he should die.

He didn’t do it because it was his job. Papa did it because every life is precious. Every life is a gift from God. If God hadn’t wanted the man saved, then why did God put him in my path, Papa asked. She learned that story back when Alexandra sill believed in God.

Maybe I was put in Reinhard’s path for a reason? Well, not by God but still a reason.

She knew how drawn to him she was. She had felt it in the hospital. After last night, she knew she wouldn’t stay away from him. She didn’t want to stay away from him.

Alex felt Reinhard stirring behind her. She rolled over and smiled. He looked like a child waking up. His short blond hair was curling up in places. His cheeks were ruddy and a smile touched his lips before his eyes ever opened.

“Good morning beautiful.”

“Good morning handsome.” She smiled. “Actually, it may be afternoon.”

“You have been up for a bit?”

“Not long. I didn’t want to disturb you.”

“You never disturb me Alexandra.” He brushed his fingers lightly against her cheek.
“Thank you.” God help me. I care about this man. Liar! You don’t just care. God please help me. Please?

“Shall we fix breakfast? Or perhaps lunch?”

“Breakfast definitely. I can do that Reinhard.”

“No, we do it together. “

So they did. They laughed and teased while making coffee. Their breakfast was simple fare. Bread, cheese, and ham for Reinhard along with a boiled egg. Alexandra kept her own simple with bread and jam. She added berries and some nuts to her breakfast.

“You don’t like the meats?” He asked while they were cleaning up after breakfast.

“Actually, I am a vegetarian. But I didn’t have any choice in the dormitory.” She was embarrassed just now telling him that.

Reinhard frowned. He put his hands on her hips and held her gently. “Why did you not tell me?”

“It didn’t seem important.”

“Please make sure you get things for yourself to eat. If you don’t wish to cook with meat I will eat as you do.”

“Why?”

“Your happiness is important to me Alexandra. It is very important to me.” You are important to me. I love you.

“Thank you Reinhard.” Long arms draped over his shoulders. “You are so wonderful my sweet Lion.” It killed her say it. It was even more painful because she meant it.

Alexandra heard the knock of the door, she scrunched her nose slightly. “I may not let you go.”

Reinhard smiled. “Is this a hostage situation?”

“Maybe. I could tie you up.” She batted her lashes while Reinhard allowed one of the men to enter.

“Obergruppenführer, the camera you asked for.” The box was offered.

“It has been tested?”

“Only indoors Obergruppenführer.”

“Well let’s take it outside and see.” Under normal circumstances he would have been furious.

Reinhard was able to snap several pictures of Alexandra without her noticing. The rest were of the area. Which was what the camera was meant for.

“Obergruppenführer, would you like a picture of you both?”

“What do you think Schatzi?”

“I would like that.”

Reinhard leaned against the railing. Alexandra leaned, in turn, against him. She tilted her head to
the side so she looked up at him. Reinhard wrapped his arm around her waist and held her hand. The way they looked at each other anyone could tell that there was a lovely secret shared between them.

“It’s finished Sir.”

“You may leave.” Reinhard never looked away from Alexandra.

His lips parted ever so slightly as his hand cupped her cheek. Reinhard was exceedingly gentle with Alexandra. He would prefer death over the thought of hurting her.

“You are so beautiful.” The words were whispered as his lips were pressed to her own. Pulling back slightly, Reinhard smiled tenderly. “I have been looking for you my entire life. I don’t think I believed that you actually existed.”

There was a knock before he could finish what he was saying. Reinhard was needed downstairs. He started to pull away but he was stilled by a gentle hand. Fingers tangling in his short blond hair, Alexandra kissed his lips. Her lithe body pressed tight against his own. Immediately, he enveloped Alex in his arms. Words were not needed at all. The kiss lasted only seconds, as she was aware that he was needed. Reinhard would have sworn he could taste her sweet kiss for hours afterwards.

“Schatzi?” Reinhard had just come up from the first level of the villa. His last call had taken several hours. It was now evening.

She didn’t respond.

“Alexandra?”

Again there was nothing.

It took him several minutes to find her. Alexandra was sound asleep on his bed. Laying on her stomach, she wore one of his button down shirts. The hem of the shirt didn’t quite cover her bottom the way she was laying. Reinhard smiled softly watching her.

Having her in his bed did nothing to cease his adoration of her. She fascinated him to no end. How a talented mind such as she had could still be so gentle and kind was strange to him. It was like she was from a different world.

Reinhard removed his shoes and stripped down to nothing but his trousers. Laying down on the bed, he was careful not to disturb her rest. He watched her. She was peaceful in her slumber.

He did not intend to sleep as he laid there with her. She brought comfort to him in ways Reinhard didn’t understand yet. She soothed his soul. When he awoke, two hours later, she was pressed tight against him. His arm had moved over her waist and the palm of his hand rested against the bare skin of her abdomen. He felt so at peace doing absolutely nothing, which was very unlike him.

He was the sort of man that always kept himself busy. Even most meals were taken with colleagues or others so he could continue to work. Reinhard always found things that needed doing. For the life of him, he had no idea why he could simply be at peace when she was near. Here at the villa he indulged Alexandra’s orders for him to rest. Now it had become something pleasant, but why?

He had been awake for about twenty minutes when she stretched and slowly woke up. Rolling over, she nuzzled against his chest with a smile.

“What time is it?”
“Almost seven in the evening.

“Goodness. I slept for almost three hours.” She slid her hand along his side.

Kissing her forehead he chuckled. “Why are you wearing my shirt?”

A crimson blush flamed fair cheeks. “It smelled like you.”

“Now it smells like us.” He gave her ear a playful tug.

“I’m sorry.”

“Do not be sorry my sweet. I don’t mind at all. I was merely curious. What is mine, is yours Alexandra.”

“Reinhard.” She smiled beautifully.

“I love it when you say my name.”

“Hm. Do you now Reinhard?”

“Keep it up Schatzi, there will no one to save you.”

“What if I don’t want saving…..Reinhard?”

“Oh you are a wicked little girl are you not?” He smiled broadly at her antics.

“You have no idea Reinhard. You have no idea…….yet.”

She kissed only his lower lip. Drawing it between her own, a flick of the tongue slipped against it. Alexandra slid a leg between his and used her’s to stroke at his inner thighs. Nipping at his lower lip it was slowly released so that she could whisper his name against his own mouth.

“You tease me?” Reinhard smiled, looking down.

“Would I do that……Reinhard?”

“You already are.”

“You have a glorious arse Obergruppenführer.” She gave it a squeeze.

“What is it that you want Schatzi?”

“You.”

Grabbing her hands, he wrenched them upwards. Holding on to both of her wrists in one hand he looked down at how she lay before him. There were only two buttons actually buttoned on his shirt. The two right under her breasts. His mouth claimed her throat first.

Oh! The warm fragrant flesh there. He devoured her while she struggled to get her wrists free. Pulling the cloth open, he exposed her breasts. He suckled on one, while his free hand caressed the other. He worshiped the rounded flesh with slow kisses. Reinhard looked down at the hardened peaks. He then took turns kissing and nibbling on each one.

Finally he released her hands from his grip. “Alexandra, you are not permitted to touch me with your hands. Do you understand?”
“Yes Obergruppenführer. I understand.”

“Good girl.”

His hands slid to her sides and he curved his hands so fingers were beneath her. With his fingers stroking her back, a trail of kisses pressed downwards. He watched how she pressed up against him. Once more she reminded him of a dancer. Her body moved in ways he was not used to. There was a certain fluidity to her movements that he had never witnessed before.

A gentle touch for now, Reinhard stroked his fingers over her soft and fragrant skin. His touch was slow. It was as if he was savoring the craftsmanship of a priceless violin. He hadn’t shaved today. So, he brushed his chin along her body. There was that little hitch of breath from her. Looking up, he gave her a half smile. Just by the look in her eye, he knew she was aroused.

There was still part of him that expected her to be snatched away from him. That small part held a fear that he refused to admit to.

Gentle hands with calloused fingertips started right below Alexandra’s breasts. White skin was like marble perfection. While her body was firm, it yielded to a gentle touch. Unlike the marble, she was warm and alive. And oh so very sensitive.

“Reinhard…” She breathed his name.

His mouth trembled when he pressed his lips to her flesh. Reinhard paused with eyes closed. It was a must, he had to stop or tears would fall from his lashes. They were not to be tears of pain, oh no. These tears were ones of joy. He had been granted a gift and was thankful.

It had been so long since he believed in anything of the teachings of his youth, but in this one moment in time Reinhard was given the true realization of what love was. He then knew how love encompassed all things.

His eyes opened and lifted. No words would have even been able to say the silent thanks he bestowed on this woman. His woman. The way she moved with his caresses could never be duplicated by another. It was all for him. Being given such a heady power was the most soothing of feeling coupled with terror.

Situated between her thighs, his cheek lay upon her upper abdomen. The first tear fell. Then another. And another. Reinhard permitted the dam to open and in doing such he opened more of his heart to Alexandra.

She drew him upwards with the tears. The tenderest of kisses took the tears from him and gave him peace. A single fingertip grazed along his lips. Kisses followed where the finger had just touched. Reinhard lost part of himself to her then. It was a piece of him that she would always hold and treasure. No one ever owned a part of him before and no one ever would again, that gift would never be granted to another.

Over and over again Alexandra whispered his name. Reinhard couldn’t help but smile.

Rolling to his side, he moved her as well. His touch was like fire on her skin and Alexandra pressed back against him. Her rounded bottom rocked against his trousers. He had forgotten they were on. Immediately they were removed. He needed to feel her as completely as he was able.

“Reinhard!” His name fell from her lips on a soft breath of surprise when he entered her from behind.
“Oh my beautiful girl.” The words were whispered softly against the shell of her ear. “I would give you the world to make you smile.”

“I don’t want nor need the world. I want you. I need you. You and only you.”

“You have me for as long as you wish to have me.”

“What of always?”

“Even longer if that is what you desire.”

Alexandra responded with a sigh of bliss.

Their bodies spoke the words their minds were too frightened to utter. Still, both Alex and Reinhard knew.

It was well after dark when Alexandra opened her eyes to the spent man that lay over her with his hand resting over her heart. She was at peace like never before. With a smile that curved her lips, she stroked her fingers down his back.

“You are the most wonderful thing that has ever happened to me Alexandra.”

“I would have preferred to have met you under different circumstances. Yet, I am glad that I was there.”

“I am glad you were as well. Alas, now I shall tell everyone you just like to make an entrance.” He smiled.

“Reinhard!”

He laughed.

“To have you here in my arms it was worth it. I mean that Alexandra. I would go through all of that over again just to have you here with me.” He pressed a kiss to her. He could feel the beating of her heart beneath his lips.

“Reinhard?”

“Yes my darling?”

She felt as if her throat was closing, keeping her from saying the three words that she wanted to say. “It’s nothing. I’m just being silly”

“Well, I have made a mess of your hair.” Reinhard took his comb from the drawer of his bedside table. Climbing behind her on the bed that put Alexandra between his outstretched legs and he carefully began to comb the tangles out for her.

“You don’t have to do that.”

“I know.” He noticed a new and different look of bliss on her face as he combed through her hair.

“Thank you.”

“I am not trying to pry but you do not have much experience with men do you?”

“No, not really. I was too busy most of the time.”
“I believe it. You are too knowledgeable of a physician given your age.”

“There is more to that story. So instead of graduating from public school at 18, I took a test at 16. I hated being in an American school. I was used to the British ones. Then, I went to a small school for university for 2 years and decided to test again. I was accepted into medical school, so I was a doctor at 22 instead of 26 or later like many others. Since I wanted to be a trauma specialist and a reconstructive specialist I worked for a while at one of the veterans hospitals.”

Everything she had said was true. Alexandra hated high school. She was bored with the classes and the people. So, she dropped out after school ended that year. Alexandra didn’t tell her parents that she did. Instead, she took something similar to what would become the GED test and then applied to the junior college. It was only after the junior college gave her permission to attend that she told her parents. She did virtually the same thing for medical school.

Leaning back, Reinhard felt her move with him. His hand stroked the flat plane of her belly. He could feel the muscle beneath her silky skin. What would their child look like, he wondered. “You are not only beautiful but brilliant.”

“Goodness no. I just got bored easily in school. I had advanced further than what was being taught because of going to school in England. Plus, I was an over 1.8 meter beanpole when I was younger. So men didn’t really look at me.”

“I understand this quite well.” He chuckled.

“It’s different with men!”

“No. No it isn’t. My voice was high pitched and I was a 1.9 meter beanpole with a big nose.”

“I quite like your nose and I love your voice. So there!” Turning around, she kissed his nose.

“Oh so you like tall men with big noses and funny voices. That is good for me then.”

“Reinhard! You are far too hard on yourself.”

Turning on him, she pushed him back on the bed. Reinhard was laughing when she climbed on top of him. His long legs were bent at the knee with feet on the mattress when she laid over him. Another kiss to his nose and then she kissed his lips.

Alexandra laid her head on his shoulder. They laid in silence for a while with his hand rubbing her back gently.

“You feel good.” She smiled dreamily.

“Do I?”

“Yes. You are a man of contradictions aren’t you?”

“I am?”

“You are hard bodied but there is a tender side of you. Your kisses are like the sweetest of songs but you don’t hear them the way I do. I can feel the strength in your hands but you are able to stroke my skin with the softest of touches.”

He chuckled softly. “How is it everything I worked desperately to change about myself you seem to enjoy?”
“You may try to change them but a leopard can’t change its spots.” A crash of thunder made Alexandra jump slightly. “Or maybe you don’t feel the need to change them in front of me?”

“I don’t know.”

“Let’s go watch the rain.” Sliding off of him, she slipped into the white nightgown from the night before.

“You are serious?”

“Yes!”

Reinhard shook his head and pulled on the trousers. He walked to the door and stood there for a moment. Alexandra had her face tipped upwards, enjoying the rain. It was the first time she felt the rain since landing in Prague. It had rained while she had been there, of course, but this was the first time she wasn’t working.

She turned to see Reinhard standing there. She bit her lip ever so slightly, looking bashful. She held out her hand to him. Unable to resist he stepped out into the down pour and took her hand in his. She pulled him closer so she could kiss his lips.

The wet nightgown was translucent on her skin. Picking her up, he laid her back on one of the tables. He was already panting in need of her. Pulling the gown upwards, Reinhard exposed his lover. He wasted no time burying his face between her legs.

His tongue parted her sex. The sweet musk of their earlier romp clung to the curls there. The most intimate of kisses made her thighs part even further. Reinhard knew what he was doing and their intimacy knew no bounds. Alexandra’s orgasm hit her hard. Pushing up against him, she cried out his name. He didn’t stop.

When finally she reached her third orgasm, he pulled her back up. Her lips found his instantly. Hand cupped around the front of Reinhard’s trousers. His hand laid over hers for a moment.

“Turn around.” The two words were gruff.

Complying with his order she did just that. Arms braced themselves on the table while the hem of the wet nightgown was rucked upwards. Her bared arse was slick with rain. The sight of her as such was the most erotic thing he had ever seen.

Reinhard took her harshly. He huffed and started to slam into her. His hands on her hips and he pulled her to him. Immediately, Alexandra started to meet his thrusts. He was surprised to feel her wetness clench and release around him. The faster he moved the faster she did as well.

It was mere minutes before he was flooding his lover with his copious pleasure. Laying over her half bent body, he kissed her shoulder.

“I didn’t hurt you did I?” His voice was quiet.

“No. Not at all. You felt. You feel still….amazing.” Alexandra took his hands and held them gently close to her. “Don’t move yet, please?”

“Why?”

“I can’t explain it.” He felt so good. No, it was more than that. He felt so right.
“Or is it won’t?”

“Both.”
“Dr. Kettler?”

Alexandra looked up at the sound of her name. The sight of the man startled her so much that she jumped out of the chair. Stepping back, she kept her eyes on him. This was the man that held a gun to her head the day she saved Reinhard’s life.

He gave her a sheepish but pleasant smile. “My apologize Doctor. I didn’t mean to scare you. I guess this means that you do recognize me.” He smiled when she nodded. “I am Johannes Klein. I am called Hans by most and you may call me that if you wish. Or you may refer to me as Johannes. I also answer to hey you.” He smiled warmly at her. “The Obergruppenführer asked if you would please come down. We will departing shortly.”

“Thank you.”

Opening the door for her, the large man spoke. “Doctor?”

“Yes?”

“I wish to apologize for our first encounter. I meant no disrespect towards you. With the Obergruppenführer injured – “

“Hans.” She touched his bicep. “Think nothing of it, I understand. I bear you no ill will or grudge. I would have acted the same way given the circumstances. Back upstairs, I was just startled.”

“Thank you. Doctor.”

At the bottom of the stairs was Reinhard. He looked upwards with a smile waiting for her. The moment she saw him, her smile grew and Alexandra took the stairs just a touch faster than before. The way they looked at each other concerned the men somewhat.

Reinhard was known to be somewhat cynical when it came to women. While not cruel in the physical sense, the men had seen a lot when it came to their superior. The sheer number of women that he went through while they had been part of his detail for the last two years was monumental.

The way he looked at the American doctor was different from the rest but still the men feared for the kind and gentle woman’s well-being.

“Hans said we are going somewhere.”

“Mmhm.” He smiled and slid an arm around her waist.

“You aren’t going to tell me are you?”

“You are correct.” He gave her a grin.

“Careful. I have ways of making you talk.”

“You do?”

“Most certainly.”

“I am curious of these ways of yours.”
“As well you should be.”

Reinhard’s eyebrow raised as he looked at her. He said nothing as he helped her into the car. Pressing close to his side it was obvious she was trying not to laugh.

“Tell me Schatzi.”

“Well…” She whispered softly in his ear. “It’s not so much talking as getting you to say my name over and over again.”

“Naughty girl.” He grinned.

“You have no idea. Yet.”

The two cars came to a stop what appeared to be in the middle of nowhere. This time it was Alexandra that raised her brow.

“Trust me. Please.”

“I do.”

Reinhard led her down a path. There was already a blanket spread out for them and a basket. He had some of the men bring it out already. He glanced at her and saw that she was smiling.

“Reinhard…….”

“Yes?”

“Thank you.”

“Oh we are not done yet.”

They followed the path deeper into the forest. Alexandra noticed the humidity around her. It felt very much like Houston in the summer she thought. Finally, they stopped.

“The water you saw on the first day? That is maybe 10 kilometers that way.” Reinhard pointed.

“This is the end of it.”

There was a trickle of water off of a cliff like rock that flowed into a small pool. That trickle of water had worn away the stone to create a small basin in the rock formation. The lush foliage created a beautiful background.

“This is beautiful! How hot is it?”

“Touch it. It is perhaps like a hot bath.”

She dipped her toes in the water. “Oh! That feels divine. Is it deep?”

“No. It wouldn’t cover your head.”

“May we get in?”

“I was remiss my dear. I did not get swimwear for you. I will make sure to get you some and we may come back at another time.”

“Reinhard, I don’t need swimwear. Neither do you.”
“Your dress will get wet.”

“No it won’t.”

“Schatzi, are you suggesting –“ He was shocked.

“Going nude? Yes.” Beguiling blue eyes twinkled with mischief. “Shall we?”

Stepping out of her sandals, she pulled off the dress. Alexandra wasn’t wearing anything beneath it. Which transfixed Reinhard to the very spot that he stood. He wanted to say something but he had no idea what. Instead he watched her step into the water and follow the rocks into the deepest part. Alexandra was almost 30 but one would never have guessed that by her figure. She looked to be but a girl still, he thought.

Sliding under the water she swam a few strokes. When she broke the surface again for a breath she turned to Reinhard and discovered him gone. Alexandra’s brow creased. She was concerned that she had upset him.

“I must admit Alexandra, this is an excellent idea you had.”

She jumped before starting to laugh.

“I thought I had frightened you off.” She wrapped her arms around his neck.

Alexandra kissed him. Her lips parted when he returned the kiss. One arm let go from around his neck. Under the warm water her fingers brushed the underside of his cock, stroking him to hardness. The look of surprise on his face made her retreat some.

“My apologies. I believe I told you that Americans are more forward than Germans.”

When she tried to retreat further Reinhard grabbed her ankle and yanked her back to him. His fingers slid into her hair and he kissed her with unbridled passion.

“Just because I am surprised, does not mean it is unwelcomed. I have never known a woman like you before. You fascinate me Schatzi.”

“You need to get out more often Obergruppenführer.”

Ducking under the water again she swam between his legs and came up behind him. Laughing softly, she held on from behind.

“What are you doing?” He sounded amused.

“This.”

Soft lips touched the shell of his ear. A kiss was pressed behind it. Taking the lobe between her teeth, she gave it a tug. Her hand laid against his chest, holding on to him. Alexandra’s touch was gentle as she explored him beneath the water. She felt him shiver with pleasure when she eased the foreskin back from the thick head.

He could feel her breath against his back. He knew the exact moment when it changed as her heart beat faster with her own arousal. Groaning, he tipped his head back. The warm water and her slippery body pressed against his were something dreams were made of.

“This way.” His voice was gruff as he pulled her with him.
Under the cliff was a smooth beach like area. It was small, perhaps enough room for maybe three or four people. Reinhard carried her up the short embankment. It was taking everything he had to not shove Alexandra to her knees and take her from behind.

Something told him that she wouldn’t mind but no. Not like that.

Gently he laid her back on the packed earth. Reinhard moved to lay beside her.

Those beautiful eyes looked up him, trusting. That was what he saw those fathomless depths that he was so unused to, trust. It was a startling revelation for him. When was the last time someone trusted him the way she was able to? When was the last time he was willing to work for that trust as he did with the woman next to him?

Since meeting her, he wanted to do nothing more than make her happy. Reinhard never considered that out of the ordinary for him but he couldn’t remember when it wasn’t about his own desires being met first until Alexandra. She came before him in his thoughts. Her actions showed that she put him before her. He hoped that his did the same.

“Reinhard, kiss me. Please?”

The way she looked at him. The way she asked him so sweetly for a kiss. He would not deny her what she asked. He was unable to. Gentle and slow. Reinhard savored how she felt and how she made him feel. When she reached for him he couldn’t help but pull her in closer.

He was surprised to notice the wetness seeping from her swollen sex. His fingers brushed against her. Much to his surprise, the wetness there had nothing to do with the water from the spring. As much as he wanted to do nothing more than bury his face between her long legs, he did not.

His hand parted her legs but he did nothing but cup his hand over the well-trimmed curls between her thighs.

“You are the most beautiful woman I have ever seen Schatzi.”

She burned with embarrassment again. It made him smile to know she was still so close to innocence. He didn’t care that she had been with a man before. That factor had nothing to do with the innocence he saw. The world had not yet sullied her views as it had his.

“Thank you.”

She pressed her lips to his chest to kiss him over his beating heart. It had been so long since he had been touched in such a way, Reinhard found pleasure in the most simplest of touches of her fingertips. He was unable to help but marvel at her. He had spent a lifetime hating so much about his own body that she showed such care and adoration for it made no sense.

When her hand slid across his arse, she squeezed him there and sighed happily.

“You have the most beautiful arse that has even been on a man. It is utterly…” She squeezed him once more. “….delicious.”

Sliding down, he parted her thighs further. Unable to help himself it was there he kissed. Using his tongue he parted the folds and was gifted with more of her sweet juices.

This woman would be his death Reinhard thought. If she was to be, he would die happily because of her.
It took nothing to have her body quaking with pleasure. She cried out over and over again. A second followed so fast that Alexandra called out both him and God. God might have let up but he wasn’t about to. He wanted another from her.

“Reinhard please. Stop. Stop.”

He ignored the pleas and drew his teeth across that hard little bud. Immediately, her hips thrust upwards. Growling around her, he shoved two of his fingers inside of her and began to thrust them in and out. Reinhard felt it for the third time, her body gripped tight around his long fingers. Her sweet voice called out to him. She no longer was begging him to stop. No, now her voice was the highest of praises.

He didn’t stop. No, he wouldn’t stop. Not until she did at least.

As soon as her pleasures were spent, he started again. His body over her own, he thrust inside of her. His face to her own, he saw her eyes go wide and come alive with him inside of her.

“Reinhard…” His name became the tenderest of whispers and the sweetest of praises.

He smiled with sound of his name. Her beautiful long legs held tight to him when she wrapped them around his waist. Those sweet lips that kissed him with reverence parted for him. Lips he dreamed about kissed him with the surest of pleasures.

He thrust harder. Wetness gripped him hard and he groaned. No she was not fragile. He had known all along.

“Harder Reinhard. Please. Harder.”

“I won’t hurt you.” He could barely get the words out.

“You won’t. I swear to you. Please. Harder.” She begged him.

Her nails bit down on his back and were drawn downwards. That was all he needed. That little bit of pain allowed for him surrender the careful control he had always kept with women. No longer did he worry, he permitted himself to lose himself fully in her. Their pleasure filled cries silenced the forest and the creatures near.

Reinhard had no idea how long they laid together afterwards. They were both too spent to speak. A slender hand stroked the nape of his neck but even then her eyes were closed.

He was the first to move.

His lips pressed to her swollen mouth. She returned the kiss and smiled.

“Are you alright?” His voice was quiet.

“No. I have far, far, FAR surpassed being just alright.”

Reinhard noticed that she was grinning rather goofily, he started to laugh. The more he laughed, the more she laughed. The cycle went on for several minutes.

Reinhard finally moved off her and sat down. Picking up her hand he kissed the back of it.

Alexandra sat up next to him. “You Reinhard are a beast of a man.” She laughed when he gave her a surprised look. “I swear to you that was a compliment.”
“We should probably clean up a bit and get dressed.”

“Your men will be wondering what happened to us?”

“Oh no. I am positive they know exactly what happened. Neither of us were silent.”

“Aren’t they with the cars?”

“No. They are no further than a few meters out of sight.”

From the tips of her toes all the way to the top of her head, Alexandra blushed crimson. “Oh Jesus H. Christ. They best be patting you on the back and offering to buy you drinks Reinhard.” She slid back in water.

“What?” He was confused.

“Not every man is such a good lover that he can make an atheist forget herself and call out for God.” She splashed him with water before diving beneath the surface.

That was the moment he knew that there would never be another woman in his life besides her.

After they returned to the villa, they had a long and leisurely lunch together. It was midafternoon when they were both outside. Reinhard was reading a book that Alexandra had recommended to him. He was enjoying it quite a bit. She was finishing up her routine yoga exercise.

“Schatzi?”

Wiping herself down with a towel, she came over to him. Kissing him on the lips, she smiled. “Yes?”

“How do you feel about going for a ride?”

“Horseback?”

“Yes.”

“I believe that sounds like a marvelous idea Obergruppenführer.”

He swatted her backside with a smile. “Go change.”

“Does this mean we aren’t going to reenact Lady Godiva?”

“Maybe another time.” He grinned.

They both changed their clothing and Alexandra braided her hair back. She stepped out to the kitchen and packed a small bag to take with them.

“Schatzi?”

“Coming.” She met him at the door.

“I never thought riding gear could be sexy. You proved me wrong.”

She laughed. “Flattery my darling Reinhard. Flattery.”

“What is in the bag?”
“Never you mind. That would be a surprise.”

There were two sets of riders patrolling the premises as it was, they didn’t need to bring anyone with them. Alexandra was in black boots and tan breeches. Reinhard wore almost the exact same. He eyed her bouncing step with a smile. The tight breeches left very little to the imagination.

“Obergruppenführer?”

“Ja Schatzi?”

“Are you lagging back so you can watch my arse bounce?”

“Ja Schatzi.” He grinned when she looked back at him.

“Silly! Your arse is much finer than mine.”

“I’m afraid I am going to have to disagree with you.”

Upon walking into the stables, Reinhard stepped back. He was curious to which of the four horses she would pick. These four were all his. He smiled to himself, watching her.

All four of the horses liked her. He wasn’t worried about that. The three full bred were an Arabian, Friesian and a Hanoverian. He was fairly certain she wouldn’t take either the Arabian or the Hanoverian. The Arabian was a fine horse, true, but he was small. The Hanoverian had an excellent temperament for young or new riders. She would find that boring. That left the big black Andalusian that had been crossed bred with an Arabian or the white Friesian. The white Friesian was his favorite to ride.

She checked over all of the horses like one should. She put them through the paces in the confines of the stalls. The horses would be let out to graze for a while after they were done riding.

“You’re thinking something.” She looked over to him.

“I am.”

“What are you thinking?”

Walking over, Reinhard kissed her with a smile. “I was deciding which one you were going to choose.”

“Oh? Do tell?”

“The Arab is too small for you. The Hanoverian is too placid for your tastes. You could fall asleep on the back of him and he would do exactly as he should do. That leaves the Andalusian cross or the Friesian. This Friesian is part of the baroque breeding which makes for an excellent horse but I believe the Andalusian cross is which you will chose.”

“Very impressive Sir!” She applauded quietly. “You are correct.”

“Do you need help with the saddle?”

“No. Not at all.”

“I didn’t think so, but to not offer would be ungentlemanly. Your horse is named Amadis.”

“Like of Gaul?”
“Yes.” He grinned.

Alexandra rode easily at first. She was getting used to the horse and letting the horse get used to her. Soon horse and rider were like old friends.

“See down and towards the right?”

“Yes. What city is that?”

“Prague.”

“I didn’t realize we were so far away.”

“Well, you did sleep in the car.”

Alexandra hopped off of her horse and looked around.

“Is everything alright?”

“Of course. Come sit down with me?”

“I would follow you anywhere Schatzi.”

From the small bag, she spread out what looked to be a tablecloth for them to sit. The bottle of wine had already been uncorked and left to breathe. She poured them both a glass.

She set out a plate with cheese and water crackers. She cut a slice of the cheese and offered it to him. Reinhard took it from her fingertips.

“That is delicious! Where on earth did you find such a thing?”

“When Klaus went to get supplies, I asked him to bring me a small amount of plain goat cheese back for me. I added honey and vanilla to the cheese and let it set. Then in a bowl of crushed blueberries, I covered the cheese in fruit. You like it?”

“Yes I do. It is delicious. Why did you go to all of that trouble?”

“I figured you probably never had it. It’s one of the things that I would get back home at the market. So I wanted you to try it.” She offered him a different bite. Which he readily took from her fingertips again.

Reinhard looked to his companion’s smiling face in wonderment.

“Do you not like that one?”

“No. It’s delicious as well. It reminds me of apple strudel. You are so unusual Alexandra.”

She chuckled and shook her head. “Because I make food for the two of us?”

“No. It’s not because you make food for the two of us. It’s because you cared enough to want to show me something of your life.” He paused. “I am used to being cared for by others. What I mean is that is their job to do. They are paid for their services. I am not used to the tender affections of a young woman doing it simply because she wanted to. Because she wishes to share her life with me.”

She blinked rapidly to keep the tears at bay. Her chest ached with the realization that he didn’t
know love. Curling close to him, Alexandra laid her head against his shoulder and held his hand.

“I remember seeing you that first time in the hospital bed. You seemed to be as curious about me as I was about you. If I remember correctly, you had no idea what to think of me any more than I knew what to think of you.

I could see the amount of pain you were in. Your eyes showed it. I had to stop myself from smiling. You were so handsome, even in pain. I found you charming. And interesting. It made me wish to know more about you. The more I knew the more I enjoyed being near you. I looked forward to seeing you every day.” Cheeks bloomed with a warm blush as she smiled. “

“Why did you not say anything?”

“Two reasons really. It would have been quite unprofessional of me. And I didn’t think you would return the sentiment. The day before you were to leave, we sat outside having lunch. I was too busy watching your mouth and wondering what it would be like to kiss you. And then my skirt blew up. I was so distracted by you I wasn’t paying attention to that. I was mortified. Especially because I wore the skirt to impress you.”

She was so embarrassed. Reinhard could see it from the way she kept looking up and looking down to touch his hand. Smiling, he kissed her. His fingertips brushed her hair back. “And now you know what it is like to kiss me. I didn’t know that you wore that for me. Did you really think that I wouldn’t have returned the sentiment?”

“I felt so ridiculous after damn near flashing my knickers. I never thought you would find me attractive. You live in a sea of lovely blonde hair blue eyed women. I am sure you have women begging you on hand and knee for attention. I do know what it is like to kiss you. I enjoy kissing you very much.”

“I was always partial to brunettes actually.” He kissed her full lips. “You are so beautiful Alexandra. To know that you don’t find yourself beautiful hurts my heart.”

“I know I am not unattractive but I am no great beauty.”

“You are to me.” He smiled softly. “My regal queen, I enjoy your strength and courage. You are not my lesser you are my equal in all ways. I wouldn’t want you to beg, except in our bed.” He smiled.

She kissed him. Alexandra savored the taste of his lips against her own. A shiver of pleasure rippled down her spine. “Somewhere along the way I fell in love with you. It was before Krueger backhanded me. I knew.” She finally was admitting it, even to her own self. “I love you Reinhard.”

“You love me?” He felt his face go white. The words he had been dying to say and dying to hear were given to him. Reinhard didn’t burst with the love he had for her. Instead, it made him feel ill.

“Yes. I do love you.” I wish I didn’t. God, I wish I didn’t. But, I do. I’m sorry Mom and Dad, I’m so sorry.

Never would Reinhard have believed that she would speak those words out loud. He wanted to rejoice in learning that she loved him. But he couldn’t. He loved her! Oh he loved her more than anyone or anything. Even himself.

“We best go back to the villa.” The words were gruff when he turned away from her.
It was fairly early in the morning and they had just eaten breakfast. Now, Reinhard was reading the morning reports. It wasn’t anything of interest truly, just something that had to be done. His heart wasn’t in it. Reinhard knew he had hurt her yesterday. She never said that he did but he could tell.

Alexandra had withdrawn from him. She felt foolish. To hide the embarrassment, she was staying away from Reinhard. It was killing him. Not that he admitted it to her, but he loved her. He loved her like nothing else. When she told him that she loved him, it should have been a happy moment but it wasn’t.

Her love frightened him. He would die for her. He would kill for her. He would do anything in the world that he could to make her smile. The problem being Reinhard felt that he did not deserve her love.

She didn’t know the reality of him, after all. He was a monstrous beast. The real man had laid dormant for over a decade. It was questionable if the real man had ever existed outside of his own mind. Reinhard was perfectly aware what he did and who he was. You don’t come to be called Hitler’s Hangman, the Butcher of Prague, or the Man with an Iron Heart because people liked you. Reinhard was completely and utterly wrong.

Alexandra understood more about the tenderhearted man than he did his own self, psychologically speaking. The person that eventually became Obergruppenführer Heydrich was nothing more than a creation. She realized that Reinhard had to build walls to keep himself safe. Those walls were there before Alexandra was ever born.

Alexandra was working in the kitchen, singing as she worked. It made him smile to hear her sing. Reinhard didn’t speak Spanish, so he didn’t know that he song was about heartbreak.

Reinhard could see a life like this after the war. A happy singing wife cooking in the kitchen. Children playing. He could imagine going to the kitchen to spend a few moments of time with his beautiful wife. The children would be under the care of a nanny while he was under the care of his beloved. He sighed wistfully at the thought of such.

Could such a thing be possible for them?

No. It couldn’t. He would never be permitted to marry an American, even if Lina would grant him a divorce. There had already been an attempt on his life, there would be another. He wasn’t a fool. An American married to a member of the NSDAP? It was unheard of. Perhaps if she would join the Party, Reinhard considered. She would never do it, this he knew.

Besides, if Germany lost the war, she would be murdered as a traitor. If Germany won the war she would be murdered as an American.

Setting the reports aside, he made his way into the kitchen. How he loved to watch her! Even just a mundane task such as this where she was cutting up vegetables. She looked so beautiful standing there with her hair pulled up and barefooted. The simple summer dress floated around her slender frame while she moved to the music of her own song.

“Alexandra? Would you follow me please?” He looked stern when he made himself known to her. Abruptly, Reinhard turned and walked away.
“Reinhard?” Frowning, she followed him. It was unlike him. “Was I bothering you?”

“Yes.” He dropped the arm down on the record player and music quickly filled the room. “You made me wish to dance with you again.” Reinhard broke into a wide grin and opened his arms to her.

Stepping towards him, her lips brushed against his in a kiss. The song was Blue Moon. She didn’t recognize the voice but it was a thick sweet baritone that was singing. Swaying to the music, they were lost together.

When the song ended, Alex started to pull back.

“No Schatzi. Right here. Stay right here with me. I don’t wish to let you go yet.” Ever.

“Reinhard, what’s wrong?”

“As soon as I am able to understand it myself, I will tell you.”

So they danced still, this time it was to the music of each other’s heartbeats. They might have stayed there for hours if it wasn’t for a phone call.

Alexandra was sitting outside before lunch so that he may have the privacy to work. She had a pad of paper and a pencil. She was singing to herself again.

“What are you singing?”

She jumped visibly. Alexandra didn’t even hear the door open. “Your powers of stealth are going to cause an accident one of these days.” She smiled and flipped the page on the notepad. “It’s called Why Don’t We Do This More Often.”

“I haven’t heard it before.”

“It was a moderate hit last year. Normally it’s a male and female duet.

“Do you always sing when you are alone?”

“No. Sometimes I sing when other people are in the room. I do it in the operating theatre a lot.”

“Do you know what you were singing when you worked on me?”

“I didn’t have a chance. I was yelling at people trying to get them to do what I wanted.”

“Did they?”

“When I figured out why English wasn’t working and I switched to German, yes.”

“I would have died if it were not for you.”

“That’s not true.”

“No, it is. I heard about the surgery. I heard how you did things that the others didn’t know about. I know for a fact I would have died.”

“You would have been fine.”

“What were you working on?”
“A heart.”

Opening the notebook, she showed him the drawing of the left and right ventricles of an anatomically correct heart.

“That is grossly accurate.”

She smiled sheepishly. “I believe I told you my father is also a surgeon? We have been taking a look lately at Arrhythmogenic Right Ventricular Cardiomyopathy, which is a genetic disorder. Patients with the disorder can have sudden cardiac deaths. We are wanting to predict which patients will have a higher risk. I thought I had an idea but it wouldn’t work.”

“The conversations your family has around the dinner table must get to be interesting.”

Alexandra chuckled and nodded. “Most people would leave the table. I’m a medical doctor and so is my father, Alex, and Eugene. My mother is also a doctor but she is a chemist. Even so, NOTHING bothers her. She raised me, Alex, and Eugene. We were disgusting little monsters. Which is par for the course with children around livestock all the time. Or at least it seemed that way with us.” She pushed her hair back.

“There was a time that my mother had made a cherry pie for dessert. My father starts talking about a surgery while we are eating this pie. My mother had left the table to take a call so it is Dad, me, and my two brothers. Eugene and I were listening and just eating away. Alexander wasn’t a doctor yet. I don’t think he was in med school yet. He ended up turning an interesting shade of green and begged us to stop.”

“Has it changed for him? I enjoy hearing about your family. You can hear the affection in your voice.” He smiled at her. “It also shows in how you speak of them.”

“Oh yes, it changed. You get so used to it that most things about the human body don’t bother you. Thank you. I do love my family. They a wonderful people. You would enjoy them I believe. Except at mealtime.” She smiled.

“So you play music, you can sing, and you draw. What other talents do you have?”

“Surgery? That is about it. I am so used to drawing the heart I can do it in my sleep. Besides you can do two out of the three. I am sure you have talents I have not discovered yet.”

Standing up, Alex came around the side of the table. Dropping herself onto Reinhard’s lap. She gave him a saucy smile before planting a kiss on his lips. His arms went around her waist only to pull Alex closer to him. He could tell she was still hurting from yesterday. The fact that he caused her pain made it even worse.

_I love you Alexandra. You are the source of my smile and joy. He could feel the words sitting on his tongue but couldn’t say them. I’m afraid my beloved. I am afraid if I admit to loving you, you will be taken from me. We should have been enemies instead of lovers._

After lunch, they shared space together in peace. On the radio opera played softly. Reinhard, was going over reports once more. Alexandra rested her cheek upon his thigh while he ran his fingers through her hair. Looking down, he smiled.

“Do you wish to nap?”

“No. I am enjoying the music and using you as a pillow.” The smile was returned with an impish one.
“Do you know this opera?”

“It is one of my favorites. Then again how can one dislike Wagner’s Tristan and Isolde?” Her brow furrowed in thought, realizing something. “Is that where your name Tristan comes from?”

“Yes. Eugen was because of my grandfather.” Reinhard looked down at her.

“My brother’s name, Eugene, is for the very same reason. Well, our grandfather. Not yours. That would have been far too odd.”

“I believe the fates are conspiring again. Come.” He patted her thigh. “Get up. I have an idea.”

“Should I be frightened?”

“You should never be frightened of me. I would never hurt you Alexandra.”

“Reinhard. I was teasing you.”

“I didn’t realize. I’m sorry.” He kissed the tip of her nose. “Get your sandals on, open a bottle of wine and take down two glasses for us please?”

“Hm. You are up to something.”

“Of course. I will be back in a few moments. Then, I need to change.”

Coming back up, he changed into a pair of shorts and a short sleeved shirt. Offering his arm, they walked down the stairs and outside. It was perhaps 200 yards away from the villa. There was a small clearing seemingly in the middle of nothing else important. The surrounding area was filled with fragrant flowers and trees creating a sensuous retreat. The clearing had been well cultivated over the years and was very private. Although, Reinhard made sure there were two of his men not far away in any direction.

The men had arrived before them and hung up a hammock between two trees. There was a small table placed to the side of it for the wine and glasses. He picked something up before laying back in the hammock. He pulled Alexandra on to the hammock with him.

Without warning, he bonked her nose with a small wildflower that he had just picked. He smiled when it made her laugh.

“What is your favorite flower?”

“Calla lilies. Do you have a favorite?”

“Interesting.” The meaning of calla lilies was purity, holiness, and faithfulness. He knew that purity and holiness were not his lover, not after what they had done. Faithfulness. Yes, he could see it. “No Schatzi, I’m afraid I do not. Comfortable my beautiful girl?”

“Very.” Turning her head to the side she kissed his lips. “I do so enjoy kissing you.” The words were soft. Alexandra’s inner dialogue about why she shouldn’t have feelings for Reinhard was fading with each passing day. She knew she was nothing more than a distraction for him. So, when she left she could go home with some semblance of a conscious intact.

“And I enjoy your kisses.” Somewhere inside of him, he could feel the bubble. He wanted to tell her everything. He wanted to say he loved her and that yes he was married but she was the one he loved. She was the only one he ever loved. Except, the bubble was fear. All of the self-doubt he
had ever had sat like a boulder. It sat in the bubble forcing everything he wanted to say back down.

Alexandra was wearing a simple wrap dress. He traced his fingers down the neckline, exposing a line of skin. Her flesh was warm and soft. Reinhard enjoyed just touching her like that. He enjoyed being able to softly stroke her skin in a way that would be considered improper to most any woman, even though they were alone. Mostly.

“You are so unusual.” He gazed upon her, smiling.

“And you keep saying that.” She chuckled. “I assure you I am actually quite boring and unremarkable.”

“It doesn’t bother when I touch you in public.”

“Reinhard. This is hardly public.” She slid a hand under his shirt, stroking his stomach.

“A man does not touch a woman outside of the bedroom.” He thought about it for a moment. “Other than perhaps the hand or a kiss on the cheek.”

“What about dancing?”

“You win that round.” He started to tickle her sides.

“Things are not as strict in the States.” She laughed.

“Would you be embarrassed by me in the States fraulein?”

“No. Of course not. Why would you even think that?”

“I do not look like the men in your country.”

“There is no specific look to an American.”

“I thought Americans had hairy chests.” He cracked the barest hint of a grin. He was teasing.

Moving, Alexandra sat on his stomach with her hands on her hips. Pulling at the tie around her waist, the wrap dress opened. She wore nothing beneath the dress at all.

“My chest isn’t hairy. Nor is any other part of me.”

Reinhard stared at his brazen lover in surprise before pulling her downwards for a kiss. With a chuckle, Alexandra whispered against his lips.

“You like hairy women?”

“You are going to be the death of me Alexandra!”

“Perhaps. Lucky for you, I know how to jump start your heart.”

“You can jump start every part of me like that.” He bit her earlobe “What shall I ever do with you?”

When he laughed again, Alexandra kissed his lips. She was in a playful mood. Gentle fingers mussed his hair while she kissed him. Sliding her hips just enough, she was no longer sitting on his stomach. Her knees gripped his pelvis now and she moved against the zipper of his shorts.

Reinhard’s hand slid behind the dress so he could stroke down her back. To be outside the bedroom like this was tantalizing for him. There was a bit of fear about getting caught but when he combined with how he felt about the woman in his arms? It was a powerful drug indeed.

They were both ready for each other. Alexandra wanted to bring him past ready and into something he had never felt before.

“I want you.”

“You have me, Schatzi. You have me.”

“Not yet I don’t, but I will. And soon.”

Unzipping his shorts, she pulled him free. Alex had a gentle touch and used it to her advantage when she stroked a single finger down his shaft. Looking at him, she bit lightly at her lower lip. Her voice was quiet, there was a lower note to it as well. “You have a beautiful cock Reinhard. Did you know that? It’s so thick and so very hard.” She tugged his shorts down further. “Did you know you hurt me at times because your cock is so big? It’s like being a virgin again and again. I’m not complaining, mind you. I enjoy it. I love it when you are rough with me.”

Reinhard groaned. Hearing her talk like that? Part of him wanted to turn Alexandra over his knee and the other wanted her on her knees.

“I love it. You know that yes? I love it when you thrust inside of me. That bit of burning pain feels so damn good.”

With just the tips of her fingers, she stroked him. Cupping her hand around his scrotum, she scratched the underside lightly. He heard the breathy little whimpers from her lips when she kissed him. Reinhard didn’t need the words to know Alexandra loved him. He could tell by her touch alone.

Her touch was enough to drive any man insane but it was her eyes that captivated him more than anything. The windows to her soul gave a glimpse of even the smallest of nuances. When she kissed him, her eyes showed him what he needed to see. In Alex’s blue eyes he saw the man he always wished to be. For the very first time, he saw himself through someone else’s eyes and was pleased with what he saw.

It didn’t stop him from hearing the desire dripping from her lush mouth.

“Do you know how much I enjoy sucking on your cock? Mmmm? That little taste of you, knowing you are as excited as I am. I love it when you force me to take you deeper into my throat Reinhard.” She licked her lips.

Without warning, she made the first move. Blue eyes fluttered for a moment when they suddenly became one. His reaction was not any different from her own.

“Do you feel that? Do you my handsome Lion? That is what you do to me. That is how much I want you.”

He used both hands to grab at her hips. Those same hands would leave light bruises that would last
for days. Every time he would see her bare skin he would savor what they had done together. Using
her body as leverage, he drove into her as hard as he could.

“Harder please, and don’t you dare worry about hurting me Reinhard. Take me. As hard as you
can.”

“Alexandra.” His voice was rough.

“Yes my Lion? You can feel it, can’t you? You can feel my need for you. I need you more than I
need to breathe.”

His eyes opened just enough to watch her. The tendrils of truth wove their way into Reinhard’s
very soul. She meant every word. He knew she did. That was the headiest pleasure of them all. She
wanted him for nothing more than himself.

Arching back, her long dark hair spilled backwards and tickled over his mostly bare thighs. Gentle
hands covered his and held tight. His eyes focused between her legs. Reinhard watched himself
thrust. He hadn’t realized how big he seemed to her much smaller frame.

Without missing a beat, she dipped down. Kissing him. He couldn’t stand it any longer. His hands
left her hips and grabbed at her long hair. Pulling her sharply, her breasts were right where he
wished them to be. Feasting with hands and mouth, Reinhard devoured the tender flesh. She was
marked as his and his alone.

No one had ever given themselves freely to him as she did. With women he had known, they came
with a price of some sort. She asked for nothing from the man she only knew as Reinhard.
Knowing the gift that it was, he returned his own to the one woman he would die for.

Alexandra bit down on her lower lip to keep her cries at bay, she ended up drawing blood while the
pleasure he unleashed quaked through her entire body. Much to Reinhard’s amazement every bit of
pleasure that she felt, filled him with his own satisfaction but in a different way. It was then that he
was given a different gift. Her pleasure was more important than his own.

Tender were the touches when he followed with his own just moments later. They both laid still,
trying to catch their breath. With her forehead laid against his shoulder, little aftershocks of
pleasure were noticeable as they scattered across Alexandra’s skin. She shivered in the strong arms
that held her to him.

Tentatively, his fingers trailed down her spine. “Are you alright?” His voice was hoarse.

“Far better than just alright.” A gentle turn of the head and her smile was for him alone.

Brilliant blue eyes sparkled. Her lips were slightly swollen with how roughly he was kissing her
and her own bite. Lifting a hand, the pad of his thumb brushed across the fullness of her lower lip.
When he saw the blood, he sucked it off of his own thumb and smiled. He knew how she had
drawn the blood.

I love you Alexandra.

I love you and never want you to leave me.

Please love me as I love you. Please.

I want to return the words to you.
I’m afraid.

I’m afraid that you will be hurt because of me.

I’m afraid that once you know who I am, you will leave me.

I cannot bear the loss of you.

He wasn’t brave enough to speak the words. Her kind and sweet nature would never understand the brutality that he had done these last ten years. She would look at him in horror before running away. At best they had four more weeks together. At best.
They returned to the villa hand in hand. Alexandra was carrying her sandals as they walked back. There was a bounce in her step Reinhard noticed. While they weren’t far from any town, the villa was situated in an area that was meant for privacy. They had been here for nearly three weeks. Not once had Alexandra asked for anything for herself alone. She didn’t ask to go shopping or to the cinema. She didn’t even ask to go out to dinner.

“Alexandra?”

“Yes?” She beamed happily at him.

“Would you like to go somewhere?”

“Where?”

“I don’t know. Perhaps out to dinner?”

“If you need to leave for a while we can certainly do that.”

“I don’t need to leave no.”

Abruptly, she stopped. “Talk to me my Lion. What is going on?”

“I don’t wish for you to be bored or unhappy.”

“I’m not. I’m not bored nor unhappy. As matter of fact, I am very happy here with you. You are fascinating and an excellent conversationalist.” Leaning in slightly, the words were for him alone. “Plus a magnificent lover.” She kissed the shell of his ear.

As much as he loved hearing the words, she did make him blush. The bright flush went from head to toe. Grabbing her, Reinhard threw her over his shoulder. Alexandra laughed wildly and gave his bum a nice pinch. He smacked her bottom, making sure that she was sufficiently covered as they went back upstairs.

Setting her down with ease, Reinhard now grinned. “Naughty girl.”

With a flutter of lashes she gave him the most innocent look that she could muster.

“Would you like something to drink Schatzi?”

“I should probably eat something first. Are you hungry?”

“A bit.”

“What would you like?”

“No. You make something you would like.”

“Those are dangerous words Obergruppenführer.”
“I trust you.” I trust you and I love you my Alexandra.

“Very well. I am sure I can come up with something.”

Dinner was simple fare really. Alexandra did lemon and dill salmon for Reinhard. She reheated a cup of lentil soup for herself and did roasted asparagus, glazed Brussel sprouts, honey glazed carrots, and roasted broccoli for them both.

“I am surprised that I have not gotten fat as much as you feed me.”

“Well, between your exercises and our exercises you work all of it off.” She smiled sweetly.

Reinhard choked before bursting out in laughter.

They had just finished cleaning up from dinner when there was a call for Reinhard.

“Come down with me?” The thought of stepping away from her was unpleasant at best.

“Is that alright? I don’t wish to get you in any trouble.”

“If I need you to step away, I can say something.”

“Very well.”

They went down together. Alexandra saw the surprise on the faces of the men. It amused her a bit. The office that he was using was quite small. So instead of giving him the claustrophobic feeling, she curled up between his legs.

Pressing a cheek against his bare thigh, Alexandra was content to sit with him as such. She could hear both sides of the conversation, it really wasn’t anything of importance as far as she could tell. Not that it mattered, she would never tell a soul.

Reinhard laid his hand down on the crown of her head. She made a muffled sound of pleasure against his leg. The way Alexandra was angled, she couldn’t see his face. If she could have, it would have been obvious that he felt delight with her silent company.

With eyes closed, she leaned against him. There was a brief contemplation of what he would do if she unzipped his shorts. Alexandra did not do it but a plan was hatched for something else. She kissed the warm skin of his thighs. She rubbed her nose against the seam of his shorts. Alexandra grinned. He still smelled like sex from earlier.

Content, she leaned against his long legs. I could get used to this, she thought. Bring your pet to work? It almost made her giggle.

She had been there for about an hour with him when he handed her a note. She needed to leave.

Rising, Alexandra gave him a smile and a soft kiss on his jaw. Reinhard grabbed her hand before she could move off. He pressed a lingering kiss to her hand only to mouth the words thank you. Slipping out of the room, she walked down the hallway.

In the informal dining room that Reinhard’s men used for mealtime there was a game of dice and game of cards going on.

When the men noticed her watching, they all jumped to their feet.

“No, no. Please sit gentlemen. I was just watching. I didn’t mean to interrupt.”
“Would you like to play Doctor?” Jürgen was playing cards and asked.

“I probably don’t know how.”

“We can teach you.”

“Very well. As long as I do not need money.”

“No ma’am we are playing for biscuits. Although if we win, we wouldn’t mind some of your baking.” He grinned broadly.

As one of the men began to explain, she realized she knew it.

“Oh. I know how to play this one. I will beat you, be forewarned. Does that mean you will bake me something?”

The men readily agreed.

Their dealer started and the game was soon going strong. Three men played against her and another acted as the dealer. Hand after hand, Alexandra won. Every so often she would throw the others a bone and purposely lose a hand. Three more men switched in and still, she took all of them down.

When the call was finished, Reinhard started to go back upstairs. Stopping at the first step, he thought he heard Alex’s voice mixed in with those of his men. Walking back, he saw her sitting with them. It took the men a good 30 seconds to realize he was standing there.

When they did realize it, all the men jumped to their feet and were at attention immediately.

Reinhard ignored them at first. “Dr. Kettler why is there a large pile of biscuits in front of you?”

Alexandra took what she called a cookie and bit into it. She offered him one, which he took.

“Those are my winnings.”

“I see.” He stepped in closer. “You have been gambling with my men I take it?”

“Yes Obergruppenführer, I have been.”

He bit into his own biscuit. “What were you playing Doctor?”

The men were starting to sweat. Reinhard was being too quiet. Usually that meant that something was simmering right below the surface and it was never good.

“Blackjack.”

“I see. Ernst! What was the bet made?”

“If Dr. Kettler won we would bake for her. If we won she would bake for us, Obergruppenführer!”

Reinhard nodded and offered a hand to the still seated Alexandra. Taking it, she popped another biscuit into his mouth. She could tell he was trying not to laugh. The men were not so sure.

“Gentlemen. If I may give you some advice? Never think of women to be lesser than you. Alexandra can you tell them how you won?”

“Card counting.” She grinned impishly.
When the men all groaned she started to laugh.

“I told you that I would beat all of you!”

“Yes you did Dr. Kettler. Yes you did.”

“Since you didn’t play fair Dr. Kettler, I think it would be good to give the men a lesson in counting and they have to bake something for you that is worthy of an Obergruppenführer’s palate.” It was Reinhard’s turn to grin. “Now, if you would excuse us I need to put Dr. Kettler to work.”

“Gentlemen, if the Obergruppenführer will allow, I will teach you a game called Farkle. This one is a dice game so counting cards doesn’t work.”

Reinhard offered an arm and took Alex back upstairs with him. It was only when the upstairs door closed did he burst out laughing.

“How did you know?” She was amazed.

“You told me.”

“No I didn’t.”

“Oh you did Schatzi, you did. I asked how you know you were going to win back at the hospital. You told me count the cards, say a Hail Mary, and count the cards again.”

“I did say that. Bloody hell.” She slid her hands to the back of his neck. “I tell you all of my secrets.”

“Not all.” He wrapped her in his arms once more.

“Oh?”

“Why did you choose a man like me?”

“It depends on where you wish to start in that equation. Do you wish to start at the beginning or at the now?”

“What if I want both?”

“That means you are greedy.” She kissed his nose.

Reinhard swept an arm under the backs of Alex’s legs and picked her up.

“Put me down you Beast!” She laughed and kissed him again.

“No.” He grinned, walking over to the sofa and sitting down. “You have to tell me both before I let you go.”

“What if I don’t want you to let me go?”

“Then you are the one being greedy.”

“I am a greedy girl. This I know.”

“Tell me?”
“Did you know that you were the first person I met here that was kind to me?”

“From what I saw there, I believe it Schatzi. There was a lot of jealousy regarding you.”

“Good god, why?” She frowned.

“That’s why my dear. You don’t understand how different you are. You are not only a beautiful woman that was deemed untouchable. You were the best doctor too. Some of them appreciated that and some of them hated you for it.”

“That is awful.”

“It is what it is, Schatzi.”

“I love you Reinhard.” It was the first time she said the words since she initially told him.

Reinhard smiled sadly. “You shouldn’t love me Schatzi.” He tucked her hair back behind her ear and he laid his hand against her cheek. “You don’t truly know me. I am not a good man. My sweet Alexandra, you should run from me.”

“Running just makes one tired.” She looked down. Taking his hands and holding them between her own, Alexandra spoke softly. “Reinhard Tristan Eugen Heydrich. Born 7 March 1904. Married to Lina. You have three children with her. You are called the Blond Beast, Butcher of Prague, and the Man with the Iron Heart. But I call you my Lion or my Beast.”

He looked at her with shock writ across his face. “Who told you?” He stood up abruptly, causing her to tumble to the floor. This time he didn’t go to her or even help her up. No, this time he put some distance between them.

“No one. I figured it out myself.” She felt it then. That exact moment when she felt her heart splinter and break. She had been a fool.

“You swear to me you are not a spy?”

“I swear to you. I am not a spy. I am nothing more than a 28 year old American doctor that was in the wrong place at the wrong time.”

Reinhard backed away even further.

There was sadness in her eyes as she looked up to him. Upon seeing him move further away, Alexandra looked at the floor.

“I figured it out when I realized Tristan was from Tristan and Isolde. You were on the cover of Time magazine back in February. They did an article about you.” Her voice sounded hollow to her own ears.

She wanted to cry but wouldn’t. Not here or now and especially not in front of him. Rising she walked back to the bedroom that had been the one designated for her own use. Alexandra closed the door behind her. Changing into the shorts she had made and layering a few plain cotton shirts that she had been given at the hospital, she pulled on socks and her boots.

A glance to the window, her eyes welled up with tears. All but the shorts she was wearing had been given to her after the hospital. She wouldn’t take anything she felt didn’t at least belong to her. Quietly, she opened the door of her bedroom Reinhard was nowhere to be seen and she was very thankful for that.
The men were busy playing games still and that meant that no one would be at the door. Although there would be guards outside and on the private road to the villa. They knew her and she was fairly certain that they wouldn’t try to harm or stop her.

“Good evening Dr. Kettler. May I help you?”

“Actually, if you would please radio the other team and let them know that I am going for a run. I would appreciate it, Jürgen.”

“Of course Doctor.”

“Thank you.”

Giving a nod, she smiled and kept on. What Alexandra didn’t know was Reinhard hadn’t left. He had to take another call. If it had been anyone else besides the man he called Führer, he would have refused.

The guards informed the others that sat at watch points down the main road leading back to Prague that Dr. Kettler was out for a run. She had gone for runs before but usually Reinhard was with her or a couple of his men. Even with the small changes, the men thought nothing of it.

Five kilometers only took about an hour to walk at a moderate pace. During that hour she berated herself over and over again. What the hell would she do when she reached Prague was the least of her concerns. No, she had been a fool. She had been a fool to lose her heart to a goddamn Nazi. She had been even more of a fool to have had sex with him. Shit. She hadn’t thought about birth control. Fuck Fuck Fuckity Fuck!

Was it just because she was alone and afraid perhaps? Maybe in the beginning when he was still in the hospital that was the case, it wasn’t now. No, now she loved him. Fucking hell, the first man I fall in love with had to be a goddamn Nazi. How does that happen? WHY does it happen? Why me? She kept walking. Alexandra wanted to be away from all of this madness desperately. Saying fuck it to herself, she started off in a run. She was a marathoner. Running the remaining distance back to Prague would not be a problem. She could do that in her sleep.

It would be a little over two hours in total before Reinhard was off the phone again. When he went back up to speak to Alexandra and to apologize, she was nowhere to be found. Running down the stairs, he went to the dining room. No one had seen her but they had not been looking either.

Finally, Jürgen told him she went for a run 2 hours ago. The guards would keep the villa secure but all six of his men were given orders to search the grounds and go to the road. The watch points were given orders to keep an eye out for her. If Alexandra was spotted she was not to be detained, they would only be permitted to follow her and radio in their location. They were not permitted to harm her in any way. Reinhard make certain his name was not mentioned in this.

The two men at the midpoint posting saw her right after the message was given.

Doing as told, both men went to follow her in the staff car, a Wanderer W11. It was a medium duty vehicle that also was a convertible. The men elbowed each other with grins while watching the American doctor. She had the perfect jiggle in every last one of the right places. Her long hair was tied back and it swayed like a metronome ticking off the beat of her steps.

The more they saw of her the more the men wanted to have their version of fun with her.

Alexandra saw them and there was something about how they were acting that made the hair on the back of her neck stand up. She started to run faster with hopes of getting past them just enough
to disappear into the trees.

The men in the car sped up. At first they tried to cajole her into the car. Then they tried to play off that she would be in serious trouble and sent to one of the camps if she did not get in. When Alexandra took off in a sprint in the opposite direction they stopped trying to get her into the car willingly.

It was an old ploy but it meant that they had to turn around which would give her at least a better head start.

The driver pulled up alongside of her and hit the wheel. It made it look like she would be run over. The passenger in the vehicle used Alex’s hair and clothing to drag her into the moving car.

Immediately she started to fight. She caught the passenger in the face with her boot. The force of the kick managed to make a bruise in the shape of the boot tread. Taking the risk, she jumped out of the vehicle and rolled. It took a few seconds for her to find her feet and take off in a run. Taking a risk, she ran into the wooded area.

Using a zig-zag pattern to run, she was praying to lose the two men. What finally stopped her was a gunshot. Hands immediately went up and she stopped. The two men were arguing if they should take her back to the post or just use her there.

Here would be too dangerous they decided. Someone may hear them.

With a gun to her back, they walked back out to the road. The man that she kicked in the face, grabbed her and shoved Alex as hard as he could. She went sprawling face first into the gravel. A piece of broken glass cut her deeply. The gash was in and around her eyebrow. Immediately, the gash started bleeding profusely.

Boot Print, as she was calling him, shoved her face into the gravel and glass again. He rubbed her face in the dirt while laughing. Within seconds her face was a smear of dirt and blood. He started to drag her off the ground by her hair.

Alex was thrown face first back to the ground with one of the men kneeling over her. One, two, three punches landed against her right kidney. Still, she tried to fight. Launching an elbow back, she felt the man’s nose crunch and break. His screams made her smile happily.

“Arschgesicht!” She swore.

The man that wasn’t screaming snapped cuffs on her wrists and threw her into the backseat of the car. The force of her head hitting the edge of the door was enough to knock her unconscious. They pulled her out of the vehicle by her hair and dragged her inside the watch point building.

With her face smeared with dirt and blood, she was a fright. The cuts on her knees and other parts of her legs was smeared with dirt and more blood. She looked as if she had already been violated.

Somewhere within, her instincts clicked into place. Alexandra was slowly coming around from the blow to the back of her head. She didn’t let the men know that yet. Eyes barely opened and then closed immediately. The two men were busy trying to clean the blood off the face and uniform from the man’s nose she had broken.

She checked herself mentally from head to toe. It was then that she realized her shirt had been torn open or cut and her breasts exposed. Fuck.

Well, that is probably what they are planning on doing to you Alex. She cursed silently again. Shut
up brain, we got to get out of this.

She hurt. Her entire body was sore and the real torture had not even begun to start.

Wrists were still restrained behind her. There may have been ties around her boots, securing her to the chair. She wasn’t certain and didn’t dare look. They were talking about having their way with her and then slitting her throat. The men laughed about it. They could dump her body in the woods and no one would know it was them. They, in fact, could blame it on the Czechs.

A slap connected with her cheek, it wasn’t for pain so much as to wake her up. It was enough that her eyes opened spontaneously. The man with the broken nose stepped behind her. His hand pulled her hair so hard Alexandra could barely move her head.

The other had unzipped his pants and was stroking himself. While Alex rolled her eyes in disgust, she smiled beautifully at the same time.

“Can’t get it up you little limp dicked asshole? Awww. Don’t worry. With that tiny thing I wouldn’t have felt it anyway.”

He slapped her face for that remark. That time she expected it, her head turned with the blow.

Alexandra smiled beautifully once more with blood on her lips and teeth. “You know acting like a prick won’t make yours any bigger. As a matter of fact, it just makes that tiny little jerkin’ gherkin of yours even smaller.”

When the man stepped even closer she spat the blood in his face and smiled once more.

“Do you want to die cunt?”

“Oh please, you think I didn’t hear you were planning on dumping my dead body in the woods? Besides cunt? That’s the best you got? Christ I have heard kindergarteners come up with more originality than that. I would accuse you of being Jewish but damn, you aren’t anywhere near that intelligent.”

“You fuc-“

That was all the man got out. A single shot was fired, spraying both Alex and the 2nd man in blood.”

“Step away from her or you die now.” It was Klaus Fischer, Reinhard’s man. “Are you alright Dr. Kettler?” He didn’t take his eyes off the man that was going to force himself on her.

Holding his hands up, the man stepped away from her.

“For the most part.” She answered.

The man with the broken nose was screaming on the floor behind her. When Klaus shot the man it ended up lodging in the would-be-rapist’s spine. He wouldn’t be going far.

Reinhard walked in wearing his full uniform. When he saw the state Alexandra was in, his eyes became a cold hell of fury. He stepped behind Alex and shot the man that was screaming between his eyes without a word. Gently, he removed the cuffs and the rope that secured her to the chair.

“Can you walk Schatzi?” Reinhard was gentle in covering her exposed breasts.

“I think so.”
He offered her a hand up but the concussion got the better of her. Alexandra started to fall. Reinhard swept her up before anything happened. He wanted to kill the other man now, but he wouldn’t. The man that had started to abuse Alexandra pissed himself in fear.

“Obergruppenführer, please have mercy? I had no idea she was your girl.”

“You were given orders to not harm this woman and not to detain her. The fact she is my girl is irrelevant. You were given direct orders that you did not follow.”

“Klaus, call for Dieter. You and he can begin once I take care of my Schatzi. And get two more men for this checkpoint.”

“Yes Obergruppenführer.” Klaus replied.

There were reasons why Klaus and Dieter were always in charge of the others. While young, they were far more senior than most. It was more than that. The two men were fiercely loyal to Reinhard and they were the sort of men that got things done no matter what.

Dieter had the skills and the stomach for certain tasks. He would not torture the innocent but this man was not innocent. Once he heard about what the man did to Alexandra, he would make him suffer for days. When Dieter found out the plan to rape and murder? The bastard would beg for death.

Klaus didn’t normally have to torture a prisoner. It wasn’t part of his makeup to enjoy such work. Dieter was better at that aspect. However, this would be the exception.

Klaus, Dieter and the other 4 of Reinhard’s men were all quite fond of the pretty American. She had become like a younger sister to them and she treated them as older brothers. Whenever she baked sweets for Reinhard, there was always plenty brought down for them as well. When Reinhard was busy, she would play a game of cards or dice with the men. The men had adopted her as one of their own.

Some of their affection for her, at first, had been because she was able to keep the Obergruppenführer occupied and happy. As the men began to get to know her, they couldn’t help but enjoy having her around.

Dieter was getting married in two months and it was Alexandra that taught him to dance. She fixed Klaus’ finger. She also baked a beautiful cake for Klaus’ youngest sister’s engagement as a thank you for all the clothing she picked out for Alexandra. All of the men had several stories each to tell of her kindness.

Klaus had gone upstairs to give some information to Reinhard that had been phoned in one late morning. When he stepped outside on the deck he was surprised to see Alexandra going through her complicated yoga routine. Reinhard had just finished his own non-complicated routine.

“Strange isn’t it?”

“Yes it is Obergruppenführer.”

“If you wish to wait, she is almost done. You may ask her about it.”

“Thank you Sir.”

Picking up a towel and wiping the sweat off, she walked over to the two men.
“Good afternoon Klaus. How are you this fine day?”

“Quite well Dr. Kettler. How are you?”

Reinhard passed her a glass of water.

“Good. Very good.” She looked happy. When she murmured thank you to Reinhard and kissed his cheek Alexandra beamed.

“Dr. Kettler, if you don’t mind me asking, what was that you were doing?”

“It’s called yoga. It’s a discipline to help your body and mind. It includes breath control, simple meditation, and the adoption of specific bodily postures. I started doing it about 12 years ago to cut down on stress and help me with sports. It also has many strengthening abilities.”

“That is marvelous!”

“Reinhard, is it okay if I show your men some of the exercises?”

“Klaus? Do you think you and the others would like to learn?”

“Yes Obergruppenführer. I believe so. I am positive that Hans and Dieter would love to learn actually.”

“Talk to them and see about making an hour’s worth of time every other day. Then Dr. Kettler will be able to work with you six.”

It was just two days later that Alexandra started to instruct the men.

What was most surprising was that they were shown a different side of the Obergruppenführer. While still fierce, Reinhard was a different person with Alexandra. Reinhard had always been filled with a type of nervous energy. While still energetic, he was calm and peaceful.

There would be no mercy shown for the man who wanted to rape and murder their little sister.
Still a trigger warning here.

Walking out with Alexandra in his arms, he couldn’t let her go. He needed her against him. Feeling her in his arms was the only thing keeping him from killing a man. Reinhard was no stranger to violence. It was something that ceased to bother him long ago.

Throughout his entire life there was always some sort of brutality lurking close to or right in front of him. It began with his mother and her torrent of beatings he endured. From his mother to now being part of the highest ranking of men in Germany, he had never known peace. That was until he found Alexandra.

He needed to heal her. He needed to tell her he loved her. Reinhard was so desperate to do both that he felt like he was being pulled apart. More than anything he wanted to hear her sweet voice tell him that she still loved him.

Unfortunately, he couldn’t get a single word past his lips.

Alexandra was carried up the stairs back to their home at the villa. Reinhard sat her down briefly so he could start a bath. He was worried. Never before was there such a vacant look in her eyes. She was filthy from the abuse the two men dealt her. Even her hair was matted with dried blood.

“Schatzi, do you need help with your clothing?”

It took a good 20 seconds for her to respond. “No.”

Helping her into the tub, Reinhard removed his own clothing and stepped in behind her.

“Alexandra, do not worry. I will not be improper with you. It is just easier for me to take care of you this way so not to cause you more pain. I am so very sorry that I didn’t find you sooner. I had to take a call. I never thought you would leave.”

“That was my own stupidity, you have no reason to apologize.”

“Why did you leave?”

“I was hurting.”

“I am so very sorry my girl. It was not my intention to hurt you. My girl. My sweet girl. I cannot tell you how sorry I am. I am so very sorry I hurt you and caused you to be hurt.”

“No. You asked legitimate questions. You don’t have anything to be sorry for. I was foolish.”

“Do you wish to talk about what happened?”

“No.”

“Alexandra, do you need to go to the hospital?”

“No.”
“I hate to ask this but did they force themselves on you?”

“No. They were going to but you and Klaus arrived first. They were going to rape me then slit my throat.”

“They said this to you?”

“No, to each other. They thought I was still unconscious.”

“You were unconscious?”

She nodded.

Carefully, he helped clean her up. The way he held the soapy sponge, his fingers didn’t touch her. Actually, the only time Reinhard touched her was when it was unavoidable. When he washed her hair for instance, his fingers rubbed her scalp. He felt the lump from where she hit her head. He was careful not to hurt her there either.

While Reinhard thought that he was taking care of her, Alexandra felt that it was making things worse.

She wanted to scream at him that she not broken or dirty! She just hurt……

She drew her legs up to her chest and hunched forwards. Swallowing hard, she tried her damnedest to keep her voice from trembling.

“I’m sorry.”

“No. There is no reason to be sorry. You did nothing wrong. I was the fool. Alexandra, I know you aren’t a spy. I was frightened when you knew so much about me.”

She nodded. “I can finish myself.”

“No.”

“I’ll be careful. I’m not dizzy like I was.”

“I am not leaving you.”

“Reinhard…”

“Lay back against me and relax.”

Deciding that she was too tired to fight with him, she did as asked. Alexandra had mastered the ability to cry silently ten years ago. What she didn’t master was the way her shoulders shook when she did cry.

“Liebchen, let it out. Don’t try to hide your tears from me.” Reinhard offered his hand so that she may hold on if she needed. He was surprised when she took it.

Clasping his hand between her two she drew his hand upwards and pressed it to her forehead. As she wept, still hunched over, Reinhard placed his cheek against her back. When she finally stopping crying, he pressed his lips to her shoulder.

“Let’s rinse you off.”
Helping her up, Reinhard kept an arm around her to make sure she was steady. He took his time and was careful once more. He didn’t touch her sexually, but he still touched her. Stepping out of the tub first, he then helped her out. Drying her skin, Reinhard helped her sit at the vanity.

“I need to get dressed my girl. I need to check in with the men. They are all worried about you. May I get you anything?”

“Tell them thank you if you would please? Whiskey, neat.”

“Of course. I’ll be gone for only 20 or 30 minutes.”

“Okay.”

She watched him leave before turning back to the mirror. Bruises were beginning to show as she looked in the mirror. Untangling her hair, she got dizzy again. Head between the knees Alexandra drew long slow breaths. After the dizzy spell passed, she braided her hair back into a Dutch braid.

Normally she didn’t wear pajamas, Alexandra had always slept naked with Reinhard. This time she pulled on the top and bottoms. Covering up further, she pulled on the dressing gown. She didn’t want to let him see the extent of the bruising.

Finally, she opened the door. Across the hall, there was a small table. He had left the bottle and a glass there for her.

She thought he was angry. She didn’t blame him. He had every right to be angry. Now that other men had tried to touch her, he was probably disgusted. She was disgusted herself.

Glass and bottle in hand, Alexandra walked to the kitchen. In one of the drawers were packs of cigarettes and matches that they kept on hand at the villa. She grabbed one of each before walking outside on the deck. Not bothering with lights, Alex sat in the shadows. Her chest ached badly enough that she pressed against the sternum with her fist.

Honestly, she couldn’t tell if it was painful because she took a beating or if her heart was just broken. Most likely it was a combination of both, she decided. Staring at nothing, Alexandra was trying to figure out what to do next. Would Reinhard still send her home?

He returned in 20 minutes as he said. Alexandra turned her head when she heard Reinhard walk out on to the deck.

He had been watching the torture of Baur Köhler, one of the men that hurt her and wished to rape Alexandra. Reinhard felt no remorse for the man. He truly believed Köhler deserved to die and that would be the end of that part of the problem. Klaus and Dieter would make sure it took a very long time for the man to die.

Sitting down in the chair next to her, his brow creased. “Alexandra talk to me, please? If you need me to beg on my knees, I will.”

“No. You do not need to beg.”

Picking up her hand, he held it gently. Kissing the back of it, he raised it and pressed his forehead against it. “Would you come inside with me, please?”

Nodding, she picked up the items brought out with her. Cleaning up, she followed him in.

They both went to the sitting room. Reinhard sat on the sofa. When he saw that she was moving to
the chair, he glanced at her before looking away. He had hoped she would sit next to him. Since she didn’t make that move, he did. Reinhard rose from the sofa and sat upon the rug at her feet.

“Reinhard, please. You don’t have to keep this up.”

“Keep what up?” He didn’t understand.

“Pretending.”

“Pretending what? Schatzi, I do not understand what you are talking about.”

“I’m ok. I have dealt with this before. Please, don’t pretend to be concerned or worried. It’s okay. I was a distraction, we both enjoyed ourselves.”

“You thought you were a distra –” Then he realized what else she said. “Alexandra what do you mean you have dealt with this before?”

“It’s nothing.”

“Alexandra, please?” The words were whispered. He knew what she meant.

She stared at him for what seemed like forever. “When you said I didn’t have much experience with men, I agreed with you. I made myself busy because…well because. When I was 18 I had gone out with some friends and a man I had started dating.” She closed her eyes.

“The friends were the man’s friends and their girlfriends. The 4 men drugged me and the 3 women went along with it. I figured out that had been drugged very fast. I made myself start throwing up and continued vomiting until the police arrived. I don’t even remember calling the police, but apparently I did. I lost consciousness when they came in and was taken to the hospital. My grandfather was working that night. He saw me come in. We tried to get them all put in prison but because nothing happened, so to speak, the police didn’t do anything to them.”

He looked upon her with horror written across his face. When Alexandra saw his expression, she read it as disgust. She couldn’t do anything but turn away. Keeping herself from crying was getting harder and harder.

“What did they give you?”

“Morphine mixed in wine with extra sugar.”

“Alexandra, how many men have you been with?”

“Why are you torturing me with these questions Reinhard? You. You are the only man I have loved and you are the only man I have had sex with.”

“You were a virgin?”

“Yes.”

He stared at her. It wasn’t that Reinhard didn’t believe her. He was just surprised at her admission.

“Why?”

