

BORYS

ODYSSEY



by
Borys Lotocki

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As a child, Borys, son of Ukrainian diplomat and professor, lives in the final days of the tsarist era and sees his country once again win and lose its independence. As a young teenager, he thrives on the mysteries of exotic Constantinople where he attends a Turkish school.

The War crashes this world forever and brings Borys harrowing adventure and narrow escapes on his way to Europe. Once here his wit, charm, and courage lead him to other adventures, including another narrow escape, this time from a French bordello.

In London he enters the international car racing arena with two Siamese princes. In Italy he becomes a movie star. Not because of this, but in spite of it, he captures the heart of an beautiful and spirited German girl. Together they make their own adventures, ultimately sailing to New York to raise their family. It is to his dear children that Borys tells his story.

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Designed by Oksana Moshinsky

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I dedicate this book to my wife, Brigitte.
Without her and the two precious
children she gave me, my life would
have had no value.

When wit and charm converge with intelligence on paper, the result is an editor's delight and a reader's enchantment. There is about much of this story the ambience of a bygone era. Every effort has been made to preserve this feeling, from the vocabulary to the use of commas.

Throughout the text the Ukrainian spelling of place names has been maintained where appropriate. The dates and facts in the pages that follow have been scrupulously verified and have proven the author's memory correct in every instance. The events described here have not been altered or embellished. What you, dear reader, are about to learn is the interesting tale of a man of pluck and tenacity who found one can through hardship find true happiness. Some of you will identify personally with the events and situations Borys Lotocki experienced; some of you will identify with them only vicariously but all of you will appreciate the courage of a small boy who was catapulted to manhood by times like no other in history.



Borys Lotocki
Milan 1950

A LETTER TO MY CHILDREN

Dear Marina, dear Alex,

You asked me to write my "memoirs." You should know, however, that I am not a writer and even my experience in journalism was brief. Consequently, it will be difficult for me to write and will possibly require some patience on your part to read these biographical notes.

Mine was an extremely interesting age, full of historical events of world importance; however, I do not intend to discuss historical problems here or present a treatise on political science. I would like only to make a sort of autobiographical sketch describing some episodes, maybe not the most important, but those which either characterize a period or a country, or those which might interest or simply amuse you. I am not writing these lines for educational purposes, but as an entertaining backdrop to my experiences. Historical events will, therefore, remain in the background of personal experience. Unlike my father, I was not a participant in these events, only a modest onlooker who was at times nearly carried away by the hurricanes destroying the old and bringing chaos into a new world.

I'm an extremely lucky man! I had the most

wonderful parents — tender, loving, and always prepared to sacrifice themselves for their children, but by no means inclined to spoil us. I had an unforgettable "nyanya" who cared for me from birth and tended me like a second mother through all my endless sicknesses, never thinking of herself first. I had a sister and brother-in-law who were exceptional people and to whom I was bound by the deepest affection and most sincere admiration. And last, but certainly not least, I was extremely fortunate to meet and marry your mother. I need not tell you how wonderful she is — you know as well as I do — and I sincerely hope you fully appreciate what she has done for you since your babyhood: caring for you day and night, worrying when you were sick, helping you in everything, and by her good example giving you the best lessons. To mention another point, I was also extremely fortunate to live in the free world and not in the "red paradise" like nearly fifty million of my countrymen.

Yes, I am a very lucky man and fully realize my good luck. This knowledge has always helped me tremendously in bad times (and I have had a good many of them!) and I stress here that I have never envied any other person. Should I be envious if in essential matters I was better off than practically everyone else? I would just like to say that having children like you both means complete happiness to me, and I only hope that you will stay as you are now and not cause undue trouble to your dear mother when I am no longer here.

BORYS' ODYSSEY

Our family originates from White Ruthenia. It traces back to Knight John Schwogier of the late fifteenth century and to Michael, Lord of Letce, and Boyar of Vitebsk (1514), related to the princes of Drutzk. In the seventeenth century their descendants relocated in Podillia in Ukraine. My grandfather, the Reverend Ignace Lotocki, married to Elisabeth Pobog Dlozewska, was the rector of Bronnytsia on the Dnister River where my father was born on March 21, 1870. My maternal grandfather, Reverend Methodius Rudenko, was the rector of Sydorivka near Kaniv on the Dnieper River. There my mother was born on September 22, 1875. My parents were married in Kiev in 1896 and my only sister, Oksana, later Princess Tokarzewska-Karaszewicz, was born on April 26 of the following year.

I myself was born in Sanct Peterburg on January 27, 1904, long before that city became known as Petrograd or Leningrad. Nobody ever questions whether an American born in Beijing or Delhi is still an American, but the Russians I met questioned, "How can you be Ukrainian if you were born in Sanct Peterburg?" This exasperated me to such a point that before leaving in 1919 for Constantinople where my father was Minister Plenipotentiary of Ukraine, I insisted on having the birthplace on my diplomatic passport changed to Kiev.



Nimfodora Lotocki
Née Rudenko



Alexander Lotocki

Later in the course of my vagabond life, I often congratulated myself on having done so, as it saved me many stupid and unnecessary discussions with stubborn individuals and bored authorities. Why was I born in Sanct Peterburg and not in Kiev? This had to do with the political climate in the then Russian Empire. My father, studying at the Theological Academy in Kiev, had published several articles in Ukrainian in the Journal of the Shevchenko Scientific Society in L'viv (at that time in Austria). This "crime" was reported to the scholastic authorities and as a result his otherwise brilliant record was marred by a "bad behavior" mark. This excluded my father from following a teaching career as he had originally intended. Instead, he successfully applied for a job at the Kiev office of the Ministry of State Control, the institution in charge of controlling the accounting of all ministries, state banks, and other government offices. Although analogous to the American G.A.O., it had much more power and was much wider in scope. It and the Ministry of Finance were at that time the least reactionary of the tsarist ministries.

Finance and economics were not particularly in my father's line, but he began to study them and, thanks to his capabilities and strong will, he had within a short time mastered matters pertinent to his work. This acquired knowledge, combined with my father's inborn literary talent, enabled him to draw up reports that impressed his superior, a Mr. Nikolaiev. He greatly appreciated my father's collaboration and when he was promoted to Comptroller General and transferred to

Sanct Peterburg he invited my father to join him there. This was in 1900.

Mr. Nikolaiev was a most decent person. Although one hundred percent Russian and rather on the reactionary side, he did not hold my father's liberal political opinions against him, a rather unusual attitude at that time. As soon as my father arrived in Sanct Peterburg, Mr. Nikolaiev introduced him to his new duties, considerably wider in scope than before. To enable my father to cope with these, he provided him a long list of important books covering economic and financial matters and excused him from all office work for three months. My father put that time to good use and in the years that followed extended his knowledge of economics and became a real expert. He did not limit himself to preparing official reports, but started to publish articles in leading periodicals. Mr. Nikolaiev naturally followed all the important publications and, knowing my father's style, usually recognized his unsigned articles and sometimes liked to tease my father with his remarks. One day something amusing happened. Mr. Nikolaiev gave my father a financial magazine, pointing out an article and saying, "Read this, it should be an example to you of how to write."

He was somewhat taken aback when my father replied, "I do not have to read it — I wrote it."

Many of the reports my father drew up were not limited to the verification of facts, but contained evaluations on banking policy and suggestions for new policies. The most important, especially the yearly reports, were read by the Minister at the meetings of the

Cabinet where policies were discussed and established.

My father spent sixteen years in the Ministry of State Control. Having liberal opinions that were often reflected in his reports and being an avowed Ukrainian certainly did not help him in his career. Not everyone was as tolerant as Mr. Nikolaiev and denunciations came even from reactionaries outside the Ministry. Nevertheless, my father's capabilities were such that he progressed and obtained the rank of Counselor of State. However, upon Mr. Nikolaiev's retirement, the situation became most unpleasant and my father began to consider resigning. But by then the Revolution had come and everything changed radically.

In 1900, when my father received the offer to go to Sanct Peterburg, the decision was hard to make. His roots were in Kiev and he had a circle of good friends, Yurko Matushevsky's father, a journalist, among them. They had founded a publishing company called Vik (The Century) and had started issuing books in Ukrainian. At that time no Ukrainian book could be published without the approval of the central censorship office in Sanct Peterburg and this involved serious difficulties and great delays. My father's presence there was deemed invaluable as he might personally be able to intervene with the censorship office. Thus, his friends advised him to accept the offer to move to Sanct Peterburg for a couple of years, so he decided to leave. "A couple of years" finally became seventeen! And the reasoning proved right. There were naturally some Ukrainians in Sanct Peterburg before the arrival of my father. Being extremely energetic, he not only undertook things

himself, but galvanized others and succeeded in realizing seemingly impossible feats. It is rather difficult for anyone who has always lived in free countries to imagine the conditions prevailing in Tsarist Russia. The civil rights of Russians were restricted, but the situation for other nationalities, Ukrainians in particular, was far worse. For instance in 1863, the Interior Minister, Peter Valuiev, in his decree prohibiting the printing of popular and scientific books in Ukrainian, declared, "there has never been, nor is, nor will be a Ukrainian language." This policy was implemented and strengthened on May 18, 1876, in liberal Tsar Alexander II's Ukaz of Ems which prohibited the use of Ukrainian in the theater, forbade the importation of Ukrainian books from abroad, and instituted preventive censorship of any work to be published in Ukrainian. Bad Ems may have been a famous German spa where the well-to-do came to be pampered, but it certainly spawned a harsh edict. To pass this censorship, a book had to be printed in accordance with the rules of Russian orthography. Because the Ukaz was never officially withdrawn, it is easy to see how difficult it was to get a Ukrainian book through censorship.

Right after his arrival in Sanct Peterburg my father started to intervene at the censorship office in behalf of Ukrainian authors wanting to have their books published. It was a very difficult and often most unpleasant task to deal with censors who behaved like dictators. In the course of time my father was successful in creating a somewhat better relationship with these people. His climb up the bureaucratic ladder was helpful,

too. If anyone talking to a censor had a higher bureaucratic rank than the censor, the word of this person bore more weight. This probably has its roots in a certain respect for a uniform. As officials wore a uniform similar to that of a soldier, my father in his uniform was able to take advantage of the moment. From all parts of Ukraine people contacted my father, asking for help and getting it.

In the meantime my father had also established good connections with several members of the Russian Academy of Sciences and succeeded in promoting a recommendation by the Academy calling for the abolition of the 1904 ruling limiting the use of the Ukrainian printed word. Interestingly, the President of the Academy was Grand Duke Constantin, a very cultured and noble person, and uncle of the tsar.

My father also contributed to the publishing of the Ukrainian translation of the New Testament by the Russian Synod in 1906. Before then it could only be read in Russian and definitely could not be imported from abroad. Additionally, he contributed to the publishing of the hitherto prohibited complete edition of *Kobzar*, by Taras Shevchenko, Ukraine's revered national poet. In addition to helping organize the Ukrainian representatives in the Duma, the first Russian Parliament after the Revolution in 1905, he contributed to a Ukrainian school text providing reading material for Ukrainian children who were forced to attend Russian schools and could only study their own language at home. This anthology, *Vinok (The Wreath)*, was published in 1905, even before the general censorship regulations had been

loosened somewhat after the first Russian Revolution. One can find many stories therein in which a little Oksana and a little Borys figure. It is remarkable how my father was able to do all this in addition to his very absorbing job. On top of his regular working hours, he worked overtime in the winter months, returning to his office after dinner for another four hours.

However, my father had an explanation ready. He often repeated that he could never have accomplished half of what he did if he had not had the loving and unconditional backing of my mother. She had a golden heart, placing her husband and children before herself. She was gay, gifted, and completely lacked that rather common feminine (?) attribute: love of gossip! She was extremely modest and self-effacing — so much so that even I myself was, so to say, "contaminated" by her self-effacement; I have mentioned my mother only three times in the previous pages!

My mother was a wonderful, pretty woman, good-hearted, charming and very friendly. She came from a family of priests from the Kiev region and attended a teachers' college in Kiev but did not pursue her profession as she married my father when she was quite young. She was very musical and enjoyed singing. She always supported her husband in his political and professional life.

Oksana, my sister, was both a beautiful girl and an excellent student. She even received the coveted "golden medal" at the end of her high school studies; however, she was not hardened to practical life. A typical example of this comes to mind. Once as a teenager she

was invited to a party to which no one in the family could escort her — no proper young lady ever went out alone! So Father gave her a three-ruble bill in order to take a coach back home. The fare was about twenty-five kopecks. When later he asked for the change, she amazed him by asking, "What change?" From then on my parents decided I should learn early how to manage money.

Our nyanya, on the other hand, was quite canny on the subject. As I was the frequent reason for the local pediatrician's house calls, I knew his fee was two rubles. Once a house guest visiting the family offered Nyanya a tip of two rubles. She promptly refused his offer with a smile and said, "No Sir, thank you very much, but I am not a doctor."

Oksana was seven years older than I and consequently no company for me. At four and a half years old I learned to read, but this did not fill my days. Therefore, I was sent to a number of nursery schools from about that age. Nothing special can be mentioned about these schools, but I enjoyed them for the sake of the companionship I experienced. Then at about the age of seven I was accepted in the primary class of a small private school organized by several ladies who had teachers' diplomas to teach their own children and those of their friends. It was an excellent school scholastically and the atmosphere made one feel very much at home with both the teachers and the boys and girls. To illustrate: one winter morning my parents noticed that I had a sore throat, and told me to stay home. I protested, but to no avail, so when my parents turned their backs, I donned my coat and cap and ran off to school. Having always been a very obedient child, this was quite a feat — until my mother telephoned the school and had me sent home. Already in that school I had caught the mania that followed me nearly all my school years: I had to be the best in my class.

However, when I was eleven my parents decided it was time I entered the gymnasium, a school offering a classical curriculum. A diploma from such a school

enabled one to attend a university. So I entered the third class of Gymnasia Maya, a well-known and outstanding school founded by a certain Mr. May. Naturally, I had to adapt myself to the completely different surroundings, but I learned to love this school very much. The teachers were excellent too, with one exception, the math teacher. He issued marks according to his personal sympathies, not according to his pupils' scholastic achievements. Being an "eager beaver" I was quite upset about this, as it could prevent me from getting the "golden certificate," high honors in all subjects, at the end of the term. I complained bitterly at home and when it again happened, my father made me explain to him exactly how the marks were given and asked me to tell him all the pertinent facts. The very next day he went to see the math teacher. Because of his vast bureaucratic experience, he knew how to deal firmly with people, making them clearly understand his point without using any rude or harsh words. The teacher denied any wrongdoing, saying that it was all a "misunderstanding." But from that time on, the "misunderstandings" ceased and I was able to enjoy my golden certificate. Later when I switched schools I realized this teacher was not only a "meaney," but was also not very bright as a math teacher.

Despite the adversities, this was the school I liked best of all. I made very good friends there, for example, Max Braun, whom I had first met at the age of eight, as well as several other very nice boys. The only one I met later in life was Max whose father was a full professor at the University of Sanct Peterburg and an outstanding specialist in Sanskrit. Of German descent, he escaped

Soviet Russia in 1920 and established himself with his family in Leipzig. My father and I even visited them there in 1921, but during World War II we lost track of them. Later I often wondered how I could find Max again. However, as fate would have it, one day while waiting at home in Flushing, New York, for a taxi to take me to Kennedy Airport, I happened to open a catalogue of second hand books dealing with Eastern Europe. All of a sudden my attention was drawn to the following line: *Russian Poets of the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century*, by Professor Maximilian Braun. I immediately concluded that this could only be my lost friend. I hastened to call the book dealer and requested him to send me the book. "It has already been sold and shipped, as far as I know," was the answer. I thereupon explained the problem and he replied that he would check. The book had in fact already been packed but not yet mailed, so he was able to open the parcel and obligingly gave me the name and address of the publisher in Germany. I just had time to jot this down when outside the cab driver honked. Later, I wrote to the publisher and obtained the information that the author was a professor at the University of Goettingen. I immediately sensed that my intuition had been correct: the author of the book was my old friend, Max. He visited us twice in Flushing and we later saw each other from time to time in Europe.

My childhood years in Sanct Peterburg were very happy. My parents were simply wonderful, I would say "unique," and I loved my school years. I made good

friends and had enjoyable holidays. Every other year we went to Finland, about fifty miles from Sanct Peterburg, and to Ukraine. In Finland, at Usikirkko, a village annexed by the Soviets after the 1939 War, we stayed for two or three summers in the same villa. My parents had given me my own rowboat to use on neighboring Lake Sula Yarvi and with my own savings I had proudly bought a bike. I played tennis and made good friends with boys and girls who spent their vacation there regularly and Max Braun once or twice came to stay with us. The climate was very pleasant during the summer months, June to mid-August, and the days were sunny and nearly twenty-two hours long, so I found these Finnish vacations most enjoyable. Once we went to Usikirkko for Christmas and I was able to ski all day long. When we spent summer in Finland my father came to visit us only for the weekends.

Every second year my father took a two-month vacation and we went to Ukraine to visit old friends and my parents' relatives. It was entirely different from the Finnish vacation, though also very interesting and enjoyable. We went to various places visiting kinsmen, some of them priests, but never missing the chance to stop in Kiev where my father's best friends were, among them the father of Yurko Matushevsky. These trips gave me the unique opportunity of seeing a good part of my country, particularly Podillia and the region of Kiev, which were very picturesque and beautiful.

Kiev was — and I understand still is — an extremely pleasant and especially beautiful green city with old churches, parks, broad tree-lined boulevards and a

lovely view of the Dnipro. During some of these trips I met various cousins, but unfortunately they were all much older than I.

Traveling was not always easy. The railway network in the old Russian Empire had not been developed and some of the bigger towns were twenty to thirty kilometers away from the next railroad station. One had to cover this distance in a horse cart, a trip of three to five hours on dusty or muddy dirt roads.

The summer of 1914 was the last time we went to Ukraine on vacation. Germany declared war on Russia on August first. The First World War was upon us. We cut our vacation short and returned to Saint Peterburg. I cannot exactly describe my impressions at the start of the war; I was ten years old and not mature enough to understand all the implications of the word, war, although, as a matter of fact, most adults were in the same boat. Just one small event remains engraved in my mind: while we were getting ready to take the train back to Saint Peterburg, a plainly dressed young Ukrainian farmer, who had apparently been called to arms, approached my father and implored, "Sir, my good Sir, please tell me, you must know how long this war will last. For how long will I have to leave my wife and children?" What could my father say? I remember he told the young man not to lose courage and expressed the hope that the war would not be long. Actually, at that time the consensus seemed to be that it would not last longer than three to four months.

Saint Peterburg's natural climate was dreadful, worse than that of New York City, but the political climate was somewhat better, especially compared with other cities and towns in the Russian Empire. Tsarist oppression in the capital was felt less than in other parts

of the Empire where underlings of the tsar, the local satraps, felt free to exercise their power with no restraint. Though much less so than the Soviet Union, the Russian Empire was a police state.

The situation in Sanct Peterburg worsened when Grigory Rasputin, whose name in Russian means "debauched," appeared on the scene. Tsars and tsarinas had often had their favorites who ruled the Empire in their name, but usually they belonged to the upper class; Rasputin, however, came from way down. He was a peasant who had spent time as a novice in a monastery from which he was expelled after having been accused of raping neighborhood girls and stealing horses. Having later read his biography, I suspect at least the first accusation must have been correct. This man who could barely write had extraordinary hypnotic power and sexual prowess which enabled him to climb the social ladder most efficiently, right into the tsar's palace.

Apparently he was able to stop the bleeding of the hemophiliac tsarevich and thus could exert great influence over the tsarina who adored her only son and heir, born after four daughters. Her desperation concerning her son's health, combined with her strong will, worked in Rasputin's favor.

His seemingly unlimited sex drive assured his popularity with the refined ladies of the court. His political power became immense; bishops and ministers were appointed and dismissed at his whim and nobody dared oppose him. I saw an example of this power in my

school class. One of the boys was the son of the Under Secretary of State for Finances. One morning I noticed he was very nervous, so I asked him what the matter was. After a moment of hesitation he told me the story. His father had come home from the office and at the dinner table had told the family that a man had been to see him, bringing a note from Rasputin: "Dear Friend, please give a good job to the bearer of this letter. Your Grisha." (Diminutive of Grigory).

"And what did you do?" asked my friend's mother.

"I told him to get out, and fast."

"What! You have jeopardized your position and you yourself will soon be begging for a job!" shouted the mother. The boy's father had to promise to give a job to Rasputin's protégé.

Rasputin was hated and despised almost universally, except within the small circle of his female and male admirers. Several members of the tsar's family and the leaders of the Monarchist Party were extremely apprehensive about the situation, feeling the popularity of the tsar and his family, already considerably undermined by the distress and misery brought about by the war, was being further weakened. Finally, there were three notable people who planned to get rid of Rasputin by assassination: Grand Duke Dimitry, an uncle of the tsar; Purishkevich, chief of the Monarchist Party; and Prince Youssoupoff, husband of the tsar's beautiful niece, Irina, and one of the richest — perhaps the richest — men in the Russian Empire. (The latter had an additional reason for wishing to participate. Rasputin was making

approaches to his wife).

On December 17, 1916, Rasputin was invited to the house of Youssoupoff. It was said he was enticed there by the anticipated presence of Princess Youssoupoff. The attempt to kill him with poisoned gateaux failed, because the sugar in the pastry reacted with the poison, neutralizing it. Realizing something was wrong, Rasputin endeavored to escape so Prince Youssoupoff shot him. Afterwards, they loaded him onto a sleigh and threw him through a hole in the ice covering the Neva River. When the police found his body it was discovered that he had resisted the poison and the bullets and had died by drowning. All this had happened during the night.

About ten o'clock the next morning my father received a telephone call from a friend: "Good morning, good morning! And my sincere congratulations!"

"What for?" asked my father, somewhat puzzled.

"Your birthday!" said his friend and hung up. One must know that in Petrograd the police were spying on telephone conversations. (Saint Peterburg was renamed Petrograd at the beginning of the War). Within a couple of hours, however, the message had been clarified.

In eliminating Rasputin, the conspirators had hoped to put a stop to the deep discontent his "reign" had created and thus help the Russian monarchy. But it was already far too late. Soon thereafter, in February 1917, the Revolution wiped out the monarchy.

It was in Paris in 1930 in the office of my boss, Paul Dorman, that I met this famous Prince Youssoupoff.

He had lost all his riches and was living on income derived from a modest guest house in Corsica. He must have also cashed in the rights on a book written with his help by a certain Irene Nemirovsky, published at about that time and giving a full account of the murder. Later my wife and I became friendly with his daughter, a charming and very pretty lady, who married Count Sheremetieff who lived two houses away from us on the Piazza Castello in Milan.

Having mentioned the Russian police state before, it would I think be appropriate here to elaborate. As my father said in his memoirs, our family was then living in a glass house under the vigilant eyes of the secret police. Although he had never belonged to any extremist party, my father was often aware that he was being followed by mysterious shadows. All concierges had to report on the people living in their apartment houses. There was even a popular saying: "Be nice not only to the concierge, but also to his dog to keep them both good." The concierges usually lived in the basement apartment and were obliged to stay at the entrance and check everyone entering or leaving the building. Most fortunately our concierge was a very nice chap, and not only because my father was generous in his tips. It happened sometimes that when my father left the house, the concierge — or as the Russians say, "shveitzar," from the German, "Schweizer," as apparently the first and best concierges were Swiss — whispered without moving his lips: "There are two of them today." Thus, whatever direction my father took he was sure to have "supervision." This sometimes induced him to change his plans.

The true picture of the efficiency of the secret police we saw only when the Revolution started on March 8, 1917. On the second or third day two young students passing the square where the building of the secret police stood, popularly called "Okhranka" ("okhrana" meaning in Russian "protection"), observed a triumphant mob making a great pyre of folders and papers that had been carried or thrown out from the windows of the building. It is possible or even probable that the initiators of this auto-da-fé were not the happy citizens, but rather unhappy agents of the secret police, who, by destroying the files of the police department, were hoping to destroy the record of their spying activities. The young men grabbed two files lying on the ground and brought them to their friend, a Ukrainian lady named Mrs. Bohuslavska. She in turn brought the files to my father.

One file contained the correspondence between the central secret service office and its provincial offices regarding trips to the capital made by various Ukrainian "suspects." For instance, the Kiev office, noting the departure to Sanct Peterburg of the "known Little-Russian (derogatory term Russians used for Ukrainians) activist, Sergey Alexandrovich Iefremov," had requested information regarding his whereabouts in the capital and his departure from it. In answer the Sanct Peterburg office reported that the "said S. A. Iefremov had upon his arrival in Sanct Peterburg gone to stay in the apartment of the Counselor of State, Alexander Lotocki, situated at ... and had left the capital toward the general direction of Kiev on...."

Visits of other well-known Ukrainians were also faithfully noted in the folders, but the correspondence between the Sanct Peterburg and Moscow offices offered the greatest sensation. Before the Revolution my father had heard that Volodymyr Vynnychenko, a well-known Ukrainian writer, had boasted how cleverly he had outwitted the police, living in Moscow with a falsified passport under the very noses of the secret police. He had even offered to host meetings in his apartment. In his file my father read the following report: "Take note that the known Little-Russian writer and agitator, Vladimir Kirilovich Vynnychenko, living in Moscow in ... Street No ... on a falsified passport in the name of Andrei Zinovievich Pavlenko, left today for Sanct Peterburg. Please let us know...." How cleverly the secret police took advantage of the self-confident people who imagined themselves to be perfect conspirators and behaved accordingly.

The tsar and his government did not learn a lesson from the Revolution of 1905 and did their utmost to retract all concessions granted to the people at that time. At the beginning of the 1914 War, there were those who hoped that in these circumstances, when maximum collaboration and concentrated efforts were required of all citizens, the government would liberalize its policy, but just the contrary occurred. There were no citizens in Russia, only "subjects," literally. By 1916 talk of revolution had started even in the most conservative, "un-revolutionary" circles and in January 1917 it became clear

to almost everyone — except the government — that a revolution was inevitable.