“Fear. I didn’t trust people for a long time. Still don’t really. I couldn’t understand why these people wanted to hurt me. If people I cared about wanted to hurt me what was the rest of the world going to do.” Alexandra looked down. Staring at her fingers, she didn’t go on.
“Why didn’t you tell me? Why did you say you had been with a man before?”

“A 28 year old virgin? It’s embarrassing. I have been with a man. I have kissed and touched a man. Did I have sex? No. People say that a woman’s innocence is precious. Goddamn, no it is not. I fought hard to be a surgeon. Nobody really wants a woman surgeon. I could get pregnant or I could get married and quit. Married with a houseful of kids is what everyone expected me to do. I just wanted to help people and save lives.”

She wiped away the tears.

“You are only the second man that has seen me naked. The last one? It was my father when he changed my diaper.”

“Why me?”

She chewed on her lower lip and still wouldn’t look up. “You were the first man I felt attracted to in a decade. You were gentle and sweet with me. There was something about you that made me feel safe. I enjoyed talking to you. I loved to make you laugh. It’s a very long list.”

“And you think of yourself as a mere distraction for me?” When she nodded, Reinhard closed his eyes. He was unable to fathom that she would see herself as a distraction. “Knowing who I am and all that I have done, how can you say you love me?”

“It was hard reconciling what I know about you and the man I know, true. That doesn’t make me love you less Reinhard.” Alexandra wiped the tears that had not yet fallen away before looking to him.

“But as I did not know all of you until recently, you do not know all of me.” Hurt and fear were written across her beautiful face. It was the sadness in her eyes that was torture for Reinhard to witness. “You will probably wish that I had been killed by those men.” Or you will simply kill me yourself. What’s a dead body in the woods after all?

Staring up at her, he didn’t know what to expect. “Alexandra…no……never.”

“My name is Alexandra Elisabeth Kettler, now. It wasn’t always so. My birth mother named me Alexandra Elisabeth Krauss. She died a few hours after my brother and I were born. My birth parents? They were a Catholic family. My birth father had died a few months prior in an accident. My biological grandparents weren’t in the best of health and there was no other family that would take us. So my brother and I were put up for adoption and sent to an orphanage. A couple that was close to my birth parents couldn’t have more children but wanted more. They adopted us. Abraham and Rebecca Kettler. They are Jews, Reinhard.”

“Eugen is your adopted brother?”

“Yes. He is a doctor but decided to become a rabbi when he turned 28, seven years ago.”

“You know what I have done, how?”

“It is known in America what Germany is doing. It is in the papers and on the television. There are already books in the libraries. You were on the cover of one of the most popular magazines in the US.” God. I am never this tired. I just want to sleep. Do I have to wake up?

Grabbing her swiftly, Reinhard jerked Alexandra to him from the chair. She let out a strangled scream at the sudden movement and touch from him. Terror washed over her as he held her tightly in his arms. Alexandra began to shake with fear. She could feel the panic bubbling in her gut.
“Look at me Alexandra! Look me in the eye.” When she finally did, he smiled. “I love you. I love you and only you. I will not allow anything more to happen to you. I cannot. I will not. Your parents. Your heritage. It changes nothing.” He meant every word he said. “My sweet beloved Alexandra. You have never been just a distraction for me. Never. I have loved you since long before we came here to the villa. Each day I love you even more. Oh my sweet Schatzi, I was terrified to say those words to you because I could not understand how a beautiful woman such as yourself could want a man like me.”

“How can I want a man like you? How couldn’t I? Reinhard, I love you. Yes, I wrestled with loving you. I gave up wrestling with it because no matter, I love you. I want you. You and only you.”

“I am the luckiest man alive.” He offered his hand. “Come to bed with me?”

Nodding, Alexandra placed her hand in his.

They walked together. Having her by his side meant more than Reinhard would ever be able to explain.

They didn’t have sex. They made love in a different way that night. The bared their souls to each other. Hopes and dreams were spoken about. Fears, old and new. They kissed often while smiles were shared and tears were shed. No matter what, their bodies always touched.

Alexandra woke to finding Reinhard staring at her. She couldn’t help but chuckle.

“Bored?” She gave a soft smile. Her entire body hurt. Christ, she thought, my hair hurts.

“You look so innocent when you sleep.” He kissed her lips.

“Well, I believe you know better than that.”

“This is true.” He grinned widely. “Good morning my love, how are you feeling?”

“Tired. Perhaps a bit numb, but I’m ok. Good morning my Lion.”

“Today we start a new day together. I love you Alexandra. I love you like I have never loved another person in my entire life. Somehow, we will make this work. I swear to you.”

They had been at the villa for four weeks now. These were the four happiest weeks of his entire 38 years. He stared at the piece of paper that he had been reading but his thoughts had turned to Alexandra. Looking out the window, it was a beautiful morning to be certain. He considered taking her somewhere. Perhaps a picnic?

Smiling, he rubbed his jaw.

The smile was interrupted with the realization that he actually was healed enough that he didn’t need her medical services. What would happen now? He didn’t want to keep Alexandra as a mistress. While some women would be happy in that position, he wouldn’t do that to her. She would not be happy. Nor would he.

He wanted to share everything with her. He wanted her next to him every night for the rest of their lives. He wanted to grow old with her. He smiled to himself. He was thinking about what it would be like to see the world together. Reinhard knew he was an intelligent man. The thought of having a wife that was a partner and not a subordinate, thrilled him to no end. While he knew he was intelligent, he also knew she far surpassed his own knowledge.
The sheer number of topics they could converse about was endless. Reinhard smiled to himself. They enjoyed the same sports even. He would love to play tennis with Alexandra. He wanted to watch her fence! They had so much in common, it still surprised him.

If Lina ever found out about her? He would have to worry about Alexandra’s safety. Not that his wife would attack her, she would have someone else do it. That someone would be a deadly force. Although, he imagined that his beautiful Schatzi would kill the first ones that tried.

Alex didn’t realize he knew she was there at his side. She had seen him finish a cup of coffee and came over to replace it with a fresh cup. Alexandra turned to walk away when he latched on to wrist, pulling her. It caught her off guard just enough that she dropped into his lap.

Reinhard wrapped his arms around her. “You are trying to keep me up all night?”

“Perhaps, but I promise you coffee would not be my method of choice.”

Her smile was still touched with sadness but Reinhard realized her healing would take a while just as his did.

“Such cheek!” He laughed, nuzzling against her neck. “You smell delicious.”

Soft lips pressed to his temple. “That is because I have been baking.”

“Are you making something to sweeten me up?”

“You are already sweet.” She smiled and brushed back his hair with her fingers.

“My beautiful girl, I am certain that you are the only person in this world to think such.”

“I see no other in this room that opinion matters more than mine on your level of sweetness.” She paused. “Actually, there is no other on this planet whose opinion matters more than mine on your level of sweetness.”

“Is that so?” He couldn’t help but smile at her.

“Yes. Besides, I know exactly how you taste.”

“We best make sure I taste the same.” Reinhard kissed her gently. “Well?”

“I’m not sure. I best check again.”

Opening the neckline of his casual shirt, her lips were soft on his skin. As she trailed kisses from his chest upwards, they both groaned softly. Shifting slightly on his lap, Alexandra faced him. Her long legs hiked the dress up some when she put a foot down on either side of him. With a raised brow, she gave him a sultry smile and tugged the tab of his zipper down.

It didn’t take long for Alexandra to find out his level of sweetness.

“How are your bruises nearly gone already?”

Biting her lip, Alexandra looked embarrassed.

“What are you not telling me?” Reinhard smiled. The woman on her knees before him was beautiful.

“I had Jürgen and Ernst help me gather up leeches. Leeches can quickly remove the bruises. They
are also helpful in reestablishing blood flow to an area. I used them on you in the hospital.”

The face he made had Alex laughing.

Reinhard couldn’t help himself. He looked down at the slick skin between her thighs.

“For the record?” She licked him slowly before zipping him up. She was on her feet once again. “You still taste delicious. Now finish your work.” Alexandra began to walk away. “Oh and Reinhard?”

“Yes?” He looked up.

She flipped up the hem of her skirt, showing just the curve of her bottom. “Incentive for later.” She laughed upon hearing his groan.

“You do not play a fair game Schatzi.” He smiled while listening to her fading laughter.

One thing Alexandra had learned when she became a doctor was the art of the poker face. It was never a good idea to let people know exactly what you think, especially after surgeries. Not that she would lie to her patients, it was simply better to keep emotions out of it. If she appeared distraught after a tough surgery others would pick up on it and feed their own worries. Stating simple facts kept most people in check. Alexandra was using that talent now.

There was no doubt now of who or what Reinhard was. He was a mass murderer. The same with the men downstairs. Hell, even Hedda the maid was Nazi. It was the religion of all the people she was living with. All of them were fanatics about their religion.

She loved Reinhard. Still, Alexandra knew there was no way she could stay in any of the Axis occupied areas. Sighing softly, she went back to being busy.

Packing up the 11 small boxes of sweets, she went downstairs to deliver them to his men, the guards and Hedda. Each box was identical. Each box listed the name of the person it was for. There was even a personalized note on each box to each person. It was just a small thank you for all that they did to help her. The gift, while small, was heartfelt.

Walking back upstairs Alex began to wonder. Would she have been a Nazi if she had stayed with the Krauss family here in Germany? No, she didn’t wonder. It would be highly likely. It was also highly likely she would never had become a doctor either. The thought made her shudder.

“Where were you?”

“I took some sweets to the men and Hedda. What they did for me, well there are no words that say how much it means to me.” She sat down next to Reinhard. Laying her head on his shoulder, she handed him his much larger box with a much longer note. Immediately, his arm was around her slender waist.

“You are good to my men. You are good to me.”

“They work hard for you. And they are good to me. I appreciate everything they do.”

“I am going to have to be a bit more gentle with you I see.”

“I beg to differ!” She gave him a faux stern look.

“Obergruppenführer!” One of the newer men came upstairs but had not asked permission for
Reinhard’s blue eyes narrowed down in anger. The SS man spoke once again before Reinhard had a chance.

“Sir, my apologies. There is an official state car coming up the road. It is perhaps 15 minutes out.”

“Do you have any idea who it is?”

“No Sir.”

“Very well, prepare as if it is the Führer himself.” He sighed. Reinhard expected there would be someone coming eventually.

“Alexandra, if…….. “ When he reached for her hand, she physically jumped back from him with wide eyes. “Schatzi, please calm down. It will not be the Führer. Most likely it is no one of importance. Even if it was the Führer, he would love you my sweet. I know he would. Not only are you German, but American. He would be tickled, not upset.” He tried to calm her. Part of him wished to tell her that the Führer already knew most everything about Dr. Alexandra Kettler. He had laughed at her antics on many occasions and was pleased to know she was a vegetarian like he was. Without ever having met her, the man Reinhard and the others called the Fuhrer had a fondness for the young Dr. Kettler.

Reinhard was certain that telling her that would not help. He was unable to understand how a Jewish woman would feel about Hitler. It was so far outside of Reinhard’s reality, he didn’t think of it at all.

“What do I need to do?” Her voice quaked.

“Change into something simple and professional looking. You may wish to put your hair up. Other than that, just be yourself. Relax my darling. If you are uncomfortable, just let me know by saying you are going downstairs.”

“Is he staying for dinner?”

“I have no idea. It would depend on who is coming.”

She nodded. “What should I call you?”

“Obergruppenführer would be best.” Reinhard paused for a moment. “Alexandra, follow my lead. Depending on who is actually coming out, I may need to make it obvious that you are mine.”

She gave him a weak smile and nodded. “Good thing you taught me to pronounce your rank properly.”

Reinhard had to chuckle, even afraid she was his spitfire. “I love you Alexandra. Some of this may be frightening for you but I will not allow anyone to hurt you.”

“I love you too. We shall get through this.”

Reinhard was standing at the upstairs entry when the guest was brought up.
Chapter 18

With formalities done, Reinhard brought the man upstairs to the sitting room. He was just about to inquire about drink when Alexandra walked in.

Both men turned and stood when she walked into the room. Instantly, her demeanor changed. Under the watchful eye of Reinhard, Alexandra flushed. Her blue eyes lowered for just a moment. When she looked up, she looked to him. Enchanted by his gaze her lips parted. The catch of her breath brought the slightest of smiles to his lips when he heard it. The way they looked at each other told the other person in the room that they were intimate with each other.

Unfortunately, Alexandra had caught the eye of their guest immediately. He saw the raw sexual beauty of the woman before him and he wanted nothing more to covet the look that was for Reinhard alone.

She was wearing heels and it put her slightly taller than Reinhard. He couldn’t help but smile at her. She looked beautiful, as always. Today there was something different. He couldn’t pinpoint it immediately but when he did? Reinhard smirked.

Alexandra looked haughty and slightly dangerous.

She didn’t wear makeup under normal circumstances at the villa. It was only worn to drive Reinhard to distraction on occasion. With her lips painted a beautiful dark ruby red, he could make a very long list of what he wished to do to her right now. The slightly bruised look to her full mouth was enhanced by the lipstick.

Their guest looked at her as if she was dessert. It didn’t take much to see that he was devouring her from head to toe. The look of hunger in his eyes was startling even for Reinhard. Not knowing who he was made Alex acutely aware of her surroundings.

Alexandra raised her head and stood tall. She would not cower to the strange man. The look in his eyes and the cruel curve of his lips would be considered attractive by some women. She was not one of them. He reminded her of a petty child on the verge of a tantrum.

“Dr. Alexandra Kettler. Please allow me to introduce you to Dr. Heinrich Buder. Heinrich, this young lady is the surgeon that saved my life.”

“This pretty little thing is a physician? I don’t believe it.” When Buder kissed the back of her hand he looked up at with a smile.

“A pleasure.” She was trying to keep a civil tone. She automatically disliked the man. Something screamed within not to trust him. Don’t believe I am a physician jackass? Let me show you how well I handle a scalpel.

“You are an American?” He sounded surprised.

“Yes. So please forgive any mistakes of etiquette on my behalf. The Obergruppenführer has been very patient with me.”

“But of course. What is your specialty?”

“Trauma and reconstructive surgery.”
“Infectious disease myself. Have the Americans come far in reconstructive surgery?”

“Yes. The potential is limitless at this point.” Assuming you were trained like I was. She smirked.

Hedda came to the doorway with a tray for the men. Reinhard glanced and gave the woman a nod. “Schatzi.” He waved a hand in Hedda’s general direction.

Alexandra went to accept the large tray from the older woman. Upon the tray were platters with chocolates, cheeses and smoked meats. All the utensils were there along with two cut crystal glasses and a decanter of whiskey. The unexpected item was a small bowl of water.

She walked beautifully across the room carrying the large and heavy tray.

Bent at the knee, she set the tray down and removed the items. Both men watched her. Without a word, she dipped just her fingertips in the water. Inside of Reinhard’s glass she flicked her fingers. Tiny droplets of water hit the whiskey. It was a simple trick to open the flavor up a bit more.

“Sir, is there anything else you may need?” She looked up to Reinhard, having not risen yet.

“Yes. Come here.”

White teeth nipped at her lower lip. Alexandra lowered her eyes slightly. It made her look both submissive and afraid. Rising back to her feet, she held the glasses in her hands still. Reinhard took a glass from her.

“Sip.” He held the glass out for her to taste.

Alexandra did as asked.

“Heinrich?”

“Yes, have her try it.”

She tried a sip once more.

“Stand in front of me Alexandra.”

Once more she did as asked. Her eyes lowered once more. A single fingertip tipped her head to the side. Reinhard touched his lips to her’s. He opened her blouse down to almost her sternum. His hand cupped around her breast, gently at first. He coaxed her nipples into hard peaks. Fingertips gave a trapped nipple a bit of a squeeze. Alex made a sound like he hurt her.

“You know better than to button your blouse up so high, yes?” Reinhard’s smile was sly.

“Yes Obergruppenführer.” Alexandra looked down.

“If you are lucky, I will punish you later Schatzi.”

“Thank you Sir.” I better get a goddamn Oscar nomination for this.

“Good. Would you see to lunch please, Alexandra?”

“Of course. I’ll be downstairs if you need anything, Sir.”

“This is the same woman that Gebhardt met?”

“Yes.”

“He had nothing good to say about her.”

“I would imagine. She proved him wrong and embarrassed that fool. If I had been left under his care I would have died. What man has anything good to say about a beautiful woman who has shown the world how ignorant he is?”


Reinhard laughed. “What brings you out here Heinrich?”

“Himmler wished for me to check on you. I understand why you chose to stay out here. She is a stunning woman.”

“Yes she is and quite talented.” Once again his smile was sly.

“Krueger doesn’t trust her.”

“Who does Krueger trust?”

Both men laughed.

“Are you healing well my friend?”

“Yes. She takes good care of me.”

The men spent a bit of time talking. Some of it was for business but most was pleasure. While they were talking Alex kept herself busy by preparing a large lunch. Since she was using the downstairs kitchen that was for Reinhard’s men, she made more than enough for them to share in the meal. It was only fair to her since they were having to wait on their own lunch until she was finished.

In the formal dining room, she got the men to help her remove all the tables but one. Then she set the table with some of the fine china that was there. She also set the tables for the men and Hedda in the communal dining room. Alex had to go back and put out a few more place settings. Buder had brought 2 men with him. She would be doing their lunch more of what she considered family style in America.

Realizing that there was no port downstairs, she went back up. Reinhard had stepped away for a moment and while she was trying to decide on which port to bring down, Buder walked in.

“Do you need something liebchen?” He leaned against the doorway.

“I have it now, thank you. If you will excuse me please?” Forgoing the port, she tried to slip past him. His hand grabbed her upper arm.

“You and I should get to know each other better, Alexandra.” He smiled.

“I do not believe the Obergruppenführer would like that.”

“What Heydrich does not know, will not hurt him. Besides, you and I are of the same. I am sure we could be considerable help to one another.”

“Thank you but I am certain that I do not need your help.”
Buder laughed which surprised her. She moved to walk away.

“You wish to leave so soon? We haven’t even started to get to know each other.”

“Something tells me that you and I? We wouldn’t get along.”

“Why is that?”

She didn’t have time to answer when she was hurled into the corner. The much larger men stepped up right behind her, pinning her in.

“I just wished to enjoy a little bit of fun with you, schatzí.” He stroked his knuckles against the nape of her neck. “You are quite lovely and spirited. I see why Heydrich is fond of you.”

“Let me go or you are going to find out exactly how spirited I am.”

“Ah liebling, I just wish for a little taste of a pretty girl.” He pressed his lips to where her neck and shoulder met.

“Touch me again and I swear to you that I will circumcise you on the spot. Good luck trying to explain that you are not Jewish. It some pretty girl you tried to get a taste of peeled your foreskin back like it was a banana.”

He pulled the hem of the skirt upwards, exposing her from behind.

When she heard his zipper come down. Alexandra dropped to the floor as if she fainted. It was enough to make the man move back in surprise. She smashed her hand upward blindly and hit the man in his genitals. When he doubled over she scurried fast. Moving to her feet in a hurry, Alexandra grabbed one of the large knives off of the butcher’s block.

“Heinrich?” Reinhard called out.

“In the kitchen my friend, I was just speaking with Dr. Kettler.” Buder recovered enough that he turned and walked away without a glance to the furious Alexandra.

Cursing softly Alexandra ran down the stairway and went to the front of the villa. Klaus was seated at the desk there.

“Good afternoon Klaus, may I trouble you for a moment?”

“Dr. Kettler!” He smiled and stood. “What may I do for you?”

“Am I allowed to go outside?”

“Of course you are allowed Doctor.” He smiled warmly. “I am going to take a short cigarette break, I can step outside with you if you would like.”

“Thank you Klaus. I would appreciate it greatly.”

Stepping out in the warm sun Alexandra breathed deeply. She felt better already.

“Dr. Kettler are you alright?”

“Yes. I think so at least.”

Something had caught the eye of Klaus and he turned to be closer to Alex.
He spoke lowly, only loud enough for her to hear. “Dr. Kettler, please go back in.”

Alexandra didn’t have time to react when shots were fired by one Buder’s men. The man had been drinking heavily and shot a feral female cat carrying her kitten across the lawn. The man was laughing hysterically at what he had done. He had killed the cat.

Still laughing, the drunk man saw Alexandra in her skirt and heels. He began to come towards her. He was speaking to her as if she were a prostitute. Klaus stepped in front of the man and tried to tell him to stop and not to move.

Not listening, the man made a move to fight Klaus. The drunk man’s reactions were slowed by the sheer amount cheap alcohol he had drank.

He stumbled forward from Klaus and grabbed Alexandra from behind. The momentum of the stumbling man almost made her fall. She abhorred cruelty against animals. That coupled with Buder attempting to assault her, she was ferocious.

A sharp elbow was driven back into the man’s diaphragm, twice. Swinging around, Alexandra boxed his ears with everything she had. In doing so, she ruptured one of the man’s eardrums, if not both. Getting out of the way of a swinging fist, she drove the heel of her hand into the man’s nose. It was then that she snapped her hand over his holster and tossed it to the side. An uppercut to the face broke the man’s front teeth. Alexandra felt that one all the way up her arm. The teeth cut her hand fairly badly.

Cursing, the drunk man stumbled back from Alexandra while reaching for his non-existent firearm. Now that the man was far enough from her, Klaus fired a shot into the thigh of the man for touching Dr. Kettler.

Besides the shots fired and now a man screaming, Both Buder and Reinhard ran down the stairs. Seeing the man pitch back, Alexandra might have wished she had on her combat boots but she still launched a kick that connected with his scrotum.

Her kick would have made any footballer proud. Yanking her shoes off, she ran back into the grass. Alex snatched the kitten and its mother up. Realizing that there was nothing she could do about the mother cat, she set the poor animal back down.

Alex quickly found a second kitten and scooped it up as well. The other man that Buder had brought with him came around from the side of the building. Within seconds all six of Reinhard’s men had their guns trained on the 2 men of Buder’s. The one man was still down but the other had his gun trained on her. Klein moved and came up behind the man that had his gun trained on Alexandra. The big man ripped the gun out of the man’s hand and punched him in the side of the head. Buder’s other man crumpled.

Alexandra was on her knees, covered in the blood of the mother cat holding on to two mewling kittens that were just a couple of days old.

The hatred and fury in her eyes were directed at the men that came with Buder. The two men should have been thanking someone that Alexandra tossed the gun and did not keep it. They would have already been dead if she had kept it. They still may end up dead if she got her hands on them. The man that she had boxed the ears of was screaming while looking at his unconscious friend.

“SHUT THE FUCK UP.” Alexandra screamed so loudly at them it made her throat hurt.

All of a sudden there was silence. In the silence, Alexandra wasn’t sure said it in German or
A pin could have dropped and it would have sounded like a bomb going off when Reinhard and Buder rushed out.

“Heinrich, tell your man to shut up.” Reinhard’s voice was like ice.

Buder didn’t have to say a word. The man went silent after seeing Heydrich. While Buder was known for his temper, Heydrich was far more frightening. Cross Heydrich and you would be lucky to die.

Reinhard immediately went to Alexandra. “Schatzi, are you hurt?” He started checking her over.

“I’m fine. The blood is mostly from the mother cat and that man.” She indicated who with her chin.

Reinhard noticed the dead cat laying near her. Seeing the dead animal, it gave him a pretty good idea what had happened. Still, he wanted to know exactly what the hell happened.

“Klaus. Explain!”

Immediately the man of Buder’s started to talk loud and fast. Reinhard fired a single shot at his feet. “Klaus?” Reinhard’s voice was calmer and colder. That was not a good sign.

“Dr. Kettler asked to go outside and I came out with her. I saw the now crying man was armed and very drunk.” Klaus’ lip curled in disgust at the man on the ground.

“Continue.”

“I asked her to go back inside. Everything happened too fast for Dr. Kettler to move without getting hit, as the idiot started firing shots at the cats. She….” He was furious that someone came so close to Alexandra. “…she managed to unarm the man that is on the ground and went to help the cats. Since shots were fired, your men came out Obergruppenführer and the other man came up as well. Hans walked up behind the unconscious man and ripped the gun from his hand. Hans then rendered the man unconscious.” Klaus was trying not to smirk or laugh now.

“I see. Who shot the man on the ground?”

“I did Sir.”

“Is there anything else?”

“When the man fired, the shot missed Dr. Kettler by no more than 10 centimeters. That was how close the bullet came to the good Doctor.” Yes, Klaus was still furious but he was trying desperately not to laugh. The fact that Alexandra disarmed the man without even trying was humorous.

Alexandra had taken out an armed SS guard. Not only an armed SS guard, but one that used to be one of Hitler’s guards.

“Dr. Kettler is there anything you wish to add?” He didn’t look at her. He had seen that she was smirking. Reinhard knew he would laugh if he did.

“Dr. Buder may wish to see to the man crying. There is a bullet in his thigh and from the blood in his ears, he has two ruptured eardrums. The man also has broken teeth and a broken nose. As for
when his testicles will descend again, your guess is as good as mine. I am pretty sure I punted them into where his eardrums used to be. The unconscious one probably needs checked too. He’s been out cold a little too long. Oh. I believe lunch is ready.” She smiled prettily.

Cleaning and feeding the kittens were the first things Alexandra did. She made sure they were okay before getting cleaned up herself. The ring finger of her right hand had been cut on the man’s teeth badly enough that she stitched the wound shut herself before bandaging it. Luckily, she was left handed.

Alexandra did not eat with Reinhard and Buder. Reinhard checked with her and she declined the offer. He understood. All Reinhard wanted was for Buder to leave. He wanted to make sure she was truly alright.

He knew she was anxious and in pain. However, Reinhard was entertained that Buder was not angered by what happened. He was amused in much of the same way that Reinhard was. The men had been taken to the hospital by Klaus and dropped off. They could make a call to Berlin when they was ready to leave. Someone might send a car for the disgraced SS men, might being the key.

The start of the meal was Ahrensburg (cabbage soup) along with fresh bread. Hedda acted as their server. The main course was sauerbraten (a pot roast) and rolladen (beef roulades) along with bratkartoffel (fried potatoes), knödel (dumplings), braised red cabbage, and grilled asparagus. Alexandra had already paired wines for the two men.

Dessert was Alex’s specialty. So she made Frankfurter Kranz and a black forest cherry torte. She had Hedda serve port and coffee with the dessert items.

Hearing the bell, Alexandra stepped out of the kitchen and into the dining room. Reinhard smiled at her with pride. She impressed Buder greatly. He had a feeling that she would rather never see Buder again after what had happened but impressing the man was important. It would give them more time together. Everything that had happened would be reported to Himmler. Yet, Reinhard was no fool. Something else happened and he did not know what that something was. Yet.

“Thank you Dr. Kettler, this was most unexpected.” Reinhard smiled warmly.

“My pleasure Obergruppenführer.”

“Did you do all of this yourself, doctor?” Buder smiled.

“Other than rearranging the tables, yes.” Think I am going to call you Sir? You can fuck right off.

“Did you feed the men as well?” Reinhard knew she did and he was trying not to laugh again.

She blushed prettily and nodded.

“You are a good girl fraulein.” Reinhard smiled once again.

“How would you like to take a trip with me Dr. Kettler? I could use another good physician to work with plus it looks as if Reinhard could be on his own for a few days. I would even show you the sights of Berlin. It is quite a beautiful city. You wouldn’t mind me borrowing your lovely doctor to show her a bit of fun would you Reinhard?”

“I allow my lovely doctor to make her own decisions as such.” He would have to explain that later to Alexandra. For him to say no could put her in danger.

“No.” The single word was cold on Alexandra’s lips.
“Why not Dr. Kettler?” Buder smiled.

“I know Berlin intimately, there is no need to show me around. Actually, I am certain that I could show you a few things. No matter, I have committed myself to the Obergruppenführer’s care and refuse to go anywhere without him.” The smile she gave looked warm and sweet but Alexandra knew butter wouldn’t melt in her mouth.

“Alexandra, you are dismissed. Thank you for everything.” Reinhard wanted her out of there after the offer to take her to Berlin. Buder was going to be lucky if he left the villa unharmed.

“Oh she will be fine for a bit more I am sure. Please sit.” Buder stood when he realized he didn’t have anyone to do it for him. Walking over, he brought a chair over for Alexandra to sit. The chair sat between the two men.

“Thank you.” Having a gun held at my head? Easy. Sitting down at a table with this bastard? I may vomit.

“How did you know how to take down a man like that?”

“I have two much larger brothers”

Buder scoffed. “I am sure they aren’t that large.”

“No. They are quite large. You are a quite a bit smaller than they are.” She smiled sweetly. “They both stand about 2.1 meters. So does my father. And from what I can tell? You are nowhere near their level of fitness.”

Alexandra smiled as the man glowered.

“What is it that they do?”

“We are all physicians.”

“You must come from a gifted family. I surprised to see you aren’t married. How old are you?”

“I turned 28 this year.” Buder was 40. He reached over and patted her leg briefly but let his hand stay on her. The tablecloth was hiding his hand for the time being.

Do not grab a fork and stab him with it Alex. For the love of god don’t stab this man with a fork. How about a spoon? Can I use a spoon?

This was a dangerous game that Buder was playing with Reinhard.

“Remove your hand from my leg.” Glaring at the man, Alexandra’s voice was not loud but it was firm.

“What are you talking about?” He tried the congenial approach.

She was fast. Like a viper striking she had grabbed the smallest finger of his right hand. Alexandra bent the finger to the side and brought his hand up where it could be seen. She swiped a knife from the table just as quickly. She was ready to slice his throat.

“You twitch your fucking eye and I will slice your throat from one side to the other. I will send you back to Berlin with your tongue hanging from your neck like a necktie. I am fairly certain that the Obergruppenführer would not appreciate the story of how you tried to rape me in the kitchen.”
Reinhard’s eyes went wide. Immediately he was on his feet.

“Lying whore! I would not do such a thing! I am a married man.” Buder growled. However, he did believe her threat.

“Alexandra, go upstairs. Immediately.” Reinhard’s voice was quiet. When she did as told at once, there was a small part of him that was surprised.

“You would not believe that lying whore over me, now would you Reinhard? You and I have known each other for what? Ten years.” Buder smiled silkily.

“Of course.”

“Good, I won’t have to call you a fool. I do have to say you are a lucky bastard to get to fuck that little tart. She must be a tasty little treat. “

“I am very lucky.” Reinhard smiled broadly but it was painful to hear Alexandra spoken of in such a way. He knew that it was expected. He had done it so many times in the past himself.

“Those lips? I will dream about those lips for a long time. Is there anywhere you could recommend for a bit of comfort near here?”

“Kamila’s. It is in the center of town. The women were beautiful and the drinks plentiful.” It was also a place overrun with disease. Even if Buder and his men wore condoms, there was a strong likelihood he would catch something still.

“Have you been?”

“No. My men have. Ask Klaus, he will get directions for you. Have Klaus give you the name of the favorite of the men. She is real special.” Klaus would know what to do.

“It is appreciated. I doubt I will see anything as lovely as your whore. She does have quite a lovely mouth does she not Reinhard?”

“Believe me my friend, I know quite well how lovely that mouth is.”

Buder laughed. “Did you have to use force?”

“Ah, just a little. I wouldn’t hurt a fly after all.” While he smiled, Reinhard felt sick.

“I bet she enjoyed it! You check her lineage?”

“Do you take me for a fool Heinrich? Of course!”

“Well?”

“Not the best. Not the worst. She isn’t Jewish or anything awful. She makes an interesting mistress, for certain.”

“When you get bored of her, I could use someone new.”

“I doubt I will be bored with her soon. You saw her, she is beautiful. Still, I will keep it in mind.”

“Please do. I would enjoy that one very much, I believe.” Buder smiled.

Reinhard was thankful that Buder didn’t stay. He wasn’t for certain what would have happened.
Buder’s attraction to Alexandra was worrisome.

Buder was of a lower rank and Reinhard could have demanded him to leave her alone. Still, it would have been impolite to have told a colleague no, given Alexandra was the enemy. No matter, he would never allow that man to touch his Schatzi. Reinhard would have killed him first.
“Alexandra?” All of the lights were off upstairs. Buder had left before it got dark.

“I’m out here.” The doors to the deck was opened.

Walking out, Reinhard found her with a drink in hand.

“Are you alright?” He kissed the top of her head. “Did he?”

“I think so and he tried. I hit him in the balls.” She put the book down and rose from the chair. “I threatened to circumcise him. He would have a fun time explaining how he wasn’t really Jewish but some woman peeled his prick like a banana instead.”

Reinhard’s eyes went wide and his mouth dropped open. Unable to contain his laughter, he shook his head.

“Oh my girl. That is barbaric but so very funny.” Reinhard pulled her closer to him. “I’m sorry for all you had to go through today.” My girl. My sweet girl. I cannot tell you how sorry I am.

Wrapped in a dressing gown, Alexandra slid her arms around his waist and kissed his lips.

“Are you alright? Truly?”

She nodded. “It was unnerving but I survived.”

“What are you not telling me my love?”

“My hand needed stitches but I took care of it.”

“It’s over now. You have no need to worry.” He smoothed her hair back. “Come, let’s go inside.”

As they walked inside, Reinhard whispered softly in her ear. “You know you are very much a tasty treat.”

“So are you. But I am a tasty treat for only one man.” Alex turned to kiss him again.

“He must be a lucky fellow.”

“No. I am the lucky one.”

“Where are the kittens?”

“They are asleep in a box in my room. You know, it sounds strange saying my room. I slept in there for what? One or two nights.”

“You plan on keeping them? That was one or two nights too long.”

“I agree. And yes. Someone has to take care of them.”

Sitting down on the sofa, Reinhard patted his thigh. “Come sit. Let us talk.”

“No.” Alexandra did however sit down on his lap.

“No?” She had never said no before, it surprised him.
“Just hold me Reinhard. Please?”

Briefly he kissed her lips. Reinhard looked into her eyes. “Alexandra, I believe you. Know that. My sweet Schatzi, I believe you fully. I love you. I love you and only you.”

“I love you too.”

He held her tight. Pulling her body close to his own. She laid her head on his shoulder. Curled tight against Reinhard, she wept. He did not try and stop her. He let her have the tears that she needed to release everything that happened that day. Eventually the tears stopped. She trembled for a little while before she gave a shuddering breath.

“Thank you.”

“For what Schatzi?”

“Letting me cry, again.”

“Never thank me for taking care of you. When I realized how much I love you, that became my job. I will always try to do what is right for you and for us. Sometimes it may not seem like it, but I swear to you I will always try. I’m sorry I had to make you answer Buder’s question about you going off with him. It was a game of politics there. When you said it was your choice, it was safer for you.”

“I understand. May we go to the bedroom?”

“Of course.”

“I want to take you to where I grew up some day.” His voice sounded wistful.

Reinhard was laying on his back with Alexandra curled up on her side next to him. Her head rested on his shoulder. She stroked his bare chest with long sweeping touches.

“Halle, yes?”

“Halle an der Saale. Have you heard of it?”

“Yes. I think I may have been there actually.”

“Whatever for?”

“I don’t remember. There was a reason we went but for the life of me I am unable to remember why. I was fairly young. There is the Market Church, which has two towers connected by a bridge.” Alexandra sat up for a moment. “There was a castle. Uhm. Giebichenstein Castle! Did I pronounce it correctly? I was little. I had just finished my first year of school. Perhaps five years old or six years old. That’s all I remember.”

“Then you have been there. Now I want to take you there with me.”

“I would love to go with you. I would happily reciprocate and take you to Houston, if you wanted to go that is.”

“I would follow you anywhere.”

Reinhard smiled and sat up. Smoothly, he moved behind her so that she was between his legs. A little adjustment and she was leaning back to him.
Tipping her head back, Alexandra kissed his lips. “I would have you by my side, not following.”

“Your family would not approve, you know this.”

“May I tell you a story?”

“Of course.”

“This is long before I was born. My father would have been a child. My grandfather worked at a hospital. He was a surgeon too. This man came into the hospital after an accident. He had gotten hit extremely hard in the chest and abdomen. The man is awake and fighting hard. Because of the accident he was taken to the nearest hospital. It happened to be the one my grandfather worked at.”

Alexandra picked up Reinhard’s hand.

“Anyway, the man was screaming how he didn’t want to be in a Jew hospital and he didn’t want a filthy Jew touching him. It got worse from there. Then all of a sudden the man starts screaming in pain. My grandfather knew what it was, an aortic rupture.”

“What does that mean? Was he taken to a Jewish hospital?”

“Aortic rupture? It means you’re dead. And no. There were no Jewish hospitals that I am aware of back then.”

“Why?”

“Usually there is not enough time to get you to a hospital or to a doctor and save your life. Luckily for this man, he was in the hospital room with my grandfather standing over him. My grandfather knew what it was immediately. He saved a man that hated him. He saved a man that thought my sweet Papa should die.”

“Why save a man that wanted you dead? Was it because it was his job to do?”

“No. He didn’t do it because it was his job. Papa did it because he believes every life is precious. Every life is a gift from God. If God hadn’t wanted the man saved, then why did God put him in my path, Papa asked. I don’t believe in God. I haven’t in a long time. I do believe that every life is a gift.”

“Did your grandfather and this man become close?”

“No. When the man was released from the hospital, Papa never saw him again. That doesn’t matter. A life is precious. My grandfather taught my father that. My father taught Eugene, Alex, and myself. We three will teach our own children one day. They might not like it at first but your life is just as precious as mine, theirs, or any other person. They would also know that if I love you, you are someone very special.”

“I haven’t told you much about me, how do you even know?”

“Well, I judge by actions first and words last.”

“What was it like for you as a child?”

“Not sure I understand my Lion.”

“Were you bullied, teased, or anything?”
“No. I also had two very large brothers that I would box with, so most people weren’t that foolish. Plus, I was heavily involved with sports. I also was learning self-defense. There was an incident when I was a teenager. I was close friends with a boy. We had known each other since we had been in diapers. That kind of close, not romantic at all. The girl he was dating got jealous and slapped me.”

“At school!?”

“Yes.”

“What did the headmaster do?”

“It was more of what I did to the girl. Her face met my mathematics textbook. I ended up breaking her nose. So we were both suspended for a week. I hired a lawyer before ever leaving the building. Granted, the lawyer was my great-aunt’s oldest son. Needless to say, I defended myself and was not suspended. It was my first year in an American school. Prior I had gone to school in England.”

“I was bullied.”

“Whatever for?”

“My voice, my looks, my being alive. There had been a rumor of us having Jewish relatives.”

For Alexandra, everything clicked into place at once. She was aware of the anti-Semitism in Europe long before this war had started. She had felt it when she was a teen in Texas. She turned the tables on the couple of kids that dared to verbally attack her. A sensitive child that was treated coldly by his parents. A bullied little boy that was tormented about his voice, his looks, about being part of a group of hated people. It didn’t surprise Alex to know he would carry so much hate inside.

She turned around to face him. Draping her legs over his, she kissed Reinhard. Arms over his shoulders, she met his gaze. Immediately, he turned his head in embarrassment.

“Please don’t turn away from me. Reinhard, I love you. I love your voice. I love your looks. I love your laughter and your smile. I love all of you, not just parts of you. All. ‘She touched his chin with her thumb. “Please my King, look at me?’

He had to force himself to look at her. “King?”

“The lion is called King of Beasts. You are my Lion and king of my heart. My beautiful and beloved Beast, you are glorious. Glorious doesn’t even begin to cover you. I love you. I love you so very much.”

“You shouldn’t.”

“That is my decision to make. Nobody else gets to make that decision for me, not even you.”

Cupping her cheek, he smiled. “You have to be the most stubborn person I have ever met.”

“That is because you haven’t met my younger brother yet. Or my older brother. Actually, we are all pretty stubborn when it comes down to it.”

“It is somewhat frightening that there are two of you.” He smiled with a laugh.

“Hey!” She laughed. “You are, alas, not wrong. My younger brother would drive you crazy.”
“Why?”

“Well, mostly because he would know you and I are lovers. He would just be able to tell. So it would be his duty as a younger brother to annoy you.” She grinned that time.

Alexandra fell backwards on to the bed. A pull of his hand let Reinhard know she wanted him to follow, so he did. Laying over her, he started to laugh.

“Something funny my dear and beloved Lion?”

“Actually yes. Do you remember when I told you I had tried to figure out if you were the Angel of Death or my Guardian Angel?”

“Yes.”

“I was wrong.”

“Oh?”

“You are the Angel of Death.”

“That was not what I was expecting.” Still, she looked amused.

“Let me finish Schatzi.”

Reinhard looked very serious.

“The hate. The fear. The loathing inside of me. You removed it from me. I am forever grateful to you my Alexandra. I don’t feel the need to hate someone for something they cannot control. I had hated myself for so long and I had no idea that is what I was doing. I found so much with you. I have been given so much from you. Alexandra, these three months with you have altered my entire world. You allowed me to find love.”

With a creased brow, Reinhard knew he was wrong. “No, it is more than love. I have found joy because of you. My girl, my sweet beloved girl. There will never be a way I may say thank you but instead I can offer you my love and gratitude in return.” He kissed her. “You already have that. You have all of my love. You have my gratitude. You are the keeper of my heart and soul my Alexandra.

“I will happily accept both as you have mine too. Although, I will ask for one more thing from you.”

“Yes?”

Alexandra beamed up at Reinhard. “May I please have another kiss?”

“Is this how my Angel accepts payment?”

“Payment? No. I don’t ask for payment. I just enjoy kissing you.”

Reinhard kissed her lips lightly. It was barely more than a brush. His lips trailed over to her ear only to cause goosebumps to raise on her fair skin.

“You were my destiny Alexandra.” It was just a whisper traced along the shell of her ear.

“And you are my soul...”
“Trust in me Schatzi, please.”

“I do. I will.”

It had taken him 38 years to realize that making love was cerebral and not physical. While part of him still hurt for the boy he had been, he was comforted by he finally had found what he had yearned to have for so many years. As they drifted off to sleep together, Reinhard unknowingly smiled in the darkness. He had found peace at last.

When he woke in the morning Reinhard realized he was still partially laying over Alexandra. His head rested on her chest. There was a smile on her full lips. When he began to stir so did she. Her hand came up and stroked through his hair. He couldn’t resist kissing her smile.

“Mmmmm good morning.”

“Good morning my girl.”

“Come. Let’s start the morning together.” He sat up.

Alexandra barely opened one eye. “Morning person. Yikes.”

“What?” He was laughing.

“People that wake up all cheerful and such are called morning people. They are frightening.”

“Are you frightened of me?” He teased her.

“Only before coffee.” She tried so hard not to laugh and failed. Finally Alexandra sat up. “I have no idea where my clothing is.”

“You don’t need any.”

“I would rather not frighten your men.”

“They would only be frightened of what I would do when they were caught staring.”

Alexandra laughed. “My darling Lion, I care for your men but it is only you I love.”

“Good. Come, I am making you breakfast.”

“Yes Sir, Obergruppenführer Sir!” She finally stood up.

Grabbing her from behind, he wrestled her back into bed. “That is Reinhard to you Dr. Kettler!”

“Yes Obergruppenführer Reinhard?”

Turning her over his lap, he swatted her backside playfully. “Stubborn girl!”

“I think you are finally beginning to understand exactly how stubborn.”

Pulling him down on top of her after wriggling away from the spanking, Alexandra looked up at him and smiled. Raising upwards, she kissed his lips. Together, once again, they found bliss.

Shortly after they left his bedroom, he was called down for a call. It would be a couple of hours before he returned.

“How would you feel about a guest tomorrow?
Her eyes went wide with fear. “It won’t be like yesterday will it? Or anyone I would be afraid of?” Having Buder at the villa still made her skin crawl

He couldn’t help but laugh. “Why should you be frightened of anyone? Schatzi, you have all of my men wrapped around your little finger. You hold my heart in your hands. You are the safest person in the world here. We would all die for you.”

“Reinhard!”

“It’s true. You had all six of my men ready to kill two drunks because they dared to upset you.”

Alex ducked her head to hide the blush. “Your men have become like my older brothers. I cannot express my gratitude with simple words.”

“They have expressed something quite similar. They all care about you my darling.”

She blushed even brighter. “I have to admit, watching Hans just rip the gun from that man’s hand and then punch him in the head was……interesting.”

“You are thinking you are lucky that he didn’t do the same to you?”

“Yes.”

“Klein is a good man. He is also a very intelligent man. It was well noted by him that you were trying to help. I think telling him to fuck off might have helped you some. It caught him completely off guard.” He teased.

“Did I ever tell you that he apologized to me?”

“Whatever for?”

“For being rude to me the day when the attempt was made on your life. I told him I held no ill will or grudge towards him. I would have been the same way.”

“Thank you Schatzi. He was very worried about you being angry at him.”

“He was protecting you. How on earth could I be angry at him?”

“There will be another guest tomorrow. He is someone I know and I am fairly certain that you will actually like him my sweet.”

“Very well.” Alexandra wanted to ask him if this was how it was going to be from now on. She knew the answer to that already. They had very little time left together.

“Alexandra, I don’t know what it is that makes you love me but I will forever more be grateful that you do”

“That might be the simplest answer ever.”

“Oh?”

“What is the reason why I love you? I could give you a bunch of answers that are true. I trust you. I respect you. You are funny. You are handsome. You are intelligent. You are strong. All of those are true but it is so much more than that.”

“So?”
“The reason I love you is because you bring me joy. You are such a large part of my happiness that nothing can bring me as much pleasure as when I am able to make you equally as happy in return.” Her cheeks reddened as she spoke. “I knew I was utterly and completely in love with you when your happiness came before mine. You keep saying I shouldn’t love you. I disagree. You are the only man I have ever wanted. You are the only man I have ever loved. Your past is just that, past. I understand when we have to leave here, most likely our story will end. Still, you will always have a part of me with you.”

Fear ate at his insides. The thought of losing her was abhorrent to him. “Alexandra, please don’t say that.” Reinhard whispered.

“It’s true Reinhard.”

“No it isn’t. It hasn’t happened. I cannot live without you Alexandra. I won’t. I will not let you go, ever.”

Looking away, she wanted to believe Reinhard. She wanted to believe so badly that they would never part but Alexandra knew that their time together would end. There was nothing else that could happen. A married man with children could not be faithful to her. Alexandra would not become more of a mistress than she already was.

No, the reality was that this was the end of their short relationship.
The dress Alexandra wore was something she made. It was reminiscent of the nightgown that she had worn the first night that she and Reinhard spent together. The dress hit the tops of her feet like the nightgown did. The thin straps were hidden with a light and short jacket. The material flowed around her like water when she moved. It gave the appearance of touching and accenting everything and nothing all at once. The dress was black and the jacket was black and white. Alexandra left her hair down and applied no makeup. She looked beautiful as she was according to Reinhard.

“You are trying to drive me to distraction?”

She laughed warmly. “This is a perfectly modest summer dress.”

“What are you wearing beneath it?”

“Never you mind Obergruppenführer!” She tried hard to look serious and failed miserably. “Asking a lady such a question.” She scoffed, teasing him.

“Wearing something like that you are no lady but you are all woman.” He growled playfully in her ear.

“Such cheek!” She laughed happily. Sliding her arms around his neck, Alexandra pressed close to Reinhard. “If it wasn’t for company coming I would take you back to the bed and not let you leave.”

“Company be damned!” He grinned at her. “No shoes?”

“You wanted me to be myself. Well myself is barefooted.”

“Now you are the cheeky one Schatzi.” There was a knock on the door. “Would you like to get it?”

“No.”

His hand touched the back of her arm. “Don’t be afraid my darling. You are safe. I swear this to you.”

Alexandra nodded and went to the door. When she opened it the man on the other side was surprised.

“Well, this is quite a surprise Reinhard. I somehow always pictured you in more formal attire than a sundress.” The man smiled and offered a hand. “You must be the Alexandra Kettler.”

Alexandra started to laugh. “Yes. I am. I don’t know your name, unfortunately.” She could feel the strength of the man’s hand. He in no way tried to show said strength, his grip was warm and gentle with her. It didn’t matter she could still tell he had strong hands.

“Ernst Kaltenbrunner. Please, call me Ernst if you would Dr. Kettler.”

“Please, come in. Thank you Sir. Please call me Alex or Alexandra.” Alexandra stepped out of the way.

“Ernst, thank you for coming.” Reinhard shook the other man’s hand.
Alexandra studied the man discreetly. He was older than she, closer to Reinhard’s age. The scars on the left side of his face made him look fearsome. She also recognized the scars as mensur scars. The large man was a fencer. Immediately that made him even more likable.

For some reason, she wasn’t afraid of the man. That brought up a red flag within her. The truly frightening men were the ones that were able to hide it best. Hopefully the flag was not needed but it did keep her attention to detail.

She could see he would frighten some people, especially women. This Ernst? He was tall. Taller than Reinhard even. Alex guessed him to be about 8 cm taller than she was.

“Your men are setting up everything for the lessons.”

“Lessons?” Alexandra queried.

“You are going to learn to handle weapons Schatzi.”

“Of what sort?”

“Handguns and rifles.” Ernst supplied.

“I don’t really think I need lessons.” Alexandra was a crack shot. She grew up on a cattle ranch. She knew how to shoot and shoot well. Or as it was said in Texas, she could pick a tick off of a dog’s eyelash and not make him blink.

“Go get your shoes Alexandra.”

“Yes Obergruppenführer.” She went to grab her shoes.

“Where in the hell did you find this one Reinhard? She is magnificent. No wonder you have been in hiding.”

“Not hiding, just taking a bit of time to relax and heal. She was the physician that saved my life.”

“No!”

“Yes.”

“She is tall but she looks so tiny otherwise.”

“Alexandra was the one that told Klein to fuck off.”

“She is a brave one.” Kaltenbrunner laughed. He knew the man.

“That tiny girl? She dropped Krueger in two punches.”

“No wonder you enjoy her!”

“I was lucky. She saw the grenade go off. She got to me within minutes. Without her I would have died.”

“Why is that?”

“She forced Krueger and Gebhardt to do things her way.” Reinhard chuckled.

“You want her to be able to protect herself?”
“Yes.”

“I can see why. She would catch the eye of any man and the fury of any woman.”

“If something should ever happen to me Ernst, get her out. Swear to me you will help Heinz to take her somewhere safe.”

“Do you think something will happen?”

“No. Nobody is hunting for me currently that I know of but I do have enemies. Will you?”

“Of course. I swear to you. I know you would do the same for my Gisela. How could I refuse you? She isn’t exactly dressed for practice. Do you wish her to change?” Ernst watched Alexandra coming down the hall.

“I want her to be how she is normally dressed.”

“Wise.”

The three of them walked down to a spot in the clearing that had been used for practice many times. Klaus accompanied them as did one of the other men of Reinhard’s.

Six handguns and six rifles lined the makeshift table. There was enough ammo to last for hours. Alexandra looked down at the table and looked up at Reinhard with an arched eyebrow.

“I thought you were kidding.” Alexandra was amused.

“No. I wasn’t. You need to know how to protect yourself.”

“Reinhard I know how to protect myself. Rifles and pistols. Sheesh. You couldn’t conjure up a Flammenwerfer 35 for me to try?”

Ernst caught her comment and laughed. “Of course you would have a woman by your side that is a handful.”

Klaus stepped up and started to help Alexandra with a Browning Hi-Power single action. “Klaus may I please have it?” She held out a hand.

“Of course Dr. Kettler.”

“Which target?”

“Can you see all six?”

“Yes.”

“Which ever you are most comfortable with.”

“Fine.” Swear to god. Men. Obviously they know little about a girl from Texas.

Alexandra shook her head. The targets were vaguely human shapes drawn on butcher paper. Every one of the targets she hit right between the eyes.

“Not clear!”

Picking up the next, she went even faster. She put a bullet right above the first on each of the
targets. For the third, she went above the last shot and below alternating on each target. Alexandra never missed a shot.

The four men were dumbfounded.

“Schatzi?”

“Hm?”

“Where exactly did you learn to do that?”

“I’m from Texas. They practically give you a gun on the day you are born. By the age of two if you can’t kill a grown man with a single shot they revoke your status as a Texan.” She grinned. “I grew up with livestock. I also shot in competitions, so it goes with the territory. We have to do a cull every year to make sure the wild pig population doesn’t get out of control. Plus, I was eight when I shot my first buck.”

“You don’t need help with the rifles do you?”

“No my beloved Lion, I don’t.” She smiled. “Unless someone has a Flammenwerfer 35. I would love to try that.”

Klaus was trying desperately not to laugh. Kaltenbrunner shook his head and laughed.

“Oh Reinhard you are going to be in so much trouble. So, so, so much trouble with this one.” He winked at Alexandra.

“She does keep my life interesting. Luckily for me she weighs next to nothing.” Reinhard picked the squirming Alexandra up and tossed her over his shoulder. He swatted her backside playfully. “Quit squirming Schatzi!”

She pretended to bite at his backside and smiled cheekily with her teeth clamped tightly down on the fabric of Reinhard’s trousers.

Ernst Kaltenbrunner would never try to woo Reinhard’s girl. That would be an automatic death sentence and he knew that. He would never approach Alexandra with any sort of intent to bed her even if she and Heydrich were no longer seeing each other. One does not do that to a man he knows. Respect was important.

Kaltenbrunner did however envy what the two had together. To be with a woman such as Alexandra would be life altering in ways that he could not fully imagine.

Back at the villa, he saw that Reinhard kept a careful eye on Alexandra. They sat outside speaking for a while. Reinhard could be a jealous man at times. It was quite obvious where Alexandra’s interest lie. The way she looked at the blond man was lovely to witness.

“Where are you from Ernst?”

“Austria. Ried im Innkreis.”

“That is in the northern part?”

“Yes. Do you know it?”

“No. Unfortunately. I have read something about it I think but I cannot recall what. Most likely something about livestock.”
“Livestock?”

“My father raises cattle, along with everything else.”

“What is it like where you are from?”

“Hot. Very hot. People think of Texas as being dry. Not where I am from. It’s hot and wet. Sort of like breathing through soup in the summer.”

Reinhard chuckled at the look of surprise on Kaltenbrunner’s face. He picked Alexandra’s hand up and kissed the back of it. “She has a way with words.”

“I’ve noticed.” Kaltenbrunner laughed warmly. “Do you like being here? Has Reinhard taken you to Germany yet?”

“My family is German, hence I speak the language. I have spent a lot of time in my younger years in Germany. It’s a beautiful country.”

“Ernst, my Alexandra is also a lawyer.”

“Really? That was my course of study as well. I thought you were a physician?”

“I am. I studied both.” She gave Reinhard a look.

“I am proud of you Schatzi. What can I say?” He smiled.

“I am in need of a drink. Gentlemen?” She stood up. Her hands brushed across the tops of Reinhard’s shoulders.

“Whatever you are having. Surprise me.” Reinhard looked up.

“Same. Surprise me, my dear.” Kaltenbrunner watched her go back inside. He turned then to his friend. “You want to leave your wife for her.”

“Yes.”

“Is she worth the hell that you will have to go through?”

“I would rather die than be without her.”

“There is no way that you would be permitted to marry an American.”

“I know. That doesn’t mean I won’t try.”

Kaltenbrunner didn’t have a chance to respond as Alexandra came walking out carrying a tray. She served the men first and placed a pitcher of the drink on the table.

“What is this?”

Reinhard laughed and shook his head. “Try it first. I have learned to not ask questions until I have at least tried it.”

Alexandra grinned sheepishly.

“This is delicious! What is it that I am eating?” Kaltenbrunner looked up at his hostess.
“The drink is a strawberry whiskey lemonade and the pastry is a Texas version of strawberry shortcake. Texas version because it is bigger.” She winked.

They chatted and laughed for a couple of hours before Reinhard told Alexandra to go change into shorts and a shirt and meet them downstairs in the ballroom.

Complying, she walked downstairs dressed as asked. Klaus, Dieter, Klein, and Kaltenbrunner were all in shorts. Alexandra laughed seeing the four men lined up.

“What’s so funny Schatzi?”

“This was not what I expected.”

“I want you to be able to protect yourself Alexandra.”

“I can protect myself.”

“I want you to know more.”

“Thank you.” She smiled.

“And Alexandra?” Reinhard looked at her. “Do not do damage to my men. I do need them.”

She laughed. “Okay, who is first?”

Klaus stepped up. “I am going to grab you from behind Dr. Kettler. Counter my attack. We will go slowly so that you can feel what is best for you.”

Klaus hit his body against her’s from behind and grabbed her around the waist. He hefted her easily off her feet. Alexandra simply shoved her thumb and middle finger up his nose and pinched the septum while pulling down. When he let go, she smacked her fist lightly against the bridge of his nose. She turned and sprinted to the other side of the room.

“That was unexpected!” Klaus smiled good-naturedly while rubbing his nose. “Where did you learn that Doctor?”

“My older brother.”

“It’s very effective.”

Each of the men took a turn with her. She was able to fend all of them off or at least get away. Klein, who was the largest, gave her the most problems so she worked with him a bit more.

At one point, Klein got her pinned in a tight corner. She did the same thing she used on Buder. She fell down like she had fainted. While she pretended to drive a hand into his gentleman’s gentleman, Alexandra didn’t touch him. She rolled out of the way easily and sprinted off.

The men worked with her on specific holds and how to get out of them quickly. They went over a series of punches but it didn’t last long. Alex was well versed in that sort of combat.

They started to go into more serious types of hand to hand combat and the use of weapons. The biggest problem lay when she was dealing with two men or more.

Still, Reinhard looked on with pride. She was truly his spitfire.

“Enough.” Reinhard clapped his hands. “Klaus, will you and the others work with Alexandra an
“Hour each day?”

“Jawohl Obergruppenführer. We will keep our little sister safe.” The men all agreed.

Alexandra thanked them all before she excused herself. She needed a change of clothing and a shower.

Reinhard and Kaltenbrunner returned upstairs for a drink.

“She loves you Reinhard.”

“Alexandra?”

Kaltenbrunner nodded. “You can see it when she looks to you. You are a lucky man.”

“I am lucky. I love that woman like I have never loved anything or anyone before.” Reinhard gave a half smile. “She is my storm when I need her to be and my calm otherwise. What of your Gisela?”

“Gisela is a lovely distraction and a sweet girl.”

“I hear a ‘but’ in your voice.”

“No. It isn’t like that. I have never met a woman like Alexandra. German women are strong and fierce but she takes it to levels I never thought of before.”

“She told me once that she didn’t need me. Instead, she wanted me. I had to ask her to explain. Need is something you have to have for survival. It is things like water, food, shelter she said. Want is a desire. To want someone means you have them in your life because they add something to you. Want is you don’t want to survive without that person.”

After dressing, Alexandra finished making their dinner. She had put together a nice light dinner earlier. The grilled vegetables were only cooked halfway. She reheated them and it cooked them to perfection. She pared the vegetables with good bread and an assortment of condiments. She added to the tray smoked meats for the men. There was several types of salad, including potato salad, radish, and her favorite a kale apple slaw. She carried the tray outside with ease.

“Good evening fine and fair gentlemen. Supper is ready. She quickly set the table for them and walked back inside. Alexandra came back out with a pitcher of ice water and a pitcher of iced sweet tea. Raised as a southern girl in Texas, Alexandra served the men first before taking a seat.

“What is it that you are drinking?” Kaltenbrunner asked Alex.

“Sweet tea. It’s an American thing. Actually, very regional to the southern part of the US. Would you like to try some?”

“Yes, Please.”

Alexandra got up and fetched another glass. When she returned she poured him a small amount. Reinhard chuckled softly. He didn’t care for it.

“Sit and eat Schatzi. We can fend for ourselves if we need anything.”

“This is very different to anything I have encountered. I like it.”

“Good! Reinhard isn’t sold on the iced tea yet. I’ll convert him eventually.”
Chapter 21

The following day after breakfast, Reinhard went back to work. After a couple of hours Alexandra told him it was enough.

“Darling, the work must be done.”

“Not by you. You have been sitting too long. You need to be up and moving.”

“Alexandra.”

“Reinhard, you do not wish to butt heads with me on this matter.” She put her hands on her hips.

“Oh really?”

Alexandra sat down on his desk directly in front of him with her legs primly crossed beneath the long skirt. “Reinhard, I am serious. You are healed but your lung capacity is not what it should be.”

He gave her a look and continued reading the report. Alexandra was not one to be shrugged off so easily. She began to drum her nails on the desk. When he kept on, she tried a different tactic.

“You know Reinhard. I love you.”

“I know Schatzi. I love you as well.”

“You are the only man I would do this for.”

“Oh?” He didn’t look up.

One bare foot was placed on the arm of his chair. The other was placed on the opposite arm.

“I know you enjoy sport my Lion. So we are going to try a different bit of sport.”

“What is – “ He was stunned into silence.

Leaning back on his desk was a very exposed Alexandra. The dress had been discarded while he was distracted by work. Seeing her naked wasn’t what stunned the big man. Even on his desk, her naked body did not shock him in the least.

He was used to her brazenness when it came to sex.

What did shock him was when he looked up he was staring between her widely parted thighs. Alexandra had shaved off all but a thin line of pubic hair. She was completely and utterly exposed to him in a way he had never seen before. The seam of her sex seeped wetness from arousal.

“What do you want to do more Reinhard? To touch or to taste? So soft and smooth. Do you know how that would feel pressing up against you? That skin slick and gliding against you before you….take. I am sure you are half aroused already.”

Alexandra smirked and pressed her bare foot to his zipper. He was partially aroused. Pressing down ever so lightly she teased him. “You are thinking about sliding yourself between my thighs and giving us both over to pleasure. Or maybe you are thinking about my mouth? No not just my mouth. You want to fuck my ass. You want to drive yourself inside of me until I scream your name.”
When he looked upwards at her he was surprised. Those bright blue eyes were outlined in black. Lashes were thick and long. Her mouth was like a whore’s. Red. The darkest of reds. Unlike the whores he had seen, her’s was glossy wet. Such pale skin showed the stark contrast to perfection. Even her nipples were rouged.

Reinhard swallowed. “You do not play fair Alexandra.”

“I never said I did. Since you didn’t want to take the easy way? Now we play my way.”

Alexandra slid off the desk. Standing up, she stood naked in front of Reinhard. There was just a hint of a smile on those whorish lips. He reached to touch her thigh, which earned his hand a light slap. She picked up her dress and slithered into it slowly. The wrap dress was tied at her waist.

“You have ten minutes to catch me Reinhard and yes your men know that we may be running around. You catch me? I will give you whatever you ask of me. You wish for your wildest desire or dream fulfilled? I will. No questions and no judgement. You wish to work and be left alone? I will leave you alone. This is just between the two of us and only we can play this game. Sun up is when everything returns to normal.”

“If you win?”

“You get to fulfill my wildest desires. See you in ten minutes.”

Alexandra took off fast. She was already almost all the way across the deck by the time he got to the door. Having made sure the space was clear earlier. She jumped off of the deck and on to the grass below. It wasn’t a long way down. Years of sneaking out of the house and dorm when she was younger made it an easy jump.

Hearing him swear made her laugh. She took off to where they ‘practiced’ shooting when she heard him crashing down the trail. Having ran with him before, she knew he was fast. He kept up with her easily when they ran together. He would be even faster now with his desire to win. Alexandra and he were nearly evenly matched when it came to speed under normal circumstances. She had one thing going for her that he couldn’t match her in, agility.

As soon as he came near, Alexandra shot passed him. She did it on purpose so that she was able to grab his arse on the way by. She expected him to make a grab for the dress and he did. He was left with the dress and Alexandra’s fading laughter as she was completely nude. Reinhard started to cough and cough hard. She saw him fighting to take a breath.

She did not panic but Alexandra acted quickly. Immediately she began to check and make certain that his airway was clear. Reinhard clamped his arms around her and started to laugh.

“Caught you Schatzi!”

The look of surprise on her face made him laugh even harder.

“Oh that was dirty. Oh that was really dirty.” She couldn’t help but laugh. ”I want to be mad at you but I cannot.”

“Because you love me so very much?”

“That and what you did was brilliant.” She bowed to him “I am at your mercy.”

He pulled her closer and smiled. “If every German man had a woman such as you Schatzi, we would be the fittest nation in the world.”
“And quite possibly the most deranged.” She grinned.

“Get on your knees my love.”

Alexandra complied in the fading light. The trampled grass smelled fresh in the warm summer evening. There was something so freeing about being outdoors like they were. Reinhard knelt behind her. He said nothing when his arm went around her waist, jerking her back closer to him. His full mouth pressed where her neck and shoulder met.

He was hard, she could feel him through the trousers. From her waist his hand drifted downwards to stroke at the smooth skin. He did nothing but caress her. It was strangely erotic. At no time did he seek out the wetness there. No, he simply explored. His hand lifted the weight of her breast, squeezing it. Thumb pad coaxed a nipple to hardness.

“You are so wet that you have gotten yourself on my trousers Schatzi. Whatever shall I do about that?”

“I’ll be more than happy to lick it clean for you.”

“No. I have much better uses for that pretty mouth. Get on your belly and face me, Liebling.”

She complied without hesitation.

Reinhard gave the barest of smiles. He stroked his hand down her cheek. Freeing himself, he used her mouth as he would a whore’s in a brothel. There as a calloused savagery from him that Alexandra was unused to. It both flustered and aroused her.

Abruptly, he pushed her away. Swollen lips and smeared lipstick. She did look like the girls he had used in the brothels before. Looking down at her disheveled beauty, he always did have a preference for dark hair. Cupping a hand beneath her chin, they weren’t done yet.

Then he looked into her eyes. Those beautiful eyes lifted up to gaze at him. He lost himself in her eyes. Alexandra may be able to look the part of a whore with cosmetics and clothing but her blue eyes told the truth.

Many of the women were charming and beautiful but they didn’t return your gaze. They certainly didn’t look to you the way she looked to him. It frightened him in a way. In a moment Reinhard knew he could destroy her and she would still love him.

For a man that once craved obscene amounts of power, he finally realized what too much power had the potential to do.

Still, when he took her from behind, he was savage once more. When she called out for him it was not her Reinhard or her Lion. No, it was the Obergruppenführer. It made him thrust harder into her. He wanted to hurt and to punish the woman beneath him but only enough for their shared pleasures.

Reinhard shoved her on to her back right before the orgasm hit him. His seed was spilled on her lips and breasts. Quick pink tongue caught what she could. His fingers smeared his release on her skin and rubbed it in. He marked her as his.

“Put your dress back on. We are going back to the villa.”

“Do you want me to clean up first?”
“No.” He smiled and offered her his hand.

Taking his hand, she spun around. “Do you know what you would like to do?”

“Besides have you scream my name until you no longer are able?”

“We did that before breakfast.” She chuckled and kissed him.

“I know what I want.”

“Oh?”

“Continue what we are doing.”

Alexandra stared at him for a solid minute before smiling. “May I ask three things of you?”

“You may.”

“Dress in a uniform with your boots on please. If you would wait downstairs for a half hour before coming up. When you do come up, knock first. I’ll set the theme, you set the scene.”

“Very well.” Quite abruptly Reinhard started to laugh.

“What’s so funny?”

“I am going to be downstairs with my men while dressed in a uniform? Do you have any idea what will be going through their heads?”

“Uhm. No…..”

“Me neither Schatzi. Me neither.”

She started to laugh too. “Perhaps tell them I am getting everything set up for a photoshoot and you did not want to get anything on your uniform while I was working?”

He shook his head. “No. If they do not understand that I am dressed that way for no other reason than the woman I love asked me, then it is none of their concern. While I might treat you like a whore tonight, you are my girl Alexandra. You are the love of my life. I love you.”

“I love you my Lion.”

They walked into the villa together.

Klaus stood immediately upon seeing Reinhard but he was visibly surprised to see Alexandra standing next to the Obergruppenführer. He had been at the desk for the last few hours and had not seen her leave.

“Klaus, hold all calls. Unless the villa is about to burn to the ground or the Fuhrer decides to surrender to Denmark, I don’t wish to be disturbed.” He noticed that Klaus was trying to figure out how Alexandra got past without him knowing. “We were playing chase. Alexandra jumped off the deck.” He swatted her on the arse. “She almost won too.”

“Yes Sir Obergruppenführer!” Klaus still looked stunned.

“Schatzi?”
“Yes?”

“You broke a perfectly good Schutzstaffel man. Poor Klaus doesn’t know what to believe! You are going to be the reason my men start to drink.”

“Sorry Klaus.” She smiled sheepishly at him. “I suppose I should better explain what running around means next time.” She sent down two bottles of whiskey for Klaus and the others when Reinhard went down to wait for the half hour.

When Reinhard knocked on the door, Alexandra was there waiting. She wore nothing but a short kimono. Her skin was bare. There wasn’t the whore’s makeup like before. Now, she was as he loved her – just his Schatzi. The only difference was that her hair was pulled up to stay out of the way. Seeing him in all black with the boots and swastika was unnerving, but she didn’t say a word about it. It was her request after all.

A drink. A newspaper. Music quietly playing. Reinhard was made comfortable.

“How much longer?” Reinhard snapped at her.

“Just a few more minutes Obergruppenführer.”

“Undo the robe. No, remove it. If I have to sit through this I want something to watch.”

Doing as told, the kimono was discarded. She propped his booted foot between her breasts. Reinhard, ground his heel against her skin. When she licked her lips, he did it again. Unable to resist, a whimper escaped from a sweetly parted month.

Kneeling, Alexandra kept her knees parted. So that Reinhard could watch every bit of her.

Watch he did. Her firm body moved fluidly. There was bit of bounce to her breasts when she moved. He began to think of how good her breasts felt in his hands and on his skin.

She cleaned and shined his boots quickly. Between riding rodeo and her own fastidiousness, Alexandra could damn near bring a mirror finish to suede.

When she stood, Alexandra offered her arm. His hand snatched her long hair and Reinhard used it to bend her backwards some. There he manhandled her before allowing her to take him into the large bath.

Alexandra drew a bath for him and knelt over his naked thighs while she shaved him with a straight razor. Seeing her like this, he was unable to resist drawing her close for a few moments. Reinhard enjoyed her ministrations. She was not subservient. That was not part of her makeup in any form. Yet, she was at her happiest when he was happy. She was even happier when it was by her hand that he found his delight. When the shave was done, he drew her close again. He was having a hard time keeping up the façade of their play. Reinhard was unable to even see her being a whore he paid for.

A manicure and pedicure were done to help him relax further. Alexandra wrapped him in a dressing gown and with a gentle nudge, led him down the hallway.

The room was warm when he was brought in. She helped him on to the table and covered him with a sheet. Oil was warmed and she massaged him only like a woman with over a decade’s worth of anatomy knowledge could. From his feet to his head, nothing on his back was missed. Alexandra even rubbed areas that he would never have let someone touch before. While working on his glutes, her oil covered thumbs slipped between those cheeks. She massaged even there. It was
something entirely new for him. When she helped to move him to his back, Alexandra worked her magic over his body that way.

Her great big Lion was a purring beast.

Buffing down the oil used on his body. She escorted him back to a private room. This room was neither the one they shared together nor the one that Alexandra had used for the first few nights. She wanted something not associated with them.

He was laying back on the bed, waiting for what was next. Reinhard was to the point of being painfully aroused. He wanted to fuck his girl again and again. He wanted to feel how she quivered under him and around him. So lost in thought, he hadn’t even realized what she was doing.

Taking two scarves, she used them to loop over his wrists. He could pull free easily, if Reinhard so wished. It was for the mental aspect rather than the physical.

Long black hair was down. The way it moved with each step it was as if a black serpent kissed at her skin. She was bared completely.

“Reinhard, do you trust me?”

“Yes.”

“It will only be you and me in this room. If for whatever reason you want me to stop just say your middle name, Tristan. I will stop immediately. Do you understand?”

“Yes.”

“If you want me to stop, what do you say?”

“Tristan.”

There was barely any light in the room once Alexandra decided to start. In an instant the bedroom began to smell of spice, the light was shadowy and it seemed to move at will. It was warm and pleasant.

“Relax my Lion. My love. Allow me to take care of you.”

From the foot of the bed she crawled upwards and over his body. Her lips were soft upon his. She could feel his frustration when he went to envelope her in his embrace but could not. Laying against his chest, her fingers stroked up the length of his arm. She followed the same path back with soft kisses. Then she did the other arm.

Looking into his eyes, she smiled. Reinhard took pause when she did. Never before was he given a gift like this. Alexandra laid herself bare for him in a new way. The realization he came to was startling.

They had talked before about need versus want. Just yesterday, he had mentioned it to Kaltenbrunner. She did not need him. She was assured a place in society by her own hand. Not only was she a surgeon, Alexandra was a skilled linguist, musician, and stunningly beautiful. Men far greater than he would happily fight each other for a chance to catch her eye.

No, she did not need him.

Even when he ‘saved’ her from Krueger, Reinhard was fooling himself. Alexandra knew very well
how to take care of herself. She would have been able to find help easily. Truthfully, other than her medical skills at first, Reinhard didn’t need her either. He wanted her. He wanted to covet that beautiful woman since the first day they were introduced.

He had manufactured ways at the hospital to see her more often and spend time with the beautiful American. Not once did he truly believe it would go further than simple flirtation. Now he had pledged his love to her. Was this any different than when he was jettisoned out of the Navy?

It was easy to look past her upbringing. She wasn’t actually of Jewish blood and she wasn’t religious. He didn’t lie when he said she had eased the hate and anger in him. It was very much the truth.

Yet, he was still apathetic to what was happening to those he had considered for his entire life to be undesirable. It wasn’t as if he could change what was going on. It wasn’t until he looked into those blue eyes did he understand something. She endangered her very existence for him.

How difficult had it had been for Alexandra to come to terms that she loved someone that was more monster than man?

Lina didn’t care. Hell, Lina helped make Obergruppenführer Heydrich. Reinhard and Lina Heydrich were similar creatures. She was every bit as cold, cruel, and calculating as he was. Perhaps she was even more so than he. There was no perhaps about it, Lina like a venomous snake.

Alexandra was not that way. Her love for him put her in grave danger. If Germany lost the war, she could be killed as a traitor. Even though she had done nothing but save the lives of people. If Germany won the war and her background was discovered she could be killed as well. She could be killed just because of what they had done together or because she was American.

She chose to be there with him at a great cost to herself. Alexandra was no fool. She knew what the fates could bring down on her, Reinhard realized.

“Tristan.” He whispered.

To say she was surprised, would have been a gross understatement. Without pause she pulled the scarves away and flicked on the light. Climbing back on to the bed, she began to check him over.

“Shh. Alexandra, I’m fine. I stopped you because I needed to hold you.” He wrapped her in his arms. Rocking her slowly against his chest. “I just needed to hold you my precious girl. I just needed you in my arms.”

Wrapping her arms over his shoulders, Alexandra held on tight to her beloved. Resting her cheek upon his broad shoulder, she didn’t know what happened nor would she push for the information. Reinhard would tell her when he was ready to. For now, all that mattered was that something had bothered him.

“I’m sorry, Schatzi.”

“Why are you sorry my love?” She stroked his hair gently.

“I can’t say it.”

“When you are ready, you will. It’s okay, I’ll wait for you.”

Reinhard’s brow creased. “Why?”
Her smile was tender. She kissed his lips with a gentleness he had only known with her. Alexandra ached with the same pain that plagued him. She was saddened by how he was still so unsure of himself.

“Oh my sweet Beast. My beloved Lion. You wish to know why I will wait for you. It’s simple. Because you are worth waiting for.”
Chapter 22

Only two hours had passed since they had returned to their shared bed. Alexandra was sleeping next to him. The thoughts that made him stop their fun earlier still plagued him. Even if he would have had someone to confide in, Reinhard would admit to no one but himself that the knowledge of how much power he had over her was intoxicating. Yet, he felt horrible to even think that.

Within the mind is a place of what can only be described as a phantom shadow. It is the place were truth exists at its most extreme. Therein lies the knowledge of how deep depravities can go. In that very part of him, Reinhard knew that Alexandra would love him until the day she died. He could wholly decimate her and she would still love him.

The most depraved part of him wanted to test that theory.

He would not do it outside of the fantasy of his mind. Truly, he would loathe to hurt his lover in any fashion. With everything that was going through his mind, Reinhard knew the truth. He loved her absolutely. Somewhere in his rational mind he also knew that if he did not tread carefully, she may love him but she could hate him in equal measures. The two were not mutually exclusive.

His judgement of character was like no others. Reinhard knew a person’s weaknesses almost immediately after speaking with them for mere moments. Unfortunately for him, he could not see his own.

His love for Alexandra was no different than her love for him. He would love her for as long as eternity would permit him, perhaps even one day more. She could be the one to pierce his heart and with his dying breath his last words would be that he loved her still.

Reinhard knew that he should let her go. He should do as he promised and send her home. If she loved him, so be it. It would be better to live with pain than not live at all, yes? There was little good that could happen to Alexandra if she stayed in any part of the territories that made up the current Germany and he knew this well.

Yet, the thought of being without his Schatzi made Reinhard go cold. He couldn’t imagine returning to the life he had before her. It seemed bleak without her at his side. With her, he saw the man he could have been. Reinhard saw the man he now wanted to be as well.

Reinhard had no ready answer to the question of his wife and children. Truth be told, Lina would miss only two things if he were to vanish from creation that very second. The wealth she was now accustomed to and the status she enjoyed as his wife. Without him, she would return to what she had been prior. No one of any import.

What of Alexandra?

It would be difficult for someone to discover her background. Even if they did, it would be easy to prove that she was not Jewish. The upbringing would be no fault of her own after all. She was far away from her family and she did not practice Judaism. Except, she loved her family and spoke of them often.

Reinhard sighed and looked to his sleeping companion. She was just as troubled in her sleep as he was awake. She looked peaceful, yes. She wasn’t. Reinhard had noticed any time she was upset she withdrew into herself physically. Her long legs were drawn upwards so that her knees tucked against her chest. In her sleep, she had wrapped her arms around her shins. Alexandra had even
pressed her head downwards as she curled into a tight ball.

He wanted to hold her. He wanted to find out what was bothering her so much that she withdrew in such a way. Yet, he didn’t. That was his first mistake.

In the dark of night, Reinhard was afraid. He knew the man he was already. Without her, how much further would he sink? Without her his anger would go unchecked. Over the past year, Reinhard’s anger had been getting worse. If Alexandra was well and truly gone, Reinhard was afraid how far he would eventually go.

Yet, his sweet Schatzi saw worth in him. Had he ever been told he was worthy of something? He couldn’t think of any time. Yet his Schatzi saw something in him. Right then, Reinhard wasn’t sure who was more deluded him or her.

Rising, he slid on his dressing gown. He stopped to pour himself a drink. He filled the tumbler to the rim and drank it. He did it a second time. The third was still filled completely. Although this time he walked away from the bottle. It wasn’t because he had enough, no it was because the bottle was empty.

After taking a pack of cigarettes, he walked outside on to the deck. Leaning against the railing, he put his head down. The earlier realization of his apathy weighed on him. He had his hands in and on so much when it came to the extermination of the Jews, homosexuals, and other groups that were considered unwanted.

He was just beginning to feel the effects of the whisky. Although, he wasn’t fully intoxicated yet.

Reinhard no longer hated Jews like he once did. How could he? The people that raised his Schatzi were kind and good people. She was the woman she was because of them. He loved her. He loved her so much.

This woman he said he loved would have been taken because of him. She could still be taken. How does one live with that sort of knowledge and do nothing? How can they still claim to love? Reinhard smashed his fist down on the railing.

How difficult had it had been for Alexandra to come to terms that she loved someone that was more monster than man? How could she love a man that held life and death in his hands and could care less about either? We lived. We died. That was all. No, that wasn’t all. The torture of the Jewish people, the Slavs, and everyone else – that was also his doing. They were starved to death, worked to death, everything came down to a horridly painful death.

Could he leave his wife and children for her? Yes. He didn’t have to think about it. The mere thought of coming home to his Schatzi for the rest of his life filled Reinhard with a joy he never felt before.

Lina wouldn’t care as long as she had the money to live as she wished. Did he owe Lina more than that? He wasn’t sure. Reinhard realized that Lina was the true creator of Obergruppenführer Heydrich. If it wasn’t for Lina he would have never met Alexandra. The irony made him smile coldly.

He took a drink.

Reinhard felt like life was repeating itself. Lina won the first time when he was with two different women. She didn’t stand a chance against Alexandra. Who would Alexandra lose against and when? Right now he felt that there would never be someone for her to lose against but did he not
feel that way about Lina? He didn’t remember.

If he left Lina for Alexandra, what would he lose? Anything? Yes. He would lose his children. That would be the only thing he would lose. Reinhard loved being a father. He loved his children.

He went to take another drink but found the glass empty. Staring at it for a minute or two, he was surprised when it shattered in his hand.

A blur of white caught his peripheral vision but when he looked up, there was nothing. His attention returned to his bleeding hand. It was like looking at the hand of another man. Reinhard felt no pain from it. It was just there. He watched how the blood dripped from the wounds and landed on the railing.

There was the blood of others on his hands, somehow the disembodied bloody hand proved it to him.

It had been Alexandra that he had caught out of the corner of his eye. She had been standing watching him. When she saw the glass shatter, she disappeared. Just as quickly, she returned.

Neither of them spoke a word when she made him sit down.

Reinhard marveled at Alexandra’s calm gentle demeanor while she picked the glass from his hand with tweezers. Bathed in moonlight, he wondered if she was real. Reaching out, he brushed her dark hair back with the tips of his fingers of his left hand. She couldn’t be real he decided. No woman this magnificent could love someone like him.

He felt as if he had said something to her but what was it? Reinhard didn’t know. He told the apparition to leave him alone. He wanted whatever this was haunting him, gone. He couldn’t take the torment any longer. He yelled at the ghostly figure to get away from him.

The shards of glass were disposed of by her hand. Like a wraith, she disappeared from his view once more.

Reinhard Heydrich, placed his head down on the table and tried to remember what it was he once dreamed of becoming. When he was unable, he had an urge to go and find the apparition. She reminded him of someone. She reminded him of the time when he felt loved. Why did he tell her to go away? He couldn’t remember.

He wanted to spill his thoughts and confess all of them.

Reinhard started to go to find the woman he said he loved but in the end he didn’t seek her out. Twice now, he wanted her and he simply turned away. To seek absolution from anyone was a blight on his heart. That was his second mistake.

It reminded him far too much of his boyhood and the church. And the beatings. And so much more that was no longer part of his conscious memory. To dredge that back to the surface would destroy the coolness of the man he tried to pass himself off as.

When he walked back to the bedroom, she wasn’t in the bed. For once Reinhard did not notice. He was so lost in his own thoughts. The acute pain he was pummeled with from within helped sober the man some but not enough. He dressed quickly, hoping that a walk would calm him.

He knew that he was feared rather than liked. It never bothered him. The position he had put himself in within the RSHA was not one that friendships were built upon. He needed loyalty, not friendships. Loyalty was easier to govern through fear he believed. Alexandra was the exception.
Not only did she like him, she loved him. She wasn’t afraid of him.

He could see it in her eyes when she looked at him. He could see it in her smiles.

There was not another person in the world he could say that about. Reinhard was not sure if there ever had been a person that liked and loved him besides her.

From an early age Reinhard understood betrayal far too well. The other children taught him that when he was just a child himself. It was their cruelty and taunts that helped shaped the man that he was in this very hour of this very day. The other cadets when he entered the Navy made sure to reiterate that lesson, lest he forget.

She was his exception.

Sobering further, he smiled to himself. It was the second day they were here. Alexandra had told him he was going to rest. No, she ordered him to rest. He had been so surprised that someone dared to order him around. Recalling the look on her face, she was a picture of stubbornness even when he said he was used to giving orders and not taking them. It wasn’t long after that when he touched her for the first time.

Not sexually, no that would come later.

He touched her as another human. He touched her so she could help him heal. He didn’t know that there was so much more than the wounds from the assassination attempt that needed to heal.

Reinhard did not know the touch that is human warmth and kindness. Touch always had a purpose for him. You shook a man’s hand as a seal on his word. You hit a man in anger. Even sex was a means to an end.

Reinhard knew nothing of the warmth of a hand laid on a bare arm. The connection from touch was something so alien to him, that he didn’t know what to do at first. His reaction was so out of the norm that she asked him if he would rather have a German nurse. Her American ways were too strange for him, she thought. It took him a while to realize that it had nothing to do with where either of them were born.

Even after they became lovers, he was unused to touch. He didn’t know what it was like to have his back stroked in plain view. He had no foundation for a warm hand on his thigh. Outside of one of his children, no one had ever laid their head on his lap just to be close. The Young Evil God of Death became who he was because no one showed him how to love and be loved.

There was so much more. Her love for music matched his own. It was one of the few places he was able to go within himself and feel at peace. Alexandra felt the same way but he never realized that. Reinhard didn’t recognize that she was just like he was in some ways.

They had both suffered injustices at the hands of others. She loved and understood Reinhard because of the connection to the dark side of their hearts. She was able to see in him the exact same thing that he saw in her. Except where she was concerned, Alexandra wished to heal others since she was never able to heal herself. Reinhard took his pain out on others.

And now? He had no idea what to do. He wanted her. He wanted her by his side and in his arms. He wanted nothing more than to love his Schatzi and spend the rest of his life with her. Reinhard also knew that anywhere he was would be dangerous for her. There would be an end to this war, eventually. She would be on the losing side no matter where she was because of him.

Leaning against a tree, he lit a cigarette.
“Is this tree taken?”

He jumped at the sound of her voice and hit his head against a tree branch. Scowling, he looked directly at Alexandra. “How did you know I was out here?” His expression softened when he looked at her.

“You lit a cigarette.”

“You saw the cigarette from the bed?”

“No, I didn’t go back to bed after I bandaged your hand. I told the night man I was going for a walk. I was coming back when I saw you.”

“You are out here alone?” If they let her go out alone? There would be hell to pay.

“No. Hans is with me.”

“Klein!” He barked.

“Yes Obergruppenführer?”

“What are you doing out here?”

“Dr. Kettler wished to go for a walk. I wouldn’t let her out unescorted, Obergruppenführer.”

Reinhard shook his head, smiling. “Thank you Klein.” Even in his absence, they took care of his Schatzi. Klaus had said it, they wouldn’t let something happen to their little sister.

“If I ever go back to Texas I told Hans that I should take him and his wife home with me. Could teach him how to ride rodeo and such. I think he liked the idea of bull riding but I had to explain that he couldn’t just out stubborn the bull and punch it in the head. I believe bull riding lost some of its appeal quickly.”

Somewhere nearby, Johannes Klein laughed loudly.

“Going to take my men with you but not me?” He teased her but truthfully, it hurt.

“Not you?” She was taken aback by his comment. “I just assumed you would be with me.”

Looking down, she bit her lip.

“Klein. Make yourself scarce.”

“Jawohl Obergruppenführer!”

“What do you want from me Alexandra?” There was a morose tone to his voice.

That was his third mistake. Although, he was unaware what he just did. It may have been the events from earlier or it could have what he said but whatever it was it made Alexandra’s head snap up. Her eyes narrowed and she focused on his face.

“If I haven’t made this abundantly clear, then please permit me to clarify for you. I am not seeking wealth, position, information nor status. I have no desire to use you for anything Reinhard Heydrich. I did not fall in love with you because I wanted anything from you. No. I never wanted anything from you, I just want you.”

“Why?”
Alexandra felt her temper rise further and just as quickly dissipate. He was serious. He really didn’t understand.

“Sit down with me Reinhard?”

When he did, Alexandra sat behind him. She wrapped her arms around his midsection and hugged him tight to her. For several minutes she stayed like that with him. Then tucking her skirt around her legs, she crawled over to face him. He laid his hand on her thigh and jerked it back quickly.

“Are you armed?” He was surprised and concerned about why she would feel the need to have a weapon.

“No.” Raising the hem of her skirt upwards, she showed him the flask. Removing it from the garter, she took a sip. “Would you like a drink?”

“No. Thank you. This is a lot of clothing for you this late at night.” He pulled on the hem of her skirt trying for levity.

“It was the only thing in the bedroom. When I woke up and you weren’t there, I got worried. I dressed in the first thing I found.”

“Why?”

“It wasn’t normal. If you were needed by your men, I would have heard them. You weren’t in the washroom. Plus, what happened earlier.” Frowning, she looked to him. “I’m not the best with words which is perhaps why I play the cello rather than compose for it. Do you remember the song I sang for you about how you can speak right to my heart?”

“Yes.” He nodded.

“To me, that song is you. You don’t have to say anything. It’s the way you look at me. It’s the way you touch me. It’s a lovely song and I have liked it for as long as I can remember. It just didn’t have meaning until I met you.”

She picked up his large hand. For several minutes she stared at it.

“Why do I love you? There is a list of reasons that could circle the world twice over. You are the only person I have ever known that I want to share every part of myself with. I love you because my heart did not give me another choice. When I see you, my heart and soul know that I am where I am supposed to be. Where I am supposed to be is not a specific place. It’s with you. Wherever you are, I am supposed to be at your side.” She was trying to maintain her composure but it was becoming more and more difficult.

“There is always a part of me that wants to ask who hurt you Reinhard. I know it would be quicker to ask who hasn’t hurt you. I want to be the balm for your heart. I want to ease your pain. I don’t just say the words, I want to prove to you how important you are to me.” She looked back down to his hand. “I love you because you fascinate and amaze me. I love you because I trust you. Reinhard, I love you for you.”

His brow creased and he looked into her eyes. The memories of long ago hurts lingered with the boozy feelings from earlier. He remembered the girls that would pretend to like him just to humiliate him later.

“Reinhard, I love you because you are the most interesting, fascinating, talented, and intelligent man I have ever seen. I love you because I can be honest with you and not have you judge me. I
love you because I do. I didn’t ask to love you but nothing else besides loving you makes me so happy. It isn’t about just me. It’s about us, together.

We love each other because our hearts both needed the balm that only the other could ever provide. We love each other because each of our souls found their mate. We love each other because we both want the same thing.”

“Oh?”

“Yes. I would do anything I could to make sure you were happy. I would lay myself bare to make sure you know that you are my one and my only. I would die to protect you my beloved Reinhard. The one thing I want most of all? To grow old happily with you. I believe you want the very same.”

Bringing his hand up to her bowed head, Alexandra pressed his knuckles against the bridge of her nose. She looked as if she was in prayer. It took him several moments to realize the wetness on his hand was from her tears.

“I would hurt myself long before I would ever purposely hurt you. Maybe you cannot understand why I love you. That’s okay if you can’t. Just as long as you can understand that I do love you.”
They had stayed outside until sunup. Now, Reinhard slept. His head rested on Alexandra’s lower abdomen. His arms draped around her thigh, he slept soundly. She stroked the back of his head and neck gently.

She wasn’t sure what happened still.

Reinhard stirred some and rubbed his cheek against her in his sleep. Her hand stayed on him although she stopped the gentle strokes. Alexandra had not realized just how protective she was of him. Looking down at the sleeping man, she smiled softly. His hair was mussed. It had grown out quite a bit in the last three and a half months. The summer sun bleached the blond curls white in some places. He was a robust picture of health.

She knew that he should have left the villa long before now. They were courting danger staying there. Alexandra had no idea what would happen when they left. Especially, since she had no desire to return to the US.

The thought of saying goodbye to Reinhard was painful. Did she have a choice? There was nowhere in Europe that was safe. Everywhere else would be so far away from him. She sighed. It was a wartime love that they had, it wasn’t unusual. How many books had told similar tales throughout the ages? The accounts of love were both fact and fiction. Almost all of the stories were heartbreaking, even if it was temporary.

Reinhard began to stir. Looking to him with a smile, Alexandra let him wake up naturally.

“Schatzi?”

“I’m right here.” She stroked his curls again.

She saw the confusion written on his face when he realized he was using her as a pillow.

“What happened?” He sounded tired.

“You had a little too much to drink.”

“I see.” He stood up abruptly. “I’ll be right back.”

Of course, she had to whistle at his bare arse. She grinned upon hearing his chuckle.

Reinhard was gone for fifteen or twenty minutes. Alexandra took the time to clean up some and put on a dress. When he returned he was wearing the bottoms of his pajamas and carrying two cups of coffee. He stopped in the doorway when he saw her.

She looked so innocent sitting there with her ebony hair pulled back in a white ribbon.

Alexandra stood when he stopped. The dress was overly large, shapeless even, on her slender frame. Somehow the flowing material accented her figure rather than detracted from it. Handing her a cup of coffee, he frowned.

“How did I end up using you as a mattress?”

“After I got you into bed, you decided that was how you wanted to sleep.”
“What did you do?”

“I let you sleep.” She smiled.

“I am so sorry.”

“Reinhard? Do you love me?”

“I love you more than anything or anyone else.” His voice sounded hollow. Raising his eyes, hurt was etched around them that she doubted his love.

“Then am I not allowed to love you the same?”

“Schatzi, it’s different.”

“No. No it isn’t.”

“You are – “

“Stop. This is not a comparison. This isn’t you have done this but I have done that. This isn’t about you versus me. This isn’t even about you or me. This is about us. You do not get to tell me how much I love you. You do not get to dictate any rules about my love for you. Only I can do that. I love you. I love you with all that I am."

“I don’t want you to love me like that.” He sat down heavily.

“Reinhard, why?”

“If we lose the war, I will be killed. I might be killed if we win the war.”

“I don’t understand. What does that have to do with me loving you?”

“If we lose, you could be seen as a traitor. If we win, you are an American. You think there wouldn’t be those wanting to hurt you? I should have done as I said I was going to and sent you home a long time ago.”

“I have done nothing but provide medical services, which is not an act of treason in the United States. You try to send me home Reinhard, I will come back.”

“Do you think I couldn’t have you held somewhere under lock and key?”

“You wouldn’t dare.”

“If it meant you would be safe? I would. I would hate to do it. I do not want you to be away from me Alexandra. Nevertheless, your safety means far more than my happiness.”

“What about my happiness?”

“Schatzi, please. I would make you hate me if it meant you are safe.”

The days following saw them return to their normal schedule. Reinhard was once more dutifully exercising as he was supposed to be. To keep him interested in maintaining his health, Alexandra had created a piste for fencing in one of the large ballrooms.

There had been a fencing tournament between the fencers of the Schutzstaffel about a year prior. There were a few items that had not been claimed. While Reinhard worked, so did Alex. It took a
couple of days but when she was finished and they had what they needed to practice.

While Reinhard was busy one morning, Alexandra stepped downstairs to find Klaus.

He was just coming in from a cigarette break when she saw him.

“Klaus? Do you or any of the others know much about fencing?”

“Are you wishing to learn Dr. Kettler?” He knew that Dieter was a fencer and so was Hans.

“Oh. No. I know how. I needed a couple of men to referee.”

“Dieter and Hans are both good fencers. I am sure they could help you. I’ll walk with you. I believe they are in the kitchen.”

She was talking to the three men in the kitchen when Reinhard walked in. The three men saluted and were at attention immediately.

“Why do I have the feeling that I just walked into some trouble brewing Alexandra?” Reinhard looked incredibly amused.

“Klaus, Hans, and Dieter are all quite innocent. I, however, am not.” There was mischief in her blue eyes.

“I am not sure what is more disturbing, that you think I would believe my men are innocent or that you are so readily admitting to guilt.”

“I was asking these fine gentlemen for help with a proposal Obergruppenführer.”

Now the three men were having a problem keeping a straight face. Gentlemen, indeed.

“Why am I afraid to ask what this proposal might be?”

“I promise there is no jumping off of buildings in my plans for today.”

“This is good to know.”

“Would you follow me please Obergruppenführer?” She offered her arm.

Chuckling, Reinhard took her arm. They walked to the main ballroom where he saw the work she had done.

“How? When?” He grinned like a boy.

“I must find ways to keep you in optimal physical health Obergruppenführer.”

“Did the men help?”

“Yes.” They did in small ways. Alexandra would not ask them to do anything she couldn’t do herself. “What you walked into earlier was I had asked Klaus if any of the men could referee. He said that Hans and Dieter were fencers so…….”

Reinhard grabbed her around the waist and picked her up. In his enthusiasm and happiness, he spun Alexandra around.

“Put me down you Beast!” She laughed.
“Never!”

After changing, Alexandra and Reinhard warmed up together.

Their styles were different enough that even though they were both well versed in sabre, it was exciting. In the beginning Alexandra had a slight advantage. Reinhard wasn’t used to going up against a left handed fencer.

Reinhard tended to be more aggressive with his longer reach but Alexandra had him beat on agility and footwork. She could accelerate and decelerate faster than he was able to.

She recovered faster from a lunge than Reinhard but his parry and riposte were far quicker. They took a break when she heard him begin to wheeze ever so slightly.

“How do you even hear that?”

Laughing, she took a drink of water. “Because I know the sounds you make. I know the rise and fall of your chest better than I do my own.”

“That’s strange.”

“Why?”

“Schatzi, your chest is far more entertaining to watch than mine.” He grinned. She rolled her eyes and disagreed vehemently with him.

They had been working for three hours before they were done for the day.

Their last go, Reinhard dropped his sword and rushed Alex. He hauled her over his shoulder and started swatting her on her arse. They both pulled their face masks off, laughing. She returned the favor from her position over his broad shoulder.

She did enjoy groping on his arse while she was upside down.

Chuckling, he set her back on her feet.

“Brute.” Alexandra gave him a nudge and groped him. “You still have that gorgeous arse.” She groped him yet again.

“Silly girl.” He nudged her back.

“Dieter, Hans. Thank you so very much for participating in this craziness.” She smiled warmly at the men and gave Reinhard another nudge.

“Yes, thank you both. Dieter I knew you were a fan of foil but I did not realize you fenced Klein.” He looked to Hans but not before giving Alex another nudge.

“It has been a while Obergruppenführer, but yes.”

“Sabre Hans?” She asked.

“Some Dr. Kettler but I prefer épée.”

She laughed softly. “Reinhard, Hans, you would both be driven mad by my brother. He considers épée to be simply random awkward stabbing.
“Which brother is this Schatzi?”

“Alexander.” She turned to Hans and Klaus. “There is another one of me. I have a twin brother.”

Reinhard made a sound. “You meet Klein for the first time and tell him to fuck off. Then you nearly broke Klaus. Now you tell these three that there is another of you? Alexandra, please do not frighten my men so. I do need them after all.”

“I did tell Hans to kindly fuck off. I was sort of polite given that I had your blood all over my hands.” She nudged him once more.

“That is a pretty good excuse Liebling.”

“I thought so as well.” She grinned and nudged him again.

With the last nudge from Alexandra, Reinhard grabbed her around the waist and hoisted up to his shoulder with practiced ease. “Say your goodbyes for a bit Schatzi. I need to teach you a lesson I believe.”

“OOoh? What are we going to learn?”

“You’ll see.”

She laughed happily when Reinhard swatted her backside. “Enjoy the rest of your day Klaus, Dieter and Hans. Thank you all for helping.”

The three men, Hans, Klaus, and Dieter looked to Reinhard and Alexandra in wonderment. The harsh speaking, no nonsense Obergruppenführer had become an entirely different man under her care. He hadn’t gone soft but he was no longer the cold and callous man of before.

When they were behind closed doors once again, Alexandra began massaging his arse. Reinhard shook his head at her.

“May I help you Schatzi?”

“No thank you, I’m fine.” She kept on.

“What is your fascination with my backside?”

“Good lord Reinhard! You don’t know?”

Reinhard set Alexandra back down on her feet.

“No.”

Undoing her hair and undressing, Alexandra walked behind him. “My big handsome Beast. Your arse is glorious. Thickly muscled, taut, perfectly shaped. Mmph.” She removed his fencing gear slowly, until he was as bare as she was. “When we make love and I wrap my legs around your waist? My heels dig into your arse. The skin is so soft and kissable there.” She kissed a trail down from the small of his back to the end of his intergluteal cleft. “I love to grab you there as well.” She moved to face him and pressed tight against his body. Her hands gripped his arse while she rolled her hips against his pelvis. Smiling, Alexandra felt his arousal. “You, my Reinhard, are decadent. All of you. I don’t think I can even think about you without craving your touch.”

She picked up his hand and pulled.
“Where are you taking me?”

“To the shower. I want to get you filthy dirty and clean you up again.”

“What’s going to make me dirty in the shower?” He grinned.

“Me.”

They were sitting on the bed after a very long shower while Reinhard brushed and combed Alexandra’s hair. While they didn’t get physically dirty, Alex had teased him for over an hour before permitting his release.

“Alexandra?”

“Hmm?” She positively purred.

“How do you know how so much?”

“About what?”

“Sex.”

“I studied the human body. Questions about sex are fairly common to get as a physician. And I have read a lot of dirty stories.”

“I had no idea you were that naughty Schatzi.”

Turning around, she kissed his lips. Gently, she pushed him back on the bed. “No idea, eh?”

Reinhard feigned innocent.

“Hm. Would you do something for me?”

“Of course.”

“Get up on your knees, legs apart. Hold your hands behind your back.”

His brow arched high and then higher. “What are you plotting?”

Alexandra feigned innocent that time. “Do you trust me Reinhard?”

“Completely.”

“Good.”

Reinhard moved into the position as he asked. He was kneeling in the center of the large bed. His back faced the headboard. He had his hands at the small of his back. Broad shoulders were squared and he stared straight ahead.

Alexandra was standing at the foot of the bed, just staring at him with just a touch of a smile on her lush lips.

“Schatzi?”

The soft voice of her love pulled Alexandra from her reverie. “Yes?”

“Is something wrong?”
“No. Not wrong at all. I’m just in awe.”

“Of what?”

“You. You are the most majestic man I have ever seen. You truly are a Lion, my Lion. Noble, strong, and proud – you are the most glorious of Beasts.” Alexandra slid on to the bed. “Yes, you are and always will be my beloved Beast.”

Tipping her head, gentle fingers were drawn up the length of Reinhard’s thigh. He watched Alexandra closely. While he enjoyed her touch, he didn’t understand what she was doing. Lips pressed to his lower abdomen and lingered there.

He shivered feeling her lick his skin. Alexandra mirrored his pose with the exception of the hands. Her hands stroked his skin with love and sweet affection.

“Give me your hands please?” Her voice was barely audible.

He did as she asked and Alexandra kissed the knuckles. When she looked up her eyes were wet.

“Schatzi, what’s wrong?” Did he do something?

“Nothing. Nothing at all is wrong. They are happy tears. I just don’t understand how you could love someone that is as boring as I am. I am grateful that you do.”

Reinhard sat down on the bed and pulled Alexandra to him. His arms engulfed her and held her tight.

“You are anything but boring Schatzi.” He kissed her tenderly. “Would your Beast have his mate be boring?”

“That’s a trick question.” She smiled.

“The correct answer is no, he wouldn’t.” He smiled gently and caressed her cheek. “You my sweet are anything but boring.”

They made love in the warm sunshine pouring through the window. Although, they didn’t have sex. They kissed. They touched. They spoke of love. They each worshipped the other with such gentleness that both Reinhard and Alexandra positively glowed.

When he rolled to his side to get something off the nightstand, Alexandra whipped the sheets down. She cat-called him in their bed before repeatedly kissing the soft skin of his bare arse.

Reinhard meant what he said about her being his mate. She was. They carried a freely and happily given piece of each other’s soul with them now.

There was part of Reinhard that believed they always had that small piece. When they finally found each other, their love was relatively easy to find.
“How would you feel about another guest?” Reinhard looked over the rim of his reading glasses. “It is someone very close to me. It would just be the three of us.”

They were sitting on the sofa together. Alexandra was working some stitching while he was looking at something with small lettering.

“How well. How large of a dinner are you thinking?”

“Small. Something for just the three of us.”

“Hm. Veal? Pork?”

“I shall leave everything up to you.”

“Oh that’s frightening. I shall provide the most American meal possible then.”

He laughed. “And what would that be?”

She looked thoughtful for a moment. “Corn dogs and fried potatoes.”

“What pray tell is a corn dog? Do I even want to have this information?”

She laughed. “Probably not. A corn dog is an extremely cheap type of sausage that you shove a stick into about half of it. Then you dip the sausage in corn meal batter and fry it. Oh and when I say extremely cheap? I’m talking the lips, ears and asshole of the animal. They are often served with mustard. No, not the good mustard you are used to. The cheapest and almost flavorless yellow mustard.”

“That sounds horrid.” Reinhard grimaced. “I do not have the most refined palate but no. There is no way I could eat that.”

“My mother was very strict about us eating things like that. I never cared for them needless to say.”

“Schatzi? Why does it smell like an orange in here?”

“Oh. Sorry.” She held up the orange.

“Schatzi is that string all over the orange?”

“Mhm. I was practicing stitches and suturing.”

Taking the orange from her, Reinhard looked over the piece of fruit before handing it back.

“You do realize this is quite odd, yes?”

She started to laugh. “Obviously you have not spent a lot of time around surgeons. I do it with pig’s feet as well.”

“You are an odd one.”

“You keep saying that.”

“That is because it’s true.”
She laughed and went to wash her hands. “Dine up here or in one of the formal dining rooms?” She sat back down, now orange free.

“Up here. Our guest is someone I have known most of my life.”

“How do you feel about French?”

“Nothing fancy Schatzi. I would like something reminiscent of home.”

“Would you prefer for me to serve you and your guest instead?”

A look of hurt flashed briefly in his eyes. “Is that your preference?”

“No. It is not. I just didn’t want you to have to explain who I was if it would be problematic.”

“Gah! I will show you problematic!” Pulling her on to his lap, she struggled for a moment. “Sing for me Schatzi.”

“What would you want me to sing?”

“Anything you want me to hear.” He smiled.

“May I get up?”

“Do you have a reason?”

“Yes.”

“I’m waiting.”

“You are going to have to work for a song my ferocious Lion. I want you to dance with me while I sing.”

“I would like that very much.”

There was a song she used to sing to on the way to and from work. It always made her heart ache with longing. She had thought that one day she would know a man well enough to sing to him It’s Magic by Doris Day.

Reinhard held his Alexandra in his arms. The song was barely a whisper in his ear as they danced.

You sigh, a song begins
You speak and I hear violins

It's magic

The stars desert the skies
And rush to nestle in your eyes

It's magic

Without a golden wand
Or mystic charms
Fantastic things begin
When I am in your arms
When we walk hand in hand
The world becomes a wonderland

It's magic

How else can I explain
Those rainbows when there is no rain

It's magic

Why do I tell myself
These things that happen are all really true
When in my heart I know
The magic is my love for you

He turned her effortlessly. When she came back to his arms, Reinhard stopped her. Holding her from behind, he stooped down to rest his chin on her shoulder.

“It is magic, isn’t it?”

“You are my one and only true love Alexandra. You are the one person I would give my life for. I would give my life to. You and only you. I love you.”

“I love you Reinhard. Where do we go from here?”

“I don’t know. I wish I had an answer but I don’t. I do know one thing Schatzi, I will not lose you. I cannot lose you.”

“You won’t. We will figure something out.”

“We will.” He picked her up and tossed her over his shoulder.

“Reinhard you beast! Put me down!”

“This Beast is taking you to his lair!”

The bedroom door did not open again until morning.

Having given one of the men a list of items she would need for day, Alexandra was up long before Reinhard. So much of what she was making would take hours to prepare.

It was mid-morning when he came into the kitchen and without stopping Alexandra fixed his coffee.

“Good morning Lion.” She smiled.

He wrapped his arms around her waist from behind. His chin touched her shoulder. “Am I your lion Alexandra?”

“Yes you are.” She turned her head to kiss him. “Especially after that bite mark you left on my inner thigh.”
“This beast was marking his territory.”

She laughed and shook her head.

“How close are you to having everything ready?”

“Everything is made or ready to go into the oven at an appropriate time other than a few finishing touches. Your breakfast is even ready.”

His fingers worked deftly against tiny buttons and it took no time for Reinhard to open her blouse. His fingers brushed over her nipples, teasing them to hardness. “I do not want food Schatzi, I want you.”

“Mm?” She pressed back against him, only to rock her hips side to side.

He marveled at her milk white skin while he rolled her nipples between his fingertips. The hardened tips were a pale rosy pink. “What is it that you do to me? Are you a sorceress that has bespelled me?”

“If I said yes would that break the spell?” Her hands covered his as she leaned back to his chest.

“You are teasing me.” He dragged hem of her skirt upwards. She wore silk stockings and a garter belt beneath the skirt. The thick bands of black were along her upper thighs. She did not wear panties. Smooth skin was on display for him.

“Oh no my Lion. I do not tease, well not for long at least.”

“When were you going to tell me you were dressed like this?”

“I wasn’t going to. I was going to wait until you found out on your own.”

In the kitchen he bent her upper body over the counter. Deft fingers explored her. He marveled at her as always. It was the little things when he touched her that made him smile the most. Those little gasps. How her breathing quickened and her skin flushed with his hands on her. He didn’t have to hear the words that she loved him. No, she showed him in other ways.

“You are magnificent my darling.” The words kissed her ear. “No. Magnificent doesn’t do you justice. You are sumptuous. You are delicious. You are everything I ever wanted and needed. And more. I love you my sweet Alexandra. I love you so.”

She was the first women that wanted him as much as he wanted her. The barely audible cues that left her lips were what he needed. The ones she didn’t even know she made were like music to his ears.

Looking down at her, the love he felt was all consuming. Her body yielded to him in such ways that he had not known was possible. And there, in the kitchen, they called out to and for each other. It was only their physical desires that were sated for the time being. The passion each held for the other would continue on.

“I made a mistake.” Reinhard righted his clothing and then helped with hers.

“What was your mistake?”

“I should not have told our guest he was welcome. I should have told him that I needed bedrest still. And it is true! I need my rest after making love to you all day. How is it that I want you again
already?” Reinhard held her gently.

“I don’t know. But I won’t complain either.” A tender kiss touched his lips. “Reinhard, I must get dressed. Your guest will be here soon.”

“I should do the same. Will you wear the black dress for me?”

“Of course. Oh and Reinhard?”

“Yes Schatzi?”

“Even though your guest will be here. I will be ready for you at any and every moment. My thighs will still be sticky with your seed and my own lust.”

She smiled at him and sauntered off.

He couldn’t help but shake his head and smile. He would be thinking about that all night. As Reinhard dressed, his mind was consumed by thoughts of her. The thoughts made him smile. Klaus and a couple of other of the men were considered good looking. Even Ernst Kaltenbrunner was considered unusual but still handsome. He would have felt inferior to all of them before Alexandra. While she was warm and friendly to the others, the way she looked at him? It made his heart soar.

Reinhard’s guest knew everything about Alexandra already. He was coming there specifically to meet the young doctor. The guest was very concerned about Reinhard. Had the assassination attempt made the Blond Beast go soft?

“Obergruppenführer.” Klaus saluted the waiting Reinhard. “Your guest is coming up the drive now.”

With a nod to the man, he called out to Alexandra. “Are you ready Schatzi?”

“Yes, I was just fixing my lipstick.”

This was the first time Alexandra needed to be in cocktail wear since her arrival. The black dress was simply divine upon her and Reinhard couldn’t stop staring. The belted waist showed how slight she was. The boat neck top of the dress exposed shoulders but nothing more. The skirt was full but hit a bit below the knee. The polished heels she wore put Alexandra just a hair shorter than he.

Staring, he gave a half smile at how she looked. Reinhard chuckled inwardly, he was already eager to help her in removing the beautiful dress. Reinhard wore a suit for the occasion.

“I do not believe I have ever seen or ever will see a woman as beautiful as you.” He kissed her hand and smiled.

“Thank you.” She kissed his cheek.

“I have something for you.” He handed her a small box.

There was a note inside. Pulling it out, she smiled. It said I love you. Alexandra’s cheeks warmed with utter happiness reading it.

“Look under the note.”

Doing as asked, Alexandra saw the necklace. Holding it carefully, she looked to him in surprise.
Taking the necklace, he stepped behind her and placed a necklace around her throat. Reinhard said a short prayer when he fastened it. He asked nothing for himself in the prayer. While not a religious man, he asked whatever god above or below that she always be protected and kept safe. The platinum chain was cold against her skin and the heart shaped locket with a single blue jewel set in the center lay just above Alex’s cleavage.

“Reinhard, it is beautiful. Are you….”

“No, it isn’t. You are beautiful. The necklace does not compare to you. It is a bauble on the throat of the most beautiful woman I have ever known.” Looking into her eyes, Reinhard smiled.

“Do not ask me if I am sure. I am more than sure. That was given to me by my mother when I went into the Navy. She made me promise her that I would never give it to a woman that didn’t love me as much as I loved her. I had to love this woman unconditionally and without reservation. There was only one exception to that. If I never found that woman I would be giving it to my eldest son. He too would have been made to make the same promise. I carried it with me always but never gave it to woman, not even…” He started to say his wife but he couldn’t do it. “Lina. You are the only woman I have loved like this my Alexandra. I know you love me with the same love I have for you.”

“I do. I do love you the same. I love you unconditionally.” She kissed him softly.

“Open it.”

Alexandra did as asked. Inside the locket was a picture of Reinhard looking thoughtful. The other was of him making the same silly face he always made to get her to laugh.

“Reinhard, I love you.”

“I know my Schatzi. I love you too. Never take that off unless you absolutely have to. Will you promise me that?”

“I promise.”

“Come down in five minutes?”

“Of course.”

Downstairs Reinhard had just greeted his brother Heinz. There was only a year difference in their age and the two men were quite close. One of the calls that Reinhard made each night was to his brother.

“Where is this doctor I needed to meet?”

“She will be down shortly. Thank you for coming all this way to meet her.”

“Reinhard I have never seen you like this. You look good. You look very good. Whatever magic this woman has agrees with you.”

“Sorry to say there is no magic.” Alexandra was halfway down the grand staircase when she spoke. “I am, however, making him rest and relax.”

Both men turned at the sound of her voice. While Reinhard smiled at her appearance, Heinz gaped. Alexandra was nothing like he expected. Reinhard had a type and this woman was not it. This was
obviously not one of the more easy women his brother had picked up. This woman exuded confidence. The gleam in her eyes hinted upon many things but intelligence and compassion were at the forefront.

Heinz unabashedly examined the young woman. She was tall and slender with jet black hair that fell down her back like a ripple of silk. Alexandra looked more like she should be in some glamorous Hollywood film than at a villa outside of Prague.

Reinhard offered a hand to her. She took it with a smile of delight. Heinz was cynical but even he couldn’t help but notice how they both lighted up at the simple touch.

“I would like to introduce you to Dr. Alexandra Kettler. My Alexandra, this is my younger brother Heinz.”

“You didn’t tell me our guest was your brother. It is a pleasure to meet you Heinz.” Her smile was one of genuine warmth. Heinz would have sworn that there was a bit of impish good humor in her eyes as well.

The men were very obviously related. Their looks were similar on all fronts. Heinz and Reinhard even had the same hair. Although Reinhard forced his to appear straight, his brother left his to curl. He was also slightly shorter than his older brother and wore glasses. It reminded Alexandra of how she and her brother Alexander looked standing side by side.

“The pleasure is mine, Dr. Kettler.”

“Please, call me Alexandra or Alex even.”

“Thank you.”

“Would you both like to come up for a drink?”

The three of them went back upstairs where they could be more comfortable.

“What would you like to drink gentlemen?”

“Gin and tonic.”

“Whisky for me Schatzi.”

The men stepped towards the sitting room while Alexandra went to prepare the drinks. She was trying to give the brothers a bit of privacy. She knew that Heinz was often on the front lines because of his position as a journalist.

“I see how she caught your eye.” Heinz looked amused. He knew of Reinhard’s dalliances.

“It wasn’t her beauty that did it.” Reinhard’s voice quiet, gentle even.

The look of amusement turned to one of skepticism. “Surely you jest.”

“I was staring up at her in the middle of the road. I couldn’t move, the pain was too much. I watched her. It was all I could do. Klein had a gun on her and was yelling at her to move. She told Klein something like kindly fuck off I’m busy.”

Heinz laughed. “She said it in German?”

“Yes she did. The look on Klein’s face was one of the utmost shock. She saved my life Heinz.
Even Erich Krueger had to listen to her advice.”

“I am sure Krueger hated that.”

“That he did. Krueger loathed her. When I was getting ready to leave, he backhanded her in plain view.”

“What was his motive behind such a move?” Heinz was appalled but not surprised. He never cared for Erich Krueger, even when they were young.

“Partially because she is American, I believe. She was simply a better doctor than he was. Although, she proved herself to be a fine adversary of Krueger. She caught him with a left hook and then a right.” Reinhard smiled with pride and mirth.

“Aha! That explains her accent. How did an American woman end up in Prague? Especially one that speaks German. Krueger and those like him need to be removed. If she could take care of herself, why did you bring her here Reinhard?” Just because he knew of his older brother’s dalliances it didn’t mean he approved of them.

“I wasn’t going to leave Alexandra there without protection. I would have sent her elsewhere first. But by that time she meant too much to me already, Heinz. She had gotten lost and separated from her Red Cross unit. She ended up in Prague because some soldiers were trying to find her a safe place so that she may return to the States and got lost. They were close behind when the attempt on my life happened.” Reinhard smiled. “She refused to listen to one of our men and helped me instead.”

“What do you mean?”

“It was one of our officers first. The man had a gun trained on her and was given specific orders to move but she decided to help me instead.”

“She risked getting killed to save your life more than once that morning?”

“Yes.”

“I must ask, please do not take it as an insult Reinhard. Did she know who you were?”

“No. She did not then. She does now.”

Alexandra came back out of the kitchen. She was carrying a large charcuterie board while Hedda helped bring out a tray with the drinks, plates, utensils and the likes. Both men stood at her entrance. She set up the table with efficiency and elegance for the brothers.

“Thank you Schatzi.” Reinhard kissed her temple.

Beaming with the kiss, she also blushed at the show of affection in front of someone else. “Please sit, both of you. I have a few preparations to finish in the kitchen so that we may dine later. If you both will excuse me? I’ll be back shortly.”

“But of course,” Heinz took his seat once again.

“Is there anything I may do to help?”

“Not at all. Everything is perfect. I just need to put the finishing touches on a few things before I put them in the oven.” Alexandra smiled happily and kissed Reinhard’s cheek.
His self-doubt was rearing its ugly head. Excusing himself for a moment, he followed her back to the kitchen. Reinhard said nothing at first. He simply watched her work.

She had taken a cherry clafoutis out of the oven recently. Now that it was cool enough, it was placed in the refrigerator. There was a chocolate torte sitting on the counter as well. Alexandra didn’t realize he was there and when she did she jumped back in surprise.

“Coming to sneak a kiss?” She smiled warmly, kissing his lips. When he didn’t return the kiss, she stepped back quickly.

“Alexandra are you uncomfortable with Heinz?”

“No. Not at all.” Her head dipped down, crestfallen. “I just needed to put a few touches on dinner and…….” She had upset him and possibly his brother. “I’m sorry Reinhard. I didn’t mean for it to appear that I didn’t wish to be there.”

“My darling girl, I just wanted to make sure. I am not upset.”

“I will be out in a moment or two. I just need to put the salads away and wash my hands.” Which she did immediately.

“Come here.”

Still contrite, she stepped closer. Reinhard wrapped her in his embrace and just held her for a few moments.

The rest of the day and into the evening passed with the three of them enjoying themselves. There was good food, good drink, and excellent company. It was close to midnight when one of the men came up.

“Obergruppenführer, your call. It is urgent.”

“I will be right there.”

Immediately Alexandra stiffened upon seeing the man.

“Relax fraulein. He is one of mine. That is why you do not recognize him.” Heinz replied quietly. “Reinhard’s men must be all busy. Come, step outside with me. Keep me company while I have a cigarette.”

Taking a wrap with her, she turned to Heinz once they were outdoors. “I am surprised you noticed.”

“How you quickly became concerned when a ‘Nazi’ you didn’t know appeared? I would have done the same.” He offered her a cigarette, which she declined.

“You don’t trust your own people?”

“Correct.”

“I assume you wish to talk to me without the listening ears of others?”

He didn’t answer. “I heard you met Buder. What did you think?”

A wry smile curved her lips. “How much time do you have and how do you feel about coarse language from a woman?”
“That poorly?”

“Yes.”

“Reinhard told me what had happened.” He spoke softly. “You were smart in how you handled things. If my brother had known right away? The man would be dead, not to say that Buder doesn’t deserve to die. Heinrich is of a high enough rank that it would cause problems. I have to ask, did you really threaten to circumcise him?”

“Yes, I did.”

Heinz grinned just briefly and laughed. “I can see why my brother cares for you Alexandra. You must keep him on his toes.”

“I do try.”

“You also do not agree with our purity laws, eugenics, and certain conclusions in science.”

Alexandra watched him for a second or two before answering. “You are correct.”

“So you are saying there is nothing different between us?”

“You are a man and I am a woman, of course there are biological differences. Still, our bodies work in similar fashions, so do our brains. The true difference between people? It’s because someone decided to make them different. Besides, there is no such thing as racial purity.”

“Why?”

“Humans have existed for thousands of years. It’s impossible. Humans migrated often, so from that alone you had genetic intermixing. There is nothing that proves that one group is superior to another.”

“Does my brother know you feel this way?”

“Yes.”

Heinz nodded. Already he liked her. “You love him don’t you?”

“Reinhard? Yes. I love him very much.”

“He loves you too fraulein. Very much so. You know who he is and still you love him.” It wasn’t a question. Heinz noticed something. When Alexandra said his brother’s name her smile blossomed. It was lovely to watch.

“I only learned of his surname recently. But it wasn’t hard to guess he was an important high ranking official given the calls, security and everything else.”

“Then you also know he is married with a family.”

“Yes. I know that as well.”

“You should run as soon as you have the chance.”

“No.”

“There is no way for you two to come out of this without being hurt. Reinhard was dismissed from
the Navy many years ago because of his enjoyment of women. He was unimportant then. Now they could kill you.”

“He told me. And honestly? Let them try to kill me. I have been shot at, guns held to my head, beaten and nearly raped more than once in less than four months. They haven’t succeeded yet.” Alexandra had seen the war up close and personal now. She wasn’t backing down.

“You stared down an angry and armed SS man to try and save my brother.” Heinz watched her with a half-smile. “Yes, I can see why he loves you so. You are a woman like no other.” He lit another cigarette. “I was half tempted earlier to try and force you to leave. I couldn’t do it.”

“Why?”

“It would kill him.” Heinz sighed softly. “I love my brother. I know his faults and I know his gifts. He is 38 years old Alexandra and this is the first time I have seen my brother in love. I am unable to take that away from him. He told me that this month and a half with you is the happiest he has ever been. I can see it in his eyes. Just take care of him, please.”

“I will do my very best. Heinz, I would die for him.”

“Tell him that. Tell him you love him often. But more importantly, show him.”

“I have.” Her smile was gentle, almost innocent in appearance. “Thank you Heinz.”

“Whatever for?”

“Saying all of this to me.”

“I was hoping to scare you away.”

“I don’t scare easily.”

“Listen to me Alexandra Kettler and listen well. My brother is a monster. He is the murderer of thousands upon thousands of people. Some think he is third in line to the Führer others think that he is next. Even the Führer calls him the Man with the Iron Heart. My brother is called the Blond Beast and the Butcher of Prague by his own people. Until he met you, I was afraid that he had lost what little humanity he had left.”

“Heinz, I do not scare easily. You cannot scare me away from Reinhard. Once I found out the truth about him? I couldn’t hate him. It was impossible. You said it yourself, he was a man without love. I know you noticed the change in him now that he loves and is loved. And yes, I love him. I love him beyond measure. I don’t care if I have to fight for him or with him, I am not afraid of a fight.

I know he had done horrible deeds. I neither deny nor condone any of it. There is more to him than the horrible. He is not evil, nor has he ever been. There is so much more to him than what he has done. Heinz, your brother is kind and tenderhearted. He is a brilliant man and funny. There is nothing more I enjoy doing that making him smile knowing he is loved.”

“Your belief in God must be powerful.”

“Actually? I’m an atheist.”

Heinz snorted “You are joking.”

“Nope.” She chuckled.
Reinhard returned abruptly. “Is something amiss?” He saw the faces of the two people he loved most is in the world.

“We were just having a bit of a discussion.” Smiling, she offered a hand to Reinhard.

“About?”

“Actually, it was somewhat comical. Heinz said my belief in God must be powerful. I told him nope, I am an atheist. He thought I was kidding.”

Reinhard laughed. He pulled her gently so that she was standing in front of him. He liked to feel her back against his chest. “Did I tell you what she did when Buder was here?”

“Besides making lunch?”

“She went outside for something. What did you go outside for Schatzi?”

“Just to cool off. It was that or circumcise Buder.”

“Ah. Yes.” There was a flicker of anger and disgust on Reinhard’s face.

“Anyway, Klaus walked out with her. One of the fools that Buder keeps as guards had gotten drunk and killed a cat. This one…”He kissed her shoulder. “…..is angry. No, angry doesn’t cover it. He shot the cat just 10 centimeters from where she stood. So what does my beloved do? She boxes his ears so hard that she broke both eardrums, broke the man’s nose, knocked out his front teeth and then kicked him in the balls hard enough that the man is praying never to have an erection again. She is covered in cat blood and has two little kittens in her hands while kneeling in the grass with the most evil look of hate you can think of. All six of my men have drawn arms on 2 of his men. The only one of them that wasn’t rolling on the ground is ready to shoot her.” He shook his head with a smile. “Klaus is explaining to us what the hell happened. Poor Klaus is trying not to laugh. I’m trying not to laugh.”

“Wait. Why were you two trying not to laugh?” She hadn’t realized that.

“My sweet Alexandra the man you had taken out? He not only was an armed SS guard, but one that was part of the Reichssicherheitsdienst or security detail. This man used to be one of Hitler’s guards. You beat him like he had never been beaten before. Do you have any idea how bad you hurt his ego? He will never live it down that woman beat him senseless.”

“His ego, no. His scrotum on the other hand?” She gave the brothers a shining smile. “Footballers across the world were envious.”

Reinhard and Heinz both laughed.

“Your woman is opinionated, strong minded and a fighter. She would make both Göring and Goebbels quake in their boots.” Heinz smiled at Alex. “Especially Goebbels.”

“She is a worthy opponent. I have seen it more than once.” He kissed her cheek and smiled. “I had Kaltenbrunner come out with some extra weapons to give Alexandra lessons in weapons. My men put her through the paces with self-defense as well. She was able to get away from Klein faster than I could.”

She laughed softly. “Only because Hans was horrified of the thought at possibly touching me improperly.”
“Truly?” Reinhard was surprised. “Afraid of what I might do?”

“I’m not sure. I think in part it is my status as the little sister.”

“Little sister?” Heinz looked to both Reinhard and Alexandra with confusion.

“Yes. The men adore Alexandra and have adopted her as family. They are her older brothers and she is the little sister.” Reinhard smiled broadly.

“You must be joking?” Heinz was surprised to say the least.

“I’m just going to ask first from now on. Schatzi do you know whatever. It will be easier.” He wrapped an arm around her waist, pulling Alexandra against him.

Heinz couldn’t help but smile. She put her hand to Reinhard’s cheek and kissed his lips. It wasn’t an act. She cared for his brother like no woman he had ever seen before. That included Lina Heydrich.

“My darling, if you don’t mind giving us some privacy? Something has come up.”

“Given the hour, I will get ready for bed. Heinz, it was a pleasure to meet you.” She hugged Heinz gently before whispering her thanks once again. “Good night both of you. I shall see you in the morning.” A warm kiss was pressed to Reinhard’s jaw. She nuzzled against him briefly before taking her leave.

They watched her go back inside.

“I can see why you love her, Reinhard.”
They discussed the business matter first. Heinz agreed to the proposal and it would keep him off the front lines while still allowing him to be the journalist he was.

“I want to spend the rest of my life with her at my side.” The words were wistful.

“What of Lina and the children?”

“I do not know yet.”

“If you wish to be with Alexandra dear brother, you will have to leave Germany and never return. There will be few places that you would be welcome or safe, if there are any at all. You would put her at risk as well.”

“I know.”

“So why?”

“She has changed me.”

“Reinhard! It has been but a month!”

“No. It has been over three months. But what does it matter? Every day in the hospital she was there. She sat by my side and told me funny tales. When the pain was too much but it was too soon to permit me more morphine, she sang to me. To help ease the boredom my sweet Alexandra and I would play chess or she would read to me. She would go and find a book that I hadn’t read in English and translate it to German while she read it. “

“Have you thought it might be to have eased her own boredom?”

“No. It wasn’t. She did that with no one else. Alexandra is the balm my soul needed. She has soothed the anger and hate within me Heinz. The strange coincidences that are between us? Her middle name is Elisabeth. Our birthdays are but a week a part. She plays the cello like an angel plays the harp. To hear her sing? It would amaze you. She doesn’t see me as someone to be feared. She sees the man I truly am and not the one I have become.”

“Do you know what you have become?”

“Yes.” He looked at his brother. “Heinz, I know the monster I have become. Nothing ever made me happy until I met her. I never have been happy until now. I thought that my life would be better when I could no longer be thought of as lesser than others. I thought if others feared me I would be happy. When I had power and money and everything my life would be perfect. None of it was true. Not a damn part of it was true. What makes me happy is making her laugh and knowing that I am the reason for her loving smile.”

“Come Reinhard.” Heinz placed a hand on his brother’s shoulder. “Let us go inside. We shall think of something. I am glad you finally found a woman worthy of that necklace. I do understand why you love her.”

“Do you?” Inside, he poured himself and Heinz a drink.

“Yes, she is a force to be reckoned with.”
“No. Heinz that is not my Alexandra. If pushed to it, yes. The day to day woman? No. She is the kindest, gentlest person I have ever met. While I was in the hospital, there was a child crying. My Alexandra? She knelt on the cold hard floor so that she could comfort the child. She always carried lollipops in her pocket for the children that would come to see their fathers. There was many a man that cried on her shoulder. She treated them with warmth, kindness and caring. None of the other doctors or nurses did that.”

“What else?”

“I will not deny she is beautiful. Alexandra is the most beautiful woman I have ever seen. Her beauty is secondary to the woman she is. Her mind is so sharp. Her musical skills are perfection, Father would have loved her for her musical talents alone. I love her. I love her so. Still, there is so much more than that.”

“Like what?”

“The older men that came to the hospital? Most of them were Sudetendeutsches. Heinz, she spoke with respect to them. No one else did. These men were treated as nuisances by everyone but her. She is supposed to be the enemy and she was better to our veterans than any of our own party has ever been. There was one day that she was not working but came in.”

“Why did she come in on her day off?”

“She helped treat the men that needed care and to see me.” He smiled, remembering.

“Strange.”

“The older men, usually from the last war, had lots of chronic pain and illnesses. She would sit and talk to them and make sure they got what they needed. Once I was more mobile, I would often be in there with her. Sometimes the men spoke with accents or terms that she did not understand.” He smiled again. “I would help her translate. Watching her was like watching someone with a beloved parent or grandparent. These men were all strangers.

I asked her about it. Why she treated them as such that is. Alexandra said because she hoped if someone had to treat someone she loved, they would give her family a similar treatment.”

“If you love her Reinhard, send her home. If you two are found out? She will be killed, if not turned into a whore in a brothel. Too many people know about her as it is.” Heinz didn’t say these things because he wanted to but because he had to.

“I know. Kaltenbrunner met her.”

“Why?”

“If something is to happen to him, I will help out his Gisela. He will help you do the same with Alexandra.”

“Can you trust him?”

“I don’t know. I hope so.”

“Do you trust Alexandra?”

“Completely.”
“Let her go then Reinhard. When this mess is over perhaps you will find her again.”

Heinz was given an upstairs room, as he was family.

Reinhard paused for another drink. It was just water. Heinz raised an interesting question. Could he trust Kaltenbrunner? When it came to Alexandra, he believed he could. Kaltenbrunner may fight him for position within the party or for something else. Reinhard had already been told by Klaus and the other men that they would do anything and everything they possibly could to keep their little sister safe. He believed them.

It made him smile briefly. He was certain they were more loyal to her than they were to him, if that was possible. Once upon a time that would have bothered Reinhard, now it pleased him greatly. Before he would have been insanely jealous. He had seen it so many times himself. Alexandra could be talking to one of the men but it was never anything close to flirtation. She treated the other men like she would a family member.

She had been talking to Dieter recently. His sister had a son fairly recently that was born with a cleft lip and palate. His sister had been heartbroken that her first child would be deformed. Alexandra explained that there was a simple procedure that she could do personally that would correct the problem. It would be rare for anyone to even notice once everything was healed.

Dieter looked upon Alexandra with shock. She had told the big man to check with the Obergruppenführer about having an operating theatre made available for her and she would take care of everything.

Reinhard had been coming down the stairs when he overheard the conversation. He stopped to listen as he didn’t know the child had a problem. Dieter gave Alexandra a hug. It was quick but the large SS man kept thanking her over and over again. She told him the truth, she would be happy to help.

When she looked up, she saw Reinhard standing there looking at her with a smile. Alexandra’s entire expression changed. She smiled just a little bit wider. Her skin glowed. Full lips that he so loved to kiss parted slightly. Even her posture changed and the way she held her body.

She cared for his men, yes. She may even have loved them as she loved her own brothers in the United States. But it was Reinhard that she was in love with. Even he, with self-doubts plaguing him on occasion, could see it.

He was proud of her. He was proud of his men. They would protect his beloved Schatzi if she needed it.

Taking a seat, he stared at the wall. Always, his thoughts returned to her. None of the men here nor that he knew would be loyal to Lina like they were to his Schatzi. They would help Lina because of obligation. Alexandra they would help because they cared for her and would protect her.

When Reinhard went to bed, he was surprised to find that his own room was unused still.

Walking into Alexandra’s, he found her asleep. He watched her. She was on her belly, long dark hair slid like satin down her bare back. The fading moonlight from a nearby window cast her in its gentle glow. She looked as if she were smiling in her sleep. Once again, he was reminded of Eir.

Reinhard only partially undressed and he didn’t care to finish. The entire day he felt as if she was pulling away from him. Seeing her in a bed that was not his was painful in ways he could not explain. It was torture sitting with the knowledge that he had to let her go. Slowly, he lowered
himself on to the bed.
The shift of weight on the bed woke her. Turning her head she saw him next to her and smiled.
“Good morning my handsome Lion. What time is it?”
“I woke you.”
“Mmmmm. No one I would rather be woken up by.”

Alexandra crawled on top of him and used Reinhard’s shoulder as a pillow. She made sounds of delight when his arms went around her. Her lips pressed against the side of his throat. She kissed the warm flesh there. She nipped his throat gently and purred against him.

“Why are you in here?”

“I wasn’t for certain how you would feel about your brother confronted with the knowledge that we indeed do share a bed. I erred on the side of caution.”

“Why didn’t you have a gown on Schatzi?”

“I never sleep in a gown with you.”

“And why is that?”

She giggled softly which made Reinhard smile. She was still mostly asleep. It was the only time she giggled.

“I love feeling your skin against mine. I crave the touch of your hands in the night. Or it can be summed up in as little as three words. I love you.”

She kissed his lips then. Her still waking body stretched over him. With dancing eyes, she kissed the tip of his nose. Deciding he had too much clothing on she worked to remove them.

“Is there something you are wanting?” He was amused.

“You. I want you.” She nipped at his chest.

“You have me right here.” His fingers traced up her spine.

“I know. I am lucky.” Her lips traveled up his chest to his throat.

Letting her tease and torment, Reinhard lay there with his eyes closed. He almost wished to weep with joy because of how happy she made him. Knowing he was going to have to say goodbye to her was killing him in ways he never thought of.

The loss of her touch would be the worst, physically. He would miss her loving touches she gave him throughout the day. Each touch was an expression of her love. She would slide her hands over his chest from behind and held him like that before whispering something sweet in his ear. How she loved to lay her head in his lap and listen to music while they both relaxes.

His brazen Schatzi. How many times did she take the paper and pen away from him and lay it to the side while she straddled his lap. She would kiss him and writhe against him until she pulled him free. Alexandra never complained how he wanted to take her or where.

It was almost always her that initiated their afternoon quickies.
While she was still half asleep, the half that was awake wanted him. A gentle hand cupped around him over his trousers. It still amused him how insistent she could be when she was half asleep.

Already she had coaxed him to hardness.

“You, my magnificent Lion, are beautiful.”

“I thought men were handsome.”

“You are handsome, true. Yet, you are far more than handsome. You are majestic. You are truly beautiful like only the most handsome of men can be.” She kissed his lips with such tenderness that Reinhard had to close his eyes in order not to allow tears to fall.

“Do you know what else my love?” She smiled.

“What else?”

“You have the most glorious arse.” Alexandra beamed at him. “Make love with me my majestic One?”

Sliding her off of him and on to her belly, Reinhard shoved his trousers down. He placed his forehead against the nape of her neck and whispered. “I love you.”

When he sank deeply into her, he sighed. She felt sublime. He loved taking his girl from behind like this.

Reinhard lay over her, his broad chest against her back. Turning her head to the side, he never let her lips leave his for long. It was the only thing that kept his emotions from running wild. Alexandra whispered his name with reverence in the absolute pleasure of their coupling.

He knew this would be their last time together for a long while, if not forever. Every touch given and received by him had meaning. Never in his life had he felt this sort of fear and inner pain. Not in the hospital. Not even when he crashed his plane behind enemy lines. Having no concept of true love before her, Reinhard didn’t know that love could hurt like this.

The love of his life was being ripped away and it was killing him slowly. He wanted to look into her eyes and plead with her to wait for him. He couldn’t. If he actually looked into her blue eyes, it would kill him.

She whispered softly to him after they finished. “Reinhard, I love you. I love you with all that I am.”

Reinhard pulled away from her and moved to his side. Alexandra pressed close against him.

“I love you too my Schatzi.” He stroked his hand through her silken tresses.

“You have me heart and soul.”

“Why? Why do you love me? You know that I am an unlovable beast of a man. If I can even call myself a man. I am a monster.”

If there was a way to undo everything that he had done, he would do so without hesitation. He was not good enough to love a person such as Alexandra. Heinz was right, she would be killed or worse. Most likely much worse. Reinhard did know what many men did for sport when it came to women. He had never participated in such nor would he.
“If you are a beast that is because you are my Beast. My beloved Beast. You are not unlovable. I love you. I love all of you. I would die for you Reinhard.”

“You almost did, more than once.” He stroked her cheek. “I would give up everything for you. I swear to you, I would.”

“Why do I feel like you are going to tell me goodbye?”

“A good man would tell you goodbye. I, however, am not a good man.”

“Reinhard?”

“My beloved. My sweet beloved Alexandra. I love you so. I am so very sorry. Forgive me. Please.”

“What are you sorry for?”

“For everything. I should never have loved you. I should never have wanted you, my darling. I do love you and I do want you, desperately.”

“Look at me please?” She brushed his short blond locks back. When he finally did. she kissed his lips tenderly.

He turned away in shame.

“My Lion, I love you. Your transgressions have long since been forgiven by me. Please do not turn away.”

“You shouldn’t. You shouldn’t love me.” He pulled away from her further and sat up. His feet were now on the floor. Sighing, he rested his forehead upon the heel of his hands, he felt ill for what he had done.

“Why?” Sliding off the bed, Alexandra knelt at his feet.

Her skin looked silvery in the moonlight. The shadows that were her long dark hair shifted across her skin. His fallen angel. His Angel of Death. Even now he wanted to do nothing more than to pull her into bed and love her until they were both past exhausted. They could fall asleep together and awaken to start all over once again. Oh how he wanted to but Reinhard knew he couldn’t.

“I would have seen you and your entire family dead.” The words were an angry whisper. “Don’t you understand that I would have not thought twice about my men raping and abusing you Alexandra? I would have laughed hearing about it!” He paused. “No. I wouldn’t have laughed. I would have punished them for fucking a Jew. No, you shouldn’t love me. You should hate me. You should fucking hate me Alexandra.”

“Reinhard! That has changed. I know you love me. Please look at me? Please?”

“No, I cannot. We spoke of forgiveness. I am unforgivable. No one can forgive what I have done. There isn’t anyone left that has the ability to do so.”

Abruptly, he stood and yanked his hands free from her gentle grasp. “I would have seen you dead. I would have seen you beaten and raped. I could have put a gun to your head and pulled the trigger. And I would have felt nothing. NOTHING.”

Alexandra was on her feet quickly. “Reinhard, please.” She laid a hand on his forearm.

Reinhard gripped her by the shoulders and pushed her back into the wall firmly. He couldn’t be
harsh with her. He just couldn’t do that, but he needed to be. Reinhard sighed. When he looked her in the eyes, he saw no fear in them. She needed to be afraid. Not just of him but of everything around her.

“Please what? PLEASE WHAT ALEXANDRA? How can I look you in the eye and say I love you? How can I promise I will take care of you? How can I do any of this knowing I would have had your blood on my hands? I would have killed you without remorse. The worst part? If you were to leave and go home this very minute? I would do all of it still. My life would continue as it did before I ever saw you. I would have no choice but to. ” The regret felt hollow in his chest.

He pressed a soft kiss to her lips. “Mein Schatzi. I love you. There are thousands, perhaps millions of people that I became their executioner just by my signature. I never knew them. I never saw their faces. I couldn’t even tell you a single name and they died because I willed them to. I’m so sorry my girl. I am so sorry.”

Without another word, Reinhard grabbed his clothing and walked out. Grabbing her nightgown, she ran after him. Taking the stairs two and three at a time, she was already halfway down the stairs before the nightgown was righted on her body. Alexandra winced when the door slammed in her face.

She didn’t let it stop her. Running outside she heard the squeal of the tires before she saw the car disappear down towards the gates. She didn’t stop running. It wasn’t until he disappeared down the road did she stop. She stood there. Bare feet were on the rocks and dirt but she didn’t notice. The pain that she felt in her heart drowned everything else out.

Alexandra dropped to her knees. Her arms crossed over her abdomen as she doubled over in the pain of losing him. When her head touched the ground before her, she let out a howl. The pain was too much to be contained within her completely.

She pounded her hands into the gravel and rocks. The stones cut at her flesh and she never noticed.

Reinhard’s men saw her but didn’t know what had happened. They let her grieve in peace but each of the men were ready to help if she needed it or asked for it.

It took nearly an hour but with a heavy heart, she went back inside and upstairs.

After returning to the upstairs of the villa, she sat outside. Alexandra sat in silence with a cup of coffee that had gone cold and a cigarette. Alexandra’s beautiful blue eyes were red from crying. The dark circles under them almost looked like bruises. They may have been bruises for as often as she scrubbed her fists to wipe away the tears. She stared off across the countryside with no idea what to expect.

Everything had been a lie.

The pair of kittens were sleeping in the pocket of her blouse. They were still so tiny that they both fit in a pocket. She had fed them and done the necessary things that the kittens needed. She stoked their tiny forms through the material of her shirt.

Heinz walked out and other than a flicker of her eyes she didn’t acknowledge him. He picked up her cup and examined the contents. Tossing the liquid over the side of the railing, Heinz refilled it with hot coffee from the carafe he brought out.

“I owe you cigarettes.” She took a drag from one.

“I have plenty. He will be fine fraulein.”
“He told you?”

“No. The walls are thin. I heard.”

“My apologies. I didn’t mean to wake you.”

“Alexandra, Reinhard is a stubborn shit of a man. It runs in the family I am told. He loves you. I swear to you that he does.”

“I can’t imagine that loving a dirty Jew is great for a political career here.”

“You aren’t Jewish.”

“That depends on who you ask. According to Jewish law, I am.” According to my heart I am.

“There were rumors that we had Jewish blood.”

Alexandra knew that but did not admit so. “Do you?”

“Honestly? I do not know. My brother was bullied because of it. Very badly bullied. One of many reasons he was bullied.” Heinz sighed. “It seems strange to tell an atheist to have faith, but you should. Have faith in him. Reinhard didn’t have an easy life.”

“No one has an easy life.”

“Touché. You are still sitting here at least.”

Her head turned swiftly. Those blue eyes locked on Heinz and narrowed down. “I told you yesterday. I was not going to run. I meant it then and I mean it now.”

“Why?”

“Running only makes you tired.”

Heinz smirked at her reply.

“Although, if he doesn’t return I will have to leave. Staying without Reinhard in a villa in what is part of Nazi Germany’s holdings doesn’t seem like the best idea for a Jew, Heinz.” Alex shook her head. “Dr. Krueger asked me why I saved Reinhard. I recited to him the Hippocratic Oath. I believe all life is precious. All of it. There is part of the Oath that states

…..most especially must I tread with care in matters of life and death. If it is given me to save a life, all thanks. But it may also be within my power to take a life; this awesome responsibility must be faced with great humbleness and awareness of my own frailty.

Of course everyone may take what they wish from that but here is my thought. If it is within my ability to save a life and that will give them a decent quality of life, I shall do so – be they friend, foe, or unknown. I will also help them to leave this world if it means that their living would cause them unbearable suffering. I am not God, I do not judge their deeds. I only have the ability to make a decision based upon their physical well-being.”

“You would do that for the Fuhrer even?”

“Absolutely. I will fight to my own death to save a life. I will not willingly take a life, if I can help it.”
“I wish my brother would have met you when he was still a young man.”

“You do realize that is an odd wish Heinz? When he was 20 I was only 10 years old.”

He barked out a laugh with a shake of the head. “I believe even if it was as a little sister at that age you would have kept both of us on our toes.” He offered her a cigarette. Which she gladly took. “I though you did not smoke.”

“I started and stopped as a teenager. It is horrible for your body to smoke but right now it is better than drinking a bathtub full of gin.”

“You do have an interesting turn of phrase. I didn’t know that it was bad for your body. I have never heard that before.”

“It is not well known.” She inhaled and held it for a moment. “I met Reinhard’s wife.”

“When?”

“I think it was the first week while he was in the hospital. He was still in a lot of pain.”

“What did you think of her?”

“She did not care much for me.”

“I imagine not. You are an attractive woman. Lina found fault in most women anyway. Even with Reinhard being bedridden, she would have seen you as a rival. Granted, you became a rival and Reinhard was never one to be faithful. You did not answer my question.”

“Well, you aren’t wrong. Even in a different time and place, we would not be friends.”

“Why do you think that?”

“She is more concerned about status and appearance than I am.”

“Perhaps because she does not have her own status is why she is concerned? As for appearance, it depends on what you mean. If you are referring to physical appearance, you are more beautiful than she has ever been. If you are referring how she appears to the public eye, you have her bested her there as well.”

“What do you mean?”

“Her status and even her appearance is because of my brother. If not for him, she would just be a hausfrau to an ordinary man. From my brother she is given status due to his own status. Appearance wise, Reinhard never cared how she looked. Part of that is because he just didn’t care enough about her. The other part, she wanted to look like the perfect Nazi wife.”

“You make a fair argument.”

“You on the other hand do have status, even here.” Heinz looked at her. “It’s not just because you are attractive either. You command respect no matter the reason. I have a feeling that is why Krueger and Gebhardt didn’t like you. You commanded respect. So, they tried to command you. You felt contempt for them because of it. They were willing to harm a man to try and overpower you.”

“You aren’t wrong Heinz. I didn’t hide the fact that I saw them as lesser physicians.”
“I know. To try to get at you, they nearly killed Reinhard. You stopped them and scared them. So, your profession, your being, and your beauty are formidable when combined. More so, because you do not see it and don’t use it as a weapon.”

“I don’t see it. I don’t want it.”

“It is what kept you safe dear girl. A lesser woman would have been brutalized at that hospital. I am well aware of Erich Krueger’s behaviors myself.”

“Yesterday when you and I met, I was dressed up at Reinhard’s wishes. Most of my days in America I am preforming surgery, so I am wearing scrubs.” She shook her head. “Not one to be faithful, that doesn’t surprise me.”

“Scrubs?”

“The loose cotton pants and shirts surgeons wear. I have no idea what the word is in German.”

“Do not feel badly, neither do I.”

“Why does it not surprise you that he was unfaithful?”

Alexandra looked to Heinz, studying him for a moment. “He was wanting something and was not finding it.”

“Did he find it with you?”

“I don’t know, it certainly doesn’t look like it now does it? That is more of a question for him. I never thought I would be with a married man. Well. Except for the one I married.” She sighed.

“Does that bother you?”

“Yes.”

“Why?”

“It is easy to tell you are journalist, did you know that?”

“Yes.” Heinz smiled. “So why does it bother you?”

“I wouldn’t want my husband to cheat on me. I never thought I would do it to someone else. That isn’t my way.”

“Alexandra, you had no idea Reinhard was married in the beginning. You had already fallen in love with him. There is a difference.”

She ignored that part of the conversation. “Heinz, he told me I should hate him. I can’t hate him. I love him. God help me, but I do love him.”

“Fraulein, please do not judge him for that. My brother has come to the realization that something he thought was right or true all of his life is very wrong. Many people have died because of Reinhard. He is having to come to terms with that now. If you had been born here you would have been murdered. If you were lucky? Your death would have been quick. You would not have been that lucky.”

She looked to Heinz. “I know.” Sighing softly. “Honestly Heinz? There is very little I don’t know.”
“How?”

“In America everything is on the television or in the newspapers. I know about far more than I have ever admitted.”

“Stay silent about all if it, it will keep you safer.”

“I also know that. Hell, I knew if I ever told anyone my adopted parents were Jewish it would be over for me.”

“You told Reinhard.”

“Yes. Because I love him and trust him. I could no longer keep that a secret. Does it bother you?”

“You know that already. I wouldn’t be sitting out here with you if I thought there was something wrong with you or if it bothered me.” He refilled the coffee cups.

“Obersturmführer?” One of Heinz’s men came out.

Heinz said nothing merely stared at the man, waiting.

“You have a phone call.”

“My brother?”

“Your wife.”

“I will return Alexandra.”

Because of his brother’s leaving, Heinz had to return several more calls than just his wife’s. When he came back to the upstairs of the villa two hours later, he found Alexandra asleep on his brother’s bed fully dressed. She was holding tight to a jacket that appeared to be one of Reinhard’s with her face pressed to the lining.

Leaving her a short note on the table, Heinz left. Taking a few men, he went off in search of his brother.

It had been almost 36 hours since Reinhard left and another 24 hours since his brother did as well. Having taken the cello out of its case, Alexandra sat by the fire with it. The only piece to come to mind was Bach’s ‘Erbarme dich, mein Gott’.

*Have mercy my god.*

She almost wished that she believed in such a deity.

It took a bit of practice and several tries to remember enough of it but finally she was satisfied with her own playing. Well, as much as one ever is. Her mind was made up. Alexandra would leave in the morning. Banking the fire for the night, the lights were all turned off.

She couldn’t sleep in her room or in Reinhard’s. There were too many memories there. To go to what had been Heinz’s chambers was just to what she would call a big bag of nope. So the overstuffed chair by the fire was her choice.

For as tall as Alexandra was, she was able to fold up tightly in the warm confines of the chair. She held on to his jacket once more. Inhaling the warm scent of him, she cried herself to sleep.
It was still dark when she woke again. That meant it was time to prepare to leave. Even preparing herself was done with the same numbness she had for the last 48 hours.

The villa was so eerily quiet, it made her shiver. Since she no longer had trousers, she took a pair of Reinhard’s that were not part of a uniform. She belted them tightly, as they were far too large in the waist for her. With her own combat boots, the length was fine.

A couple of the hand me down shirts that were from the hospital were layered on. Finally, a bag was packed with provisions and water. Alexandra made certain to pack items for the kittens. They were coming too. She had found a few maps and packed those as well. A short note was penned in which she itemized the items she took and swore she would find a way to send the money back. Truthfully, there was nothing of value in anything she was taking except maybe the kitchen knife she stuck in her back pocket. Alexandra had almost forgotten the necklace. She reached back to undo the clasp and stopped. She had sworn to him she wouldn’t take it off unless she had to. Did she have to? No.

A quick note was penned and then sealed.

That was it. The note was hidden with a few other things. Another note was placed on the table. So if anyone cared, they would know she left of her own volition.

Wiping under her eyes, she brushed the tears away. Alexandra had planned on walking out the front door. Would the men try to stop her? She had no idea what they knew or didn’t know. It didn’t matter, she went out the way she came in. She strode out the goddamn front door.
It was Heinz that found Alexandra’s note. He had returned to the villa and was going to do what his older brother promised. He was going to send her back to the United States.

Reinhard had been found. He was in Berlin with his family. Heinz did not contact his sibling in any fashion. He simply found himself unable to speak with his brother. For over three months Reinhard spoke of nothing but the beautiful American he was in love with. Heinz Heydrich was not a man who was affected by many emotions, needless to say he wasn’t surprised to how deep his brother’s callousness ran.

Something like this had happened previously with Reinhard. He jilted one girl for another and he was dismissed from the Navy because of it. Apparently, he did it again. Heinz liked Alexandra quite a bit in the very short time they spent together. He was very sorry to see that she was hurt by his brother. He could not understand what Reinhard saw in Lina. Heinz had never like the sharp tongued shrew of a woman that was Lina Heydrich.

He spoke with his brother’s men. They had not seen Dr. Kettler in over 24 hours. No one admitted to knowing how long she had been gone or even how she left. One of the men however, seemed to know something.

“Fischer, come upstairs if you would be so kind.”

Heinz had no authority over Reinhard’s men. Some of them even outranked the Obergruppenführer’s younger sibling. He had garnered the respect of the men because he was almost always found on the front lines. Too, to treat the younger Heydrich poorly would not have been wise.

The two men stepped outside for a cigarette. The fact they had walked outside for a cigarette made Klaus smile. The only reason they didn’t smoke in the building was because he had found out that Alexandra didn’t like the smell of it on everything.

“You seemed upset about Dr. Kettler’s disappearance. Do you think that something has happened such as a kidnapping?”

“No Sir. I know it hasn’t.”

“How?”

“She came downstairs a day after you and the Obergruppenführer left. She was going to walk back to Prague but after what happened previously, I drove her. I saw her to a train.”

“Why?”

“She was nearly killed when she went out on her own previously. The Obergruppenführer was very particular about how Dr. Kettler was treated. He wanted her treated well. We all complied, of course. There was also more to it than just his say.”

“Explain.”

“Sir, the Obergruppenführer is a good man. Dr. Kettler’s presence made him an even better man.” Klaus knew immediately that he had overstepped.
“What do you mean?”

“I’m sorry Obersturmführer. Dr. Kettler is an excellent physician and took good care of the Obergruppenführer.”

Heinz looked at the other man with narrowed eyes. “Fischer, have you been here the entire time at the villa?”

“Yes Sir.”

“Then you damn well know that my brother has been having an affair with Dr. Kettler!”

He lit another cigarette as he watched the man’s eyes nearly bug out of his head.

“I was concerned for her at first Sir.” Klaus spoke softly.

“Why?”

“The Obergruppenführer is known to have certain traits that might not be beneficial to a woman’s well-being.”