Although disorder had already been anticipated on February 14, 1917, the opening of the Duma, everything ran smoothly on that day. On February 23, male and even female workers initiated a strike; people gathered in the streets and the police chased them, but there was no bloodshed. The next day the strikes extended. Students joined the strikers and the police started using arms. On February 25 and 26, great crowds gathered in the center of the city; the police manned machine guns and troops were called. On the latter day, the Volyn Guard Regiment, the majority of whom were Ukrainians, was sent against the strikers, killing and wounding many. The crowds appealed to the soldiers not to shoot their own brethren and the spirit of the troops changed. In the evening when the commanding officer complimented them on their "patriotic action," they rebelled and killed him. The Duma then requested the tsar to nominate a new government responsible to the Duma. On February 27, the Duma elected a provisional committee to direct the revolutionary events and without its officers the rebellious Volynian Regiment marched in the streets, joining the crowds in recognizing the authority of the Duma. Other regiments followed nearly marking the end of the Russian Monarchy. On March 1, the tsar appointed Prince Lvov Prime Minister and signed his own abdication.

"The Bloodless Revolution," as in the beginning the Russians complacently named it, was welcomed by almost all the population of the Russian Empire. Only the

tsarist family, the Court, some aristocrats, reactionary politicians, bureaucrats and, naturally, the police opposed it. On March 14, the Temporary Government was formed by the members of the Duma which during the last few years of tsarist rule had been deprived of its rights and existed, for all practical purposes, on paper only. But at the same time agitators of leftist parties created "soviets," councils, of working men and soldiers oriented much more to the left. The conflict between these two powers grew constantly.

Representatives of all the Ukrainian organizations in the capital met on March 19 and unanimously elected my father president of the Ukrainian National Council in Petrograd. Thus he became a kind of ambassador in Petrograd of the Ukrainian Central Council, Centralna Rada, which had been newly created in Kiev on March 7. On March 23 my father, this time heading the official delegation of the Ukrainian National Council, visited Prince Lvov, the first head of the Russian Provisional Government, and demanded the creation of a special government office for Ukrainian affairs; the appointment of Ukrainians as regional and provincial commissioners in Ukraine; the introduction of the Ukrainian language in public administration, courts, schools, and churches; and the restoration of the former rights of the Ukrainians in parts of Galicia and Bukovyna (formerly part of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy) which were then under Russian occupation.

The Russian military and civilian authorities were maltreating the Ukrainian population, arresting young men and dispensing them to camps in Siberia,

confiscating agricultural products without compensation, tolerating violence by members of the Russian armed forces against the local civilian population. Protests by the Ukrainian Centralna Rada and the Ukrainian National Council, demanding that Russian governors in the occupied former Austrian provinces be replaced by Ukrainians able to protect the Ukrainian civilian population, were successful. And on April 8 an old friend of my father, Dmytro Doroshenko, was appointed governor general of Galicia and Bukovyna and a few days later my father was made governor of Bukovyna. These regions being under military occupation, my father was a military governor and had to wear a uniform. When I first saw him in the uniform of a two-star general (lieutenant general), I felt like laughing.

As my father needed time to groom his successor at the Ministry and my parents needed time to prepare for departure, we finally left Petrograd on May 22 together with Nyanya. Never suspecting we were leaving forever, we retained our apartment and took only a few suitcases with us. However, we never went back and everything we had left behind in Petrograd was lost. Well, not quite everything. Many months later, after the Communist take over in Russia, when hunger plagued Petrograd (it was renamed Leningrad in 1924), my father succeeded in getting in touch with some of his best friends who had remained there and arranged for them to enter our apartment to take the considerable quantities of flour, sugar, melted butter, jam, and other foodstuffs

that had been stored in case of emergency. Luckily for his friends, my father was a very provident man and in all circumstances did his best to care for his family. The Brauns, one of the three families sharing the bounty, later told us that one my father's old friends, a very sedate and rather formal person, actually danced a jig when he saw all the goodies.

My father then went via Kiev to Chernivtsi, the capital of Bukovyna and seat of his new office, while my mother and I, after a short stop in Kiev, went with Nyanya to Makhnivka, a village in Podillia. There we were to be her guests. Nyanya was a peasant girl who had worked in my paternal grandparents' house for several years before coming to my parents. She was such a good, trustworthy, loving, and lovable person that she completely identified herself with our interests and became one of the family, particularly taking care of me. As she originally came from a somewhat poor family, her schooling was nonexistent, but she was very intelligent and had learned to read, so in her spare time she often absorbed history books with particular interest. I loved her like a second mother and as a small child I often pleaded, "Don't look at anyone else — only at me!" With my continual ailments I do not know what my parents would have done without her. Aside from our family, her only affection was for her younger brother and his son who was called into the army during the war. Her brother was rather poor as their elder brother had inherited the bulk of their parents' goods so Nyanya helped him as much as she could. She also gave him money to enlarge his house in which she intended to

spend her old age. We spent a whole month there before my father came to fetch us by car.

That idyllic month was destined to be the last we would ever see of our beloved nyanya. She would not be talked into accompanying us to Constantinople because she adamantly refused to be buried in a Muslim country. We never heard from her after our visit and dared not write to learn news, since writing to anyone from abroad was tantamount to signing a life-threatening warrant for that person.

To live in a peasant house in a Ukrainian village (how spotless the house was!), to have daily contact with these not only bright, but often wise people, to lie in the hay or to climb a cherry tree with a book and while reading pick ripe cherries was simply unique. We also became friendly with the local priest and his family and time seemed literally to fly.

On June 28 we left for Chernivtsi. It was a rather long but very pleasant trip. The good American Pierce Arrow rolled heavily along the bad roads on the Ukrainian side of the border, but once on the former Austrian territory, it went tearing along at the "crazy" speed of nearly fifty miles an hour! (You must remember, this was 1917!).

In Chernivtsi we resided in a beautiful house belonging to Baron Styrcea who had fled before the arrival of the Russian troops; this house was later requisitioned by the authorities to serve as the residence of the governor. From local sources my father learned that his Russian predecessor, whose daughter had recently been married, was able to provide her with a

bountiful dowry because he had plundered the linen closets of the Baron. His wife and her maids had been busy for weeks and weeks undoing the embroidered initials and crests on the bed and table linen. On our arrival, my father had a complete inventory made by an employee of the city hall.

One of his last acts there was to order two trusted soldiers to load all the bottles from the Baron's vast wine cellar onto trucks, drive to the city's outskirts, and smash them there. After a few hours the soldiers reported back, saluting my father while swaying heavily from the fumes of the evaporating alcohol.

Years later the prominent Ukrainian Professor, Roman Smal-Stocky (a native of Bukovyna and friend of Baron Styrcea), met my father in Warsaw and told him Baron Styrcea had mockingly exclaimed, "What the Russian General did was bad enough, but what Governor Lotocki did was most horrible!" Then laughingly he added, "I can understand his reasoning. What would have happened had either the Russian or Austrian soldiers gotten hold of the wine? They would have raped or massacred the population."

My father had taken me along on two of his inspection tours and I had been able to see the beautiful scenery of that region and its inhabitants, good looking people, neatly dressed in Ukrainian costumes that were a gay sight, especially on Sundays when they were going to church. But our stay in Chernivtsi was a short one. Taking advantage of the fact that the Revolution had shaken the discipline of the Russian Army and had seriously disorganized it, the Austrians began a new

offensive and were approaching. We were forced to pack hastily and on July 11 left the city on the last train, ending up again at Nyanya's. My father stayed behind and left by car at the last minute, just before the bridge was blown up.

He rejoined us in Makhnivka and we went together by car to Kiev on July 25. During his short stay in Bukovyna, my father not only reestablished order from the chaotic situation in the local administration, but also made fruitful contact with the commanding general of the region, General Kornilov, an excellent soldier and a very upright person. This liaison ended the military's maltreatment of the civilian population.

In the meantime it was decided that all the documents and files of the governor's office should be transferred to Kostantynohrad, a small town in the Poltava region, for final settlement of all pending matters. So to Kostantynohrad we went on August 25. My father stayed there just long enough to get the offices organized then returned to Kiev to participate as Secretary of State in the first Ukrainian cabinet officially recognized by the Russian Provisional Government (September 3, 1917). However, on November 12, because leftist tendencies in the cabinet came to prevail, he resigned, soon followed by Simon Petlura, and returned to Kostantynohrad. This was a small, very provincial town, something I was not accustomed to, having always lived in the capital that already at that time numbered over two million inhabitants and was, along with Kiev, the most westernized city of the Russian Empire. In Kostantynohrad the mentality of the people — teachers,

students, everyone — was totally different and so very provincial. As I was already thirteen, this difference was fully apparent to me. This was the beginning of that period in my existence when I had to start learning to adapt myself to the ever changing conditions of life. I must say I was lucky to have this "schooling" at an early stage, thus enabling me to take in my stride all the other changes fate had in store for me in the years ahead. As a matter of fact, I have observed sometimes when such "schooling" comes late in life, instead of being beneficial, it may have the contrary effect of a setback.

School was to start soon and I did not waste any time entering. My new school companions, although rather nice, were very dull compared with those I had in Petrograd; the school itself, however, was on a surprisingly high level. This was due to the principal, Mr. Kovarzhnyk. Of Czech descent, he was a big homely man with bushy eyebrows and thick eyeglasses who was actually not at all unpleasant. He enjoyed great authority by virtue of the fact he was the principal and the students were trying to do their best. He was a superior mathematics teacher and I was painfully taken aback by the inadequacy of my own knowledge and understanding of math. It was then that I fully realized how bad my math teacher in Petrograd had been. I had to be tutored in math for a couple of months to catch up with the others, but at the end of the school year, I was first in my class. The other teachers were quite good, with the sole exception of the reverend who was supposed to teach us religion; he had a very limited mind and was a rather foolish man. We had to learn our catechism by

heart, both the questions and answers: "What are the sins against the First Commandment?"

"The sins against the First Commandment are godlessness, adoration of many gods, lack of faith, heresy, sectarianism, atheism, despair, superstition, magic, loving a creature more than God, laziness in church matters."

I can still today recite these innumerable sins by heart, though more than seventy years have elapsed. But I'm not so sure this was a great help in keeping my morality on a high level! Fortunately, I was already mature enough that this teaching method did not destroy my religious feelings.

My father did not stay long with us and soon returned for what we thought would be a short while to Kiev, the center of political life in the resurgent Ukraine. It must be very hard indeed for anyone who was not in Ukraine at that time to imagine the chaotic conditions in the country when the situation at times changed radically within a month or even a week. Military operations against the Central Powers, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey continued, but as I have mentioned before, the army was disorganized. Numerous armed deserters, mostly Russians, were a great threat to the civilian population near the front lines. Autonomous but not independent, the civilian government was Ukrainian, but the military command on the front and also within the country itself was in the hands of Russians who were strongly anti-Ukrainian and were creating very serious problems for the Ukrainian government. In the larger cities communism was rampant among the many Russians and Jews who resided there and uprisings against the Ukrainian government were organized, while at the same time, Russian authorities still in the country opposed any organization of Ukrainian military formations.

On November 7, 1917, the communists grabbed power in Petrograd. In response, the Ukrainian Central

Rada proclaimed the Ukrainian National Republic on November 19. Some weeks later, on Christmas Day, the communists initiated the first invasion of Ukraine without declaring war. Starting from the northeast, they occupied Kostantynohrad on January 20, 1918, soon after my father's departure. One of their first moves was to break into our apartment looking for my father. Had he been there it would have been the end for him.

On January 22, 1918, the full independence of the Ukrainian National Republic was proclaimed in Kiev. But by February 9 the communists occupied Kiev. In the meantime, in order to gain popularity with the war-weary troops and to strengthen their position, the Red Petrograd Government started peace talks with the Central Powers. Realizing the danger of a German-Russian agreement for Ukraine, our government also began talks with the Germans just before Christmas. Working swiftly, it succeeded in concluding a peace treaty with the Central Powers on February 9, 1918, before the Russians. Thus, we obtained German help in throwing out the communist invaders. As soon as Kiev was liberated (March 1) a new government was formed. My father played a part in it briefly before a new switch to the left made him decide to resign. In April he returned to Kostantynohrad and stayed with us for several weeks; on May 25 we all left for Kiev. People were swarming to Kiev from all directions and it was most difficult to find accommodation. Matushevskys very kindly offered us the hospitality of their large apartment. Later we stayed in a furnished apartment in a suburb and finally found an apartment away from the

center of the city. Consequently, I had a long commute to school when it started in the autumn, but it was worth it as this school too was quite good.

Back to political events. On April 29, a German-aided rightist coup d'état overthrew the democratic government of the Central Rada. Paul Skoropadsky was proclaimed hetman (chief of state). He was a descendant of the brother of an eighteenth century Ukrainian hetman and general in tsarist Russia. His entourage was primarily Russian from tsarist high society and his political tendencies were most reactionary. For this reason my father refused the cabinet post offered him. Skoropadsky did, however, do some good things. In addition to founding the Ukrainian Academy of Science, he developed our newly-created Ministry of Foreign Affairs and established Ukrainian embassies abroad. In October he invited the Ukrainian National Union, a union of the Ukrainian democratic parties, to participate in his government, hoping to give the policy of the government a clearly national and more democratic direction. His proposal was accepted and five representatives nominated by the Union entered the Cabinet on October 15, 1918. My father served as Minister of Religious Affairs.

Unfortunately, this collaboration did not last long. International and domestic political situations were changing daily. On November 14, Russian counselors persuaded Hetman Skoropadsky to proclaim a federation with Russia, a truly senseless move, as the Russian government was communist and only in the southeast,

the region of the Don, were the White (tsarist) generals opposing it. Immediately the five Ukrainian ministers resigned. This act of federation hastened the outbreak of the mass uprising against Skoropadsky's regime led by the newly formed Directory of the Ukrainian National Republic. Hetman Skoropadsky abdicated on December 14 and escaped to Germany. A new cabinet was formed December 26, and my father was in charge of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, a post which he held only until January 16, 1919. He did not waste time and already on January 1, 1919, he let the Directory proclaim the autocephaly of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. My father had prepared this law while he was still in Skoropadsky's Cabinet, but it could not be promulgated because of the sudden federation with Russia. Being aware of the deep religious feelings of the Ukrainian people, my father had always believed the national Ukrainian church would be of great help in establishing and maintaining the independence of the Ukrainian state. The Russian government even then tried to use the church to russify Ukrainians by prohibiting religious books in Ukrainian, by introducing Russian pronunciation into the old Slavonic church language, and by sending Russian bishops and priests into Ukraine. In former times the Ukrainian church depended directly on the Patriarch of Constantinople, the spiritual leader of the Orthodox Church, but in 1686, due to political pressure by the Russian government, the Patriarch transferred control of the Ukrainian church to the Patriarch of Moscow. The proclamation of January 1, 1919, was a political act of the Directory of the Ukrainian Republic,

but official recognition by the Patriarch of Constantinople was necessary to put matters in order from the canonical point of view.

All these happenings had a decisive influence on the fate of our family. Being the most important specialist in ecclesiastic matters and author of the new law, my father was naturally considered the most suitable person to negotiate the official recognition of the autocephaly of the Ukrainian church which would have returned its status to that prior to 1686. Thus, quite logically he was offered the ambassadorship in Constantinople. Not being a career diplomat, he hesitated to accept, but my mother, who had never before intervened in my father's affairs, observed that other potential candidates were not career diplomats either and, moreover, did not have the advantage of a thorough knowledge of the church problems they were expected to discuss and solve. Furthermore, she felt my father's extensive bureaucratic experience would be very helpful. So he finally accepted the offer and on January 20, 1919, was appointed. Had he not accepted and left Kiev, you can well imagine what would have happened to him and probably to all the family when the Russian communists overran the country, again occupying Kiev on February 5. Once the decision to leave was made, preparations were hurried. Furniture and books were stored with friends as we expected to be back in a year or so, after my father had completed his assignment. Only the most indispensable things were packed in five suitcases and at eleven o'clock on Sunday January 26, 1919, my mother, sister, and I left Kiev by train, never to return. It turned out to be the

same strange repetition of what had occurred less than a year before when we left Petrograd forever. My father, who had first to settle bureaucratic formalities and problems, followed us three days later.

A few days before our departure an important event in the life of our nation had taken place. On January 22, the first anniversary of the official proclamation of the independence of Ukraine, the union of "Great" (Eastern) Ukraine (formerly part of the Russian Empire) and Galicia (western Ukraine, formerly part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy) was solemnly proclaimed.

We did not travel alone. Along with us were other members of our legation, including my sister, Oksana. She had the rank of "dragoman" (an oriental word meaning "interpreter"). Her functions were quite important. My father spoke practically no French, whereas hers was excellent. This was important because at that time French was the diplomatic language. I should mention here that since May 1918, Oksana had been one of the first members of the staff of the newly created Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During Skoropadsky's tenure she was even in charge of the consular department. Members of several Ukrainian diplomatic missions proceeding to countries in Western and Central Europe were on the same train. Among these was the father of Yurko Matushevsky who had been appointed chief of our diplomatic mission in Greece. Yurko was with him, but his two younger brothers, Borys and Wassyl, had stayed with their mother, who was a medical doctor and could not immediately abandon her numerous patients.

Besides, they too thought they would be staying abroad only a short time.

After a twenty-four hour journey we arrived at the former Russo-Austrian border where we were to change trains. It was late at night when we reached Ternopil' in Galicia and we had to sleep on the train — I remembered this the next time I passed through twenty years later, in September 1939, when I was escaping from Warsaw. In the evening of the next day a special train arrived taking us to Stanyslaviv. We spent nearly a week in this nice town where my father joined us before we proceeded together to Budapest, arriving on February 11. Budapest is definitely a beautiful city and impressed me all the more as life there was perfectly normal, while in Ukraine one felt the war at every step.

Three days later we left for Vienna. This itinerary was most unusual; the shortest route to Constantinople would ordinarily have been via Odessa and the Black Sea. Odessa was, however, at that time occupied by the French who were not at all friendly toward Ukrainians, because they favored the idea of a Great Russia and were hoping the White Russians under tsarist generals would defeat the Reds.

We arrived in Vienna mid-February. At that time, just after the war and the dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Vienna was most certainly not the same as in the old pre-war days. The food situation had worsened: at the hotel we each received only two slices of bread four times a week. At the Hotel Imperial which had the best restaurant in Vienna, we were served practically the same thing to eat every day, but served

elegantly. One day they called it "Speck mit Kraut" and on the next "Choucroute garnie." It was here that I learned to eat potatoes, something I had never in my life touched before.

We would have enjoyed our stay in Vienna had it not lasted so long. The trouble was that in order to be admitted to Constantinople, then occupied by the Allied forces, a French visa was necessary. The nearest French official representative, General Pellé, was in Prague, but as he had left for France and would not return for four weeks, we were obliged to wait. The time, however, was not completely lost. Our government was very short of foreign exchange and my father, taking advantage of our longish stay in Vienna, met some important people of Ukrainian descent at the Austro-Hungarian Bank who were able to "defreeze" some big sums due from the Austrian government. Later upon receiving our visas, we were finally able to make our departure.

It was an adventurous trip to Trieste where we hoped to embark. Arriving at the Yugoslavian border, we found it closed since precisely at this moment the Yugoslavs were stamping over the Austro-Hungarian bank notes in circulation in the former Austrian provinces that had become Yugoslavian. We managed to hire a couple of Yugoslavian carts which took us to the Italian border located on a mountain pass. Here we were stopped by the Italians. Yugoslavian vehicles were not allowed to cross the border. There were no Italian ones in sight. The situation seemed hopeless. Good fortune favored us, however, as two empty Italian trucks arrived on their return from Yugoslavia. The drivers agreed to

take us along and in the morning we arrived in Trieste. We were then to discover that maritime service had not yet started on the Adriatic, as the sea had not been completely cleared of floating mines. Hoping to have a better chance in Venice, we went there, but on arrival we learned boats to Constantinople were sailing from Brindisi at the southernmost part of Italy, though not on schedule. Our continuous efforts were rewarded and at last we found a Turkish military transport ship that was on the point of returning to Constantinople to be placed at the disposal of the Allied Military Command. We succeeded in persuading the Turkish captain and the British naval officer who were supervising the return of the ship to take us along with them and after a somewhat lengthy and uncomfortable "cruise," we arrived in Constantinople on April 23, almost three months after our departure from our beautiful Kiev! An important chapter in our lives had started.



Vienna 1921-1922

This new period was by no means a treat for my father. In Constantinople he represented the Ukrainian government (which was conducting a losing battle on two fronts against Red and White Russians) at the court of Mehmed VI, whose country had been defeated in the war and was occupied by the Allied troops. The Allied Command was behaving in a most reckless way; it had its own military police and they shamelessly interfered in all kinds of local matters.

Constantinople had been invaded by tens of thousands of refugees, first from Odessa and then from the Crimea. It had become the center of their activities directed toward the restoration of the Russian Empire so, of course, they were fanatically opposed to the independence of Ukraine. The Allied High Command, hypnotized by the dream of a Great Russia, had officially recognized the so-called "Government of Southern Russia" headed by General Denikin and was most antagonistic toward all "separatists" and to the Ukrainians in particular, for they were endeavoring to create independent states on the territory of the old Russian Empire. The ignorance in the highest Allied circles in matters regarding the situation in Ukraine and the Don region was astounding. One day Lloyd George, the British Prime Minister, even joyously announced in

Parliament the great victory of "General Kharkiv", although even most high school students knew that Kharkiv was a large industrial city in eastern Ukraine.

My father's predecessor was a certain Mr. Michael Sukovkin who had been appointed by Skoropadsky in the summer of 1918. Upon receiving the news that Skoropadsky had proclaimed federation with Russia, he officially informed the sultan's government and all the foreign embassies that from that moment on, Ukraine had become part of the Great Russian State. He immediately introduced Russian as the official language in the Ukrainian legation, hoisted the Russian flag on the Ukrainian yacht stationed in the port of Constantinople, and appeared in public wearing Russian decorations. In January 1919 Sukovkin was recalled and instructed to make the councilor, Dr. Kobylansky, the director of the legation until the arrival of the new minister. He refused and instead fired Dr. Kobylansky and named an ex-employee of the Russian Embassy as councilor, informing the Turkish government that the Ukrainian government and its representatives were Bolsheviks. On March 1 he closed the legation.

Sukovkin had been visiting foreign representatives, civilian as well as military, assuring them that in Ukraine there were only Bolshevik intrigues and revolutionary chaos and the idea of independence was not at all popular and, furthermore, the only cultured, civilized, and vital elements were Russian. He was helped in these provocative activities by the numerous Russian refugees in Constantinople and their many committees and organizations. When finally, on April 23,

1919, we arrived in Constantinople, Sukovkin rushed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to protest the recognition of the new Ukrainian diplomatic representative. At the same time he concocted and succeed in publishing in a local paper, "exact" information about my father, who he claimed was an ex-sailor who had robbed a Russian princess. He added that members of the staff were not Ukrainians, but international adventurers, German agents, and former Austrian officers. Naturally, such "information" did not generate a favorable atmosphere or facilitate my father's activities. On the other hand, in some quarters the exaggerations of this "information" produced a contrary reaction — first, in Turkish official circles where precise information on my father was available from the former Turkish Minister and the former Turkish Consul General in Kiev, as well as from the Turkish embassy in Vienna.

Upon our arrival, my father met Mr. Sukovkin and handed him the Ukrainian government's order to surrender documents and the property of the legation. As might have been foreseen, it did not work out so easily. Sukovkin had sold the furniture belonging to the legation and one of its cars.

He kept the money, but finally released the papers and the other car, a Benz. Later, however, he changed his mind in a dramatic way. The chauffeur, a White Ruthenian named Orsa, whom my father had inherited, went by car to the former legation to pick up his belongings. When he arrived in the courtyard three of Sukovkin's men ordered him out of the car and sent him away, telling him that the car would stay there. Terribly

upset and literally crying, he hurried back to report to my father what had taken place.

It must be said here that in Constantinople all embassies had some sort of manservant, or bodyguard, very often a Montenegrin, a "tough guy," whose duties were to accompany and protect the ambassador wherever he went. These watchdogs sat next to the chauffeur and were dressed in an impressive uniform ornamented with a great deal of gold. They opened the door of the car and preceded the ambassador when he got out. Upon our arrival, two "kavas," as they were called had been engaged and one of them, Demo, was particularly efficient. At Orsa's news, my father called him immediately and informed him of the situation. "Do not worry, Excellence," was the answer. "This matter will be settled without delay!" In no time he had mobilized a couple of his friends and together with the chauffeur they went to the house where the Benz had been sequestered, entered the courtyard, seized the car before the adversaries could intervene, and drove out triumphantly.

Demo was a interesting man. Not very tall, not very broad-shouldered, he had innocent-looking blue eyes and looked very martial in his blue uniform with gold embroidery. However, in a tail coat he was the perfect butler. His most important characteristic was his absolute devotion to his boss, my father. At important diplomatic receptions when an embassy's own butlers and kavas could not cope alone, they usually called in their colleagues from other embassies to help. As Demo was both very capable and very decorative — and had good friends—he was quite often called to help out on

such occasions. Usually the very next morning he made a confidential report to my father about everything he had seen and heard the evening before. Much of the time his information was quite valuable.

When we first arrived in Constantinople we stayed at the Pera Palace Hotel, then the best in the city. It was here that the Ukrainian legation was located. A few weeks later we were able to rent a delightful three-story white house at Therapia, a very pleasant summer resort on the Bosphorus. From the windows and balconies we had a most enchanting view of miles and miles of the Bosphorus and the mountains bordering it. The climate, as the name indicates, was simply marvellous.