“Did he ever raise a hand to her?” Reinhard if you raised your hand to her, I swear to you……..

“No Sir, not to my knowledge. They appeared to be quite happy together.”

“How so?”

“We saw a side of him that we had not previously been privy to. He laughed, smiled, and joked with us and with her.”

“Is there anything I need to know?”

“Possibly.”

“Yes?”

“Dr. Kettler became like our little sister. We were all very protective of her. She made our lives better. When the men at the outpost tried to harm her? All of us had a hand in their deaths. It was not just Dieter. While we were the personnel of the RSHA, we are her big brothers too.”

“How did that happen?” Heinz had heard something similar already.

“Dr. Kettler treated everyone with the utmost of kindness and respect. This was not an act on her behalf to try and charm the Obergruppenführer. Unless you gave her a reason, she was kind and gentle with everyone. Since we too were away from our homes, she would do things to make us feel better. She would cook and bake for us. If the Obergruppenführer was busy she would come down and play a game of cards or dice. She baked a beautiful cake for my sister’s engagement. Dr. Kettler taught Dieter how to dance properly because he is getting married soon. It was things like that. She became part of our family.”

“You were not used to that were you?”

“No, none of us were.”

Heinz nodded. He didn’t care for Lina nor did his wife and never had. He had seen firsthand how she treated the men that were not of high rank. The only reason Heinz himself wasn’t snubbed was
because he was related to Reinhard. Even then, Lina was still cold to him.

“Sir, if there is anything that I or the others can do to help please let us know?”

“You were the first man that found her when the unspeakable almost occurred.”

“Yes Sir. None of us would allow any harm to come to Dr. Kettler.”

“Thank you Fischer.” Heinz offered a hand.

“Thank you Sir.” He shook the older man’s hand. “And Sir?”

“Yes?”

“If you hear anything would you please let me or one of the others know?”

“I shall.”

“Thank you.”

Since Reinhard was obviously healed enough to travel, the villa was cleaned out of all personal items that had belonged to Alexandra or Reinhard. Other than the instruments, everything of Alexandra’s was destroyed. Reinhard’s was returned to him at his home.

There was only one item that survived the purge of the villa. It was an envelope that was now in Heinz’s possession.

The envelope had been tucked away and very well hidden. He wasn’t sure if it was by Alexandra or Reinhard. When Heinz opened it, he found a photograph of them. There were not many photos of Reinhard looking happy. The few that Heinz knew of were pictures of his brother playing with his children. This was completely different. Reinhard looked content in picture. He looked as if he was at peace with the world and very much in love with the woman in his arms.

On a sheet of plain paper there was a beautiful drawing of Reinhard. Heinz had not seen anything like it before. His brother looked to be perhaps daydreaming. It was so rare to see Reinhard look happy. Had he ever looked happy?

On the back of the paper was another drawing. This was of an anatomically correct heart. He assumed that Alexandra was the artist. A pressed wild flower and a sealed note were the only other two items left. He didn’t open the note.

Shaking his head, Heinz spoke to no one but himself. “You are a fool Reinhard. You are a complete and utter fool. You could not have loved her like you said. You would never have abandoned her. I hope you find your way home safely Dr. Alexandra Kettler. Good luck to you fraulein, something tells me you are going to need it.” He dropped the cigarette and ground it out with the heel of his boot.

It was a frigid late November day when Heinz found out what happened to Alexandra.

The day was unseasonably cold. Heinz had just returned from the front a few days before and was glad to be in his warm Berlin office. The television was on in the office, as it normally was. While having a television was not the norm, it was needed.

When a news report came on, he was mostly ignoring it. Then something made him look up.

It was Alexandra Kettler on the screen. Alexandra looked healthy and fit but there was such
sadness in her eyes that it made him draw back. He had a feeling that she would never move on
from Reinhard. True to her word, she loved his brother fiercely. It was a shame that Reinhard did
not reciprocate such love.

Like Klaus Fischer had said, she was put on a train. The train was raided by the Gestapo as there
were two young men that had falsified paperwork on board. Everyone on the train was taken into
custody because of it.

It was perhaps a stroke of luck that one of the Gestapo men recognized Alexandra from the
Bulovka hospital in Prague. He had become a patient of her’s. The wounds the man had were not
life threatening and care had been delayed on him because of it. He was lucky that there had not
been an infection but severe scarring had occurred.

The surgery she performed was unheard of by anyone else. She removed the scarring and was able
to clean up the wounds. Without her skills, the man would have been horribly disfigured.

When the man approached her, she had remembered him. Alexandra greeted him as Herr Mayer.
She asked if he would send a hello home for his daughter, Margarethe, from her friend Alex.

Because of this, it expedited her paperwork and her release. That release only got her as far as
Berlin. Nothing more was said about Berlin, although Heinz knew how to read between the lines.

While Alexandra was not under arrest, she was being watched closely.

Heinz had to smile when they showed the two kittens playing. The smile turned into a chuckle
upon hearing the names of the small felines – Tristan and Isolde.

No one seemed to know what to think about the pretty American surgeon.

The story continued with how Alexandra had come to Germany. She had come over with one of
the Red Cross agencies. Since she was a trauma surgeon and a reconstructive surgeon, her skills
were very much needed in the European theater. Aided by the fact that she spoke at least five
languages fluently and could get by in several others, she had come to help the civilians that had
been injured.

The good doctor had gotten separated from her group due to fighting in the region. The shelling
had gotten worse. Two soldiers were trying to get her to one of the field hospitals became
extremely lost. The attempt on Reinhard’s life had happened right in front of the car she was in.

The soldiers she had been with were killed. The report blamed it on the Czech men that tried to kill
Reinhard. In the confusion of the moment, Oberscharfuhrer Klein held her at gunpoint. Dr. Kettler
had ignored the hulking SS man in order to save the life of Obergruppenfuhrer Heydrich,
Stellvertretender Reichsprotektor of Bohemia and Moravia.

She also performed the extremely long surgery at the hospital in Prague. Heydrich was willing to
reward her for her hand in saving his life. Due to the difficulty of finding safe passage for the
young surgeon in the war torn areas, she stayed on at the hospital to finish the care of Heydrich and
other wounded. She was still waiting to go home.

In the meantime, Alexandra was working at a military hospital in Berlin. Part of her
responsibilities were to teach other surgeons the techniques she knew. Surgeons from all over
Germany, Austria, and even Switzerland were coming to learn from her.

Ever cynical, Heinz was amused by the news. Goebbels was masterful at the art of propaganda and
this had his fingerprints all over it. They were showing off that they had a pet American who may
or may not be there against her will. The fact she was a beautiful woman would make it worse. It would get the attention of the Allies as it was supposed to.

Switching off the television, it was a good 20 minutes later that Heinz realized she was still wearing the necklace. It should have made him smile but it didn’t.

Heinz Heydrich had only spent about 24 hours with Alexandra in total but she left an impression. He removed the picture of Alexandra and Reinhard from its hiding place. Setting it on his desk, he studied it for several minutes before making a decision.

It was time to see his brother for the first time in months. Heinz also took the opportunity to inform Klein that Alexandra was alive and well. Reinhard’s driver would see that the others were told.

“You look at me as if you hate me Heinz.” Reinhard spoke softly when he opened the door of his hotel suite to his brother.

“What an odd hello Reinhard. I don’t hate you. I have never hated you. Wasn’t our last conversation about love?”

Reinhard’s gaze turned to ice at his younger brother’s reprimand. Heinz returned the look in kind.

It gave him a chance to study his older sibling. He realized that his older brother looked ill. How long had it been? End of September? Heinz couldn’t remember.

It was quite obvious that the Blond Beast had lost weight. It was to the point that his face appeared almost gaunt. Heinz wondered how much weight his brother had lost as he looked at him. Was this because of Alexandra? Or was it something else?

Heinz wondered if his brother had been sleeping. The dark smudges under Reinhard’s blue eye made his eyes even look more sunken in. They were so dark that it made him look as if he had been caught in a fight. Perhaps he had but this opponent was himself.

The two men sat down to speak but the small talk that they tried would not flow. It was stifled at best. Finally, Heinz gave up.

“You look terrible Reinhard.”

“I have been busy.” He lied.

“Did you hear the news?” Heinz asked with a lifted brow.

“There is always news. You will have to be more specific than that.” He was dismissive.

“Alexandra Kettler is safe.”

“How do you know?”

Reinhard brightened perceptibly. There was almost a smile on his lips upon hearing her name. Heinz knew then that his brother wasn’t ill with a physical ailment. No, the man called the Butcher of Prague was slowly wasting away from a broken heart.

“There was a report on the television.”

“I am pleased to hear that. She was a fine doctor. I owe her greatly for saving my life.”

Heinz understood immediately, there was a chance that the private room may have a microphone
hidden. It could also be that Reinhard was paranoid. Most likely, it was both.

“It was most peculiar. She sang the praises of the German people that had helped her. She looked pretty in her blue dress with matching jewelry.” Given the television was black and white, it was a thinly veiled reference to the locket.

Reinhard eyed him at the mention of jewelry, but said nothing.

“The funny thing Reinhard? She never made it home to the US. She is living and working here in Berlin.”

The look of utter shock on Reinhard’s face made Heinz realize his brother had no idea that she was in Berlin. Reinhard just assumed that she was back in the United States because that was what should have happened. None of Reinhard’s men would have said anything about Alexandra and especially not to the Obergruppenführer.

Obviously, Alexandra herself had not tried to contact Reinhard. After his brother walked out, Heinz could only imagine how she felt. He had seen some of it firsthand. He suspected that it was partially because the young woman would not have wanted to cause trouble for Reinhard. They sat together in silence for several minutes before Heinz began to prepare to leave. There wasn’t anything more to say.

“I have something for you.” Heinz reached into his inner pocket of his coat. “It is an early Christmas gift.” He handed a flat thin box wrapped in plain paper to his brother. “Open it when you want. It doesn’t need to wait.” Looking Reinhard in the eye, he gripped his older brother’s shoulder briefly. With a nod, he left.

Staring at the closed door, Reinhard shook his head. He tossed the small package on to the bed. He was not in the mood to stand before his brother in judgement again that night. Glancing to his watch, it was almost midnight.

He looked to his watch more often these days. He would calculate the time difference between Germany and Texas and wonder what Alexandra was doing at that hour. He had no idea that she was so close.

He wondered at which hospital she worked. He could find out easily. Then what? Go and say hello? Reinhard sat down on the edge of the bed. He was a coward. He should have made sure she was taken care of but he didn’t. If he couldn’t have her then at least he had his life before her intact, right?

He scooped up the package from his brother and flipped it over in his hands. Getting up, he tossed the package in the bin before going to bathe.

With a towel wrapped around his waist, he stood before the mirror. Reinhard had not combed his hair yet. It was still curling from being washed. Looking at himself, he felt a strong mixture of regret and disgust.

She had loved playing with his curls. Her long fingers could stroke his head for hours and often did. His mind drifted back to when Alexandra was resting her own head on his shoulder with her fingers stroking his hair after the first time they made love.

He remembered the look on her face so clearly. She had the most beautiful smile while lying there against him. Her eyes were half closed. He had thought she was sleepy at first. Reinhard even said something about her being sleepy. She had laughed softly and kissed his throat. No, she wasn’t
sleepy she said. She was happy. She was content.

He didn’t know what to think when she said that. Who had he made happy before besides his children? Certainly not his wife. She always had something to complain about, especially now. Walking back into the bedroom of the hotel suite, he paused. Retrieving the package from his brother, he once more sat down.

His large hands opened the small package only to find a non-descript box. Reinhard’s mouth curled wryly. This was very much like Heinz. When he pried open the box, he gasped at the contents. Nestled inside was something he didn’t expect. It was the only picture in existence of Reinhard and Alexandra together.

Oh how beautiful she looked! He remembered that day perfectly. He touched her lovely face with just his fingernail so he wouldn’t smudge the photograph.

“I miss you Schatzi. I miss you so.” The words were whispered silently.

Heinz had worried at first that she might be trying to get information out of Reinhard. She never asked questions about his work other than the day they sat outside and talked. She had told him that she wouldn’t. It would be improper to be asking such questions as an American.

Alexandra’s questions were more of a personal nature. What foods did he like or his favorite composers and why. They spoke about traveling and where they had been. Also, where they wanted to go some day. They spoke of things that interested them both. They talked of sports. They spoke of everything and anything except what his function was in the NSDAP. It was a freeing sensation for him that Reinhard didn’t realize at first. For the first time since 1931, he was judged not by what he did but the man he was instead.

When she would cook, Alexandra often made items that he had never tried. She would make a serving for herself and a half serving for him. If Reinhard liked it, she would add it to the menu. He often told her that it was unnecessary to cook only for him. Her left eyebrow would arch high and she would smile. She enjoyed cooking, Alexandra would tell him. And she enjoyed cooking specifically for him.

Reinhard never told her that he was secretly pleased that she would go to such work for him alone. He regretted not telling her. He regretted many things when it came to Alexandra. There were two things he regretted most in his life. The first was when she told him she loved him, Reinhard didn’t tell her he loved her until she had gotten hurt by the men at the check station. He should have told her before but he couldn’t. Or was it wouldn’t? He wasn’t sure any longer.

The second was that he left her behind. He should have at least told her the damned truth about what was happening. He didn’t. Instead he went back to the man he had been before they ever met. Somewhat, at least. Reinhard was trying to undo the damage and not get caught.

He looked at the photo again and sighed. The day before the picture was taken he had been sitting on her bed. She was putting away all the clothing he had someone purchase for her while at the same time admonishing him for doing so. He was learning about her siblings that night. Reinhard closed his eyes and could almost feel her near once again.

She called him handsome that night.

Reinhard knew he was not considered ugly but he was not handsome. Unusual perhaps and often called striking, he had grown into his looks. His musical talents, family name, and even his position in the Navy helped find women to bed. Now, women were never a problem when he
wanted one. His power made him more attractive.

With Alexandra he needed to be nothing more than himself. A name, position, wealth – she did not care about any of it. She cared for - no that wasn’t right. She loved him, not the fancy wrapping or pretty ribbons. Reinhard realized he could have been a pauper and she would have loved him all the same.

Neither of them had any idea what would happen that night. She had gone to bed when he took his nightly calls. Unable to sleep after the phone calls annoyed him, he sat upstairs alone.

He had been thinking of her. Reinhard chuckled now. He had been thinking of her and wondering how he could entice the beautiful American. Nothing that came to mind would have worked. She would have seen through all of it. He had just poured a drink from the heavy bottle of whiskey when he threw it as hard as he could into the fire. Since the bottle was nearly full, it shattered loudly.

If he would have known what a light sleeper she was, he wouldn’t have thrown the bottle. Alexandra was woken up by the noise and walked out of her room to investigate. She almost fell over his legs. The shock of human touch startled them both so much that when Reinhard stood up, he knocked her to the floor.

On the floor, she was cast in moonlight. He couldn’t help but remember how she looked. Alexandra wore nothing but that long nightgown of white cotton. On another woman the gown would have been matronly. It wasn’t so with her. Alexandra looked utterly erotic.

He was able to see the hazy outline of her body beneath the soft material. Immediately, he dropped to his knees to make sure that she was unharmed. Reinhard was not an impulsive man any longer. He hadn’t been since his days in the Navy. He was impulsive once more when he kissed her.

Immediately, he knew he should not have. He fully expected his face to be slapped. No one could have been more surprised than him when she returned his kiss. Turning his head, Reinhard looked out into the cold Berlin night beyond the window of his room and closed his eyes.

They made love for the first time that night.

With Alexandra it was never just sex. Even when they both burned with sheer lust, there was always love between them. Before they admitted their love to each other, Reinhard knew he loved her. He didn’t believe she could love him. Looking back now, he saw it. He saw it as far back as the hospital.

Gebhardt should be thankful. If his disregard for basic medical standards had allowed for Reinhard to be harmed or die? His Schatzi would have seen the man dead. She would have done it with her bare hands too.

His throat felt tight all of a sudden. He missed her terribly. Reinhard wanted to go to her and beg her to forgive him. He would fall to his knees and plead with her for forgiveness. How could she forgive him? Hell, he couldn’t even forgive himself.

There were times that he was up until three in the morning on the damn calls. The first time that it happened after they became lovers, Reinhard decided to nap on the sofa. He didn’t want to wake her. It couldn’t have been twenty minutes later that she came out to find him.

Wearing one of his shirts, she curled up on the floor and laid her head to his thigh. It was always that way with them. They wanted the other to be close. Alexandra told him that it didn’t matter if
He woke her, if he didn’t come back to bed she would just go to him. They never slept apart after that. Well, not until he left her at the villa.

He smiled again. Alexandra ordered him to rest. She ordered him to do the work he needed to do to have his body heal properly. He couldn’t believe it when she ordered him to do something. He was dumbfounded that this little slip of a girl would dare to order him around.

She always seemed so delicate. While tall, she was slender. Ordering a German General around? She had to have been daft too. No, she wasn’t daft. Reinhard felt and watched how her body moved. It still amazed him. When Klaus and the rest of his men worked with her for an hour a day to improve her self-defense skills, they were impressed as well. Alexandra took Klein down. It strengthened the bond that she had with the men. Then they began having yoga lessons with her as Reinhard did. He didn’t do the exercises with the men, but he did enjoy watching.

His brazen girl. His very brazen girl. The second time she was downstairs with him while he was on a call, she could tell that he was trying to get off the phone. She gave him all the incentive he needed.

Reinhard told Himmler that something had come up and it was true.

Alexandra had unzipped his trousers and pulled him free. That hot wet mouth of her’s had him at the ready in a matter of seconds. There was something so erotic about how she lavished him with attention while he was on the phone.

Neither of them slept that night, he smiled.

Reinhard met his match in Alexandra and he lost her. No, that wasn’t true. He didn’t lose her.

He threw her away.

He didn’t know what to do. Could he go back to her? With the war continuing, who was certain what would happen next? He knew the outcomes would be bleak for the two of them.

Lina had been threatening him with divorce since he had returned. Honestly? He didn’t care. He was working more and more so he wouldn’t have to deal with the situation at home. His only regret was the children. He did love his children. Since he and Lina had four children already, he gave her the divorce she kept threatening him with.

He just missed his Schatzi.
Chapter 27

He did. He missed her so damned much.

Reinhard smiled to himself thinking back to a conversation he had with her while he was still in the hospital. She almost always wore trousers. He had asked her why she wore trousers rather than a skirt. She had laughed and said that skirts often lead to unladylike behavior on her behalf.

“No, I mean it. When you were initially wounded, we had just gotten you to the hospital. You started to crash.” When she saw his confusion, she smiled gently. “My apologies, it means all of your vital signs were dropping dangerously. I hopped up on the gurney with you. I was kneeling over you to keep you alive. If I would have been in a skirt? I see London. I see France. I also see Alexandra’s underpants.”

He didn’t plan on bringing her back to the villa with him.

It had crossed his mind in the wee hours of the morning many times. The callous part of him dreamt of having his way with her. After Krueger hit her, Reinhard had no choice. She would be at the mercy of far too many men. He couldn’t do that to Alexandra. He simply wouldn’t.

Himmler could have been cajoled into taking action against her, easily. Reinhard closed his eyes. Himmler would have raped her. It wouldn’t have been as brutal as the two men that tried while they were at the villa but that changed very little. When he was done, Alexandra would have gone to one of the camps. Himmler may have not permitted her to survive that long.

Reinhard swore to himself he would not touch Alexandra or even try.

He should have known better. Reinhard had no regrets about the love he found with her. In roughly 2 months he would turn 39 years old. In all those years, he had just over a single month that was utterly blissful.

He slipped on his pajamas. He needed to sleep but Reinhard was still consumed by thoughts of her. She would laugh when he called her strange or unusual. She didn’t see herself that way but to him? She was nothing like he had ever seen before. Her gentle nature opened his eyes to so much. The caring wisdom she possessed made him look at life differently.

He didn’t realize how starved for affection he was. Reinhard was not used to being touched. It had never been a part of his life before. His parents were strict, the touches he received tended more towards punishment. The trysts he had as a young man in the Navy weren’t much more than sex. There wasn’t love and tenderness involved. Lina wasn’t an affectionate woman nor were the whores he paid. It simply was outside his realm of understanding.

He had misread the touches initially. He had thought she was being flirtatious. Then he began to pay attention how Alexandra interacted with others. The touches were her way of showing that she cared. Reinhard enjoyed them even more after the realization. She cared about him.

Once they became intimate, the touches changed. Her hand would linger on his flesh. Her lips would find his often. Her thigh would press to his as they sat side by side, working on different pursuits. Every touch said something different. It was an entirely new language for him to learn. What Reinhard didn’t know then was that her touches told him that she loved him.

Looking at the photo again, he smiled tenderly. It wasn’t unusual for them to make love multiple times a day.
At first Reinhard believed her to be going along with what she thought he wanted. He was going to tell her that it was unnecessary. She didn’t need to do that for him. Although, truth be told, he did appreciate the efforts.

“Reinhard?” Alexandra’s voice was soft.

“Yes?” He was looking over a report and did not give her his full attention.

“Does it uhm.” She didn’t finish, instead she pursed her lips.

“What’s wrong Schatzi?” He found her blushing bright red.

“I don’t know how to ask this without it sounding strange.”

“Just ask.”

“Does it bother you that I want to make love with you so often?” The words were rushed.

He couldn’t utter a single word his shock was so great. Reinhard stared at his girl in disbelief. He spoke slowly, making sure he heard correctly. “You think that you wanting to make love with me is bothersome?”

“Yes.”

“You are serious?”

“Yes.”

Reinhard got up out of his chair and went to her. Sitting down next to Alexandra on the sofa, he pulled her on to his lap. “I thought you were just going along with what I wanted.”

They both had a good laugh that day.

How many women had he gone through over the last twenty years or so? He couldn’t even fathom the number. He was never satisfied. Truthfully, since he was a teen he had felt that there was something wrong with him.

He wasn’t satisfied because he didn’t realize that it wasn’t just sexual urges. He needed a partner that could challenge him physically, intellectually and even spiritually.

He didn’t realize she was what he had been searching for. Reinhard thought a woman such as Alexandra was just a dream.

Her point of view was thrilling! It was so new and vibrant, that even if he didn’t agree, they could discuss all the nuances. He wasn’t used for a woman to be so willing to discuss and disagree. That was not the home he had grown up in. Nor was it the home that he shared with his wife. Alexandra showed him a sort of equality of the sexes he didn’t realize was possible.

Laying on his back, he stared at the ceiling. Reinhard could almost conjure the scent of her warm sweet skin.

Alexandra would walk through the villa only to find him working. She would pause to kiss the nape of his neck. When he would be reading reports, she would put her head in his lap just to be near. It wasn’t unusual for a small plate of sweets or pastry and a fresh cup of coffee to appear next to his hand when he wasn’t looking.
They would be lying in bed together and Reinhard would hold her close. With their passions sated, they simply talked and listened to each other. It wasn’t just in the bedroom. It could have been anywhere as long as they were together.

A frown appeared when he realized when they first met after the surgery that Alexandra preformed he had considered her naïve. He was wrong, so very wrong. She looked for the best in everything. No that wasn’t true. She saw the best in everything. Everything had worth to her, even him. That was just her way. He remembered asking why she thought like that.

It was because of forgiveness she said. Forgiveness was not only for those that have done something wrong to us. It is for ourselves. If I forgive someone I am no longer the victim in the tale. Forgiveness lets go of negative emotions such as vengefulness, forswears recompense from or punishment of the offender. Forgiveness is freedom.

He asked about how could that work with the laws that were in place? His sweet Schatzi smiled and told him that if the laws were fair and just that was up to the court system to do something. It no longer was about his own anger.

If a man like him was allowed to have such a thing as hope, he hoped she would be able to forgive him someday. She became his everything and he threw her away. If only he could tell her what had truly happened!

Reinhard knew he was one of the most detested men in the world. It wasn’t his name, not yet at least. When the war ended people would know what all he did. If they won, it would matter little except people would fear him. If Germany lost? He would be killed.

Honestly, he welcomed the thought of death. Death would be better than having to live a lifetime without her.

Life and death never mattered to him before Alexandra. You live and then you die. It happened to every single person. But to know his hand would have been the one that signed her death warrant was painful beyond measure for him. It still was. She was the adopted child of Jews. He would have killed the family that loved her and whom she loved. He would have seen her dead for no reason other than hatred.

And she forgave him.

That is what his brother didn’t know. Reinhard’s disgust with his own self made him leave that night. It wasn’t that he couldn’t reconcile loving a woman that was raised a Jew. It was because he was ashamed of what he had become. Or was this how he always had been? After he cleared his head, he was coming back to her. He was never going to let her go.

Reinhard realized for the first time in his life that there always were others being blamed for things that they had no control over. After the First World War, Jews were blamed for virtually everything. They had become the scapegoats of Germany. He never thought about it before. Having hated everyone else for so long, because of Alexandra he turned that hate where it belonged finally.

Inward.

He hated himself and always had. Even as a boy, he was never enough. He was never good enough, smart enough, nor talented enough. There was always something wrong with him. With her at his side, Reinhard came to terms with who and what he was.
His own fanaticism and self-hatred would have seen the one person that loved him unconditionally, murdered. No, it wasn’t just that he would have had her murdered. For her to have just been murdered would have been a blessing.

She would have been beaten, abused, starved, and worked so hard that she would have died. Her beautiful hair would have been shaved off. Those gentle hands of hers would be chapped, rough, and possibly smashed and broken. Still, Alexandra would have tried to help and heal others, no matter her own circumstances.

She may have been raped. No, Reinhard corrected himself, she would have been raped. She would have easily caught the eye of one of the guards or someone else. No, it wouldn’t have been a guard. It would be a kommandant of a large camp or a visiting Obergruppenführer. Someone that had the power to keep her, would have.

Most likely, Alexandra would have been dressed beautifully and given cosmetics to keep her that way. That wouldn’t last long. She would have tried at least to fight the person keeping her. If they had been foolish? She would have killed them. He did not doubt that in the least.

He knew she would have fought as hard as she could no matter what. That would have only made it worse but he knew his Schatzi. She would have fought each and every time. Some of the men would have enjoyed that. It would have given them a reason to be sadistic, not that they needed one.

She could have used his name to gain her freedom but Reinhard knew she wouldn’t. She would have worried that it would cause him trouble or something similar. He could have saved her life easily, but she would have never uttered his name for her own benefit.

Sitting up abruptly, he threw the lamp on the table beside him at the wall. The image of what would happen to her kept replaying in his mind. The image tore a sob from his throat. Reinhard remembered the scene where she was almost raped. She was tied to a chair and covered in dirt and blood with her breasts exposed. There were cuts on her face, arms and legs. The two men had planned on raping her and then slitting her throat.

Reinhard wept. He wept for her. He wept for all that she had gone through at the hands of the Germans. How in the hell was she able to remain kind and caring after all of that, he had no idea. When he realized she was disgusted with herself because it almost happened before? He didn’t know what to do.

Was he any different?

Other than he did not force himself on her, no. He wasn’t any different. The camps, ghettos, the Final Solution – they were all his doing. Then on a much more personal level, he didn’t tell her he loved her until after the men nearly raped her. His beautiful Alexandra thought she was nothing more than a distraction. He remembered his surprise when she revealed she hadn’t ever had sex before. She was so embarrassed. She thought he was disgusted by her.

Reinhard realized something, why wouldn’t she have thought those things? He would have thought the very same.

His sweet Schatzi knew the same sort of pain he did. She was so very beautiful. She came from a wealthy and loving family. She was a talented musician and artist. Well-read coupled with a brilliant mind, she was the most perfect woman he had ever known. Reinhard understood how she saw herself and how she saw him.
Alexandra was the one person who looked upon him and smiled because she was happy to see him. The one person that loved him unconditionally. The only person he ever loved the same. She would have died because of him. His happy and sweet Schatzi would have had no chance of survival.

The knowledge that it would have been his fault? It was a pain that he found unbearable.

Who else had he ruthlessly murdered unknowingly? Which of these thousands upon thousands of people could have made a difference for someone or did make a difference? His entire life he was told Jews were not really human. He lapped that up like it was mother’s milk when he joined the NSDAP. He used that so he could take his anger out on others.

When he stopped for a drink before going back to the villa, he saw Krueger. Krueger asked about Alexandra. Reinhard lied saying he had dropped her off somewhere a month ago. He made it sound like he had raped her first. Krueger laughed and was pleased. He was pleased so he didn’t have to go through with his plans. That bastard was going to turn him over to his own SS men. Reinhard was a fool to have not gone back to get her. Even if he couldn’t get her, to not have let her know what had happened was cruel.

He could have trusted Heinz, Klaus, Klein, Dieter, Jürgen, or even Ernst. He probably could have trusted Ernst Kaltenbrunner to have gotten word to her as well. He chose not to. Reinhard chose the easy path instead of the right one. He didn’t send anything. No, he went home instead. Reinhard went home to his wife and children and went about his life as he always did.

He wasn’t to be punished for all the atrocities he had committed, not yet at least. He committed the greatest crime within the Reich instead. Reinhard fell in love. Not only did he fall in love but she was considered the enemy.

She had paperwork stating who she was. It shouldn’t have been a problem. Unfortunately, someone would have made it a problem. Reinhard knew then he couldn’t go back. Krueger would have had him killed. Which would have put her at a greater risk. Still, he should have sent something to her.

He knew Heinz would send Alexandra home. Before Heinz even met her, Reinhard made him promise to send her back to the US if something should ever happened to him. The same went with Kaltenbrunner. He was to help Heinz, if need be.

Glancing at the photograph again, Reinhard closed his eyes briefly. What was he going to do? He pulled the photograph from the box. The photograph was going to have to be destroyed. To do so, killed off yet another part of his soul.

Then he noticed something. There was something behind the picture. It wasn’t just something but a few somethings. There was a piece of paper. Frowning, he thought it was trash at first. He then realized it was a sealed envelope. Reinhard carefully opened it.

*Words are such inadequate ways of communicating. I merely wish to be in your arms once more. I pray to feel my lips and myself yielding to you again. I wish to communicate with you without a word being spoken. My beloved Lion, the locket you gifted to me remains on my neck. That is its forever home and resting place. My love for you will never cease and I remain forever yours.*

*Your Schatzi,*

*Alexandra*
He couldn’t continue looking at the items, not yet anyway. The pain of his loss shot through him physically. It was unlike anything he ever felt. He sat there on the bed doubled over in agony.

It was then that Reinhard realized he wanted to die. It wasn’t the physical pain that made he wish for death. Reinhard wanted to die to come back as another man, a man worthy of a woman like her.

It took nearly twenty minutes for the pain to subside. Finally able to move again, he looked at the other items in the box.

Unfolding the piece of paper a tiny pressed flower drifted from the paper. He recognized it immediately. Reinhard swallowed hard. The fact she kept all of this made him hope. It gave him courage that perhaps…..No, it was foolish to even think about.

Looking at the paper, it was the anatomically correct heart. The date was written upon it. Reinhard began laughing. He remembered her drawing that and the medical jargon that followed. He turned it over.

It was a drawing of him. While she didn’t realize it, Alexandra had captured the likeness of him when he had been daydreaming about her instead of working.

The laughter stopped suddenly when he realized there was something written in tiny letters at the bottom of the page -

To my dearest Lion,

I leave my heart with you for eternity.

You had and will have all my love forever more.

Alexandra

It was dated. He had already abandoned her when she wrote that.
Chapter 28

Trigger warning: Abuse/Rape

“My apologies, I am very sorry to keep you waiting Frau –“ Alexandra Kettler looked up and saw who was in the room. “Dieter!”

“Dr. Kettler.” The large man smiled and hugged Alexandra. “This is my sister Hanna Metzger and her son Siegfried.” He smiled broadly. “Hanna this is the little sister we all adopted when Obergruppenführer Heydrich was wounded.”

“It is a pleasure to meet you Frau Metzger.” Alex smiled warmly.

Hanna Metzger looked to her brother and then to Alex. She embraced Alexandra with affection. “I have heard so much of you. My brother is quite close to the other men. They come for dinner often. They would tell stories about their baby sister and the antics she would get into. It is truly a pleasure to finally meet you.”

She blushed brightly. “Thank you. Thank you very much. May I see your boy please?”

Alexandra loved children. And this little boy looked very much like his uncle. Siegfried eyes were the palest blue she had ever seen. The cleft lip and palate were pronounced but it was obvious his mother was taking good care of him. Tickling the baby’s tummy he giggled like any child. She ran the vitals quickly and everything was perfectly within the midline.

“You have a wonderfully healthy baby boy.”

Hanna looked down. “Thank you Doctor. Is there anything you can do to help him?”

“I believe so, yes. Not to worry. I have done perhaps 100 to 150 of these types of surgeries. Siegfried will have a small scar over the philtrum. Which is this right here.” Alexandra pointed to the space above her upper lip and below the nose. “Since he is so young, it will be hardly noticeable by the time he is of school age. I do recommend a speech therapist not too long after surgery and I have a few that I can recommend.”

“How long will he be in the hospital for Doctor?” Frau Metzger asked.

“Five days, give or take. The surgery will take about six hours, maybe less.”

“Dr. Kettler if I have more children is there a chance they will be deformed?”

“Well, are there any others in your family or your husband’s that were born with the clefts?”

“No.”

“Did you drink alcohol, smoke, or take medications during your pregnancy?”

“Yes.”
“Those are the likely culprits. If you are going to have another child you need to quit smoking and no alcohol. Any of the medications you might take need to be checked out by someone here.”

“I hurt my baby?” She started to cry.

Alexandra wrapped her arms around the young mother. “No Hanna. Oh no no no. You did nothing wrong. We are just now discovering this information. You had no idea. You are not at fault for this. I swear to you. I would have done the same things as you had.”

“You would?”

“Yes. I would have. I will be bright back. I think I have a cancellation tomorrow and might be able to fit you in.”

“Thank you Doctor.”

“Thank you Dr. Kettler.”

“My pleasure. Both of you. I mean it. Your brother saved my life. Siegfried will get the best possible care.”

Alexandra’s schedule now had the baby on it. She would be performing the surgery tomorrow around noon.

The day was an easy one for her. There were no surgeries scheduled. Alexandra saw new patients and current patients throughout the day. It was almost time to go home. Tomorrow her day would start earlier than normal. She had an entire day of surgeries booked. She wanted to check on one more thing when someone knocked on the door.

“It’s open.” She called out.

“Dr. Kettler? May I speak with you for a moment please?”

“Of course. Please, come in Dieter and shut the door. Is everything alright?”

“Have you spoken to the Obergruppenführer?”

“No, not since I left the villa. Why?”

“I didn’t want to inadvertently give away your location if you were keeping it a secret.”

“Don’t worry about that. I’m not hiding. And Dieter? You can call me Alex. Most everyone does.”

“If I did that and the Obergruppenführer found out? I would be immediately dispatched to Siberia.”

“I cannot imagine that Siberia is pleasant this time of year.” She smiled. “I am glad you were able to find me. Not to worry, I will take good care of your nephew.”

“Thank you. Obersturmführer Heydrich found out where you were. He was able to let Hans know. Hans told the rest of us.”

“Do you mean Heinz? I still get a wee bit confused by the ranks.”

“Yes Doctor. That is exactly who I mean. May I speak freely?”

“Dieter you have obviously spent too much time with Reinhard. You don’t need to ask that with
me. You may always speak freely.”

The large SS man chuckled. “Old habits. Obergruppenführer Heydrich is not doing well Dr. Kettler.”

“Is he having problems with the old wounds or is he ill?” Alexandra’s brow creased with worry.

“We were in France for a couple of days. The weather turned bad very quickly. He shared a room with myself and with Hans. The others took the other room. It was all that was available. I don’t think he realizes it but he calls out for you in the night Dr. Kettler. Please do not think I am disloyal to him. I am only telling you this because I am loyal.”

“No, I never thought you were disloyal Dieter. Thank you for being concerned about him. I’m afraid there isn’t anything I can really do. He is married and has children. I interfered with his marriage once, I cannot do it again. I’m sorry.”

“No. I understand.”

“Dieter, it’s not that I don’t want to help him. I loved Reinhard then and I love him the same now.”

The look in her eyes was one of heartbreak and sorrow. “It’s just not fair to his wife and children for us to be together. I didn’t know he was married until a week or two before we left the villa.”

Reinhard had always been a private man, especially when it came to family. Dieter did not know that he was now divorced. Alexandra, of course, didn’t either.

“No, you are right Dr. Kettler. I apologize for asking. I didn’t mean to put you in an awkward position.”

“No apologies needed, I promise. Will you be here with your sister again tomorrow?”

“Her husband is currently in Denmark so yes ma’am.”

“I’ll see you tomorrow then.”

“Thank you.”

Two days later Siegfried Metzger was thriving and doing beautifully. Alexandra was only keeping him in the hospital to keep an eye on the handsome little boy for any chance of infection. Dieter and his sister took pictures each day of the little boy to send to his father when they were finished being developed.

True to her word, Siegfried Metzger went home after 5 days. He was doing wonderful. Soon, he would look like any other child.

“Alex, let it go. There is nothing we can do.”

Dr. Alexandra Kettler and Dr. Paul Aber were standing looking at a series of x-rays.

“No. I am not going to let I go. I’m missing something Paul. I don’t know what it is.”

“You’re grasping! If Falk and Eisenman couldn’t figure it out how are we going to?”

Looking over tops of her magnifying eyeglasses at Aber, she frowned. “No. I’m not grasping. There is something there. I simply have not found it yet. How are we going to? I’m a better surgeon than either of them. Shit. Get me a flashlight.”
“What?”

“Get me a fucking flashlight!!”

It took over five minutes with both of them searching but they found a flashlight.

“Hold the film.”

“Alex.” He heaved a sigh.

“Paul, shut up and give up or shut it and let me fucking work.”

“Are you always this difficult?”

“No. I’m usually worse.” She scowled.

Alexandra was slowly working across the area she suspected had a problem. After about fifteen minutes she found the problem.

“There. Look. It’s not piercing but it is inhibiting.”

“That isn’t any bigger than a hair. How did you know?”

“I didn’t know. I just had a feeling something was not right.”

“You are a genius!”

“No. I just am an old hand at this. You scrubbing in with me?”

“You damn right I am.”

“Next time you try to stop me from proper protocol, I’m cutting you off Paul. I mean it. You can go back to working with the others.”

“As you should Kettler. You never cease to amaze me.”

“Be amazed after we get this kid walking again, not before. Just because I found it doesn’t mean I can do what I need to.” Alex heaved a sigh.

The surgery took nearly 21 hours but it was successful. It would be a bit before the young man stabilized enough to walk but he would be able to walk again.

Alexandra never wanted to know personal information about the patients she operated on. Unless it was something that she needed to know for the care of the person, otherwise it was of no consequence to the work she did.

Medical history she needed. She didn’t care if the person was a father or mother, a high ranking official or the lowliest of fliegers. It made no difference to her.

Needless to say, she usually permitted the doctors assisting her to talk to the families after the surgeries, if the families were available. It wasn’t unusual for some of the men not have family to come to see them for various reasons. Although, distance and financial were the most common reasons.

Those were the men that she paid personal attention to after the surgeries. Alexandra made sure the other staff members did too. While she was wholeheartedly against war and what was happening,
she would not make these men’s situations worse if she could help it. Plus, Alexandra believed the better the men felt in their hearts and minds the better they healed. Everything was connected.

While Alexandra was not in charge of the floor she worked on, some people seemed to believe she was. She was the one making changes within the ranks of doctors and nurses. She was the one that was teaching new techniques. The brass permitted her to do such because it was beneficial to their own rise in the ranks.

Still, Alexandra did not have friends.

She refused to. Yes, she was friendly at work. Friends was an entirely different matter.

A job needed to be done and that all she was there for.

She assumed that Germany would lose the war due to the attack on the USSR. Alexandra realized she potentially could be hung as a traitor if someone wished to make a case for it. That whole saving lives thing would be her death. Irony. Would she have done anything different knowing what she knew now?

No.

She wouldn’t have. She became a surgeon to help others. Perhaps the affair with Reinhard wouldn’t have happened but that would have been it. Perhaps. Or maybe she just wouldn’t have fallen in love with the murderer.

There was a knock on her office door that snapped her out of her reverie.

“It’s open.” She called out.

“Did you hear the news?” It was Paul Aber.

“What are we out of now?” She sighed.

“Alex, no. You are about to be famous. We are about to be famous.”

“I don’t want to be famous.”

“The kid we operated on? That is Harald Quandt!”

She stared at him blankly. “I need more than that to know what you are talking about Paul.”

“I forget you are not actually German.”

“I am actually German, I was just wasn’t born or raised in Germany.”

“Harald Quandt is the son of Günther Quandt!”

“Ah. The industrialist.”

“That’s not the important part. He is Goebbels stepson!”

“I know who Goebbels is Paul but I stay out of political discussions because I am American.”

“What are you pulling tomorrow?”

“Twelve hours.”
“Morning?”

“Yes.”

“Good. I hate it when you aren’t here when I am on shift. What are you doing for the holidays Alex?”

“Why is that? Working. I know people want to be with their families and since I can’t be with mine at least others can be with theirs.”

“Why? You know what the fuck you are doing.”

“It doesn’t feel that way. Paul? Go home. I am finishing up paperwork and going to do the same.”

“I should.”

“Exactly. Come on. I’ll walk you out. I’ll do this tomorrow.”

“You going to scare off a mugger?” He laughed.

“Doubtful.”

The drive was uneventful. Alexandra was living in a small home. While small, it was quite lovely. She was actually surprised how well it suited her. Tonight wouldn’t matter, she was going in and straight to bed. She had to be up at stupid o’clock for surgeries tomorrow.

Having parked the car, the house was dark looking. Something caught her eye while she was walking to her front door. Alexandra knew what it was. It was the tip of a lit cigarette glowing in the dark. Pretending that she dropped something, she knelt down to see if she could tell who it was. Unfortunately, it was too dark. Sighing softly, she decided that after six months of living under Nazi control, she really didn’t give a fuck.

Alexandra saw who it was before she stepped to the door. “Get out of my way Buder. Actually go away Buder.”

“Aww. That is no way to speak to an old friend schatzi.”

“We aren’t friends.” She opened the door and stepped inside. When she went to close the door Buder stepped in.

“Get out of my house.”

“No. You know, when Heydrich was done with you he was supposed to give you to me.”

“And I declined that offer.” What the fuck? It was all a farce to Reinhard, wasn’t it? She felt like a fool.

“You have no say in this.”

“Actually, I do. Remember something, I don’t make idle threats. I will cut your dick off and amputate your balls. I won’t bother with circumcision. I’ll turn you into a fucking eunuch. You can piss through a straw the rest of you fucking life.”

Raising the pistol in his hand, he poked the barrel against her lips. “Walk.”

Staring at him, the only thing that made her move were the kittens. Alexandra didn’t care if she
died. She did care about the kittens. Sighing, she put her hands up and did as he asked. What is it with Nazis and pointing a gun at my head? I am going to start needing to keep a tally. Who the fuck would a thought a nice Jewish girl from Texas would have to keep a tally of Nazi anything??

Spotting the kittens on the stairway down to the basement, she spoke softly. “I’m going to close this door.”

“Why?”

“It’s drafty.”

“Lock it.”

Closing the door, she nodded. It was locked from inside of the house.

He took her to a guest bedroom and shut the door. “Strip.” He smiled slightly. “Schatzi.”

Hearing him say schatzi was enough to make her want to hit him. Preferably in the face. Oh and with a brick. Maybe two bricks. How about drop a brick house on this fucker like the Wizard of Oz?

“Go fuck yourself Buder.” She would not cower to this bastard.

“No. No. No. Schatzi, this is not how this game is played.”

“House rules. My house.”

He went to level the gun at her again. Alex gave thanks to Klaus, Hans, and Dieter all of a sudden. She knocked the gun out of the man’s hand. It skidded quite far under her bed. In an instant, Alexandra took off like a shot.

Buder was faster. That was something she didn’t expect. He threw himself into her back and knocked her down. Alexandra fought and fought hard. In the end it was the stiletto blade pressed to her throat that made her stop. Face down on the floor in the hallway, Alexandra was as still as possible.

It felt far too much like Prague again.

After cutting off much of her clothing, he made the rape seem almost consensual. This rapist acted as if she was his mistress instead of his victim. Doing absolutely nothing to encourage him, Alexandra went over a grocery list in her head. When he finished, Heinrich Buder curled up against her body and held her affectionately. He even went so far as to kiss her slack mouth. His fingers were gentle as he stroked her bare skin.

She realized something. He wanted the rape to be consensual. He wanted her to desire him as a man. Well, THAT wasn’t going to be happening anytime soon.

What the HELL was with the Nazis? She could understand the show of force and guns when Reinhard was attacked. Nobody knew which way was up when that happened. Seriously, they all seem to want to stab each other in the back. Sheesh. Hm. She wondered what he would do if she told him she was a Jew.

Grabbing Alexandra’s hair, Buder half dragged her back to her bedroom. He raped her again, this time it was on her bed.
Buder started to get dressed around midnight. He chatted away with the silent Alexandra. She truly thought she was going to become ill with the way he was acting. He even called her his häschen.

Little bunny? Oh for fuck’s sakes!

He pressed a kiss to her cheek and said something about seeing her tomorrow and showed himself out. When she heard the front door shut, she got up and ran for the door. First she flung open the basement door to let the kittens out and then ran for the front door. Locking it, she slid down to the floor. Numb from what just happened, Alex just sat and stared.

From then on, Alexandra saw Buder nearly every day. If she decided not to go home and sleep at the hospital, he would show up there. He managed to find her when she was at hotel. Finally, she just gave up. If anyone noticed that Alexandra seemed different, they said nothing. Truthfully, she doubted anyone actually noticed.

It was 23 December when she went to help with Harald Quandt’s physical therapy. The swelling had gone down from the surgery enough that he was able to feel and move his legs once again.

“Will I be walking soon?”

“Yes. I would say about another month you will be up and walking again.”

“Why is it taking so long?”

“Due to the nature of your injury I am holding off with anything more right now.”

“Why is that?”

“Well, mostly because it is far too easy to re-injure the location. If that happens, you are likely to lose leg function permanently.”

“Are you for certain I will be able to walk again?”

“Yes. I am positive.”

“Hello Mother.” Harald looked up over Alexandra’s head.

“I will be out of your way shortly Mrs. Goebbels.” Alexandra wanted less than nothing to do with Magda Goebbels. The woman disgusted her for some reason, well actually a lot of reasons.

“One more time Harald five presses of each foot and we are done for the day.” She put her hands lightly on the sole of each foot.

“Perfect! Can you see how much you have improved?” She smiled at the young man.

“Actually, yes. Thank you.”

“Doctor?” Mrs. Goebbels interrupted.

“Yes ma’am? What may I do for you?” Cue the smile Alex. Cue the smile.

“With the holidays almost here would it be okay for me to bring my son some dinner and his presents?”

“That would be perfectly fine.” She was actually surprised that the woman asked and didn’t just do. “You two have a lovely evening. I will see you in the morning Harald.”
When she parked her car the now familiar red of a cigarette was at her door. He was there every evening. Alexandra was, however, curious to who was letting him know when she left the hospital. There was no way that he was waiting for her out in the open for hours. Not to mention that she never came home at the same time. Such was the life of a surgeon.

“Welcome home häschen.” He kissed her cheek.

Unlocking the door, she didn’t close it. It was pointless to fight him. It was a battle she had grown weary of. Nothing changed.

Removing her hat, coat and gloves, she hung them up.

“Get us drinks and me an ashtray. Meet me in the sitting room.”

Alexandra did as asked. For as much as she once loved this little house it had become a prison. Offering him a glass of whiskey, neat. Alex moved to sit in her chair.

“Sit with me.”

She did as ordered, as per the usual. Sitting on the sofa, her legs were drawn up. Alexandra sat facing her rapist in the lotus position. I never thought I would have to sit with my own rapist in my own living room. But hey, I also never thought I would willingly fuck a Nazi. What would be next? Her body gave a slight shiver when she started thinking about what could come next.

“Why do you always wear that locket?”

“It was a gift long ago.”

“From?”

“My parents.” She lied.

“What pictures are in it?”

“My parents.”

“I will be gone for a week.”

“Very well.”

“You aren’t going to miss me häschen? I will miss you greatly.”

She didn’t respond. Instead, Alexandra swallowed down the last of the whiskey in her glass.

This time the rape was brutal.

She wasn’t sure if it was because she didn’t say she was going to miss him or if it was because he just wanted her to be in pain the week he was gone. Did it matter the reason? No.

Nothing was going to stop this bastard except death. Her own or his, it didn’t matter.

Buder pulled away from her abruptly. Reaching down, jerked the necklace off. Alexandra was up immediately.

“Give me that back!”
Without a word, he punched her in the face. The Totenkopfring that he wore on his left hand chipped her tooth and cut the skin next to her mouth in the process. It didn’t stop Alexandra. She wrestled with the man to get back the locket.

Buder grabbed for his sidearm and held Alexandra down. The barrel of the gun rested right between her eyes.

“Do it. DO it. PULL THE FUCKING TRIGGER!” She screamed at him. “At least I won’t have to see you ever again. PULL THE TRIGGER YOU FUCKING COWARD!” Alexandra started to fight him. She got in some solid punches but Buder pressed his boot down on her neck and stood over her. It would take nothing to crush her throat.

“Hosenscheisser.” She spat.

Opening the locket, Buder saw the pictures of Heydrich. He laughed. “Heydrich is your father eh? Well with that bastard anything is possible. He may have fucked your mother.”

“Piss off.”

“Piss off?” He laughed. “When I see you next, you will be my urinal then. I cannot believe you fell for his drivel. Foolish bitch aren’t you? Reinhard loves the ladies. He has put his dick in almost all of the ones he meets or tried to at least. You should get yourself checked for disease.”

“So should you then.” She snarled.

“Go clean yourself up whore.”

“Get the fuck out of my house, whoremonger.”

“When I see him tomorrow, I’ll give this back to him. See you in a week häschen.”

Locking the door behind the man, Alex went to take a shower. She made the water so hot it was painful. When she finally got out and got dressed, she made a couple of ice packs. Putting ice on the worst of the bruising and swelling, Alexandra felt empty.

A plan started to develop. She would kill Buder the next time he was there. Then she would kill herself. There was nothing else that could be done. She couldn’t escape. She could last a week.

Alexandra realized that she would have to find a home for Tristan and Isolde.

Speak of the devils, the two felines hopped up on the bed for attention. Looking at their sweet little faces, Alexandra cried like she never had before. All she wanted to do was go home. Go home to her parents and her family. She wanted nothing more than to be safe and tucked in her bed. There was no safety here in this hellish place.

Whatever she had felt with Reinhard at the villa was all a lie. Hell, she wasn’t even a distraction. She had been nothing more than a whore and orifice to him.

The icepacks helped but Alex would have sworn even her eyelashes hurt. She managed to camouflage the visible bruises with a bit of well applied makeup. The rest was hidden with clothing.

“What happened to you Alex?”

She and Paul Aber were going over blood test results in his office.
“What are you talking about? Okay, these need to be redone. The rest of these are fine. Give me some of your tests. I can help you knock them out.”

“You. Who the hell hit you?”

“Nobody hit me. I slid on the ice.”

“Kettler, I am calling you out on that bullshit.”

“Paul, stop. Please?”

“Boyfriend?” He knew she wasn’t married.

“No. I don’t have a boyfriend, I just fell.”

There was a knock on the door. Reaching back, Alexandra opened the door. The office of Paul Aber was a copy of her own, tiny.

“Yes Edeline?” Alex asked.

Edeline was one of the charge nurses. “Dr. Kettler? Dr. Aber? You need to come out here.”

Rising, Alexandra pulled on her lab coat. “What’s wrong?”

“I think you two are about to get visitors.”

Heinz Heydrich hadn’t seen her yet, but she saw him. He was waiting in the corridor along with a photographer while a group of men were walking towards him. From the distance he looked so much like his brother.

“Paul, take care of this.”

“What? Why? Alex, this is your doing and it is a good thing.”

“Trust me, please.”

“Have you met the guy standing without the camera? That’s the brother of the man you saved when you first got here. You know, Heydrich.”

At that same moment, Heinz turned his head towards her. Alexandra gave a weak smile. To say he was surprised would have been an understatement but like Alex, Heinz Heydrich knew the value of a poker face.

“Paul, Edeline, please excuse me.” Alexandra ran down the hallway to the nearest toilet.

She vomited and broke out into a cold sweat. Her body kept heaving until there was nothing left. Even then, the dry heaving continued. Seeing stars, she leaned against the cold of the wall. Fairly certain that Buder had cracked one of her ribs, the pain was horrible.
Trigger warning again. All sorts.

Alexandra cleaned up as best she could and chewed on a couple of mints. Cracking the door just enough to see who was in the hallway, she raced to her office. There was no hiding or getting out of the situation, so she prepared for battle instead. Righting her appearance and fixing the now ruined makeup, she looked like a proper physician. Now if only she felt like one, she sighed.

It was time for the afternoon rounds, so she was ready to get that done and over with when Edeline spotted her.

“Nobody has noticed you aren’t there yet, you’re fine.”

“Thank you Edeline.” Fucking hell.

“You don’t look well. Is everything ok?”

“Yes. Something I ate disagreed with me.”

A group of men were coming in one end of the general ward. Alexandra was standing at the opposite end. She would speak to them once they had finished talking with the wounded men. Standing not quite in the doorway, it kept her hidden unless someone was in the proper position.

Heinz Heydrich was in the proper position and walked over to her with a smile.

“You don’t look so well Dr. Kettler.” He offered a hand.

“It’s Dr. Kettler now?”

“In public, yes. It has to be.”

“Have we met?”

“No. I just introduced myself” Heinz didn’t look at her.

“Just checking.”

“You removed the necklace.”

“No. It was removed without my consent.”

Heinz raised a brow at her comment. He studied her for a moment “Alexandra, what can I do to help? You look terrible.”

She didn’t have time to answer when out of nowhere, Reinhard entered the room. A glance to Heinz, showed that he was shocked too. Apparently, he had not expected his older brother.

“I’m certain you know which the Führer is. The others are…”

“Goebbels and Himmler. Yes, I know. I know which your brother is too. Why is he looking so angry?”
“I have no idea.”

Hitler paused to talk to a young man that Alexandra and Dr. Aber had done extensive work on. Aber stood with Hitler to explain the surgical process. The young man had needed quite a bit of reconstructive surgery. It would take a few more surgeries but he would eventually be able to have a normal life again.

Alexandra was introduced to Goebbels and Himmler by Heinz. Goebbels was polite to her and thanked her for the care she had taken with his stepson. Both his wife and stepson had spoken very highly of her, she was told. She got a feeling that the rather creepy man believed her to be more of a nurse and Paul was the one actually in charge. Honestly? She didn’t care. The man made her skin crawl. Giving a silent sigh of relief, she was happy when he left.

Himmler on the other hand tried to flirt with her. It was painfully awkward speaking to him. Not to mention, both he and Goebbels were quite a bit shorter. Alexandra tried her hardest to remain polite.

What was it about Nazis that most of them were so damned short? Alexandra was nearly 6’2. The number of these men that were taller than her was ridiculously low. Even Heinz was shorter than her, although not by much.

“What made you decide to become a surgeon?” Himmler smiled up at her.

“I come from a long line of doctors, professors, and such. It just seemed natural I suppose.”

“You are a very lovely woman Dr. Kettler.”

“Thank you.”

“Are you married?”

“Only to my job.”

So far Alexandra was able to remain pleasant. She hope she could remain that way until everyone left. It took a couple of minutes for him to realize she was the same doctor that had saved Heydrich’s life.

“Reinhard!” Himmler called out. “I have a surprise for you.”

Pasting on a smile and not looking at Heinz was about the best she could do. If she looked at Heinz, the smile would have fallen away and betrayed her true feelings.

Reinhard walked over. Turning, he was shocked to see Alexandra.

“Obergruppenführer, you are looking well.” She didn’t offer a hand.

“Of course. You did good work Doctor.” His voice was like ice.

“Thank you.” He looked upon her with such cold hatred, it hurt more than she could ever explain. The look he gave her cut straight through to Alexandra’s heart.

Out of nowhere a large dog came bounding over. Alex was confused. What was a dog doing in a hospital? Was it service animal? Sitting down on the floor, she showed no fear of the animal. Noting it was a female, she talked to the dog. It was better than talking to Reinhard at least. Granted, talking to Goebbels was better than talking to Reinhard.
'Well aren’t you a pretty girl?’

She scratched the dog’s neck. Alexandra was rewarded with a gentle head butt. It made her laugh. Ears were next. She stroked the dog’s shiny coat. The large German shepherd playfully knocked her backwards and rolled over on her back like Alex was.

“OOoh. I get tummy.” She scratched the dog’s belly.

“Dr. Kettler?” Heinz spoke softly.

Looking up, she saw Adolf Hitler approaching. Standing up and wiping her hands off. The dog stayed close to her side. That obvious I need a guard dog eh pup?

It was Reinhard that made the introduction. Not only was she a Jewish woman standing before multiple men that hated her very existence, one of them could share the secret of who she really was if he so desired. She could feel the panic crawling up from the back of her throat. She wanted to vomit, again.

There was another problem, she had never been told how to greet these men. She never once thought that she would be in a position to need that sort of knowledge. One tiny slip could be the end of her. So, she told the truth.

“I-I-I’m sorry Sir. I-I-I-I don’t know how to greet you properly.” Alexandra turned red and lowered her eyes to the floor. While anyone watching, outside of Reinhard, would think it was embarrassment, it was actually because she was terrified.


The man responsible for the death of millions smiled gently at her. “Chancellor or Chancellor Hitler is fine Dr. Kettler.”

There was a flicker in her blue eyes as she looked back up at him. “Chancellor?”

“Ja. It is a pleasure to meet you Dr. Kettler. You have done a great service for the German people and for Germany. I thank you for all that you have done.” He spoke in English.

“Thank you Sir.” Her stomach rolled with the words she spoke. She felt ill. Barfing on Hitler’s boots would be a BAD idea Alex. Pull yourself together girl.

He smiled at her once again and switched back to German. “My Blondi seems to like you. I have heard quite a bit of your skills as a doctor.”

“Blondi? I hope they were good things Sir.” Goddamnit can we stop already? I can’t do this. The dog jackass! “I didn’t realize she belonged to you Sir. I apologize for any protocol I may have broken with her.” Alexandra was beginning to wonder if she could blush any brighter.

Hitler smiled warmly. “No, it pleases me to see her like that. Usually she only reacts that way to me. But yes, they were. Obergruppenführer Heydrich sung your praises and I have had the opportunity to speak with many men that you worked on.”

“I’m happy to have helped the men. The people of Germany have been very dear to me for a long time.”

“Heydrich has told me you traveled in Germany fairly extensively as a child, yes?”
“Yes Sir. I loved coming every summer when I was young.” She actually began to smile. It frightened her.

“I hope you are willing to stay here in Germany so that you may teach others your techniques. I am positive that could be arranged.”

There was a twinkle of humor in the murder’s eyes. Half of it chilled Alex to her very core and the other half smiled and laughed softly.

“May we sit and speak for a bit Dr. Kettler?”

She nodded. “Of course Sir.”

In a private room Alexandra Elisabeth Kettler, the adopted daughter of a loving Jewish family, sat and spoke with Adolf Hitler. She was grateful that Heinz Heydrich was permitted to sit in with them. While Heinz was doing his journalist duties, he was still a comfort. She wasn’t certain if she would have been able to survive otherwise. She was even more pleased with the dog being there.

“Please sit Dr. Kettler. Have you met Heinz Heydrich yet?”

“Yes Sir, we met a few minutes before you and I were introduced.” She smiled at Heinz. “Herr Heydrich.” She gave a nod.

The dog, Blondi, propped her head up on Alexandra’s knee. Smiling at the beautiful dog, she stroked its shiny coat with a gentle touch.

“Yes Sir.” Heinz was a man of few words. “Myself and my family owe you much thanks Dr. Kettler.”

“Where are you from in America?”

“Texas.” She smiled. God she would give anything to be there right now.

“Like the John Wayne movies?” The German dictator sounded thrilled.

“Yes! Do you like John Wayne movies Sir?”

“Very much so.”

“You would enjoy some of the Texas cattle……” She forgot the word again. Damnit. “Farms. That isn’t the best word but that is all I remember.”

“I understand what you mean. Have you spent a lot of time with livestock?”

“My father is a geneticist and also a cattle farmer…..” Serious Alex? AGAIN. “He became a physician later in life.”

“Do you understand genetics?”

“I do a little bit. It is mostly just rudimentary alas.” She stroked the dog’s back.

“Is it true that some people are more loyal to their state than the country?”

“Somewhat, yes Sir. I never thought about of it until now. Granted some people are more loyal to their football team than anything else.”
When he laughed at her joke it reminded her so much of her Papa’s laugh.

He knew already that she was of German decent so he asked how her family came to live in America. They spoke of food and drink. When Hitler said something about her being a vegetarian as well, Alexandra was surprised. She assumed that it was Reinhard that supplied that information.

It was strange. Alexandra had heard a couple of the infamous speeches of this fearsome man but she had never heard him speak in his natural voice. It was almost fatherly. That made this talk even more sickening than before. The charisma that he had been credited with was obvious. Still, she could feel how her guarded walls slipped away. It horrified her to feel it happen.

“Do you like being in Berlin?”

“Very much so. I spent a bit of time in Munich and Bremerhaven as a teen but it was Berlin that captivated me. The music, museums, everything. Berlin is very close to my heart.

“Are you a musician?”

“Yes, Sir. I do play several instruments but the cello is part of my heart and soul.”

“Heydrich mentioned that I believe. He was quite impressed with your talent.”

“That was too kind of him.” Alexandra blushed and looked down. “The Obergruppenführer is of a concertmaster class violinist. I can only dream of reaching his level.”

The conversation was perhaps twenty minutes long, then he left. This murderer of millions was gracious and kind to her. Adolf Hitler thanked her for taking the time out of her busy day to speak with him.

“I believe Blondi wishes to stay with you.” He smiled and called the dog. She went to her master happily. But not before giving Alex a wet kiss on her cheek.

“She is beautiful Sir. You have trained her well.”

“Thank you.”

His last words were telling her he hoped that she wouldn’t mind to as to cook for him her favorite vegetarian meal when the war was over and he would return the favor in kind. Heinz patted Alex’s shoulder as he followed Hitler out.

In the empty room, she sat alone. There was no voluntary movement from Alexandra. It was just the involuntary rise and fall of her breathing. Staring off into an unseen distance she began to shake. The anxiety of the two weeks finally reared its ugly head in a physical form.

It started with her hand, her fingers curled in tight to the palm of her hand. Alexandra could feel her body betray her and pull in. She was unable to do anything to stop the process.

She curled into herself as panic swept through her over and over again. Tears spilled down her cheeks silently. The threat of death had been so close for so long. Now everything that had happened since she landed in this strange place spilled out of the already overflowing cup.

It was over two hours later that she finally had the wherewithal to head for home. After having picked up her things from her office, she made one more stop before walking to her car. She didn’t even bother with the heavy coat. The freezing night air was easing her anxiety.
Alexandra considered it a blessing not to see the cherry red dot of Buder’s cigarette on her doorstep. Although, she did check through the entire house to make sure he truly wasn’t there.

Food sounded far too ambitious. Pouring a drink and cutting a slice of bread was about all the energy Alexandra had left to do. Drinking whiskey and eating bread, is this what my life has come down to? She sighed and threw the remaining food into the bin. She didn’t pour out the whiskey.

After a hot shower, she looked in the mirror. The dark circles under her eyes were horrifying. The bruising was worse. Alex’s entire body was riddled with bruises and bite marks. Looking down, fingertips traced the burn on her thigh. The bastard has crushed his cigarette out on her skin.

She noticed that she was losing weight again. When was the last time I had a proper meal?

Probably at the villa outside of Prague.

All of a sudden she started to laugh. “You had no idea how prophetic you would be did you Reinhard? You were right. You saw me dead today. I have nothing left to give or be taken. I have been beaten, humiliated, and raped. I wish you would have pulled the trigger. It would have been so much kinder to have killed me even if you would have felt nothing at all. Oh and guess what? You were right. Adolf fucking Hitler found me amusing. Yeah. I made him laugh.” With a hand over her mouth she sprinted for the toilet. Once again she lost what little was in her stomach.

*I would have seen you dead. I would have seen you beaten and raped. I could have put a gun to your head and pulled the trigger. And I would have felt nothing. NOTHING.*

Those were some of the last words Reinhard had spoken to her.

She desperately wished that he would have pulled the trigger. He would have felt nothing and she would never have to feel again.

She brushed her teeth to get rid of the taste of vomit in her mouth. Alexandra realized then that she was most likely pregnant with Buder’s child. Too bad I’m not blonde, you could have had a lovely Lebensborn baby there Heinrich.

Naked, she walked to the kitchen. Fixing another drink, she went back to the bathroom. Two syringes filled with enough morphine to kill herself sat on the top of the sink. After seeing Reinhard and having to talk with Adolf fucking Hitler, Alexandra couldn’t take anything more. She gave up.

The house was quiet now with the kittens gone. She had dropped the kittens off with another doctor she worked with. He and his wife wanted them for their daughters for Christmas. They promised to love them and take care of them. It was far more than she could do right now.

Tonight everything would finally be over. It was time. She was ready.

There was a knock at her door. Alexandra ignored it. It was probably Buder anyways. He could fuck off. The knocking grew more insistent while she finished injecting the contents of the first syringe into her vein.

Alex ignored the sound of glass shattering. She didn’t care. He could rape her dead corpse.

She had just gotten halfway through the second syringe of morphine when all of a sudden Reinhard Heydrich was standing before her.

“What do you want?” She looked at him. There was a mixture of betrayal and sadness in her once
vivid blue eyes. Oddly, she didn’t question his being in her home.

“I was wrong about you. I was so very wrong about you.”

“You know nothing about me. Get out Heydrich.”

“Why did you give this to your lover to return to me?” He dangled the necklace between his fingertips. “I understand you not wanting it any longer but I never expected you to be so cruel Alexandra.”

Alexandra pushed the plunger down fast. The morphine burned going in. Now, at least she didn’t have to care any longer.

She gaped at him. Cruel. CRUEL? She started to laugh. Cruel. Right. Standing up, she was unsteady.

“Cruel? You consider my RAPIST giving you the necklace back as cruel.” She laughed again and then Alexandra punched him as hard as she could. The anger, hate, and more than anything – the hurt, connected with his cheekbone.


The fact she hit him was a surprise. Holding his hand to his face, he looked at her. This was unlike the woman he knew.

“Get out of here.” The words were snarled at him.

The lies all of the lies. It was all a lie. His words had all been lies. All of a sudden her knees buckled and she fell to the rug on the bathroom floor.

He realized she was shaking. Taking a dry towel, he wrapped her up in it.

“Alexandra. Look at me.”

“Get. Out. Of. My. House.” The towel was wadded up and tossed to the side. “Get out Heydrich. I do not want to ever see you again.” That wish would be granted very shortly.

He saw then.

She was riddled with bruises. Some were old and some were new and they were everywhere. Without the makeup on, he could even see them on her pretty face.

“Buder did this to you?”

“And that is none of your goddamn business.”

“Schatzi…..please? Let me help.”

“Do not call me that. NEVER call me that again. Get out of my house and forget I ever existed.”

“Buder did this to you. What else has he done to you?”

“It doesn’t matter anymore. Leave, please. Do not torture me in my own home. I’ve been tortured enough here as it is.”
“Alexandra…let me help you. Please?”

“No. Go away Reinhard. Go away.”

Finally, the morphine hit her. Alexandra lost consciousness.
Yet ANOTHER trigger warning

“Heydrich, you’re snoring.” Alexandra’s voice was a metallic rasp.

“How did you know it was me?” He stretched, waking up.

“I took care of you in the hospital for 2 months and spent 6 weeks in your bed. You only snore when you are sitting up while sleeping.”

“How are you feeling?”

“Fucking pissed off. I should be dead. I want to be dead.”

Reinhard heard it. The disappointment that she was still amongst the living was there and so was the anger over her own survival.

“Why are my eyes bandaged?”

“You tried to scratch at them. They are not damaged it was just for safety reasons.”

Turning her head towards the sound of his voice, her eyebrow arched above the bandages. “Where am I?”

“In the hospital.”

“I can tell that. Which one?”

“You are in Switzerland.”

“Why?”

“Since June 1st 1942 it has been estimated that you have saved the lives of well over 10,000 people. The numbers include the ones from other doctors that you shared better techniques, medications, and care with. When you recover enough to travel, you will be going home. So once you were stabilized enough to get you to a different place, you were transferred here to make sure you received the best possible care.”

She nodded but said nothing.

“You are not happy?”

“No.”

“Why?”

“I’m still alive. I don’t want to be alive.” Her normally sweet voice was hollow sounding with pain.

“Alexandra, Buder is dead.”

“So?”
“I thought that would make you feel better.”

“No. It erases nothing. I will be haunted by the memories. I will remember all that he did and all that he said. There is nothing that stops those memories.”

“Do you know why he is dead?”

“I don’t care.”

“You should.”

“Obergruppenführer Heydrich, it matters little. The damage is done.”

“The Führer adored you, just as I said he would. He was furious that one of his people would have treated you so poorly. He said it spoke well of your character that while you suffered at the hands of a German, you did not hate Germany. It was upon his order that Buder was executed.” Reinhard was the one that killed him and he made the bastard suffer. Dieter, Klaus, and Klein assisted him.

“Why are you here?”

“To keep an eye on you.”

“You did your job. Goodbye, Obergruppenführer. I release you from any sort of obligation.”

“Schatzi……” He whispered softly.

She didn’t answer. Instead she rolled her head back and didn’t speak.

For two hours Alexandra was silent and offered little in the way of movement. Reinhard believed her to be asleep when one of the doctors looked in on her.

“Is she asleep?” The man spoke German.

“No.” Alexandra answered for herself.

“How are you feeling Miss Kettler?”

“That is Dr. Kettler, thank you. I’m fine. I would like to leave now.”

“Miss Kettler we are not…."

“One more time, my title is DOCTOR and my name is Alexandra Kettler. I earned my degree as a MEDICAL DOCTOR a good number of years ago. So it is not Miss Kettler. Do I make myself clear? Do I need to speak to you in another language? I would be more than happy to, you have several to pick from that I can converse fluently in.”

The man took a breath and exhaled slowly. “Dr. Kettler, I am not able to release you yet. You suffered some trauma and uh well? Hmm? Uhm perhaps we should speak alone about this?”

“Can we take the bandages off my eyes first?”

“Yes, of course.”

The bandages were removed. Alex had to slowly open her eyes because everything seemed too bright. Looking around very slowly Alexandra realized she was in a posh private room. A frown touched her lips. Well, this was costing someone a pretty penny. Or Reichsmark, whatever.
“Better?”

“Yes.”

“Perhaps we should speak alone?”

“Alas, I hold no sway over my keeper that is sitting in the chair. He may stay or go as he pleases. I don’t fucking care.”

If the doctor was shocked by her language, he didn’t show it. “Sir?”

“I will stay.” Reinhard glared at Alexandra.

She dismissed him with a glance.

“Dr. Kettler, the amount of morphine you had taken almost killed you.”

“Yes. I know. It was supposed to have killed me. Unfortunately, some jackass decided to save my life.” She knew the jackass she spoke of was Reinhard.

“You meant to commit suicide?”

“Didn’t I just say that?” She snapped.

“Did you know you were pregnant?”

“Am I still pregnant?”

“No Dr. Kettler. You aren’t. The pregnancy ended in a miscarriage.”

She gave a nod. “How long have I been here?”

“Three weeks.”

“Why so long?”

“When your…” The doctor glanced at Heydrich… “husband arrived we tried letting you wake up but you still fought us. I thought it was best to keep you in a mostly twilight state so that you may heal.” It was obvious that the doctor thought that it was Reinhard that beat Alex.

“He isn’t my husband. He isn’t my anything. He also isn’t the one that beat me nor got me pregnant.”

“I see.”

“Do you doctor? What exactly do you see? A woman that was raped repeatedly? Do you see someone that must be a whore because she was raped? Does a moose sized Nazi sitting in my room make this whole thing better or worse? Never mind, just get the fuck out of my room.”

The man left immediately.

“It’s good to know your temper hasn’t changed all that much Schatzi. Especially when it comes to dealing with other doctors.”

“Don’t even start with me Heydrich. And quit calling me Schatzi. I am not your treasure. I am not your anything. What happened to your face?”
“You punched me.”

“Really?” She was rather proud. It happened three weeks ago and he still had a livid bruise.

“Yes. Do you hate me that much?”

“Yes. Yes I do. I TOLD YOU when he tried to rape me at the villa. For you to think that I would have wanted that man in my bed? I am almost 29 years old and you are the only man I have ever welcomed to my bed. AND YOU KNEW THAT. You knew you were the only one. You were the only man I ever loved. Fucking hell, I was such a fool.”

The tears that fell down her cheeks only made her angry. The hurt and pain she felt was all consuming. Alexandra raised her eyes to him.

“So, who does this speak more about, me or you? No. Don’t answer. Just get the fuck out. I don’t want to see you. I don’t want to hear you. I want to forget everything about you Heydrich. I wish I had never met you.”

“Alexandra….”

“Go back to your wife.”

He stared at her for a moment before answering. “My wife asked for a divorce. I gave it to her.” Reinhard gave her a sharp nod and walked out.

Lina Heydrich could live with many things. Her husband being in love with another woman was not one of them.

Alexandra slept for several hours after Reinhard left. It was perhaps around 11 o’clock at night when she woke up. Someone was humming. It was something that she knew quite well. Sliding out of bed, she walked over to the door of her room. There was an elderly man humming while he mopped the floors.

“Hello.” She smiled. There were tears in her eyes.

The man jumped in surprise. For a moment he looked vaguely afraid.

“I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to frighten you. I woke up and I heard you humming. My father used to do the same thing when I was a girl.”

“Do you know the tune?”

“Yes, Sir. Quite well. My father used to tease me and my twin brother that we were angels.”

He was humming Shalom Aleichem. The story said that two angels followed people back to their homes upon leaving shul. One was a good angel and the other was an evil angel. If the home was prepared properly for Shabbos then the good angel would utter a blessing that the next Shabbos would be the same. The evil angel is forced to respond with "Amen". If the home was not made ready for Shabbos, the evil angel would say that the next Shabbos will be the same, and the good angel is forced to respond with "Amen"

The man nodded and smiled happily in return. “You do know.” He looked at her thoughtfully. “Your accent, I cannot place it. You aren’t from here are you?”

“No Sir. I’m from the United States. Texas to be exact.”
“Ahhh yes. Where the cowboys are. What are you doing here?”

“I’m a doctor. I came over with the Red Cross to help civilians that were getting hurt. My group got hit and I ended up in German territories. I haven’t been able to go home yet.”

“The Germans didn’t send you anywhere awful?”

“No everyone has treated me well. Almost.”

“The almost is what has you here?”

“Yes Sir.”

“No need to call me Sir. I am nobody.”

“I disagree Sir. You made me smile when I thought I would never smile again. That makes you somebody, to me at least. You have my gratitude and my thanks. Plus, my Papa and my Father taught me everyone is somebody. Every person that crosses my path was put there by God for a reason.”

“Your Papa and Father sound like good men.”

“They both are. They are wonderful men.”

“Alexander Klein.” He offered his hand.

Clasping his hand with both of her’s she beamed happily. “Alexandra Kettler, Mr. Klein. My twin brother is Alexander as well.”

“Why do you have tears? A sheyne maidel should not have tears.”

“I just want to go home.”

“Gam zu l’tova. This too is for the good.”

Alexandra smiled softly. “Talmud.”

“A woman of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies.” Alexander Klein had substituted woman for wife when he quoted Proverbs. “Your Papa and Father should be very proud of you Dr. Kettler.”

“Thank you Herr Klein.”

“Klein! You are not being paid to stand around and talk all night! I will throw you out on the street in a matter of seconds you Jew bastard!!”

When she heard the voice yelling at Alexander Klein, she stiffened. Her entire body changed subtlety from her back stiffening to her jaw clenched.

“Yes Dr. Maier!”

“My apologies Mr. Klein. I didn’t mean to get you in trouble.”

“Don’t be. You made an old man happy tonight. Thank you Alexandra Kettler.”

“You are most welcome.”
Mr. Klein moved off to finish his work.

Fury at how the man was treated screamed through her veins. Whatever happened snapped her out of the darkness that was circling her.

Alexandra righted her appearance and straightened her shoulders. Her head was high and proud. The woman that she was now was NOTHING like the one she had been for the last two months. While she was dressed in a hospital gown, robe and her feet were bare, Alexandra walked like she was of the highest royal order.

“Dr. Maier?”

“Yes?”

“Do you know who I am?”

“Yes. You are a physician yourself, Dr. Kettler.”

“Good, you do know. Does my name mean anything to you?” Her smile was as artificial as saccharine. Sweet, but it was completely fabricated.

“Yes Dr. Kettler. You are here because of your relationship with….” He glanced down at the log. “Oh….ohhhh.”

Alexandra thought that it was because of her relationship with Reinhard. She didn’t know it was actually because of the dictator of Germany.