I did not spend all my time in sightseeing and excursions, but immediately started to study French. I could already read French quite easily and spoke it, if not fluently, sufficiently well for daily use, but that was not enough. In the autumn I had to enter a school and in good schools in Constantinople instruction was in French. I had lost one school year and in the autumn would have to be well prepared to meet the challenge of a new language, not only in everyday speaking, but also in composition and in learning scientific terms. I had the good luck to find a very nice and capable lady teacher and my French progressed by leaps and bounds, all the more so as I became very friendly with her nephew and through him, with some other local families, thus obliging me to speak French daily for hours. Consequently, in the autumn when I entered school, my French was as good as that of my new colleagues. The question of school had been amply discussed in the family circle and

it was decided that the best, or rather the only, thing for me to do, being the son of a foreign representative at the court of the Sultan, was to enter a Turkish school and not one run by foreigners, such as a French religious order or a British group. On the other hand, such a Turkish school would have to have the instruction in French in order to enable me to follow the courses. These pre-conditions made the choice very easy: there was only one such school in Constantinople, the Lycée Impérial Ottoman de Galata Serai — in Turkish, Mekteb Sultani, "Sultan's School." You can still see this majestic building behind a vast courtyard on the principal street of Pera in today's Istanbul. My father made an official request to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and so I became not only the first Ukrainian, but also the first ex-subject of the Russian Empire to enter this school.

In the morning all the courses were in French, and in the afternoon we had a few hours of Turkish. My spoken Turkish was very weak and I had no idea whatsoever of the Arabic alphabet. Consequently, I had to go to a so-called "preparatory class" with nine and ten-year olds. It was fun but by no means easy, especially as the teacher spoke only about ten words of French. Practically every Arabic letter was written in four different ways, depending on whether it was at the beginning, the middle, or the end of a word, or whether it stood separately. Vowels were often left out so if you did not know the word, you could not pronounce it correctly. For this reason I was never very good in reading though quite successful in writing, and my pronunciation of Turkish sounds was nearly perfect. The

little fellows — my Turkish preparatory class companions — were a friendly bunch and I never had any problems with them.

In the morning classes in French, I was much better off. There my companions were Turks, Greeks, Armenians, and Jews, all of Turkish nationality. French was then the language generally spoken in Constantinople, so my companions had all been fluent in French since childhood. However, as French was not their native language, I was able to compete with them on an even basis. Before my arrival the best student in the class was a Turkish boy named Emjed. The fact that I competed very strongly with him did not in the least mar our relationship. I have to admit that never before or later was my class so closely knit as in Galata Serayi. The fact that we were only fourteen or fifteen contributed to this. An example of our closely-knit rapport came as the end of the school year was approaching. All the teachers had finished the yearly program a full week ahead of the examinations and we were told that during the last week we would recapitulate. We students had a secret meeting and decided that rather than recapitulate in school, we could prepare for our exams much more efficiently by studying at home. Unanimously we decided to stay at home that week. As we all stayed out no sanctions were applied. This is the only experience of that sort that I ever had in my scholastic life.

At that time the Turks had no surnames. Consequently, on my school certificate I too went only by my first name. Sometimes it made things extremely complicated if you wanted to know with whom you were

dealing. Usually such a conversation went like this: "Yes, Emjed is the son of Rashid bey, who is the son of Hilmi Pasha, and his uncle is Mustafa bey, who is at the Foreign Affairs Ministry...." It was Kemal Pasha, after he took over the government in 1923, who finally introduced surnames. In 1934 the Grand National Assembly bestowed upon him the name, Atatürk, "Father of the Turks".

We had excellent teachers; some were French but most were local. The algebra teacher, an Armenian, was particularly good. Although we always needed several hours to do our algebra homework, we still liked him. Once I did not feel very well and had to stay at home. I did not want the teacher to think I had missed school in order not to do my homework, so I sent our kavas to school to deliver my homework with a little note saying, "It took me six hours to do this task." My classmates told me later that the teacher had laughed heartily on receiving my message.

I was quite happy in that school and, generally speaking, very happy in Constantinople. Not that I did not sympathize with my father who had tremendous problems to resolve, problems far more complicated than those of the diplomatic representatives of "established" nations in normal circumstances. But Constantinople was then so orientally exotic, so interesting, so beautiful, that I yielded to its charm, not only its charm but also to the charm of a Greek girl with the romantic name, Thalia, the muse of pastoral poetry, whose parents' house was not far from ours in Therapia. All the complications in international politics, all the bad news from Ukraine (unfortunately, it was more often bad than good), and all

the diplomatic and financial turmoil my family had to face appeared somehow mitigated when viewed through the prism of Constantinople's enchantment.



Turkish high school uniform, the Fez

Today's Istanbul is not the same. Then it was the true Orient, not only to my inexperienced eyes but also quite intrinsically. Now to see the Orient you must go much further east. The Hagia-Sophia, the Süleymaniye and Sultan Ahmed (Blue) Mosque, as well as the Top Kapu and the old walls and towers and the cemeteries of Eyüp and Usküdar are still there, but the Bosphorus and especially the Golden Horn have been spoiled by factory smokestacks and the excesses of modern architecture. Gone are the "charchaffs," the black, dark blue, or brown head covers and veils which were then a kind of uniform for Turkish women. However already in 1920, the young and good looking ones were pulling back their veils to let the men admire their charms. One had the impression that all Turkish women were young and beautiful, not quite the same impression that one gets now. Gone also is the red fez which was the headdress of the men in Turkey, whatever their religion or descent. Made of felt, it needed periodical pressing to be kept in shape. Consequently, a fez press parlor, usually combined with shoe shining, was one of the popular features in every town and village. Here young and old men alike gathered to face the glittering array of brass hat forms and exchange social tidbits. In the Galata Sarayi we had no school uniform, but we did wear the red fez, so I also

became a regular customer of these fez press parlors.

Turkish women had no such counterpart. When we lived in Constantinople most of the houses were of wood with balconies. The women were allowed to participate in the life of the city from those balconies by peeking through their wooden shutters and grills. This way they could follow the happenings outside without being seen from the street.

Unfortunately, the wooden homes caught on fire easily. It was especially eerie at night to hear the firemen shouting, "Yangin Var! Yangin Var!" ("Fire! Fire!"). But seeing them dashing through the streets one could only chuckle. Two men usually ran carrying an almost miniature water pump between them like a sedan chair. They were naked to the waist, wearing only skimpy trousers noticeably without pockets. When I asked our kavas why they were not properly clothed, he swiftly replied, "Why, they're supposed to extinguish the fire, not to steal."

Notwithstanding all the difficulties I have described, my father achieved an excellent relationship with "La Sublime Porte," the Sublime Gate. As the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs was called the "Quai d'Orsay" and the Austrian Ministry, the "Ballplatz" in diplomatic language, so "La Porte Sublime" was the name of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, more generally, of the government of Turkey. My father also enjoyed an excellent relationship with the Patriarchate of Constantinople, or the Fanar, as it was called. Nevertheless, before our arrival, Patriarch Hermanos, accused of friendliness toward the Central Powers, had to retire

under pressure of the Allied Command and the see of the Patriarch was occupied by a "locum tenens," Metropolitan Dorotheos. He received my father with all the honor and ceremonies of an antique etiquette, but my father was not able to obtain official recognition of the autocephaly of the Ukrainian Church. He gave as the official reason that he, Dorotheos, was only a "locum tenens," but the real reason was that the situation in Ukraine was rather precarious and the Patriarchate was afraid of possible unpleasant consequences should the Russian Empire be restored.

My father did not speak French, Turkish, or Greek, so needed the help of good interpreters. In French my sister was extremely helpful and for Turkish and Greek my father had a very good man, Spapharis, who not only knew both these languages perfectly, but having studied in a seminary, was particularly helpful in dealings with the Patriarchate.

In December 1919, we were finally able to move from Therapia to Taxim, the elegant section of Constantinople. We had two contiguous apartments, one in which we lived and one which was occupied by the offices of the legation. It was here that my future brother-in-law, your Uncle Jan, arrived on August 2 from Vienna. We had met him in Vienna where he had been counselor of the Ukrainian legation since June 1918. His personality had greatly impressed my father so he asked him to come to Constantinople. Quite at home in Vienna since before the war, Uncle Jan knew everyone there, Viennese as well as foreign diplomats, and had no particular reason to be eager to go to Constantinople, especially

knowing very well the unpleasant political situation there. I suspect the reason that incited him to accept my father's offer was because he was impressed not only by my father, but also by my sister. His arrival was very welcome. Being an intelligent and brilliant man, an accomplished "homme du monde," and a diplomat who spoke perfect French, he was able to cultivate a circle of friends in Turkish circles, as well as in the diplomatic circles of Constantinople. This was not an easy task given the fact we were Ukrainians.

In the meantime, the military situation in Ukraine was deteriorating. Communication with our government was getting more and more difficult and the financial situation of the legation was becoming critical. To survive, costs had to be cut drastically. My father decided to resign and asked Jan to stay on in his stead with just one employee.

But this plan had, of course, to be approved by our government. My father, therefore, decided to go personally to Kamianets where the government had its temporary headquarters to get a clear view of the the situation and to have matters properly settled. Before leaving Constantinople he went to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to announce his departure and to inform the staff that my future brother-in-law would be taking over. On this occasion my father took me with him as his interpreter. At the age of sixteen, I was on my first diplomatic assignment. On March 25 he left for the lengthy and complicated trip to Ukraine. Once in Kamianets' my father submitted his resignation and following his recommendation, Jan was appointed the

new minister plenipotentiary.

In early June 1920, my mother and I left Constantinople by boat for Constantza and from there by train to Bucharest where my father met us. My sister, Oksana, had in the meantime left for Kamianets' where she worked in the office of our Supreme Commander, Simon Petlura, until almost the very last moment that our government stayed on Ukrainian territory. Later she joined us in Vienna.



Oksana in her Ukrainian costume

A decision had to be made as to where we should stay permanently now that we could not return home and my father was out of work. We had to make our money last as long as possible, since no one could say how soon we would be able to go home — although we were hoping our exile would not last for more than a year or two! The Ukrainian diplomatic representative in Bucharest, an old friend of my father, suggested we stay there, but my parents objected principally because of me. It would have meant I would have had to study in Romanian, a language of which I had not the slightest knowledge. Of what use would Romanian and a Romanian diploma be outside the country? Besides, we had heard that many Ukrainians went to Vienna where life was inexpensive, schools were good and the language, which I spoke, was an international one.

So to Vienna we went. In the beginning we stayed in a hotel and later moved to Nussdorferstrasse from which I started my studies at the "realschule" nearby. Here again a decision had to be made: classical or technical studies? In a gymnasium I would have to undertake three years of Greek and then study for three more years; whereas, in a realschule, I would need to catch up with two years of descriptive geometry, but could get my diploma within two years. This decided my

choice: I went to the realschule. It was harder for me to adapt to the Viennese realschule than to the Lycée Ottoman in Constantinople. First of all, my French was better than my German, and whereas in Constantinople the mother tongue of my classmates was not French, the mother tongue of my new classmates was German. Besides, here I had to catch up in many areas, not only in descriptive geometry (which was Chinese to me!), but also in physics, German literature, and history. For months I was tutored in descriptive geometry in order to absorb a three-year program in a single year. It was a hard and strenuous task, but somehow I was able to cope with it. Also, the classes here were much bigger; in Constantinople a class totaled sixteen and here nearly forty — and some of the boys were by no means likable.

Although inflation had set in, life in Vienna was inexpensive, but our hard currency was dwindling and our hopes of returning home soon were becoming less optimistic. In order to save and reduce costs we went to stay in Baden near Vienna where we found a modestly priced, but nice apartment.

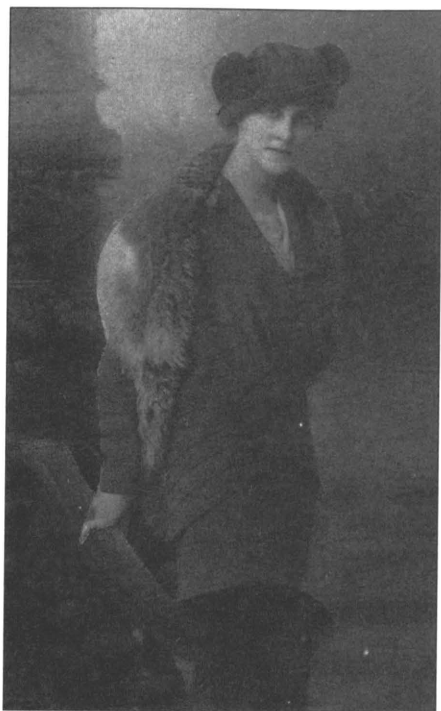
Your Uncle Jan had in the meantime concluded his stay in Constantinople in December 1921, after our government finally had to abandon our national territory and go into exile in Tarnow, Poland. He rejoined the government there and in January 1922, became Under Secretary of State in Charge of Foreign Affairs of the Ukrainian Government in Exile. He had maintained correspondence with my sister and one day appeared in Vienna. They were married on April 29, 1922, in the Greek Orthodox Church of Vienna and later in a Catholic

church in Baden. A benediction from Pope Pius XI arrived by telegram: "Saint Père avec voeux paternels envoie de coeur aux Prince Jean de Tokary et Oksana de Lotocka à l'occasion de leur mariage. Bénédiction apostolique implorée gage faveurs divines Cardinal Gasparri" (Secretary of State).

In October, 1918, about four months after Jan had become the counselor of our legation in Vienna, he began corresponding with the then Monsignor Ambrogio Damiano Achille Ratti, Apostolic Visitor in Poland, who became Pope Pius XI in 1922. In one of his letters Monsignor Ratti revealed to Jan that, as per special authorization of the Vatican, he intended to visit Ukraine in an official capacity. This trip, however, never materialized because of the communist invasion and the subsequent events which took place in Ukraine. Pius XI was the Pope who negotiated the concordat with Mussolini, the Lateran Treaty, February 11, 1929, giving the Pope temporal power over Vatican City.



Chabanivka



Oksana



Jan

Here I would like to give you details about your uncle. Jan Tokarzewski Karaszewicz was born June 24, 1885, in Chabanivka, one of the estates of his parents in Podillia, and was baptized Jan Stephen Marian. He belonged to a very old Lithuanian-Ukrainian family related to the Radziwills; in fact, they shared the same crest, three trumpets. Originally they were Orthodox and even had an Orthodox saint in the family. Later as were a great part, or even the majority, of the Ukrainian nobility, they were Polonized and became Catholics, and into their original surname, Tokarewski, crept a "z." Karaszewicz (the Tartar word, "kara," means black) came from the relationship with a prominent Tartar family. The Tokarzewski family was quite wealthy. Your Uncle Jan owned more than 7,000 hectares, about 17,000 acres, in the most densely populated part of Ukraine. A whole little town, Kryve Ozero, was built on his grounds.

Jan completed high school in Zhytomyr (Volyn) and then studied at the Universities of Fribourg (Switzerland), Vienna, Munich and Toulouse. He held a Doctorate of Philosophy and a Doctorate of Political Sciences. As he had lost his father when young, he lived in Chabanivka administering the family estates. When the First World War erupted, he worked for the Red Cross and became the regional general comptroller of

sixty-three hospitals. In 1917 he became a member of the Provincial Council of Podillia and in June, 1918, counselor of the Ukrainian legation in Vienna. In June and July 1919, he was sent on a special mission to the Vatican and in August of 1919 went to Constantinople first as a counselor and then as Minister Plenipotentiary. He was also an honorary knight of the Order of Malta. After their marriage, Jan and Oksana went on official business to Rome and then returned to Tarnow where they lived under the most difficult conditions until 1925. It was there that Oksana ruined her health.

Our move to Baden was very inconvenient for me, as I had to commute to my school in Vienna: fifteen minutes by streetcar in Baden, fifty minutes by train and again forty-five minutes by streetcar in Vienna. It became much worse in winter, as the streetcar in Baden stopped service and I had to walk more than two miles each way in rain or snow. By Christmas I had had enough and decided to transfer to school in Baden. I was not very happy about this.

In each new school one has to establish one's reputation with teachers and cement friendly relations with schoolmates and I had less than five months before the final exams for my matura, school leaving certificate. When I enrolled in my new school in January, I could see that the teachers were a bit diffident. My transfer was so unusual they assumed something must be wrong. However, within two or three months I was accepted at "face value" by the teachers, as well as by students. These

students were an odd mixture. Most of them were country boys with a sprinkling of elements somewhat unusual for such a school. Among my classmates were two princes, the Kamsarakan brothers, sons of an old Russian general of Armenian descent who was captured by surprise in Baden at the outbreak of the 1914 War and was interned there for the duration of the War.

There was also a very bright boy from Hungary who later became famous as the writer, Arthur Koestler. I met him again quite unexpectedly in the early thirties in Paris at the Restaurant Dominique in Montparnasse. He had become quite "red" by then; we started a conversation which soon degenerated into a violent discussion. When he suggested that I opposed communism because the Reds had deprived me of my wealth, I replied that if money determined political opinions, he must have been paid for becoming a commie. A couple of years later he went to the Soviet Union, but changed his mind and returned to the West. Some evil tongues suggested that the true reason of this disenchantment was the fact that whiskey tasted better than vodka! Since his youth he had had a predilection for alcohol. After our Maturakneipe, the beer fest celebrating our passing final exams, he was so drunk we almost had to carry him home.

As I have already mentioned, there were many Ukrainian refugees in Vienna, but not many youngsters. I met only two boys and a girl of about my age there. One of the boys was Yurko Matushevsky, whom I had known since I was eight years old. We saw each other fairly

often and also met from time to time at the house of a young lady, Valia, the daughter of a Ukrainian businessman. We courted her a bit, but one day discovered we had a competitor, a very nice and good looking young man, much older than we. His Ukrainian name was Vassyl Vyshyvany, but in fact, he was Archduke Wilhelm von Hapsburg, nephew of the last Austrian king and pretender to a Ukrainian throne. He, actually his family, had conceived this idea early in 1918, when the peace treaty had been concluded between Ukraine and the Central Powers. Although the ensuing events showed quite clearly that his chances of success were nil, he nonetheless learned Ukrainian and frequently spent his time with Ukrainians. This pleasant man paid a high price for his juvenile ambitions, or dreams. When the Soviets occupied Vienna toward the end of the last World War they arrested and executed him. I fail to understand what danger he could have represented to them!

Yurko Matushevsky landed in Vienna too. His father had died in Athens where he headed the Ukrainian diplomatic mission. The counselor of the mission, also his tutor, accompanied Yurko to Vienna where he entered the same school as I, but as he was a year younger, not the same grade. He stayed only a year, because without even consulting my father, his tutor did an extremely foolish thing. Yurko's father had left some money — not much — in good U.S. dollars. Galloping inflation was overtaking Austria and the lucky owners of hard currencies were holding on to them tightly, exchanging only small amounts for their daily needs. One day, when the Austrian crown took a particularly

deep plunge, this very naive old man decided the rate was fabulous and could not get any lower, so he exchanged all Yurko's dollars for crowns. A few days later the rate of crown fell again and poor Yurko was deprived of his solid financial base. To save money he entered a realschule in Traiskirchen, not far from Baden, where there were dormitories for students. From there he visited us often in Baden where we had moved. But even so, with one mere grade to go, he was out of money. The Ukrainian Polytechnical Academy had in the meantime opened in Podebrady, Czechoslovakia. My father succeeded in obtaining a scholarship for him so in the late spring of 1922 he left for Podebrady. There he took a special course, passed his matura examinations and entered the Academy where, in due course, he brilliantly concluded his studies. His engineering degree was extremely useful to him throughout his life — in Poland, Germany, and in the U.S.A.

Our finances were also at a very low level. We moved again to a very modest two-room apartment. My mother did wonders in cooking marvelous meals with a quarter of pound of meat and many, many, many potatoes. But finally the situation became quite desperate. At the age of fifty-two, lacking a good knowledge of German and not having references other than having been a counselor of state, governor, minister, ambassador and writer, it was impossible for my father to get a job. Finally a so-called friend ("*nomina sunt odiosa*") tipped off my father that there was a job available as a night watchman in a factory in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia. Being stateless (by then Ukrainian diplomatic passports

were no longer recognized by the majority of the European states), my father had to get an Austrian passport for foreigners, as well as a Czech visa. This took three full days and when my father arrived in Bratislava, the job had been taken a couple of hours before. And by whom? By the very man who had given my father the good advice. He had thought it over then rushed to take the job himself, without even bothering to inform my father of his change of mind. In despair my father went with his Czech visa to Prague.

There with the help of Czechoslovak government, a Ukrainian university had recently been established for the large number of young members of the Ukrainian armed forces who had crossed the Polish border and had been interned by the Poles when they made peace with the Soviets. President Masaryk of Czechoslovakia apparently wanted to show his appreciation to the Ukrainians who had helped the Czechoslovak war prisoners stranded in Ukraine. In the Austro-Hungarian army there were numerous national minorities, among them Czechs and Slovaks. As they saw no reason to fight for their oppressors, many of them surrendered to the Russian army as soon as an opportunity arose. At the conclusion of the Brest-Litovsk peace in February 1918, German and Austrian armies were marching into Ukraine and these prisoners, if caught, would have been court-martialed. Appreciating their plight, our government helped them to escape from the country which enabled them, after a long and complicated journey through Russia, Siberia, and the U.S., to return to the newly created Czechoslovakia.

Already in 1921, free courses for young Ukrainians had been organized in Vienna by Ukrainian university professors living there. My father had declined an offer to lecture there, not feeling competent because he had never pursued this career. Some of these lecturers were now in the Ukrainian university in Prague. Seeing no other way out, my father decided to try his luck. It was not at all easy as some professors from Galicia were not inclined to share the modest funds of the university with an "amateur professor" from Eastern Ukraine. But the urgency of feeding his family helped him overcome the resistance and my father become a lecturer at the University. The class on the history of the Orthodox Church, in which my father was very proficient, had already been taken by another so my father had to give the course in canon law in which he was less interested. A lecturer's salary was skimpy, but it was at least something and, in any case, better than a night watchman's job.

So my parents went to Prague and I, having just finished the realschule and having obtained my "matura," stayed in Vienna for my undergraduate studies. I had to study something practical — not arts or law, but what? My good marks in sciences entitled me to make my studies at the Polytechnical Institute in Vienna, but the curriculum covered five years, and even the ablest student usually needed seven to obtain a diploma. How could I expect my parents to support me for seven years, especially on my father's extremely modest income, with no hope of its substantially increasing? They were already making tremendous sacrifices to

maintain me in Vienna. Then there was the World Business Institute, Hochschule fuer Welthandel; three years were required to get the diploma. However, a one-year condensed course was also offered. So my choice was made immediately, and I never regretted it. I enjoyed this school tremendously. First of all, I was out of high school and now felt very important being a university student. To be sure, I had very little money and lived in a tiny, dark room with its window opening onto the staircase. But this again was an advantage; having no heating, it was less cold in my room than it would have been had the window faced onto the street. I was also able to study at home quite comfortably, warming my hands on the lamp shade of dark green glass and wrapping my feet in a blanket.

Our professors were competent, most of the subjects interested me, and I met three of my former schoolmates from the Vienna school. So within a couple of weeks I felt perfectly at home, despite the very hard drill. We had tests in each subject every six or eight weeks and some of our schoolmates got into difficulties quite soon. There were five parallel courses of seventy students each and I managed to be the best in our course, winning at the spring and final exams my hardest competitor, a very nice chap and the son of a Rabbi. I can also say that I enjoyed some social life. For special occasions I even had a tuxedo, albeit an old one that had once belonged to my father.

I had come to Vienna in 1922, when I was eighteen. It was no longer the capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, just the capital of the small Austrian

republic. The government no longer had imperialistic tendencies. Those had been replaced with ambitions to promote high sexual morality. Special police called "Sitten-Polizei," morality police, were in charge of enforcing these ambitions. One of their duties was to check the hotels to determine whether the couples staying there were legally married. If they were not, the woman was taken to the police station and registered as a prostitute. This situation created serious problems for many people, including me. Eighteen years old, I had met a charming girl about my age, but we were not able to rendezvous alone. She was staying with her aunt and I had a room in an apartment whose owner, a soldier who due to war wounds of a certain nature, had become extremely moral. Consequently, I was forbidden to receive female visitors in my room. This situation became unbearable until one day walking on a street I discovered a pleasant looking hotel bearing the name, "Zum Auge Gottes," At God's Eye. I was then rather naive and thought that true prostitutes would not dare to go to a hotel with such a name, therefore, the police would not waste time checking the documents of the guests of this hotel. My girl friend shared my opinion so one evening we went there. I registered us as Mr. and Mrs. and gave an imaginary name. Our room was very nice and we enjoyed tremendously being finally alone. But about six o'clock in the morning someone started banging on the door. "Open up!" shouted a man. "Morality Police!"

My girl friend was terrorized. "What should I do? What should I do?" I tried to calm her. We dressed quickly and opened the door.

An elderly fat man came in and presented himself, "Oberinspector Koloschwar." Then I too trembled.

Only three weeks before I had tried to board a moving streetcar and a man standing on the step nearly threw me down trying to prevent me. A violent discussion ensued and the man jeered, "I'll bring you to the police station to denounce your misbehavior."

"Then I'll charge you with attempting to push me off a moving streetcar. You could have caused serious injury or death." This argument calmed him somewhat and at the next stop we separated, by no means in a friendly way, but he did not insist on hauling me to the police station.

Now to my horror, here he was again! I tried to modify my voice so he wouldn't recognize me. When he told the girl he would take her to the police station, I said, "I shall come with you."

"No need, but you may."

We went down the stairs and the girl was crying. I saw that a waiter was opening the coffee shop and said, "Before we go, we must have our breakfast."

"I won't waste my time while you eat your breakfast," said the policeman as I was ordering our coffee. "I'll examine your registration again." And he rushed into the next room to the registration desk.

"Run!" I hissed to the girl and pushed her toward the outside door of the coffee room and stole quickly behind the door leading to the kitchen.

A moment later the policeman rushed back holding my registration form in his hand. When he saw the empty room he cursed violently and rushed to the street

shouting, "Hold her! Police!" But the street was empty and my girl friend already had a good fifty yard lead. Just then a streetcar stopped and she jumped on, leaving the sweating, shouting policeman behind. He was not in uniform and the streetcar conductor, if he saw him, probably thought he was trying to molest the young girl. So both of us were saved.

Fifty years later when your mother and I were driving in Vienna, I looked out the window and to my surprise I saw that At God's Eye was still standing. I did not go in.

At the end of the school year 1922/1923, I left Vienna for Prague to rejoin my parents. There I tried to get a scholarship at the Ukrainian Polytechnical Academy in Podebrady where Yurko Matushevsky was already studying, but to no avail; scholarships for that good school had been exhausted. The same thing happened at the Ukrainian university and the only thing I succeeded in landing was a scholarship at the Ukrainian Pedagogical Institute. To be quite frank, I was never interested in pedagogy and although I tried my best, I never succeeded in finding these studies very enticing. Of course, it was of no help that the teaching personnel, with one or two exceptions, was by no means of top quality. In order to stay in Prague permanently I would have had to learn Czech and this idea did not appeal to me. I found the Czech language ugly, rather difficult, and above all, of no use whatsoever outside Czechoslovakia.

Admittedly, Prague was a beautiful city with many magnificent, not to say unique examples of Czech baroque, but at the same time it was a very provincial town and I saw no promising future for myself there. I was happy to join my parents, but after a few months realized my pedagogical studies were a waste of time as they could never be of any practical use to me.

Going to Paris and l'Ecole des Sciences Politiques

had been my dream for several years. As I did not know anybody in Paris, this move had to be prepared thoroughly in advance. I learned that l'Institut des Etudes Slaves in Paris granted several scholarships to foreign students and I applied for one through a Ukrainian residing in Paris, M. de Galafre, ex-secretary of the Ukrainian diplomatic mission at the Peace Conference in Paris in 1919/1920. He informed me that my chances were good but the amount of the scholarship was a modest 150 francs a month for eight months a year, whereas one needed about 500 francs a month to survive in Paris. As I could by no means be sure of securing a job immediately upon my arrival in Paris, I had to provide a small reserve to take along. I discovered the only way to make money was to give lessons in foreign languages. A couple I met were interested in learning Russian and two gentlemen wanted to learn English. This started me in a kind of pedagogical career.

My biggest income came, however, from the French lessons I was giving to Russian refugees learning car mechanics who intended to emigrate to France in order to become cab drivers. I had two classes of about twenty people each, with students between the ages of twenty-five and fifty. At first this was a bit intimidating as I myself was only nineteen. However, my knowledge of French was good, so I was able to muster enough authority to keep the classes going nicely and I sincerely hope my students profited from these lessons as much as I did. In a few months I was able to purchase two new suits and coats to replace all my old clothes which were in pitiful condition. I even managed to put aside about

1,000 francs and to buy my ticket to Paris. My parents, although greatly regretting my departure, agreed that I had a better chance in Paris so on March 22, 1924, I left Prague, arriving in Paris the next morning.

Immediately I knew where I wanted to stay: in the Latin Quarter. I took a small room in a hotel situated in the rue de la Sorbonne and began looking around for something nice but cheap. After having inspected about fifty small hotels, I settled in a "maison meublée" with the attractive name, At Home, at 7 rue Thenard, just in front of the College de France. With only short interruptions, At Home was my home until I left France in 1937. In 1925, when Oksana and Jan came to Paris, they joined me "At Home" and later our late president, Petlura, stayed there too.

The school year 1923/1924 was nearing its end so I could not enter l'Ecole des Sciences Politiques at once. Instead I enrolled at the Faculté des Lettres, la Sorbonne. I had to study somewhere, because I was fortunate to have the small scholarship from the l'Institut des Etudes Slaves in Paris.

However, this scholarship did not cover the school fees at l'Ecole des Sciences Politiques, 1,600 francs at that time. From Prague I had brought 1,000 francs which would enable me to live very, very modestly for two months, so no time could be wasted; I had to look for work. There were plenty of jobs available, but I was very young and inexperienced and my French had deteriorated somewhat from lack of practicing since 1920. Somehow I did manage to get a job in the newly created lodgings office of the French Olympic Committee.

Several young men were working there but I seem to have impressed the manager, a very nice man by the way, and a few weeks later I became "secrétaire du directeur" and my salary jumped from five hundred, to six hundred francs. This rapid advance was not to last, as the wife of the manager started coming to the office to "help" her husband. She was a real busybody and very overbearing. She took over the reins of government from her kind but weak husband. In the beginning she was extremely agreeable and pleasant to me, but then her attitude changed to such an extent that I got fed up and went to consult the manager. "I was supposed to be your secretary," I told him, "not your wife's servant. Things being what they are, I do not intend to stay here any longer." I left.

While saying good-bye to my colleagues one of them smilingly related the facts, "Dear friend, you didn't understand the situation. Apparently you're not well acquainted with the Bible, otherwise the story of Joseph and the wife of Potiphar would have enlightened you." In any case I was forced to seek another job.

A former secretary of the Ukrainian diplomatic mission at the Peace Conference of Versailles (with whom I had corresponded from Prague), advised me to join the ranks of railroad workers at the St. Lazare Station. My subsequent temporary summer job was at the information office. At first I was not sure what kind of information I could possibly give to the poor travelers, being somewhat, if not completely, ignorant of the geography of northwestern France.

Happily I learned I'd be responsible for seat

reservations on the trains going to the very popular summer resorts on the Channel Coast. The not-too-generous pay amounted to fourteen francs a day with no pay on Sundays or holidays. My Ukrainian colleague and I were put in charge of third class reservations, while the regular employees, all women, who worked year round took care of the first and second class passengers. The outlook seemed bleak at first, but after observing the work of our colleagues, we discovered our jobs had unexpected possibilities. To a certain extent we had to read the customers' minds, make suggestions, and help them when the seats they wanted were not available. There was a psychological approach. As a single example I cite the following: An elderly gentleman asks for a seat in the smoking compartment. I look straight into his eyes and say, "No, Sir, I will not give you a seat in a smoker's compartment."

"Why not? Are they all taken?"

"No, Sir, there are enough, but the smoking compartments are at both ends of the carriage, right over the wheels, and you would be terribly shaken during the whole trip."

"So, what should I do?"

"I have a suggestion," I offered. "I will put you in a compartment right in the middle of the car, not over the wheels, and I will give you a nice corner seat near the corridor with your back to the engine. Whenever you wish to smoke you can just step into the corridor and then return when your cigarette is finished without disturbing anyone."

"But why my back to the engine? I always

thought that facing the engine was better."

"In winter yes, but in summer people always open the windows and you are bound to have draughts." (At that time, nothing frightened the French so much as a draft — "le courant d'air").

"You have definitely all the answers," the elderly gentleman usually said and he had to be a real S.O.B. if he did not leave a good tip. Another sales talk was ready for couples, for families with children, and so on. Naturally, it was not possible to spend so much time with every customer as there were often many people standing in line. Here again the psychological approach was necessary — instant choices of passengers who were "worth" such sales talk. The results were quite comforting. The first month I made all in all 500 francs; the second 1,500; the third 3,000 (the salary of an assistant manager in a bank). This was a summer job, so it ended in September. But by October I was spared the problem of how to pay 1,600 francs at the Sciences Politiques.

A young Russian joined us, one of the nicest Russians I had ever met. He was the son of General Samsonoff, commander of the Russian troops, who shot himself rather than surrender when defeated by the Germans at Tannenberg at the beginning of the 1914 War. This young man did not stay long with us, but soon resigned and took a job as a taxi driver. In Paris at that time driving a cab was strenuous but very remunerative employment for anyone who spoke several languages and knew his way about. All the "de luxe" restaurants, night clubs, and bordellos paid good commissions to taxi drivers who brought clients. Many Russian émigrés in

Paris chose this "liberal profession."

In 1926 I repeated the St. Lazare experience. The manager knew me as an efficient worker and again gave me the job. I felt at home and organizing my work even more effectively, was no longer satisfied to serve only third class passengers. Once I had a rather amusing experience with a first class passenger. A youngish man asked me to reserve an entire compartment for his employer and he proudly mentioned his name, J.P. Morgan. Unmoved, I told him it would be necessary to purchase six tickets.

"So you refuse to do it?"

"No," I said, "but it has to be done in accordance with regulations. I have to have six tickets and I must stamp them all, but nobody will prevent you from getting an immediate refund for five of them without any charge through door 22 on your right".

So he bought an additional five tickets and refunded them after I had stamped each one. Then he came to see me again and negligently dropped one hundred francs on the counter — one week's salary! I only regret that I did not meet J. P. Morgan in person!

I was working at the station from eight o'clock in the morning until noon and from two o'clock until six. Then from seven until nine at night, I worked as an interpreter at the elegant restaurant, Duval-Madeleine, nearby. I had just to sit at a table consuming a meal "à la carte" and if the necessity arose (and it happened very seldom), I had to help a foreigner in making his or her choice, acting as if I were just another customer. I was not paid for this but had free choice of the menu, and I can

assure you that as a result I always showed great appreciation of the culinary art of the Duval chef. From the restaurant, three times a week I went to the office of the Ukrainian weekly, *Tryzub* (*Trident*) to do the book-keeping. In such a way I had quite profitable but rather busy summer months.

Let me now return to September, 1924. I went to l'Ecole des Sciences Politiques, filled in a myriad of required forms, produced all kinds of documents: the certificate of Galata Serai Lyceum in Constantinople, my Viennese matura, papers from the Hochschule fuer Welthandel, etc., paid the 1,600 francs fee, and was admitted to the school. I went to classes for a couple of weeks, but then again material desires overpowered spiritual ones and I had to look for a job once more. To attain this aim I started to scan newspaper ads. One seemed interesting to me: a firm was looking for a "manutentionnaire." I had no idea what that meant, but this did not hinder me. I put on my best dark blue suit with a blue-yellow-white butterfly tie, a "canotier" á la Maurice Chevalier, grabbed my malacca cane and "gants de beurre frais" (as the French say, put on the yellow chamois gloves), and hurried to offer my services. A friendly man received me and asked what I wanted.

"I want the job," was my clear answer.

"What job?" he asked.

"The job of manutentionnaire."

"Do you know what kind of job this is?"

"Frankly no," I answered, "but that doesn't matter.

I need a job."

The man smiled kindly and said, "You'd have to unload trucks, weigh and package merchandise, and load it onto the trucks again." He inspected me from tip to toe once more and continued, "It's a good honest job, but I don't think it's in your line. There must be other ads in the paper offering more suitable employment. Look and try. However, if you do not find anything to your taste, come back; I'll keep this job open for you until five o'clock this evening." I have seldom met a kinder person.

I took his advice, examined other ads, and finally landed a job in the third largest French bank, the Comptoir National d'Escompte de Paris. Since I had not the slightest idea of banking and had no appropriate references, I was given the most stupid work imaginable: listing the commercial notes that were sent to the bank for collection. It certainly did not strain one's intelligence and was boring to the extreme. Apparently, however, my lists were soon found satisfactory and I was transferred to a regular department where the work, although not too enticing, was not unpleasant. This was in a smaller office with only about thirty people. The supervisor was a nice man and my knowledge of foreign languages greatly impressed him. Apparently he had been talking about me to his colleagues in other departments, because soon there was a procession of people coming to have letters translated, not only from German and English but also from Italian, Dutch, and Romanian. In the beginning I was somewhat overawed, but the contents of these letters written in languages I did not know, were similar; I was always able to gather what they were about. As a

result of this occupation I became rather popular, and my boss was quite pleased to have such an "expert" in his office. So when I explained my plight to him — the necessity to attend the seminar at the Sciences Politiques on Wednesday afternoons — he authorized me to take these afternoons off. There had been no precedent for such a procedure in our office, but it certainly solved a very difficult problem for me. I was also free not to attend the lectures at the Sciences Politiques, although, naturally, I would have preferred to do so. Besides, attendance at the seminar was mandatory, otherwise I would not be admitted to the final examination.

The School of Political Sciences was the most famous school of that kind in the world. Many foreign diplomats in Paris attended, as its diploma increased prestige with their own governments. I made many interesting acquaintances here which later proved very useful. As a stateless soul with a French Nansen passport, the contacts I established through these acquaintances meant I could obtain visas more easily. By 1939 my steadily extending passport measured 3.95 meters.

One of my most pleasant acquaintances was the counselor of the Czechoslovakian Embassy, Mr. Vanek. One day I was invited to a party organized by one of our professors, himself a former diplomat. I had just greeted the host and the hostess when the butler announced the next guests, "Mr. Vanek and Madame Vankova."

To my horror the hostess whispered to her husband, "How disgusting! We invited him with his wife and he comes with a call-girl!" (*avec sa poule*). Quickly I turned around and whispered, "Non, Madame, she is his

wife. In Czech, Vankova is the feminine form of Vanek." She thanked me from her heart for having avoided an unpleasant scandal.

Another fact further increased my prestige with my boss. One day, talking with the registrar at the Sciences Politiques office, I learned that the most important person at the bank, the managing director, was an alumnus of the school. I had always dreamed of exotic countries. The bank had branches in Madagascar. Could he, I wondered, help me? I should be transferred to one of these branches! It was by no means easy, as there were too many candidates already and I was virtually a "nobody." I wrote a letter to the managing director, mentioning my studies at the Sciences Politiques and asking for an appointment. A few weeks later an usher with a quantity of gold on his uniform appeared in our office and announced in a stentorian voice, "The managing director wishes to see Mr. Lotocki!" This had the effect of a thunderbolt. All my colleagues stared alternatively at the messenger and at my humble person.

My boss, who during his thirty-two years of service had never come anywhere near the managing director, rushed to my side. "Mr. Lotocki, please drop everything — go, go!" I followed the usher into the splendid office of the managing director who greeted me with a friendliness that took me by surprise.

"You merit interest for more than one reason. Not only are we colleagues from Sciences Polytiques, but as you can well imagine, before receiving you, I gathered information about you from our personnel department. Your reputation is excellent. What can I do for you?" I

told him of my ambition to go to Madagascar and, as was the custom, to be first assigned to the inspection of colonial agencies at the head office. He promised to consider my request with sympathy and added, "You will hear from me."

For six long months, silence. Then I wrote him a very carefully phrased letter to learn if there was any chance of my request being granted. I waited for nearly three months more, but to no avail. I couldn't afford to waste any more time at the Comptoir d'Escompte where the salary was very low, and left the bank in order to prepare for my examinations at l'Ecole des Sciences Politiques.

It was just then that the tragic event which shook Ukrainians all over the world happened: the assassination of President Simon Petlura. He had come to Paris in October, 1924. He chose Paris because in his opinion it was the most convenient place abroad for him to continue his activities for the liberation of Ukraine. Paris was the traditional center of émigré organizations of all nationalities fighting for the independence of their countries: in the old days, Greeks, Italians, Serbians, Bulgarians, Irish, Poles, and after the First World War, émigrés of the peoples oppressed by the Soviet Union.

As I said before, when my sister and brother-in-law arrived in Paris they came to stay at the modest hotel I had discovered. President Petlura came to visit them, liked the place, and moved in too. Later his wife and only daughter joined him there from Poland.

On May 25, 1926, Petlura accompanied his daughter to school, had lunch at a small restaurant in the rue

Racine, then proceeded toward the Boulevard Saint Michel. The assassin, who must have been watching him, stood at the corner and when the president came near, felled him with the first shot. Then the murderer discharged his gun five more times into the president lying on the sidewalk. He died two hours later in a hospital.

The murderer was a communist agent, a Jew named Schwarzbart. The communists had hoped this murder would disorganize the Ukrainian émigrés, but the result was just the opposite. Horror and indignation drew the Ukrainians together. Petlura and his ideas are still revered today by all Ukrainians. Even those whose organizations opposed him during his lifetime give him full measure of respect.

Having successfully passed my final examinations at l'Ecole des Sciences Politiques I again went to work at the St. Lazare station and in three months had made more money than I would have in a year at the bank. In the meantime I was collecting information and in September applied for a job at the Royal Bank of Canada. Due to my knowledge of English, albeit not too brilliant, I was immediately accepted at a salary seventy-five per cent higher than that at the Comptoir d'Escompte. I liked my new position as foreign exchange teller very much. It was a varied and lively post. My immediate supervisor, a Dutchman, and my colleague, a young Canadian, were very friendly indeed and we constituted a perfect team. The assistant manager, a German-Canadian, who had hired me, took a liking to me and was most disappointed and slightly offended when not even a year later I had to resign. Why?

In Petrograd I knew a family who had two daughters, one of whom I had even courted. After leaving Petrograd in May, 1917, I lost touch with them. Then quite unexpectedly in the autumn of 1918, when I was in Kiev, I received word from them saying that after all kinds of adventures, they and their parents had arrived in Kiev and were staying with friends. I rushed to see them and met their charming friends, a multi-decorated Russian general staff colonel, Paul Dorman, his wife, and their eight year-old daughter, Kissia. This was the same Paul Dorman, later an important industrialist, whom I met again in Paris in 1927 and who offered me an accountant's job at his central office in Paris, 31 rue Marbeuf. We are now good friends of Kissia, whom I met again in 1971 in Zurich after forty years.

I did not hesitate to accept Paul Dorman's job offer and welcomed the fifty per cent salary increase that came with it. It was the most interesting job I've ever had in my life and I am only sorry I was then too young to fully appreciate it; otherwise I could have learned so much more.

Mr. Dorman was a quite extraordinary person. He had applied his exceptional strategic talents to business, becoming extremely successful. At one time he controlled the Banque Française de l'Afrique, the bank privileged to issue bank notes for French West Africa. He also controlled the Banca Minelor in Romania. In addition, he had oil fields and refineries in Ploesti, Romania; iron mines in Spanish Morocco; a railroad in Spain; and a holding company in London. Perhaps he had overextended his empire by reinvesting all liquid

money and obtaining huge credits from banks. In any case, when Black Tuesday shook the world and the price of oil and iron dropped more than fifty per cent, Mr. Dorman's financial situation became shaky. He gamely fought with all his mental and financial resources. But in 1931, one of his enterprises collapsed, and like a row of falling dominoes, the others followed. I worked for some time in the other bank he controlled, La Banque Vasseur, but this too came to an end and I was out of a job and on the street once more. This concluded a "brilliant" period during which I had bought on monthly installments — but never finished paying for — a little piece of property near Saint Germain. I was even considering the purchase of a mini-plane. Yet I have to compliment myself, even when I was making two thousand dollars a year (1929 dollars), I never considered abandoning my bookkeeping job at the Ukrainian weekly. The pay was small, but in these new circumstances most essential.



Vacation 1937 in the Carpathian mountains

The year, 1930 was a very sad one for our family. Although my father did not wish to burden us unduly, he did write to us in March from Warsaw to say that my mother was ill and would undergo an operation. It did not enter our minds that this could be serious. But several months later Mama had to reenter the hospital, as she again did not feel well. We, my sister, brother-in-law, and I went to visit her and were told she had cancer. The operation in March had been too late. At that time medical science was even less capable of combatting this terrible disease than today. We understood that there was no hope. My father supported us all admirably during this trying time. Although in despair himself, when he was with Mama he was always gay and smiling and managed to persuade her that her illness, though probably lengthy, would not be too serious. In this attitude he was greatly helped by Dr. Pokorny, the physician, who visited Mama daily. He even prescribed a treatment with a special blue quartz lamp, just to give Mama the illusion that something was being done to cure her. While we were there we too naturally did our best to play the game, but we were not able to stay in Warsaw for more than a few weeks. In September my father wrote that Mama was getting weaker and weaker. We again all went to Warsaw to be together in these last

weeks of her life. My father and the good physician were successful in their well-meaning deceit: Mama did not realize what she had and slipped away from semi-consciousness with a smile on her lips. It was a terrible blow for all of us, but most particularly for my father. My parents' marriage was the happiest I have ever seen. In the most difficult times, and there were many of these, my mother gave her unflinching support to my father, who always said that he could not have done half of what he did had Mama not stood by him so steadfastly. And both of them always sacrificed their personal interest in favor of my sister and me.

In 1931 the situation on the job market was adverse, if not downright bleak, and it took me several months to find work. A Ukrainian friend and I, together with a Swiss friend, decided to start a business dubbing American "talkies" into French. The Swiss chap was to deal with the actors, my Ukrainian friend with film cutting, and I with the financial side of this small enterprise. My salary was of course much lower than it had been with Dorman, but it was a new and quite interesting occupation. We had temporarily employed a young Italian, Gianni Franciolini, to cut the sound film. I met him again in Rome in 1939 and the early 1940s when he had become a well-known film director and he did his best to repay me for the courtesies shown him in Paris. He was never ashamed to remember his ultra modest beginnings in Paris, and one day when we were lunching together in Rome he remarked nostalgically, "Ah, the

food tasted so much better in Paris when, if I was lucky, I had one regular meal every two or three days!" His brilliant career took a tragic and sudden end, as he died while still quite young.

Alas, the Paris dubbing enterprise did not last long. Due to a silly quarrel between the other two partners, I was once more unemployed.

Here again a chapter closed through no fault of mine, and I was forced to find another beginning. In time I did. During my lucky period I had found an excellent tailor. He was a Swede who with his brothers had owned a thriving business in Sanct Peterburg. Then they left Russia, his brothers going to Stockholm and he, being more adventurous, choosing to go to Paris. His business was in an excellent location, l'Avenue Victor Emanuel III (now Avenue Roosevelt), near Rond Point des Champs Elysées. This very pleasant and interesting man also lectured on tailoring and had printed a booklet on men's fashions. At about the time I lost my job, he complained bitterly to me about the ineptitude of his bookkeeper whom he had just fired. I did not let this opportunity slip by and became his accountant.

At a party some time later I met a Russian lady who had a millinery and dress shop near La Madeleine. During the conversation she happened to mention her inventory problems. That was it! The next day I had an additional job. I then found a third one in a Georgian restaurant. All three together, plus my old Ukrainian weekly newspaper job, enabled me to exist. The new situation had, however, an added advantage. I had no office hours and my bookkeeping had to be done only monthly. So I

worked very hard for twelve or more hours a day at the end and the beginning of the month, and then went for two or three weeks to Warsaw where my poor father was feeling terribly lonely after Mother's death. In 1933 I managed to repeat this trip three or even four times.

Since the Peace Conference of 1919, a Ukrainian diplomatic mission had existed in Paris. Its activities were suspended, but then in the 1930s it came to life again. The mission was not officially recognized by the French government, as the Ukrainian National Republic that it represented no longer existed, but the mission and its issue, the Ukrainian Refugee Service, functioned semi-officially. Sparse funds were provided by the Polish government as a kind of token repayment for what the Poles had grabbed in Ukraine during our mutual campaign against the communists in 1921 (which ended by their selling us to the Russians under the Treaty of Riga and seizing a good part of Volyn). The mission was headed by Professor Alexander Choulguine, who had been a member of the Ukrainian delegation at the Peace Conference in 1919/1920 and whom the family had known for years. As the activities of the mission were expanding, the job of secretary to the mission was offered to me in May 1934. The salary was low, but how could I mind? Now I would be working for the Ukrainian cause. I must say I very much enjoyed this work, humble as it was. We published a monthly bulletin containing news of Ukraine, sent memoranda to the French government and to the League of Nations on matters regarding Ukraine and the Ukrainian refugees, and participated in official meetings, conferences, and receptions. Writing many

articles improved my French considerably. I also continued my small bookkeeping job at the Ukrainian weekly located at the same address as the mission.

At the same time I was active in Ukrainian organizations. When I first arrived in Paris, some friends and I founded the Ukrainian Student Association, of which I was permanent secretary. Later Ukrainian organizations in various cities and towns in France created a federation headed by a general council. I became a member as the first general treasurer of the federation and held this position for more than seven years, until I left France. It was not easy to organize the collection of dues from all our member organizations and it demanded much of my time, but it was an important job, as our organization had no other resources apart from these dues.

In Paris I often read a Russian newspaper published there, the *Last News*. This was the best way to keep up with things happening in the Soviet Union. This paper had a typical Russian slant, but was otherwise well-informed and interesting. One day in 1925 I discovered an ad on the last page: "The State Pawn Institute of Petrograd informs persons who pawned objects in Petrograd that they may claim them in the State Pawn Institute presently located in Yugoslavia at the following address.... Pawns will be returned to their legitimate owners against the original receipts or exact description of the pawned object and payment with interest of the loan." I could scarcely believe my eyes. How could pawned objects have found their way to Yugoslavia from Petrograd? They would have had to have been evacuated from Petrograd before the communist take-over in No-

vember 1917! How and why? I was asking myself all kinds of questions and finding no answers. Why did this ad interest me? For a very simple reason. Every year before leaving on vacation, we had to store all the silverware and other silver and gold objects in a safe place. Because they were too bulky to be put in a safe, my parents always employed the following stratagem: all the objects were taken to the State Pawn Institute and as small as possible a loan was taken against them.

As soon as we returned from vacation the loan was repaid and the objects returned to us. The interest paid represented in practice the safekeeping fee. In that fateful May of 1917, my parents had done as usual and apparently now there was an opportunity to redeem these objects or at least a part of them. I forwarded the cutting to my parents in Prague and their surprise was as great as mine. They prepared a list of the objects pawned with a full description and sent it to Yugoslavia. A reply came soon: the silver tableware was there but larger silver objects and those in gold were not.

How disappointing! I had hoped to retrieve "my" golden cigarette case. In 1916 the new Deputy State Comptroller had been entrusted with the delicate job of verifying the accounting of the committee established under the honorary chairmanship of the tsarina to help the victims of a serious earthquake. My father was appointed to "assist," that is, essentially do the job. With the help of his co-workers he proceeded with the lengthy verification and found the accounting to be inadequate. In the meantime, members of the committee, all very important people, were pressing for a speedy conclusion

of the verification and the Deputy State Comptroller was pressuring my father to give a positive evaluation. My father made it clear that this was not possible and finally his boss, in order not to upset all the notables, signed a bland letter in which he diplomatically avoided mentioning the deficiencies found by my father. As my father's unfavorable findings were known to the committee officials, they interpreted the bland letter to mean that my father had changed his mind. To thank him, they presented him a heavy golden cigarette case bearing the tsarina's initials inlaid with precious stones. My father's boss, who was hoping the whitewash would bring him something tangible, received nothing at all and this, of course, did not make my father popular with him. When my father, who did not smoke, brought the cigarette case home, he smilingly said to me, "If you promise not to smoke, this cigarette case will be yours!" I was delighted, as I loved the initials, A. F. (Alexandra Fedorowna), laid out in glittering diamonds and sapphires on the surface of the case. But it was not to be mine. Some communist S.O.B. must have stolen it.