“Exactly. I am here because I am the surgeon that saved the life of Obergruppenführer Reinhard Heydrich. I am also the surgeon that retrained nearly 6 dozen doctors and nurses to better assist patients in Germany. And if I ever hear that you have spoken to anyone as you just spoke to Mr. Klein? Not only will you be dealing with me, you will be dealing with my people.” So she didn’t have people, he didn’t know that. Half the plan of a good threat was making someone believe it. “Do I make myself clear?” The look of disgust in her eyes and the way her mouth was set in anger, it was all that Maier needed. He believed her.

“Yes Dr. Kettler.”

“I believe an apology is in order. A sincere apology.”

“I’m very sorry Dr. Kettler”

“Not to me!”

The man’s lips moved but no sound came out. To Alex, he looked like a dying fish. Maier walked over to where Mr. Klein worked and apologized. She stood by to watch and listen.

“Mr. Klein, you know who to contact if anyone gives you a hard time here.” She gave the man a wink as she stood behind Maier.

“Yes, of course I do.”

“Good. Maier, you are dismissed!”

They both watched Maier leave the area and fast.

“You are an interesting young lady Alexandra.” Alexander Klein whispered with a smile.
“You don’t even know the half of it Mr. Klein.”
Chapter 31

She sat in the waiting room of the hospital and stared out the window. There was some sort of transport coming to take her to the International Red Cross headquarters in Geneva. Alexandra spent a month in the hospital recuperating. It wasn’t from the suicide attempt so much as it was from her having the miscarriage.

Unsure how she felt about the miscarriage, Alexandra tried not to think about it. She wanted to have children someday but Buder’s? She couldn’t even imagine. Still, she would have loved the baby no matter the father. Alex had a feeling once he had found out that she was pregnant, he would have caused a miscarriage himself or would have forced her to have an abortion.

In the quiet waiting room, she watched the patient’s families hear good news about their loved one. Alexandra realized how hopelessly alone and hollow she felt.

She was going home, finally. She had not spoken to her family since the small group she had been with was ambushed. Sending a letter from Nazi Germany to her family was impossible. Besides, how the hell would she explain everything? She couldn’t. She had just mailed off her first letter to them yesterday. Alexandra couldn’t imagine how they felt after nine months without a word.

Alexandra Kettler wasn’t going home. She wasn’t the same person she was when she came over to Europe. Her family probably thought her dead months ago. Physically, she looked relatively the same. Mentally, Alexandra wasn’t sure who she was any longer.

If it wasn’t so dangerous, she would have stayed in Germany. It would have been easier. She wouldn’t have to lie to her family about everything. There was no way she could ever tell them anything. There was no way she could lie about it either. They would know by the look in her eyes.

Alexandra still wanted to be dead. Not for the same reason as before. If she was dead or thought dead she could hide at let her family go. She truly wished she could return to Germany. She had people she knew there and a job. She wasn’t lonely there. Unfortunately, it wasn’t safe. It certainly wasn’t safe for an American woman to be single. Worse yet, it wasn’t safe for an American woman to be single AND have punched the same man that started the Final Solution in the face. Alexandra was not going to even think about how she made a dictator laugh.

That was what she would call a nope. More like it was a big ol’ bag of nope.

Before she left Switzerland, she would drop two letters into the mail. One would go to Reinhard and the other his brother. Heinz’s letter was a thank you. Reinhard’s was an apology. She didn’t leave a return address for them to contact her but Alexandra felt that she needed to do this.

She had been cruel to Reinhard and her poor behavior was embarrassing. She had been rejected. Most people had been rejected by her age. Most people had been rejected by her age more than once. It wasn’t his fault he didn’t want her. Not every relationship works out.

Both of the letters were quite short. It was due to safety reasons rather than the lack of words. She would not do anything to get either brother in trouble with their government. That sort of trouble could be deadly.

“Dr. Kettler?”

“Yes?” Alexandra turned towards the voice.
There is someone here to see you.

Out front?

No ma’am. Room six.

Oh, I’m waiting on a car.

I know. I will get you if the car comes while you are detained.

Alexandra did not like the sound of detained but there was little she could do to get away from someone if they wished to see her. Walking over to the private conference rooms used by doctors to speak with relatives of patients, she rapped on the door and opened it. She was surprised to see who it was.

Reinhard.” Her brow furrowed. “What are you doing here?”

“I came to say goodbye Scha-“

He paused and closed his eyes briefly. He looked at her upon opening them. “My apologies. I came to say goodbye Alexandra.”

“Thank you.”

“I brought you this.” It was a bag of sorts. “Open it.”

“You are not in uniform.”

“No. It is easier to travel without it some of the time. Besides, I knew that you would not like it.”

“Thank you.” Sitting down, she opened the case. Two little furry heads popped up. “Tristan! Isolde!” Alexandra beamed at the pair of kittens and scooped them up into her arms.

He felt a pang. Reinhard hadn’t seen her look happy since they were at the villa. Granted, none of the circumstances he had seen her in since the villa were pleasant ones. Even now, her beautiful eyes were haunted with pain and sorrow.

“How did you get them?”

“The younger of the daughters was allergic. Their mother works in one of the Berlin offices I happened to be in yesterday evening. I heard her mention that she had gotten them from you. I thought you may wish to take the kittens with you.”

“Thank you Reinhard. Thank you very much. That was thoughtful of you.” Both kittens clung to Alex.

“It was my pleasure. Did I hear you correctly? You named them Tristan and Isolde?”

“Yes.”

“Why?”

Alexandra turned a bright shade of crimson. She turned her head away when the tears began to well up.

“Are you alright?”
She nodded. “One of my favorite moments at the villa was listening to the opera with you. It always had special meaning to me. One of the theatres used to do a children’s opera once a month. Light hearted and only about an hour or so to keep the children interested. Wagner’s Tristan and Isolde was the first opera I heard in entirety. I loved it then and I loved it even more listening to it with you. So it seemed like the perfect names for them.”

Reaching into her bag, Alexandra withdrew the two letters. Sliding them both across the table, she looked up at him. “You may read the one for your brother as well. If you wish, that is. There isn’t much in there. I kept them brief just to be safe.”

“I don’t wish to read either of them. Will you tell me what is in mine?”

“Your letter is an apology. I treated you quite poorly when you did nothing to deserve it. I even hit you. I cannot believe I hit you. Reinhard, I am so very sorry that happened. You are the last person I ever wished to hurt.”

“I don’t understand.”

“Uhm. I yelled, screamed, cursed at you. Then I punched you in the face. That sort of cruelty is not me. I have no excuse for my behavior. I didn’t mean to take my anger out on you, but I did. I am so sorry Reinhard.”

“Why?”

“Why did I behave so horribly? I think part of it was I never had been rejected before. I never allowed any man to become close enough to reject me. That wasn’t your fault at all. Things change. Relationships change. People change.”

“I meant why are you apologizing?”

“Because I behaved horribly towards you.”

“Alexandra, we are both at fault.” It was like that first few days at the villa all over again, he itched to touch her.

“I disagree.”

“That is because you don’t know the full story. The night I left at the villa, I was ashamed. I was embarrassed. I was returning to you when I stopped for a drink. I had to stop. I kept coughing like something was caught in my throat. I think now it was because I knew I would hurt you no matter what I did.”

Reinhard swallowed.

“When I did stop, Krueger was there. He asked about you. I said something about having gotten rid of you. I don’t know why, I had a feeling something was off with him. I was right, something was very off. He was getting ready to send men after us both. I couldn’t go back to the villa. I was not going to risk you. There was no way I would allow for you to be tortured. I had made Heinz swear to me he would get you home if something had happened to me before you two had even met. Ernst Kaltenbrunner made the same promise. Still, I should have contacted you myself. Even if I could only pass a message through my brother. I have regretted not doing so this entire time. I am so sorry Alexandra. I am so very sorry.”

“I wouldn’t have been tortured.”
“Yes, you would have. You wouldn’t have been treated like the average Jewish woman, true. It wouldn’t have been about your parents at all. Only myself and Heinz knew about your parents. I would have never betrayed you nor would have he. It may have simply been because you are an American. Or it may have been because of me, I don’t know.”

He reached across the table for her hand. Reinhard closed his eyes in relief when Alexandra wrapped both of her hands around his. He hadn’t been sure how she would respond.

“Luckily, you have useful skills that would have kept you alive. Someone would have found you interesting and beautiful, my sweet Alexandra. Still, I knew you would have been raped and beaten until you or your body gave up.”

Reinhard closed his eyes. Even now, it was painful.

“But it happened anyway. Alexandra, I had no idea. I had no idea whatsoever. I never once believed that the bastard would have touched you. I was wrong. I was so wrong. I am sorry sweet girl. You have gone through so much in so short of time. None of it should have happened. Not to you. Never to you. I would take it all away from you if I could. I would live it myself so you would not have to.”

Looking up, he could tell she was still in pain because of Buder. She would bear his scars inside and out for the rest of her life. If he could kill him again for her, he would.

“When he gave me back your necklace. I was so hurt. Then to see you at the hospital unexpectedly, I was devastated. I sought you out to hurt you like you did me, except it wasn’t you that did it.”

She kissed the back of his hand. That was all she could do.

“I did get one thing right Alexandra.”

“Oh?”

“I told you that the Führer would adore you.”

She started to laugh. “Yes, yes you did.”

“He was the one that ordered Buder’s execution. That is how much of an impression you made on him.”

“You do realize that is unnerving?”

“I didn’t mean to fri-“

“Reinhard, its fine. You taught me something, you know?”

“What was I able to teach you besides how I take my coffee?” He scoffed.

Alexandra smiled. “That was important. No, it’s more about how we are all human.”

“You and your riddles.” He smiled. “I do not understand what you are trying to say.”

“Germans are made out to be the villains in this war, from the American perspective that is. We are all human and we are all just trying to survive. You are a breathtakingly talented violinist. Adolf Hitler is a vegetarian that loves dogs. Hans loathes to hurt others but will do so to protect you. Dieter is a happily married man and a loving uncle. It is not as black and white as it is made out to be.”
“What are you?”

“Outside of being a doctor, I have no idea.”

There was a knocking on the door. “Dr. Kettler, your car has arrived.”

“Thank you. I will be right out.”

“There is food for the cats in the bag. Plus water.”

Alexandra stood and returned the cats to the traveling case.

“Thank you Reinhard.”

“For what?”

“Listening to me and for bringing the kittens.”

“It was my pleasure. Alexandra, know this. I love you. I will always love you.” Don’t go! Please Schatzi….don’t.

“I love you as well. You were the first man I loved and the only man I will ever love.”

Reinhard took a chance. He stepped closer to Alexandra. Pressing a kiss to her lips, he cupped her cheek. Her lips were soft beneath his and after a brief hesitation, she returned his kiss. Pulling back, he looked at her.

Reinhard could tell, she was unsure of herself and of him. Her cheeks were lit with a warm blush and she stared down. He took her hand into his.

“I want to beg you not to go. I know that is selfish of me to do so but knowing I will never see you again is painful. May I ask a favor?” Reinhard cringed as the words came out. He could hear his own voice becoming higher pitched. It tended to happen when he was afraid.

“Yes. Of course.”

“Don’t go. Not today at least. Give me one more day with you. I won’t touch you. I won’t do anything that would come close to compromising you. I just need to be near you one more time.”

Alexandra started to speak.

“Let me finish please?”

She nodded.

“We go now to Geneva. You will be right there. Just spend one more night with me. Talk to me. Listen. Let us have one more day together before you leave. Please?”

She studied him for a moment before nodding. “Okay.”

“Really?” He was surprised.

“Yes. Really.”

Reinhard grabbed Alexandra under her arms and swung her around, laughing.

“Put me down you Beast!”
“Make me.”
“I need to tell the driver I am not going with him.”
“I’ll do that.”
“I can. It isn’t a problem.”
“I am slightly more intimidating than you are.”
“Only slightly?”
“Are you trying to tell me something Alexandra?” He gave her a look of mock hurt.
She laughed softly. “You had this horrifying wound on your left side and you tried to fight me.”
“Did I intimidate you?”
“Not until I realized I had cut your uniform off.”
“I am a lovely gentleman.”
“Yes, you are. Remember you were half conscious at best and I kept having guns pointed at me.”
“And you told a large SS man with said gun to your head to fuck off you were busy.” He laughed.
“Sometimes I have more balls than brains. And given you know for a fact how I am equipped, that is saying something right there.”
Reinhard laughed again. “You always did have a way with words.”
Reinhard took care of the driver and drove his own car around to pick Alexandra up. Hopping out, he escorted her to the car. When she smiled he couldn’t help but smile with her.
“Where are we going?”
“I booked us a suite at Hotel Les Armures.”
“Oh. Thank you. That is a lovely hotel.”
“You have been there before?”
“No. I have just seen pictures of it.”
“Are you hungry? I know a café near here.”
“No thank you. I’m not hungry.”
“Alexandra, please take care of yourself. You are too thin.”
“I know.”
“I have a medical question for you.”
“Yes?”
He sounded shy. “Is there anything that would deepen my voice?”
Reaching over, Alexandra touched his hand. “I love your voice. It’s beautiful. I also know it is something that bothers you. But, to answer your question, nothing to my knowledge. You could try a voice coach.”

“Do you think it would work?”

“I know very little about the coaches so I’m afraid I cannot answer your question. I know a few speech therapists. I could contact them. Actually, the one that Dieter’s nephew is working with is very good.”

“Thank you. Dieter’s nephew? Dieter in the RSHA?”

“Yes. I was the surgeon for his sister’s son.”

“Oh. I remember he had the problem with his lip and mouth. I didn’t realize you were the surgeon. He never said.”

“I’m sure he didn’t tell you because he didn’t wish to bother you Reinhard. “

“I am fairly certain we have had this conversation before. You are never a bother.” He smiled.

Alexandra laughed. “The first time I ordered you to do something?”

Reinhard tipped his head back and laughed with her. “I was so surprised when you did that Schatzi. I didn’t know what to think.” He realized his mistake. “May I still call you Schatzi?”

“Yes, if you would like.” She bit her lip. “You even told me you were used to giving orders and not taking them. And then there was that look you gave me.”

“I would very much like to. That battle was won by you.”

“Yes. You knew very early on how stubborn I was.”

Alexandra picked up Reinhard’s hand. His hands were so beautiful. She loved watching him speak with his hands when something intrigued him. Long fingered and manicured, the only callouses were when he would play his violin more often. Tipping her head forward, she pressed a kiss to his knuckles.

“My darling, what is wrong?”

“I don’t know how to put it into words.”

“Can you try?”

“Maybe?” She looked rather bewildered. “Reinhard, I love you. I have never stopped loving you. I knew it in the back of that delivery van that you would change my life.”

“Delivery van?” It was his turn to look bewildered.

“I think it was Hans that flagged down a delivery van. So much of that morning was a blur. That’s how we transported you to the hospital. You were in the back of the van. I had your head on my lap. Hans or someone was back there with us, making sure I didn’t do you any harm.

You had my hand and were holding it tight. I was trying to get you to relax some so the pain wouldn’t be as bad for you. I stroked your cheek like I would have someone dear to me. You said something like you trusted me. You were afraid. You were in pain. Somehow you trusted my word
that I was going to take good care of you and you would be alright. I knew it though. You would change my world completely.”

“You said you would dance with me at a wedding?”

“Yes. I believe I did. You remember?”

“I’ve dreamt of it a couple of times. I didn’t realize it was all real until now.”

Reinhard pulled off the road to get gas.

After speaking with the attendant, he turned to say something to Alexandra. He found her fast asleep. Reinhard smiled looking at her. The days in the hospital when she couldn’t or wouldn’t sleep, she didn’t know he was there. They had to drug her so she wouldn’t hurt herself fighting.

While the attendant pumped the gas, cleaned the windshield and did all the routine checks, Reinhard studied the sleeping Alexandra closely. He would give up everything for her without a moment of hesitation. His career. His country. Everything and anything. It didn’t matter as long as she was with him.

He had meant what he said all those months ago. She was his destiny.

Alexandra didn’t sleep long. It was only perhaps twenty minutes in total when she woke up with a yawn and a stretch. Frowning, it took her a moment to get her bearings.

“I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to fall asleep.”

“It is better you sleep than me Schatzi.” Reinhard smiled.

“Since you are driving, I would think so.”

Reinhard just grinned happily.

“Why are you grinning like that?”

“You fell asleep.”

“Yes, I did.” She looked at him oddly.

“You won’t sleep if you feel unsafe or uncomfortable.” He grinned even wider.

“You are correct Herr Obergruppenführer.”

Picking up her hand, he kissed the back of it. “I am thankful you feel safe and comfortable with me.”

Twining her fingers with his. “I have from the day I met you. Otherwise I wouldn’t have told an extremely large SS man with a gun to kindly fuck off.”

“Klein still tells that tale. My men are still very proud of their little sister.” He smiled. “They would talk of you often, thinking I could not hear it. They worried about you still. Ah! I nearly forgot something!” Reinhard made a quick turn.

“I thought of them often too. I didn’t want to contact them and upset you. Where are we going?”

“You will see mein Schatzi. I honestly don’t know how I would have felt if you contacted them
and not me. Most likely I would have been extremely jealous.”

She chuckled. “You know, I never thought anyone would be jealous over me.” Alexandra looked thoughtful for a moment. “Even now, it sounds odd.”

“It took me a bit to realize you and I are not all that different.”

“Oh?” She arched an eyebrow.

“We have both been hurt in similar fashions.”

“You are not wrong.”

They drove for a short distance and arrived at a very non-district building.

Exiting the car, she looked around. A light snow was falling. The air was crisp and cold but it felt good. It made Alexandra feel alive. She looked to Reinhard, who was standing next to her.

“What are you thinking?” He asked.

“A couple of things actually. You have no reason to be jealous of another man in regards to me. There will never be another. And? I want you to kiss me.” The words were soft, quiet.

“Why?”

“Why? I enjoy kissing you.”

“Do not play with me Alexandra.”

“I’m not playing. There are no games Reinhard, just us.”

His lips touched hers. The tendrils of fear dug into both of them with razor sharpness. Still, when her full lips parted, Reinhard pulled her closer to him. The softness of her breasts were crushed against his broad chest. Pulling away from the kiss, Reinhard wrapped his arms around her and held on tight. Alexandra slid her arms around him as well. Holding on to her, he knew.

Reinhard finally had his Schatzi back.

“You still are the most beautiful woman I have ever seen. I’ve missed you so much my beloved.”

“I missed you too. I love you Reinhard. I love you more than anything in this world. I am so sorry. I am so very sorry.”

“Stop.” His fingers touched beneath her chin, bringing her gaze up. “No more. No more saying sorry. We hurt each other and we are both sorry. We know this.” Pulling off his glove, he brushed his fingertips lightly across her cheek. He needed to touch her skin and know she was truly before him. “I love you. I love you and only you my girl. It’s been that way since I first laid eyes on you in that damned hospital bed.”

“You are the only one I ever have loved. I mean that my Lion. I mean that with all of my heart.”

“Am I your Lion Alexandra?” He gave a half smile in asking the question from the villa.

“Yes. You are my Lion. My Beast.”

“Then you are my Lioness.”
“Always.”
Chapter 32

Reinhard pulled up to the Hotel Les Armures in Geneva. The valet opened the door for Alexandra but it was Reinhard that helped her out. He pulled her close to him and smiled.

“You are beautiful. No. You are more than beautiful. You are breathtaking.”

“You need your eyes checked.”

“My eyes are fine.”

Alexandra was carrying the bag with the sleeping Tristan and Isolde. They walked into the lobby but instead of going to the front desk, they went to the bar first. Sitting across from each other at a private table, his brow furrowed. Someone came over to take their drink order before he could speak.

“Whiskey. Neat. For the both of us.” Reinhard ordered. He waited for the drinks to be brought over before he began.

“Schatzi.” He groaned inwardly with having to ask this. “This is embarrassing.” He looked down for a moment. “What sort of room would you like?”

“My Lion, if you are asking if we need more than one bed the answer is no. If you don’t wish to be intimate, I understand. I do enjoy curling up next to you with or without intimacy.”

“You think I would not wish to be intimate with you?” Reinhard went from incredulous to laughing without batting a lash. “Oh Alexandra. Oh my sweet beautiful girl. That is up to you entirely. I will not push for such but that doesn’t mean I wouldn’t want to make love to you.”

Once again her cheeks bloomed a bright crimson. “I am never going to learn the subtle cues am I?”

“It doesn’t matter. I am not letting go of you again. You only have to learn my cues.” Rising from the booth, he kissed her cheek with a smile. “I’ll be right back. I will get our room. Reinhard checked each pocket of his trousers to make sure the items were safe.

After securing the room, Reinhard spoke with the concierge. The man was given money, a list of items, and an extremely generous tip. He expected the purchases to be brought to the room as soon as possible.

“Will you do the honors Schatzi?” He handed her the key.

“Of course.” She opened the door to their hotel suite. There was something rustic but still luxurious about the room.

“Do you like it?”

“Reinhard, it is lovely. Absolutely lovely. The room isn’t important to me. I could be in a cardboard box and be happy. Just as long as we were together.”

It was he who blushed for a change. Clearing his throat, he smiled. “Thank you. Set the two tiny terrors up then come with me please? I wish to show you something.”

The suite was large, quite a bit larger than Alexandra’s first flat even. Down a rather narrow hallway, Reinhard led her to two doors.
“Saunas. This one.” He touched the door. “Is wet. And the other is dry. They are only fit for two people but I do not think that should be a problem.” He wanted so desperately to please her.

“Of that sounds divine.”

“There is a lavatory at the end of the hall past the saunas. Then the master bath of course.”

“Would you like to warm up in the sauna together? Afterwards, we could get ready for dinner.”

Alexandra bit her lip.

“What is wrong my sweet?”

“I’m nervous.”

“About me?”

“No. Yes. Argh!” She sighed. “I do not……look…. the same as I did.”

“Schatzi.” He whispered, gathering her in his arms. “While you are quite beautiful, it is not your looks I fell in love with. Your heart and mind were what captivated me. Your beauty was simply a bonus.” Reinhard gathered her in his arms. “Tell me what is going through your mind?” When she didn’t speak, he took her to the sofa.

“Talk to me, please Alexandra?”

She looked down. Her hands grabbed at the hem of her skirt. Pulling and twisting at the material, Alexandra tried to find her voice and she couldn’t. Reinhard said nothing but spoke volumes with his arms around her. The tension in her body and the tightness around her eyes were visible. Finally, she tried to speak but nothing made sense.

“Take your time. If you do not wish to speak of it yet, we won’t. I do have something for you.” He reached into his pocket. “Close your eyes.”

Alexandra did as asked. Taking her hand, he placed upon her palm a small glass box. There was not another like it. Reinhard had it made especially for her. The box was only 10 x 10 centimeters.

“Open your eyes.”

Alexandra smiled. There was intricate work on the small box. The corners were made of wire wrapping. The wrappings framed the center which held the pressed flower between the glass panes. She had saved after Reinhard had bonked her nose with it.

“It’s beautiful. Where did you get the flower?”

“Heinz. He gave me everything you had left in the envelope. It was my Christmas present from him. Open it.”

“Reinhard, it’s beautiful.”

“May I put it on you?”

“Yes.”

The bracelet was a bangle that was opened at the end. Reinhard slid it over her wrist easily. On one end was a beautiful amethyst and on the other was an aquamarine. He twisted the stones when they
came together. It locked the bracelet on to her wrist. Taking her hand, he brought it upwards. A lingering kiss was placed on her knuckles.

“You had to have had this made.”

“I did.”

“When?”

“When you were in the hospital.”

“Why?”

“I love you. I almost lost you Alexandra. That’s why I refused to leave your side.”

“I’m confused.”

“I know.” His brow furrowed. “You had taken the morphine the day I came to see you in your home. I was so angry that you wouldn’t answer. I ended up breaking in. We were fighting when you passed out. I got you to a hospital and they saved your life. I had a meeting the next day I told the Führer what had happened. Immediately he ordered Buder’s execution. Klein, Dieter, and Klaus were the ones that arrested Buder.”

“I didn’t know any of that happened.”

“I know. Alexandra you are a very strong and powerful woman.” He saw her expression and it amused Reinhard. “You do not think such, I know. You are. You are intelligent, kind, physically strong, and emotionally strong. You are the sort of woman that men wish to covet. Those men are fools. They wish to make you bow to them. Any man worthy of your attentions, doesn’t wish for you to bow to him. He wants you by his side. That isn’t just as a lover Schatzi. It goes for friends, colleagues, any man outside of your immediately family.”

Her brow furrowed. It made Reinhard chuckle.

“You still don’t see it. I never told you this but when we were at the villa, I took calls from the Führer several times a week. He asked about you originally because it was a strange situation. I think he heard something in my voice that told him more than I ever did.

He was furious after finding out two of our men tried to hurt you. I had to tell him because the men were dead.

The day he ordered the execution he spoke to me privately. He asked if I was in love with you. I didn’t know what to say. I didn’t know why he was asking such a strangely personal question. I told the truth, of course. He told me to take care of Buder for you. Then go take care of you. You helped your German brothers, now it was time for your German brothers to help you.

What I did not know was there was a social gathering I was at. The Fuhrer arrived and left fairly early. Klein was filling in for the Fuhrer’s driver. This was just two days before the hospital visit. He asked Klein about you. The Fuhrer knew he would be meeting you.

I’ll have to have Klein tell you the full story. It is more entertaining coming from him. He talked to the Fuhrer about you. He sung your praises better than even I ever could. If it wasn’t for the fact that I know Klein is hopelessly in love with a young lady, I would be concerned.”

Alexandra laughed softly. “Hans always reminded me a gentle giant, until you made him angry.
Then? Good luck.”

“Very accurate my love.” Reinhard smiled. “Klein told him what you did for my men, for me, and just your kind and gentle nature in general. Klein told him how you took care of our veterans. How you helped our men. Needless to say the Fuhrer heard a lot about you from a lot of different sources.”

“How did Hans know? I never saw him at the hospital.”

“For such a large man he is quite capable at not being seen. Once they got you stabilized in Berlin you were then transported to Switzerland. Switzerland was safer for you. There wouldn’t be reprisal from anyone. I stayed with you while you were healing. I couldn’t be away from you and if anyone was to hurt you they had to go through me first.”

“Reinhard…” Alexandra slid her arms around his neck and held on to him.

“Oh my Schatzi. I love you. I love you so very much.”

Her voice trembled when she spoke. The words were barely audible when she whispered in his ear. “Buder left me with physical scars.” She pulled back away from him, embarrassed.

His hand was gentle on her chin. He made her look at him. “My Alexandra, he cannot hurt you again. I swear this to you. I made sure of it myself.”

“What do you mean?”

“I was the one that killed the bastard. Klaus, Dieter, and Klein helped.”

Reinhard didn’t go into details but Dieter was able to keep Buder alive for over a week. Klaus made sure the man felt everything. Dieter and Klein orchestrated every bit of the torture. There was not a place on the man’s body that had intact flesh when Reinhard and his men were finished.

“I love you Reinhard.”

“I love you Alexandra. I do. I really truly do. If you do not wish me to see the scars, you may wear my shirt in the sauna. Or we don’t even have to use the sauna.”

“No. You will need your shirt for later.”

“Are you sure?”

She nodded. “I’ll wear a towel for now.”

Rising from his lap, she smiled gently before walking back to grab towels and change. Alexandra walked back in wearing only a towel, there were two more in hand. He had just hung up the phone when she came out.

“Is something wrong?”

“No, the front desk needed something.” Actually, they were making sure it was fine to bring up what Reinhard ordered. He stripped down to his boxers and wrapped the towel around his waist before removing the last bit of clothing.

“You look like you are wearing a swim dress Schatzi. I look like I am wearing a skirt.” He wiggled his hips for emphasis and grinned. He smiled wide hearing her warm laughter.
“You don’t have to wear a towel if you don’t wish to. You didn’t need to hide from me either. I have seen you naked more often than dressed I believe.”

He laughed. “I only have it on because I don’t like the benches on my bare backside.”

“This looks like a swim dress to you? Good lord. You would be scandalized by what I wore on vacation.”

They climbed into the sauna.

“What did you wear on your holiday?”

“Four triangles and a bit of string. At least that is what my father called it when he saw pictures from my vacation.”

Reinhard eyed her. He wasn’t sure if Alexandra was kidding or not.

“You have seen the two piece bathing suits before I’m sure. Well, this is sort of like that. Two triangles pointing up tied around the neck and back with some string. They cover my breasts, well somewhat. The bottoms are triangles pointing down at front and back also tied with string along my hips. The islands are very relaxed about nudity or almost nudity.” Alexandra had gone on a Caribbean vacation.

There was part of him that was horrified that she would go out in public wearing so little. The larger part of him was titillated at the thought of her wearing so little.

She laughed after seeing his look of horror. “Germany has nude beaches. Don’t tell me you have never been to one!”

“I have been to many. Somehow the hiding just enough is more….erotic than nudity. I don’t believe I could ever go to a nude beach with you.”

“Why?”

“Because I wouldn’t be able to keep my hands off of you or any other part of me! We would end up getting arrested.”

She laughed. How he had missed that sound!

“Reinhard?”

“Ja Schatzi?”

“Will it bother you if I remove the towel? It’s making me more than a wee bit crazy.” It kept trying to fall off.

“It will bother me in the sense that I was not there when you needed me. It will not, however, make me feel any differently about you.” He swung his legs up on to the bench seat that they were sharing. “Sit between my legs.”

“Uhm. Okay?” Alex sat between his knees.

Reinhard made a sound of frustration. He picked her up and placed her between his thighs. “Silly girl. I want you close to me.”

Alexandra wiggled closer to him.
“Lean back against me and let me hold you?”

She did just that. Reinhard shifted her so that her head rested on his shoulder.

“Ahh. Much better.” He smiled. “May I have your hands?”

Holding them out palms upward, she nodded. He took her hands in his. His fingers caressed her own. Bringing them upwards, he kissed each fingertip one by one. Then Reinhard kissed each palm.

“I want you to hear something.”

“Yes?”

“It is important to me for you to hear this about yourself. Just listen. We may talk about it when I am done, if you would like.”

“The first thing I remember about you? It was your hands. I was on the pavement, dying. The pain was too much for me. I couldn’t move. Your hands felt strong. It wasn’t just a physical strength either. You knew what you were doing. Your touch was confident but gentle and that alone reassured me. There was no sense of urgency, you were doing what you knew best. I couldn’t even see you most of the time but I knew then I was going to be fine. Your hands gave me that courage.”

“The first time I saw all of you, your hands reassured me again. So did your smile. You were frightened. I could tell. Who wouldn’t have been after what you went through? You didn’t let that fear take over. You managed that fear and you did your job. I marveled at your hands once more. You were gentle but still had a reassuring touch. I believed in you.”

“I remember your voice as well. You have a voice that could drive any man to distraction. I remember thinking your voice reminded me of autumn, hot chocolate, and sex. It made me look to your lips. They were so full and soft looking. I wanted to know if they were as soft as they looked.”

“Because of your soft lips I watched your smile Schatzi. Many people hide behind a smile. You didn’t. It was something rare to see in men or women. You were in a country that anything could happen to you and there would be no one wiser. Your smile was so genuine. It pleased you here” He tapped over her heart. “and here too that a dying man was amongst the living.” He tapped the side of her head.

“The first time I consciously felt your bare touch was when you showed me where the nerve was in my neck. I felt your callouses that time. I was certain they were from playing a string instrument. I think it was then that I fell in love with you. You were an artist here.” This time he kissed her head. “And here too that a dying man was amongst the living.” He tapped the side of her head.

“We have had the discussion how I am not a good man. I stand by my words on that but I hear how you disagree. It is okay that we don’t agree. I am not a good man but I am trying to become a better man for you. No, not just for you but for us. My darling girl. My beloved treasure. My Alexandra. You are all of those and so much more. All that I have hated about myself, you taught me to love. And I do, if for no other reason than because you love those parts of me. My voice, my body, my nose and even my possible ancestry. These were all things that people made fun of me for. Yet, you loved them. I couldn’t understand how you could, but I do now.”

His arms were around Alex’s waist and he held her close to him.
“You see your scars and hate them. It is not a surprise. You endured more than anyone should ever have had to. I see your scars and I love them. I understand that what happened to you was awful and I do not love that you have had to go through so much. I love your scars because you are still with me. You endured so much and still here you are. With me.”

Reinhard began to choke up. “I was so close to losing you. I almost did lose you. If I had been just two minutes later I would have lost you my sweet girl. That’s is all I need out of life, having you with me. I love you Alexandra. I love you more than anything else in this world or the next.”

She tipped her head to the side and kissed his full lips. “I love you Reinhard. I love you more than you will ever know. You made me think of something.”

“What is that?”

“There is a Japanese art called Kintsugi. It means golden joining or something close to that. It’s been a while since I have seen it. Broken pottery is fixed using gold and some sort lacquer. The art and philosophy behind it was always so beautiful to me. It treats breakage and repair as part of the history of an object, rather than something to disguise, hide, or even discard. Also, just because it was broken it doesn’t mean that there is something wrong with it.”

“Perhaps you and I can learn how to do this?”

“I would enjoy that very much.”

“If you could go anywhere in the world for a vacation, where would you like to go?”

“Anywhere as long as you are by my side.” Alexandra picked up his hand, holding it.

“That was a given that we would be there together. So where?”

“Ameri...”

“No really? I thought you would wish for us to go somewhere neither of us had been and discover it together.”

“I would love that too. Or a private island where we could just be with each other.”

“So why America?”

“I want to share as much with you as I can. I would love for you to see the things that mean a lot to me. I know. I’m silly.” Alex smiled. “I would take you to New York and we could see some of the marvelous plays on Broadway. Boston to hear the symphony. Then to Washington DC so you could see where our capital is and hear the National Symphony play.”

Still blushing, she studied his manicured nails.

“Then to New Orleans, but we would be there for Mardi Gras. Houston of course. We could spend a month there and we would never see everything I would want you to. Houston we would have to be there for the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and I would have to take you to an American football game which is totally different from what German football is.

I would want to take you Chicago and sit in some of the best blues and jazz clubs in the world. We would have to see the national fencing comptetition of course. To see the beautiful, the stark, show you the people – so you know a different part of my life. Walk on a California beach at midnight, for no other reason that because we can. I would love to teach you to water ski. I would love to
take you somewhere I know well and have you see all of it through my eyes.”

He held on to her tightly. Pressing his lips to her collarbone from behind, Reinhard wanted to say something, anything. He couldn’t think of the words to use in order to convey to Alexandra what he felt in his heart.

“When I met you, you awakened my heart and soul. I never believed my heart and soul even existed. I thought I had been born without. I used to loathe being vulnerable. It was painful. Too damned painful. Then I fell in love with you. Love leaves you exposed to the one you cherish. I have a heart and soul after all. They are linked with yours. No. They are more than linked to yours. You are the key holder.”

He felt her stomach growl and frowned. “And you need to eat young lady. Shall we get dressed?”

“We could walk down to the restaurant naked but I think it might be a bit chilly.”

Turning around, Alexandra kissed him before wrapping her arms around him and just holding on for a few moments. Reinhard stroked his hand down her back and closed his eyes. To have his beloved in his arms again was a gift and he knew that.

The purchases for the pair of them were all put away. There was nothing out of the ordinary to make Alexandra realize that things were delivered.

“I had the bellhop bring you some cosmetics and a few thing you would need to bathe. I had him do the same for me. I did bypass his offer of cosmetics for me.”

She laughed. “I can share.”

“Perhaps later.” He smiled.

“Or perhaps you will wear my shade when I kiss you.”

“I like that idea even better.”
Chapter 33

Alexandra stepped out into the sitting room wearing nothing but a towel. Her clothing was missing.

“Reinhard?”

He came from around the corner, fixing his cuff links. “Yes my darling?”

She was about to tell him she couldn’t find her clothing. Yet she was unable to form the words while looking at him. Alexandra was rendered speechless for a few moments.

“I’m afraid I am a touched under dressed.” She smiled with appreciation of how well he looked in a tuxedo. “On the other hand, you are not. Reinhard, you look….” She lost her train of thought while watching him. “You look like a god among the rest of us mere mortals.”

“Thank you Schatzi. And you won’t be under dressed.” Opening the armoire, he removed the dress that was still in its garment bag. Your undergarments are in this drawer.” He tapped it lightly with his fingers. “And you may decide what shoes to wear in here.” He opened a closet door.

Reinhard saw the look she gave him and began to laugh. “Yes, yes, yes, we have had this conversation before. Why so much? Because I wanted to. Tonight is for us and only us. It is special.”

“Thank you.”

Alexandra couldn’t help but chuckle. The undergarments were made with a man in mind. She slipped the garter belt on with practiced ease. Silk stockings were sleek and smooth going up her legs. The tap pants were beautiful. Silk and chiffon, it covered her bottom but barely. The fluttering hem whispered across her skin. It actually brought a blush to her cheeks with how exposed she felt wearing them.

The high asymmetrical neckline of the dress made it look deceptively modest, especially with the long sleeves. Alexandra’s back was left bare from her shoulders to the small of her back. The dress was quite fitted to the upper body but at the waist the dress flared outwards. The high low hem also gave an appearance of showing more leg that it did. The back and the sides almost touched the floor with the front of the hemline hitting at the lower part of her calves.

The d’Orsay pumps had some heel to them, it was more than she was used to wearing. The heels were more stiletto like than what was currently in fashion but they looked beautiful. Walking out to the sitting room, she gave Reinhard a shy smile. Alexandra almost felt like a child playing dress-up. Almost. After Buder, she was certain she wouldn’t ever feel desire again. Looking at Reinhard she knew that she had been wrong. She wanted him. She wanted him so badly that just looking at him left an ache at the pit of her belly.

“You look stunning my Alexandra.”

“Thank you. Although, you are by far more stunning than I.”

“We will just have to disagree. You are underdressed still.” He handed her a small box.

“Reinhard you have spent far, far, far, too much money.” The box held a pair of diamond solitaire earrings.
“Will you wear them for me?”

“Yes.”

“And the locket? Please?”

“Yes. I would love to.”

After she put on the earrings, Reinhard slipped the necklace around her throat. Holding her from behind, his lips pressed against her collarbone. He had so feared her rejection that he felt he needed to hold on to her for a bit.

“Reinhard, what’s wrong?”

“Nothing is wrong. I just need to hold you.” Whispering against her throat, he felt at peace. “I am the luckiest man in the world.”

“Oh?”

“To love and be loved by the most beautiful woman in the world I would say that I am the luckiest of men. Are you ready for dinner?”

“No.”

“Oh?”

Turning around in his arms, Alexandra kissed him and smiled. “Now I am ready.”

“You had to kiss me first?”

“Are you objecting?”

“Not at all.” Reinhard laughed and offered an arm. “Why are you blushing?”

“I love to hear you laugh and see you smile.”

“Oh?”

“I’m silly.”

“No. Not at all. How can I call the woman I love silly when she wants me to be happy?”

When they walked into the restaurant people took notice for various reasons. Mostly because it would have been virtually impossible to not have noticed them. They were a couple that was very much in love. And it showed.

In the heels, Alexandra was slightly taller than Reinhard. She left her hair down. Those long ebony tresses were styled in the way of the elite Hollywood actresses. Alexandra was not one for makeup. Her alabaster skin was on display as it was. So she merely complemented her look with dark red lips and long lashes.

Reinhard was the perfect picture of masculine fitness. The cut of the tux showed his impressive and well maintained physique. They looked exotic together with his blond good looks and Alexandra’s darker ones.

People whispered to each other as they walked past, wondering if perhaps the couple was from
Hollywood fame or even royalty. Reinhard’s hand rested in the center of her bare back as they walked through the restaurant. His thumb stroked against her spine.

It was obvious that he not only loved but cherished the woman at his side. From the way she looked at him, it was easy to tell she felt the same way. Red lips were slightly parted. While not overt, it was a mere glimpse of something so very sexual to the other guests.

Reinhard had ordered their meal while Alexandra was getting ready in the room earlier. He was very specific about nothing containing meat or animal products. The meal, while simple, was delicious.

They were enjoying an after dinner drink with each other when a band began to play.

“Schatzi, may I have this dance?”

“But of course.”

They danced the night away. Barely even taking a break between songs.

“May I cut in?” A handsome gentleman asked Reinhard.

“No.” Alexandra was the one that answered. “You may not.” She looked into Reinhard’s eyes with a smile.

“Breaking hearts in every country.” He whispered in her ear.

The fact she was the one that turned the other man down spoke volumes to Reinhard. His large hand rested on her bare back. It made him close his eyes briefly and inhale deeply. This was what they were supposed to be. They were supposed to be together. Reinhard knew it in his heart and soul.

“Careful there….” She teased.

They rarely sat a song out. Reinhard’s heart soared just looking at his Schatzi’s smiling face. She was happy. He was happy. And they were hopelessly in love. It was long after midnight when the band announced they would do one last song.

I’m in the Mood for Love.

Reinhard held Alexandra in his arms while the rich baritone sang in the background. They swayed to the music together. Alexandra hadn’t heard the song being sung by a man before. There was something about the voice that made her ache desperately for her beloved.

She didn’t realize that they were the only dancers left on the floor. Alexandra pressed her lips to Reinhard’s with a smile.

“I love you.”

“I love you too my Schatzi. I want to spend the rest of my life loving you.” Reinhard dropped down to one knee. Looking up at her, he smiled and kissed the back of her hand. “Alexandra Elisabeth Kettler, will you marry me?”

There was a delay in her reaction. Alexandra stared at Reinhard, not comprehending at first. Finally, she nodded and smiled as she stared at him. Her cheeks were pink and the look of unadulterated happiness was obvious. “Yes. I would be honored to be your wife.”
Reinhard slid the ring on to her finger. He didn’t get her a traditional band. Instead, he slid the diamond ring on to her left ring finger. The applause from the band, staff, and other guests made Alexandra turn a bright shade of red. She had forgotten that there were others around them.

“You are a cad.” She whispered softly in his ear.

“Did it make you happy?”

“Yes.”

“Then that is all that matters.”

He offered an arm. “Shall we?”

“But of course.”

“You will be lucky if I do not rip that dress off of you before we get back to the room.” He whispered.

“Oh?” Alexandra took a step back. Her bottom pressed against the front of his trousers while her strong hands grabbed on to Reinhard’s hips. They were alone in the elevator and she didn’t try to hide what she was doing at all. Firm little bottom rubbed against him. Alexandra gave a little grin when she felt him hard against her.

“Schatzi………” He was warning her.

“Yes my love?”

“I am going to turn you over my knee.”

“Promise?”

“I believe that was to be more of a threat you naughty girl.”

“Naughty?” Alexandra batted her eyelashes.

He was just about to yank the skirt up when the door opened to the floor of their suite.

“Coming darling?” She cast a look over her shoulder and smiled so very innocently.

Reinhard smirked.

There was no time for niceties. The door was quickly closed behind him and Reinhard shoved Alexandra up against a chair. The skirt of her dress and crinolines were pulled up while he pulled himself free. She whimpered when he shoved his cock in her. She had forgotten how large he was.

“Reinhard!” Alexandra gasped.

Pain and pleasure collided so deeply it made Alexandra dizzy. She yielded to the tremor of pleasure that raced up her spine. His hands cupped over her breasts and shoved the neckline of her dress down. He rolled her hard nipples between his fingers.

His breath was warm on the shell of her ear. “Is that what you want Schatzi? Is it?” He drove into her harder and faster, making her gasp.

Her body clenched around him. Alexandra bit down on her lip so hard that blood was drawn.
Crimson trails fell across her swollen lip as she cried out for him. Turning her head, Reinhard kissed her brutally. He tasted the blood. He tasted how she yearned for him. The soft gasps that slipped past her lips were one of the most erotic things Reinhard ever heard.

“You are mine Alexandra. You are all mine. There will never be another for me. You and only you.”

It took him mere minutes to coax an orgasm from her. The powerful rush caught Alex off guard just enough that he grabbed her around the waist to keep her knees from buckling. His own orgasm followed quickly.

Alexandra lay across the back of the chair. She barely wished to pick her head up. Spent, she smiled at the man she fell in love with. Reinhard swept her up and into his arms. He carried her to their hotel bed and gently placed her upon it. He slowly helped her undress. He stared at her as he began to undress himself.

“You best not be leaving me.” She smiled lazily up at him.

“I could never leave you Schatzi. You are my love and you are my life.”

Reinhard climbed into bed with her, all the while smiling. Alexandra wasted no time before sliding on top of him. She kissed his throat. She found his lips, only to kiss them as well. She savored every bit of him. Back curved, she kissed her fiancée again and again. When Reinhard playfully nipped at her lower lip he couldn’t help but smile at the happiness he found with her.

“I meant what I said. You are mine Alexandra. You are mine until we no longer inhabit this world and then you will be mine for eternity.”

“Hmph. Silly man. How do you figure this? You, my love, are mine and only mine.”

“You wish to fight about this?” His brow arched upwards playfully.

“Of course.” She gave him a smug look.

Reinhard grabbed her quickly and pulled Alexandra down to the mattress. She squealed happily with laughter when he started to tickle her sides. Rolling back on top of him, she kissed his full mouth. They pulled back briefly from each other with a look of surprise on each of their faces. They were both ready for each other again.

Alex’s voice was a wicked rasp. “Don’t you dare stop!”

“What do you want? I want to hear it for myself.” His hands squeezed her bottom, kneading the flesh there. Flashing a grin, he forced two fingers inside of her. Her body clenched tightly around the digits.

“My Schatzi is a greedy one. Tell me Alexandra. What is it that you want?”

“You. I need you.”

He couldn’t have been gentle if he tried. Her soft cries spurred him on further. He pulled his fingers out and licked the wetness off of them. Hard again already. He gave her a smile like none other. Thrusting into his bride to be, he was delirious riding the wave of unadulterated lust with her. Bare feet pressed into his ass and he claimed her over and over again.

Reinhard shivered when her nails dug into his back. “Harder Alexandra! HARDER!” Her nails
drew blood. He bit her collarbone. Once. Twice. Three times. Lips found her nipples and he sucked upon the hardened peaks. He devoured her like nothing ever before. When she hit her peak, beautiful blue eyes went wide and then wider. Her soft sweet voice sang out to him when wave after wave of her orgasm pummeled through.

He rode that wave. With the lust he had for her sated, he collapsed over her. Reinhard wound his hand through her long hair and kissed her with all the love he had. She returned the kiss in kind.

Out of nowhere he started to laugh and laugh hard.

“Great. I’m in bed with a lunatic.” She was out of breath but still managed to smack him playfully in the chest with a pillow.

Looking at her, he laughed even harder.

“What pray tell is my fiancée laughing about?”

“You makeup looks like you just played some sport!”

Now she started laughing.

“Given I did! I worked hard for this look.”

“Mein Schatzi, there will never be a woman that comes close to you.” He smiled broadly.

“I’m not sure if you should be happy or frightened by that thought.”

“A little bit of both.” He kissed her nose.

“Mr. SmartyPants!”

“Shouldn’t I be wearing pants to be a SmartyPants?”

“You make a fine argument there Herr Heydrich.”

“I know.”

Peeking up at him, she shook her head and smiled. Then she hit Reinhard with a pillow.

“You are a smug Beast. At least you are my smug Beast.”

“Til’ death do us part Schatzi.”

“No.”

“No?”

“For forever and one day longer.”
Chapter 34

Alexandra was laying on her belly in the middle of the bed. She was in a state of lulled comfort when she noticed Reinhard’s expression. Stroking his bare thigh, she smiled.

“What?” She looked up at him.

“Nothing much.”

“My dearest love, I don’t believe that for a second.”

“Are you, m’lady, calling me a scoundrel?” Reinhard tried to look as if his feelings had been crushed.

She started to giggle. And the giggle grew into something a bit louder. And still it grew. Alexandra no longer could stop the laughter. Trying to control herself, she drew her legs up to her chest and wrapped her arms around her shins. Reinhard started to laugh now and swatted at her backside.

“You look like a rollassel when you do that.”

“A what?!” She had no idea what he was talking about.

“The bug!”

“What bug?”

“You know what it is. If you touch it? It curls itself into a ball.”

“I have no idea what you would call it in German.”

“Well what do you call such a thing in English?”

“Doodlebug or a roly-poly.”

“Americans are strange.” He waved her off playfully.

Alexandra began to snicker. Which made everything worse. Pretty soon they were both laughing at each other.

“Germans are bizarre!”

“Ha! We don’t call things doodlesbug! And. And. AND you are German too!”

“Doodlebug. Not doodlesbug.”

“I’ll show you a doodlebug!” He pulled her to him.

Curled up in his arms, Alexandra was the picture of happiness.

“You look so happy Schatzi.”

“That’s because I am.”

“Good. That is my intention. I want you to be the happiest woman in the world.”
“You have succeeded in your mission then Obergruppenführer. I’ll be right back. I want a drink.”

“Liebling, I have to admit I do like to watch you walk away from me.” He grinned wolfishly when she looked back at him. “But only if you come back to me.”

“You are a naughty one Herr Heydrich.” She handed him a glass.

“Well you do have a very nice arse, doodlebug.”

“You are not turning that into my nickname!”

“Want to bet doodlebug?”

She glared at him. Which made Reinhard laugh.

“My kitten is getting her claws.”

“Don’t forget your kitten has teeth.” She nipped his bare chest.

“How could I forget such a thing?”

“I am not sure. But dear lord Reinhard you are the sexiest man to ever grace this earth.”

“You want to tease me? I see how it will be.”

“Oh no. You have the best looking arse of any man I have ever seen.”

“Schatzi?”

“Hmm?”

“With your limited experience, just how many arses have you seen?”

“I’m a physician! I have seen more butts, bottoms, and arses than I care to count!”

“Likely story!” This time he had to bite down on his lip to not laugh.

“You, my darling husband-to-be, are silly.”

“I am unable to refute this claim that you have made.”

“Good!”

“Doodlebug.” He grinned cheekily at her. “Lay down with me, Schatzi?”

“May I lay down on you?”

“Of course.”

Alexandra pushed him back on to the bed. Sliding upwards, she rested her cheek upon his chest. Cradling her gently in his arms, Reinhard smiled. He could think of no place he would rather be than holding her just like this. He wanted for nothing, it was true. Reinhard knew he had everything with her. He was willing to die for the woman he held to his chest. He was willing to kill for her as well.

“Alexandra?”
“Hmmm?” she pressed her soft lips to his throat and left kisses there to linger.

“Never leave me.”

“Why would I leave you?”

“I would not be able to survive if you left me. I wouldn’t want to.”

“I’m not going anywhere. My place is with you. You know you are more than my husband-to-be? You are my partner, my lover, my dearest friend. You are the reason I am able to crawl out of bed each morning and welcome a new day. I never wish to be without you. Ever.”

“I will be right back.” He rose from the bed and walked away.

With a grin. Alexandra whistled at his backside. She smiled happily when she heard his laughter.

Laying her head down on his pillow, she smiled. The scent of him was comforting. The warmth of his cologne lingered on the pillowcase and she sighed softly, content. When Reinhard came back, he watched her for a moment or two. Alexandra was asleep. Curled up comfortably in the center of the bed, she looked blissful. He knew that she rested easily because of him. That made Reinhard smile even more broadly.

He eased on to the bed gently, so as not to wake her. There was part of him that wanted to wake her. He wanted to make love to her again. Reinhard wanted to touch her soft skin and stroke her body with the tenderest of touches. He wanted to feel her soft lips press kisses against his body. Already, just thinking about her in such a way, he was erect.

Nothing was helping diminish his erection and it was getting slightly painful. He was going to take matters in his own hands, so to speak, in the other room. Unfortunately, rising from the bed proved painful.

Praying she didn’t wake up and see him, he tried to be quiet while stroking himself.

Reinhard didn’t realize she had woken up. Alexandra was watching him stroke himself. Reinhard tipped his head back. She heard his breath quicken as the strokes came faster. She was trying to figure out a way to intrude and not embarrass him.

Not wishing to startle him, Alexandra moved slowly. Her hand wrapped around his and she squeezed. The motion was unexpected and it was enough that he hit his head against the headboard. Moving between his thighs her lips brushed across the tip of his cock. Slick with his arousal, she licked the tip.

Mmmmmmm. A sound of pleasure vibrated from her lips. Her lips were soft as she pressed kisses to him. From there, she took him between her lips. Reinhard’s hand found the back of her hair and he held on tight. Forcing himself deeper into her throat, she took him without complaint. Her sweet cries of pleasure made him want more.

Swinging around behind her, his body laid over her’s.

“Alexandra, I need you. I need you now.”

She raised up to press against his hardness. Already she was ready for him, he could feel it. “I’m yours Reinhard. Anything of me that you want, is yours.”

“I don’t want to hurt you.”
“Mmm. My beloved, trust in me. You won’t. You know I want you. You can feel it, can’t you?”

“Yes Schatzi. I can. Dear god. How are you always ready for me?”

“Because I always want you. Always. Take me Reinhard. Take me my love. I want you. God do I want you.”

He mounted her from behind. His hands gripped her hips. Slowly, he started to slide into her and then retreated. “Harder my love. Please, harder.” She could feel his reluctance. “Please. Oh please take me harder.” She pleaded with him. Unable to deny her anything, he did. She inhaled sharply and her whole body trembled before him.

Her hips arched, thrusting upwards to meet him. Reinhard glowed with her wanton ways. He pinned her down on the mattress. Alexandra met him thrust for thrust. Pulling out, he pressed the head of his cock against her arse. Unable to help it, she yelped softly in pain. The yelp made Reinhard stop what he was doing, afraid he was hurting her too much.

“Reinhard don’t you dare stop! Please!! Don’t. Don’t stop. Please. Continue. Please for the love of god please keep going.” Alexandra begged.

He pressed slowly into her further. Alexandra groaned and then she thrust back, taking him deeper. It caused another yelp of pain from her. Fully inside of her, Reinhard took control of them both. This time he began thrusting deeper.

Now her cries weren’t of pain. Sweet cries urged him on and begged for more. God have mercy! She felt so good! She felt so right!

“Do not hold back Reinhard! Harder! Please!”

She begged him for more. He growled lowly against the curve of her neck. One hand tormented her breast in a deliciously cruel fashion. Licking her lips she whimpered his name with such a yearning, Reinhard himself felt that he would break her in two. Sliding his hand underneath her, his fingers slid inside of her wetness. Within seconds of him doing such, she came and came hard. He pulled his hand back out and grabbed her hips tight. She was so wet. So very wet and it was all for him. Reinhard roared as he came and came hard.

Panting, it took him a bit to catch his breath. He was still inside of her.

“I didn’t hurt you did I?” His voice was soft as he kissed her silken skin.

“Only in the ways I enjoy.”

Laying over her, he smiled. “Not only do you make a lovely blanket but also a comfortable bed.”

He pulled free and laid down on his back. Looking up, he saw her adoring face smiling happily at him.

“Schatzi, you look like a cat that has gotten into the cream.”

“What do you mean look like? I just got plenty of cream.” She smirked.

“Whatever will I do with you?”

“That depends.”

“Oh?”
“We have had this conversation before. How would you like this information? Are you looking for suggestions? Perhaps a detailed list? Report? Actions? Or do you just wish to fuck me again to hear me call out your name?”

He chuckled and kissed the tip of her nose. “Sometimes it is more fun tormenting you. Right now I just wish to lay here and relax with you. What are you thinking about for tomorrow?”

“I’m not leaving you that’s for bloody certain.”

“I didn’t mean it that way. But I am glad to know this.”

“There is always Germany but we have other options. We could go to the US or England. I think Canada may be a better bet for us, truthfully.”

“Why Canada?”

“Quebec is French speaking. We both speak French so that is a bonus. Plus there are some outstanding conservatories in Quebec. With their laws it is highly unlikely that you would face any problems.”

“Ahh that’s my girl, brilliant and beautiful.”

“Flattery Herr Heydrich, flattery.”

“You never cease to amaze me.”

“You need to get out more then.” Alexandra winked at him. “Reinhard, I love you. I love you with all of my heart and soul. Never forget that, please. I will be by your side and do everything I can to make you happy.”

“Why?”

“Because that is what makes me happy.”

“I am not used to this.”

“Get used to it.” She giggled.

Alexandra and Reinhard returned to Germany together the following day. In just a month they would marry. He would have married her the following day if it could have been arranged. Granted it could have been arranged. He wanted his brother there as his witness. Heinz was somewhere on the front lines but he would be returning to Berlin in less than 4 weeks.

After that, Reinhard was hoping on leaving the Reich to be with his beloved.
Alexandra and Reinhard changed a good many things on her small home the first two weeks after returning from Switzerland. What had been her home now became their home. The rooms of the house were switched around. What was her bedroom was now his office, for example. They even repainted all of the rooms. They would be selling the house but it was also done for their comfort.

“Schatzi?” The house was quiet.

“I’m in the kitchen.” She sang out cheerfully.

The first day he returned to work, Reinhard walked in to their home unannounced. He had scared Alexandra so badly that she panicked. They decided it would be better if he would announce his presence when coming home for the time being.

“Good evening my beautiful girl.” He kissed her right behind her ear. “It smells wonderful in here. What are you making?”

“I wanted to show you something from my home, so you are getting what is similar to schnitzel but Texas style. They call it chicken fried steak.”

“Do you need any help?” When did he ever ask that before in the kitchen?

“No, not at all. Get comfortable, sit down and talk to me?”

“What are you going to have?”

Alexandra chuckled. “Not to worry, I have made myself plenty to eat.”

Reinhard enjoyed the ‘Texas schnitzel’ as he called it.

They worked together in cleaning up the kitchen, not that there was much to do. Alexandra was fastidious and cleaned as she cooked. After dinner they sat down talk about each other’s day.

Reinhard was working to undo some of the damage he had done. He had started to do that after he left the villa, although he had never told Alexandra that.

“I need you tomorrow Schatzi.”

“Just tomorrow?” She teased.

“Silly girl.” He kissed her nose. “No, I need you always. Tomorrow I need you to go to a function with me. I’ll be with you the whole time. If for some reason I am called to a meeting, Klein will be there with you.”

Biting her lip, she nodded.

“Soon, we will be away from all of this.”

“I know.”

“Good.”

“What time? What do I need to wear?”
“We shall leave here at 7. Formal. I will be in dress uniform.”

“Oh I have to dress up and I don’t get to see you in a tuxedo? This may cause a munity! Munity I say!”

“I’ll make it up to you.” He smiled.

“Oh! I do like the sound of this. Do you wish for a proper girl or a vixen?”

“I cannot have both?”

“Greedy Beast!”

“I believe you have known that for a while when it comes to you Schatzi.”

“You aren’t wrong.” She smiled.

“What would you like to do this evening?”

“How about you take me to bed?”

“Are you tired already?”

“No. I am hoping you will wear me out.”

Reinhard woke up before Alexandra, which was out of the ordinary. All of a sudden he realized that he was happy. It was an odd feeling for him. Alexandra was curled up against his chest. They were facing each other on their sides. He didn’t move. He didn’t want to wake her. Thought drifted as he laid in bed with her. He would be turning 39 on Sunday. He hadn’t even been with her a year yet and this was the happiest he had ever been.

He was concerned about the function that evening. Reinhard was not expecting it to be a good time. This would be the first time that Alexandra would be attending anything with him. The next time she attended anything with him, it would be as his wife. He and Lina’s divorce was final nearly six months ago but that mattered little. The introduction of another woman was always difficult. It was even more so with a woman such as Alexandra.

His fiancéé was waking. Alexandra rubbed her nose lightly against the sparse hairs on his chest with a smile. Looking up, she was greeted with the same. Stretching, she slid her arms around Reinhard’s broad shoulders and kissed him.

There were no words between them as the kiss turned into more. It wasn’t until their pleasures had been sated, for now, that actual words were uttered.

“And a very good morning to you my Beast.”

Reinhard growled playfully in her ear before finally pulling away.

“Hey now. What if I wasn’t done with you?” She pulled him back for another kiss.

“It is a good thing that I have some self-discipline, Schatzi.”

“Oh?”

“I would never leave the bed otherwise.” He smiled and kissed her once more.
Laughing she planted a kiss on his bare backside before grabbing her dressing gown. He would get ready while she prepared breakfast.

He was getting ready to leave when Reinhard paused. “My darling girl, tonight will most likely be painful for you. You will be compared to Lina, I am sure.”

“How?”

“The other wives.”

“Not to worry. I have dealt with this before.”

“My father, mother, eldest brother, and I had gone to a medical convention. It was the first one I had gone to as a doctor. Someone saw me kiss my father’s cheek. Somehow this started a very nasty rumor. The word got around that he left my mother for me. Mom figured out what was going on. So she and I played it up, not telling my father. We were even staging mock fights between the two of us. Finally my mother is the last speaker at this convention, she introduces her children. Myself and Eugene. Alexander was still in med school. The audience was stunned to say the least.”

Reinhard stared at her with wide eyes.

“What?”

“Your family.”

“What about them?” She was confused.

“They are all as stubborn AND ornery as you are.”

Alexandra laughed. “Yes, they are.”

“Do not tell Klaus and the others this. I don’t need you breaking my men again.”

“Are there any rules I should follow?”

“Standard etiquette is fine. Address anyone you have met before by their titles is all.”

“Such as? I am not really familiar with the ranks.”

“Don’t worry about ranks except for Himmler and Goebbels. I believe Kaltenbrunner will be there tonight. You would refer to him as Dr. Kaltenbrunner. He will do the same for you.”

“The joys of politics?”

“Yes.” He chuckled.

“I love you my Lion.”

“I love you too my Schatzi. I shall see you tonight.”

After getting dressed, Reinhard hadn’t seen Alexandra appear yet. He had talked to her through a door while she was getting ready but that was it.
“Schatzi? Are you ready?”

“Of course.” Her voice was a husky whisper from behind him. Reinhard whirled around in surprise. The moment he saw her, he was stunned.

Her long jet hair was left down. She had styled it in big looping curls and waves. Upper lids lined in black accented her cerulean blue eyes. Thick lashes fluttered ever so slightly as she smiled.

The dress was a beautiful silvery grey silk chiffon. You didn’t notice the chiffon at first, the fine beaded crystals stole the show. The bodice and waist were tucked to show off her figure but it didn’t look tight. No, Alexandra looked sleek. The beading was perfect. It was a touch of glamour to the already glamorous woman.

The only jewelry she wore was what he had given her. Reinhard’s lip curved upwards. His girl wasn’t a girl in that dress, she was a stunning woman instead.

“I need to call Dieter and Klaus.”

Immediately she was alarmed. “Is something wrong?”

“Looking like that? You will need your own protection detail.”

Alexandra’s dark red lips parted with a laugh. “Silly Beast.”

“How can you be fully dressed and look so erotic.”

She leaned in and whispered in his ear. “Because you know that later I will be on my knees begging for you.”

Reinhard growled lowly. “I want to ruin that pretty lipsticks of yours.”

“You will. Later.”

It was Johannes Klein that drove them, of course. Other than greeting him warmly, Alexandra didn’t say anything else. She understood that he was working.

While it was Klein that opened Alexandra’s door, it was Reinhard that helped her out. He jerked her to him hard. The sun was just setting when they turned to look at it.

“I love you Alexandra. This might be complicated and difficult but no matter. You and only you are mine. Just as I belong to you.” He kissed her with sweet tender affections.

Once again, Alexandra and Reinhard made an entrance. They were a stunning couple, especially dressed as they were. Alexandra topped 6’4 in her heels, making her taller than Reinhard. Yet, she looked so delicate next to his more brawny physique.

It was a whirlwind for her. The sheer number of people she was introduced to was daunting. Everywhere the official photographers for the Reich were snapping pictures.

“Ernst.” Reinhard shook hands with the big Austrian.

“Dr. Kaltenbrunner.” Alexandra smiled warmly. “It is a pleasure to see you again.”

“Dr. Kettler, this is my Gisela. Gisela this young lady is Dr. Alexandra Kettler.”

“Please call me Alexandra, both of you.”
“Only if you will call me Ernst.”

“Of course.”

“It is a pleasure to meet you Gisela.”

“The pleasure is mine. I cannot place your accent.”

Smiling, she looked down briefly. “I get that quite often. I’m American.”

“Oh.” Her eyes went wide.

“I’ve also gotten that reaction quite a bit.” Alexandra was amused.

“What is an American doing at a gala such as this?” Gisela asked.

Alexandra laughed softly. “It all started because someone got horribly lost and luckily found.” Her gaze turned to her fiancée.

Reinhard smiled and kissed the back of her hand.

“Walter.” Reinhard nodded.

Alexandra turned to the next person. It was one of Reinhard’s subordinates. The man did not seem to recognize her.

“I remember you.” Her voice was soft. “You were the second man that interviewed me after I performed surgery in Prague.”

There was the barest flicker in the man’s eye. He knew immediately he had made a faux pas. “Yes. Walter Schellenberg, at your service Dr. Kettler.”

“Second man?” Reinhard raised a brow.

“I angered the first one after he slapped me a couple of times.”

“Who slapped you Alexandra?”

“No idea, I never got a name.”

“Schellenberg?” Reinhard stared at the man.

“I will find out for you Obergruppenführer. I am not certain at the moment.”

“I want to know by morning.” Turning to Alexandra his countenance changed completely. He led her away from prying eyes. There was a gentleness to his eyes. A softness in the way he smiled. When he gazed upon his love, he was not the same man. “Were you hurt?”

“No. It was fairly minor but annoying. I recall asking the man if he was the Admiral of the Swiss Navy.”

Reinhard had to force himself to keep a straight face. He had heard the phrase before. It was used on self-important little men. “You didn’t?”

“Of course I did.” She laughed.

“Ach. Whatever will I do with you?”
She whispered in his ear a suggestion.

“Naughty girl.” He smiled broadly.

“You are the one who asked.” They walked back towards the others.

“You still are naughty. I will be back shortly.” He kissed her temple.

“You are fine Reinhard.” Although that wasn’t entirely the truth. Alexandra felt like she was surrounded by predators and everyone wanted to try and take a bite out of her.

After getting herself a drink, she turned her gaze to the elite party goers.

“You look uncomfortable Alexandra.”

She turned. It was Ernst Kaltenbrunner. “Maybe a little? I am certainly out of place being the lone American here.” Oh and Jew. Let’s not forget that Jewish part.

“To be fair, you are making a fair number of others uncomfortable.”

“What?” She was surprised.

“Yes.”

“I hope you aren’t uncomfortable with me?”

“No. I’m not.”

“Good.” She smiled.

Kaltenbrunner looked to the American. She was a beautiful and brilliant woman. He could admit somewhere inside of him, that he enjoyed her company greatly. He didn’t think of her in romantic terms, no. He thought of her as someone he could be friendly with, if not an actual friend. Could men and women be friends? For the life of him, Kaltenbrunner couldn’t see why not. That isn’t to say that he didn’t still envy Heydrich.

“Why am I making people uncomfortable? Besides I am a woman with Obergruppenführer Heydrich and an American?”

“There needs to be more?”

Alexandra laughed. “You raise a fair point Ernst. But there is more, isn’t there?”

“Your name is on the lips of many people currently and not a one knows what to make of you.”

“Outside of the operating theatre, what you see is what you get I’m afraid.”

“What about inside the operating theatre?”

“There you will find a woman that could make drunken sailors blush with her language.”

Something changed. She could feel it. There was a different ripple in the air.

“Ernst? What’s going on?”

“I believe the Führer has arrived.”
“Oh.”

Alexandra followed along with what the other women did for the most part. She did not raise her hand in salute. She would rather die.

There was a light touch to the back of her arm. Turning slightly, Alexandra relaxed some. It was Johannes Klein.

“Well something wrong Hans?”

“Not at all Dr. Kettler. Your presence has been requested by the Obergruppenführer.”

“Well.” She touched Kaltenbrunner’s wrist. “Pardon me Ernst, I have been called away.”

Nodding to the now present Gisela, Alexandra followed Hans.

Hans had to argue with the doorman briefly before he would allow the admittance of Alexandra. Once the man realized she was associated with Heydrich, there was no longer a problem. The door opened to a large and opulent ballroom.

Reinhard stood taller than the others, it was easy for Alexandra to spot him across the way. When he spotted her, he lit up with a smile. The small grouping of men included Heinrich Himmler, Josef Goebbels, and Albert Speer.

It was obvious she only had eyes for the tall, blond man. Her blue eyes sparkled with delight seeing him turn towards her and smile. The three men beside him took notice of Alexandra immediately. They each saw the way she returned his smile.

“Mein Schatzi.” He smiled further when his lips touched the back of her slender hand

Alexandra blushed beautifully. If any of the men had a question of where her loyalties lay, it was obvious that it was with the Butcher of Prague.

“Well everything alright?” She queried.

“Well. The Reichsführer and Dr. Goebbels?”

“Yes. Good evening gentlemen.”

Both of the men greeted her before returning to their conversation. Neither Himmler nor Goebbels was interested in Alexandra. Heydrich laid his claim on her and they weren’t THAT foolish.

“Well Albert, this is my fiancée Dr. Alexandra Kettler. Alexandra, permit me to introduce you to Albert Speer. He is the Minister of Armaments and War Production.”

“A pleasure Herr Speer.” I am going to give myself an ulcer, I swear.

“Well what is it you are a doctor of my dear?”

“Medicine.” She smiled softly.

“Alexandra is the surgeon that saved my life.”

“Ah. I have heard of you Dr. Kettler. You are revolutionizing medicine all on your own.” Speer smiled warmly.

“I believe someone is telling you tall tales Herr Speer.”
“Where is it that you are you from?”

“United States. Texas to be more precise.”

“Really? Your German is better than mine.”

Alexandra laughed merrily. Or at least it sounded that way. “My grandparents, are all German. I come from a family of surgeons and doctors. My grandfathers were offered positions at prominent universities in the United States. Needless to say, I grew up speaking it at home.”

The sound of the crowd made everyone aware that the Führer had finished speaking.

With the flashes of cameras going off everywhere and the men that followed, Alexandra took the opportunity to duck out of sight behind Reinhard. While she was nearly as tall as he was, she was able to hide behind him easily. Reinhard moved her to the front of him effortlessly.

Once more, Alexandra felt the bite of fear and revulsion.

While the others all greeted the dictator, she stayed quiet. It cast her in a demure light. Alexandra didn’t realize it made her look even more like the model of a perfect German woman. The dress she wore was actually quite modest in the fact she showed no skin save for her lower arms from the neck down.

“Chancellor, it is a pleasure to see you again. I hope you and Blondi are doing well.”

The murderer of millions, laughed. “Thank you, Dr. Kettler. We are both doing fine. I hear that congratulations are in order and that you just have celebrated a birthday.”

“Yes, I did. Thank you, Sir.” Thank god I didn’t eat. He would be wearing it.

“Heydrich, congratulations to you as well. Take good care of this young lady.”

“I plan to mein Führer. I am a very lucky man.”

“Dr. Kettler, take a short walk with me.” Adolf Hitler offered his arm.

Having no other choice, she took it. She walked with the man down a long opulent hallway for a couple of moments before he began to speak.

“My apologies Dr. Kettler, I did not wish to take you away from your fiancée. I merely had a couple of medical questions for you.”

“Of course, what might I do for you Chancellor?”

“My own physician is ill and I was wondering if you might be of assistance. Dr. Morrell normally gives me Doktor Koster's Anti-gas pills but they are no longer working. Could you recommend something different?”

Alexandra was fairly certain that her heart stopped beating in that moment.

In the small clutch she carried, Alexandra removed pen and paper. She wrote the information down as she spoke. “Normally I do not use medications for gas. First, it is very normal to have gas. Everyone does. Most people pass gas somewhere up to 21 times a day Sir.”

She spoke gently to the cruel dictator. That was mostly for herself and not for him. Keeping the moderated tone kept her looking at ease. “But, if you need immediate relief, this will help you.”
Alexandra wrote out what was essentially oral calcium carbonate, or an antacid. “I would advise that you drink a cup of strong peppermint tea after each meal or snack only a teaspoon of sugar if you must. And a cup of chamomile tea before retiring to sleep again only a teaspoon of sugar.” She wrote that down as well. “Do you have someone you would like me to give this to?” She tapped the slip of paper.

“I shall take it.” He took the slip and placed it in his inner pocket. “Thank you Dr. Kettler. Do you think this will help me?”

“I believe so Chancellor. There are other things we may try if you prefer but this is the best for your overall health.”

“I best get you back to your fiancée. I don’t want Heydrich to believe I ran off with you.” He smiled warmly.

Alexandra smiled and laughed while inside her own stomach was in knots. She would have taken the damn antacid herself, if she had any. Was marrying the man she loved worth this? Would they both be able to escape the trappings of Germany? She didn’t know. Nor was Alexandra sure she had the stamina to find out.
“Sir, may I be bold and make a suggestion?”

“Will I like this suggestion?”

“Doubtful Chancellor, but it could be helpful. Our bodies react to everything we do. What we put in them is just as important as what we are around. I am positive that you have a lot of stressors in your life that will be there no matter. I do, however, suggestion changing your diet somewhat to something that would be more sustainable to a vegetarian diet.”

“Oh?”

“You can eat as a vegetarian but if you are not getting the proper nutrients needed, it won’t help. For example, if you ate nothing but potatoes you are still following a vegetarian diet but it does not give your body proper fuel to work. You would end up very ill as a matter of fact.”

Alexandra wanted to hack off her own head but having seen what the man was taking perhaps it could make a difference for him to be less drugged. Was it possible to end some of the horrors of war through medical means?

Adolf Hitler stared for a moment at the tall American doctor. “I was unsure about you when I first heard about the attempt on Heydrich’s life.” His voice was quiet.

“I believe everyone was Sir.”

“While Heydrich was recuperating in the hospital, I had no less than 15 people tell me how you treated our veterans. You know I fought in the first war?”

“I have heard it mentioned Chancellor, but I do not know any details.”

“Three of the men that spoke to me about you were men that I knew personally from the war.”

Alexandra stomach churned. She couldn’t think of anyone besides Krueger or Gebhardt she treated poorly. “I hope they spoke well of me Sir.”

“They did. They all spoke highly of you. You treated them for their physical ailments, they unburdened their hearts to you, and you showed them kindness like none other. You made sure that they had medicine, food, and a place to stay warm.” Hitler took her hand in his own and grasped it in a two handed handshake.

“Nothing that I think of to say is worthy of the accolade I wish to give you Dr. Kettler. You have my heartfelt gratitude. According to other sources, you were the only one that treated the veterans well.”

“Reinhard asked me about it once. If my father or brothers were in a same situation I would have hoped that someone would have treated them well. I was more than happy to help Sir. The men were all very gentle and gentlemen with me. They helped me learn the regional dialect. One of them, his wife tried to play matchmaker for me.”

“I am an old fashioned sort Dr. Kettler. I believe that women belong in the home. They are there to be a comfort to their husbands and families. Women are what keeps our nation as strong as it is. Still, I heard a great deal more about you while Heydrich was recuperating in the villa.”
“I wasn’t aware Chancellor.”

“I can’t imagine that you would have been. I heard how well you took care of Heydrich. You were his doctor, nurse, chef, and even therapist. You also took care of the men that were there for him.”

“I tried to, yes.” Careful Lexie, you know you are walking on something far more fragile than eggshells. Male egos? Shut it brain.

“I will not ask to what country your loyalties lie. Your loyalties are with Heydrich, even I can see that. I cannot say that is a bad thing. A married couple should be loyal to each other. I and a number of others have seen the change in him. He is a contented man, the likes none of us had seen before in him. It has been said that a contented mind is the greatest blessing a man can enjoy in this world. I am unable to recall who said it, but it is true.”

“Joseph Addison, I believe Chancellor.”

“Correct. Thank you. Dr. Kettler, you are a gifted physician. I suspect you and Heydrich will be most happy together. It is lovely to see how you both hold each other in such high regard. While most women here do not work outside the home if at all possible, you are permitted to retain your position as long as your husband allows for it. I would like for you to begin training a greater number of German schooled surgeons on a regular basis in the techniques you know. Would you mind doing so? You have my heartfelt blessing for your upcoming nuptials Dr. Kettler.”

“I would love to train others. Medicine is meant to be shared with colleagues so we may all do better at helping our ill and injured. Yes Sir. Thank you.” Allows for it? Oh For fucks sake.

“Thank you kindly, Dr. Kettler.”

Alexandra felt nauseous as she was escorted back to Reinhard by the man she saw as nothing more than a murderer. Reinhard offered his hand to her, which she readily accepted. She stood with him in a moment of stunned silence, recalling what Adolf Hitler just said to her. He gave his blessing for her and Reinhard’s marriage. Did they need it? She wasn’t sure.

The two men spoke briefly. Alexandra felt her stomach churn even further when Hitler told Reinhard what a lucky man he was to have found a woman like her. His bride-to-be would be a good German wife for him. Alexandra was a German as if she had been born in Berlin and lived here her entire life.

When the murderer of millions took his leave from them both, it took Alex a moment to see the humor in all of it. Adolf Hitler, one of the most horrible dictators of all time just wished one of his top generals to a long and happy life with a Jewish woman.

Taking a step back she felt more secure with Reinhard close. Noticing that more of the wives and mistresses of the men gathered were coming back. Alexandra whispered softly that she was going to go freshen up and would return shortly.

Alexandra was reapplying her lipstick when a voice behind her left shoulder spoke up.

“He’ll cheat on you, you know.”

She didn’t turn around, Alex looked at the woman via the mirror. The woman wasn’t unattractive but there was something in her eyes that left her looking unstable. Those the eyes told even more of the tale, this woman was bitter. Unstable and bitter were bad combinations as far as Alexandra was concerned. You never knew what they might do.
“You are most likely correct. History does have a way of repeating itself.”