My parents paid the Pawn Institute officials the amount requested (as far as I can remember it was calculated fairly), and for some years had the satisfaction of using their old silver tableware. It was later lost again, this time forever in 1939.

I have so far been writing nearly exclusively about my jobs, but this does not mean they occupied all my time and all my life. Arriving in Paris at the age of twenty, and Paris being Paris, and France being France, then at the apogee of its prestige, I could not avoid being duly impressed. Since 1917 I had been dreaming of going one day to "La Ville Lumière" (as the French like to call Paris) to study at l'Ecole des Sciences Politiques and was naturally extremely happy to have been able to realize this dream. Paris was truly a glittering capital, hardly to be compared with Vienna, which at the end of the war had become the overweight head of a shrunken Austria, or with Prague which, although rich in magnificent monuments of beautiful Czech baroque, was a sleepy provincial town.

La Place de la Concorde, L'Etoile, Le Champs Elysées, and other splendid boulevards and squares; Notre Dame, Sainte Chapelle, and dozens of beautiful churches; Le Louvre, Cluny, Carnavalet and other museums; the Comédie Française, L'Opéra, L'Opéra Comique, and a multitude of smaller theaters; Versailles, Fontainebleau, Saint Germain, all created a dazzling atmosphere. Reading the French press and modern literature one seemed simply to know that France was, and always had been, the salt of the earth and Paris the

centre of the universe. Paris then was much more dignified and distinguished in appearance than now; women, although not beautiful, were more elegant than anywhere else in the world, and even the "midinettes" with their very simple wardrobes always managed to be correctly dressed.

I must confess that the shows, the dance halls of all kinds, from the most modest, "bals musettes," to the most elegant, did not leave me indifferent. Money was not always plentiful, but having good friends helped a lot. I still remember outings with two of my friends. One was dealing in secondhand luxury cars, Rolls Royces, Hispano Suizas, Minervas, etc. The other was a sales representative for the *Semaine* of Paris (similar to New York's *Cue*). I was the only one of the three who had a regular income, so we combined our resources and impeccably dressed with white ties, de rigueur at that time on Fridays, we went out together to the most posh places. One furnished the car, the other coupons for champagne at the nightclubs (part of his commission was in such coupons). I supplied the cash for tips, check-girls, etc. Once, however, it happened that the car for that night, a Rolls, got stuck near the Place Pigalle at four o'clock in the morning. Due to an unexpected lack of gas and complete lack of money, my poor friend was stranded there until noon when I was able to provide some fresh funds from my office. But this was what one called "professional risk."

One day I was perched at the bar of a basement nightclub in Montmartre when I became aware of a man descending the stairs. I could not believe my eyes. This

man could have doubled for Nicolas II of Russia and was wear-ing the same kind of uniform. Suddenly all the waiters and the barman dropped everything and rushed to him, raising the collars of their coats. "Oh, Majesty, we are so glad you are here! It is so cold in Siberia!" they all said, or rather chanted.

Smiling sadly, the man said, "My poor subjects, my poor subjects!" and began distributing 100 franc notes. Then he sat down at a table and champagne was served to everyone present.

"Is he crazy?" I asked the barman when he came back smiling happily. (One hundred francs was good money).

"Not crazy," said the barman, "just a bit toqué" (cracked) and he told me the story. The man, a wealthy banker, resembled Nicolas II. As his friends started joking about it, he began to accentuate the resemblance, adopting the same haircut, moustache, and beard. Then it became an obsession; he had a uniform made, a copy of the tsar's, and felt compelled to wear it from time to time. His wife and his friends made fun of him though. So, having met the owner of this nightclub, he made an arrangement with him. He would come about once a month and the personnel were not to contradict him. It satisfied everybody. He left home normally dressed, changed clothing in his chauffeur-driven car and was hailed as the Tsar in the nightclub. Apparently this escapade helped him get through his everyday life.

I had also acquaintances and friends in the so-

called "society" which is more or less the same all over the world. In the diplomatic circles I particularly cultivated friendships which were extremely important to me, as I was the not too happy owner of a "Nansen passport," a travel document issued by national authorities on behalf of the High Commissioner of Refugees of the League of Nations. Because the first such commissioner was Fridtjof Nansen, the famous Polar explorer, the document took his name. Although theoretically a "travel" document, the hapless owner more often than not had tremendous difficulty actually traveling outside the country of his residence, because should it be necessary to expel a stateless "Nansen citizen," no other country would accept him. However, knowing diplomats personally made it possible to overcome these difficulties, and I was allowed considerable travel. I still possess that passport which served me from 1929 to 1939. It began as one sheet to which other sheets were added over the years. Covered on both sides with visa stamps, it ultimately reached the impressive length of nearly four meters! That mine was the longest passport in existence was repeatedly mentioned by the consular employees of the many countries who handled my passport. I was determined not to relinquish this magic key, as four meters of important looking official seals made consular authorities less difficult.

There was also another reason to keep my old passport. In all its text no mention was made that it had been issued to a "Russian refugee who had not acquired another nationality." If this quotation appeared printed on the forms, it was extremely difficult to have the word,

"Russian," replaced with "Ukrainian."

Since these Nansen passports were issued at the police headquarters in Paris, the police authorities were always finding important reasons for avoiding doing so. Once in 1929 when I went to pick up my passport which had to be ordered a week in advance, I was prepared for the usual long and unpleasant discussion, but not for the unexpected bit of good luck which fell my way. I arrived at exactly two o'clock, but the person who was to deliver the passport was not there. 2:10. Nobody. 2:20. Nobody. Finally at 2:25 a woman carrying several shopping bags arrived and hurriedly took her place at the window where I was impatiently waiting. I said not a word, but glanced at my watch. Flustered, she rummaged quickly through her papers and handed me my passport. I examined it and exclaimed, "I am not Russian, but Ukrainian, as you can see from my papers, so please correct this document!"

"But it is printed this way, I can't correct it."

"Madam," I said severely, "I have already wasted twenty-five minutes waiting while you did your shopping. If you wish to waste any more of my time with needless prattle, I shall go straight to your boss!"

"All right, all right, Monsieur, please don't be angry, I'll correct it." Presto! My passport had been certified Ukrainian for the next ten years.

Now I shall leap eight years ahead to London. Like all foreigners, I had to go to the Alien Registration Office to fill in a multitude of forms in order to obtain an alien registration card. Processing took only a short time and soon a friendly police officer called me to his desk,

gave me my card, and pointing to a line at the foot of the card, said, "Please sign here."

Looking at the card, I read, "born in Russia."

"Just a moment," I said, "I was not born in Russia, but Ukraine."

"Our government has not officially recognized the Ukrainian Republic," he answered.

"From your point of view, you are perfectly right, but my conscience won't allow me to sign a document which does not reflect the truth," I objected.

"But the regulations state you must pay ten shillings for this card," he responded lamely.

"It's perfectly all right," I replied. "I'm glad to pay. Here are ten shillings."

"But, sir I cannot give you the card if you don't sign it."

"The card has been properly issued and paid for. You do not have to give it to me. Keep it in your files."

The good officer was quite puzzled. Apparently nothing like this had ever happened to him before. "Suppose you are required to produce this card?" he began feebly.

"I will answer that the card is safely on file at the Alien Registration Office." He shook his head disconsolately, but could not find a convincing answer so let me go, leaving the card in his hands. At this juncture, I express my sincere respect for the fairness of this British police officer, so typical for the British civil servants whose job it was to enforce regulations, but with whom one could reason.

About twenty-five years later I had an

analogous experience in the United States. In 1962 I had to leave suddenly for Europe. I rushed to the passport office on Fifth Avenue and picked up my new U.S. passport without noticing that under the heading, "Place of Birth," the ominous word, "Russia," instead of "Ukraine," was printed.

Upon my return, I went to the passport office to have this rectified, but the clerk refused so I called on the head of the officer, but the only thing he was ready to do was to put Soviet Union instead of Russia. I told him that this would be nonsensical, as the Soviet Union had not existed in 1904, the date of my birth. No reaction. I promised the man he would hear from me soon and headed for the the office of New York's Senator Javits who gave me a letter of introduction for the passport office. Then I wrote a gracious letter to the office (I must admit my statements were not all one hundred per cent truthful) in which I said I had resided as a stateless refugee in many foreign countries, including Austria, Czechoslovakia, France, England, and even Fascist Italy. None of the authorities in any of those countries had ever tried to connect me forcibly with Russia, a country which had always been the worst oppressor of my people. Now that I had become a citizen of a reputedly free country, my very own State Department was forcing upon me the stigma of being born in Russia and, by implication, of being a Russian, which is entirely false. In doing this the State Department also was jeopardizing my trip to Finland. It would be most unpleasant if, on the basis of the false statement in my passport, the Finns identified me with those Russians who had always tried to oppress

their country. I returned to the head of the passport office and gave him the letter. While he was reading it, I placed the note from Senator Javits under his nose. His face became livid. He swallowed the answer he was about to give me and instead meekly squeaked, "But you will have to pay ten dollars for a new passport. This one cannot be corrected."

"Even twenty if necessary!" I did not have to return the next day, but half an hour later sprang from the passport office triumphantly bearing my beautiful, corrected passport.

If written passports can cause a fellow trouble and grief, those "passports to pleasure" can also cause him a few tense moments among the enjoyable ones. I did not neglect the French girls whom I found most charming and seductive. On the other hand, I cannot say I particularly appreciated the average Parisian man whom I found very full of himself and often xenophobic. Outside Paris men are so much more agreeable.

In the 1920s when I came upon the scene, Paris was at the pinnacle of its glory and Parisians proudly called their city "La Capitale du Monde," Capital of the World. It wasn't long before I found that a similar, but very different term, suited Paris even better: "Paris est la Capitale du Demi-Monde." Demi-mondaine was a polite designation for prostitute. Paris for centuries had been a sexy city and French kings particularly lent their participation to make it notorious. A story of François I who kept many mistresses is particularly notable. The nobleman husband of one of his mistresses itched for revenge, but had no hope of assaulting the king, so he found a prostitute with syphilis, became infected, and passed the infection to his wife who in turn infected the king. His son and his grandson, husband of Mary Stuart, inherited it. The grandson died at the early age of sixteen, creating complications for the dynasty.

Louis XIV was probably the most famous of all for the number of mistresses. Here I remember an appalling fact I learned from a French school book when I was fifteen years old: the famous romeo had taken only one bath in his life; the exact date was even given in the book. By the end of the nineteenth century, morality in Paris had not elevated itself. One-eighth of the female population, about twenty thousand, were prostitutes. Toulouse-Lautrec depicted this brilliantly in his art.

One evening I was strolling along the avenue de l'Opéra in Paris when a young man stopped me. I suspected his wrist was a bit limp, but even so, he asked simply, "Excuse me, Sir, do you know the Grand Chabonais?" (This was the name of the most famous bordello in Paris).

"By name only," I said. "But why do you want to know?"

"Very simple," he said, "I'm its sales representative and I'd like to offer you the unique opportunity to explore it."

"I'm not interested and am just returning from a rendezvous."

"You do not have to consume," he continued, "but can explore this wonderful place and visit it later and inform your friends of its unique qualities."

"If you guarantee that I needn't consume, I'll take advantage of your offer," and I followed him. After short walk we arrived at the door of a beautiful house. A plump woman, called sous-maîtresses in Paris, brought me to the first floor. Here another woman met me and

ushered me into an imposing room almost filled with tables and chairs. "What would you like?" was her first question.

"Nothing."

"Non, non. You must have something and please sit down. Jean, Jean!" she called, and immediately a waiter appeared with an ample choice of drinks and I was served. Then the door opened and six beauties entered the room, dressed only in the skimpiest of skimpy skirts, enabling me to fully appreciate their anatomies.

"Which one would you prefer?" the woman inquired.

"None." was my short answer.

"Oh, I am so sorry, Sir, that I was not able to suite your taste! Jean, another drink for the gentleman." This was upsetting, because I had almost no money with me and the whole episode could have unpleasant consequences. I wanted to leave, but the good woman was standing all the time between me and the entrance. Just then the other door opened, and this time not six, but nine beauties appeared! Never before in my life had I seen such a wonderful collection. I completely forgot I had been returning from a rendezvous; if I'd have had some money in my pocket, I'd have jumped up and attempted a very difficult choice. I still jumped up but for another reason someone had distracted the plump woman and she stepped aside. Ah, my avenue to salvation! I overturned my chair, pushed past her like lightning and rushed down the stairs. The salesman who was standing there saw me, became frightened, and raced out himself. I bolted after him, but once on the street, took

the opposite direction. Phew! I was safe.

Le Grand Chabonais was the most elegant and most expensive in Paris, but there were hundreds of other bordellos, some of which were more pleasant and more reasonably priced. One of the most popular was the Sphinx located in Montparnasse not very far from the famous cafe, la Coupole, and built on the ground once belonging to the archbishop of Paris. This small place looked elegant. One took a place at a table and ordered a drink which cost five or six times more than in a regular café. Girls dressed in remarkably short skirts waited on the tables. At this point a decision could be made: one could continue liquid refreshment or choose another kind. The patronage consisted of men of all ages, couples, and rather rarely, single ladies. It was indeed a very popular place. When a bride was very young and inexperienced some husbands brought her to the Sphinx for a lesson by an experienced prostitute in the thirty-two love positions which were popular. One well-known American journalist rented a permanent room and established his office in this little establishment.

Very near where I was staying is one of the most beautiful museums I know, the Cluny Museum. The building itself is an antique palace and houses the most beautiful Gobelins in the world. In my time however, it had two exhibits which were even more popular, two chastity belts from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries – one in pure silver with exquisite engravings, but obviously not designed for comfort, and the other not

beautiful at all, but much more comfortable, crafted of leather, wood, and metal. One day I was walking on Boulevard Saint Michel when a charming blond lady asked me in awful French if I could show her the way to the Cluny Museum. I answered her in English and escorted her to the gate of the museum. She then asked me whether it was true that the museum was exhibiting two antique chastity belts. I conducted her to the right spot, showed her the belts, and persuaded her not to use anything similar during the next pleasant week with me in Paris.

Ten years later I wanted to get a belt as a birthday gift for a friend. Someone suggested the leather artisan's shop in my neighborhood. I made my choice and while paying I said jokingly, "You are so near to the Cluny Museum it's a pity you don't have chastity belts."

"Who says?" the artisan replied indignantly.

"Nobody, but it's evident."

"So, please, follow me." He opened the door and brought me into the workshop. There on the table I saw a half-finished chastity belt similar to the later-date model in the Cluny Museum. He added, "Every year I have orders for five or six of these." That was in 1936.

In the Latin Quarter, not too far from the Sorbonne, there was a small but pleasant restaurant with a two-man orchestra where one could dine and dance for six francs. Its patrons were not elegant, but decent, young ladies, secretaries and midinettes for the most part. One evening I came there, ordered my dinner and started looking

around; not far from me in a corner I discovered a very good looking girl. I immediately jumped up and invited her to dance. She was not only good looking, but also a good dancer. At the end of the dance I saw that my soup had been served. Thanking her, I asked, "Please reserve your second next dance for me."

While I was eating my soup the music started again. Two young men tried to invite the girl for a dance but she refused both. I rushed to her and she said, "You invited me for the next dance."

"Sorry," I said, "but I said second next, but let the soup get cold, I'd rather dance immediately." We danced together from there on. At the end of the evening I persuaded her to come to my chambers and what a wonderful night! We arranged to meet again at the same restaurant and I felt very proud of my conquest. The next evening I was walking on boulevard Saint Michel and chanced upon a café with a well lit outside terrace. A stout middle-aged woman, a well known prostitute, was seated there, and next to her I saw my beautiful conquest of the evening before. Flabbergasted and desperate, I rushed to the other side of the street before she could see me. My sweet and charming conquest was a prostitute! I returned home embittered and did not go to the appointment we had arranged. When I went to that restaurant three or four weeks later, the waiter told me that a young lady had been there three times looking for me. That news saddened me still more.

Several months later I related the story to a colleague at the Political Sciences Institute. He looked at me and remonstrated roughly, "Borys, you are an idiot!" I

wanted to smack his face, but he continued, "Wait I'll explain. Anybody can go to bed with a decent woman without paying, but to go to bed with a whore without paying — this is a true conquest!" I had to admit I'd behaved like an idiot.

In the beginning of this century human beings were much friendlier than they are now. This includes the prostitutes — or *poules* as the French call them. Not so long ago if a man strolled in the Times Square neighborhood and was approached by a prostitute, he risked being clobbered on the head by a stiletto shoe heel if he refused her proposals in an unfriendly way. In the newer years of the twentieth century, the situation in Paris was quite different:

One afternoon I was walking on boulevard Saint Germain in the Latin Quarter, when a pleasant looking young woman approached me and inquired, "Would you come with me, darling?"

"How much would you give me?"

She misunderstood me and said, "You have to give me only twenty francs."

"No, no, I don't give you a penny. You asked me to come with you, so it's you who have to pay."

"Ah-ha! You are one of 'those' guys," she said with a moue.

"One of those who has no importance, whatsoever," I replied. "But I will show you that I'm fairer than you are. You're asking twenty francs, but I'll be satisfied with only eighteen!" We stood on the corner haggling for

some ten minutes. She came down to fifteen francs; I to thirteen; she to twelve; and I finally to ten.

Then she lost patience and shouted, "I've had enough of this! Around the corner is a hotel. Let us go there. I don't ask you a penny but I hope you will at least pay for the room!" What could I have done? Of course, I had to accept her invitation. I feel very sure something like this could not have happened today.

Some of the Ukrainians in Paris were jealous of the prestige my brother-in-law enjoyed in French circles and began a whispering campaign against him, accusing him of trying to organize a secret Ukrainian society against the Ukrainian government in exile, an assertion all the more stupid as my father was vice-prime minister of this very government. This campaign proceeded and the atmosphere in the office turned poisonous. I have never hesitated to speak up to foreigners and certainly did not hesitate now to give a piece of my mind to those of my countrymen who took part against my brother-in-law. This brought me into conflict with the then prime minister of our government in exile who was my boss and the chief editor of the Ukrainian weekly, *Trident*. Disgusted, I resigned. Soon thereafter Oksana and Jan moved to Rome and sometime later my father resigned from his post as vice-prime minister of the Ukrainian government in exile. I had worked in the Ukrainian mission in Paris for nearly three years, but apparently it was written in stone somewhere that I was not to hold a job for more than three years, because my work here ended also.

I did not have the slightest idea what I was going to do next. My first steps in job seeking were not encouraging. Then I remembered when I was still working with

Mr. Dorman, my secretary had several times mentioned a clairvoyant lady whom she admired very much. She had given me the address, but I had never bothered to visit her. I suspected this woman used her gift of telepathy, some adroit questioning of her clients, and her own intelligent deductions to impress those who came to see her. Now, as I had no plans whatsoever, I thought this might be the right moment to visit this good lady. And so one afternoon I entered a small dry cleaning shop in a lower middle-class section of Paris and saw in front of me a blond middle-aged lady whose appearance did not strike me at all. She bade me enter a small back room and seated me in front of her across a small table. She carefully examined my palms, gave me a crystal ball to hold in my left hand, and distributed her tarot cards on the table.

"You are now in a transitional period and are wondering what you should do."

I interrupted her impatiently, "I know my present; let us speak of the future!"

"Very well," she answered. "Within several weeks you will meet a young man, pale, with black hair, and a lover of music. He will make you some proposals."

"Do I know him?"

"Yes, you know him well."

But I could not figure out who he could possibly be. "He will offer you the chance to go to another country across the sea," she continued.

"America?"

"No, the trip is shorter."

"What will I do over there?"

"I don't know exactly; something to do with the burning of gas or oil, and please note," she added, "it will be a conditional proposal. Should, however, the young man tell you that your presence over there would guarantee success, you can consider the proposal final. In any case, should this project come true, it will not materialize for three months."

Rather incredulous, I paid my twenty francs and left the good lady. Thinking as hard as I could, I could not see any lover of music sending me across the sea to give me a job with burning oil.

Some weeks later I went to dinner with two good friends. The lady was half Ukrainian and half Russian, married for the second time to an American from Seattle, Harry Clinton Stone. Her first husband had been the crown prince of Thailand (then called Siam). He was fulfilling his military studies in Petrograd at the beginning of the First World War when he met her, fell madly in love, married her, and took her off to Siam. They had a son, Prince Chula Chakrabongse. Eventually he decided to take a second wife, a Siamese woman, although he had promised that my friend would be his sole wife. (In Siam kings usually had many wives, as many as three hundred sixty five)! Nevertheless, when the crown prince did this, she divorced him and went to stay in Shanghai where she met and married Harry Stone. Her first husband never became king; he had a rather strong character and apparently court dignitaries, adverse to having a very strong-willed king, had him poisoned.

The Siamese government paid his former wife a

handsome allowance. Her only son, who had studied at Harrow and Cambridge, was living in England but often visited his mother in Paris. We had met several years before and I had even been his guest for a week in London the previous year. One fateful evening he happened to be at his mother's, having just arrived from London. During dinner he asked me what I was doing and I told him I was doing nothing at all right then.

"Why don't you come to London?" he asked.

"But I was your guest only last year."

"No, this time it's business," he said. "My cousin, Birabongse (Bira), is a well known racing driver and we have a racing garage. My chief mechanic has so far been dealing with financial matters, but it's too much for him. So I think it would be a good idea if you took over the financial side of our racing stable."

Of course, I was stunned. Here it was: a young man I knew, the pale face, black hair, crossing the Channel, gas burning (in this case specifically gasoline), a great lover of music. (I learned later that he did love music).

"But Prince Chula," I said, "I must tell you quite frankly that I don't have the slightest idea about mechanics. I can just about distinguish between a wheel and a steering wheel!"

"That's not necessary; for that we have mechanics. You'd be in charge of finances and administration. I'm sure it will work out perfectly."

Now I had no doubts whatsoever about the prediction of the clairvoyant and even the next words of Prince Chula did not shake my confidence. "I am just

talking on the spur of the moment." he said. "Let's think it over, both of us. I'll write to you soon." And we left it at that.

Ten days later I received Prince Chula's formal offer from London. He was a peculiar fellow, very generous with friends but rather penny-pinching in business. The salary he offered me was small. But now I was sure I would get this job, so I requested nearly fifty per cent more and got it. Prince Chula told me that he would be coming to Paris to spend Christmas with his mother and assumed I would be going to Warsaw to be with my father over the holidays, so we set the starting date just after the new year, 1937.

"The good lady must have made a slight mistake," I thought to myself, "it will be only two months, not three, but who cares!"

I did go to Warsaw to spend Christmas with my father and there in the sub-polar weather I caught a terrible cold that developed into the worst strep throat I'd ever endured in my life. After spending three weeks in bed I arrived in London only on February 5, 1937. So after all, the clairvoyant had been correct in her prediction that I would start the new job after three months.

At that time life in London was not too welcoming to "Continental." So-called English comfort did not include central heating and one had, and even today often has, to be satisfied with gas stoves which, while roasting one half the body, left the other half frozen. The whole body froze if the stove was not continuously fed with silver shillings.

Fortunately, I had a friend in London, Alexander

(Shura) Rahm. I had met him in Paris several years before through the Stones. They had been old friends since their times together in Shanghai. Shura's father was a Swiss whose grandfather had emigrated to Russia and made a fortune there. His father continued the successful family business and had become an importer of tea from China. He and his family had managed to leave Kazan on the Volga three or four hours before the Bolshevik takeover and had traveled by train for weeks and weeks through Siberia to Harbin and then on to Shanghai. From there they came to Paris, via the United States, having succeeded in bringing a substantial part of their fortune with them. But Black Tuesday ruined them, and Shura, who had always been mechanically gifted (at the age of eighteen he built an astronomical clock which was displayed in the Paris Museum of Arts and Crafts) and was a good friend of Prince Chula, came to London to work in the racing garage.

With his help I found an adequate, if small, boardinghouse owned by a retired British captain who had met and married a French girl while in France during the war. The first thing she did after they had bought the house was to install central heating. This solved my problem. The boardinghouse was in a quiet street five minute's walk from the office and Prince Chula's flat and five minutes from the "tube" which brought me to the racing garage.

It had a rather curious name: The White Mouse Garage, White Mouse being Prince Bira's mascot. I spent mornings in the garage and afternoons in the office. In the garage I met the chief mechanic, Mr. G. Wyatt, and

his assistants, three mechanics and a boy apprentice. There was a warm friendly atmosphere in the garage and I soon felt quite at home. It would have been a marvelous opportunity to learn about motors, but unfortunately, mechanical things are not for me. I tried several times to watch our mechanics at work but after ten or fifteen minutes I literally became sick. I could not learn the name of a single spare part and had to ask questions all the time, but at least there were no problems with the accounting. The English bookkeeping system was much simpler and less formal than the French and the Austrian ones I knew. In the afternoon I did some typing and secretarial work for Prince Chula. He had two Siamese secretaries. The older one was a pleasant man, while the younger seemed to be a dull boy; both were typical Siamese and sometimes I felt that our manner of thinking did not always follow along the same lines.

In the evenings we sometimes gathered together and played monopoly or chatted, but as a rule I was on my own, exploring London and getting to know the amiable Londoners. It seemed to me that everyone was much more polite and pleasant than in Paris. Once, quite at the beginning when I was driving the small Ford placed at my disposal by Chula, I made a turn and forgetting that I was in England where one drives on the left side of the road, I found myself in the wrong lane. A policeman appeared with with his little book and said severely, "Your papers, please!" I produced my French driver's license. "Oh, you're a foreigner. All right, proceed, but next time pay attention, please." He probably thought, "Oh, you stupid foreigner, an

Englishman would never have done that!" But the fact was he did not utter it. The English had at that time a superiority complex like the French, but they were too well mannered, too gentlemanly, to show it, while the famous "politesse française" (I have still to discover it!) did not prevent the French from cursing "les sales mètèques" (dirty foreigners). In those days on the Continent the opinion seemed to prevail that Britishers were "cold and haughty," but I am willing to testify that in their own country they are quite different.

I was, I have to admit, rather sad and reluctant to leave the Parisian girls. But soon I discovered that the English girls could be charming too, not so well dressed, but more straightforward and frank. I still remember my astonishment when having approached a young lady in the street (an office worker I later discovered), I asked whether I could accompany her and she answered with a smile, "Why not?" Maybe because they were not accustomed to this direct approach the English girls felt all the more flattered.

A few other things in London were different than to what I had been accustomed during the thirteen years I spent in France. For example, the English positively love their tea; they are real tea addicts. It seems that English water blends excellently with tea and that nowhere in the world does tea taste as good as in England (something analogous to coffee: nowhere does espresso taste as good as in Naples). In the hotels one is awakened with a cup of tea, then there is tea for

breakfast, then a cup of tea at ten o'clock and again at four o'clock in the afternoon. The afternoon tea seems to be something similar to a religious rite which is rigorously observed. I remember when I arrived one day near the sacred hour at the Shell office to visit a Georgian friend, Prince Soumbatoff, who held an important position there. I saw crowds of employees rushing down the stairs. Astonished and somewhat taken aback, I asked the doorman, "Fire?"

"No, Sir, tea time."

And on one of my first Sunday excursions by car, I noticed that around four o'clock the young lady beside me was becoming restless. "What's the matter?" I asked naively.

"It's tea time, dearie," was the answer.

I mentioned breakfast. This was a real meal, very wholesome and tasty too, not the Continental breakfast to which I was accustomed.

Somerset Maugham said once to someone who complained about the English cuisine, "Take breakfast, breakfast, and breakfast." I personally would have added, "And afternoon tea." I have to admit that the complaint about English food was justified, although thirteen years of continuous French cuisine does make one rather demanding. There was also an aspect of London restaurants I did not find particularly attractive: the service. It was only there that I finally understood that the word, "waiter," does not come from the verb, "to wait," as in "to serve," but from the verb, "to wait," as in "to lose time." Fortunately, in London there were French, Italian, Greek, and Chinese restaurants. I became an

enthusiast of Cantonese cuisine.

It took me a couple of months to become accustomed to the new atmosphere but then I fell in love with London, foggy as it was. It had a great charm, not only broad avenues and large squares, but cosy little squares with gardens in the middle. Not to forget, of course, the British Museum, the National Gallery and Tate Gallery, etc.

The countryside in England is simply enchanting, lusciously green with a variety of grand old trees. Roads are winding, even in the plains, due to the great respect for private property. An English journalist put it in quite a different, humorous way. "It seems," he said, "that our roads were designed by drunken people who could not see straight!"

One evening when Prince Chula and I were talking, we turned to the theme of palmistry and clairvoyance. He was most skeptical, so I told him my story (without mentioning the decisive sentence).

"But Borys," he said, "you're a serious-minded person. How can you believe in such things?"

"Believe it or not," I said, "but you have to admit that I'm here."

He then asked me many questions about this clairvoyant, how reliable she was, where she lived, and so forth, making skeptical remarks all the time our conversation lasted. For several days I did not see him and the butler said he had gone to Paris to visit his mother. Then one afternoon he burst into my office and eagerly demanded, "Borys, tell me frankly, did you tell her something?"

"Tell whom what?" I asked, dumbfounded.

"That woman you know."

"What woman?" I asked him, not grasping what it was all about.

"That clairvoyant! You talked so much about her that I decided to go and see her."

"You, Prince Chula, a serious-minded person?"

"And the reason I asked you is that as soon as she saw me she said, 'It's your friend, the tall blond one, who sends you. But naturally you could not have told her; I didn't tell anyone I was going visit her. This impressed me, but what she told me was junk. Imagine! She told me that she sees me being driven in a gilded coach in a big city, big crowds are cheering me, bells are ringing, and cannons are thundering. What nonsense! And then imagine, she told me someone close to me is cheating me and stealing, but that I should not worry as you, Borys, are watchful. You'll catch the thief and have the stolen money returned to me.'"

In the meantime the butler had brought tea and the two Siamese secretaries joined us. "Pay attention!" Chula said to them jokingly, "Don't steal! Otherwise Borys will have you jailed!" We all laughed heartily.

The cheating to which the clairvoyant had alluded happened towards the end of March. In May His Royal Highness Prince Chula Chakrabongse of Siam, representing His Majesty the King of Siam, and the royal Siamese government on the occasion of the coronation of His Majesty King George VI, was driven through the streets of London in a gilded coach and was cheered by the crowds while the bells rang and cannons thundered.

In order to better adapt my bookkeeping to British standards, I attentively studied all monthly statements given to me by Mr. Wyatt, trying to learn names and spare parts, checking the figures, and so on. Receipted bills were attached to the statements, but I noticed that in the last statement one bill was missing. I mentioned this to Mr. Wyatt. "It's terrible," he said. "I'm so disorderly in my paper work, I'm sure I've the receipt somewhere but must look for it." Two weeks later he gave it to me, saying that he had found it in his old wallet. The receipt had the correct date but was all smeared. I continued looking through and checking previous statements and once more I found a receipt missing, this time for a large amount, nearly five hundred pounds. I mentioned this again to Mr. Wyatt and once more he promised to look for it. Two or three weeks later when the receipt still had not appeared, I asked him about it. "Look," he said, "so far I have not been able to find it. Wouldn't it be easier to call the firm and ask for a duplicate?" He went to the phone, dialed the number, then put down the receiver. "Such a request will create a most unfavorable impression of this firm," he said. "They'll say we're not well organized. Give me some more time and I'll find it." As the receipt was still not forthcoming, I finally decided to call the firm myself.

"No, the bill has not yet been paid," was the answer. "But there is no hurry, His Royal Highness may pay whenever he likes."

So there was no doubt anymore. Mr. Wyatt was cheating. He made all payments through the White Mouse Garage bank account, so I needed the statements

of this account to get the final proof. I went to the bank and asked that the statements be sent to Prince Chula. The next morning a big envelope had been delivered, but addressed to Mr. Wyatt. I took it back to the bank and explained I was not prepared to open mail addressed to other people. "But Mr. Wyatt is the only person who has the power of attorney for this account," I was told.

"If you say that His Royal Highness has nothing to do with this account, it's all right with me," I answered. "In this case, you are accepting the fact that His Royal Highness would in no way be liable should there be an overdraft on this account."

The next morning the statements addressed to Prince Chula were delivered and there it was an overdraft of over five hundred pounds. The next week a meeting took place; present were Mr. Wyatt, Prince Chula, his solicitor, the solicitor's secretary, and I. The solicitor informed Mr. Wyatt that his secretary would record the proceedings and asked for an explanation for the unpaid bill and the overdraft on the White Mouse Garage account. I had the impression Mr. Wyatt was expecting the question about the unpaid bill, but he gasped when the overdraft was mentioned. He could not give a valid explanation, garbling that there must be some misunderstanding, and asked for another appointment in a week which was readily granted him. At this meeting he gave no explanation, but handed the solicitor a postdated check for the full amount due. The check was honored upon presentation a month later.

So the second part of the prediction had come true. To close the story about this clairvoyant, I will tell

you about my visit to her when I was passing through Paris late in 1938. She had dropped her dry-cleaning job and had dedicated herself full time to her consultations. This time when I consulted her, she was extremely vague, telling me only that she saw me establishing myself in a southern country. She saw palm trees and mentioned I would have difficulties, but that I should not be disappointed as everything would work out later.

"How much later?" I asked.

"Oh, seven or eight years," she mumbled. This was such a contrast to her previous precise predictions that I left in disgust, feeling that her abilities had suffered now that she was a full time clairvoyant. I myself interpreted "southern country" with palm trees as Siam, but the "seven or eight years" seemed simply nonsensical. Later I was able to render her justice. The "southern country" was not Siam, but Italy, and I realized that it was not her ignorance, but her kindness, that restrained her from elaborating on my future "difficulties."

Back to the White Mouse Garage. A problem had to be solved: who would be the new chief mechanic? The second in command, Lofty England, was promoted to that post (he was nicknamed "Lofty" because he was six-three or six-four). This proved an excellent choice; he tuned the cars beautifully and Bira continued to win.

Once in the 1960s on a plane to London I was leafing through a magazine when I saw the name, Lofty England. This could only be "our" Lofty! He had become

the managing director of Jaguar. Upon my arrival in London I called him at his office in Coventry and we had a most enjoyable chat reminiscing about old times.

During the racing season, from April to October, we traveled all over Europe to participate in the races on our calendar. The racing car was transported in a large blue van exhibiting the White Mouse logo and accompanied by two mechanics (Shura was always one of them).

Chula and Bira traveled in Chula's Rolls Royce and Prince Chula's secretary, Banyen, and I usually drove in Banyen's Delahaye. Each car went on its own and we met at our destination two days before the race. In England we raced in Brooklands near London and Donington; in Ireland, at Phoenix Park and Cork; in France, at Albi and Peronne; in Czechoslovakia, near Brno; in Italy, at Turin and Naples.

It was in Turin that an odd incident occurred. Arriving at the circuit, we noticed a poster was hanging over each pit, indicating the name of the entrant. Prince Chula, always very jealous of his rights and prerogatives, became incensed because the poster hanging over our pit bore Bira's name. "I'm the entrant, Bira is only the driver," he complained to the officials. They apologized profusely for this mistake, promised it would never happen again, but asserted that it was too late to change it for this race. From an official, with whom I happened to have mutual friends in Paris, I learned what had actually taken place. Originally Prince Chula's name had been displayed, but had to be replaced by Bira's in order to avoid disparaging jokes by competitors, mechanics, and the public. In

Italian "Chula" is pronounced "Koola" and all the Italians present pronounced it giggling, "Koolo," a rather vulgar designation for the buttocks. When the shocked officials tried to explain that the name should be pronounced "Chula," the giggling intensified, because in the Turinese dialect this means "stupid." The tactful officials preferred not to mention the true account to Prince Chula.

At this race I met Crown Prince Umberto of Italy for the first time. The next time I encountered him was in Naples. He joined us for lunch at the Hotel Excelsior then took us to the ancient Greek temples of Paestum. Here I snapped some pictures that were later to play a significant role in my escape from Poland in 1939. Later he even went night clubbing with us. It was amazing to see how all the ladies present ogled him. He was definitely extremely popular, not only with the ladies, because he was kind, intelligent, charming, and handsome. He had a gift so precious to kings and politicians: he remembered faces and names. The first time I met him, I told him that I was particularly happy to have the honor of being introduced to him as I had so often seen his picture in the house of Mr. Landini, counselor at the Italian embassy in Paris. Many years earlier Mr. Landini had been his tutor. "Oh, you have seen him recently? How is he? And does he not have a charming daughter? What is her name? Maykoyes, Mayko. When I reported this conversation to Mayko (she and her mother were very good friends of ours) she felt very flattered. Her parents have meanwhile died and she, now Countess Ferrau, lives in Livorno.

After 1938 I did not see Umberto for quite some time and much had taken place during those years. On

June 5, 1944, the day after the Allies entered Rome, his father, Victor Emmanuel III, instead of abdicating immediately in favor of Umberto, named him Lieutenant General of the Realm and abdicated belatedly on May 9, 1946, less than a month before Italy became a republic as a result of the plebiscite of June 2, 1946. The vote was fifty-five per cent for a republic, forty-five per cent for a monarchy. If Victor Emmanuel had abdicated earlier, the monarchy could perhaps have been saved. However, Victor Emmanuel III was universally disliked: by the Fascists, because he had betrayed Mussolini on July 25, 1943, and by the anti-Fascists, because he had tolerated Fascism for over twenty years. Because he remained king practically up to the last moment, the monarchy was identified with his person. He did just one thing that was right: he died on December 28, 1947, four days before the new Italian constitution became valid. This new constitution decreed that all property belonging to the male members of the Savoia family was to be confiscated. Since the old king died before January 1, 1948, only the part inherited by Umberto was confiscated, while his sisters received their portions and shared with him. Several years later Umberto won the lawsuit in England, thereby putting at this disposal the considerable funds that had originally been deposited by his father in the Hambros Bank and that the Italian republican government had claimed the right to confiscate.

In August 1959, I had to pass through Lisbon and the idea of visiting King Umberto, then residing at Cascais, not far from Lisbon, came to my mind. It was too late to make any advance arrangements, so I simply

took the little electric train that runs along the coast and in less than an hour stepped out in Cascais. The first passerby pointed out Umberto's villa. I was received by a friendly aide-de-camp who asked me whether I had an appointment. Upon hearing that I did not, he showed me the eight or nine people seated in the salon and said that unfortunately I would have a long wait. As this was my own fault I could not argue, so merely gave him my business card and sat down to wait patiently. Less than five minutes later, the aide-de-camp returned and asked me to follow him. Umberto met me at the door. To my utter astonishment I did not have to explain who I was. Before I could open my mouth he started to ask me questions about our mutual friends, the Siamese princes. I told him in detail how the snapshot I had taken of him had enabled me to leave Warsaw, thanked him for his willingness to grant me an audience in 1939, and told him that I was now living in New York City and had become an American citizen. He listened attentively to my story and smiled wistfully. "When we last met," he said, "you were a stateless émigré and I was what I was in my own country. The situation has now reversed: I am an émigré and you are a citizen of a free country. I am glad for you." I confess I had tears in my eyes.

I met Umberto only one other time, in 1962 when your mother and I journeyed to Mallorca where we stayed at the Hotel Formentor on the northeastern tip of the Island. One evening after dinner we were coming down the stairs leading to the garden when I saw Umberto coming up, very informally dressed. I was taken aback to see him appearing out of the darkness and

exclaimed rather indiscreetly, "Your Majesty, how is it that you are here?"

He laughed and asked, "And you?"

"I'm here with my wife."

"And I came on the yacht of Mrs. Claire Booth-Luce" (the former ambassador to Italy). I was delighted to introduce your mother and we exchanged a few words and then bade each other farewell.

The newspapers gradually mentioned him less and less. For awhile his children were in the news, but unfortunately usually for something to do with "chronique scandaleuse."

As I said before, the racing season normally lasted from April to October. There were three principal types of races: those for the big three liter cars, those for smaller, 1500 cc. cars, and those for sports cars. Competition in the first category was principally between cars of German make, Mercedes and Auto Union. Italian Alfa Romeos took part in these races too, but their chances of winning were nearly zero because the German cars were technically so much superior. Only such champions as Nuvolari could sometimes squeeze themselves into one of the first three places. One story characteristic of Nuvolari spread. During practice for the Tripoli race his car veered off the circuit. He broke three ribs and suffered internal injuries. Taken to the hospital, he was put into a cast and the doctor prescribed complete immobility. On the day of the race his friends secreted him out of his room through the window, lowered him to the street level, brought him onto the race track and put him into the racing car, to the great

surprise of the officials and his competitors. His preliminary time was good, so he got a good starting place, took off perfectly, led the pack, and won the race. A few meters across the finishing line he collapsed, unconscious.

I had seen him at several races and remember one in particular near Brno in Czechoslovakia, where the laps were unusually long, twenty-three kilometers. If a driver had an accident or engine trouble at the beginning of the lap, his chances of reaching the pit where his mechanics were stationed with spare parts and gas were very scanty. On the third or fourth kilometer Nuvolari's tire went flat. He continued until the tire actually burst. He forged on with three tires, scratching the asphalt with the rim of the fourth. Upon reaching the pit the wheel was replaced and he resumed the race, finishing, I think, third or fourth. In the evening I happened upon him sitting in the hotel lounge and approached him. "Commendatore, how did you manage to drive with only three wheels?"

"Oh, that's nothing, I just reduced speed, that's all." was his answer.

In the second category, 1500 cc. cars, the competition was principally between the English E.R.A., English Racing Automobiles, and the Italian Maseratis. The E.R.A.s had been built for the English racing track, long and straight with few curves, and were usually successful on that type of track. The Maseratis were built for the Italian type of circuits with many bends and were victorious in this type of race. Official teams from both companies and also private drivers competed in this race class. Our problem was that the E.R.A. company sold to

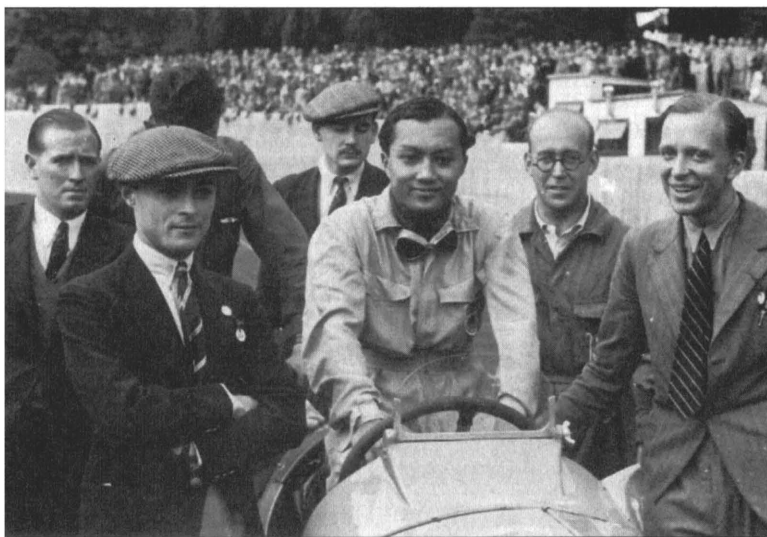
private owners only cars of the previous year to make it difficult for private drivers like Bira to compete successfully with the drivers of the official team. Consequently, our mechanics had the onerous task of tuning up the older cars so they would not be inferior to the more recent. Bira had an even more difficult assignment: not only had he to drive better than the team drivers, he had also to overcome the handicap of driving an older car. He did it so well that he won the championship of England, the Gold Star of the British Racing Drivers Club, for three consecutive years, a feat never before achieved.

Bira was an extremely cool driver, although I had the impression sometimes he was slightly nervous just before a race. When the cars were already lining up, my task was to give him a sip of mineral water and a piece of chewing gum. Then his nervousness disappeared and he drove like a robot, a very brilliant robot, I must say. Even racing in the rain did not bother him. In fact, rain was a good omen for us. Practically all other drivers slowed down, but Bira did not, and regularly won the "rainy races." He was an affable, friendly fellow with a round, smiling, and quite good looking face. He was also interested in sculpture and participated in exhibitions.

But the true organizer, the financier, and driving force of Bira's success was his cousin, Chula. He meticulously studied the racing calendar, dates, countries, probable participants, etc. I well recall the preliminary meetings before the season started when all these questions were thoroughly scrutinized and discussed before the program for a season was prepared. Each year new cars had to be purchased, tested, and tuned and the program

established, all of which was dependent upon the cars we had at our disposal, those so-called sports or racing cars. A myriad of other factors, such as dates, the competitors we would encounter, and the type of racing circuits also entered into the planning. After the War, Bira, fed up with his cousin's domineering ways, tried to race on his own, but the result ended his racing career.

On September 30, 1938, Prince Chula married his long-time fiancée, Elizabeth (Lisba) Hunter, daughter of a wealthy industrialist. It was a quiet wedding, only very intimate friends were invited and I was his best man. I had never taken a particular liking for Lisba. In my opinion she was a cold and egocentric person and the way she treated Shura after Chula's death only confirmed my opinion. Her parents and older sister were, however, charming; we were quite good friends.



Prince Bira in his car

Turning back to 1936, Oksana and Jan had moved to Rome where they liked it very much. In 1938 they suggested I come and stay there over the winter. I had very little to do in England, as Prince Chula and Prince Bira had gone to Siam with their wives. I agreed to their suggestion and went to Rome, which I too liked very much. At that time under Fascist rule, it was quite different from the Rome of today: much less international, much more provincial, but also perfectly safe. Ancient Rome was, however, much the same as now. Almost all the excavations, restorations, and reconstructions had been made by the Fascist government and very little has been added in recent times.

I decided to learn Italian, and from experience knew the best way to learn a language is to study in that language. As I already had my diploma from l'Ecole des Sciences Politiques in Paris, I decided to broaden my horizon by studying political science in Rome. In doing so, I could combine the pleasant (studies) with the usefulness (money), as there was a possibility here too of acquiring a scholarship. In fact I was able to get one quite soon. Though modest, it was sufficient to cover my basic expenses, so that I did not have to call upon my savings from the London period.

My knowledge of Italian was then limited to

about two or three hundred words; and although my French and Latin helped greatly, I could not totally follow the lectures. I endeavored to get a grip, and though at first discouraged, I persevered, listening attentively to my professors four to five hours daily. After about two months a minor miracle occurred: all of a sudden I understood them and a month later I felt quite at home in the language. Naturally, the contact with fellow students, aged seventeen to nineteen, was also very helpful. They were extremely nice to me and I made good friends with some of them, notwithstanding the fact that I was nearly twice their age. These friendships have lasted over the years. My children, you have met Emy Pollio, the first woman to be admitted to plead before the Corte di Cassazione, Supreme Court of Italy, and Carlo Tricerri, a high official at the Sacra Romana Rota, Supreme Court of the Vatican.

I found my studies most interesting; many subjects were treated in quite a different way than in Paris and I was often reminded of the old French saying, "*des conflits des opinions jaillient la vérité*." Most of the professors, as in l'Ecole des Sciences Politiques in Paris, were formidable in their specialities, authors of important publications, diplomats, etc. I sincerely enjoyed following their lectures once I started to understand Italian. I experienced this pleasure for only a very few weeks in Paris and have always regretted it.

One of the foremost lecturers was Gioacchino Volpe, professor of history, charming as a man and a prominent historian. But the one I liked and admired most was the geography professor, Count Amedeo

Barbiellini Amidei. He was an outstanding personality, not only as a professor but also as a human being, a man of vast intelligence and culture, possessing an incredible memory and talent for languages, and above all a man one hundred per cent true to his beliefs. He was extremely popular with the students: one had to be in the auditorium at least half an hour before the lecture began in order to get a seat. As his lectures were usually at the bright and early hour of eight o'clock, this was quite an achievement for the lazy Roman students.

Once in a while before starting his lecture, Amidei would inquire, "What shall we talk about?" Letting the students decide upon the subject, he then improvised – and how he improvised! He was well acquainted with Chinese, Arabic, Russian, French, English, and German and understood several other languages. I remember, for instance, one day when peering over my shoulder into my exercise book in Japanese, he read aloud sentences such as, "The white horse is faster than the black one," which were written in Chinese idiograms.

On another occasion when I was visiting him on the island of Elba where he was a director of the Napoleonic Museum, he showed me his library. I noticed some Ukrainian books published by my father's Scientific Institute, which my father had sent to him upon my request. I pulled out one of them and noted that all the pages had been separated (at that time books had various intermittent pages still folded). He saw that I looked rather surprised and asked me why. I told him that I was wondering who had read the book. "I did," he answered, and started to talk about problems discussed therein. "Do

you think I collect books only as ornaments? When they are in my library, I have read them."

"But I didn't realize you know Ukrainian." I answered.

"I really don't know it, but my knowledge of Russian and other Slavic languages enables me to understand the essential meaning."

Amidei was convinced that French and English foreign policies were directed against Italy and were undercutting its possibilities of free development. He thought a war might open wider horizons for his country and was, consequently, necessary and inevitable. I did not agree at all on this point. In my opinion a war would have catastrophic consequences for the whole western world, but I failed to convince him. When Italy entered the war he, being a lieutenant colonel in the reserve and a married man with three children, was not immediately called for active duty. But, true to his ideals and beliefs, he volunteered without delay to go to the front line. While directing his company's crossing a river at the Greek front, both his legs were nearly severed by a machine-gun blast. He refused to be transported to hospital, continued to direct the operation, and bled to death on the site.

I used some of my free time to tramp around Rome and its surroundings, going to Genoa, Naples, and Capri and once undertook a trip to Libya, then part of the Italian colonial empire. I visited Tripoli, built up splendidly by the Italians, and the ruins of the Roman city, Leptis Magna, which has since been excavated. I had to admire the Italian enterprise for developing the city and

for constructing magnificent roads, but could not refrain from wondering whether it was worthwhile for such a poor country to sacrifice so much money on the colonial empire, money which could have been employed much more usefully in the meaner parts of Italy, such as Sicily or Sardinia. The same thought occurred to me years later when Haile Selassie returned to Addis Ababa after the Italians had been ousted from Ethiopia. Receiving foreign delegations, he apologized for his palace and city not being in excellent condition, saying, "the masons have just left," an illusion to the Italians who had built up the city and constructed roads and railways.

In the spring news came that Chula and Bira, along with their wives, were returning from Siam and would be landing in Naples. I went there to meet them. The mother and sister of Chula's wife, Lisba, arrived from London too. Following my old habit, I stayed at the Excelsior Hotel which I liked and where during my previous stay I had befriended the chief porter. He was a very nice, courteous man, the son of Italian parents in Odessa, who had come to Italy in the early 1920s. His parents had lost nearly everything in Odessa. In the beginning he had to endure hardships in Italy, a strange country to him, but his attributes and knowledge of foreign languages had helped him to build a livelihood. Hotel porter was not an all-important position, but with the exception of the general manager, he was the most significant man in one of the most luxurious hotels in Italy. Assuredly, with the tips he made, he earned more than the general manager.

He offered me a very comfortable room, but I ex-

plained my prolonged vacation had made my funds a bit scarce. "All right then, I will give you the cheapest room in the hotel. Who cares, as you will spend only the night there." It really was a dark hole. However, when I came to pay my bill, I found that the room was in fact dirt cheap. The good porter had arranged for the bill to be made out in such a way that my arrival appeared to be two days later than the actual date.