“That doesn’t bother you?”

Alexandra looked thoughtful for a moment. “No.”

“What sort of woman are you?” The stranger accused.

“The practical sort. Being told by a stranger what my future husband may or may not do doesn’t have any bearing on my happiness.” She turned to the woman, facing her.

Alexandra immediately adopted a haughty tone and a steely gaze. These were practiced skills she used when someone tried to unnerve her. Normally it was used on male doctors that didn’t understand that simply because she lacked testicles it didn’t mean her’s were not bigger than their own.

“If I may take the time to explain something to you? Your statement would have much of a more solid impact if you would have befriended me. Even if it was a temporary friendship of two people at an affair that they are possibly both out of place and at the very least out their comfort zones. Instead you try to corner someone in the lavatory? Where is the splash? Where is the panache? You gave me nothing to care about. Oh boo-hoo the mean lady in the toilet said something? Please. You will have to do better next time. And yes, I am fully aware that the laws of probability favor Reinhard cheating on me. However Frau Potthast, I do keep the odds in my favor. The projection of your sorrows on to me was unnecessary.” Alexandra smirked and walked out.

It was just by luck that she knew Himmler’s mistress. Reinhard had mentioned something about the eyes of the woman once before. His detailed description had been spot on.

Alexandra returned to Reinhard’s side. With a smile he curled his arm around her waist.

“Is everything alright?” He whispered

“Mostly, yes.”

Reinhard raised an eyebrow at her.

Turning closely, she whispered in his ear. “I just really want to go home and have you ruin my makeup.”

He said nothing. He didn’t need to with the smile he wore.

“My Lion, isn’t that your brother over by the entrance?”

Although he was surprised at seeing him, Reinhard raised his hand motioning for Heinz. “You will get to meet Trude. His wife.”

It was almost immediately that Alexandra and Gertrude ‘Trude’ Heydrich bonded. The four of them were in a lively conversation when the celebrations started.

A large cake was brought out to the center of the ballroom. It was for the birthdays of the soon to be married couple. Alexandra blushed brightly at the surprise and thanked everyone. Reinhard’s the reaction was nearly the same as her’s. They, along with the Fuhrer, were given the first slices of cake. Reinhard fed his bride-to-be from his fork, making her blush even brighter. He kissed the little bit of icing off of her lips.
Most of the men in the crowd had known Reinhard for at least several years, if not much longer. Quite a few of them remarked how different he seemed to be. Some of the more crass colleagues remarked how they would be happier too with a woman like Alexandra gracing their beds.

There was a clinking of silverware against a fine crystal glass that drew the attention of everyone to the front of the room where Heinrich Himmler now stood. Alexandra watched the short and awkward man carefully. He may not look like much in her eyes but she also knew that his look was very deceptive.

“Dr. Alexandra Kettler, I would like to thank you dearly. If it was not for your services, we could very well have lost a great man. It is because of you that we gather here this evening in celebration. You stared down death yourself not once but twice that very morning in order to save the man seated next to you. You looked in the face of a man that was to be your enemy and found compassion. A short time later you found love.”

Turning slightly from Himmler’s speech, Alexandra looked at her intended. She loved him. Sitting in a room full of people that would see her dead, she knew that she loved him. Could love conquer all?

No, she knew it couldn’t.

In the room filled with people with deadly ideology, she realized that there was no way she could live like this. She could not and would not remain in Nazi Germany. The what-ifs terrified her far too deeply.

“Obergruppenführer Reinhard Heydrich, you were smiled upon that fateful day in May. Men were sent to murder you. Instead, you persevered. Not only were you given the greater gift of love, your life was changed forever by a lost woman that offered you her hand in a moment of need. My friend, my colleague, your unique abilities and pure character, your mind, your logic and clarity have helped shape what it means to be German.

As both of you celebrate the anniversary of your births, it is here where you start a different life. Today your lives start together. If you would both step forward?”

Alexandra rose with Reinhard. She could tell by the look on his face he wasn’t sure what was going on either. It was less than fifteen minutes later that Reinhard and Alexandra were pronounced husband and wife.

The next couple of hours were a whirlwind of celebration.

On their way home was when Alexandra finally got a moment to ask a question. “Did you know what was going to happen?”

“No Schatzi, I did not. I assumed it would be a birthday get together but I believe that went far beyond a get together.” Picking up her hand he looked at the ring. “It is beautiful on you.”

“How did they get the rings?”

“Himmler knew I had them in the safe at the office. He and I were the only ones that could open it.”

“Sneaky.” She chuckled.

“Are you happy Dr. Heydrich?”
“Yes Obergruppenführer Heydrich, I am.”

“I can’t wait to start our family.”

“Oh?”

“I’m not a young man Alexandra. I want our children to know me.”

“Reinhard, you aren’t even 40 yet.”

“Still, I am middle aged.”

“You are not. Remember Obergruppenführer, your wife is a physician. You have at least another sixty years, if not more.”

When they arrived at home, Hans opened the door for them. Reinhard stepped out of the car first and offered his hand to Alexandra. Before she was even fully out, he swept her off her feet.

“Put me down you Beast!” She playfully smacked his shoulder.

“No. Not a chance my wife. I must carry out the tradition in your country of carrying you over the threshold.”

Johannes Klein unlocked the door for Reinhard and immediately stepped out of the way.

“Thank you Hans!” Alexandra called out.

“Thank you Klein. If you would be so kind to lock the door? I need to take the damsel in distress back to my lair.”

“Congratulations to you both.” Klein smiled widely and locked the door as he stepped away. He was very happy for them both.

The newlyweds did not wake up until mid-afternoon the following day. Sunlight was streaming through the window when Alexandra woke. Reinhard was still sleeping soundly. Looking around the room, she pressed her hand over her mouth to stifle the laughter. It looked like a fight had occurred. Clothing was strewn everywhere, a nightstand was knocked over, and even the items normally on the dresser were askew.

They had tried to remove each other’s clothing as quickly as possible to consummate their wedding vows. The room was destroyed in the process, apparently.

Curling a smile, Alexandra slid under the blanket. She could do nothing, at first, with the warm and sultry scent of sex enveloping her. Inhaling sharply, it wasn’t just sex. The sheets were doused in the scent of love.

Wanting nothing more than to wake him blissfully, she inched towards him. A silken cheek rubbed against his thigh. From there, Alexandra worshiped at his alter.

She made him feel everything.

Reinhard tangled his hand in her hair while the other ripped the blankets off of them both. Her eyes lifted to him with the removal of the blankets. Blue eyes captured his gaze. Reinhard now watched her until he could no longer do so.

Reinhard could barely take more from her. His heart pounded in his ears as he watched his wife.
moments like these she was the most beautiful woman ever to grace this earth. Who was he kidding, she was that already.

There was something so very powerful in their coupling. She was the one in control and Alexandra made sure he knew that. She felt his feet touch her sides now. His toes were curled and his thighs tense. It wouldn’t be much longer. And it wasn’t.

“What got into you my beloved wife?”

“I was just trying to see where I left my lipstick last night.”

Reinhard chuckled lowly and drew her upwards. He kissed her lips and smiled. “Find it?”

“Oh yes.”

They spent the day being lazy together.

Alexandra was preparing dinner with the help of Reinhard. He was standing next to her chopping vegetables when he took pause. When had he ever helped in the kitchen? Had he ever helped in the kitchen prior to his Schatzi?

Turning, Alexandra took the knife from him and set it down. Smiling, she slid her arms over his shoulders. Reinhard smiled in return.

“May I help you Dr. Heydrich?”

“I just wanted a kiss, if that is alright with you Obergruppenführer?”

It started with just a kiss but they didn’t sit down for dinner until much later that evening.

The following morning when Reinhard woke up, he discovered he was alone in their bed. Stretching, he was about to get up when she walked into the bedroom carrying a large tray.

“Happy Birthday my Lion.” She set the tray down over his legs before sliding back into bed with him on the other side.

“Thank you Schatzi.” He looked at the tray in surprise.

The bread was fresh baked in their kitchen. The marmalade was homemade as well. There were several small portions of meat and cheeses for him. From the carafe, she poured them both coffee with a splash of milk each. For her there was oatmeal with fruit and nuts.

After they ate, Alexandra took the tray away. When she returned, there was an envelope in her hand. Climbing back on the bed, she didn’t give him the envelope yet.

“Around our home there are many gifts for you. You get to find those on your own.” She smiled cheekily. “This one, is your first one.” She handed him the envelope finally.

My Beloved Lion,

It’s hard to believe this is the first time we are spending you birthday together. It seems that I have always known you. Maybe we have always known, it just took us a while to see each other face to face.
So on your birthday I give you news of another birth that will happen in approximately 7 and a half months. So on this day, not only do we celebrate the anniversary of your birth but we celebrate the announcement of our first child. We will greet him or her sometime in October or early November.

Happy Birthday

Your Schatzi

Reinhard looked at the card and looked at her. He reread it once more to make sure.

“You knew this Friday night?”

“Of course.”

“H-h-how?”

“I wasn’t feeling quite right so I had some tests ran at the hospital. I am in picture perfect health and pregnant with your child.”

“Come here.” He drew her into a kiss. Placing his hand on her belly, Reinhard looked to his wife in wonderment. “I cannot think of a better birthday present.”
Sitting in her home office, Alexandra was working on materials that she would need to begin teaching the first of June. She broadened the scope past surgery. After seeing her own obstetrician and realizing she knew things that they didn’t, it was frightening.

The craziest one was about weight gain. The doctors didn’t want women to gain weight. Alexandra muttered something about horseshit while she wrote down the proper information. Pregnant women smoking cigarettes and drinking alcohol? Good god no. Don’t breastfeed? What the hell? The scariest was someone perpetuated the belief that babies and young children didn’t feel pain.

Her education in the United States was not much different than those of Germany. As a matter of fact, German physicians were considered some of the best trained in the world. This is where Alexandra was wholly different than other surgeons. She recorded everything and compared it to what she and others had found.

Even if she wasn’t preforming surgery that day, she was practicing techniques on parts of butchered animals that had flesh similar to humans. This went on until she could recreate her findings with precise accuracy again and again. From there she worked on corpses donated to medicine. She worked within the guidelines set out for her and used her findings to change procedures. Alexandra demanded one thing always. It was the consent of the patient.

The skills she learned from her chemist mother helped Alexandra tremendously. She was able to recreate so much through simple procedures in the ways of pharmaceuticals because of it. Already, she was patenting items.

The trill of an alarm sounded. It was time to put dinner in the oven. Just as she was ready to do so, the phone rang. It was Reinhard.

“Would you mind if I brought guests home for dinner?”

“How many? If you are needing something fancy on this short of notice, yes. If they can handle a simple dinner then no.”

“Five. What are we having?”

“Alfredo vegetable lasagna. I’ll add some other sides as well. It is about to go in the oven now. It will be just a little over an hour.”

“That would be perfect Schatzi. I’ll see you in less than an hour.”

She made spaghetti from her own frozen pasta and sauce that she canned herself. A prosciutto and mozzarella salad was made with spinach. Garlic bread was at the ready as well. Alexandra finished everything off with baked vegetables with balsamic and garlic.

Table was set in a flash and Alexandra went to change into a more fashionable dress.

She was walking down the hallway when she heard the door open. It was Reinhard. Alexandra being herself, she cat called him with a whistle. He turned towards her, laughing.

“What’s a nice Obergruppenführer like you doing in a place like this?” Alexandra wiggled her brows.
Reinhard laughed and opened his arms to her. She ran to him, only to wrap herself around him and kiss his lips.

“Naughty girl.” He smiled happily at his wife.

“What are our guests?”

“Our guests will be here shortly. Did you make a dessert?”

“When do I not make a dessert Herr Sweet Tooth?”

“What did you make?”

Alexandra laughed. “Luckily I made something for you to take to the office tomorrow. I made donauwelle and herrencreme.”

“You are going to make me fat!” He teased.

“No hardly.” She heard the buzzer alerting her that dinner was done. “I’ll be back out in a few.” She patted Reinhard’s arse and whistled again. “Germany’s greatest secret, Reinhard Heydrich’s fabulous arse.”

Alexandra wasn’t paying attention to the group of men in Reinhard’s study. She was busy putting everything out on the table. When she was done, she walked to the open door and rapped on it lightly.

“Gentlemen? Dinner is served.” It was then that she saw who the men were.

Klaus, Dieter, Ernst, Jürgen, and Hans beamed at their little sister. Alexandra went around to each man and gave them a hug and a kiss on the cheek.

“I cannot believe you all are here!” Alexandra turned to her husband and gave him a kiss. “Reinhard! Thank you!”

“We had a staff meeting today Schatzi. They were telling the new man about you and some of your antics. He couldn’t come this evening. I am fairly certain he is terrified of you.” He grinned.

“I swear I won’t be jumping off of buildings again, at least not for a while.” She herded the men into the large dining room.

“Alexandra, they do not know.” Reinhard whispered to her.

The conversation was lively and warm. When they were all sitting back with a bit of port or coffee, Reinhard smiled to the men gathered.

“Gentlemen, my wife asks about each of you just as you ask about her. I wanted to thank you again. Since you met Alexandra, you have been good to her and I appreciate that more than I can ever say.” He picked up Alexandra’s hand and kissed the back of it with a smile.

“I am so happy to see each of you.” Alexandra beamed at the men she considered family. “Klaus, Dieter, Ernst, Jürgen and Hans, you are my older brothers in my heart and mind. Since Reinhard didn’t tell you, I shall. Come fall, you will all be uncles. I’m considering teaching the babe to call their father Papa Obergruppenführer.” She teased with a smile.

The five men were beyond happy for their superior and their little sister. Alexandra changed their lives as much as she changed Reinhard’s. The amount of love shared in the room made even the
once cynical Reinhard smile.

It was perhaps a week after the impromptu dinner party. The mid-May morning was beautiful. Everything looked fresh and green. The birds were chirping. If she had the time, Alexandra would have sat down in the garden and sketched a few pictures.

Having cut back the hours she was working because of her pregnancy, Alexandra was off that day. The hours were to be cut further when she began to teach in a couple of weeks.

It was already a busy day. She had ran out to do some shopping as her waist was expanding some in her third month. Not even Reinhard could tell Alexandra was pregnant but she could by the way her clothing fit. When she returned home, she noticed that her husband had left his wallet on the dresser. Chuckling softly, she tossed it in her purse and retrieved the tart she had made that morning. She would drop both items off as his office.

Walking into the office, she saw that Klaus was in rather than Dieter.

“Good morning Klaus. How are you this lovely spring day?”

“Dr. Heydrich! I wasn’t expecting you today.”

“I wasn’t expecting to come in to be honest.” She grinned sheepishly. “How are you?”

“I am doing wonderfully, thank you. Hans asked his girl to marry him last evening and she said yes.”

“Oh! That is fantastic! Is Hans around today? I would love to see him before I leave.”

Checking the logs, Klaus smiled. “Yes ma’am, he is. He is away at the moment but should be back shortly.”

“Is my Reinhard in his office?”

“He’s in a meet- “

At that moment Reinhard Heydrich walked in while talking to Himmler and Kaltenbrunner.

Not expecting to see his wife, Reinhard stopped abruptly. “Schatzi, is something wrong?” He went to her quickly.

She chuckled and shook her head. “No, I was just dropping off a chocolate cherry tart for all of you.”

“Thank you Dr. Heydrich!” Dr. Kaltenbrunner grinned. He and Himmler both loved the younger woman’s baking.

“Excuse me gentlemen.” He led her back to his office.

He closed the door behind her. “You normally don’t come here unannounced. What is it Alexandra?”

Kissing his lips, she smiled. “You left your wallet at home.” Alexandra handed it to him. “You worry too much. Nothing is wrong. I saw it when I returned home from shopping so I brought it by.”

“Shopping? You hate shopping.” He was amused.
“Well, my clothes aren’t fitting very well any longer.”

He snorted with laughter. “Your stomach is flat as can be.”

“It won’t be for long.”

“If I didn’t have another meeting today I would come home with you.”

“Is something wrong?”

“Wrong? No. Tedious yes. Besides what sane man wishes to be at work when his pretty wife is home waiting for him?”

Leaning up against the side of his desk, Alexandra looked thoughtful. “The fact you married me and you are calling yourself sane? Gutsy move Heydrich.”

He laughed and shook his head. “Naughty girl.” Coming over towards her, he sat down in his chair. With a gentle tug, he pulled her on to his lap. “I think we are going to have to schedule you times to come in. It seems to greatly improve my mood. I am sure that the men would appreciate that. Klaus or Dieter could schedule you in for a Wife Break.”

Shaking her head and laughing. “My Lion. You are silly.” She kissed him softly.

Alexandra slid off of his lap and walked away from him. Making sure that the door was locked, she leaned against it.

“What are you up to?”

“Nothing.”

“I know you better than that my beloved wife.”

“Hm.” She raised a brow.

The phone rang and Reinhard answered it. He turned his attention away from his wife for a moment to write something down. In a matter of seconds, her mouth was painted harlot red. He so loved to ruin her lipstick.

Alexandra walked slowly across the room, returning to him.

The pencil skirt was unzipped. She let it fall to the floor, only to step out of it. The blouse dropped. Pulling the pin out of her carefully pulled back hair, she moved closer.

Reinhard turned to say something to her and stopped. The look of utter surprise on his face made Alexandra smile happily. Long legs straddled his lap while she stood. Slowly, she tugged the tap pants she wore downward.

“Pardon me Franz, something just came up. I need to let you go.” He hung up the phone.

“Schatzi….”

Pressing her finger to his lips, she shushed him. “Be quiet Herr Heydrich. You don’t want anyone else to hear.”

Bending at the waist, she stroked her hand down the front of his trousers and ever so slowly pulled the zipper down. Reinhard arched towards her hand, unable to help himself. Already his breath quickened. Soft lips touched the shell of his ear. Alexandra told him what she wanted in a breathy
whisper. A flick of her tongue, she traced the curve of his ear.

She had begged him to use her. Abuse her. Debase her.

Alexandra’s soft voice was in his ear begging Reinhard to use her like a whore.

He both feared and loved these moments. Reinhard was always afraid of going too far with her. The fear ran even deeper now that she was carrying their child.

The scent of her perfume was spicy and heated, just like the woman wearing it. Alexandra stood in the same position wearing nothing but her heels and stockings.

Unable to help himself, he buried his nose in her short and shaven pubic hair. Reinhard inhaled sharply. His senses were alive with the scent of her own arousal. His hands gripped tight her bare bottom he tasted her. Alexandra tried to move and he growled lowly and gave her a look.

What he wanted was her and in every way imaginable.

He did as she begged earlier. He abused and debased his beautiful wife.

Reinhard pulled her down on top of him after he dropped to the floor, spent. Her slick body on his, he looked up at her with a smile. He marked her. There would be a faint bruise here and there. A suck mark graced her skin on her inner thigh and her breasts.

Their mingled pleasure was slick on her inner thighs. His pleasure was left in her thick black hair.

She would wear them home and no one would know but them. The thought of her doing that would keep him partially aroused all day.

Alexandra straightened his tie after they had gotten dressed once again.

“I will miss this.”

“Miss what my Beast?”

“You wanting me all the time.”

“You think? Oh….” Alexandra chuckled lowly. “My Lion, some women desire sex even more often while they are pregnant. It is even more common during the second trimester. The only time I don’t want you my love? It would be when your gorgeous cock is already buried in me. Even then, somewhere in the back of my mind is ready to have you again and again.”

Reinhard was completely surprised by that. He looked to his wife wordlessly. “I had no idea.”

“We might need to invest in some anti-chafing cream for you.”

He grinned wide.

“I heard that Hans asked his girl to marry him last night.”

“How do you know this before I do?” He gave her a faux grumpy look.

“I’m the little sister, I have to know these things. Can we go out and see him before I leave?”

Reinhard was unable to deny her the request and they walked out together. Seeing Hans Klein look so blissfully happy, thrilled Alexandra. She asked if he would introduce her to his bride-to-be soon,
and he promised he would.

Reinhard congratulated his driver and shook the younger man’s hand. He wished Klein all the happiness that he found with Alexandra.

Reinhard mock whispered to Klein. “Just make sure she is more obedient than this one.” He pointed to Alex. “Or at least that she won’t be jumping off buildings.” He was pleased to see his Schatzi blush brightly and kissed her on the nose.

They had a quiet night that evening after dinner. The pregnancy was making the normally vivacious Alexandra a bit more tired than usual. She was curled up against Reinhard dozing happily while he read a book.

Alexandra had her head resting on her husband’s thigh while he read. Reinhard stroked his fingers through her silken hair while he read.

“What are you reading?”

“The Hobbit by JRR Tolkien. Have you heard of it?”

“Really?” Alexandra sat up immediately. “Oh, that as one of my favorite books as a teen. I wanted Thorin to whisk me away with him. Thank goodness, I grew up. I find handsome Obergruppenführers named Reinhard Tristan Eugen Heydrich much, much, much more appealing.”

He laughed. “Do you now?”

“Would you like me to prove this to you?”

“No my girl, I don’t need proof. I know that this is true already.”

Putting the book down, he turned off the light. Reinhard gathered her in his arms and held Alexandra to him gently. Facing him, she kissed his lips.

“I love you.”

“I love you too. I love you so very much.”

“What’s wrong?” She asked, sleepily.

“What makes you think something is wrong Schatzi?”

“You’re restless.”

“I suppose I am.”

“Talk to me my Lion.”

“I’m just worried about you.”

“What about me worries you?”

“I want to get you out of here. Out of Germany that is.”

“I thought that was the plan all along?”
“Yes.” Reinhard sighed. “Alexandra, I love you. You know this, yes?”

“Of course. You know I love you as well, correct?”

“Yes. I do.” He smiled gently. “Something is off and I don’t know what it is. I don’t know if it is through Himmler or through Hitler. I need to get you out of Germany.”

“Reinhard, I am not leaving without you.”

“Schatzi, you must.”

“We have had a similar discussion before. I will come back.”

“Alexandra, I do not wish to be away from you but to keep you and our child safe, I will. You have seen the bombs going off. You have seen the people injured.”

“Which is why I need to stay!”

“Schatzi, listen to me. I beg of you, please listen. We lost Stalingrad. The Red Army will be coming. You haven’t seen what they have done to women.”

“I don’t need to see it, I lived it. Only it wasn’t a Russian it was a German.”

“Alexandra, I will get on my hands and knees if I must. You have got to go elsewhere. You can stay close. Switzerland is neutral and you can live there unscathed.”

“I am not leaving my husband behind. End of discussion.”

Reinhard sighed. “You are the most stubborn women ever.”

“Oh my beloved Beast, I am the most stubborn person ever.”
30 June 1943

“Schatzi?!”

Alexandra was caught off guard. Reinhard shouldn’t be home for several more hours. She had just been going over materials she would be using for the next few weeks. Running out of her office, she nearly collided with him.

“What’s wrong?” She looked frightened. “What happened?”

“Nothing is wrong. We are going somewhere for a few days.”

Her jet brow arched high. “What is going on?”

“We have been invited to the Fuhrer’s private estate in Bavaria, the Berghof.”

“I have to work. I can’t go.”

“It has already been taken care of Alexandra.”

“Reinhard, I don’t understand. Why do I need to go?”

“Schatzi, it is you that has been invited. I am your guest.”

“Fucking hell.”

Alexandra looked at all of their luggage in dismay. They would be leaving shortly and returning Sunday. Five days at the private retreat of Adolf Hitler was not her idea of fun. It seemed like an excessive amount of items to bring. Reinhard had explained to her they would be expected to dress for dinner every night. They would have at minimum two wardrobe changes a day and most likely more.

They were flown from Berlin to a private airstrip. From the airstrip they were brought up to the large chalet. Alexandra’s stomach was churning from the bumpy flight and the nerves of being summoned. She could blame the nausea on her pregnancy and no one would be the wiser, for that she was thankful.

They were announced and were greeted warmly by the staff. While their luggage was being brought to their set of rooms, Alexandra and Reinhard were taken to Hitler’s drawing room.

The dictator greeted Alexandra first since she was whom he sent for. Reinhard was greeted as warmly as she was. They were offered a seat and a drink immediately. The newlyweds both asked for coffee.

“You both look very happy.” Hitler smiled warmly at the pair.

“Thank you Chancellor, I am very happy.” Alexandra smiled at her husband.

“Ja mein Fuhrer. I am as well.” Reinhard kissed the back of his wife’s hand with a smile.

“I hope the last minute invitation was not an inconvenience to either of you.”
“No Sir, of course not.” Liar. Alexandra thought to herself.

“You will be parents when?”

“Somewhere in the fall, most likely around mid-October mein Fuhrer.” Reinhard beamed a smile and placed a hand on his wife’s stomach.

“Are you going to consider working after your child is born?”

“Yes and no Chancellor. I will take the rest of the year off and go back to teaching part time in January. I would like to train more doctors, nurses, and midwives. Reinhard and I had several long discussions about it.”

“I believe what Alexandra does is important mein Fuhrer. It saves the lives or improves the lives of Germans across our empire. It is her way of serving Germany.” That was a lie and Reinhard knew it. Alexandra held no loyalty to the current Germany. As a matter of fact, she detested what was going on. She did however believe that saving and improving lives was important even if she did not agree. Alexandra believed that all human lives were important, just as she had been taught. “As long as it does not interfere with our lives or the lives of our children, I see no reason for her not to continue.”

“Dr. Heydrich, I wish to thank you. What you did for me on your wedding day has helped considerably.”

“I am happy to hear that Chancellor.” Alexandra bowed her head to the dictator. She was once again the picture of a perfect German wife.

The door opened abruptly, causing a pause in the conversation. Fritz Tornow stepped into the room with Hitler’s dog Blondi. The German Shepard was let off her leash by the trainer and she stood at attention until her owner told her to come.

The dog came bounding over to her owner. She did slow down when she spotted Alexandra and kept her eyes on the American in a friendly way.

“Oh! She is as beautiful as ever!”

“Would you like to pet her Dr. Heydrich?”

“May I please?”

“But of course.” He released the dog and she immediately went to Alexandra.

“Hi pretty girl.” Alexandra ran her hands through the dog’s coat. She took time to scratch every itchy spot that could possibly be found. “You are such a good girl.”

Seeing his wife with the dog, Reinhard chuckled. He had almost started to tell the tale of Alexandra and her taking the two kittens but didn’t. That story was the day she met Buder.

Hitler smiled at the American’s obvious love of animals. “Dr. Heydrich, is it because of your love of animals you decided to become a vegetarian?”

“Yes Sir. I loathe to cause unnecessary pain or suffering to any living creature.”

“Unnecessary pain?”

“Yes Chancellor. I can use Reinhard for an example. I caused him pain in saving his life. I had no
choice if he was to live.”

“Now I understand, Dr. Heydrich. While you are here could you take a look over a few things and speak to my dietician?”

“Of course Sir, it would be my pleasure.”

It was then that Eva Braun made her appearance. Alexandra smiled warmly at the pretty woman and stood with Reinhard.

“Eva, you remember Obergruppenführer Heydrich? This is his wife Dr. Alexandra Heydrich.”

Eva Braun did indeed remember the large man. He was somewhat difficult to forget.

“Herr Heydrich it is good to see you again.” She turned to Alexandra. “Dr. Heydrich it is nice to make your acquaintance.”

“Please, feel free to call me Alexandra or Alex if you wish.” Alexandra noticed that Eva looked to Hitler for approval and he gave it with a barely perceptible nod.

“Thank you Alexandra.” Eva smiled. “Please call me Eva.”

“Thank you. Goodness, your dress is beautiful. May I ask where you found such a beautiful piece?”

When Alex sat once more, the German Sheepd climed up in the seat next to her. Blondi rested her head on Alexandra’s lap. At once she began to stroke the beautiful dog’s head.

“I’ve never seen her do that with anyone but the Fuhrer.” Eva said surprised.

“I said nearly the same when Blondi and I first met Dr. Heydrich.”

Seeing his wife’s blush, Reinhard smiled. “Alexandra has a way with animals and children. They love her.” Reinhard patted Alexandra’s hand. She had purposefully engaged Eva so that he may speak with Hitler.

While they discussed clothing, Alexandra admitted that she was finding some things difficult. “My ever expanding waistline does not help in finding good fashion.” Alexandra’s smile told a different tale. She was deliriously happy. “I have had to have a couple of things made needless to say.”

“Did you design them yourself?”

“Sort of? I gave the seamstress an idea of what I wanted and she put it together.”

“What else do you like to do Alexandra?”

“Sports. I could play or watch all day every day and never get bored!”

“Me too. What do you play?”

“Not much of anything for a few more months.” She patted her stomach with a soft laugh. “I like a little of everything. Tennis is my favorite. Probably fencing would come second. I also enjoy rowing, running, shooting sports, skiing, horseback riding, rodeo and swimming. Rodeo is very North American. It is cattle ranching skills put to contest. Although I have no idea why we do some of them.” Ha! I remembered the word finally.

“Are you going to explain the bull Schatzi? I believe our Fuhrer would be tickled by you and your
antics.”

Alexandra blushed again and had a rather sheepish expression on her face. “Eva, I’m from Texas. Just so you know. It is in some ways like the westerns that the Chancellor enjoys. More modern, of course.”

She took a sip of her coffee.

“There is a sport called bull riding. Chancellor, a bull is put into a very small pen so it cannot move and you climb onto its back. There is a rope behind his front forelegs that you hold on to. Then they release the bull out into a big arena. You only hang on with one hand and the other is up and back. If you can stay on for 8 seconds you get points if you don’t you get 0. Oh the hand that is up and back? You can’t touch anything with it, even yourself. So doing this has been called the most dangerous 8 seconds in sports. The bull will try and throw you off by bucking.”

“Surely you jest Dr. Heydrich?”

“No, Chancellor. I’m afraid to say it is a popular sport.”

“Have you done it before Alexandra?” Eva was sitting on the edge of the seat with wide eyes.

“Yes. Women cannot compete in the sport that I know of but I have done it on a dare. I told Hans Klein, Reinhard’s driver, about it. He really wanted to try until I told him he cannot just out stubborn the bull and then punch it in the head. He seemed less inclined to try after that.”

She made both Hitler and Eva laugh. Hitler had seen Klein many times before. He was an extremely large man.

“My father is a geneticist and surgeon who specialized in cattle breeding at one point. So I grew up with my parents and two brothers on a cattle ranch. My brothers decided one day they wanted to be bull riders. That is how I had the chance to do it.”

“Did you stay on the bull?” Eva asked.

“Yes. Then I ran like the wind so its horns wouldn’t gore my backside.”

“Alexandra would you like to come outside with me for a smoke?” Eva offered.

“I don’t smoke but I would like to come out with you, if that is alright?” The question was posed for her husband.

“You two ladies enjoy yourselves.” It was Hitler that answered.

The two women walked outside. Alexandra stopped dead in her tracks at the view.

“Oh my! How beautiful!”

“Isn’t it though? I am glad the Fuhrer invited you and your husband up. Rarely do any interesting ladies come here.”

Alex blushed and laughed softly. “I’m not sure how interesting I am, but thank you. So what sort of sports do you enjoy?”

“Swimming, skiing and gymnastics are favorites of mine. I do love to watch a game of football.”

“In the United States football is a different game than what you know. They call football soccer. I
honestly like to watch both. My father thinks that football makes sense. You kick a ball with your foot. So when my brothers want to watch American football Dad calls it hand-egg. The ball is carried and it is sort of egg shaped.”

Eva laughed. “I suppose it is completely different in America.”

“Yes and no. It is very different but my family is German. So growing up wasn’t all that different for me. What sort of skiing do you do?”

“The regular sort?”

“My apologies. Where I am from there is a lot of water nearby so I water ski and snow ski.”

“You can water ski? What is it like?”

“It’s different from snow skiing. Depending on what sort you are doing, you float in the water with your knees up and the skis at an angle. The tow rope is in front of you and it pulls you up. It takes a bit to learn but it is a lot of fun. You can go on and on and on for hours if you are good enough. You can do jumps and such as well. I bet you would like it.”

“That sounds exciting! I wonder if I know anyone that does it besides you.”

“Reinhard had seen it before, but that is all I know.”

“Is it hard being married to a man like him?”

“A man like him?”

“He has always seemed cold and standoffish to everyone. The first time I met him I felt that he was like polished steel. Cold, unbending, and he could project back what he wished to. If he wished to.”

“He has changed since the attempt on his life. He is a wonderful and loving husband.” Alexandra smiled happily.

“I should say so since you are already pregnant!”

Alexandra laughed.

“So Doctor, can you tell me how to get rid of these circles under my eyes?”

“Not completely but I can show you how to hide them.”

“Really?”

“It’s very easy. I hide my own.”

“You don’t look like you are wearing make-up.”

“I am, I swear. Eva? Would you mind helping me pick out a dress for dinner tonight? I think I brought my entire wardrobe.”

“Of course! Would you like to go now? We can pick you out something and after you get dressed you can show me your trick?”

“Perfect!”
Back in the rooms designated for their use, Alexandra started to get ready. She had just stepped out of the bath and was applying a light bit of oil to her skin when Reinhard entered.

“Need some help Schatzi?” He gave his wife a wolfish grin.

“Of course.”

His hands stroked every bit of skin from her neck down as he applied the oil. He noticed how much larger her breasts had gotten. They were also more sensitive. He couldn’t help but tease the dusty rose peaks.

“Reinhard?”

“Hmm?” He kissed one nipple and then the other.

“I want you.” She whispered.

“What is it that you want from me?”

“Tease.” Leaning in, she nipped at his earlobe. “I want you to fuck me.”

“Oh?” Running his hand up her inner thigh, he quickly noticed she was ready for him. She was always ready for him.

Reinhard put his hand on her belly and kissed right above her navel. “You rest little one and no peeking. Your father needs to take care of your mother.”

Take care of their mother he did. They were laying together in bliss for a bit afterwards.

“I need to get cleaned up.”

“It would possibly be rude to go to the Chancellor’s table smelling like sex.”

Reinhard laughed and shook his head. “Only you would think of that Schatzi.”

“Oh no. Not true. Now you are thinking of it. You are thinking of marking your territory even.”

Long fingers stroked across Alexandra’s stomach. Kissing his wife, Reinhard smirked. “I already did.”

“My big purring Lion.” She ran her hands over his arse.

“I will tell everyone it was your fault why we were late for dinner.”

She laughed. “Sorry my wife is insatiable?”

While he was showering, Alexandra fixed her hair and makeup. The dress she wore was the same cerulean blue as her eyes. The neckline appeared to be low cut but actually showed only a peek of skin. The dress was ankle length and gathered into a pleat at the diaphragm. It was something simple but modest and perfect for summer. The heart shaped locket was put on display with the dress. Once she was dressed, she stood in the doorway admiring Reinhard while he shaved.

“Yes Schatzi?”

“I am just enjoying the view.”
“You are a strange woman.”

“You have been saying that for over a year. I keep denying it.”

“You are staring at my arse again.”

“Of course Obergruppenführer. It is a glorious arse.”

He rolled his eyes. “You look beautiful my sweet.”

“Not as beautiful as your arse.”

He shook his head, chuckling.

“I will meet you when you are done. I promised I would teach Eva a trick I know with cosmetics.”

“I’m glad you two are getting along so well.”

“Me too.”

Alexandra showed Eva Braun the trick of covering up under eye circles with a touch of red lipstick. Half of the trick was blending properly and only doing a small bit at a time.

“You my dear Alexandra are a genius.”

“No. I can’t claim to have figured this out, I was taught by my mother. She told me when I was doing my residency I should never look WORSE than the patients.”

The two women walked out arm in arm laughing together. Alexandra in blue and Eva was in pink. They complimented each other well. Reinhard was pleased seeing his girl happy. Hitler seemed to feel the same about the younger women.

The following day found Alexandra busy for the entire morning. Not only did she take a look at the medications that Adolf Hitler was taking she took a peek at his menus. There were several items on the foods list that could cause gas and cramping, as she expected.

To the dietician Alexandra explained how to eliminate and add back in items. If he seemed to tolerate them well with little or no complications, keep the food items available. If he did not, eliminate the foods.

That evening Alexandra would be cooking with the personal chef of Hitler. Standing in the vast kitchen and looking around, she felt nothing but fear. This was not how her life was supposed to have turned out. Yet, she was the one that married Reinhard. Alexandra felt that everything was her own fault. Still, she loved her husband.

It was when she sat down with Adolf Hitler’s medical file with the dictator himself that Alexandra became most alarmed. She did not know his physician. The problem was whomever the man was – he was killing Hitler. Alexandra mused that she should have been comforted by the thought of the murderer dying but it wasn’t that easy. How much worse was Hitler because he was in precarious health?

“You look surprised Dr. Heydrich.”

“I am surprised, Sir.”

“Why?”
“The medications you are being given are not safe nor are they doing anything for you but hurting your systems.” Alexandra paused. She was terrified to say what she needed to. “Chancellor, do you know what strychnine is?”

“It is a type of rat poison, I believe.”

“You are being given that.”

“You must have made a mistake.”

“No Sir. I have not made a mistake. You are being given an anti-spasmotic as well. Do you know what for?”

“I have a problem with my left leg and hand trembling.”

“That could be caused by the strychnine. It tends to cause muscular convulsions. So you are being given a drug that causes your problem and then another drug to counteract the shaking. None of this should be going on as it is. If there is a physical reason outside of the drugs, all you are doing is masking it and not treating the problem.”

The dictator studied her. Karl Brandt said nearly the same thing. Were they correct? “Heydrich told me that I reminded you of your father.”

“You do Sir.” Reinhard I am so going to smack that pretty arse of yours. It’s the voice and the looks. It isn’t the soul of my father. My father would never have participated in genocide and shit. And shit. Fitting for this Morell character’s medications.

“Heydrich also said you speak highly of your family, all of them.”

“I have a wonderful family. They are good people that wish to make the world a better place. My father is a brilliant man. He is wise, kind, and caring. He was my model for when I decided to become a surgeon. No, that’s not true. He was my model for everything.”

“I take that as a compliment then Dr. Heydrich. So what would you tell your father to do?”

“I would do a complete med wash under the care of another physician, not me and not your personal physician either. Nothing given to you for two or three weeks unless it is necessary. During that time tests can be ran, observations could be made. A team of physicians could begin to treat an illness if there is one. The problem with that being you will hate life for those two to three weeks. You could become quite ill because of withdrawals.”

“Do you take any medications?”

“No Sir. I may occasionally take an aspirin but that is it.”

The dictator rose and offered his hand. “Thank you. I appreciate your candor. Not many people have the courage to tell me this sort of thing.”

Rising, she shook his hand. “After I performed surgery on Reinhard I had several people ask why I saved his life. Part of it is very simple, because I could. I recited the Hippocratic Oath, which I believe in. These include the principles of medical confidentiality and non-maleficence.”

“Primum non nocere.”

“First, to do no harm. Yes Sir.”
Alexandra went down to the kitchen to start working with the chef and dietician on the dinner. She wanted to keep it free from bread products as possible to see how that helped with the dictator’s gut issues.

They would be starting with something similar to minestrone soup. Alexandra made a potato gnocchi to replace the pasta and did not add beans to the broth. Instead she added a bit more vegetables.

The next course was a spinach salad with blueberries and nuts. Alexandra showed the chef how to make her particular vinaigrette.

The main course was actually two dishes. The first was a vegetable alfredo lasagna. Instead of using pasta, she used thinly sliced zucchini for the noodles. The other was wild mushroom ragout over polenta. Alexandra wouldn’t have served a side at home with it but she wanted the chef to try to do the roasted vegetables in a way that she preferred.

Alexandra loved making desserts and sweets for her husband. Reinhard teased her happily that she was going to make him fat. She made sure to work the calories off of him. He didn’t complain about that either.

For dessert there would be a flourless chocolate torte, orange sorbet, and cheesecake stuffed strawberries dipped in chocolate. The masterpiece were white chocolate blackberry crème brûlées.

When everything was done or ready to go into the oven, she went up to dress for dinner.

Reinhard had just finishing shaving when she came in. “Excuse me? I’m sorry this room is occupied. I was here with my wife but she disappeared.”

“Is that so? Damn. I suppose I won’t beg on my knees to suck your cock.”

“Schatzi! It is you!” He kissed her nose. “I would recognize that mouth anywhere.”

She laughed. “I see how it is. I alas need to get dressed but I promise when we come back to the room I will do whatever you want.”

Kissing her lips, Reinhard smiled. “That’s my girl. I will see you shortly?”

“Of course.” Smiling, Alexandra brushed her fingertips to his cheek. “I love you.”

“I love you mein Schatzi.”

Alexandra decided on a very dark red dress that was nearly floor length. It was reminiscent of the nightgown she wore the first time she and Reinhard made love. The short jacket was black with a hint of red on the sleeve.

The makeup she wore was kept natural, although she did darken her brows slightly for a more dramatic look. Her hair however was styled in a sleek chignon. Alexandra was buckling the ankle strap of her heels when there was a knock on the door.

It was Eva.

“Alexandra! Please help, I did something wrong.” She was almost in tears.

“Not a problem. Come over to the vanity and have a seat.” It took all of two minutes for her to fix Eva’s makeup. “You just need a bit of practice. If you want, I will do it with you tomorrow.”
“Thank you.” She hugged the smiling Alex. “That dress! Where on earth did you find something so marvelous?”

“This one I actually made.”

“You didn’t!”

“There is a story behind it actually. Are you ready to go downstairs?”

“Yes. Can you tell the story?”

Alexandra chuckled. “Yes. So when I was Reinhard’s doctor at the hospital I made a couple of enemies. One of them being the physician in charge. The last day I worked there he backhanded me.”

“What? Why?”

“I have no idea really. Anyway, Reinhard was leaving that day and took me with him. He brought me on as his physical therapist basically. It was the second day that we were there I believe. I told him he needed to rest. He looks at me and tells me he is used to giving orders and not taking them. Please understand that while I was fluent in German I didn’t know anything about him. I wasn’t even told his last name.”

“You ordered Obergruppenführer Heydrich around?”

“Yes.” Alexandra turned nearly the same shade of her dress. “So the next night he and I had a lovely talk. Just about families, growing up, that sort of thing. He had his phone calls and I went to sleep. It was perhaps two or three in the morning when something loud woke me up. I went out to investigate. Well I didn’t see Reinhard sitting in a chair and I ran into his legs.” She smiled, remembering.

“Did he pull you to his lap and ravish you?”

Laughing softly, Alex shook her head. “No. He stood up and knocked me to the floor. He dropped to his knees to make sure I was okay and he kissed me. That’s how it all started. The dress looks like the nightgown.”

“That is so romantic. It’s funny. Before he always seemed, cold. Perhaps distant would be a better word.”

“I have heard that before.” Alexandra smiled warmly.

The women walked to where the men were talking. Reinhard turned to greet his wife. He smiled. Except it was not just a simple smile. The way he looked at her spoke volumes. How she was dressed took him back to the fateful night. He had so expected to have his cheek slapped, instead she returned the kiss.

Reinhard couldn’t give her a kiss in front of the others, it would be improper. Instead, he held out his hand to his wife. When she took it with a smile, it was just another way that they showed their love.
The summer had been a warm one and with Alexandra’s ever growing belly, she was uncomfortable most of the time. She was no longer working. Since there was a bit of a window to when the baby would be born, she and Reinhard felt that it would be better for her not to be working currently.

However, the October air had the taste of autumn in the breeze. It wouldn’t be long before winter arrived.

“What do you like for a girl’s name?”

“We aren’t having a girl Schatzi.”

“Humor me?”

“Gulielma?”

Alexandra was on her side and Reinhard was pressed up against her back. She couldn’t see his face to tell if he was joking or not.

“My Lion? That sounds like a disease.”

Reinhard laughed. “Well what do you like?”

“No idea.”

“Calla?”

She smiled. “I like that.”

Reinhard rubbed his wife’s belly gently before resting his hand there. He could feel their child moving and kicking. He smiled.

They had finally decided on names for the baby. If their child was to be a boy, Christoph Baldric Rainer Heydrich. For a girl they decided on Calla Giselle Susanne Heydrich.

“I cannot believe that somewhere in a span of less than a month we will be parents.”

“I hope it is sooner than later.”

“That uncomfortable my love?”

“Sometimes, yes.”

“What can I do to make you feel better?”

“You are doing it.” She smiled.

“Would you like to stay in tonight?”

“No, you need to be there. Although, we may wish to take separate cars. I am not sure how long I can last.”

“Alexandra, if you need to leave I am coming with you.”
“Reinhard, that is not necessary.”

“No arguments.”

Alexandra chuckled softly. “And you call me stubborn?”

He put his hand back on to her belly and grinned. “Your mother is quite possibly the most stubborn woman in the world. No. Your mother IS the most stubborn woman in the world and quite possibly the most stubborn person in the world as well. It is okay. It’s just because she loves you.”

First it was a snicker from her. Then it turned into a chortle. It didn’t take long for Alexandra to be laughing and laughing hard. To Reinhard though, it was the best sound in the world. He made his wife happy.

Alexandra decided to take a nap before she needed to get ready. When Reinhard went to wake her, he stopped to grab the camera first. Alexandra was sound asleep on her side with Tristan and Isolde snuggled up against her stomach. It looked as if they were guarding her. After taking a photo, he had decided to wake her up gently.

He went to get something and returned with violin in hand. He began to play Brahms’ Wiegenlied. The music woke the sleeping Alexandra. She didn’t move just yet. She laid there watching her husband. She had heard so many times how different of a man he was when he played his violin. Truthfully, Alexandra had seen the difference the first day at the villa.

With his eyes closed and moving ever so slightly to the music Reinhard had the barest hint of a smile on his full lips. Now there was no difference to him with or without the violin. His blue eyes opened when he finished playing. They immediately went to his Schatzi. He put the violin back in its case and looked to her once more.

“That was beautiful.”

“No. You are beautiful. Music pales in comparison to you.”

He climbed on their bed and pulled her to him. One hand rested on her belly, like always. The other brushed her silky obsidian curls back from her face. Alexandra moved just enough so that she could kiss his soft full mouth. She pulled back, only to whisper words of love and desire. Then she kissed him again.

“I love you Reinhard. I love you. I love you. I love you.”

“Does this mean you love me?” He kissed her before she could say anything.

Laughing, Alex swatted his arse with a pillow. Then she kissed him once more.

Reinhard was in uniform and she was in an icy blue simple floor length gown. The dress crossed over in the front and left just her shoulders bare. This time Alexandra left her hair down and curled it in finger curls. Her makeup was simple and elegant.

Like her husband, Alexandra stood out in a crowd by her height alone. Perhaps, she stood out more simply by being a woman. She was speaking to Ernst Kaltenbrunner and Klaus Fischer while Reinhard was occupied somewhere else. Johannes Klein was with Reinhard. Dieter was watching the perimeter.

“Dr. Heydrich, it is a pleasure to see you again.”
Alexandra turned towards the voice. Immediately upon recognizing the man, she felt the spot between her shoulder blades tighten. “Brigadeführer, good evening. How are you feeling?”

“Good. Very good. Thank you.” Hermann Fegelein smiled and put his hand on her stomach. The move pinned Alexandra in on three sides. “You look ready to learn your proper place. A woman with children has no reason to be in the workforce.”

Alexandra stepped back swiftly. The anger in her voice was obvious. “Do not touch me.”

Klaus stepped in front of Alexandra acting as a buffer between her and the disreputable Fegelein. He was about to say something when Kaltenbrunner spoke first.

“You need to leave now Fegelein.” Ernst Kaltenbrunner’s voice was cold.

Kaltenbrunner was a large man. Tall and thick bodied, he had the look of a brawler. He used his height and weight to establish dominance over the much smaller Fegelein.

“I am not permitted to have a conversation with my doctor?” Fegelein’s smile was oily.

Fegelein’s smile disappeared when he felt a large hand clamp down on his shoulder and squeeze tightly.

“No. She is not your doctor nor has she been for weeks. You are not permitted to have a conversation with my wife, ever.” Reinhard’s voice was like a hiss.

“Fuck off you squeaky little kike.” Fegelein snarled.

Immediately Reinhard put the smaller man into the wall with both hands holding on to Fegelein’s uniform. Hans, Klaus, Ernst, and Reinhard surrounded the smaller Fegelein.

“Call me what you wish but it is you that covet my wife, not the other way around. You are to have no contact with my wife at all Brigadeführer Fegelein. Do I make myself clear?”

“Yes Obergruppenführer Heydrich.”

“You even look in her general direction on accident? You will not find me anywhere near this pleasant.”

“Very well Obergruppenführer Heydrich.”

“Fegelein? Just in case you didn’t get the message? Come near me again and I will make you hope and pray for death.” Alexandra paused, looking at the man. With a tilt of her head, she smiled so cruelly that even Reinhard was surprised. “Except your death won’t come. I’ll make you watch the deaths of your family first and foremost. And then it will get even worse.” Once more she smiled. “If you ever speak to my husband, Dr. Kaltenbrunner, or any of his men with that tone? I’ll peel your prick like a banana and make you a banana split to eat when I am done.”

“Klein! Show this despicable piece of shite out.”

“Jawohl Obergruppenführer!” Klein smiled malevolently at Fegelein. No one was permitted to bother the little sister and walk away unscathed.

Reinhard, Ernst Kaltenbrunner, and Klaus looked to Alexandra before they started to laugh.

“Schatzi that was a threat worthy of the Gestapo.”
“Thank you. Dieter taught me how to make credible sounding threats.”

Once again, the three men laughed.

“Dieter is quite frightening when he wishes to be.” Klaus chuckled.

“Ernst. Klaus. Thank you both.” Reinhard nudged his wife closer to him. “I do not trust that bastard. I trust him even less where you are concerned Alexandra. But I am so very proud of you.” He grinned and kissed her cheek.

“I hated being around him in the hospital. There was something about him that made me recoil. He didn’t do anything I was aware of but Fegelein felt off.”

“He is off.”

“I will be right back my Lion, I need a drink.”

“I need to go back to my conversation Schatzi. I’ll return shortly but if you don’t mind bringing me a whiskey please? Klaus?” Reinhard motioned with his head for Alexandra to be escorted.

“Causing a commotion are you Heydrich?” The voice was snide.

Reinhard knew the voice and turned around. “He is lucky to be alive after he put his hands on my wife.”

“Who in the hell would want to put their hands on that ugly bitch you call a wife? Dumber than a rock and about as attractive.” Bormann smirked.

There was a tap on the man’s shoulder. Martin Bormann whirled around only to be met with two drinks thrown in his face. He wore a whisky and a water. A left hook and an uppercut followed quickly.

The bleeding man was laying on the carpet, stunned.

Seeing the man start to get up, Alexandra put her heel against the man’s throat and pressed down. “I have to ask, is your ass jealous of the amount of shit that just came out of your mouth? Speak about me or to my husband like that again? You will be using your tongue as a necktie. Do I make myself clear?”

“Who the fuck are you?”

She put a little more pressure on his throat. “Dr. Alexandra Heydrich, Reinhard’s wife.”

His eyes widened. The name was familiar, of course. Bormann believed that the Dr. Heydrich that had found favor with Hitler was at best a distant relative of Reinhard’s. Furthermore, he had not known was that Reinhard and Lina had divorced.

“Now, if you take a look around? You will see all the witnesses to your vile behavior. “

Bormann blanched. Everyone was staring at him. Some were even pointing and laughing that a woman knocked him down. Not just a woman but a pregnant woman at that.

“Also note that you got your arse kicked by a pregnant woman.” Alexandra gave the man a humorless smile. “I’m quite serious, if either of our names are on your lips it best be for business reasons only.”
“Are you ready to leave Schatzi?”

“Yes please.” She removed her foot from the man’s throat.

Klein was about to get the car when he saw Bormann stand up and move towards Reinhard and Alexandra. He stepped in front of the foul little man with a raised brow. Immediately Klaus joined him.

“Herr Bormann, it would be in your best interest to walk away.” Klaus’ voice was soft.

Dieter came up behind the man. “Walk away and never speak to Dr. Heydrich in such a way again would be advisable.”

Bormann did do just that. A moment of rare intelligence for certain.

Alexandra laid her cheek against her husband’s arm on the drive home. Reinhard smiled looking down at her. “You looked so beautiful tonight.”

“Reinhard, I love you. I love you more than anything but I look like a beached blue whale.”

“Ah but you are my beached blue whale.” He grinned.

Alexandra laughed with a smile. “I’m going to have to stop going on outings with you. I seem to anger everyone.”

“You do not Schatzi. You do however anger the ones that think they can be rude.”

“You don’t mind do you?”

“Mind?” He chuckled. “My girl of course I do not mind. I am proud of you. I have seen you take down five of my men. I have seen you take down two of my men at once. Poor Klein here doesn’t know what to think! His little sister beat him.”

Klaus and Hans were in the front seat, laughing.

“No one is permitted to mess with our little sister Dr. Heydrich, not even us.”

Both Alexandra and Reinhard laughed at Klaus. She was about to say something when she grimaced.

“What’s wrong?” Reinhard frowned.

“My water just broke.” She looked very surprised and started to laugh. “Uhm. Hans? Can you take us to the hospital please?”

“Schatzi? Is everything alright?”

“Yes my Lion. It is just that you will be a father again in the next 24 hours, give or take.”

When they arrived at the hospital everything and everyone was in a flurry of madness, except Alexandra. Having worked in hospitals it was nothing new for her. When the physician in charge would not allow Reinhard in the room with her, Alexandra was not happy.

“Dr. Heydrich, expectant fathers have a nice comfortable waiting room.”

“No. I don’t care how nice or how comfortable it is. I want my husband with me.”
“I’m sorry Dr. Heydrich we cannot allow that.”

“Very well, I shall make arrangements elsewhere.” Alexandra rose from the wheelchair immediately and began to walk towards the door.

“Dr. Heydrich, wait.”

Alexandra paused but did not turn around. “Change your mind Dr. Böhm?”

“Yes. Your husband will be permitted to stay with you the entire time.” There was a scowl in the man’s voice. He knew it would not be a wise choice to irritate the Obergruppenführer or his wife. Dr. Böhm wasn’t for certain who would be worse to have angry at him.

Obergruppenführer Heydrich was known for his cold and callous ways and his temper. Dr. Heydrich was known to be the exact opposite of her husband. She was a kind and gentle lady unless you did something incredibly untoward her or her family. It was well known that she was one of the best surgeons anyone had ever seen. It was also well known that Adolf Hitler himself gave his blessing for her and Heydrich to be wed.

“Thank you. The practice of keeping men out of delivery rooms is foolish. It serves no purpose. The mother should be permitted to make that choice for herself.”

Reinhard stayed with his wife the entire time. He sat in a chair beside her bed and whispered sweet words in her ear while she was in labor. As it progressed, he sat with the doctor. In the early hours of 17 October 1943 Alexandra gave birth to two boys that were born four minutes apart. It was the same amount of time as Alex and her twin brother.

Reinhard was the very first person to touch his children. Seeing their squalling child for the first time made him so happy. He immediately showed his Schatzi. The nurse took the newborn from his father and cleaned the child up. It was then that Alexandra realized they were having twins.

He helped deliver their two boys. In that time, he almost laughed. It would have been highly inappropriate but no matter, it almost happened. The laugh would have been from the happiness that he felt. His wife. His children. The sheer joy of his new life.

The chosen name of Christoph Baldric Rainer Heydrich became Christoph Haydn Baldric Heydrich and Rainer Mahler Sebastian Heydrich. They added the names Haydn and Mahler after two of Reinhard and Alexandra’s favorite composers.

Reinhard wouldn’t leave Alexandra yet. He didn’t even want to think of her spending nearly a week in the hospital. He knew that he would be miserable without her at home with him. He was surprised suddenly when her hand reached out and smacked him on the bicep.

It was easy to tell that Alexandra was still asleep. Reinhard took her flailing hand and kissed the back of it. She sighed softly with a smile. Immediately, she was fully asleep once more. Tears were in Reinhard’s eyes. He couldn’t help it. His life had changed so much in the last 18 months.

Reinhard would have died if it wasn’t for her. Although Alexandra denied it, he knew that it was true. He found the love of his life with her. His deepest and most painful regret was when he walked away from her that summer day. So much had happened because of him doing that. The thought of Buder ripped into his heart once more.

He regretted hurting Lina as well. They simply outgrew each other. Unlike Alexandra, Lina was very much uneducated about the world and even life in general. He was taught to believe that was what made a good wife. It was a lie.
A woman needed to be a close companion to a man in order for a marriage to be based on more than a maid, cook, and babysitter. How many times did he find himself in the arms of another woman without knowing why he was so dissatisfied at home?

It was far too many to count. It wasn’t until he met Alexandra that he understood why. No, that wasn’t true. He bedded her because he lusted for the beautiful American doctor. He did love her already at that point. Still it wasn’t until he knew he loved her more than anyone else, including himself that started the change within him. When he realized that he loved her to such a great degree, Reinhard turned inward.

Instead of blaming others for his problems, Reinhard Heydrich examined his own self and needs. Alexandra was a physically beautiful woman. He knew that the first day they met. Reinhard was used to beautiful women. They tended to want a man of power, such as the power he had. These women were simply social climbers. Sometimes he would fuck them but that was it. They were little more than an orifice to him.

Everything should have told him not to trust Alexandra. An American woman that spoke fluent German landing in Prague when an attempt was made on his life? He should have thought that it was a set up immediately. That’s not to say he wasn’t wary at first. He had her watched and her room at the dormitory had a microphone put in at his request. A female member of the SS watched the room, nothing. There was nothing out of the ordinary going on.

Slowly, Reinhard began to realize Alexandra was exactly who she said she was.

He didn’t tell anyone but he trusted her fully. He trusted her more than his own wife even. Not only was she beautiful, Alexandra was interesting. Her brilliant mind thrilled him. The last ten years had turned Reinhard into a hateful, cynical, cruel man. His humanity had ceased to exist. There was something about her that gentled his spirit. He couldn’t figure out why.

She went out of her way to make him happy. She did the same for his men. Alexandra, he found out, wanted those around her to be as happy as she was. It was more than that, her sweet nature made him want to be of a similar mind. When they spoke about forgiveness and being responsible before your own happiness, it clicked with something in him.

She didn’t care because he was of high rank. She did not care because he was wealthy. Money, position, nothing of like that impressed her. They had already married when he finally had the courage to ask her why.

“Why don’t the normal things impress you Schatzi?”

“What do you mean?”

“Money, social standing, none of that holds an interest for you. Why?”

“You probably should have asked that before you and I married.” She smiled and looked to her husband with such love, he couldn’t help but smile in return. “But since you didn’t my husband, why should any of that matter? Money, rank, social standing have no correlation to you being a good man or a happy man or the man with the most beautiful arse. Besides, all of that is easy to achieve if you know how. So many things are so much more important. How you treat me and others for example. Are you the sort of man that kicks a hungry puppy out of the way or feeds it?”

“I’m not a good man.”

“I disagree.” She kissed him softly while looking into his blue eyes. “Have you done bad things?
Yes. So has virtually every other person on this planet. You are trying to change that. Reinhard that is what matters. I love you. I know you love me with the same fervor. You don’t love me for what I can do for you, do you?”

“No. Of course not.”

“Then why would I love you for the same reason? I love you because you make me smile. I love you because you treat me beautifully. I love your serious side and your silly side my Lion. I love the Beastly side of you as well.” She beamed at him and kissed his nose. “I love you because I trust you, because I feel safe with you. I love you simply because you are you. I love you for all those reasons and that you love me for the same. Oh, and you have the most fabulous arse in the history of mankind.”

“You and my backside.” He shook his head.

“That is not just a backside. Oh no. My sweet love, your arse is a work of art. Your arse is to art like Vivaldi is to music.”

He rolled his eyes at her. Alexandra started to laugh and she tackled her husband on their bed. Reinhard wrapped his arms around and looked up at his beloved. She kissed his forehead. Then she pressed her lips between his eyes. When she finally kissed his lips, she whispered the three words that he had been denied so often. “I love you.”

“How did I get to be the lucky man that captured your heart?”

“The same way I got to be the lucky woman that captured yours. We were made for each other my sweet and sexy Beast. The Fates knew. They knew we needed each other and no one else.”

Reinhard was paying his former wife a rather large sum of money to keep her and their children in a lifestyle they were used to. She refused to permit him to see their children. He could force measures but Reinhard felt that to do so would scare or traumatize his children and he did not want to do that. He loved his children, all of them.

“What are you thinking?” Alexandra’s voice sounded sleepy.

“About how much I love you.”

“My Lion.” She took his hand and smiled.

“My Schatzi.”

The nurse brought in their sons at that point. Both infants were awake and hungry. Chuckling softly, with a little help she had both of them nursing in moments.

“Are you happy Alexandra?” It was always a worry for him. Until he met her, he had never known happiness.

“No. Happy doesn’t even begin to cover how I feel. I am joyous. I’m ecstatic. I am with the man I love and our children. I’m at peace with the world. I love and am loved.” Turning her head towards her husband, she smiled. “Happy doesn’t convey my level of bliss. I am the luckiest woman in the world my Reinhard. I have you.”

He could not help but smile back. Rising from his chair, he kissed her softly. Tears sprang to his
eyes.

“What’s wrong my beloved Lion?”

“There is nothing wrong. I am like you, happy doesn’t begin to explain my feelings. Eighteen months and you have changed me completely.”

“No. You changed you. I love you.”

“I love you mein Schatzi. Always.”

“And one day longer.”

Reinhard was holding his tiny sons after they were fed. Alexandra was napping again.

He looked upon them with awe. Reinhard felt that they looked to him the same way. Both boys had heads full of white blond hair. Both babies grabbed on to their father’s fingers and held him in their tight little grasps. It made him smile at the two infants.

“My sons. My precious sons. I am your Papa. Mama and I love you both very much. We are so happy to finally meet you. You both are the lights of my life along with your Mama. I am unable to promise that I will be the perfect father but I do promise that I will do my very best.” Reinhard whispered softly.

Bending low, he kissed his sons’ heads and then their feet. He couldn’t help but smile at the noises the boys made.

“You two are very lucky. Your Mama is an amazing woman. Your Papa is trying to do better. Christoph, Rainer I love you both so much already. I will fight and strive to give you both the best lives my sons. We already are doing that. Your Mama and I are completely devoted to you. We will love you both always. Just wait, oh my sons just wait, the first time you truly see your Mama you will see what I do. Your beautiful Mama will care for you like no other woman ever will. I hope that someday you both will find a woman like her to love you when you are grown.”

Christoph spit up a little. Reinhard cleaned his son off gently while smiling.

“Are you going to be my messy eater son? Or will it be your brother. If anyone ever tries to make fun of you or hurt you, come tell your Papa or Mama immediately. I do not want you to be made fun of like I was.” The thought of his children suffering like he did hurt worse than it did back when Reinhard was a child himself. “I hope you don’t have my flaws my sons. Don’t be like your Papa. Your Mama is who to emulate. Please don’t have my flaws. Please.”

“You see things as flaws but I don’t. I love all of you Reinhard Tristan Eugen Heydrich.” Alexandra’s voice sounded tender and sweet. “Besides, if they have something to them that you don’t like about yourself, will you tell them it’s a flaw?”

“No. Of course not.”

“Then treat yourself with that same kindness my beloved Lion.”

There was a bit of commotion in the hallway. Neither parent paid any attention to it. Alexandra was enjoying simply watching her husband talk to their sons. There was a knock on the doorframe. Alexandra looked up and smiled. It was her ‘older brothers’.

Jürgen, Klaus, Hans, Dieter, and Ernst all filed in.
Each of the men brought gifts for the two boys. They also brought with them a change of clothing and toiletries for Reinhard and Alexandra’s already packed bag. They took turns holding the boys and talking to them. Alexandra had to smile. They all took their job as uncles seriously.

The men didn’t stay long, some of them were fathers already and they knew that the parents were bonding with their children. Still, it pleased both Reinhard and Alexandra to see them.

“Alexandra, our boys are already so lucky.”

“Oh?”

“They haven’t even been here a full day and already they are so loved by so many.”
She was ready to go home. After spending one night without her husband, she was beyond ready. Reinhard had just stepped out to get himself a cup of coffee when Dr. Böhm came in to check on Alexandra.

“Dr. Kettler, your husband is spending too much time here. You and your boys need to rest.”

Her jet eyebrow rose high. “My boys and I do rest when we need to. My husband is not disturbing that. Furthermore, I am in perfect health. There is nothing wrong with me or my children. Dr. Böhm, you are not going to win this fight, I assure you that.”

There was commotion outside in the hallway again. Alex thought it to be her ‘big brothers’ or her husband. Quite possibly, it was both. Needless to say, she was quite surprised when Heinrich Himmler and Adolf Hitler knocked on the door.

“Chancellor, Reichsführer what a lovely surprise! Please come in.” Alexandra smiled beautifully. She would remember this as the first and only time she was pleased to see these men. “Dr. Böhm, could you possibly see that the boys are brought down? I am fairly certain that neither of this gentlemen came to see me.” She teased.

“She sees us as gentlemen?” Himmler laughed. “That is a new one for me.”

Dr. Böhm looked from Alexandra to the men and back again. After properly greeting the two men, he left quickly. The babies were brought in by their father just a moment later. Someone was able to sneak Eva Braun into the room with no one the wiser. Eva hugged her friend tight and the three guests took turns holding the boys.

“What did you name them Alex?” Eva asked first.

“Christoph Haydn Baldric Heydrich and Rainer Mahler Sebastian Heydrich”

“How do you tell them apart? They are perfect little Aryans!” The dictator of Germany looked upon the boys with a grandfatherly smile.

Reinhard beamed with the praise. “Christoph is wearing the dark blue and Rainer is wearing the light blue.”

The fact that Adolf Hitler was tickling the belly of Christoph made Alexandra want to cringe but it was the perfect little Aryans made her angry. Somehow she was able to keep a smile on her face. Christoph made a grab for the dictator’s finger and pulled quite hard for his size. “What a big strong young man already!”

Himmler was holding Rainer and smiling. The little boy giggled in return. “You and your wife certainly have beautiful boys Reinhard. Congratulations.”

“Thank you.” Alex and Reinhard responded at once. It made everyone laugh.

The two men had to leave, but Eva was going to spend at bit of time with Alexandra while Reinhard walked out with his superiors.

“I can’t believe you already have children!” Eva smiled.
“Neither can I. Granted I told Reinhard on his birthday that I was pregnant.” She gave her friend a sheepish grin. “By the dates it happened on our Swiss vacation.”

“A romantic vacation?”

“Very romantic. He proposed on the dance floor.”

“Alex, you changed him so much. He is a completely different man than the one I first met.”

“He changed himself.” She smiled. “It so strange how everything happened. You know the story, yes?”

“I know you saved his life and did the surgery. After you were slapped at the hospital you became like his nurse, right?”

“We couldn’t get an ambulance so his driver flagged down a delivery van. I was in the back of the van with Reinhard and his driver, Hans. Hans was watching me like a hawk. I knew then that somehow Reinhard was going to have a large impact on my life.”

“Two boys I would say was a large impact!” Eva laughed. “I have always wanted to ask you, how does Germany feel from an American’s perspective?”

“At first? I was terrified to even sneeze.” Alexandra blushed. “Once I began to get my bearings it became like home again. Reinhard’s men adopted me as their little sister, which helped.”

“His men that are his adjutants?”

“Yes, and Johannes Klein. He was the driver that held a gun to my head. Not that I blame him at all, it was a mess and Reinhard was hurt badly.”

“Alexandra! You get to have all the fun.” Eva looked so serious but her eyes told a different story.

“You two are having fun without me?” Reinhard smiled walking through the door.

“Welcome back my Lion. Do you need to go home? You look like you are ready to pass out.”

“Klein is coming back in two hours, then I will go get some sleep.” He kissed Alexandra’s forehead. “Eva, your car will pick you up in an hour if that is alright.”

“Thank you.” Eva beamed. “Reinhard, I feel I need to apologize to you.”

“Whatever for?” There was a note of surprise in his voice.

“When you and I first met I was put off by you.” Eva looked down at her hands and blushed brightly. “I was horribly wrong. I am very glad that you and your Alexandra are in my life. I am so sorry for ever thinking that of you.”

“Eva, thank you. You don’t need to apologize. You saw me originally before my Alexandra and I met.” He sat down on the very edge on the left side of his wife’s hospital bed. Reinhard picked up his wife’s hand and held it close to his heart. “I tell her she changed me but my stubborn Schatzi refuses to believe that. She says I changed……”

He stopped as his children were brought back in. His smile was bright as he picked up the sleeping Rainer. The small infant yawned and curled up close to his father, only to fall back asleep. Eva picked up the waking Christoph and helped place the tiny babe in his mother’s arms.
The newborn began to nurse and Reinhard continued with his story.

“She said it was me that changed myself.”

“Which do you think it was?” Eva asked.

“50/50.” He smiled while rocking his son gently. “Alexandra showed me how wonderful life could be. My sweet girl showed me that love was the most important part of life. She showed me how to love and be loved. She gave me the reasons to change.”

Sitting down at her desk, Alexandra and the boys had been home for not even a week. The boys were sleeping peacefully in a cradle next to her as she wrote out thank you notes for all the gifts sent. Reinhard was doing the same on the other side of the desk for a few of the single men that sent gifts. He didn’t have a problem with her sending out thank you notes but it would be better coming from him, these men didn’t know Alexandra at all.

One of the men came in to bring them their personal mail, which Reinhard took.

“Schatzi, this one is for you.” Reinhard handed her a letter.

“Thank you.” She looked up at him with a smile.

“Yes?”

She didn’t respond. Alexandra stood and walked past her husband. Having turned on the record player, she curtsied and offered a hand to him. In the large office, Reinhard waltzed with his wife. When it was over, she kissed him softly.

“I love you. Us. Our family. I love all of it.”

“As do I mein Schatzi.”

His broad smile made her want to kiss him again, so she did. Rainer began to fuss a bit in the cradle. Reinhard went to pick his son up while she unbuttoned her blouse. When the newborn began to nurse, Alexandra chuckled.

“You are just like your Papa, Rainer.”

“Oh?” Reinhard noticed the mirth in Alex’s bright blue eyes.

“He is cranky when he is hungry just like you my Lion. He also is very happy with my breasts in his hands.” Alexandra grinned upon hearing her husband’s laughter.

30 March 1944

Alexandra was going over a series of x-rays in her office. She only worked very limited hours now. No more than a couple of hours a day. The boys were in the room next door with their nanny. She knew it would be time to feed them soon. Her breasts were getting a little sore already.
She was sketching out a plan of attack for an upcoming surgery. She knew it would be difficult but had not expected it to be this bad. She wouldn’t be preforming the surgery or even sitting in. Dr. Paul Aber would be doing the observation and could take over if need be.

The once tiny office was now expanded to two rooms. The order for the additional office came from higher up than Reinhard. Although, she wasn’t sure from exactly whom. It could have been from Hitler, Himmler, Goebbels, or Goering.

That was the strangest part. Alexandra met them all. While she hid her distaste for all four men, they enjoyed her company and the boys. Goebbels nor Goering were not overly fond of Reinhard but they were kind to Alexandra. She figured it was because Hitler and Eva. No matter, it still made her skin crawl.

She assumed that the command came from Hitler via Eva. Eva had stopped in to pick Alexandra and the boys up for lunch when she was in Berlin last. Eva had been appalled by the tiny office.

Alexandra and Reinhard went to Hitler’s Bavarian retreat at least once a month. Usually it was at the request of Eva Braun. Often times Reinhard would have to be somewhere with Hitler, so Alexandra and the boys would stay with Eva at the Berghof.

If the dictator was there, he always played with the two infants. Alexandra found the man’s adoration for children bizarre. Even Blondi was ever watchful of the boys. The dog’s love for Alex had spread to Rainer and Christoph. If someone approached outside of Hitler, Eva. Reinhard, Alexandra or their nanny, Blondi inserted herself between the babies and the other person.

Hitler hated his dog to be upset by anything that she wasn’t supposed to be. When Martin Bormann was there and he entered the same room as Alexandra or the boys, Blondi would growl, snap and bark at the man. She bit him the first time it happened. Bormann learned quickly to not get too close to Alexandra or her children. Since the dictator hated anyone upsetting his dog, Bormann was not brought to the chalet if it was known that Alexandra would be there.

Sitting back, she remembered the first time Reinhard played his violin for their unborn children while she was still pregnant. Alexandra ended up bursting into tears from the sweetness of it all. Now, it was something he did daily. After dinner, he would play for his sons. It was rare for Reinhard to be away from home for more than a day without his family with him. So it was almost an everyday occurrence. Reinhard loved his two boys and it was obvious. He helped with everything.

Christoph and Rainer were just starting to have solid foods added to their diet now that they were old enough. Reinhard helped with the feeding of his sons. When he returned home for work, he spent time with the boys. He read them bedtime stories and would get up in the middle of the night to check on them.

Just the last weekend, Alexandra had been putting lunch together when she realized how quiet everything was. She found her family in the master bedroom. Reinhard was asleep with his boys sleeping on his chest. His arm laid lightly over the babies, protecting them. On either side of him was a snoozing cat. Yes, she took a picture of them all.

There weren’t any surgeries scheduled for the day nor was Alex teaching. So she came in a bit later than normal. It had been a wonderful morning. She and Reinhard had made love for hours.

Smiling absently to herself, she thought back to earlier that morning. Would there ever be a time when she wasn’t wanting him? Alexandra was creative in the bedroom. A lot of that was to keep Reinhard guessing what she would do next. His sexual prowess was damn near insatiable at times.
Truth be told, when it came to him, she was much the same. Even after the boys were born and she was unable to perform penetrative sex, Alexandra kept her husband satisfied.

The day she was cleared to perform her wifely duties, she surprised him in his office with a quickie. Alexandra dressed for the occasion. Well, she was dressed for the occasion with what was under the prim and proper dress.

She had most everything made specifically for the occasion.

Having to have a little bit of help but not explaining why, Dieter got Reinhard out of the main office and Klaus snuck her in to her husband’s private office. They would alert her if he refused to go in alone. Alexandra put her purse on his desk and sat in the chair. Her long legs were crossed at the ankle and she propped her feet up in the window. All Reinhard could see were the stockings and heels that she wore.

“Schatzi?” He was surprised.

“Good afternoon my Beast.” Her voice was that husky warmth that made him take pause.

“Is something wrong?”

“No. Not at all. I just got cleared from my doctor.” She hadn’t mentioned it.

“Cleared?”

Spinning around in his chair, Alexandra stood up abruptly. Instead of a brassier she wore a short and sheer camisole. It didn’t even cover her breasts fully. The high waisted sheer black tap pants didn’t hide the fact that she was shaven smooth. The backs of the tap pants were cut high on her backside with just a hint of a ruffle. The garter belt and stockings framed both her bare front and nearly bare backside.

“Yes, cleared to be able to fuck you senseless again.”

He didn’t say a word. Reinhard couldn’t find any to say. His wife slid her hands up his chest and grabbed on to his uniform. Her red lips gave him the smile that spoke of temptations and wanton lusts. She pressed against him, grinding against his already hard cock.

“Will you my magnificent Beast? Will you let me fuck you senseless?”

Reinhard’s desk, his chair, the rug and more places were used by them. He ruined his wife’s lipstick and the ever so lovely lingerie she had made especially for that moment. Even in their lust filled couplings, they made love.

She stood there naked before him in the high heels and helped right his uniform once more. Unable to stand it, Reinhard took the rest of the day off and went home with his wife.

If anyone would have accused her of using sex as a way of keeping her husband in line, Alexandra would have laughed. She used sex for two things and two things alone. First, it was for their mutual pleasure. The second? She knew her husband well and he needed to be shown love often. So Alexandra was using touch as just one way to show him how much she loved and cared for him. She knew how important touch was to him.

He could be filthy dirty or just out of a hot shower, it didn’t matter. The scent of his skin was the greatest aphrodisiac she had ever known. He reminded her of the sun, spices, and decadence. The scent of him was unique and all his. Truthfully, she liked when he was dirty. There was something
sinful about the musky scent of sweat on his skin. How many people had called Reinhard Heydrich cold over the years? She didn’t see him that way. No, the man she called her Beast, her Lion, and her husband was not cold. He was vibrant and warm.

No matter his state, Alexandra enjoyed every inch of him. She smiled to herself. She remembered the first time she had licked his arsehole. Reinhard had panicked and rolled to his back before pulling completely away from her. He moved so fast, that she barely saw him react. The look he gave her was one of surprise.

"Does this mean you didn’t like it?"

"I’m not gay Alexandra."

"How does my tongue on you mean you are gay?"

"That’s what homosexuals do."

"Reinhard you have fucked my ass countless times. You enjoy that, yes?"

"Alexandra." He scowled.

"My darling Lion. As long as everything is consensual, nothing that goes on between us is wrong. Nothing between us means you are homosexual, either."

They went slow with her touching him there after that. Reinhard had liked it too much which scared him. Now it was part of their regular love making.

When they had woken up, Reinhard had been in a mood. He had pinned her to their bed and had gotten rough with her, not that Alexandra was complaining. He had taken her from behind.

"Do you know what I love Schatzi?" He had growled in her ear. They had just finished. He was still buried deep inside of her.

"Besides me?" She wiggled back against him.

He chuckled. It was such a lovely sound. Alexandra always felt as if she could touch his laugh. It existed in both sound and a physical form it seemed.

"Besides you. When I pull out of you and see you seeping with my seed. I love to see that. I love to know that you will wear me through the day or night."

Hearing that made her whimper softly. Immediately, Alexandra initiated round two.

Alexandra had considered calling in sick but she only was to be in the office for 3 hours that day. Reinhard was working hard to scale back the destruction he had caused to human life. He had been doing that since he had left the villa. He showed her the work and they discussed it frequently. Last August he had staged a prisoner escape and coup at one of the camps. It had not gone as well as planned but it gave others hope.

She was wondering how much longer until it was time to go home, when a knock on the door broke her reverie.

"If you are bringing me paperwork go away. If you aren’t, it’s open." She called out.
Expecting Paul to come waltzing in asking questions about some surgery, she smiled and looked up. It wasn’t Paul. It was Heinz Heydrich with a grim look on his face.

Immediately Alexandra saw that he had been crying.

Ever the trauma surgeon, she shot out of her seat and was in front of Heinz before he realized she had moved. Alexandra’s eyes were wide. Had something happened to Trude? Was it one of the children?

“Heinz, what’s wrong?”

“Alexandra, I’m sorry."

“What?” She backed away from him.

“Alex, I am so sorry.”

“What are you talking about?”

“Reinhard…..”

“I just saw him this morning. Everything is fine. I just saw him.” I was just thinking of him. REINHARD!

“Alexandra, there was a car accident.”

“No. No. No. No. No. Do not.” She slid down to the floor.

She put her hand over her mouth as tears fell. How? Why?

She looked down at her wedding ring. “He just turned 40 Heinz. The boys are still so tiny. This can’t be happening. No. God no.”

Heinz Heydrich wrapped his arms around his sister-in-law.

“Heinz where is he? HEINZ I have to see him. Please. Oh god. Please. No…..”

Alexandra wouldn’t stop crying. When she started to shake so very violently and hyperventilate, Heinz went and grabbed one of the other doctors. Alexandra refused sedation and came back around some. She had to think of the twins first and foremost.

She had been late for work that morning. She was never late. Never. They had laid in bed talking and just being in love. She could still taste his skin on her tongue. There were four little freckles all grouped together on his shoulder. She liked to kiss him there. His skin was always so soft.

His skin. His soft skin with the freckles that she loved and he hated.

Alexandra got lost in thinking of Reinhard’s skin. He had the softest skin that she had ever felt. She loved to just leave a hand on him. Feeling his skin, him, warm and alive beneath her fingertips. He was forever amused by the way she wanted to touch him. He was the same way with her. He always wanted to touch her.

He was always so warm. She would tease him how he was like a great big cat laying in the sun. He would point outside to a cloudy sky or the night sky. Alexandra would tell him that he was her sun. He was the brightest point of her life. It was true. Her husband and their children were the greatest of joys she ever known.
He never had a nickname before besides Reini, which he hated. He had never known love before. REINHARD! She wept even harder. Doubling over, she began to cry out his name.

Her Lion. Her beautiful majestic Lion was gone. Alexandra wept.
With the bombings and losses on the fronts, they barely had time to give Reinhard a proper burial. Reinhard would have been pleased at the extravagance of it all. Lina had been at the funeral with their children. Alexandra didn’t see them. She really didn’t see anyone. Her body was there but the rest of her was elsewhere. The only time she was able to concentrate was when the boys needed something.

Alexandra and Heinz’s wife, Trude, had struck up a fast friendship when she and Reinhard had married. The two women enjoyed each other’s company greatly. Trude was who kept Alexandra making it ‘just one more day’. She would have gone happily to her own grave if it wasn’t for her children.

Heinz Heydrich and Ernst Kaltenbrunner tried to get Alexandra, Rainer, and Christoph off of the European continent. She stubbornly refused to go. To leave Germany would be to leave Reinhard behind she felt.

Heinz tried to force the issue. He turned Alexandra and her children over to Allied troops. He brought the two cats home with him. After making sure she truly was Alexandra Kettler Heydrich, the Allied forces were at a loss. They could do nothing. She had not provided aid to Germany outside of medical assistance. Even her marriage to a top Nazi official meant nothing. They had heard long ago about the American that fell in love with Heydrich.

It disgusted the American and British men that the pretty American had been with a Nazi, willingly. Because of it, they treated her poorly in many ways. She didn’t care. Outside of her infant sons, she rarely spoke unless asked a direct question. It was only when one of the Americans threatened her children were they able to get a reaction out of her.

“Dr. Heydrich, your children will be going to the US where they will be put up for adoption. We have contacted your family and they want nothing to do with you or your children.”

“Do not threaten me through my children.” The words were barely audible.

“Well we won’t American children be raised by a Nazi’s whore.”

She struck fast and without remorse. The heel of her palm was dashed into the soldier’s nose, breaking it badly.

Two more men poured into the room with guns at the ready hearing the other man swearing.

“What the fuck?!”

“I do not take kindly to threats against my children.” Her soft drawl was apparent. “In case none of you bothered to check, I am a lawyer as well as a surgeon. I am more than fit to practice military law. I can play far dirtier than any of you. I am tired of this little game. Get someone with a brass ass in here, now.”

It was two days later that she was released.

When she finally came home with her children, the felines were there. Heinz had been told of her release and brought the two cats home to her. Alexandra survived one day at a time. Sometimes, she thought she would never make it. It was only because of the children and the cats that Alexandra was able to keep moving and living. The bombings were getting worse. She moved back
into her old home that was far enough outside of Berlin and without anything around it that she considered it safer.

It was just a month away until 1945. Alexandra’s home was on the southwest side about an hour and a half out from Berlin. She had gone for a morning walk when a group of soldiers started to pester her. She understood them perfectly fine, as they were all speaking English. Like most women, she tried to ignore them.

One of them dared to grab at her bottom and her breasts. Alexandra was furious that someone touched her inappropriately. She struck like a snake and took the man down with a wrist lock. The man was face first into the cement within seconds. She had her booted foot pressing heavily against the back of the man’s neck.

“Get me your CO now.” She said in English. It was suddenly obvious that she was an American.

It took someone about ten minutes to come back with their Sergeant.

The man tried to speak to her in horrible German at first.

“I’m American.” She gave the man a look of disgust.

“Miss, what exactly happened here?”

Having grown up in Texas, Alexandra didn’t appreciate the good ‘ol boy attitude that she saw happening. “It is not Miss, it is doctor. My name is Doctor Alexandra Kettler Heydrich.”

She saw the recognition of her name in the man’s eyes.

“Next time your boys want to try having some fun with the ladies? Take them to one of the brothels.” She twitched her hand just enough to make the boy at her feet yelp. “Is it safe to assume y’all made it through kindergarten? Then don’t touch what doesn’t belong to you.” She let go of the man. “You are here to help not hurt. Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage. Each of those fucking words should mean everything to you. If it doesn’t? You are a sorry sack of shit and not a US soldier.”

She went home without another word.

Instead of going for walks, Alexandra started to work out in the basement of her home. She would spend hours down there once the boys were in bed for the night. The hours spent down there exhausted her, which was what she wanted.

She had achieved her pre-pregnancy weight not even two months after giving birth. Then she hit her pre-pregnancy level of fitness before Reinhard died. Now, Alexandra was extremely fit. Her stomach was flat and well-muscled. It was the only thing she could do to keep the depression and anxiety at bay.

The boys were asleep and Alexandra was restless. She decided to write in her journal one sunny early November morning. Christmas was just around the corner. The thought of not having Reinhard with her at Christmas was torture.

When the doorbell rang she glanced to her watch and noted the early hour. Closing the journal, she walked to the door. She should have been surprised to see who was on her doorstep but she wasn’t. Opening the door, Alexandra and the almost stranger locked eyes for a good 30 seconds.

“Would you like to come in?” Alex broke the silence first.
Her guest followed her down the hall and to the sitting room.

“Please, have a seat. I will be right back.” True to her word, she returned swiftly with refreshments in the way of coffee.

“I know you.” Lina Heydrich spoke quietly.

“No. You do not know me. You have seen me, there is a difference.” Alexandra felt exhausted.

”What sort of woman takes up with a married man?”

“I didn’t know that Reinhard was married at first. When I did find out, I was already in love with him. I was too selfish to walk away like I should have. Still, he walked away from me shortly after that.”

“He went back to you.”

“Yes. After you asked for a divorce, he did Lina.”

Lina’s lip curled up. “He would have done the same to you. You were just his latest toy. Reinhard loathed to do anything outside of work. He hated to talk, to read, and to do ANYTHING but work. You would have been thrown away like the garbage you are.”

It was taking everything Alexandra had NOT to ask like he threw you away.

“I made Reinhard what he was. He would have been NOTHING if it were not for me. He would be the whining weakling that he was before we married. Did you know when he was dismissed from the Navy he locked himself in his room and cried for 3 days? It was because of me that he became something great. I am the one that pushed him to do better. He was among the highest ranking of men. He had personal counsel with the Fuhrer even. That was my hand. Not yours.”

She now understood Reinhard’s infidelities. Alexandra also understood why Reinhard found it strange that she loved him simply for himself and not because he was able to give her certain things. He had never known love like that before. Alexandra’s anger at Lina intensified.

“I had personal counsel with the Fuhrer and still do. It wasn’t because of my husband either. It was based on my own merit. It isn’t difficult to achieve, if you know how to do so.” The words tasted acrid in her mouth. Alexandra was being petty and really didn’t care.

“You lie.”

“No, I don’t. It was in the paper. Adolf Hitler was there and even gave us his blessing to marry.”

“Our children will never see their father again, because of you. It was because of whores like you that he never came home. You were one of hundreds.”

“You know as well as I do that is not true Lina.”

Lina stood up. In her fury she slapped Alexandra. “Do not have my name on your whorish tongue.”

The blow wasn’t painful. Whorish tongue was almost amusing to the part of Alexandra’s darker sense of humor. She almost said ‘whorish tongue? My husband enjoyed my tongue’. She wasn’t quite that crass.

Looking to her husband’s ex-wife, Alexandra rose to her full height. There was always something regal about her. While she never paid attention to it, others did.
“Reinhard pleaded with you to permit him to see his children. You always refused. If you are going to come into my home at least have the courtesy to speak the truth Lina. I did not take Reinhard away from you. He left you long before I entered his life. Do you think I don’t know about his infidelities? My sweet Reinhard? He loved to talk. We would spend hours laughing and telling each other stories. We read to each other passages from books. The man both of us were married to? They were not the same man, ever.

Why did he physically leave you? You told him to go. He finally understood that he was worthy of someone’s love. He spent 38 years being miserable. We did not have a long time together but he knew he was loved beyond measure.”

When Lina was about to reply to that, Alexandra held up her hand. “I’m not done.” She looked to the other woman with utter contempt. One of her sons had begun to cry. She heard the nanny go to the boys. Alexandra was furious all of a sudden. The woman before her had been the cause of so many of Reinhard’s fears and sorrows.

“I will tell you something right now and Lina? You were an ugly ignorant miserable bitch in 1930 and you have only became uglier. Body, heart, and soul you are the foulest of creatures. You didn’t make Reinhard. You made Obergruppenführer Heydrich. My husband was Reinhard, not yours. My husband loved to read, talk, make love, and spend time with his family. My husband was a loving and doting man that wanted nothing more than for his family to be happy. We did not share the same man. Ever.

I will not repeat myself. Stay far away from me and my family. Don’t you dare even whisper my name nor anything about me. If you ever say anything about Reinhard that is unkind or untrue? I will make your life a living hell. And you have no idea what sort of fire will rain down upon your head. If you think your treatment of Reinhard’s men did not go unnoticed? You are a bloody fool. Your treatment of the people in Prague and the Jewish prisoners that groomed your lawn didn’t go unnoticed either.”

Alexandra’s smile was cold and vicious.

“You can walk your arse right out of my home now and if you think to linger for even a second? There will hell to pay. Now get the fuck out of my home and never come back. If I even see you by accident Lina von Osten? You best pray to whatever god you believe in.”

Alexandra locked the door after her visitor stormed out.

Feeling numb, she started to go to the sitting room but she couldn’t. Staring at the sofa, Alexandra couldn’t walk in the room. Instead she went to her two sons. Taking them into the solarium with her, they calmed the fiery anger she had felt towards Lina.

Alexandra wondered what would have become of Reinhard if the circumstances had been different. What would he have been like if he had been a musician or never met Lina and stayed in the Navy?

She found Lina’s words to be at odds with the man she loved. Didn’t like to read? They read to each other all the time. Reinhard loved the written word and quoted from their favorite books often. Good lord, how often did they lay in bed together reading and talking?

“Love does not dominate, it cultivates. And that is more.” His voice was a whisper.

“Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.”
"I do not wish to control you. I loathe to manipulate you. I want you in my arms because your desire matches my own. I want to grow with you Alexandra. I want you by my side as we grow together. I want us to be better people than the day before. I would give you the world but I know you would say no, you don’t want the world. So, I give you the only thing I am able – myself."

“That is what I want. I want you. You are what feeds me heart and soul Reinhard.” She laced her fingers with his.

“You have me. You always will. The one thing that you ask for, was yours long before you asked.”

And he didn’t talk? That was completely different from the man she knew. They talked. They laughed. They loved. They both doted on each other and their two little boys.

Most importantly, they were happy together. They were gloriously happy together.

The Saturday before Reinhard died, Alexandra had awoken at 5 o’clock in the morning. Her husband wasn’t in bed. She had fallen back to sleep for thirty minutes and woke with him still gone. Concerned, she went to find him. He was in the nursery, rocking both of his boys in the rocking chair. The two infants were chattering happily laying against their father. Reinhard had been crying.

“Schatzi.” He was smiling through the tears.

“What’s wrong?” She leaned against the chair with her arm around his shoulders.

“Christoph said Papa. He was so happy sounding as he said it. The Rainer chimed in saying Papa.” He paused to wipe his eyes. “My boys, my boys know who I am. Look how happy our children are Schatzi.”

Leaning in further she kissed her husband and her children. “What are you doing up?”

“I was thirsty. I looked in on them and they were awake. I thought if I rocked them they would go back to sleep. No, instead they gave me the greatest gift a father could have. It seems awfully early for them to be talking yes?”

“Normally it’s around six months so yes, they are early.”

“See my boys, I told you. Be like your Mama.”

Would he have cheated on her, she wondered. Maybe. She could see where the habit started. The Navy had given him status that he never had before. Women wanted him for the first time in his life. He felt wanted. What a joy that must have been for him. Unfortunately, it was there that he was taught that sex and love were similar.

Lina made him fit in a box of her making. She forced him to adhere to her ideas of what a successful man was. In return, she offered him companionship and loyalty. Yet, what was the cost of that? The lives of millions?

It was painful to remember that her gentle love was the architect of such human destruction. How she could love a man whose signature alone killed so many people. The mere thought of that made Alexandra ill. He tried to change what he created with some success but to protect himself and his family it was slow going.
Still, she missed him with every piece of her shattered heart.
25 November 1945

The war was over and had been over for something around 6 months.

It was quite by accident that Alexandra found out about Ernst Kaltenbrunner having a brain hemorrhage while in custody at Nuremburg. She did not watch the television at all. The nanny, Amelie, mentioned seeing it on the television the night before. Amelie had met Ernst Kaltenbrunner at some function a couple of years prior and she had been terrified of him.

“Why were you afraid of him?” Alexandra asked.

“He was just so big and ferocious looking. Have you met him?”

“Yes. His height never bothered me. My two brothers are 2.1 meters and my father even taller. I suppose it never registered with me to be afraid.”

“You are also quite a bit taller than me Dr. Heydrich.”

“True.”

Within a week Alexandra used her status and being both a physician and a lawyer to gain access to him. She was not permitted to be alone with the Kaltenbrunner. It was cited that since she was a delicate woman and he was a war criminal, not having her alone with him was for her own protection. So she made sure one of his lawyers was with her most of the time.

At mealt ime it was different. His cell door was permitted to be opened and a guard stood right outside.

When his cell was opened for her the first time, Alexandra was appalled at the conditions. She barked out a series of orders in German. The big man had lost a great deal of weight. She sat down on the floor next to the cot while one guard stood outside and the other was off doing her biding.

Clasping his hand, she rubbed it gently. “Ernst. It’s Alex Heydrich, Reinhard’s wife. Can you hear me?”

“Alexandra?” The fear in his eyes was vivid. “Is it really you?”

“Yes. It’s me.”

“Why are you here?”

“Looking after you.” She smiled gently. “Can you sit up?”

“Yes.”

Alexandra helped him sit up in a corner so his side and back were stabilized by the wall. She started going over a series of basic neuro function tests with him. She asked about how he felt and about his pain. She kissed the top of his head and poked her head out of the cell.

“I want the prison physician in here right now.” She spoke in English

The guard ignored her.
When she was ignored after using German and French, Alexandra used another tactic. Shoving her thumb and index finger up the guard’s nose she dug her nails into the man’s septum. It was painful. It was extremely painful. When the man hit his knees on the cold slab that they called a floor, she glanced at him.

“Ready now?”

When the man croaked out a yes she let go.

The prison physician was there in less than five minutes.

Hell hath no fury like a woman that has nothing to left to lose.

Alexandra read the man the riot act over how the conditions were. When he tried to get belligerent with the much younger Alexandra, she threatened to have him added to the Doctor’s trial with Brandt and the others. While there was no way it would have actually happened, her point was made. Needless to say, everything was sorted properly.

She did leave the man with one more threat, if the circumstances for all of the prisoners did not improve? She would scream his name from the highest rooftops for every newspaper and news report. He didn’t take her seriously until Alexandra told him her name.

While most people at the trial did not know Alexandra’s face, everyone knew her name. There were all sorts of rumors about her floating around. The most common rumor was about the change in Reinhard Heydrich. He went on to sabotage his own work because of his love for her.

She was amused that no one had the courage to ask her to her face.

Those that knew her were adamant that she would provide aid for those that asked or needed it. Her objective was to save lives, alleviate suffering, and maintain human dignity. While she was not on trial, there were those of the allied forces that were dubious of Alexandra’s sincerity.

While Ernst Kaltenbrunner stayed in the infirmary, she stepped in with his attorneys. Since Alexandra was quite knowledgeable in Reinhard’s dealings she could positively identify what was Kaltenbrunner’s and what was Reinhard’s.

Alexandra not only kept up with Ernst Kaltenbrunner’s health and welfare, she made sure to spend time with him daily.

Alexandra brought Kaltenbrunner food, medication, and cigarettes every single day. She trusted the prison physicians about as far as she could throw a moose. Actually, she could throw the moose further.

The day that they called for Dr. Erich Krueger to take the stand as a witness she was shocked. When the man expressed his sorrow not only for Reinhard but also stated that she was at the hospital in Prague against her will, Alexandra stared at him in disbelief.

Every day she sat in the courtroom wearing the headphones but not turning them on. It was known that she spoke English and German, of course. What was not known was she spoke French fluently and was close to being fluent in Russian as well. She scribbled note after note but her countenance never changed.

“Why do you do this?”

“Why do I do what Ernst?”
“This. Taking care of me.”

“You came to my aid more than once. Hell, more than twice. I am returning the favor.”

He was about to take a bite of his food. “It’s more than that.”

“Isn’t it always?” She gave him a wry smile. “You know it’s funny. I have heard the rumors floating around about me and Reinhard. Yet, no one has the courage to ask me directly if he turned tables and began saving people. Reinhard was the love of my life.” She looked away so she would not cry. “Our boys will most likely hear what a monster Reinhard was. That’s only half true though.”

“I am so sorry for your loss.” Kaltenbrunner meant it.

“I have no idea if you know about what happened while we were still at the villa. Reinhard and I got into a spat. I went off on my own and the two men that were in charge of one of the checkpoints tried to rape me. They almost did. After that happened there wasn’t many people he would trust to be around me outside of the men there at the villa.”

“No. I had no idea. That is horrible. Men he was in charge of tried to do that?”

“Yes.”

“I would have hated to have been on the receiving end of what they were given. When it came to anyone upsetting you, Heydrich had no sense of humor. Not that I blame him.” Kaltenbrunner smiled at her. “He loved you Alexandra. When I asked after you over the phone, I could hear the change in his voice. You turned the machine back into the man.”

“What?”

“Some of the men would joke about him being more machine than man because he never stopped.”

Alexandra laughed softly “Oh on the second day we were at the villa I made him stop working and rest. He gave me this look of absolute confusion and utter surprise. Reinhard told me in this quite lofty voice that he was used to giving orders and not getting them. I didn’t care.”

“So, why did you come to my aid? You didn’t answer.”

“That he trusted you to be around me. That speaks volumes of how he thought of you, Ernst.” She smiled softly.

“There has to be more.” He sounded incredulous.

“No. There isn’t.

“You are an odd one Alex.”

“You wouldn’t begin to fathom how many times I have been told that. Oh you may hear a rumor about me.”

“Oh? Let me guess, because your connection to Reinhard you must be Jewish since he was?”

“Oh, you have heard.”

“No. Just a guess. I look more Jewish than you, for Christ sakes. I never understood why so many
people were so worried about the Jews.”

“What do you mean?” She handed him more bread.

“We are all people.” He shrugged. “If Germany was more worried about winning the war and less about the Jews I think the outcome would have been very different.”

“I don’t think so. Perhaps if Germany didn’t try to take on Russia or would have kept the peace with the UK or US it would have.”

“Do you hate the Jews?”

“No. Not at all. I am okay hating a person but I am not okay hating people for something they had no control over.”

“Good. I have only a short while left. I do not want to keep going over the Jewish thing.”

“I don’t hate the Jews, Ernst. That’s because I am Jewish.”

“You jest?!”

“No. I don’t. My biological parents died. My father passed away before I was born and my mother shortly after I was born. The couple that adopted me and my brother were a wonderful Jewish couple. My parents raised me Jewish.”

“Did Reinhard know? Was he okay with that knowledge?” He knew that Heydrich was anti-Semitic as they came.

Alexandra nodded. “Yes. He knew and yes he was okay.”

“Good. I would hate to have to die simply to go to hell and put my boot up his ass.”

Alexandra chuckled. “You aren’t going to die. Well, at least not at this godforsaken hellhole.”

“Ah Alex, you cannot promise me that.”

“True. I cannot. But I can promise you that you will not go down without one hell of a fight from me.”

“Have you heard from my wife or Gisela?”

“I have not, yet. We are still working on that.”

There were other Nazis on trial, of course.

Working with Kaltenbrunner’s German defense attorney, Alexandra was able to steer the course of the trial for him. Under the watchful eye of Alexandra Heydrich, the other prisoners were given better care as well. When she was asked about it, she told the truth. Two wrongs do not make a right.

Alexandra had never thought of herself as being overly political. She just didn’t have time to pay attention to politics prior to ending up in Nazi Germany. She found out that she was wrong in thinking that. She had always been vehemently against the death penalty. She also believed that prisoners deserved fair treatment. That didn’t mean they were to be kept in posh conditions. It meant they should not have to suffer unnecessarily. Extreme temperatures, unsanitary conditions, prolonged solitary confinement were unacceptable to her and always had been.
Of the 24 original men at the trial Alexandra had met most of them. It took her several days and a
lot of thinking to come to a decision. Albert Speer she would attempt to help. While she felt that
Erich Raeder deserved whatever punishment he was to be given, he could be of use alive.

The cell of Albert Speer was opened. There was a guard situated at the door as per the usual.

“Albert?”

“Alexandra? Is that really you?”

“Yes Sir it is. May I come in for a moment?”

“Of course. How are you doing my dear? How are your children?”

She smiled softly. “I’m well. The children are good. They are with their nanny at the moment so I
can be here.”

“What are you doing here?”

“I heard about Ernst Kaltenbrunner’s brain hemorrhage. I came out to make sure he was relatively
well.”

“That was very kind of you.”

“I didn’t realize you were here as well. I only just found out. Is there anything you need?
Cigarettes? Food?”

“A pipe and tobacco if you can manage, it would be lovely.” He smiled.

“I will have them for you when I return tomorrow. Any particular tobacco?”

“You are coming back tomorrow? Why? I use Prince Albert.”

“I will be here every day. I’m trying to help those I can. I never agreed with the politics of
Germany but I am against many things, including the death penalty.”

“I can imagine Reinhard didn’t care for your politics then.” Speer tried to smile.

“He knew. I didn’t hide anything from him. Even with my strange American ideals, he loved me
no matter.

“That he did. He loved you so much. You made a difference in his life.”

“Thank you Albert. I appreciate that.” There was sadness in Alexandra’s bright eyes. She would
never heal from the death of her husband. “I don’t know if Reinhard or I ever told you but I am a
lawyer as well as a physician. I am fully qualified to practice military law in the United States.”

“No. I had no idea. I knew you were a bright young lady, but I didn’t realize that.”

“If I can, I would like to help you out on your case. That is if you don’t mind?”

“I would appreciate that, yes.”

“Okay, good. I will be back tomorrow morning.”

“Thank you Alexandra.”
“You are most welcome.”

Alexandra went next to Erich Raeder, a man that was hated by her husband. Once more, the guard waited outside of the cell with the door opened.

“Großadmiral Raeder?”

“Yes?”

“I am seeing if you and the others are in need of anything. Food? Cigarettes?”

“Thank you but no. My needs are being taken care of. Do I know you? You look familiar.”

“I’m Dr. Alexandra Heydrich.”

The man’s jaw tightened hearing her last night. “I see. You relationship, if any, to Reinhard Heydrich?”

“He was my husband.”

“I have met his wife, you look nothing like her.”

“I am his second wife, Großadmiral. He and Lina divorced.”

“No thank you. I do not need anything from a Heydrich.”

“Yes, Sir. If you change your mind you may easily get word to me.”

He never did.

Men and women who were being tried as war criminals or were acting as witnesses were paraded through the court. In her estimation, most deserved lengthy prison sentences or even death. If she saw anyone that she believed didn’t deserve the punishment, Alexandra would have stepped up.

Alexandra knew that Kaltenbrunner most likely did as well, but because of the nature of trial she was able to bring to light enough doubt of what the man actually did. So much had been rubber stamped, that no one knew truly what was what. The two men that would have known, Himmler and Reinhard, were dead.

The same was with Speer, those that knew him best were all dead.

It was one of the last days that she took the stand.

“Dr. Kettler, we have proof that Dr. Kaltenbrunner is a cold and sadistic man.”

“You need to ask me a question for me to provide you with a statement.” She snapped. “Since you did not ask a question how about I ask you one instead First, cold and sadistic are opinions. What you believe to be right by you is not what may be correct to me. So I raise the question what proof do you have?”

“We have the testimonies of –“

“Wait.” Once more her tone of voice made the hair on the back of their neck stand up.

“Testimonies of other criminals cannot be presented as fact because you know that they aren’t likely to tell the truth. Do you have any concrete evidence to the charges against Dr. Kaltenbrunner or Herr Speer?” It was a miracle she told no one to fuck off.
Ernst Kaltenbrunner was acquitted. Speer was not. He was given a 20 year sentence to Spandau. She immediately went to work trying to make it where she could enter the prison and do a wellness check on the prisoners. She was denied access to Spandau in any form. It was her punishment for helping Kaltenbrunner and Speer.

When Kaltenbrunner was released from prison Alexandra was there to pick him up.

He chuckled seeing her standing next to her car, smoking a cigarette.

“People are going to start to talk Alexandra.”

“I quit giving a fuck about people talking about the age of 12.”

“May I have a cigarette?” When she handed him the pack and the matches he grinned. “It took you til twelve?”

She laughed. “Where would you like to go Ernst?”

“I don’t know. I have nowhere to go.” They both climbed into the car.

“You are more than welcome to stay with me. I have plenty of room. I can get you to Austria if you would prefer. Or really anywhere.”

“How have you had the money to do all of this? I dread to get your bill.”

“Patents. I registered patents all over the world. You are not going to get a bill. Ernst, you were one of the only people that Reinhard cared what they thought. The others? His children, me, and Hitler.”

It was over four hours to get back to Berlin. Kaltenbrunner slept on and off most of the trip.

“The first time I met you I was envious of Reinhard.” Stretching, Kaltenbrunner was just waking up again.

“Why?”

“The way you looked at him and the way you both teased and played with each other. It was nothing like I had ever seen before. “

“Thank you. I don’t really know what to say.” She blushed a bit.

“You two had something very special.”

“Yes we did.”

“I can only imagine how he loved Christoph and Rainer.”

Alexandra smiled wistfully. “We were still at the hospital. The boys were only about 12 hours old, if that. Reinhard was holding both of them and talking to them. I had woken up while he was doing this. It was beautiful.”

They arrived at her home. After parking, she brought him inside. Ernst looked around. Her home, while lovely, was perhaps 1/8th the size of his former estate. The following day Alexandra went back to the court. It would be the last time she was needed.

Upon that last day, Alexandra addressed the court. She spoke what she felt was the truth. “What
you all have done here is a crime. Your sense of revenge was far too great and the principle was lost on these hearings. This trial was at best a farce.

I know some of you in this very courtroom believe me to be a Nazi sympathizer. No, I am not. As a matter of fact? I am Jewish.”

The gasps heard around the courtroom made Alexandra’s lip twitch slightly.

“I tried to scale back the destruction of life by Germany with the help of my late husband.”

The gasps grew louder and people began to talk loudly. One of the judges demanded order and eventually the courtroom became quiet once more.

“While I cannot say which of those called a criminal deserved what they got, I can say that each and every one of you of the Allied powers made certain that you appear to be the foolish ones. In time, the Allied forces will have to answer for their own war crimes that occurred against the peoples of Europe and Japan shown to the world. May your god have mercy on each and every one of you that stood here and denounced the others. You showed no mercy to your fellow man in all of these weeks. You too are criminals of this war.”

She did not yield her stance. Instead, Alexandra wetted her lips and continued. All of the men that were on trial, save for the ones acquitted or whom had already died were there.

“Two wrongs have never made a right. The fact that you left men in knowingly squalid conditions is a crime all its own. I know none of you are used to a woman standing before you in such a court but understand this. I may be but a woman but I am a woman of valor. I will make the world change. As a matter of fact, I already have.

It is not my place to judge, although I do so anyway. I stand here with love and forgiveness in my heart. I must or otherwise become bitter for what has happened. Today day marks a day of many firsts and first you need to know this. Do not permit the hate to breed or one day we shall be back in this same room, reliving everything once again. Only the faces will change, if you are lucky.”

Alexandra turned swiftly and picked up her briefcase. She then walked out, alone.
March 1946

Alexandra had taken four weeks off of work. She just couldn’t go in. Between her birthday, Reinhard’s birthday, and their wedding day, it was too much for her to deal with. She wondered if there would ever be a time that she didn’t feel so lonely. She doubted it.

It was after dark when she went to Invalidenfriedhof. It was the cemetery where Reinhard was buried. Alexandra always went after dark. One of the caretakers would be told she was there. In the cover of night she wept and spoke to her lost love. She had come at least once a week to his grave since he died.

The Russians had destroyed the headstone. With the Allies still very much in charge of Berlin, she didn’t bother to replace it yet. Alexandra maintained the area and kept it crisp looking. This time she came to say goodbye. She would be gone for six months. Sitting in the cold cemetery for hours was nothing new for her. This night was even more difficult because she would have to be away for half a year.

Later that evening found Alexandra was sitting in the solarium of her home and drinking. She rarely imbibed on alcohol these days but tonight it was needed. She needed to be able to feel something. Anything. Even if it was just the whiskey burning her throat and gut.

Looking out into the darkness it was obvious she was in pain. Her eyes and nose burned red, not from the alcohol, but from the onslaught of seemingly never ending tears. The boys were in bed already. She couldn’t believe they were two and a half already. They looked so much like their father. Thick pale blond hair topped their sweet heads like cotton swirls. The curls matched Alexandra’s mores than Reinhard’s but it was his color. They had her eyes but everything else looked like Reinhard. It was so obvious they were his children.

The boys had their father’s sensitive side and his logical side. Alexandra was teaching them on the piano to read music. The toddlers were happy little boys with their Mama and Uncle Ernst.

Ernst Kaltenbrunner had begun practicing law at the start of the year. He was going to be moving out in about a month. Alex would miss his presence. While they didn’t spend a lot of time together, they enjoyed each other’s company.

Alexandra was trying to decide what to do. It was time to leave Berlin. Actually it was more like it was time to leave Germany. For nearly four years she had lived in some part of Germany or its territories. The place that felt like home for most of her youth now was home to nothing but pain.

The amount of violence she had lived through was unreal.

Where could she go? Did it matter as long as she was away from the Nazis? Chuckling softly to herself, no really it didn’t matter. Just no more Nazis. She never wanted to see a swastika again.

London.

New York.

Houston.

Montreal.
Toronto.

Nowhere Near Fucking South America.

Sydney.

That was the list. That was it. Large cities that she could speak the language and get lost in. None of them were particular Nazi havens that she knew of. At least not to the degree South America was. She had briefly considered returning to Prague but thankfully she knew better.

“Alexandra?”

“Yes?” She turned.

“Just checking on you. Your bedroom light was on and the door was opened.” Kaltenbrunner walked in. “Prince Pasha was playing King on my pillows.”

“I’m sorry. I thought I had broken him of that habit.” Tristan liked sleeping in Ernst’s room. Specifically, Tristan liked sleeping on Ernst’s pillows. The wily feline was also fond of sleeping on Ernst.

“Ah.” He waved a hand. “I never had a pet before. It took me a bit to get used to them but I am quite fond of both Tristan and Isolde. The petite Princess was sprawled out on your bed, by the way.”

“This is not a surprise. How was your day?” She smiled gently.

“I’m alive and I am free. I have no complaints.”

“Good.”

“You don’t look good.”

“Rough day. My birthday, our wedding day, and his birthday all in the span of a week.”

“I’m so sorry Alex. Is there anything I can do to help?”

She shook her head but smiled. “No. It will just take time. How are your headaches doing?”

“Eh.” He shrugged it off.

Ernst laughed when her arched brow arched even higher. “I am okay Dr. Heydrich. I had a bit of one earlier but it was eased by coffee.”

“Good. That makes me happy.”

“Have you eaten?”

She rolled her eyes and nodded. “Yes Papa.”

“Come sit and talk while I eat?”


He sat at the small table in the kitchen while she made him a sandwich and heated up a bowl of soup. Kaltenbrunner watched the American woman. It was strange. He never thought of her as
American. She was more German than some Germans he knew.

“Thank you.” He smiled when she placed dinner in front of him. “Alexandra, I do not know how to pay you back for all that you have done.”

“I told you, I don’t want nor need payment. Truthfully, you staying here has kept me from getting worse. I should be the one paying you.”

“You are a strange woman.”

“I have been told that often.” She smiled.

“You have never truly answered why you helped me.”

“I told you –“

“Reinhard thought highly of me. Yes, I know. I believe that is true, in part. What was the full reason?”

“Because I could.”

“You are serious.” Kaltenbrunner was surprised.

“Yes. There is no way Reinhard would have survived the trials. He would have been hunted like a dog and killed if he had escaped somehow. At least with his death, I am not having to worry about that. I couldn’t save him but I could save someone he trusted enough to be near me.

Ernst, please do not take this as an insult. I have no idea if you are guilty of the crimes that they charged you with. It is none of my business either. You were only in the position for a short time as it is. The fact of the matter is, nobody could know what you signed or didn’t sign. You could not remember since so many things were literally stamped. I don’t agree with railroading someone in a court room. Unless they had proof positive that you were guilty as charged I would have fought to my very death to keep you out of prison and alive.”

“I don’t see it as an insult. You have my thanks Alex. I am a lucky man.”

“Oh?”

“To count you as my friend? Yes. I am very lucky indeed.” He smiled. “I know how Reinhard felt about you Alexandra. He and I spoke often in the night. He loved you more than anything. I don’t know if I should tell you this or not. From the moment he met you in the hospital, there was never another woman for him besides you. You know he was somewhat of a womanizer?”

“Yes. I did. There is very little about Reinhard that I don’t know about.”

“He never was with another woman beside you after the attempt on his life. It was more than that. He didn’t want another woman. He didn’t need another woman. He had all he ever desired with you at his side. You made a difference in a lot of lives here.”

“Thank you Ernst.” She kissed his cheek.

“OH! I have something for you! I’ll be right back.”

It was six envelopes tied with a ribbon that Kaltenbrunner placed before her.

“I got love letters?” She started to laugh.
“Maybe? They were dropped off at my office today.”

“Are they important?”

“Are they a matter of life and death? No. Are they something you should eventually read? Yes. May I ask you something?”

“Of course.”

“Why haven’t you gone back to America?”

“There is nothing for me there.”

“Your family?”

“My situation is somewhat like your own. I can’t find them.”

“Why?”

“I have no idea.” Lies Alex! Fucking lies! Her family was extremely unhappy with her, not that she could blame them. “So, I stay where I can at least do some good. For now.”

“I have a request to ask of you.”

“What’s that?”

“Can you make me look different?”

“I’m not certain how you mean.”

“The scars. Is there a way to remove them?”

“Yes, it is a fairly easy surgery actually. Why do you wish to change?”

“What I was is associated with the scars. I am a monster with them.”

“No you aren’t. You are the same man with or without the mensur scars.”

“You know what they are?”

“Didn’t Reinhard tell you? I am a fencer too.”

“He may have, I don’t remember. Which is your preference.”

“Not épée.”

“Why not épée?”

“I’m perfectly capable of fencing épée but my brothers made fun of it, especially the younger one. Sabre is what I am best at. Reinhard and I used to dual fairly often. As for removing the scars, I would prefer we wait a little bit longer so we know of any potential issues with the hemorrhage. After that, I will schedule you in.”

“Thank you. Are you planning on staying in Berlin?”

“I’m weighing my options. I’m not sure what is going to happen. I have a favor to ask of you Ernst.”
“Alex, you know I will do anything I can.”

“Thank you.” She smiled gently. “I need to go away for a period of time. It’s just work. I am going to be with a group of surgeons to see what we can do to reverse some of the medical experiments on people. Help the civilian population with injuries and such. The Red Cross has organized it. They group I am with, I get to be head bitch in charge. Anyway, I know you were planning on getting your own place, but I need you to check in on Tristan and Isolde. You are more than welcome to stay here or just stop by every other day.”

“Do you know for how long?”

“Six months.”

“What bout Christoph and Rainer?”

“They and Amelie will be coming with me.”

Kaltenbrunner nodded. “I’ll stay. Thank you.”

“No Ernst, thank you.”

“I am going to win this one Alex!”

She laughed. “Oh do tell?”

“Finally I have a way of thanking you in a small way for all you have done.”

“I do have another favor to ask.”

“Whatever it is I will do it.”

“Stand on your head and sing the Yellow Rose of Texas.” She smiled. “No. I need you to get something to Lina Heydrich.”

“What?”

“I need y- “

“I heard you. Whatever for?”

Handing Kaltenbrunner a sealed envelope, Alexandra’s eyes glittered with tears.

“What is this?”

“You may open it if you wish. It’s a bank account made out to Lina. My name is not on anything nor is it traceable back to me. She is the only one that may access it. Reinhard would not want his children to be without. She will need a lawyer with her. I figured that could be you.” She handed him another envelope, paying his fees.

“Alexandra Kettler Heydrich! I will not take this from you. You saved my life. More than once. No. I will not take it.”

“Take it, please. For me.”

“Alex, what is going on?”
“I just miss him. I need some connection to him still and I find it withering away.”

“Thank you.”

She patted his shoulder and stood up. The walk to her bedroom seemed to be a long and tedious journey. Alexandra sat down on her bed. She needed to be packing but she was curious about the strange letters. Swear to god if I have a new stalker? Or a new rapist?

She didn’t have a new stalker. They were all letters and notes from Reinhard’s men. All six of them. They were letters wishing her well and hoping they would see her again. None of them had troubles with the trials since they were all of lower ranks. Every one of his men left a way to reach them if she ever needed to. So instead of packing, Alexandra sat down and wrote six letters.

While they were not love letters they very much filled with love.

Alexandra sat back for a few moments. She was just two weeks past her 32nd birthday. Feeling as if she had lived five lifetimes in the last four years, it amazed her that she wasn’t dead. It was time to make changes. Perhaps leaving Germany wasn’t the best of ideas. She had people here that cared about her.

She was saddened that Heinz Heydrich didn’t stay in contact with her, but she understood. Alex remained close with his wife and children. Heinz wasn’t implicated in the trials either, thankfully.

A framed picture caught Alexandra’s eye. Rising, she walked over and picked up the frame. It was the first picture she had taken of Reinhard with just Christoph. Rainer was still nursing so Reinhard picked up his tiny infant son. The happy father smiled and bounced his child. Alexandra had cried then. They were happy tears that time, unlike the ones that spilled now.

Reinhard told his son about the adventures he would take his boys on. How he would teach both boys about music and fencing. If their Mama was a good girl maybe she could go too, but only if she was good. Christoph made giggly sounding noises which made Reinhard laugh. He told his son that yes, Mama being a good girl was almost impossible. He and Rainer would have to try their best to help keep her in line.

When Rainer was done, he had both of his boys. In those silly moments, Alexandra looked at her husband and easily saw how radiant he was with his children. It made her hurt for the children he wasn’t permitted to see. It wasn’t fair to them or their father.

Alexandra ended up getting the important dates for Klaus, Heider, Silke, and Marte. She kept track of their birthdays, holidays, important school days, everything. Lina ended up calling and demanding Reinhard stop sending them things. He didn’t know anything about it. It was all Alexandra and it was all done through anonymous channels. She didn’t stop after Reinhard died either. She wanted the children to know that they were loved still and never forgotten.

The only person that knew was Eva. She took the secret to her grave.

Alexandra put the picture in her suitcase. It would go with her.
Chapter 44

Closing the front door to the flat she was staying in, it was time to walk to the hospital. Flat made it sound far grander than it was. Still, it was better than nothing. Most of the people working like she was didn’t get any privacy. It was a demand that Alexandra had made before deciding to go ahead and work like she was doing.

Granted all of the doctors were men, except her. So, she got the only private space anyway.

Looking up to the still dark morning sky, Alexandra paused as she did every day of her life for nearly 3 years. “I love you Reinhard Heydrich. I’ll never stop loving you. I’ll never stop missing you either.” Her fingers brushed across the locket she wore. She clasped it for a moment.

Now, it was time to be a surgeon.

The workdays were insanely busy. It was because of that very reason they wouldn’t work any medical personnel more than six months if they could help it. After the six months the medical personnel would be transferred back to a ‘normal’ job. Most everyone there pulled at minimum 17 hour days about five days a week. The other two days it was only ten to fifteen hours.

Because of her last name conjuring bad memories from people that were harmed by the Nazis, Alexandra was going by Kettler again. She refused to legally change her last name.

The people they saw were terrified of most of the physicians, including Alexandra. She didn’t blame them. She would be terrified too. None of the surgeons were German or Austrian born. They kept it that way so to provide the best for their patients. You wouldn’t expect a Brit to be a Nazi but a German you would, was the theory.

Alexandra made sure to bring food to the patients and have a few bites so they would see it wasn’t poisoned. Truly it was when she sat and prayed with some of them that patients began to relax around her. She told stories of her parents, siblings and growing up Jewish in the United States. They talked about holidays and tradition. It helped tremendously.

Her Polish was nearly fluent having spent the last three months in Poland. She had always been gifted with languages and was grateful for it. With the word of mouth spreading that the people working in the hospital were kind, they were getting busier and busier.

The group of doctors and nurses were amazing. Most all of them were British, American, or Canadian. Very few of them had any military training. They wanted to help. That was their reason for being there. All of them spoke both English and German. A good number of them were like Alexandra and spoke other languages as well.

“Kettler!” The head nurse this shift saw her walk in.

“Yo!”

“I need you hopping into bay two.”

“On it.”

There was an elderly couple in the room. The man wasn’t keeping anything down. Talking to the couple this had been going on for a couple of days now. By the symptoms, Alex was guessing food poisoning. It was common. People would try anything to fill their starving stomachs.
“Good morning. I’m Dr. Kettler.”

“Amerikanish?” The wife asked.

“Yes.”

“Yefayfiyeh!” The woman elbowed her husband.

Alexandra chuckled softly and told the woman thank you. She had just been called beautiful. It made the tired Alex smile. Then when the older woman’s eyes went wide, she patted the woman’s arm.

“I’m Jewish.” She smiled gently at them. The scent of fear from the Nazis lingered everywhere. It was especially bad where people were vulnerable, like the hospitals.

Alexandra wrote out orders and scripts. She also placed about a week’s worth of food vouchers in the woman’s hands after signing them. They would keep the gentleman for a day to get his vitals up. His wife could stay with him.

“Shayna maidel.” The elderly woman put her hands on Alex’s face and then gave her a warm kiss on the cheek. “Thank you.”

Alexandra teared up briefly. The woman reminded her of her grandmother. Bending down, she kissed the woman on both cheeks. “No. Thank you.”

“DOCTOR KETTLER!!”

Someone screamed right as she walked out of the curtained area. Alex ran out to see the problem. Her eyes went wide. It was quite possibly the worst case of gangrene she had ever seen. Alexandra knew that there was nothing that could be done for the man, even in her own time it was unlikely. She made the man comfortable and gave him morphine to make it easier. The gangrene was just too wide spread. How the man made it as long as he did, Alexandra couldn’t even fathom. They didn’t even know the man’s name. He would be leaving just as he came in, alone.

She was cleaning herself up when Alexandra heard her name again.

There was a child being brought in. She looked at the child while still in her mother’s arms. Alexandra knew what had happened. The child had been gang raped. Most likely by the Soviets but there was always a chance it was others or even locals.

“Prep for OR. Get me a gas man down here and an extra cutter.” Alex told them that she needed someone to act as an anesthesiologist and an extra surgeon. And to get an operating theatre ready for them all. “I only want women to be seen when we bring the child in. Men will scare her.”

The extra surgeon stepped in when the little girl was put under. He immediately began to complain about having to hide.

“Get the fuck out of my operating theatre.” Her bright blue eyes were hard.

“Excuse me?”

“Didn’t you hear me? GET THE FUCK OUT OF MY OPERATING THEATRE. If you think that trying to make a child that has been raped so many times that she had a prolapsed rectum and a wound in the vagina that has opened up into the rectal cavity feel a little better is such a fucking inconvenience? GET OUT. You are fired. Not only are you fired from here you are fired from the
entire service.”

“You don’t have the power to do that.”

“Bet me. I’m the head of this team or had you forgotten?” The smile she gave the man was frightening. “Don’t worry. I will make sure this record will follow you for the rest of your life.”

The surgery was a silent affair. The wounds this child bore were enough to silence even the most seasoned of surgeons. That combined with what had happen earlier, there was no idle chatter. After it was over, Alexandra sat down outside and looked off into the distance.

It wasn’t the first time she had a 1000 yard stare nor would it be the last.

She had just two more days left before she would leave to go back to Berlin. When was the last time I talked to Ernst? What fucking days is this? Sighing. There wasn’t a forthcoming answer to either question. It took her checking a calendar to get the answers. Two days ago and today is Thursday. Sheesh.

Seven days a week Alexandra had been seeing patients. Nearly every day she was performing surgeries to try and reverse some of the evil experimentations that the so called doctors did at the camps. Most of the time there was no cure, the damages were so horrible that she would have to find ways to lessen their pain. That was all she could do.

If Alex had her way? She would execute every doctor who did these experiments. But first, she would make them pay in blood.

Except you fucked and loved the guy that started this? Eh Lexi? Like you can talk. You are just as bad as Mengele. Her inner demons were screaming.

The rest of the time? She was doing what she did today, solving minor problems and trying to keep the minor from becoming major. Or picking up the pieces from the latest atrocities. How many days ago did she remove rocks from someone’s intestines as they tried to stave off hunger. In her free moments she was trying to reverse the abuse and malnutrition that so many people survived. It was never ending.

How many times had she gotten into fights with the Soviet soldiers? Alexandra spoke the language but she didn’t understand their brutality. Or was it her own she didn’t understand? She wasn’t sure.

When one of the Soviets came into the hospital she was the only one that spoke Russian. The man had gotten an infection when he forced someone into giving him oral sex and they bit him. By the bite radius Alexandra knew it was most likely a child under the age of 12, possibly under 10. The man walked out and shot himself after finding out they could do nothing for him.

Alexandra swore an oath one night because of the smarmy little bastard Gebhardt. She had a couple of drinks with the nurses and they were sharing their literal war stores. She would kill him or at the very least send him to his death if she ever could.

The day had been a long one and Alexandra was finally sitting down something to eat and drink. She caught a glance of herself in a reflection. She was losing weight yet again. Alexandra could almost hear Reinhard’s voice chastising her for it.

Mein Schatzi, you are too thin. You need to take better care of yourself.

Tears pricked her eyes and she brushed them away.
I miss you Reinhard. I miss you so much. Alexandra was eating as fast as possible. She needed to get back to work. At least the work numbed her enough that she wasn’t focusing on her losses.

“Did you get called on that gangrene?” Dr. Patrick Lyle sat down across from her.

“Hey Pat.” She gave a weary smile. Dr. Lyle was English born but had immigrated into the US as a child. They had been colleagues since day one in their services. “Yes. It was the worst I had ever seen.”

“Did I hear right that some areas were skeletal and falling off.” He speared a piece of sausage with his fork.

“Tips of toes up to the 8th rib.”

“Bloody hell.”

“Yeah, it was bad. There was nothing we could do. I am still shocked that the man was even alive. You know the moment I honestly felt like a surgeon?”

“When?”

“I could eat whatever and still talk about or see some of the foulest moments in medicine.” Lyle laughed. “You are right. Where are you going next?”

“Back to Berlin, thankfully.”

“Not back to the States?”

“No. I’ve lived in Germany for a while.”

“You got a thing for Nazis?”

“No. I loathe that shit. I was married to a German he was killed in a car accident only a few months after I had given birth.”

“Oh shit Alex, I didn’t know.”

“It’s okay. I don’t think I have told anyone.”

“Would you like to get dinner with me some night?”

“Thank you, but I leave tomorrow after my shift. I have a lot to do before I go.”

“What about in Berlin? I’ll be in Leipzig. If I remember correctly, it’s only about two hours from Berlin. We can go as friends, if you prefer.”

“That would be nice.” Liar!

“Good. I need to get back to work. I’ll see you later.

“Talk to you soon.”

It was sheer willpower that Alexandra didn’t start bashing her head into the table. Perhaps if she never fell in love with Reinhard or if more time had passed, Alexandra would have considered it. It was too soon. Maybe if she hadn’t ever known Reinhard but now? No. She couldn’t. Sighing softly
she pressed her forehead to the heels of her hands.

“Dr. Kettler?”

“Yes?” She her head up. It was one of the nurses.

“Can you take a look at this please? I think something is off but I am not sure to what.”

Frowning, Alexandra took a look. There were jumps but they were all within the midline. Then she understood. “I see. Is the patient here?”

“Yes Doctor. Your office.”

Alexandra moved with swiftness. Finishing the last bites of lunch on her way to the other side of the hospital. Her office wasn’t really her office.

“Thank you Christelle.”

The nurse nodded with a smile and walked off.

Opening the door and swiftly closing it she spoke softly. “It’s me.”

Heinz Heydrich stepped out from behind the blackout curtain.

“Heinz.” Alexandra hugged her brother-in-law tightly.

“It’s good to see you Alex.” He returned the hug.

“You look good. Healthy. How is Trude and the children? What’s going on? You aren’t in any trouble are you?”

“No. Not at all. Everyone is fine. I saw the things that Reinhard had been working on before you and he met. That was, surprising and sickening.”

“Heinz, he changed. I swear he did.”

“I know. Thankfully.” Heinz smiled softly. “You are still wearing the ring and the necklace.”

“Of course.”

“Why?”

The single word was crushing to her. “Heinz, your brother was my world. He is still my world. Just because he was killed doesn’t mean my love for him has died too. I love Reinhard. I will always love him. Swear to me everything is okay Heinz? You aren’t going to trial right? You showing up in Poland is not an accident.”

“You are correct, it’s not. But no, I am not being brought to trial. I’m a lowly journalist.”

“What’s wrong?”

“Why is Kaltenbrunner in your home?”

“That’s what you are here about?” She couldn’t help but laugh at the ridiculousness of it being because of Ernst. “I found out about his brain hemorrhage quite unexpectedly. I didn’t trust the Allies to take care of him properly. So I went to see him. The conditions were appalling. So when
he was well enough to return to the trial proceedings, I made sure he had an adequate defense team. His lawyer was a jerk. Anyway, he was acquitted. He didn’t have anywhere to go and my home is somewhat remote. I figured he would have a better chance to rebuild his life there. He was going to move out in mid-April but I didn’t have anyone to stay with the cats so he is there taking care of them.”

“You and he are not a couple?”

“Good god no.” The accusation pierced her heart further.

Heinz started to speak but she cut him off quickly.

“What the hell Heinz? He was someone Reinhard respected. Kaltenbrunner came out to the villa when we were there. Reinhard trusted him enough that he allowed Kaltenbrunner to know about me. Heinz, I would never do that to Reinhard’s memory. I would never do that to Reinhard.”

While tears fell on her fair cheeks, it was the pain in her voice that was the most noticeable. “Jesus Christ Heinz. I was sitting eating not even ten minutes ago and I saw my reflection. I could hear Reinhard’s voice in my head saying Mein Schatzi, you are too thin. You need to take better care of yourself.”

“Alexandra, I’m sorry I-“

“No.” She backed away. Her hands raised at chest high.

“Why on earth would you think I would do such a thing? Do you think so little of me? Not that he can hear it, but I talk to Reinhard every morning. I wish him good night every time I go to bed. Somedays I wish I would have died too.

I hate my very existence with him not here with me. I blame myself of every fucking hour of every fucking day. I was the reason he didn’t leave our home on time. I was the one that kept him past the time he needed to leave. I’m the goddamn reason that he died. My sweet beloved Lion died because of me.”

“Ple – “

“Now you know the truth. Just go. Get out of here.” Throwing the door open, she moved swiftly.

“Alexandra, wait.”
Chapter 45

Alexandra stopped in the doorway.

“Ich liebe dich mein Schatzi. I never stopped loving you either Alexandra.” His voice was soft.

She just stared across the hallway.

“Would you turn around, please?”

The look on her face was one of incomprehension. Finally, she nodded and turned. When she moved, the door closed behind her.

His presence overwhelmed the small room. He still was a large man but it was more than that. She never saw him as fearsome as so many others had in the past. Reinhard Heydrich, murderer of millions had always been gentle with her. But now? Now a tremor ran down her spine. He was dead. Or he supposedly was dead. Now he returned from the dead?

Having always welcomed Reinhard’s presence it felt strange to be frightened of him. She took a step back and then another. Alexandra’s back brushed against the solid door. She tried to put distance between them. Shaking her head, she licked her lips.

“Reinhard?”

“Yes my love. It’s me.” He reached out to her

Her eyes glittered not with the love he expected, but with pain. She stepped backwards again and her body shrunk from him. Alexandra was not permitting him to touch her.

“Don’t. Don’t touch me.” The underlying panic in her voice there.

“Alexandra….” Reinhard reached for her once again and stepped closer

He was too close. In an instance the fear turned to terror. Terror overrode her conscious thoughts and Alexandra began to hyperventilate. “Get away from me.”

When he tried again, Alexandra fought back. Reinhard was able to move quickly so that it was a glancing blow that he received. He had been prepared for a swipe from her left, as she was left handed. Somewhere in the overriding survival instinct of her’s she knew to lead with her right. He wouldn’t expect it.

In some strange way, Reinhard was proud of her.

Yet, a welt raised immediately. He didn’t counter the attack. Instead, he grabbed her hands and held her wrists while backing her into the wall. He pressed against her, not out of lust but because of love. It was because he loved her that Reinhard wouldn’t retaliate but this way she couldn’t lash out physically at him either.

“You have been alive all this time?” She fought against him while trying to get free. Alexandra managed to get a hand free and was ready to slap him across the face. Reinhard barely grabbed her wrist in time.

“And you.” She turned towards Heinz. “You waltz in here and frighten me to death? I think that you are going to be taken to trial in Nuremburg. All I could think of was how to get you, Trude and
the children to safety. I have done everything I can in your brother’s name and you wanted to know if I had kept myself pure for him?! Jesus H. Motherfucking Christ Heinz. Who I have had in my bed is none of EITHER of your concerns! Fuck you both. You can both go to hell and ROT!”

Heinz had the decency to look ashamed. Something Alexandra said sparked a memory. Heinz Heydrich excused himself, briefly.

“I will. Only after you listen first.” Reinhard’s voice was firm.

“No. Get the hell out of here and get the fuck away from me.”

“Alexandra….please.”

The lies all of the lies. It was all a lie. Life, death, him, had all been lies. She wailed in the worst sort of pain she had felt in her entire life. His death had not been this bad. She dropped to her knees on the cold floor. Alexandra felt as if she were dying. The one person she allowed herself to trust had betrayed her completely.

He realized she was shaking. Without thinking, Reinhard picked her up and pulled her to his lap. Holding her tight to him, he tried to comfort her.

“Alexandra. Look at me.”

She turned her head to the sound of his voice. Alex didn’t look at Reinhard. Oh no, she glared at him with such anger and hate that he was taken aback.

“I thought you were dead.” It was an accusation. “You let me think you were dead.” The hurt and despair in her voice was apparent. She fought to get away from him. Sliding on the floor, she was the furthest she could be away from him in the room.

“I know. Everyone thinks that. For all intents and purposes, I am dead.”

“Why?”

“My death was faked, Schatzi. I was captured by the British. I couldn’t tell you before now. I was unable to contact anyone. But, my Alexandra. I’m here finally. I came back for you and our boys. Oh my beloved wife, I have missed you more than words could ever say. The thoughts of returning to you and our children were all that kept me going.”

Reinhard watched her carefully. He was concerned about her wellbeing. He could see the tendrils of panic in her eyes. Was she in shock? Oh how he wanted to hold her! He was never known for his patience but for her he would do anything.

“Schatzi, look at me.”

She did.

“I love you Alexandra Elisabeth Kettler Heydrich. The moment I was released, I went to our home. A bomb had leveled most of it. So I took a chance and tried our old home. I didn’t let Ernst know I was there, to be safe. I contacted Heinz after. I am here so that we may be together once more. I love you my girl. I love you more than anything in this world or the next.” The words were a plea. He needed his woman. He needed his wife and children with him.

“Your actions speak louder than your words Reinhard. I sincerely doubt there was no possible way to get a message to me. You declared your love for me and you left. NOT ONCE BUT TWICE.
That does not sound like love to me.” She snapped.

He winced. “The night I left the villa, I was ashamed. I was embarrassed. You know this! I was not
going to risk you. I had made Heinz and Ernst promise me they would get you home if something
had happened to me before you even met them. Alexandra you know all of this.”

“Reinhard, stop. Just stop.”

“Schatzi, I love you too much to permit harm to come to you. This time? This time there was a
different plan and one set into place. My captors gave me two choices. I could help them and be
rewarded or I could refuse and they would torture you. My darling, no one knew I was alive until
now, except my captors.”

“I cannot do this Reinhard. I cannot. I don’t have the strength to do more of this. I’m sorry you
came all this way but no. I cannot go through this again.” Alexandra walked out. Once she got
around the corner, she took off in a run.

Pale and shaking, she went to the head nurse and told her that she was going back to her flat,
feigning illness.

“Do you need someone to get you home? You look awful Dr. Kettler.”

“No. I’ll be fine. Thank you.”

Alexandra started to walk home.

“Kettler! Hey Kettler!” Dr. Patrick Lyle was outside having a cigarette. He yelled and jogged over
to her. “Jesus girl. You look like shit.”

“So I’ve heard.” She kept walking.

“Alex, seriously you look really bad. Let me get you home.”

“I’m fine. Really.” Pausing for a moment, Alex sighed. “Pat, please. Leave me be.”

It felt like Reinhard appeared out of nowhere. Alexandra knew he didn’t but it made her wince all
the same.

Reinhard wrapped an arm around her waist and gave Lyle a cold viper’s smile. “You heard the
lady. She wishes to be left alone.” He made a show of kissing her cheek. Reinhard knew he was
playing a dangerous game. Alexandra was no man’s pawn.

“That includes you.” She snarled at him.

Everything about Reinhard screamed Nazi, even though he was dressed in civilian clothes. The
way he tried to manhandle her and make Alexandra give in to his desires had the air of Nazi
arrogance.

“Alexandra?” Lyle looked to Reinhard and then to Alex.

“Patrick, go away. Now. I’m fine. He will not do anything to harm me.” And honestly? I can’t say
that I won’t kick him in the balls. Alexandra was furious.

He nodded and backed away, keeping a careful eye on Reinhard.

“I mean it Pat. I need you to leave. Ten minutes ago.” She started walking to her flat once again.
She was thankful that Pat did as asked

“Schatzi, please.”

Turning swiftly, she bared her teeth. “Can I have some time alone? Is that fucking okay? Just twenty minutes ago your brother was berating me because I had a man living in my house when I am not even there. If either you or your brother would have investigated a little bit you would have easily seen that we don’t share a bed, a room, or anything else except the house.” Okay and the cats.

“Alexandra please…”

“I FUCKING BURIED YOU. I PUT YOU IN THE GROUND.”

She looked at him and shook her head.

“I never got over you. I never had that chance. Here you are thinking that everything should be back to normal and I don’t even know what that is. I have fought to stay alive every single day because I wanted nothing more than to follow you to the life after. At least once a week I would go at night to visit your grave so nobody would see me. I would sit and talk to you for hours. And cry. I missed you so much that I would lay next to where I thought you were buried. The rest of the time I had to act like nothing was wrong. I had our children to take care of. They were the only reason I didn’t slit my own wrists. I cannot survive this pain any longer Reinhard.”

“Alexandra, give us another chance. I beg of you, please.”

“I cannot.” Unlocking the door to her flat, she stepped inside without another word. She locked the door behind her.

“Reinhard.” Heinz touched his brother’s arm.

“What?”

“Alexandra’s right. She never had the chance to grieve. She never had the chance to mourn for the loss of you.”

“What do you mean?”

“Nobody knew how devastated she was. She was alone. I couldn’t be there for her. She had nobody at all. She tried to help a few of the fellows during the trials and was able to get Kaltenbrunner out and Speer out of the death penalty. When Alex gave her final testimony, she was shunned by most everyone after admitting she was Jewish.”

“That’s ridiculous!”

“Is it? She has no family. She has no friends. Three times now she gave up everything for you. When you two first met, she was forced to stay at the hospital. Then she was your caretaker and lover. You abandoned her. You miraculously get her back and she agreed to marry you. She is happy and pregnant and then you are gone again just a couple of months after she gives birth. Now you are back once more. Reinhard, that girl gave up everything for you.”

“I never realized…..”

“When you were buried, it was Lina that stood at the grave. She cried her false tears and paraded your children around. Alexandra was there physically but was barely functioning. Reinhard, listen
to me. Alexandra would have died if it wasn’t for Christoph and Rainer. She loves you. I know she
does but she has been horrifically hurt. Think of what she has gone through since she happened to
be in Prague. She was held hostage, interrogated, had guns held to her head, she was almost raped
two different times by three men, you declare your undying love for her and you disappear. That is
all in what? Three months? Do I need to tell you about what Buder put her through? Whatever she
did, she did it for you and your children. I don’t just mean the twins either.”

Reinhard looked to his brother with horror written on his face. He never put everything together
before.

“When Lina told you to stop sending your children presents? It was Alexandra doing that. She has
been doing that even after it appeared that you died. Lina slapped Alex across the face and spit on
her. What does your wife do? She funnels money anonymously to Lina so your children have a
good life.”

“How did you find this out?”

“Kaltenbrunner. I called him when I walked out of the exam room.”

“You’re right.” Reinhard knocked on the door. “Alexandra, I’m leaving. I don’t want to leave but I
will respect your wishes. I love you. I will always love you.”

She didn’t answer.
Chapter 46

Having slept enough that she no longer felt raw, Alexandra walked outside of her flat. She wouldn’t smoke inside because of the smell and the children. Now when she would venture outside of her home, she was always armed. A pistol and a knife honed as sharp as any scalpel. The two items were her constant companions.

Between the Russians, Germans, and desperate people of all types. It wasn’t wise for a woman to be unarmed. Traveling in groups didn’t help either. It created multiple people to attack.

Alexandra knew better than to take a chance ever again.

Going down to the curb she as startled to see Reinhard there having a smoke of his own. He smoked even less than she did.

Hearing her footsteps he turned around. “I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to startle you. I’ll go.” He started to get up.

“Why are you here?”

“I went for a walk. I’m always drawn to you, even when I don’t realize it. Good night Alexandra.”

“Stop. Please?”

“Why?”

“I’m too tired to fight with you. You are on public property and not private. I still love you. Pick one?”

Reinhard sat down on the curb. “I’ll take the last one.” He rubbed his hand over his face. “I’m a fool. I am a complete and utter fool.”

“Well good. Since we are both sitting on the curb, we are a pair of fools.”

“For all that I have done or let happen to you, I am so sorry Alexandra. You are the last person that I ever wanted to hurt.”

“I know. You are the last person I want to hurt as well.”

Reinhard looked to her and smiled sadly. “The Brits gave me an option. I could watch you be tortured and then be killed or I could help them, willingly. Guess what I chose? Did you know that the assassination attempt you saved me from was done, in part, by the British?”

“Yes. The men that tried to kill you were Czech. It was set up by their government that was in exile in the UK. The British trained the men. You were targeted specifically. I messed that up, not realizing what I had walked into.”

“How did you know?”

“It took them a while to find who did it or tried to kill you. When they were found the men were all killed. As your widow, I was told.”

“If you knew in that moment that I was supposed to have died would you have tried to save me? Or if you knew who I was and what I had done?”
“Yes I would have saved you. And excuse me? Tried? No. I would have saved you. I did save you.”

He snorted. “Cocky. Why?”

“Why am I cocky? I know what I am doing. Am I the best surgeon? Doubtful. But I am damn near close to the best.” She smirked. “I have told you before, I will not willingly send a person to their grave if I can save them and give them a decent quality of life. If the attack had left you with a head wound where you would have been in a severely diminished capacity I would have let you die. That is not what happened so I worked to save you.”

“You should have let me die Alexandra.”

“No. I shouldn’t have.”

“That man that ran after you? Patrice?”

“Patrick.”

“He would like to know you better.”

“Reinhard, I have already turned him down.” She lit another cigarette.

“Why?”

“There will never be another man in my life. Well, that’s not true. Christoph and Rainer will become men someday. I found the love of my life in you. I don’t want anyone but you. No one else could ever live up to my expectations. Nor would they have anywhere near the beautiful arse that you possess.”

“Honestly, you are the oddest woman I have ever known.”

“I get that a lot, even from others.”

“I believe it.” He chuckled. His voice was barely audible. “If I helped them willingly, they would give me a new name, new country, and a new face. I declined the face. I figured you would do a better job anyway. I made them add in you and of course our children. I didn’t think that maybe you wouldn’t want to go or that you would be upset. I’m very sorry Alexandra. I was a fool.”

“You aren’t a fool.” She pulled the flask out of her pocket and offered him a drink. “I was.” After he took a drink, Reinhard handed it back. “I never forced myself to recover after I believed you to be dead.” She took a drink that time. Then she made it a double. “There was so much going on. I had the children. I had work. I was working at whatever until I was so exhausted I couldn’t do anything else but sleep. When you showed up unexpectedly today, I was madder than a wet cat.”

“Why?”

“At first it was like the villa all over again. Not to mention that I have been working 17 hour days almost every day for three months.”

“Why so much?” He looked alarmed.

“Too many hurting people and not anywhere near enough people to help them. I operated on a little girl of about 10 that had been gang raped by adult men. That wasn’t even the worst thing I saw today.”
“Schatzi…” Reinhard opened his arms to her without thinking. He was surprised when she curled up in his embrace.

Alexandra nodded. “Lina came to visit me.”

“How did she find you?”

“How many Dr. Alexandra Heydrichs are there around?” She smiled wryly. “It did not go well. She was still angry. She blamed me for taking you from your family.”

“Heinz told me. He called Kaltenbrunner earlier. He said she slapped you and spit on you.”

“Yes. It was ugly. I did understand a bit more about you through her.”

“Oh?”

“Your womanizing ways made sense.”

“Thanks.”

“No, I truly mean that. Reinhard, you are a loving and caring man. You are one of the sweetest men I have ever met. When you love? You do so honestly and completely. It’s beautiful to see.” She laid her cheek on his shoulder. “You have put up a lot of walls in the past to protect yourself. You wanted companionship desperately but you were unable to find it. I think that you and I worked together because I we took care of each other’s needs and relished doing so.”

“That does make sense.” He smiled softly at her. “How did you feel about the suicides?”

“Honestly? It broke my heart. I didn’t have any love for Hitler or Goebbels. The fact he killed Blondi and her pups? Or Goebbels killed his children? I was angry. Eva though? Hearing she had married him and committed suicide with him? Eva always reminded me of someone that was willfully ignorant. She didn’t want to know of the horrors simply because she didn’t want her love for him to change. I cried for Eva. I couldn’t blame her for taking the cyanide pill to be honest.”

“Why do you say that? If I know you like I think I do, I am fairly certain you cried for all of them.” He stroked her hair back.

“The Russians came first. They were brutal. They raped so many women. Hell, they raped children and the elderly as well. Reinhard, it was horrifying.” Alexandra actually shivered thinking about it. “You probably aren’t wrong. As terrified as I was of Adolf Hitler, he was able to make me relax. He told me that you had said he reminded me of my father. He was very pleased and thanked me. Honestly? I felt badly for him in the strangest of ways.”

“Did anyone try to harm you? What do you mean?”

“No. The closest was there were two drunk Russians on the hospital grounds. They catcalled me but when I yelled at them in Russian they took off like a shot.” She shrugged. “Why did I feel baldy for him? Hitler’s personal physician, that Dr. Morell was something nightmares are made of.”

Reinhard nodded.

“Morell was a fool and utterly dangerous. These so called treatments that he was giving Hitler?
They would have ended up killing him in the long run. Basically Morell was feeding his patient rat poison, feces, and other unsavory things. The fact that Hitler wasn’t already dead was probably a miracle. I have no idea which of Hitler’s illnesses were real and which were brought on by the crap Morell was giving him.”

“Morrell was crazy. Even I knew that. I can’t remember if Hitler or Morrell gave something to Himmler. Himmler had it sent to one of the labs to determine what was in it. It was a frightening mixture.”

“There is a bacteria that lives in your feces. It also causes severe illnesses in people. Which is why you are told to wash your hands before leaving the lavatory.”

“Why are you telling me this?”

“Shut up and listen please.

“Just because you said please.” Reinhard smiled and gave her hair a gentle tug.

“Morell was giving him the bacteria. You could say Morell was feeding Hitler shit and not be completely wrong.”

“That is disgusting. What else did Lina say to you?”

“When you returned home and wouldn’t touch her, she knew then it was over. You were in love and you were giving another woman your fidelity. It was something that you never gave her. That’s why she asked for a divorce. She could live with your indiscretions but not you loving another. She blamed that on me. Which was fair, we were the ones having the affair.”

Reinhard frowned and ran his hand through his hair. “Alexandra……” He couldn’t find the words quite yet. “I ruined your life.”


“How many times were you hurt because of me? How many times did someone put their hands on you because of me? You can’t tell me that you being with me didn’t cause you pain.”

“Reinhard. Stop. You cannot control the actions of others. You have done things that affected my life greatly. You married me. You fathered our children. You loved me once upon a time. Those you did. The other things? They were not you. You gave an order for me NOT to be touched. They men that did touch me were punished. That is not your fault. The same goes for Buder. That was not your fault. You are only ever in control of a single person and that person is you.”

“I loved you once upon a time?” He stared at his wife, incredulous. “You think I ever stopped loving you?”

“My behavior earlier was awful, again. You didn’t deserve that treatment from me, again.”

“My wife is daft. I will never not love you Alexandra Heydrich. I would turn you over my knee and smack your backside if I didn’t know you would enjoy it!”

“Reinhard, I don’t deserve your love.”

“Please, do not say that. Please.”

“Why weren’t you faithful to your wife?”
“I have always been faithful to my wife. You, Alexandra Heydrich are my wife. I however wasn’t always faithful to my ex-wife. To be perfectly honest, I am not sure. Not to say I don’t know some of the reasons.”

“Such as?”

He sighed softly. “I’ll have to start at the beginning. When I was dismissed from the Navy, she was there. Lina’s parents didn’t wish her to marry me but she was ready to defy them. I was very much in awe of her loyalty. Yet, there was so much that we lacked between us. We just had so very little in common with each other. We were in love with being in love.”

Reinhard rubbed his hand down his face. “I was pumped full of beliefs that were not my own. Marry a younger woman, make sure they aren’t too smart, this way you can train them.”

Alexandra looked horrified.

“It’s okay Schatzi. I didn’t believe that nonsense for long. It was why I think I had so many affairs. I wanted a woman that was essentially you but I didn’t understand that. My life bored me.”

“Is that why you ended up flying?”

“I believe so and I think I may have had a death wish too.”

“Why?”

Reinhard paused for a moment, thinking. “I was miserable. I was unable to do anything to make myself happy. I couldn’t have actual friends. What would happen if I had to take action against them? I was so unhappy that death sounded better than living. Except I couldn’t commit suicide, where would that leave my children? So, I figured if I played around it would be alright. Yes, I know that was a horrible idea. I thought I could hide it. I had rules. Never the same girl more than twice in so many months. Stick to the brothels or the party girls.” He lit two cigarettes and handed one to Alexandra.

“Thank you.”

“There was a lot of pressure to be married and have as many children as possible, for the Fatherland. We never took into consideration that we needed to learn about each other first. I loathe to admit this Alexandra, please forgive me. Lina bored me. She bored me in every way possible. I didn’t even realize to what extent until I met you.”

“Me?!”

“Yes, you. I am not blaming you at all. Please don’t think that.”

“I don’t. I was just surprised.”

“I didn’t believe what I wanted could exist until I met you.”

“I keep telling you I am boring. I really am not joking about that.”

“Perhaps you feel that way but you are anything but boring to me. My god Alexandra! You are so vibrant. You shine like no one I have ever seen. You are funny, warm, caring, and brilliant.” He smiled. “You understand music and the arts. No it is not so simple as understanding you feel it in your very soul. I have sat with you in a room while we listened to the radio. Your attention to the music was so breathtaking to watch. With your head on my lap, your lips parted, you were
enthralled by the notes. You could see them before your very eyes as they were played.”

“If you tell me I was smelling the colors next I am going to think you were on acid.” She chuckled.

“Acid?!”

“LSD aka acid. It’s a psychedelic drug invented in the later part of the 30s. It makes you hallucinate.”

“You didn’t have anyone to impress. I remember so clearly the first time I watched you listen to the music. You didn’t even know I was back in the room. You were enraptured with every note. I stood there watching your fingers against the arm of the sofa as you conducted.”

Reinhard smiled to himself, remembering.

“You have the desire to help people so they could have a better life. It’s the simple things that you desire. You enjoy good food, laughter, talking and so much more. My Alexandra. Oh my sweet Alexandra I was so ready to die at the hands of the British. You were my beacon. I kept hoping to come home to you.” He swallowed. “There was a night that I was ready to quit. I was ready to die. They didn’t hurt me physically but they kept playing tricks.”

“Mind games?”

“Yes. One night I passed out. I didn’t realize it at the time but they were not letting me get any sleep. The last night they tried that I passed out. I dreamt of you. You were sitting in our bed and nursing our sons. You were so serene.” Reinhard gave a half smile, remembering. “You moved over so I could curl up against you. We didn’t have to do anything but be with each other and we were gloriously happy.”

“Come inside with me please?” She stood up.

He nodded and followed.

The flat wasn’t large. It wasn’t even decorated well. It served the purpose it was intended for. A temporary home for Alexandra and her sons. Their sons.

She closed the door to Amelie’s room, so as not to disturb the sleeping nanny.

Carefully and quietly, Alexandra opened the bedroom that their children were occupying. The twin boys were sound asleep. They each had a teddy bear on their bed. Reinhard gazed as his children for the first time in almost two years.

She whispered in his ear. “Reinhard go sit on the sofa please? I’ll be back out in just a couple of minutes.”

When he was out of sight, Alexandra went into the bedroom and woke her sons. She told one and then the other she had a surprise for them.

Walking back out to the tiny family room, she held the hand of Christoph and the left and Rainer on the right. The squinting toddlers rubbed their eyes with the hand that held their bears.

“Rainer? Christoph? I know you don’t remember him but this is your Papa.”

She was on her knees with the boys who stared wonderingly at Reinhard. Their father had the exact same expression looking at them.
“Would you like to say hello to Papa, lieblings?”

“Hello Papa.” Rainer spoke first.

“Hello Papa.”

“Hello Rainer. Hello Christoph.” Reinhard couldn’t help but smile.

They only spent perhaps ten minutes with their father before Alexandra and Reinhard tucked them back in to bed.

Closing the door to where just a crack was left, the parents walked back out into the small family room.

“Thank you.” Reinhard was looking to the worn carpet.

“For?”

“Letting me see my children.”

“Reinhard, I would never keep your children away from you without reason. I understand if you want a divorce. We can work out a schedule so you may see your boys.”

His mouth dropped open. All Reinhard could do was stare at his wife. First she said he used to love her and now this? He realized something. His wife had been hurt many times over her lifetime. It wasn’t just these last few years. Alexandra was confident in her skills as a doctor. But she really had no idea how many people actually cared deeply for her. His beautiful wife saw herself as expendable.