When the boat arrived, Lisba's family and I were at the pier with magnificent bouquets for Lisba and Ceril, Bira's wife, that we had ordered through the porter. I noted with delight that my bouquet of flowers was the more beautiful. On asking the porter for the bill, I discovered it was modest. "How is it that it is not more for such a beautiful arrangement, the loveliest of all?"

"Was it the most beautiful?" he asked with an innocent smile. "Then I must have made a mistake and given you the one ordered by the mother of the lady." He confided to me that he would soon be leaving for Brazil where he had been offered a similar job at the leading hotel in São Paulo. Many years later when we went to São Paulo I asked for him and was told that he had gone to Belo Horizonte where he had acquired his own hotel.

We spent a few days in Naples and I informed Prince Chula that I wished to stay on the Continent for the summer which I wanted to spend with my father before leaving with them in the fall for Siam where the Grand Prix of Bangkok was scheduled for December 6. As I had requested of him before his departure, he confirmed he had arranged a job for me in the Information Ministry in Bangkok should I choose to stay there per-

manently. In the meantime during the winter Shura had learned enough to take care of the accounting so that my summer absence would not cause a serious problem.

We then left Naples, I to Rome and the rest to London, and agreed to meet in London in September to depart on October 14 for Penang on the *S.S. Rajputana*.



Prince Umberto, Prince Bira,
Borys Lotocki and Prince Chula

When the school year ended I packed my belongings and went to join my father for the long summer vacation. How idyllic: we went to the mountains at Zakopane, a famous Polish winter resort in the Tatra mountains which was most pleasant and picturesque even in summer. We also made excursions to other places and finally landed in Zalishchyky, a small town with a Ukrainian population situated on the Polish-Romanian border. Zalishchyky, although belonging to Galicia, was during World War I occupied by Russian armies attached to Bukovyna and so came under my father's jurisdiction in 1917. It was an amusing coincidence that in this small town we encountered two other "had beens," a good friend of my father, Dmytro Doroshenko, the former governor general of Galicia and Bukovyna in 1917, and an affable gentleman from Galicia, who had been the local administrator during the short period in 1918 when Galicia was under Ukrainian rule. We spent several pleasant weeks there, all the more enjoyable as many lovely girls from Warsaw were there on vacation. The kindness they showed was most flattering, but never did I imagine one of them, Hanka by name, would play such an important role in my life only weeks later. On arriving in Zalishchyky we intended to return to Warsaw soon after September first. A few days

thereafter I was to leave for London, as the departure for Siam was scheduled for October first.

On August 24, 1939, we read in the papers the news of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact concluded the day before. This news, although not wholly unexpected, came like a thunderbolt. It became apparent that the danger of war was imminent. To hasten our return to Warsaw seemed wise so events would not take us by surprise when we were holed up in a small town only some thirty kilometers from the Soviet border. Packing our belongings, we left Zalishchyky on August 27, stopping over in L'viv where my father wanted to see friends and talk over various matters regarding the printing of his books. We took advantage of the stopover to consult the leading Ukrainian physician in L'viv, Dr. Panchyshyn. He told us we were both in good shape; however, when we were outside I found a pretext to go back for a moment to ask the doctor what he frankly thought about my father's health. "As matters stand today," he told me, "your father has a chance to outlive you!" Less than two months later my beloved father was dead. Had it not been for the war he might have lived another ten or twenty years.

We returned to Warsaw late on the night of August 29, the day before the Polish government announced general mobilization. When my father went to the University the treasurer paid him his professor's salary for six months in advance. This was clear proof that the situation had become critical. In fact, in the early hours of September 1, 1939, World War II started. The German troops proceeded with all speed. The Polish army, quite unprepared, tried to halt advancing tanks

with cavalry; the results can readily be imagined. Within a few days the Polish defeat, or rather debacle, was accomplished and the fall of Warsaw was only a question of days.

My father pointed out to me that, being stateless and having a so-called "Nansen passport," the passport of the stateless, which had been issued in France, the German occupation troops might consider me a French soldier. This would most probably mean detention in a concentration camp. Consequently, he felt it advisable that I expedite my departure. I naturally hesitated to leave my father alone in Warsaw, but at his age he could not risk a journey of seven hundred kilometers, especially without knowing whether trains would or would not be running. Moreover, my father said that he could not very well abandon his papers and his library and maintained that the arrival of German troops would not be a danger to him. Then I had an idea: upon my return to Italy, I could ask my friend, Umberto, the Italian crown prince, to obtain authorization from the Germans for my father to join my sister and me in Rome. Given the Italian-German friendship at that time, the realization of such a plan should not have presented any serious difficulty.

Easy as it was to say I would leave, being stateless presented enormous drawbacks to travel. Governments were very reluctant to allow the stateless entrance to their countries. At that time a visa was necessary to gain entrance into a country, if only for a few hours, and getting a visa was a real problem. Consequently, on September 4, I went to the Italian Embassy, but was

informed no visa could be issued unless I could produce quality references in Italy. I failed to see how such references could be checked, since postal and telegraph communications with foreign countries had been disrupted. I then produced the picture (which I had providently taken with me) of Prince Umberto with Prince Chula standing on his left and I on his right. The picture itself and particularly this innocent detail made a marked impression on the first secretary; he disappeared with my papers and in less than ten minutes was back from the ambassador with my visa. Thereupon I hurried to the Yugoslavian Embassy to try to get a transit visa. As had always happened before, the consular employees refused to issue it. The next day I returned and finally landed in the office of the counselor. He was busy examining my papers and then he suddenly asked, "Is Professor Alexander Lotocki a relative of yours?"

"He is my father." The counselor immediately became very cordial.

"I am interested in church matters and have great appreciation for his writings on the history of the Orthodox Churches, particularly the Serbian." he said. "Here is your visa and please give my best regards to your father!"

Greatly encouraged by this double success I hurried to the Romanian Embassy to get the last visa I needed. I had to go through Romania, although I would have preferred to go via Hungary, as it would not bring me so near the Soviet border, but that would be unwise. Earlier that year the Hungarians with Nazi approval had barbarously destroyed the small Carpatho-Ukraine

which had just gained her independence from Czechoslovakia, killing and torturing thousands of Ukrainians. The consular employees, however, refused as usual to issue a visa and I was unable to get through to the "higher-ups;" apparently they had already deserted Warsaw in the direction of Zolishchyky on the Romanian border, exactly where we had been spending our vacation less than two weeks earlier. This was a clear sign the situation was becoming very precarious in Warsaw.

I had heard that in order to travel by train one had to have a special permit. The same afternoon I hastily went to the appropriate office and obtained the permit, but on arriving at the station I learned the train had already gone and no others were expected to leave. Doubt arose in my mind as to whether I should ever be able to leave, and how. Perhaps it was already too late! However, the next day, September 7, I saw a multitude of people lugging suitcases and parcels walking towards the bridge on the Vistula leading to roads east and southeast. I thought, well, if others can walk so can I, and lost no time. Quickly I went home and packed some indispensables into my knapsack, not overloading it, as I would have to carry it on my back a rather long distance. So along with my father I headed to the bridge that would carry us to the other side of the Vistula River and south. Just as we were crossing the broad bridge, German war planes arrived and bombed it. Most fortunately there were only four or five planes and their bombs were of no great size. The one falling nearest us made a hole in the bridge and exploded underneath, so we were safe. Ten minutes later the planes had gone and we hurried on

our way. On the other side we stayed for a moment to say good-bye. It was not a happy leave-taking, as in times of war one can never tell what is going to happen the next day. I had hoped, however, that the Poles would not try to defend their capital (in fact they did not), so the situation in Warsaw would not be too dangerous; I knew also that my father was not isolated there, having many good friends. My own enterprise appeared more risky, but I had faith I would succeed.

I started to walk in the direction of Otwock about twenty kilometers away. Near a crossroad under the cover of trees, I spotted several parked trucks. Naturally my first thought was that in going by truck I would save time and energy. One truck was heading for Lublin, just on my way. The truck's driver was in military uniform. Inside the truck were several soldiers, a couple of civilians and a man in a nondescript uniform. They agreed that I could go along with them so I climbed into the open truck. Soon afterwards we left. At first everything seemed all right. I was extremely relieved to have found this solution for covering a good part of my itinerary. But at a certain moment the man in the nondescript uniform asked to see my identity papers. This was a legitimate request and without hesitation I took out my Nansen passport and passed it to him. He inspected it briefly and putting it into his pocket said, "We are in war and there are too many damned German spies everywhere. I shall keep your papers until the question can be clarified as to who you really are." I tried to argue polite-

ly, but to no avail. I did not need a vivid imagination to figure out what could happen. At best I would land in jail, who knows for how long! And my chances of getting out of Poland would be annihilated. There was also the grave possibility that the Poles might kill me without any legal process as a German spy. When losing a war one always tries to find a scapegoat! I was in a real mess. I couldn't jump off a truck in motion, risking a broken leg or neck. Besides, they would simply shoot me down as an escaping spy. Even if I managed to get away, I wouldn't stand a chance of reaching and crossing the border without papers now safely stored away in the breast pocket of the man in uniform. Meanwhile, darkness had fallen and we were rolling southward. I was inwardly making plans and discarding them in turn, as I really did not see what I could do alone and unarmed, except place my faith in God.

Suddenly we approached a town, though nothing could be seen because of the blackout. It was Garwolin and the truck stopped. At that instant I had an inspiration. I do not remember whether I thought of Mussolini, who once spoke about driving the people on like asses with a carrot or, if that did not work, with a stick, or of my dear Russian "friends" who used to say, "Who takes a stick becomes a sergeant." This inspiration came so spontaneously I believe it was an answer to my prayers. I suddenly started to yell, the "man in uniform" being my target. "Finally we are here! And now I want you to know what a "dog's blood" (Polish expression approximately the equivalent of S.O.B.) you are! You allege that you intend to arrest me, but who are you, damn

you? You will have to answer for this! Give me your papers immediately and we will proceed to the local command post and I will insist that it is you who should be arrested! Your papers! Here!" My transformation from lamb into wolf was so unexpected that the man literally gasped. Automatically he put his hand into his breast pocket and halfway pulled out my passport (not his papers!). This saved me. I grabbed my passport and screamed, "No! It is your papers I want! Come with me to the command post!" While shouting I threw my knapsack onto the road and jumped down myself, beckoning to the man to follow me (and trembling lest he do so).

He was so shaken he could only call to the soldiers, "Hold him, hold him!"

They sat frozen and only one opened his mouth to grumble, "Hold him yourself if you want him. You started this, we don't give a damn."

Suddenly the driver boomed, "That's enough! I have no time to waste! Get in or out! I don't give a damn, I'm leaving!" Without losing a second I jumped over the ditch and tore off into the darkness, afraid someone may have overheard the whole uproar and intervene. But everything was quiet, so in ten minutes I crept out of hiding and continued on to Lublin, this time, however, on foot as originally planned. Still, I was lucky to have made nearly fifty kilometers by truck.

I passed several houses, but no lights were to be seen and I did not want, or rather did not dare, to intrude on perfect strangers, Poles at that, at such an hour. I had hoped to sleep under a tree, but as the night was very

clear and the grass soaked with dew, I had no choice but to walk. In any case, I could not have slept. Thinking of the preceding hours' events kept me wide awake, thankful, and exhilarated. With my step-by-step forward march under a translucent moon, I kept thinking, "If I survive (and somehow I knew I would) I will never forget this night and this walk. In time this may even become a pleasant recollection." And so eventually it did.

In the morning I sighted a small pine wood aside the road. A sigh of relief, at last I'd be able to sleep a few hours. There was no grass between the pines and I found a dry spot where I could rest. Two or three hours later I was again on the road. A steady stream of cars full of Polish officers passed, all headed in my southeasterly direction away from the invading Germans.

Civilian cyclists passed too and I eyed them enviously. Although I had not ridden a bike for nearly twenty years there was no doubt that I could advance at least twice as fast if I had one. I was beginning to realize more and more clearly that there was no time to be lost and even if I could walk fifty kilometers a day, I would need two weeks to reach the Romanian border, probably getting there just in time to be caught by those damned Russians. So my problem was elementary: to be (with bike), or not to be (with bike)! It would have been much safer, even with my French Nansen passport, to have stayed in Warsaw rather than to be caught on the road by the Germans or, infinitely worse, by the Russians. But where to buy a bicycle?

Later I stopped to ask a farmer for a glass of buttermilk and a piece of bread. He was apparently

wealthy judging by the size of the house, and while drinking my milk I spotted something that looked like the handlebars of a bike protruding from under a cloth hanging on the wall. I could not believe my eyes! This was my salvation! The farmer was a bit reluctant to part with his vehicle, but when I told him he had only to name a price for it, he agreed. (My father had given me plenty of Polish money which I felt pretty sure would be of no value outside Poland). Trying to conceal my overwhelming joy, I took possession of the bike and pedaled off along the road. These were no American roads! Either they were dirt or were paved with "cats' foreheads," as the Poles called cobblestones; seldom was a road paved with bricks. My bike was a heavy antique, unwieldy and without brakes. However, the poor road and the clumsiness of the bike, as well as my own ineptitude, were only insignificant details in my eyes. Finally I possessed a contraption that enabled me to move faster. In time I forgot how tired I was and pedaled away like a professional.

Eventually I caught up with four young men, students, riding in the same direction. Since it is always easier to follow than to ride alone, I just kept steadily behind them. They gradually became aware of me and we exchanged greetings and when we stopped to relax for half an hour I struck up a conversation with one of them. As is so often the case with young men, we started to talk about girls and to the utter amazement of us both we discovered that we had dated the same girl, he in Warsaw and I in Zalishchyky during vacation. I suppose under other circumstances he would have been angry to know that I had become his successor, but at that mo-

ment when we were pedaling away from Warsaw and normal life, it was a particular pleasure to talk about this very attractive young lady whom we had both liked very much. A kind of brotherhood of Hanka's friends was born. This was all very agreeable, but I was incessantly driven by the fear of reaching my destination too late. My new friends were not going fast enough so I bade them good-bye and hurried on alone.

A few hours later after descending a hill I found myself at a fork and hesitated as to which road to choose. Both went uphill. Seeing four or five farmers, or so they seemed, I dismounted and asked them which direction to Lublin. It was unwise to expose my foreign accent, but during the last two days I had had only friendly contact with Poles and had forgotten my bad experience on the truck. Unfortunately, I soon realized I was the victim of a kind of mass "spy psychosis!" Instantly the farmers surrounded me and one started to ask me ironically why of all places should I want to go to Lublin? "To spy for the damned Germans?"

And the second one intervened, "Friends, didn't we hear the Minister of War saying on the radio that our country was swarming with German spies who must be destroyed? It's better to kill ten innocents than to let one dirty spy go!" These farmers were stocky fellows, all with big sticks in their hands. I was alone with my only potential "weapon," the bicycle pump, and furthermore, this only if I could grab it fast enough. The bike was of no use. Even if I succeeded in pushing two of the strapping peasants aside, there was no escape, as all three roads ran uphill. I cursed myself for having been so naive; it

seemed I would be facing a rather unpleasant death under the blows of those threatening rods. Turning around in despair I saw my four student friends sailing down the hill in my direction. "Friends, come quickly, these beasts want to rob me!" I shouted at the top of my voice. In no time they were on the spot and the situation changed radically. I was not alone any more. We were five against five and the farmers retreated cursing under their breaths.

These students whom I had met by pure chance on the road would have had no reason to intervene in my favor had this dear girl, Hanka, not unwittingly brought us together. I have forever afterwards remembered her with sympathy and gratitude and do wonder if she were able to survive the war and its aftermath.

The young students knew the road and we continued to pedal along together for some hours. Later when they were taking another direction, we separated wishing each other good luck. Within a few hours I reached a town called Naleczov. I learned that foreign emissaries had been stationed here, but had left that very morning. So I trudged on, but soon before darkness fell I knew I would have to make a stop and ask permission of a farmer to spend the night in his barn. After a second or third attempt I was successful and so my bike and I spent the night side by side in a barn. I clutched it to me while I slept as I was afraid someone might come and steal my treasure. After a good night's rest (I had always enjoyed sleeping in the hay), I was again on my way before six o'clock the next morning.

Pedaling hard I was gradually approaching

Lublin when I suddenly saw many German planes flying low over me. I immediately dashed under a tree for cover, but they ignored the traffic on the road and went straight ahead to bomb Lublin. After two hours when they had cleared off, I continued to Lublin. The sight was horrible. Practically half of the city was in flames. Firemen were not to be seen anywhere. People were heaving their furniture and belongings out the windows of their burning houses, trying to salvage at least something. Instead of avoiding the burning city I went right ahead, hoping to find in the military hospital a good lady friend of my parents who had volunteered to work with the Red Cross and had been sent to Lublin. I wandered around the hospital, a forced spectator of some frightful sights. The good lady was not to be found and I left the city rapidly trying to forget the devastating scenes of fire, blood, and desolation.

In the evening I came to a village and was able to get a room. But, having become wiser, in order to avoid the slightest suspicion or trouble I proceeded to the local police station to exhibit my papers. I had hoped to have a good night's sleep in my room, but was awakened at four thirty in the morning by explosions. Bombs were dropping and the village was in a panic. As soon as calm was restored I left.

I approached a place where the road led down a steep slope and then ascended upward again. Joyfully I pedaled easily down in order to take advantage of my speed for the uphill slant. I literally flew airily down and was already half way up the other side, fortunately at an already reduced speed, when the front wheel of my bike

loosened and spun off. Humpty Dumpty's great fall was not more impressive than mine. The bike was flung to one side, I to the other. The wheel rolled gaily downhill. Not bothering to worry about injuries, I threw the bike into a ditch and rushed downhill to catch the wheel. Naturally there were no tools in the little leather bag attached to the bike, so I had to carry the wheel and pull the one-wheeled bike behind me for a couple of miles to the next isolated farmhouse where I was able to perform the necessary repairs. All in all, I was very lucky indeed, except for some scratches on my face and hands there was no bodily harm. I shuddered retrospectively at the thought of what might have happened had the wheel come off while I was speeding downhill! Praising God, I again mounted.

After an interval filled with another German bombing attack, another visit to a local police station, and another short sleep, I reached a part of the country populated by Ukrainians. Here all my troubles were over. I was Ukrainian. I spoke Ukrainian to the people and we were instantly friends. Amiability welcomed me wherever I went and I even had to insist, at times unsuccessfully, to pay for my food or bed. I was now pedaling along in a much better mood and my mind was less preoccupied with the thought of danger lurking at every turn of the road. It was high time to make plans to get to Italy once I got out of Poland. L'viv was a large city where I should try to purchase a ticket for the journey out of the country. It was essential to buy the ticket in Poland, as I had plenty of zlotys but was in very short supply of pounds and was, moreover, afraid my zlotys

would be worthless abroad. The thought struck me also that once in L'viv I should also find out whether there was a Romanian consulate in the town in order to try again for my visa.

After cycling along miles and miles of dirt roads, sheltering from the continuous bombings, feeling my muscles aching more and more, and being very sore in certain parts, I finally approached L'viv relieved. In the suburbs factories were burning after a recent bombing. I sped on as I needed to reach the international travel office, Wagons Lits/Cook, before it closed. I reached L'viv and Cook's without further ado. "A ticket to Rome, please!" I exclaimed to the first man I saw upon entering the office. With compassion the kind man, who happened to be the manager, looked at me and the bicycle I had taken along into the office (both were dusty and dirty and not in good shape) and said apologetically, "Sorry, we have no more tickets."

"If not to Rome, then to some other place!" I pleaded.

"To no place whatsoever!"

"But you must have some blanks which can be filled out and stamped!" I insisted.

"No blanks left. Everything has been sold." he said regretfully. This gave me quite a jolt. Now I am done for, was my thought. How can I get to Italy?

Seeing me so downcast the manager said, "I see only one possible way to help you." He drew a ticket from his drawer saying, "This ticket was ordered yesterday by someone who promised to pick it up this afternoon. You see it is a second class ticket to Venice and

I have already marked the number of his passport on it. It is now nearly five-thirty; we close at six o'clock. If he doesn't come by then, I shall feel free to give it to you." Seldom in my life have I spent such a agonizing thirty minutes. Every time anyone entered the office I trembled inwardly and outwardly. At five minutes of six, seeing the state I was in, the dear man closed the shutters. I nearly fainted from overexcitement. He altered the passport number on the ticket and gave it to me. With quaking hands I pulled out the money to pay for the ticket, but had to induce the good man by force, God bless his soul, to accept a tip as recognition of my gratitude. Afterwards I went to the Ukrainian hotel where I had stopped with my father two weeks before and was lucky enough to get a very nice room. That evening I treated myself to a dinner at the best restaurant in the city. It felt quite strange to be once more in quasi-normal circumstances.

The next morning, September 12, my efforts to get a Romanian visa were again daunted. I hopefully made several telephone calls to friends of my father and visited Mr. Paliy, general manager of the large Ukrainian co-operative organization, Maslosoyuz, who vouched for me. Wasting no time, I elatedly departed from L'viv. The future seemed much brighter and I was optimistic that in Zolishchyky I would overcome the sole obstacle still in my way, the Romanian visa. I felt I had only to hurry and everything would be all right. I then learned one should never become over-optimistic.

I was suddenly stopped by an armed soldier. Definitely a deserter, he robbed me in a rather courteous,

selective way. He needed a bike tube and some money. Disdaining the Polish zlotys, he removed the few pounds sterling I was carrying. He insisted that he was not bad, but just a fellow in need and that he was only taking strictly what was necessary. Left standing helplessly on the road with a useless bike, his "distinguo" seemed absolutely ridiculous, but later I had to admit he was a "gentleman." I tried to flag down passing trucks and after the third try managed to get as far as Peremyshl.

There I was lucky to find a bicycle shop. But, of course, neither tubes nor tires were available. I explained my desperate situation to the owner and after a thorough search he dug out an old tube that seemed completely beyond repair. After two hours of painstaking and conscientious work, he inserted the tube in the tire. With the zlotys the deserter had disdained I recompensed the kind man and continued my journey, secretly hoping this was the end of my tribulations.

Alas, speeding along in the darkness I fell off my bike breaking the front axle. Again I had to push to the nearest farmhouse and once more I was lucky. A mechanically-minded farmer managed to repair the cycle and offered me shelter. However, at one o'clock in the morning he roused me, along with another man who was sleeping in the barn and asked us to leave, saying the Germans were approaching (frankly I think it was a false alarm). There was no end to my troubles. On the way my back tire suddenly went flat. Again I pushed my iron horse for miles and miles until a good-hearted and capable windmill hand rescued me.

Finally, deadly exhausted, I arrived in Ternopil'

and found a hotel. As soon as I entered the lobby I realized staying was a vain hope. The owner was standing in the middle of a crowd and was repeating patiently to each, "Very sorry, no rooms left!"

I was standing nearby when suddenly a maid ran up and started talking to him hurriedly. I overheard that she spoke in Ukrainian. Without losing a second I approached him and whispered, "Please help me! I am dead tired and I too am Ukrainian."

"No rooms, Sir!" he wailed aloud so that all could hear, then whispered to me without moving his lips, "room twelve, second floor." And aloud again, "No rooms! I have told you already!" I waited a short interval so as not to attract attention, asked the man servant to take good care of my bike, and went to room twelve. What joy! A real room with a clean bed, running water, and even a bathroom just opposite my door!

The next morning I left at five o'clock, hoping to make the one hundred forty kilometers that separated me from Zalishchyky in one day. Vain hope! I had renewed trouble with the front wheel and had to push again for miles until a friendly village blacksmith mended it for me. The road was very picturesque but terribly exhausting — all ups and downs. I even considered abandoning my "assistant." If only I could have hitchhiked, but no trucks came by.

Abruptly on the road in front of me I saw men in uniform. I wanted to retreat hurriedly, but it was too late; they had seen me and a retreat would have appeared most suspicious. I was arrested and taken to their commanding officer, a youngish, fat, brutal man, with a sar-

castic smile. "Here is somebody who must be a spy!" was the report they made to him. Again I had the enraging and humiliating feeling of being alone and helpless against brute force. But suddenly I had a very strange experience: I saw the face of my dear mother who seemed to appear before me offering protection and I felt reassured. The ugly-looking officer was not pleasant, but he was by no means a fool. After examining my passport and other papers, he concluded that if I were really a German spy I would not have been provided with a Nansen passport issued in France. About half an hour later I was free.

In the late afternoon I arrived amid sirens in Chortkiv. I tracked down the local manager of the Maslo-soyuz there and showed him the card of the general manager in L'viv. He received me like an old friend and invited me to spend the night at his home. Next morning I left again at five o'clock. In a little town about fifteen kilometers from Zalishchyky the road was closed. "No one may proceed to Zalishchyky," was the order of the local commanding officer. After a complex trek over fields neighboring the town I managed to find the southern road and so continued to Zalishchyky.

Pedaling away with the last of my reserves I arrived there at ten o'clock in the morning on September 15, and hastened to the same boardinghouse where less than three weeks before I had stayed with my father, an eternity it seemed to me! The landlady did not recognize me at first. She told me that many foreign emissaries had arrived by car in Zalishchyky the day before and were quartered in a kind of boardinghouse for civil servants.

This gave me one important fact: the Romanian embassy was still in town. She had heard they intended to leave that very day. I cleaned my suit as best I could and she kindly sewed up the holes in my trousers made from falling off the bike. Thus, cleanly shaven and more or less presentable, I made haste to contact the Romanians for my transit visa. I received the usual answer: no visa could be issued to me. But this time I knew the high-ranking officials were there, so I went through the by now old familiar moves and was finally seated in front of the counselor.

"I am very sorry, but I cannot issue a visa for you. We have precise instructions from the Ministry in regard to stateless persons." He then continued somewhat hesitatingly, "unless, er... can you produce a document proving you are employed by an embassy or a consulate? Yes, that's an idea. You have a French Nansen passport, why don't you go to the French Consul General, Monsieur Ronflard? I know him quite well. Ask him to issue you such a certificate; it's just a formality."