“Schatzi…Oh my god. I never realized it until now.”

“What?”

“You are unable to see yourself as the rest of the world does because you find yourself to be expendable. When you told me that this war was not black and white and you only saw yourself as a doctor that was the truest statement you uttered to me about yourself. You don’t think you have worth outside of your medical skills do you?”

She wanted to deny this but she couldn’t. “I am an excellent surgeon but that is about it.”

“My beloved girl. I am so sorry. I never realized that someone that I thought was so wonderful would have the same fears I did.”

“There is no reason to say you are sorry. You have done nothing wrong.”

“Yes I have. Alexandra, you are the love of my life. I have been remiss in showing you how much I mean that.” Reinhard laid his hand against her cheek. “You are the strongest woman I have ever known. Your light is the brightest in my world.”

His blue eyes pleaded with her to simply understand.

“My sweet girl. My Schatzi. Forgive me for not understanding that about you. I had no idea. You are the love of my entire life. I want nor will have anyone but you.” Reinhard drew her closer to him. Pressing his lips to her’s, he kissed his beloved for the first time in nearly two years.

“I love you my wife. I never want to let you go.”
Chapter 47

Alexandra had just finished getting dressed, when the pounding on her door started. A glance to her watch, it wasn’t but half past four in the morning.

Opening the door after she looked out from a side window, she was almost ready to leave. “What might I do for you Heinz?”

“Alexandra, please.” There was a look of panic in his eyes. “Have you seen my brother?”

She swung the door open a touch more to let him in, Alexandra said nothing as she walked out. She was running a few minutes late for the early morning rounds as it was.

Alexandra’s bedroom was in plain view of the front door. Heinz could see that Reinhard was sitting on the edge of the bed. He wore nothing but his trousers. Looking up at his younger brother, there was a self-satisfied smirk on his full mouth.

“You couldn’t have left a note?” Heinz took a seat in a chair.

Reinhard laughed. “Heinz, I have not seen my girl in nearly two years. Leaving a note didn’t even cross my mind.”

“Things are better between you two?”

“Yes. Not perfect but better.”

“Good. I am glad to hear that. What do I need to do to get back in her good graces?”

“I wouldn’t recommend what I just did. I would hate to have to strangle my brother.” Reinhard grinned.

“I’ll talk to her and apologize.”

“That is usually the best when it comes to Alexandra. I recommend staying back some. My wife packs one hell of a left hook and an uppercut.”

“Does she need help packing?”

“No. It’s all done.” Reinhard nodded at the two boxes and 3 suitcases by the door. “These doctors have their household needs provided for. They just bring about a week’s worth of clothing. You remember Klaus Fischer?”

“Yes. He was one of your men.”

“He and the other five men at the villa found out that Alexandra stayed in Berlin. Klaus ended up speaking with Ernst about something, I don’t remember what. Klaus had asked if it was true that she was the one that fought for him at the trial. When he said yes, Klaus asked if he could get a message to her. It was six messages. They all wrote her a note saying if she was ever in need of anything at all they would always be there for her. She showed them to me. I am proud of my men. I’m proud of my woman.”

“She really has changed you.”

“Why do you say that?”
“Outside of the obvious?” Heinz chuckled. “You saw other men as competition when it came to women prior to her.”

Rubbing his chin, he smiled at the realization. “With Alexandra, I never had a concern that she would choose another over me. I didn’t have a reason for that sort of jealousy. I belong to her and she belongs to me.” He smiled. “I do however owe that other doctor an apology.”

“Do you know where you wish to go?”

“I keep thinking Switzerland.”

“Are you crazy?”

“It keeps me close to home and it’s a neutral country.”

“Reinhard! You will be recognized.”

“I can have Alexandra change my face.”

“Reinhard, you cannot. You would be better off overseas.”

“Come Heinz. Let’s pack the car up. I would like to get flowers for my Schatzi.”

“Does this go with us?” Heinz pointed at the folded quilt on top of the suitcase.

“Yes. That quilt will be buried with me when I die.”

Heinz looked at his brother questioningly but Reinhard said nothing.

“She had made the quilt for Christoph and Rainer. When I supposedly died, she cut it in half and had it buried with me.”

“Hey Alex, can you look at this?” Ruta was one of the few actual locals working in the hospital. The young Polish nurse was one of Alexandra’s favorite people.

“Sure. What’s going on?” Looking at the numbers Alexandra frowned. “What the hell? Meds?” She looked up at Ruta.

“No. None given. I don’t think they even gave the child aspirin, ever.”

“Age?”

“Close to puberty but not there yet.”

“Shit shit shit. Get Dr. Lyle over here. He isn’t a pediatrician but he is better than I am.” She handed the stack of files over to Ruta. “These ae done. They need medication but orders are written. Get a nurse in there, if there are question call me.”

“You think I am done with you yet Kettler? I have to make your last day as memorable as your first.”

“Damn good thing I like you Ruta.” She read over the symptoms and such but Alex knew what it was. She gave a silent thank you to her father because of it. “First one get me a chest film immediately.”

“What do you think it is?”
“Coarctation of the aorta. Most likely the kid will need surgery.”

“Pat.” She looked up. “I need a second on this one.” She handed the file to him.

“Come and sit. You need food.”

“I had breakfast. Good lord, it is still morning.” Sheesh.

“And you were here around stupid o’clock in the morning. It’s what? 1030? Six hours ago. You are too thin. Move it Kettler. That is my payment for looking at this.’

“Asshole.”

“I love it when you whisper sweet nothings.” Patrick Lyle smirked.

She rolled her eyes. “Wilsons?”

“Shit, yes.” He slammed his hand down on the table.

“Do we have anything we can treat the kid with?”

“Nothing I am aware of.”

“Wait. What about zinc acetate, food control, and a shit ton of water?”

“It might work.”

“I think that is all we got.”

“Alex, food control won’t work. Too many people are willing to eat a damn tire if they could chew it.”

“It’s the best chance we have. I don’t know of any other chelation type of drugs we can get.”

He shoved a large bowl of potatoes in front of her.

“Seriously?”

“There is enough butter, fat and carbs to fill you up.”

“Thanks Dad.”

“Now who the hell was that Nazi giving you shit yesterday?”

“Nazi?!” She choked on a piece of potato.

“That man was the most Aryan looking person I have ever seen in my life.”

“You need to get out more then.”

“Who was it? I’m serious Alexandra. I have seen you madder than hell because something went horribly wrong here. Or because some of our drugs were stolen. I have never seen you that angry at a single human being. Are you in any danger?”

“No. I am not in danger. He was a man I loved dearly. Fate didn’t look kindly upon us and we split apart. I was upset because seeing him was unexpected. I never thought I would see him again.”
“You said loved. Do you still love him?”

“Yes.”

“Is he a Nazi?”

“Right. A Nazi would simply adore my Jewish ass.” She rolled her eyes. “I need to get the one kid prepped for surgery.”

“You want me to scrub in?”

“No. You are needed more out here today. I will snag one of the Danes.”

“You speak Danish?”

“Only enough to get me drunk, laid, or thrown in jail.” She gave a wry smile. “Luckily his German is perfect.”

It was almost 12 hours later that Alexandra came out of surgery. She looked haggard and felt worse.

“Hey Kettler. Lyle went outside for a smoke. He’s looking for you.”

“Thank you Izaak.”

Walking outside, she took a deep breath of fresh air. It felt good. She saw Patrick standing over by the brick wall. Walking towards him, she saw both Reinhard and Heinz standing there. The three men were talking animatedly.

Reinhard noticed her first. He couldn’t help but beam a smile seeing her walk towards him. He opened his arms to her and Alexandra ran towards him. She hit his body with a resounding thud.

“Mein schatzi.” Arms tightened around her. “How is my girl?”

“Exhausted.” She smiled to Heinz and Patrick. “Hello……” She paused dramatically.

“Something wrong Kettler?” Pat lit a cigarette.

“Yes. I was going to call both of you gentlemen, but I know you two better than that.” She teased.

“Tristan here sought me out earlier. You have a good man Alex.”

“I know I do.”

“He apologized and brought a good bottle of whiskey over.”

Laughing. “Good. We can have a drink for the road.”

“You leaving already?”

“I need to go in and say goodbyes but yes.” Smiling she looked at Reinhard. “It’s time to go home.”

After the goodbyes were said and the hugs were given, Alexandra put Christoph and Rainer in the back seat. Amelie would sit in the backseat with the children. There was no way that Alexandra could fit her long legs back there or she would have done it.

They would be going from right outside of Łódź to Berlin. It was easier for Reinhard to hide under
the cover of darkness. He would get them to close to Berlin, Heinz would drive into Berlin and to Alex’s home. By then, Kaltenbrunner should have left for work. After a bit of rest, she would then go visit Kaltenbrunner at his office while the brothers rested.

Heinz would stay in Berlin with his wife and children.

“When we get to the house, I will do a few tricks I know to change your looks some.”

“Will it be painful?”

“As long as you don’t get the coffee in your eye, you will be fine.”

“Riddles again?”

“I will darken you hair, brows, and lashes. Then use a bit of powder to make your facial features look a bit different. Everything but your hair will wash out immediately. Your hair will take two or three washings.”

“How do you know this?” He chuckled.

“I took a theater class in school. I was awful at it but I was excellent behind the scenes.”

“I cannot believe you are by my side once again.” Picking up her hand, he kissed the back of it before threading his fingers through hers. “What do you think about Switzerland?”

“It will be an easy place to leave from.”

“No, I mean living there.”

“Reinhard, it is far too dangerous. There are still people hunting the men and women that escaped.”

“I have protection.”

“No. You don’t. Perhaps if you were arrested you would have protection. That doesn’t stop someone from kidnapping you or a putting a gun to your head.”

He nodded. Reinhard didn’t like the thought of being so far from his beloved Germany. While he had purged the hatred, he still had a deep love for his country. It was beautiful there. It was home.

“I think Canada might be the best place. You could be Swiss and going to somewhere in Canada to perhaps teach at a conservatory.”

“What of you?”

“As long as there are people, I can be a doctor everywhere.” She smiled.

“Sing for me?”

“As you desire my love. What would you like me to sing?”

“Whatever you wish. I have but one request?”

“Yes?”

“English please.”
“Interesting request.”

Alexandra started by stroking his thigh along to the tune of The Way You Look Tonight by Frank Sinatra.

Some day, when I'm awfully low
When the world is cold
I will feel a glow just thinking of you
And the way you look tonight

Yes, you're lovely, with your smile so warm
And your cheeks so soft
There is nothing for me but to love you
And the way you look tonight

With each word your tenderness grows
Tearin’ my fear apart
And that laugh, wrinkles your nose
Touches my foolish heart

Lovely, never, never change
Keep that breathless charm
Won't you please arrange it?
’Cause I love you
A-just the way you look tonight

And that…

Alex stroked his cock through his slacks with a smile. Immediately, Reinhard turned down a road that wasn’t much more than flattened grass and tire tracks.

“Where are you going?”

“I need to pull over for a moment.” Cutting the lights off, he disappeared in the darkness.

Heinz was snoring softly to her right while Alexandra tried to visually find Reinhard in the dark. She jumped when he opened the driver’s side door.

“Reinhard!” She hissed quietly.

Amelie and the boys were also asleep.

Offering a hand, he laughed silently.

“Where are we going?”

Within 3 yards, Alex and Reinhard disappeared from any view at the car.

“You do not play fair Schatzi.” He pushed her against a nearby tree while his hand wrapped around her throat gently. “I’m tempted to turn you over my knee.”

“Oh really? Wouldn’t you rather have me on my knees sucking your cock?”

“You know me well.” He kissed her lips with sweet affection.
“I love you Reinhard.”

“I love you Alexandra.”

“Why did we come out into the woods?”

“I wanted to touch you and not worry about them seeing. There are many things I will share with Heinz. You are not one of them.”

Sliding her arm around his neck, she ran her fingers through his curls. "While I love your brother and his family, it’s not the same way I love you.” Alexandra teased.

“We best get back on the road my love.”

“Not yet.” Alexandra smiled for him.

“Oh?”

She kissed him passionately. The kiss caught Reinhard off guard. There was something different as her sweet lips pressed to his. He could taste the urgency and the love from her. It was his turn.

Once again Alexandra was pressed against the bark of the tree. She was pinned there by the strength of his body.

Delicate hands explored him. The hands of a surgeon and the hands of a musician followed the curve of his spine and the strength of his body. The kiss turned into a demand for more. They both wanted more but here was not the place. There were too many things that could go wrong.

Pulling back, Alexandra inhaled sharply. The scent of his cologne and their lust was something that magic was made from. They both came together for more. The caress of her quiet moans lit Reinhard on fire. He was a half second away from tearing her clothes off so he would have the woman he loved fully.

“Goddamnit! Reinhard! Where are you two?!” It was Heinz.

They both slapped their hands over their mouths to keep from laughing. With nary a sound, they walked back towards the car and waited.

Heinz jumped upon seeing the lovers in the dark.

“You couldn’t have waited you two?” Heinz hissed at them.

“I don’t know what you are talking about Heinz. I just had to take care of a necessity. I figured you wouldn’t want to see me urinating.”

Heinz rolled his eyes. “Alexandra, I sincerely doubt that your back and your hair are covered with bark because you needed to piss.”

Alexandra and Reinhard began to laugh. They had been caught.

The next two hours Alexandra drove. She got them to her home and parked the car in her garage. She checked through the house to make sure that Ernst was not there and put the two men in what she called a Priest Hole in the basement. There were four beds down there. Reinhard looked at her oddly.

“It came with the house. I have never used it.”
“You aren’t going to rest?”

“I’m not tired. I will go see Ernst and then get everything ready to leave.”

“How can you not be tired?”

“My love, I haven’t had more than 4 hours of sleep for 6 months. I am used to running on coffee. You rest so you may drive.”

“Stubborn Schatzi.” Reinhard smiled.

“You knew this.”

“That I did.”

First and foremost she cleaned up and put on something that made her look at least, in part, professional. The paperwork was all in a folder that she needed. Picking that up, she drove to where her friend and housemate worked.

“I need to see Dr. Kaltenbrunner, please.”

“Do you have an appointment?”

“No, but he is expecting me to stop by.”

“I’m sorry ma’am. He is quite busy. You need to make an appointment.”

“Is he with clients or in court?”

“No, but…..”

Alexandra bypassed the receptionist and knocked on the door to his office.

The door opened to a rather puzzled looking Ernst Kaltenbrunner.

“Hi there Cookie.” Alexandra grinned. Cookie was the nickname he was given by Christoph and Rainer. They often called him Uncle Cookie.

“Alex!” He hugged her tight. “You’re home!”

Returning the hug, she kissed her friend’s cheek. “May I come in?”

“Of course.”

“Greta, hold everything.”

The woman glowered.

They chatted for a while before Alexandra told him the actual reason for her visit.

“Ernst, I need a lawyer.”

“Is everything alright?!”

“Of course. I’m going home. And I needed you to sign some things for me.” She handed him the file.
Glancing through the paperwork, Kaltenbrunner looked up abruptly. “Why are you doing this?”

“Because I can.”

“Alexandra, it is too much.”

“Then you can sell it. Besides, you know better than to argue with me. It will just wear you out but nothing will have changed.” She chuckled.

“You aren’t taking Tristan and Isolde are you?”

“Do you wish to keep them?”

“Yes. I would like to, if that is okay.”

“Of course. Can you sign and file the other stuff today?”

“Yes.”

“Ernst, I will get you the phone number and the address where I end up. You are a close and dear friend. You are always welcome to visit or come stay no matter where I am. Thank you for all you have done for me. I mean it truly.”

“You will be gone by the time I get home?”

“Yes. I have a few things to pick up at the house and then I will be leaving.”

Ernst Kaltenbrunner walked over to the other side of his desk and hugged his friend tight. The ferocious looking man had tears in his eyes.

“And remember if you still wish to hide the scars, I will do that. You just might have to take a vacation for it.”

The paperwork gave Ernst Kaltenbrunner the home that they had shared. The other paperwork was giving Heinz and Trude the home she had purchased, just in case. Both were on the Allied side of Berlin. Both were fully paid for.

It was time to start over. This time Alexandra wasn’t alone. This time she had the people she loved most in the world with her.
Chapter 48

7 March 1950

“Schatzi?” Reinhard walked into their home.

“PAPA!!” Two little boys yelled at the same time. The scampering of small feet were heard against the hardwood floor.

Reinhard swept his twin sons up and into his arms. “Where is your Mama my boys?”

“She is in the kitchen. But you can’t go in there! Happy Birthday Papa.” Rainer told his father.

“Is that so?” He could hear Alexandra laughing in the kitchen and smiled.

“Papa, did you have a good day?” Christoph hugged him tight. “Happy Birthday.”

“Thank you Christoph and yes I had a very good day.”

“How old are you?” Rainer asked.

“Old. I am very old. I was born on this day in 1904. Can you tell me how old I am?”

“46!” The twins answered together.

“Very good. You both are correct. Where are your sisters?” Setting them both down. He glanced at his watch. It would be a bit before dinner. “You two go play for a little while and then we will have dinner and go outside before bed.”

“Napping Papa.” Rainer smiled up at his father.

“Thank you Rainer.” Watching the two boys run off, he shook his head with a smile. “Schatzi, am I allowed in the kitchen?”

“Of course.” She answered cheerfully.

She was cooking dinner. When he stepped up behind her. “Happy Birthday my beloved.” She gave him a kiss.

“I cannot believe another year passed already. How do you stay so tiny? I do know what you eat!”

She laughed. “I chase after our small but quite speedy hooligans. Don’t sit down. And only drink black coffee. How was your day?”

“Good. It was a very good day.” He now taught at Conservatoire de musique de Genève. “Now it is even better.” He kissed his wife’s neck. “How was your day? What is for dinner?”

“Quiet. I missed you today.” Alexandra only worked at the hospital part time now. She spent a couple of hours each day teaching at the medical school and one of the professors she was working with was teaching her how to make electronic devices. She would also pitch in for Reinhard’s work on occasion. “It’s a surprise and if you peek, I am making tacos.”
“I like tacos!” He had finally convinced her to make him tacos when they first moved to Switzerland.

Taking her hand, he spun his wife around as if they were dancing. He smiled at the memory it evoked.

“What?” She smiled kissing his lips again.

“There was a day at the villa. I was looking over some report that I could have cared less about. You were in the kitchen singing. You sounded so happy my girl. I remembering thinking how much I would love to have a happy singing wife.” He wrapped his arms around her waist. “How I could go in and see you. Talk to you. Our children would be playing. Even back then, all I wanted was you.”

“I love you Reinhard. I always have and always will.”

“I love you mein Schatzi. That was the day I barged into the kitchen looking irritated!”

“Because you wanted to dance with me. We danced to Blue Moon.”

Leaning in, Alexandra sang for him alone. Sleek and lithe, she pressed tight to Reinhard’s heavier frame. The song was just a feather’s touch away from his lips. Their blue eyes were intent on each other.

**Blue moon you saw me standing alone**
Without a dream in my heart
Without a love of my own
Blue moon, you knew just what I was there for
You heard me saying a prayer for
Someone I really could care for

**And then there suddenly appeared before me**
The only one my arms will hold
I heard somebody whisper "Please adore me"
And when I looked, the moon had turned to gold!

**Blue moon!**
Now I’m no longer alone
Without a dream in my heart
Without a love of my own

**And then there suddenly appeared before me**
The only one my arms will ever hold
I heard…

“You make me feel young again.” He stroked her cheek with a loving touch.

“You are young. And I know this for a fact.”

“Hm. Oh really Schatzi and how do you know this?”

She smacked him playfully on his butt. “Because you have one very fine looking arse. Besides all the girls swoon over you Dr. Löwe.”
He chuckled. “You are my girl. And other than our daughters, you are my only girl. But listen here little girl, you are all woman.”

“That sounds like the making for a song.” She kissed him again and stepped back. “Your sons have a gift for you and they are very excited to give it to you.”

“What of you? Do you have a gift for me?” He pulled her tight to him once more. The lascivious gleam in his eyes made his wife smile.

“I have several. Although, some of them you won’t get until after the hooligans go to bed. Come, let’s get your present from the boys. You go have a seat in the solarium. We have a good half an hour before we can eat.”

Alexandra went upstairs to the play room. “Come you two. It’s time for you to give Papa his birthday present. Do you need help preparing?”

“No Mama.”

“No Mama.”

“You tell me if you need anything. I will get your sisters and then go sit with Papa.”

A little over 3 years ago on Christmas Eve of 1946 Alexandra gave birth to two little girls. She and Reinhard named them Khryssa Annalise Löwe and Karissa Giselle Löwe.

Alexandra found their new surname still to be funny. They were given the name by the British and had no choice in the matter.

Alexandra walked in with both little girls on her hips. Their nanny, Kenna was close behind. Kenna was married to one of the men that was in the family’s employ.

The two girls looked like their mother just as the boys looked like their father. When Alex set the girls down they ran immediately for their father. Two little girls covered their father’s face in kisses before wishing him a Happy Birthday.

Here in the sitting room, both sets of twins practiced music daily, as did their mother. Curling up next to Reinhard on the sofa, Alexandra propped her chin up on his shoulder.

“What are you doing?”

“Thinking about your birthday presents.”

“Am I going to like them?”

Her lips caressed the shell of his ear and she whispered quietly. “If you don’t, this Dr. Löwe will be very concerned. She might drive you straight to the hospital herself.” She smiled when he began to laugh.

Reinhard’s looks were different. His hair was worn longer and not in the severe style of Nazi Germany. Reinhard’s natural curls were soft ringlets that gave him an almost angelic look. Of course, Alexandra teased him about that. She had done a bit of rhinoplasty to repair his at least twice broken nose and scrubbed in for a blepharoplasty or eyelid surgery for him. He also had worked with a voice coach to change his voice. Physically, he resembled the old Reinhard. He looked more like he could be a cousin or perhaps an uncle. He looked younger at 46 than he had at 38.
With the surgery came the name changes for both of them. Alexandra went by Elisabeth Löwe now and Reinhard was Reinhard Löwe. She was Canadian by birth according to paperwork with the maiden name of Schmidt and Reinhard was Swiss but from an area near the German border.

Like their parents, Rainer and Christoph both were showing exceptional musical talent. Christoph had more of his mother’s temperament but Rainer had more of his father’s. The two girls were just starting to learn about music.

Rainer, like his father, was fond of the violin. Christoph enjoyed the piano and violin, soon Alexandra would start him playing the cello. The twins were still in their school uniforms when they walked into the sitting room and turned to their parents, bowing.

For nearly eight months, since the boys had thought of the idea, they had practiced five days a week.

Leaning back, Reinhard wrapped his arm around Alex’s shoulders. He raised an eyebrow looking to her. She gave him a non-committal shrug.

Their boys began to play. Alexandra only allowed the boys to learn fifteen minutes worth of the music. When they finished, both of their parents had tears in their eyes. For their Papa they had learned to play a small part of their grandfather’s music, Abschied.

When Rainer put his violin down, he and his brother were swooped upped into their teary-eyed father’s arms. Alexandra kissed both of her son’s cheeks with a smile.

“My boys. My sons. That was the best birthday gift I was ever given.”

“What was the best present you ever were given?” Christoph asked.

“Well there is actually five. You two, your sisters and you mother are the best gifts.”

“Well done my sweet hooligans. You both played beautifully. I am very proud of you. Now, assuming you five wish to have supper, I’m going to get dinner on the table.”

“Schatzi?”

“Yes darling?”

“Thank you.”

“It was all their idea my Lion.”

She had thought of taking Reinhard out for a glamorous night on the town but in the end, she decided to stay home. They would go out over the weekend. Alexandra did however make her husband’s latest favorite dessert. It was all from scratch that she made a rich Schwarzwälder kirschtorte or a Black Forest cake. It was a family affair to clear the table. Although, often times it was one of the adults distracting the children as way of helping.

They went to the family room together. The room was smaller than the more formal sitting room. Here there was the television, radio, and games for the family to play.

“Christoph, will you please get the long package wrapped in gold and you Rainer get the long package wrapped in silver for your Papa to open.”

When the boys came back into the room, Alexandra put her hands over Reinhard’s eyes. “Okay my
hooligans, switch the packages around. Now darling, pick your right or your left.”

“Right!”

“Rainer goes first!”

The giggling blond boy handed his father the present.

“Hmm. What could it be?” Reinhard looked thoughtful. “I know! It’s a boat!”

“No Papa!!” The boys laughed and clung to their father’s legs.

“No a boat? Hm. What could it be then? A book!”

The boys erupted into peals of laughter.

Alexandra held her daughters on her lap. They were getting antsy about giving their Papa a gift too.

“You two are going to have to help me then. Each of you grab and end and I will take the middle.”

“Schatzi. Mein gott. It is beautiful. Thank you.” He kissed his wife and children. They went through the same thing seven more times. The first two gifts that he received were new swords for fencing. They were made by hand from top to bottom. One was an epee and the other was a sabre.

The Alexandra had taken in his old ones and had them mounted to display in his office. The girls gave their beloved Papa beautiful cufflinks, new ties, a new wallet and a new bow for his violin. The final gifts looked identical but were not. One was a simple daily journal. The leather bound book was exquisite. The butter soft leather was a rich brown with gold scrolling. The other was already written in.

They bundled the children up and went outside to play. Early March was still quite cold but Alexandra insisted on some outdoors time when at all possible.

Reinhard went to read his four children a story while Alexandra finished straightening up. The proud and happy parents tucked the boys in first and wished them a good night. They did the same with their little girls.

There were still two wrapped packages on the bed, plus the journal. They were next to a small tray with two cut crystal glasses and a good bottle of bourbon. The bourbon had been a gift from Heinz, who had moved to the US with his family shortly after the twins were born. They would be going out to see them in the summertime.

For her own birthday, just a week before, Reinhard had someone make seven nightgowns like the one she had at the villa the first night they made love. Tonight was the first night that she wore one of them. Laying on the bed, she had poured them each a glass of the bourbon.

“How is it that you look no different than that night eight years ago?” His voice was filled with emotion.

“Because my beloved husband, you never have seen me clearly.”

“The same can be said about you.”

Sliding on to their bed, he smiled at his wife. “Thank you for everything tonight Alexandra.” Because of her name change, Reinhard rarely called his wife anything but Schatzi.
She wet her lips with the bourbon but did not drink it. “We aren’t done yet. You know.”

Grabbing her ankle, he pulled her towards him. “Thank god.”

Playfully, she kicked at him. Although Reinhard pretended to be mortally wounded.

“Silly Lion.”

“How is it that every moment I see you my love for you grows?”

“Because you are a silly Lion?” She pounced on him. “But I feel the same way about you.”

“Silly Schatzi.”

“You didn’t finish looking at the journal.”

“Oh?”

Like many physicians, Alexandra was a precise record keeper. Ever since they had met, she kept a journal. This journal was printed and made for Reinhard alone. Every single day of the year had a small inscription of a happy memory shared on that very day. There was not a single day that was blank. There was more. The back of the journal was filled with copies of the letters she had written him when she thought he was dead. He never saw the letters before. She thought they had gotten lost in the move until she came upon them tucked back in an old jewelry box.

“You are not allowed to skip ahead past March.”

“That’s unfair!” He grinned, pushing her back down on the bed.

“That way you get a surprise every day.”

“Which one next then, since my Schatzi is so mean.” He tried so hard to keep a straight face but ultimately, Reinhard failed at that task.

“The larger one.”

Unwrapping the gift, it was a large colored photograph that had been taken at the gym where he practiced fencing. The photo was about 20x25 cm. The old floor was scarred and worn, but still polished smooth. There was a certain serene beauty to the photo. There was light filtering in through one of the screened windows. Masks and jackets lined the walls. There was an epee mask on the floor. In some ways it looked like it had been cast out of a practice. Angle the picture just right and you could see the mask, while worn, was well cared for. It was loved.

“It’s stunning. Where did you get this?”

“There is a story behind that. The girls were a bit earlier than we expected. Which, given they were of a normal size that was more of a miscalculation on my part than that they were early. As it was a Saturday, you were not at work. You had gone to practice your lunges once more. I was over at Ketti’s when I went into labor.”

Ketti Bassert was a physician that Alexandra had worked with on occasion. Ketti tended towards research than patient care, unlike Alex. Her husband, Johan, worked with Reinhard.

“Johan had come in, I think he had been practicing with you?”
“Yes, he had to leave early. There was ballet dancers posing with the fencers, for pictures. He was supervising. Then Johan had to get dressed for something at the school.”

“Well, my water broke so that started a chain of events. There was something going on at the gym. Johan rushed to get you and take you to the hospital. When you tossed your mask, one of the photographers caught that shot. He gave me permission to recolor it and everything, since the original picture was in black and white.”

A moment in time was captured forever in a single instance of love and fear. The memory was thick on his tongue and left him unable to speak. He had been a father six times over by then and it was soon to be eight.

“You recolored it?”

“Yes.”

“Why?”

“At the touch of love everyone becomes a poet. It’s a quote from Plato. One of us always is the poet and the other is the muse. That time you were what inspired me. My beloved husband, I love you.”
Alexandra handed him the last package and smiled. Bright blue eyes gazed upon him with utter happiness in the depths. She wasn’t one for extravagant celebrations like he was. It mattered none. That was what he needed and she happily gave it to him.

Cupping her hand to his cheek, he looked at her. There was just that little bit of a smile that curved Reinhard’s full sensuous lips. The sheer amount of love she felt for this man moved her, still.

“What are you thinking beautiful?”

“How much I love you.” Leaning in, her soft lips were painted a garish scarlet. She only allowed the kiss to be brushed against his lips. “I do. I do love you.”

Reinhard set the package on the nightstand and pulled her to him. Laying on his side, he kissed the woman he loved and marveled at her.

“My Destiny.”

“My Lion.”

Pulling her closer to him, Reinhard drew her leg over his hip. “Kiss me?”

“With pleasure.”

Her lips were so soft and full. They reminded him of the finest of velvets. He could taste the bourbon on them. A single kiss was all it took and he began to ache. Reinhard smiled and closed his eyes.

Every time they made love, he felt something entirely new within him. Up until Alexandra he had preferences when it came to women. His preference happened to be for a woman’s arse. He loved watching them in a tight skirt. He loved feeling them grind against him, in certain venues of course. And most of all Reinhard loved to fuck a woman’s arse. Perhaps it was because it was considered sinful to do because it was neither for God nor the Fatherland in the days seemingly long past.

It was something solely for him and his pleasure. At least it was prior to kissing her that fateful summer day in 1942. Now? Now it was about their mutual pleasure. There was nothing that could bring on his own orgasm faster than knowing she was spent.

Reinhard was not opposed to a bit of sadism. He enjoyed very rough sex, both receiving and giving. Did he enjoy the humiliation that the women went through because of his desire for anal sex? He didn’t know. Truthfully, he didn’t care either. His only care was that the woman who would joyously whisper his name and beg for more was happy.

How long had they shared a bed when she begged him to take her anally? Was it just a week? Maybe two? And oh yes! Oh god help him, yes he loved to take her there. Thankfully, she enjoyed it just as much as he did.

She showed him the art of what was called a ‘lap dance’. He had never had one before. At least not the way she did it. High heels and lingerie? Her movements were set to music. That round arse she possessed would grind on his lap. How many panties of hers did he end up ruining? It made him smile.
How often did he bother with pleasing a woman? Prior to when he married Lina he tried to. Part of it was thinking that he could make his future wife happy. His first wife was boring in bed. It wasn’t a big surprise. Sex was for procreation to her.

So, he started finding other women. He considered almost all these women whores. Some of them were actually whores, they were paid for a service. Others were just loose women he would pick up in the bars.

Reinhard was a visual man when it came to sex, fucking, lovemaking, whatever you wanted to call it. He didn’t want to be in a dark room. No, he wanted to see everything. Feel everything. He had bought for his Schatzi an extensive collection of lingerie. She would make sure he knew what she was wearing at the most improper of moments.

The conservatory had large Valentine’s Day performances, with Reinhard putting it together. There was music, shows, champagne and decadent desserts. Alexandra wore a lovely black cocktail dress. She looked the picture of a happy and successful wife of an equally happy and successful husband.

She gave him discreet glimpses of what was under the dress. When it got to be too much, Reinhard dragged his wife into one of the private practice rooms and locked the door behind them. He was in no way a gentleman in those moments.

It was strange. In those moments they were quick, lest they be caught. Even then, it was no longer just fucking. It certainly wasn’t just sex. It was never for his gratification only. Now, it was with love. Every touch he gave her was about love and she returned it tenfold.

Reinhard had no idea why he had been gifted such a woman in his life. He certainly didn’t deserve her.

There had been one night that Alexandra didn’t come home. They hadn’t been in Switzerland but a few months. He knew she wouldn’t be there. She was preforming a complicated surgery, the likes of nobody had seen before. The entire surgery took something like 36 hours. Just mere hours before dawn, he had awoken in a panic. Fear struck his heart that she was with someone else.

In his rational mind, he knew where she was. He could have walked into the observation room and seen her himself. She was teaching a new technique and a new device to surgeons. What Alexandra was doing was making the news all over the world. Reinhard forced himself to stay in bed. In their half-empty bed, he wondered if it was because he didn’t deserve her that she came into his life.

Were they together so he could have a way and a reason to change? Reinhard remembered thinking she was an angel when he laid on that dirty pavement dying. Even then, he felt that he didn’t deserve to even gaze upon the woman that saved his life.

It had taken until after the British released him until he noticed something.

It was the way her eyes lit up upon seeing him. Her soft full mouth would part and smile for him alone. The smile for him was wholly different from any other she gave. It belonged to only him. He could see it the way her head was held and the way her body moved. Part of her belonged to him and only him.

And it was mutual.

“How many times have I had you today already my sweet?” He brushed the pad of his thumb across her lips.
“This will be five.” She smiled.

“Why is that my love?”

“Because you are an insatiable Beast and you are my insatiable Beast.”

“Does that bother you?” Even after eight years, he did worry he was too much for her on occasion.

“Mmm. Not at all. My Reinhard there are few things that bring me as much pleasure as……well….bringing you pleasure.” She kissed him again. “And you worry too much. If I was bothered I would tell you that. And we aren’t finished yet. Roll over to your back my husband.”

He complied. “Now what do I get to do?”

“Lay there and enjoy.” She chuckled softly.

Alexandra kneeled over the upper part of his pelvis and her nightgown was pulled over her head and simply dropped to the floor. Bending forward, his already hard cock was trapped between her breasts. She began to massage his feet. “Oh and my Lion?”

“Yes?”

“No hands.” She smirked and looked at him over her shoulder.

How the hell was he already that damned hard? Reinhard felt how he slid between her full breasts. She would move just in the right way to tease him.

He slid his hands behind his head and began to watch. His wife had nimble fingers. Years of being a doctor had done that and the massage was exquisite. From his toes upwards she worked. There was not a bit of flesh up to his hips that was not touched. He could easily see her arousal. Every time she moved forward just a bit, little was left to the imagination. God in heaven, he wanted to bury himself inside of her.

“Reinhard?”

“Yes?” His voice sounded half strangled.

“What do you want?”

“You. Now.” His hands gripped the sheets.

“No.” Her voice had the scintillating rasp of arousal. “I could suck your cock, you know.” She looked over her shoulder again. “But you would ruin my lipstick.”

The sound he made was one of a man in pain.

She laughed so very softly. Reinhard wasn’t sure if he was imagining it or not. Tipping her head back, her dark hair brushed across his stomach. God he loved that laugh.

“Reinhard, you know I love you. You know I love you more than anything in this world or the next.”

He grunted. All he could see was the curtain of her black tresses and the smooth expanse of her back. It was taking every bit of control he had not to touch her.

“Put your hands on my hips.” She whispered the words. As soon as Alexandra finished speaking
and before he could move, she moved for them both.

Alexandra’s understanding of human anatomy was phenomenal. So was her understanding of physics. The movement made his painfully ready hardness slide into her. His hands dug into her hips. She would wear his bruises that night, for certain. Just the thought made her smile wide.

“Ride me Schatzi. Now. You are going to end up killing me my girl.” His voice was hoarse.

“No. I won’t. I promise. Besides I brought you back before and I will do it again.”

She started slowly at first. Her hips rocked side to side and then front to back. She found her rhythm and tortured him just a little more. Knees slid apart and she leaned towards his feet just enough to give him a show.

Watching himself slide in and out, his grip became vicious. Reinhard began to thrust hard and then harder from watching her. Alexandra refused to let him set the pace so she pulled forward and off of him.

“Alexandra Elisabeth!” He hissed her first and middle name.

She laughed and turned around, facing him. “Naughty Lion.” With the barest hint of a giggle she crawled up his body to sit on his stomach. She leaned down with a grin. “Now, are you going to behave?” Forehead to forehead, she looked him right in the eye. Red painted lips didn’t quite touch his.

Forcing air out between his clenched teeth. Reinhard said nothing.

“Do you feel that?” She rocked side to side on his stomach. “You did that. You made me all wet. Sticky. That is how much I want you. Can you feel it my beloved husband?”

“Schatzi………”

Running a single fingertip up his shaft from behind her. Alex examined how wet her fingertip was and sucked her own finger clean mere centimeters from his face. Sliding down his body, she laid between his thighs.

The tip of her tongue flicked against the head of her husband’s cock. Then again. Then she licked from the base upwards. Reinhard couldn’t stand another minute of her teasing him. His hand threaded through her thick hair and began to thrust into his wife’s mouth.

She was correct. He did ruin her lipstick.

After cleaning both of them up, she laid with her head against his chest.

“You always do give me the best birthday presents.” He kissed the top of her head.

“I try.”

“My girl, did I ever tell you how I had to lay in pain in the hospital because of you?”

She looked up, horrified. “What? Why didn’t you tell me or Krueger?”

“I couldn’t. I would have rather died first.”

“Reinhard, what was going on?”
“Your voice. It is like sex. You have that soft rasp. Something smoky in your voice that makes even the most innocent of words sound like velvet drawn gently across the skin. Your sweet smile was so at odds with your voice. I wanted to do the most depraved things to you.” He chuckled softly. “Yes, the last visit of the evening from you would leave me harder than a rock and not near as flexible. I couldn’t do anything about it. Even trying to relieve myself wouldn’t work. I needed you.”

She looked surprised.

“Don’t know how sexy your voice is do you?”

“No.”

“Ahh my beloved. Your voice is sultry and sweet. It is deeper, darker, and decadent. It appeals both to my higher nature and my lower. Watching you speak while you walk? That bounce to your flesh and the tantalizing sound that makes me want to do very bad things to you.”

“Very bad? Tell me more if you would please my Lion.”

“I want to cum on your breasts before you leave for work. You would have to walk around all day knowing you gave me the utmost of pleasure. You could inhale the scent and know my hands touched you with love and lust. You are the most wanton of women. I want you every minute of every day my girl.”

“Well now you have me.”

“Thank god. Now I just wake you up if I need to.”

Alexandra laughed.

“What is it in the last package so I do not have to move you?”

She started to laugh once again. “Why thank you kind Sir but seeing is believing.”

Sitting up, Alex grabbed the package and laid it down on his bare chest.

He sat up with a groan. “You have worn me out my wife. I will be unable to satisfy your cravings for weeks, if not months!”

“Oh?” She looked at him, amused.

“Schatzi! You do not believe me?” He looked hurt.

“I know better my beloved Beast. I don’t call you a Beast because you like to climb trees.”

Reinhard looked to her with a raised eyebrow before opening it. Alexandra hit the bed with a thud and started laughing. She had been tackled by her husband.

“You are going to break my ribs!”

The ecstatic Reinhard couldn’t even speak at first. When he finally was able to, he croaked out a single word. “How?”

“To make a horribly long and boring story short, I did reconstructive surgery on someone important and that was a gift to us. So we will all go to the Summer Olympics in two years.”
Alexandra sat up again. Reinhard, of course, tackled her again.

“Oh my love. That one is good. The next is even better.” She smiled at him.

Looking at her and looking at the small box. Looking at her and looking at the small box. He was speechless. “You are the most amazing woman in the world!”

“Happy Birthday my beloved Beast. May I sit up now?”

“Yes.” But he dragged her on to his lap. Alexandra had managed to get him fencing lessons for two full weeks with Willy Fitting. Herr Fitting was a Swiss épée fencer that was assumed to be going to the next Olympics. He was breathtaking to watch and Reinhard watched him as often as he could.

“Surgery again?”

Alex nodded and grinned.

“I am the luckiest man alive.”

“Yes you are.”
Chapter 50

The sun had not started to rise just yet. She could tell it would begin its ascent shortly. In the city it felt like some sort of phenomenon that was otherworldly. It wasn’t something visual nor was it anything that could be heard. There was just something that buzzed across the skin. The world was waking up and with it came the movement from all around.

She should be waking too but Alex had not slept.

There was something on the horizon. No, she wasn’t psychic. It was just the knowledge of having spent so much of her life in dangerous situations. Her mind just had not put two and two together, yet. It would when she was ready or had coffee. One or the other usually worked. Alexandra tended to prefer the coffee method.

Looking out their bedroom window, Alexandra was dealing with a rare bout of insomnia. She knew the reasons. Having been a physician for so many years, second to tenth winds were not unusual and occasionally unnecessary. It was also when she would fall prey to Buder’s visits. She knew that he was dead but still sleep eluded her some of the time because of him.

In the daylight? She could fall asleep immediately if her husband was there. The thought made her smile. It had always been that way with him. The first car ride with the Butcher of Prague and she fell asleep like a small child, curled under his arm. Although, at the time she had no idea who she was riding with.

She knew now.

Reinhard Heydrich should have died days after the attempt on his life. Instead, he still walked the earth. If he had been left with Krueger and Gephardt, there was a very good chance that Reinhard would have died. The two doctors didn’t want to give him sulfonamides. Alexandra still considered them to be quacks and grossly ignorant of basic medicine.

Remembering those days, she took a sip from the glass clutched in her hand. The internal struggle when she went willingly to the bed of a Nazi was difficult. The way her body ached for his touch after discovering that he was none other than Reinhard Heydrich, the architect of the so-called ‘Final Solution’ was the ultimate betrayal of her body and mind. He was one of the few high ranking Nazis that people knew the name of. Thank you Time magazine.

Looking down at her hand, her wedding ring glinted in the low lights. God help her, she loved him then and loved him even more now.

There was one more package for Reinhard to unwrap left over from his birthday. The thin box was no bigger than a deck of cards really. What it held inside was the greatest of gifts. Picking it up, her fingertips traced along the seam of where the paper met. This one had been set aside. It was far more special than the others had been.

When Alex and Reinhard were alone they spoke German. The rest of the time they tended to speak French. The children were, like their parents, multilingual and adapted to what was needed.

It wasn’t too long ago that someone at the hospital, a tourist, asked for directions in French that was so poorly spoken she could barely understand it. She gave him kudos for trying but since she was a native English speaker, she should have been able to help. It took a good 20 seconds for her to remember a word. She could not think of the word for turn. It was somewhat embarrassing.
In eight years she had barely spoken English. Alexandra remembered the surprise that she had when she realized her thoughts and dreams were in German.

Looking around their large bedroom, she smiled. The room was decorated in classic pieces that fit both her and Reinhard’s personalities. The year didn’t matter. It could be 2019 or 1950 and their room would be fashionable. It was the artwork that was special. The artwork was all done by her and Reinhard with a couple of small framed pictures their children had made them. This was home.

Reinhard was asleep. Glancing over at him, she smiled. Alexandra would never pretend to know the reason why they were brought together. She did love him with her entirety.

There was something that she had thought about earlier that kept coming back to her.

There was a dramatic difference between her and Reinhard’s childhoods. Alexandra had the idyllic life filled with love and affection. Like all children, she got in trouble on occasion. The punishments were fair and just, even if they didn’t feel so at the time.

The thought of some of the things that she and her brothers all got in trouble with and the things they got away with. They were all happy memories that brought a smile to her lips.

While she understood that the different countries meant different childrearing methods. Reinhard did not have a happy childhood.

His mother was a cold woman that lacked maternal feelings for her children. Her punishments would be considered cruel at any time period. His father had paid little attention Reinhard and his siblings. It pained her to know that her beloved husband suffered so young.

Alexandra and Reinhard were newly married when his mother and sister came to call upon them. She was unimpressed with the two women. Granted, she did not endure herself to either in-law. Reinhard had stepped away for a moment. The elder Mrs. Heydrich made a disparaging remark about her son and Maria, his sister, added to it. Alexandra made sure that both women were aware that such remarks were not welcome nor would they be tolerated anywhere in her home or in front of herself or Reinhard.

Standing at just a scant hair under 6’2, Alexandra was an imposing woman. She was svelte but anyone who paid attention could see the strength of will that coursed through her.

When she was angry? And oh she had been furious, it was even more pronounced. She told the women to leave. While angry, she had been calm. Reinhard walked back in just a breath after she had told them to leave. His sister started to complain immediately.

“Maria, enough.” Reinhard’s voice was quiet. “Schatzi? I know that you wouldn’t be discourteous to anyone. That means they said something that upset you. Is this correct?”

“Yes.”

“Mother, Maria, please collect your things. I will call a car for you.”

When they left, he asked what had happened. Alexandra was honest, although she did not share with him what his relatives said.

“No one will ever get away with disrespecting you in my presence, especially not in our home Reinhard.”

Reinhard had known that his wife was a formidable opponent in any discussion. That day he saw
her in a different light. He knew she loved him he just didn’t realize how deep that love for him ran.

Heinz had been in Berlin that week. He and his brother had lunch one afternoon and Reinhard told him what had happened.

Alexandra had earned the respect of Heinz Heydrich back at the villa, but this impressed him.

“Reinhard, your wife loves you.” Heinz quirked a smile.

“I don’t know why.”

“You don’t have to know why. Just know that she does. Trude heard about it from Maria. She called your home afterwards to make sure Alexandra was ok.”

“Alexandra said she was. She looked as if she was.”

“She said that Alex was cheerful as ever. She told Trude that she could not force someone to respect you but she would not allow anyone to disrespect you. It didn’t matter who they were. Reinhard, your wife would go toe to toe with the Fuhrer, Himmler, Goering, and Goebbels all at the same time and come out the winner if they said something that she felt was disrespectful.”

Reinhard chuckled softly. “My Schatzi is the tenacious sort.”

“That she is. You were lucky to find that girl.”

“I think it was she who found me.” Reinhard smiled.

“She told Klein to fuck off. Right then you should have known it was a match.” Heinz smirked.

“Ach. She has him and the others all wrapped around her little fingers. I think they would be more loyal to her than me.”

Reinhard was proud of that. The six men closest to him in the Party wouldn’t have done much beyond what was part of their duty for Lina. They had killed for Alexandra more than once already. It was believable that she was their little sister and they her older brothers.

Because of the cruel and callousness of his family outside of Heinz was why he was a good father today, she mused. As a matter of fact, Reinhard Heydrich, the very person that Hitler had called the Man with the Iron Heart, was an exceptional father. From day one he had made sure he spent time with his children and helped in the raising of his two boys and two girls. His children would not be raised as he was.

Alexandra did not believe in spanking children and Reinhard had been very happy about that. He abhorred the thought of hitting their children. Touch and affection was never withheld. The rare times that their children needed punished it was just and swift. It was also forgiven.

He had been teased and bullied brutally from childhood into his twenties, perhaps even further. All that and more combined into a person that was more monster than man. The hatred that the Nazis regime brought to their own country made it all the worse for someone like Reinhard. It gave him somewhere to focus his new religion of hatred and death.

Reinhard was not cruel by nature. No, the sensitive boy that craved approval and love would have grown into a very different man had he been given what he had so desperately needed. Alas, he did not get what he needed until it was far too late for so many people. It was, luckily, not too late for
him.

Alexandra did not turn a blind eye to her husband’s former deeds. As a matter of fact, she knew them perhaps better than he did.

When the Nazis took power, Reinhard’s intelligence was compelling but it was his hate that had a use. The two combined into a deadly attribute. The use of his venom only made him into more of a monster over time. It wasn’t until he met Alexandra did Reinhard understand that part of himself. When he found out the truth about her, Reinhard had a decision to make.

Would he be able to accept unconditional love offered from the woman who he now loved heart and soul? It had been just minutes before that he unknowingly hated her and her kind with such a deep driving passion in that he was willing and able to eradicate everything and everyone she ever loved. Would his one chance to know such a love be dashed away because of the madness of hate?

He didn’t have to even think about it. Their combined love for each other was too powerful to be thrown away.

Reinhard Heydrich, the Young Evil God of Death, surrendered himself to a woman who would love him until her dying breath and he would love the same. If they were lucky, it would be long beyond that as well.

With time and with her to lean upon, Reinhard realized that the anger he held in his heart was aimed at himself. It was then and only then that Reinhard began to heal.

In battling her own demons, Alexandra learned not only about herself but about the man she loved. She learned how to feed the man and tame the monster. Eight years later, they were happy together.

One thing Alexandra never forgot was something Heinz, her brother-in-law, said after she told him that she would die for Reinhard. Tell him that. Tell him you love him often. But more importantly, show him.

She listened. And she did.

“Schatzi?” Reinhard’s voice was rough with sleep. When he had reached for her, she wasn’t there.

“I’m right here.” She heard the note of panic that others would not. Walking away from the window, she sat down on the edge of the bed.

He had been sleeping on his stomach. There was a sparkle in her eye as she tugged the bed sheet down just enough to see his bare arse.

“I feel that Schatzi. I know your tricks.” He scolded her with a sleepy smile. While he would never admit it out loud to anyone, it thrilled him that his beautiful wife found him attractive.

Playfully, she kissed his bared arse cheek. “And still the most glorious arse eight years later.”

Her fingers stroked through his curls that were now mussed at the back of his head. He had always tried so hard to make his hair straight. It was a battle never to be won when she was near. The soft blond curls still delighted Alexandra, especially now with the trending hair styles for men were longer than the severe cuts of Nazi Germany.

“Is everything ok? Why are you drinking this early?”
“It’s just water, silly. And yes, everything is fine.”

“Unable to sleep?”

“Yes.”

He took the glass from her and set it down on the bedside table. Reinhard rolled to his back and with a smile he pulled her on to him.

“No escaping.”

“I wouldn’t want to escape from my sleepy Lion.”

Her fingers brushed back his hair again. As it sprang forward, she laughed quietly. Their twin boys had hair that did the same. Reinhard nuzzled to her. Warm and at peace, she sighed contently.

This was never the life she planned on having. Still, Alexandra was happy in her life. This was where she belonged. She couldn’t help but smile looking at her husband.

“Who would have ever thought that you would have been my one true love?” Her voice was soft. Drawing a finger from the center of his forehead, she traced down his nose. When the digit brushed his lips he kissed the fingertip and smiled.

“Not I my Alexandra. Not I. The only thing I would ever change is that I wish I found you sooner.”

“Ahhh. My Lion. My Beast. I love you.”

“I love you Schatzi.”

“You aren’t awake yet.” She chuckled.

“You shouldn’t be.”

“I know.”

Alexandra and Reinhard wanted for nothing and they gave back to the world in countless ways. After they left the villa, Reinhard began undoing the damage he caused to human life. The pain that came from the knowledge that he would have been the cause of her death was far too much for him to bear. He had to try to fix it, even if he could not have her.

It went slow at first because he had to do so much in secret and not get caught. When he was captured by the British it was what saved him. They would have happily executed him. That was a secret he would never tell his wife. Once again it was her that saved him.

As a married couple right after the war, they were lucky. Money was not a problem, thankfully. Most of it was due to patents that she owned on medications and medical devices. When he was still in the hospital in Prague, she didn’t know that penicillin was almost impossible to get. She figured out a way to expedite the manufacturing of the needed medication. From there her pharmaceutical knowledge grew at an exponential rate.

“I should have not gotten you so many nightgowns.”

“Why?”

“There is too much material between us. I cannot touch you.” He made a grumbling noise. “Why are you wearing one?” She always slept nude with him.
“I was looking out the window. I didn’t wish to frighten anyone. And you my Insatiable Beast. Were you not the one that said I had worn you out just last night? You wouldn’t be able to satisfy me again for months?”

“Clearly, I was mistaken.” He opened one eye halfway.

She kissed him. There was something so sensuous about his mouth that rarely could she resist kissing him. He chuckled with a sort of wickedness that sent her body tingling from head to toe.

Reinhard rolled her to her back and he gave a scowl at the soft cotton of her nightgown. “I am going to burn your nightgowns.”

Cupping her hand over his cock, he was already hard. Fingertips exposed the thick head and it was there she paid attention to with the lightest of strokes of her fingers. When she heard that first low pitched growl leave the back of his throat, Alexandra smiled a most decadent smile.

He had just started to yank up the material as he was getting less than no help from the teasing that his wife was giving him, when there was a knock on their bedroom door.

Reinhard started to get up but Alex put a hand to his chest.

“I’ve got it. I am the one somewhat clothed.” Rising she grabbed her dressing gown and went to the door.

“Due to no fault of my own!”

Shooting him a look as she had to put her hand across her mouth to keep from laughing. She mouthed the word naughty and shook her finger at him. That made Reinhard start to laugh.

When she opened the door, Alexandra was surprised to find their head of security standing there. She was expecting the nanny.

“Caspari what’s wrong?”

Reinhard couldn’t hear but Alexandra’s side of the conversation.

“Very well. We will use the kitchen and informal dining room. Stay with him and have another man there as well. I will be down shortly.”

“Alexandra what is going on?” Reinhard was up and getting dressed immediately.

“I’m not sure yet but we may have a breach.” Kissing her husband, she put a hand on his shoulder. “No. There is no danger. Stay up here and don’t let the children or their nanny come into the kitchen or dining room.”

“I am not – “

“Reinhard, please. I am in no danger but you may have been discovered. Let me handle this. If I need you I will send for you, I promise.”

Dressed comfortably in slacks and a jumper, Alexandra paused before entering the informal dining room. She saw the young man in plain view. Just as quickly, she stepped out of sight once more. She knew who he was, although they had never met.

It felt as if someone hand just punched her in the chest and she had no idea what to do. Alex knew that this young man was about to set her entire world on fire.
Chapter 51

Tears glistened on her lashes. They had not fallen. Not yet. Whether or not they would fall would depend on so many things, including Reinhard. Right then Alexandra couldn’t even contemplate the enormity of the situation. Walking back upstairs, Alexandra was reminded of the last time she walked up the stairs at the villa.

She wondered if they were ever able to get the blood off the beautiful staircase there.

Reinhard had left. He told her he loved her one more time and then he left her. She ran after him into the dark night. Alexandra neither felt nor saw the rocks that cut her feet and knees when she dropped to the ground crying. It was a distant memory now but the blood dripped from her feet with each step. Like a child that skinned their knee, the blood trickled down her lower legs.

Alexandra had slender hands with long fingers. They were the hands of a musician or the hands of a surgeon she was told by some unknowing stranger. With her, they were both. Those hands dripped blood from where she slapped her hands against the stones in the drive over and over again. Alexandra had no conscious recollection of that but they still dripped with her blood. The blood smeared upon the railing as she walked so slowly upstairs. Every step was more painful than the last. It wasn’t physical pain at all. That didn’t bother her. How her heart shattered into shards was the cause of her pain.

No, they never were able to remove all the blood at the villa.

What came after that was something like a horror story. She had been raped, repeatedly by a man that told her that Reinhard was supposed to have given her to. After how Reinhard left her, she believed the man. Her flesh and her soul still bore those wounds.

She almost died by her own hand because of it.

Most of the time she didn’t even think about what she endured. Now, each scar felt as fresh as they were when they were given to her.

She couldn’t continue just yet. Her hand clutched the bannister and she stood there. There was no movement from her. There was not even the rise and fall of her breathing to give proof of life. No, in that moment Alexandra ceased to be alive even if her heart was still beating.

Knowing and living are two very different things. Loving a man like Reinhard would always be difficult task. A man that could obtain the rank of a general in Nazi Germany would never be an easy man to live with. Loving one was even more difficult.

Alexandra tasted fear on her tongue. The brackish taste reminded her of a cigarette butt discarded in a half drank glass of whiskey. Her stomach heaved with taste and she clung fast to the railing once more.

When was the last time she had been this afraid? In her own bed while in her own home? In Berlin? It didn’t matter. Fear tasted as foul then as it did right now. At least there in Berlin anger coursed through her veins, now she felt nothing but fear.

Never in her life had she felt this alone.

Yes, there were friends. There were people she cared about and people she saw on a regular basis. They didn’t know the secrets that Alexandra harbored. They did not know her husband was a war
criminal. They certainly did not know that he was a supposedly dead war criminal. And they didn’t know she was a traitor.

She could care less if she was considered a traitor to her country. She held no allegiance to Germany, Nazi or otherwise. She did not help them in time of war. She helped human beings that would have been dead or disfigured without her care. Alexandria would have done the same thing for anyone.

No, she wasn’t a traitor to her country. Alexandra Elisabeth Kettler was a traitor to her own kind, the Jewish people of the world. Seven years ago she had managed to stuff most of those thoughts away and tie it with pretty ribbon. The ribbon was now cut and it all spilled out. There was nothing pretty about the contents.

What did that mean for her children?

Her children. It was them and only them that moved her forward and up the stairs.

She followed the familiar path to her sons’ bedroom and stood in the doorway. The boys weren’t up yet. A glance to her watch told her that they had time before they needed to waken for school.

A thought. A memory. It slipped into the forefront of her mind and she held it with the gentleness that she had held her newborn babes the day they were born. The boys had been given their own separate bedrooms just last year.

The boys preferred to stay in the same room. They would not be separated. So each morning Alex and Reinhard would go to wake them, they would find their children nestled together. It wasn’t too much different from how she was with her twin.

Alexandra wanted to scream. Their boys. Their girls. Their twins. Her innocent children.

The blow came from an invisible hand and knocked Alexandra to her knees. Teeth clamped down immediately onto her lower lip to keep her cries muffled from the sleeping twins. Short manicured nails scratched against the hardwood.

Twin boys that could have easily been handed over to the likes of Mengele if circumstances had been just slightly different. Her Aryan looking sons with their mother’s vivid blue eyes and their father’s curling blond hair. While they might appear to be Aryan, the boys were like her. They were Jewish.

The same went for her twin daughters. They looked like miniature versions of her. Their softly curling black hair and sweet nature came from Alexandra herself.

Oh it could have been so very different. Different meant deadly, even now.

Pressing her forehead to the floor, Alexandra gagged. If anything had been left in her stomach, it would have come up. She was thankful there was nothing left. She wanted the pain.

As she gagged those tears fell. It didn’t take Reinhard to make them fall. All it took was the realization of how little all of their lives meant.

Alexandra did not wipe the tears away when she found the emotional strength to stand. Steadying herself against the doorframe, she was finally able to move again.

Taking a breath, she walked to the master bedroom. Alex might have been surprised if she could have seen how steady she appeared. She felt anything but steady. On the inside it was true, but her
outer shell maintained that strict poker face.

Steady with blood on her chin from where she bit her lip.

With a hand on the door there was nothing more to do than to face the inevitable. She and her husband needed to speak. Alexandra had only one concern. It was a single concern and she would not waver upon it, ever. The safety and well-being of the children would come before anything.

When she saw Reinhard, the poker face vanished.

“Alexandra!” He saw the blood first. “Schatzi. Tell me. What is going on?”

He rushed to her. Frowning, Reinhard swept his wife off of her feet. He could tell whatever it was, it was serious. He sat them both on their bed. Immediately he knew something was far more serious than he originally believed by the look on her face. She always fought him, even if it was in jest, when he picked her up. Reinhard, with the most gentle of touches wiped the blood first with his hand and then with their bed sheet.

“How much time do we have? Who knows?” He held her tight.

“It’s not you. It’s me. I was asked for by my given name. They appeared not to know if it was truly me but you know how that is.” The water was still on the nightstand. Picking it up, she drained the glass. “I have no idea if it was a ruse or not.”

“So you know who it is?”

Yes, she knew. In that moment, Alexandra could not face her husband. The same window that captivated her in the wee hours of the morning, caught her attention once again. If for nothing more than to permit her to focus elsewhere, as the ramifications of what could happen were deadly.

How was it possible? How could she even ask such a thing? To make a man choose was something so vile that she could not comprehend his response. In the moment she needed her husband the most, Alexandra recoiled from him physically and emotionally. It was from his lap that she physically spilled onto the floor. Once more she retched painfully. This time there was something.

“Schatzi!!” Reinhard crashed to his knees and grabbed his wife. “What is going on? You are scaring me Alexandra. Talk to me. Please.”

The dark smudges beneath her beautiful blue eyes had not been there when they were still together in bed earlier that morning. What happened in the twenty minutes that she had been gone for?

When the tears started to fall again it almost felt like they scorched her skin. It was so much and so fast that once more she turned away from him. While she cried in silence, Reinhard noticed there was a difference in his wife. The confidence that she always had from the first moment he had laid his eyes on her had vanished. He did not recognize the woman that pulled away from him as his beloved wife. The woman that he saw now appeared devastated. She moved away from him.

Once more, she stood at the window.

Smooth alabaster skin turned mottled with redness when her reflection showed itself in the window.

The redness reminded her of diluted blood being washed away from skin. She remembered when it was his skin that she washed the blood from. Someone had tried to kill Reinhard and Alexandra was able to keep him alive. The damage was so extensive that she even closed on the surgery
which is usually relegated to someone of a lesser status on the surgical team.

When Reinhard was injured he had fought and fought hard with her. She didn’t blame him. She would have done the same if someone had tried to kill her like they did him. All she was then was a crazy American woman that he did not know. Nor did he know she was trying to help.

There were two guns pointed at her and Alexandra remembered suddenly with such clarity one of the two men with guns telling her to hurry. She responded rather pleasantly in German with something akin to would you kindly fuck off I’m very busy.

Then Alexandra made a statement she had forgotten about until this moment. Or was it not a statement but a promise?

“Come on big guy, cooperate with me and it will all be good. I got ya. Be a good boy and I’ll dance at your daughter’s wedding with ya.”

In some strange way she saw herself for the first time in that reflection. The layers of the well-controlled woman that appeared to almost everyone, was being diluted.

And so was her life.

Like the blood she had cleaned with gentle care from her husband’s wounds, her happy life was washed away. Again, she wet her lips. This time her tongue was dry. It did nothing to help and felt useless in her mouth. Alexandra felt the same. Useless.

Breathing was impossible with the tears. Her nose stuffed up. Turning swiftly, she walked to grab a handful of tissues. That was when she looked at him.

“Primum non nocere. First, do no harm. It perhaps would be better to not intervene.”

“You are speaking in your riddles again Schatzi.” Reinhard’s voice was little more than a whisper. He felt a fear like none he ever had before. Somehow, he knew that this wasn’t about winning or losing. They all would lose.

“Hippocratic Oath. When it comes to you, I ignored the statement. I intervened with you when I shouldn’t have. Not in saving your life but in your life. I did you harm. You were a married man. It mattered none if you were happy or unhappy in your marriage, I have no idea if you truly were or not. I couldn’t help but fall in love with you. It was inevitable. I should not have done anything about it. I was weak when I shouldn’t have been.”

“Alexandra. My love. My life. Please. Do not say such a thing.”

“It’s true Reinhard. It is true. Still, even though it was me that was asked for. You are the one they want.”

“Who?”

“Klaus. You eldest son.”
Chapter 52

Alexandra turned and walked away from Reinhard. She only went as far as their en suite bathroom. Washing her face first, she steadied herself as best she could. Her gentle hand held a few items. Reinhard was sitting on the bed with his face in his hands.

She said nothing. A cold damp cloth was placed on the back of his neck. Alexandra had to physically move his hands but the other was held to his forehead. Tissues were placed next to him, more for her than him.

“Thank you Dr. Löwe.” His tone was sarcastic.

“You are welcome Professor Löwe.” Her’s was not. Sitting on the edge of the bed, her eyes searched him from head to toe. “I’m going downstairs to talk to him.”


“I must. If you wish to join me or listen in, that is up to you. I do think it is for the best that he meet me first since I am the one he asked for.” She sighed. “The children are staying home from school today. If the situation warrants it, we can leave immediately. Tell Kenna would you please?”

“Ja.”

“Reinhard. No matter, I love you.”

“I know. I love you as well.”

He stood up abruptly. “Wait.”

“Yes?” She paused at the door.

“I will not tell you not to speak with him but know this Alexandra this is my doing. I will take care of this.” Reinhard searched her face for something, anything to give him the strength he needed. The sadness in her eyes was killing him.

“No. We are both at fault for this Reinhard.” Her eyes drifted to the wrapped gift for him. It pained her knowing it had been all but forgotten.

She smoothed his shirt. With her hand laying over his heart, she kissed him briefly. Without another glance to him, Alex left.

Walking down the stairs, Alexandra mentally packed up her feelings on this matter. She did not have the strength for those feelings to roam free in her mind. Right now, she needed the academic side of herself to come. Other than empathy, emotions would be dangerous in whatever this was going on. When she walked into the informal dining room, Reinhard’s son stood up immediately.

The informal dining room opened to the large kitchen. There were no doors in the doorways. This is where Alexandra’s family enjoyed their breakfast. It was where her children took their snacks. It was where their four children took their tutorial lessons from her.

“Caspari. Daegan. Thank you both.”

“Would you like us to stay Doctor?”
“Just outside if you both would, please Caspari.” She knew how to translate the meaning of the two heads of security. The boy was not a physical threat.

“You realize you could have just knocked on the door.”

“Are you Alexandra Kettler?”

“I was, yes.”

Alexandra knew that Caspari and Daegan would have already checked the boy for weapons, she studied him for other reasons.

There was no mistaking Klaus Heydrich. He had his father’s eyes and his father’s tender heart. Alexandra could see it easily in the eyes that were nearly identical to her husband’s. Her own heart went out to the boy, even as he stared at her with cold hatred.

“What happened to my father?” It was a demand, not a question.

“Manners will get you far Herr Heydrich, please have a seat. Would you like something to drink? Perhaps coffee?” She was as she always was, soft spoken.

“I’ll have whatever you are having.”

“Nanette, if you would be so kind?” She asked the waiting servant.

A carafe was left on the table after the coffee was served.

Alexandra had never met a coffee she didn’t like, some were just better than others. This was very good coffee but the boy wasn’t used to it. The bitter brew was not to his liking. He was trying to be more than he was.

“You asked about your father. What would you like to know?”

“On…” The boy paused dramatically and looked in a small notebook. “27th May 1942 you performed surgery on my father. What was the result?”

“He survived. He survived on a date that you likely know as well as the date of your own birth. Reinhard Klaus Heydrich. Please, quit the act. Ask me what you wish to know and I will answer you to the best of my abilities. Know this, if I do not wish to answer I will not answer. Nothing I say will make you feel better. As a matter of fact, anything I say will likely make you feel worse.”

“Why did you save him?”

“I have been asked that question so many times and it never fails to astonish me. I’m a surgeon. A man nearly died right before my very eyes and it never occurred to me not to help him.” The sadness welled up in her chest. “Would you like some milk and sugar?”

“Yes.” He paused before remembering his manners. “Please.” It was brought to him.

“I performed surgery on your father because that is what I do. I didn’t know who he was. I didn’t even know his last name for nearly three months.”

“Did you have an affair with my father?”

“Yes, I did.”
“Why?”

“Because I fell in love with him.”

“Why did you take him away from us?”

“Why? I was selfish. I didn’t think of anyone else besides myself and what I wanted.” There was so much more than that. Good god, the entire explanation would take a few years and more than anyone’s fair share of therapy, but Alex told the truth in its shortest version.

“My mother hated you.”

“Of that I have no doubt. To be fair, I hated me too.”

“Why?”

“That is one I will not answer as it has nothing to do with you or any member of your family.” Buder, you will always be my shadow. Won’t you? “Does your mother know you are here?”

“She died in an accident, like my father.”

“I am so very sorry Klaus.” The words seemed trite to her own ears but they were not meant that way. The ache for the boy grew more profound. “Where are your sisters and brother?”

“With my uncle in the US.”

“Why are you not with them?”

“I didn’t want to go. Germany is my home and Germany is where I will stay. I have wished you dead for a long time. I still do.”

She said nothing. It was on her tongue to say she had wanted to be dead but Alexandra would not uncover that part of her once again, she didn’t want to know what unleashing that demon would bring. Now was not the time to find out.

“Did my father love you?”

“I cannot answer for him but I believe he did, yes.”

“My mother said you were nothing more than a Jewish whore that made him turn away from his own family. You ruined him. Us.”

Alexandra knew that Lina didn’t know that she was Jewish. That would have been a death sentence for both Alex and Reinhard if Lina had known. She said nothing to Klaus.

“Is it true?”

“Is what true Klaus?”

“You are nothing but a Jew.”

“I would say I am quite a number of things. But yes, one of those is being Jewish.”

Klaus half rose from his seat and spat in Alex’s face. Caspari appeared immediately on one side of the boy and Daegan did on the other. Strong hands forced Klaus back into his seat.
Wiping the spittle from her face, Alexandra rose and walked to the kitchen. A clean rag was taken from the drawer and wetted. She cleaned herself off before returning to her seat.

“It’s fine Caspari. I have had much worse on me.” The two men went back to outside the doorway. “You are a guest in my home Klaus, I ask that you do not do that again. Your father and I were happy together. I know that is hard for you to understand.

The boy’s lip curled in an ugly way. Alexandra had seen it only once before on his father when the two men that were supposed to be looking for her were planning her rape and demise. There was a thin line of fear that now ran through her.

“My father killed more of your kind than you will ever know. Too bad he didn’t get to you before you changed him.” The boy hissed in anger. “He never loved you. You trapped him. You killed MY FATHER!”

There was very little Alexandra could say. Nothing would change the mind of the angry and hate-filled child before her. As much as she wanted to blame Lina for what this boy had become, Alexandra knew she was at fault as well.

A hand caught the back of the boy’s collar and hauled him up and out of the chair. “I did back then and I do love her even more now. You are the one that doesn’t know what you speak of Klaus.”

Having caught only the last minute or two of the happenings, Reinhard was furious.

“Alexandra, I know you have errands to run and the packages that needs delivered. If you would take care of that? Caspari will go with you.”

Alexandra understood the code spoken by her husband all too well. She felt herself go cold. The name Caspari was derived from the Persian word Kaspar or Treasurer. The man had been given the name on purpose. He was the one that was supposed to help manage Reinhard’s Schatzi when things went horribly wrong.

Caspari formerly known as Klaus Fischer and Daegan was once known as Dieter. Both men and both their wives were loyal to Alexandra and Reinhard. Caspari was just told to get Alexandra and the children to a safe place. Only he and Kenna would know where they were.

Reinhard would be taken somewhere else, possibly. Right now everything was dependent upon what an angry not quite 17 year old boy would do.
Reinhard Löwe was standing on one of his home’s five balconies on that 9th of March morning. His thoughts drifted, of course, to his wife. He had not seen her in over 24 hours. When was the last time that he had gone without seeing her for that long? If he was going to be gone more than 24 hours, she always came with him. Always. The last time they were apart it was when he was held by the British.

Now, he had no idea where his wife and children were.

The British. He had sold his soul to them. If he didn’t, they would have tortured his wife and two boys before executing them. The threat didn’t pertain to the girls, they had not been conceived yet. Reinhard would have been forced to watch. If he spoke freely they gave him a chance at freedom. That’s what they said at least. He had been blissfully happy these last four years.

An old memory came to the forefront of his mind. He had abandoned Alexandra. How long did he hate himself for leaving behind the one person that mattered? He had been in his office where he and Lina lived. Looking out the window he saw Lina and the children playing.

Reinhard felt nothing for them except perhaps pity.

He pitied them for leaving and breathing such a horrible hatred for people. He wondered if he could get the children out of there and teach them differently.

That was the day he vowed that he would eventually find his Schatzi once again. Reinhard knew he was being a selfish prick. He should try to make a life again with Lina but all he wanted was that sweet girl he called his Schatzi.

Looking out across the expansive grounds, he felt the same thing. All he wanted was his wife and their children. The loneliness was suffocating him. Understanding that Caspari was on the grounds somewhere, so were a few other men didn’t help with the despair he felt. Their large home was empty of the life it normally contained.

Alexandra adored their home. She had fell in love with it the first time she saw it. One of the Brits had to okay the home before they could actually sign the paperwork.

All the security measures had been put together by the British in case of an emergency. MI-6 and MI-5 collaborated to make sure everything was a well-oiled machine. Sighing, he turned to go back into his office.

He desperately missed the sounds of his children in the too quiet home.

Reinhard was getting the rest of the financial paperwork together before he could leave. A private plane was sitting on the small airstrip near their home waiting for him. The last two days had been pure hell. He didn’t understand how his son from a previous marriage found Alexandra. Had Lina told Klaus something?

When Reinhard tried to explain to his eldest child, Klaus, that Lina would not permit him any contact with his children. His son called him a liar.

After all, Reinhard was an Obergruppenführer, he could have had anything he wanted. What Klaus did not know was that to do that Lina would be punished severely and possibly sent to one of the camps. While he may not love Lina as a husband should, he would have never done that to her.
According to Klaus, Reinhard had faked his own death to escape his family for a Jewish whore. His son then left. He tried to stop his sullen, angry, teenaged son but was unable to.

Accidently bumping his briefcase off of the desk, a letter fluttered out. The envelope was that sort of heavy and exquisite paper that one only uses for exclusive dinner invitations or wedding invitations. This one was neither. As a matter of fact, it only had Reinhard’s name on it.

He recognized the swirling script as his wife’s. Frowning, this was something unusual. There was a little prickle of worry that bit at him as he pulled the envelope free and started to read.

7 March 1950

My Lion, I love you. Stop worrying. There is nothing wrong. I wanted to write you a letter is all. It was something I thought of while at work and as usual my thoughts are of you. Again, don’t worry. Not a thing is wrong.

First of all, I hope you have had the happiest of birthdays my Beast. I can’t wait to make you purr like a big cat again. Stop reading right now. Yes, I am giving you an order. I know, you are used to giving orders and not taking them. Trust your wife on this one. You will like this. Go to our room when you get home from work. There will be a small box by your side of the bed. It’s wrapped all nice and prettily.

Immediately he started to laugh. She knew him well. He went to get the box.

Do you have the box? If yes, continue. If no? LISTEN TO YOUR WIFE YOU NAUGHTY LION!

My Beloved Reinhard,

“It is never beautiful how we love.”

Yes, that was my thought. It seems so insignificant of a saying. Yet, there is so much truth in it. I have no idea if it is something I heard or something that I came up with to be honest. I didn’t know in the May sunshine in 1942 when I saw you for the first time that you would be the man I would love forever. I was scared, alone, and knew not what to do.

In the blink of an eye I did know what to do. You were my salvation. You say I saved your life but I think we saved each other’s lives.

The first time I saw you I ended up covered in your blood.

I berated and belittled myself for over a solid month because I knew I was falling for you and that was unbelievably unprofessional. Not to mention quite unlike me. Did I ever tell you that some of my friends thought I didn’t like men nor women? They thought I was frigid.

I didn’t know that it was just my heart was searing for you and I would accept nothing less.

It wasn’t two days later that I found myself at your feet and in your bed.

Reinhard chuckled. Alexandra had written it just in case someone else had gotten ahold of it. It would make no mention of facts that would give away something recognizable. At your feet, he shook his head as he read that again. She had tripped over his legs and then he ended up knocking her to the floor.

Smiling, he remembered that night in detail. He laid on her bed as they spoke of her siblings, forgiveness, and making your own happiness. He couldn’t get her off his mind. When she fell to
the floor, he kissed her for the first time. Reinhard smiled at the memory. He fully expected to be slapped. She returned the kiss instead.

He wanted to take her right then and there. He forced himself not to. To love her like a cad their first time together horrified him. Reinhard wanted to love her as she deserved. And he did.

We have been through everything two people may go through together. No, our love didn't start out beautiful. It was ugly because war is ugly. We faced everything that wartime lovers do and more. The ugliness of war never stopped our love.

You are not the love of my life as I once thought. No, a love like ours is eternal. Our love is too strong to just be for one lifetime. There has to be more.

Our children are beautiful but goodness! They didn’t come out that way. They were squalling little messes that made the most unholy of sounds and smells. Granted you saw all of it. From that day forward you were the perfect father.

My Handsome Beast,

Actually, now that the boys are seven and the girls four I do believe they still make the most unholy of sounds and smells. I recall this from my own two brothers. The condition can be fatal if applied too often around female siblings. Be warned!

No, love is never meant to be beautiful in its making or creating. But when we have it, is it magnificent.

Forevermore you have all of my love.

Your Schatzi.

PS – While it is never beautiful how we love, your arse is the most exquisite, beautiful bit of human anatomy ever created.

PPS – Just so you know.

PPSS- What do you use after PPS? I have no idea. Can we go back to talking about your arse?

Now open the box.

Reinhard pulled the wrapping off of the box and opened it. Inside of the box was a gold band with 7 diamonds set into it. It was gorgeous. And expensive.

I love you my Beast.

Because I love surprising you, Happy Belated Birthday!

You will be a father AGAIN come August. Five diamonds for our five children. But two are just for us. My sweet silly Beast, I love you. Close your eyes and sit back. Feel the love your family has for you. We all love you.

Reinhard read the note again before letting it fall from his hand. The man once called The Man with the Iron Heart, wept uncontrollably.
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