I shot off to see Monsieur Ronflard and explained the situation. After examining my passport, he looked at me and said in a cool voice, "You are not a French citizen and not a *"protégé français."* This is war, I do not know you, good-bye."

I formed in my mind some vile wishes for him and his ancestors, but this, of course, did not help me, and help I needed urgently. Perhaps I could get a certificate from another embassy. Most were temporarily located in the government building I'd previously visited, so I tore back to discover that all the embassies

were on the point of leaving for Romania, as there was a rumor that the bridge over the Dnister would be destroyed any moment by German bombs. The spacious garden courtyard was overrun with diplomats carrying suitcases and parcels to their cars. Once more I reminded myself, "There's no time to be lost!"

Remembering some Japanese words I had learned (intending to go to Siam, I had studied that language and also some Japanese), I approached a group of Japanese diplomats, easy to recognize by their faces and the little flags on their cars. I saluted them in the formal Japanese way, a deep bow with my arms stretched down by my sides, and said in the best Japanese tradition, "Ohaio gozaimasu." One of them advanced toward me and I made my request. He said he personally could not decide anything, being only the third secretary. I should speak to the second secretary. The second secretary sent me to the first secretary, the first secretary to the counselor, and the counselor to the ambassador. However, the ambassador was not there, and they pretended they did not know where he was. But as luck would have it, at that moment I spied an elderly distinguished looking Japanese gentleman.

Surmising he was the Ambassador, I rushed up to him, repeated my polite bow, and submitted my request. He examined me rather suspiciously and said that such matters were in the competence of the counselor and I should discuss the question with him. I understood then that this would only mean a further loss of time.

So I sprinted over to another, the British commercial attaché I later learned, but the result was the

same. The next in line was the ambassador of Spain, a charming old man, but just as helpful as the Japanese and the Briton. Cars were streaming from the courtyard one after another and my bright hopes were quickly vanishing.

Earlier I had cast a momentary look at a good looking, stern-faced man who was standing in a group and whom the others were addressing as "Excellency." Stern or not stern, I thought in desperation, I had no choice but to try my luck with him. I had been asking, imploring, appealing to the good hearts of people, all to no avail. A change of approach was in order. Advancing to the gentleman, I made my pitch, "Excellency, you will soon be crossing the bridge and entering Romania. I do not know whether you are acquainted with that country, but I am. It is a poor, primitive country with bad roads and ignorant people who speak no foreign languages. You will be lost there. You definitely need someone who knows his way about and who speaks the local language (I knew about fifteen words of Romanian). This someone is me. I offer you my services as chauffeur, interpreter, cook, and valet. Do not let this unique opportunity pass!" It seemed to me that his eyes were smiling but his face remained stern.

"Who can tell me," he asked, "that you are not a highway robber?" It would have been difficult to answer this question, but at that moment a young man approached and they spoke a Slavic language. A glance at the little flag he wore revealed they were Bulgarians. Now, Bulgarians heartily dislike Romanians because of the Dobrudja question. (Dobrudja was a contested area

between Bulgaria and Romania in the Danube region). So it was easy to understand why he enjoyed my denigrating Romania. Knowing he was a Bulgarian gave me a trump card.

"Mr. Zankov, president of the University of Sofia, could confirm to you that I am not a robber. He is a good friend of my father, a Ukrainian and professor at the University in Warsaw."

"But still, you could be one," he said. "I can't help you... come along." Suddenly he started walking showing me the way.

So I followed him, trying not to appear overjoyed. We entered one of the buildings and came to the third floor. Two employees were packing their suitcases hurriedly. He called to one of them, "Stefanov, take your typewriter and write out a certificate for this man saying that he is our interpreter, our chauffeur, our cook, and what not!"

Stefanov gave him a perplexed look, not knowing whether he was serious or joking. "May I?" I interjected quickly, and sitting on a nearby chair, put the portable typewriter on my knees and started to type my own certificate as fast as I could.

Ambassador Traianov signed the paper and gave it to me wishing me good luck. I simply flew to the Romanian Embassy realizing with horror that it was already past one o'clock. The counselor had gone, but a well placed tip to the office boy revealed that he was in his room, third window to the left in the garden. I felt some qualms about disturbing the gentleman's siesta, but had no option. I ran into the garden and banged on the

windowpane. The poor man hurried to the window and did not seem too happy to see me. At this particular moment it came rather belatedly to my mind that my document had been issued by the Bulgarian ambassador, and Romanians and Bulgarians were like "cat and dog." I had therefore to improvise a story on the spur of the moment. After having profusely apologized for disturbing him, I explained that Mr. Ronflard had not been able to issue the required document to me, as the list of employees in the embassy had already been completed and trans-mitted to the representatives of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (on my peregrinations from one embassy to another I had heard that such representatives were present in Zalizhchyky), but that he had very kindly recommended me to Mr. Traianov whom I did not know at all. To please Mr. Ronflard, he had issued the necessary document.

"Show it to me." said the counselor. "Yes, good, but there is something missing here. There should be added, 'and requests the Royal Embassy of Romania to issue a transit visa.' Have this completed and return to see me at three o'clock."

I grabbed the paper and ran; I'm sure I could have beaten any Olympic record! And lucky I was: Mr. Traianov was just taking his seat in the embassy car. "Again my highway robber!" he exclaimed. "What do you want now?" I rapidly explained and even without waiting for his permission I seized the portable typewriter that was (luckily) on the back seat and settling down on the running board of the car I typed in the additional sentence.

"You seem to believe that you really are a member

of our embassy staff," grumbled Stefanov. But I paid no attention to him, finished typing, put the typewriter back in the car, and heartily thanked the ambassador. The good man laughed frankly this time and again wished me the best of luck while we shook hands. A moment later he was gone.

At three o'clock I was at last clutching my visa, but no trains were leaving that afternoon. I spotted some Ukrainians whom I had met before and they were surprised to hear that I was leaving in a hurry. "The Germans will be arriving soon and we will be better off with them than with the Poles," was the general opinion. I had to spend the night in Zalishchyky and left next morning on the 9:40 train. I later learned German bombs had destroyed the station and the bridge that same afternoon, and the very next morning, September 17, Soviet troops marched into Zalishchyky.

The train journey through Romania was quite uneventful, especially compared to the first leg of my trip. From Bucharest then via Timishoara, Subotica, and Zagreb, I arrived in the early morning in Trieste, and then at last in Venice, my ticket's end. I had no Italian money, as a matter of fact, no money at all, apart from zlotys which, as I had feared, were worthless. Consequently, I could not buy a ticket to Rome. Another approach was called for. I knew Venice from my previous trips so decided to go to the C.I.T. (Italian State Travel Office) in St. Mark's Square. Once there I asked to speak to the manager, briefly explained my situation, and in payment for a ticket to Rome offered him a Russian gold coin that I'd been smart enough to keep hidden in my

shoe. The man was very friendly and readily accepted my coin. It didn't cover the full price but he gave me the ticket all the same, telling me that it would be all right if I sent him the balance from Rome at my convenience. His good Italian heart, and I suspect once again the picture of Prince Umberto, helped me out of yet another critical situation.

In the evening of September 19, I reached Rome and hastened to my sister's home. She and my brother-in-law were absolutely flabbergasted to see me. Having had no news of either my father or me, they had been extremely worried. They were terribly relieved to see me and to hear that twelve days ago I had parted from our father, leaving him in good health. However, none of us added that events were racing at such a speed that all kind of things may have happened in the meantime or could happen later.

Yes, I was at last safe in Rome, but the situation was by no means simple and unclouded. First of all, I had to solve the problem of getting my father out of Poland, then find out if my trip to Siam for the Grand Prix of Bangkok, was still on (I rather doubted it but still preferred to hope). Moreover, my Nansen passport would expire November 1, and had to be extended. Finally, the question of immediate survival was becoming acute. I had no money, nor did my sister and brother-in-law, as their monthly remittance from Poland was no longer forthcoming.

I wrote to Crown Prince Umberto to find out

where and when he could give me an audience. As you can well imagine, like every important person, he was fully occupied with the political and military events that were taking place. However, I received a communication from General Gamerra, his chief aide-de-camp, saying that the Crown Prince would be coming to Rome and would receive me then. In the meantime, the German Army was still a few miles from Warsaw without having advanced and no news of my father could be obtained.

I also wrote to my bank in London where I still had a small balance, as well as to Prince Chula and Shura. I received some money from the bank and Prince Chula and Shura also sent me some, so that my immediate needs were covered for a few weeks, but the trip to Bangkok was off.

I was cheered, however, when the French vice consul informed me that the renewal of my passport would not present any difficulty, but could be done only after it had expired. So I just had to be patient.

As I always like to repeat, Italians have very good hearts. Upon my arrival in Rome I met a young student in the street whom I had known at the University. Although the rents in the knees of my trousers had been mended after a fashion, when he looked at me he gasped. He asked what had happened, and when I told him my story he pulled out his wallet, saying, "Just yesterday I received my monthly allowance from my father. Half of it is yours." Thereupon he thrust bank notes into my pocket. Carlo Tricerri is today an important official at the Sacra Romana Rota, the Vatican's ecclesiastical tribunal, and still a very good family friend.

The day after this incident I met another acquaintance, Giacomo Pozzi-Bellini, Costanza Mucchi-Piccolomini's brother-in-law, whom I had met in London. After hearing my adventures, he took me by the arm and without saying a word brought me to his home. There he opened the closet where his suits were hanging and said, "One of these is yours!" I stood, undecided. Misunderstanding my hesitation, he added, "I appreciate that you do not like the idea of wearing a suit that has been worn by someone else, so let's do it this way: when you no longer need my suit, just bring it back and I will wear it after you."

All this was certainly most generous, but I definitely could not live on handouts from acquaintances and friends. Getting a job was mandatory. I started by applying for a scholarship; the Italian government was rather generous in granting them to foreign students. As I had been a regular student at the School of Political Sciences of the University of Rome before going to Warsaw, I was soon awarded one. It wasn't much, five-hundred lire, but it was a start and I subsequently had time to search for work.

In the meantime, the German army had occupied Warsaw. Immediately we wrote to my father and to our friends there hoping for news. After a long wait a postcard came from Metropolitan Dionisy, head of the Orthodox Church in Poland. Our hopes were shattered. Our father had died of pneumonia in the city hospital. This first communication was very brief to avoid delays by German military censorship. Later we learned more from a long letter written by the bookkeeper of the

Ukrainian Institute. He reported that a German shell had started a fire in my father's apartment. In order to save his writings, papers, and books he had carried them down to the cellar and in so doing had caught a cold. As almost all the apartment windows had been shattered, his cold got worse and he developed pneumonia and was taken to a hospital. However, his condition did not improve there and on October 22, 1939, my father left us for a better world. I do not need to describe here the great despair and grief we felt. Our dearly beloved father, who should have lived for many more years, was no longer with us! Mother had reported having heard a radio broadcast in 1929 in which the communists sentenced my father to death. Now we had only the bitter consolation of knowing that in the end he had thwarted them.

On October 29, before receiving this tragic news, I had gone to the French Consulate to have my passport extended. The same vice-consul extended it for four months but refused to extend the reentry permit to France.

"Why not?" I asked him in surprise.

"In wartime we do not need suspicious foreigners in our country."

At least now I did not need to wrestle with choices. The situation was quite clear I could not go to France and the English would not let me in without a French visa. I had to stay in Italy and find work; the scholarship was not enough. My knowledge of Italian was not sufficient for office work and I had neither the desire nor the ability for factory work. I decided to try my luck in the movie world. I suppose recalling my brief

"movie stint" in Paris gave me the idea. With no special knowledge or ability, the only job I could hope to get was that of an extra. And that made it especially difficult to land a job; there were too many "volunteers" with no special abilities. Competition was staggering. I had to learn fast where to get information on films that were going to be made, how to push my way to the producer or director in order to get a one or two day job (a five day job was quite exceptional). One had to be engaged before the filming had even started, because once production began, the offices were transferred to Cinecitta, or "movie city," a big walled-in compound where almost all the studios were concentrated and where one could obtain entrance only by special permit. The gate to this "paradise" was strictly guarded by the most unpleasant beings. Thinking back, I realize that never in all my life, neither before nor later, had I to exercise my diplomatic abilities to such an extent just to land a small contract for one or two days! Certain facts that would have handicapped me in any other country, my foreign look and accent, were, to the contrary, an asset to me here. Once I even received the odd remark, "Oh, you're a foreigner! How nice. I know that I'm dealing with a gentleman!" As I definitely did not look like an Italian, I gradually became aware that my best chances to be hired were in films where foreigners appeared. Little by little I specialized in that kind of part, in the beginning mute, later speaking. So from a mere extra I advanced to an actor.

If my recollections do not let me down, the first speaking part I had was that of a British major who was maltreating Napoleon on St. Helena. I had only to give a

brief order, "A hammer here!" (a hammer to shatter the bust of the "Roi de Rome," Napoleon's son).

Later I was selected over twenty-four other candidates for the part of a British officer in the Italian war film, *Bengasi*. I had to have a moustache and speak Italian with an English accent. An excellent contract for eight days at one-thousand lire per day resulted. How favorably this compared with my five-hundred lire monthly scholarship! Moreover, this contract enabled me to become a member of the Movie Actors' Union. I was no longer an extra any more at a hundred lire a day, but a real actor!

However, membership to the Union nearly cost me emigration to the U.S.A. At the beginning of 1951 the I.R.O., International Relief Organization, informed me that I was being denied a U.S. visa, having been a former member of a Fascist organization. It was only months later when the McCarran Act was amended that I obtained the visa.

The greatest irony was, however, that I never played the part in *Bengasi* for which I had been selected, and moreover, paid. This film contained several battle scenes featuring tanks. Authorization for this had to be given by Marshal Badoglio, Supreme Commander of the Italian Army. To keep the Commander well-disposed, his son-in-law was engaged as the assistant director. Young, he was a rather attractive looking playboy with the impressive title of Marchese Altoviti Avila, but with no experience whatsoever in film-making. It turned out he was a truly versatile playboy, playing not only with the girls, but also with the boys. To favor his boy friend, a

very tall blond Dutchman, he let him play the part for which I had been engaged. After only one day's work the director, Genina, a very pleasant and able man called me and quite frankly explained the situation, saying that because he had to have the tanks, he could not oppose his "irregular" assistant. I would still have a part. I would still receive full pay and even some extra days of work, but I would not be able to play Captain Clary. He was not obligated to give me these explanations, but being a decent man he preferred to be frank and apologize.

It does not often happen that virtue is rewarded and vice punished. But this time, Virtue received two extra days of work, and Vice, the "irregular" Dutchman, got into serious trouble with the Allies when they occupied Rome. He had participated in an "anti-Ally propaganda film." This is just an illustration of how things were, and still are, in the film industry in Italy and elsewhere.

I also worked for nearly two weeks with Roberto Rossellini, who was then well known as a friend of Mussolini's son, Vittorio, and who later became famous for the anti-Fascist film, *Rome, the Open City*, and still later increased his popularity by seducing Ingrid Bergman. But he more or less dropped out of fashion until his death brought his name into the limelight again.

During the war German movie makers came to Italy and I acted in several of their films. I was in one with Albach-Retty, a well-known actor and father of Romy Schneider. During that period I became acquainted with several famous Italian and German actors. Many of them were very likable, brilliant, intelligent, and often

witty and charming.

My movie "career" was not limited to acting. At its beginning, my friend, Pozzi-Bellini, the man who had lent me the suit, asked me to assist him in making an advertising film for razor blades. We went together to Acqui in Piedmont where the factory was located and from there to Cinecitta to arrange for the cutting and sound tracking of the film. I often accompanied him into the "forbidden city" of Cinecitta, the gate of which was so watchfully guarded by a bunch of porters, headed by a real so-and-so called Pappalardo (translated into German "Speckfresser!"). He was ignoble but smart, and knew immediately that I no longer belonged to the anonymous crowd of cheap job seekers, but was somebody "in the production."

I took advantage of Christmas to give him a hefty tip as a "Christmas present." This completed his conviction that I was "somebody" and from then on, I had no difficulty whatsoever in being admitted to Cinecitta whenever I wished, which naturally greatly increased my chances to get parts or some other work.

One of these pursuits, very well paid by the way, was serving as interpreter to the architect of a German film made at Cinecitta. I had no idea of architectural terms, either in German or in Italian, but nevertheless was complimented for my highly efficient interpreting.

Numerous opportunities arose to meet many interesting people in the movie business. One was the very charming Russian-born actress, Assia Noris, one of the big stars on the Italian movie firmament at that time, and her husband, Mario Camerini, a famous director.

Another was Amedeo Nazzari, the leading film actor of the time, a man of humble descent, very tall and good looking, and rather pleasant, but not particularly intelligent. I tutored him in French and English, but it was heavy going. I also knew his competitor, Fosco Giachetti, a much better actor in my opinion, and one who cordially disliked Nazzari. One day when we were shooting a movie, during a recess somebody asked Giachetti, "How can you explain the tremendous popularity of Nazzari?"

"It is very simple," he answered, "in Italy there are two million servant girls who go to the movies every Saturday. That explains everything!" The actor whom I liked best of all was Osvaldo Valenti, a rising star. He was an excellent actor, highly educated, a fantastic conversationalist, possessing a bright intelligence and great charm. Sadly, he became a cocaine addict and this I think contributed to his premature demise in the last weeks of the Italian civil war at the end of World War II.



Borys in the movies

But all this movie glamour failed to impress the beautiful young lady whom I met in June 1941. You will agree this was a supremely important event in my life when I tell you that the lovely young lady became your mother. Brigitte Adolph had been studying at the University for foreigners in Perugia for two years, when her girlfriend came to Rome, got a job at the German Academy, and wrote to say that there was also another job available. Your mother came, took the job and established her headquarters in a very proper boarding house owned by a Swiss lady. From that moment it was unavoidable that we should meet. A matter of fact, three of my good friends, Etienne de Chadarevian whom you know, an Armenian student and an Italian movie actor (Desiderio Nobile was his funny name) were all raving about the meals in this place. All three urged me to go. I finally did. It was a "coup de foudre." Unfortunately, the famous saying, "veni, vidi, vici," did not apply to me. The two first words were okay, but "vici" was not easy at all! My movie jobs were not at all glamorous in her eyes as they were "not serious." When at last we became good friends, it was not because of, but rather in spite of my movie career.

Meanwhile, political and military events were

evolving. On June 10, 1941, Italy declared war on France and England. On June 22, Germany started the war against the Soviet Union and soon afterwards, Italy followed suit.

Discussing circumstances, my sister and brother-in-law and I decided it would be the right moment to initiate anti-communist transmissions on the Italian State Radio. Immediately we drew up a memorandum which I forwarded to the Ministero della Cultura Popolare, the Ministry of Culture and Information, along with my application for the job of radio announcer. We asked Italian friends to give a little push in the right direction and to our agreeable surprise, less than three months later, in September, our proposal to initiate Ukrainian announcements was accepted. I had to pass a test, was approved and soon started broadcasting announcements at six forty-five every evening. To be able to strike at the Russian communists in my transmissions definitely afforded grounds for great satisfaction. Moreover, the salary, though not too generous was acceptable, and from that moment on I did not need my movie work. But as is often the case in life, either you have nothing or you have much. I captured more and better movie contracts than ever and was able to combine both occupations as my transmissions were in the evening after the film work had been completed, and in emergencies my brother-in-law took my place.

I truly loved this radio job, as I hoped that at least some of my countrymen would hear me. I didn't think that the material we were transmitting was monumental, but it was anti-communist and consequently important

and useful.

I received forty or more printed pages of material in Italian, from which I chose five or six pages of news or comments that I considered most important and translated them into Ukrainian, very easy and fast work. However, some of the news and the comments were labeled "obligatory" and their transmission was required.

I worked in my own room at the ministry, but was officially attached to the so-called "Russian Department." The department was headed by a rather well-known journalist, Napolitano. To pick up my pages I had to pass his area and sometimes exchanged words with colleagues, some of whom were very nice, especially Michele Lombardo, whom you know and also Count Sheremetieff, a Russian married to the daughter of Prince Youssoupoff, who liquidated Rasputin in 1916. Count Sheremetieff later became our neighbor in Milano. However, I had never seen "the boss" and did not bother much about him.

But one day I found in my pages an "obligatory" note signed by Napolitano, in which the following was inserted: "Stalin is a villain because he has subverted the ideas of Lenin. The ideas of Lenin were good and if Stalin would only follow them more closely, he too would be a hero." This stupidity could perhaps have appealed to the Russians; but it would certainly seem a paradox, if not downright inflammatory and insulting to Ukrainians. In any case, I did not feel I could transmit such a comment, and although marked "obligatory," I omitted it, knowing full well that the material I transmitted was later reviewed by someone. Frankly, I didn't care.

Two days later I was called to Napolitano's office and, of course, his first question was, "Did you receive my note two days ago?"

"Yes."

"Did you see it was marked 'obligatory'?"

"Yes."

"Did you transmit it?"

"No."

"Why?"

"Because I considered it unfit for Ukrainian listeners."

"You are not here to make decisions, but to transmit whatever is ordered to you!"

"I will definitely not transmit what I consider self-defeating," I said unequivocally.

"You may go, but you will hear from me!" I withdrew. Later at home I received a call from Michele Lombardo, telling me that as soon as I'd left the office, Napolitano had bellowed so that everyone could hear him, "That guy will be thrown out within twenty-four hours!" Something had to be done, and quickly. A good friend of my sister and brother-in-law, Enrico Insabato, grandfather of our friend, Ivana Fedeli, and former member of the Italian Parliament, knew the under secretary of state at the ministry and the entire incident was reported to him the next morning. Consequently, when Napolitano came to see his friend, Mr. Bernabei, Chief of the Cabinet of the Ministry (the highest civil servant in the ministry) to ask him to fire me, the answer was, "Sorry, the under secretary of state wishes him to remain at in his post."

Napolitano finally succeeded in firing me, but not until after July 25, 1943, when King Victor Emmanuel III had Mussolini arrested and appointed Pietro Badoglio as Prime Minister. New ministers were appointed but the cabinet chief, a civil servant, stayed on and was glad to be able to take his revenge. However, this was not the last of my dealings with him, as you will see later.

Regardless of those events, today I still have the satisfaction of knowing that the Ukrainian transmissions initiated by me were later continued and maintained for more than thirty-five years. I was not particularly happy about losing this job, less for the money, my work in the movies was progressing quite well, but because, illusion or not, I thought I was doing something for Ukraine.

Sometime later I met Herr von Boriess, a member of the German Embassy in charge of radio transmissions, and we became quite friendly. Learning I had lost my job, he offered me one monitoring some Italian radio transmissions he was interested in. I accepted. We discussed all kinds of anti-Soviet propaganda issues. He showed me texts of radio transmissions in Ukrainian coming from Germany and asked my opinion of them. One evening he drew forth the text of an appalling transmission. It was a translation from German, written in a primitive, and I would say childish way, and contained inappropriate words. I told him frankly my opinion then forgot all about it. Imagine my surprise when nearly ten years later in New York, Hala Timoshenko, a Ukrainian friend I had met in Prague in 1924, told me one day when we were talking about radio transmissions, "You created a lot of trouble for me when you criticized my

translation to the man from the German Embassy in Rome." I was dumbstruck. Once more I realized how small the world is!

On the morning of September 8, 1943, I accompanied your mother to the station, as she was leaving for Germany together with the other members of the German Academy. That evening I was as usual sitting in the little office listening to the Italian transmissions. Suddenly a special announcement interrupted: Italian Supreme Commander Marshal Badoglio announced that Italy had concluded an armistice with the Allies. Immediately from the street I heard shouting, hurrahs, singing, a real explosion of joy. I could not call von Boriess because there was no phone where I was, so I continued my work. When I did go out, I saw the streets crowded with people in an exuberant mood. "*The war is over! The war is over!*" I finally found a public telephone and repeatedly tried to contact von Boriess. No answer. So I went home and the next morning tried to call him again, first at his home and then in the office. No answer anywhere. I hurried to the German Embassy and found it empty; in the night they had all left Rome.

But then another "coup" occurred. On September 12, a German Air Force officer, Captain Skorzeny, flew to Campo Imperatore on the top of a mountain in the Abruzzi where Mussolini was being kept prisoner, and released him. The Fascist government, helped by the Germans, who had meanwhile occupied Rome and

reorganized their positions, was reestablished all over Italy except in those parts occupied by the Allies. Salo, on Lake Garda, was chosen as the temporary seat of the government.

After landing in Sicily the Allied armies were gradually marching north; all kinds of rumors were flying, including one saying Soviet officials were apparently following the Allies. I did not particularly like this piece of information and reasoned it was high time to exit Rome. I had heard the Ministry of Culture and Information was preparing to evacuate Rome for the north. I went to see a very nice young man who had been appointed private secretary to the Minister, and with whom I was on friendly terms. He confirmed that the information was correct and told me they were going to Venice on a special train that was to leave fairly soon. Hearing this, I immediately made up my mind. On your mother's departure from Rome, we had agreed that if I had to leave Rome and if she could come back to Italy, we would both try to head for Venice. Here was the opportunity! I asked my friend whether I could leave Rome on the Ministry train. "No problem," he said, "especially as you are a former employee of the Ministry." (I had told him the whole story of my radio work). I settled all my affairs, packed my belongings, and a few days later, on a fine October day, I was sitting in the train rolling toward Venice. I did not know what I would do there, but hoped for the best and fervently hoped that somehow I might hear from my fiancée. When and how? That I did not know.

After a rather lengthy though pleasant journey

the train finally got us to Venice. I was preparing to check my baggage and search for an inexpensive hotel, when I saw we were being met by those Ministry employees who had arrived earlier. When they started handing out coupons to the train passengers for hotels and meals, I was utterly surprised and delighted that I too got my share of coupons. This gift naturally contributed enormously to the peace of my mind.

Being a foreigner, I had to register with the local police. I always disliked delaying this formality so the very next day I went to the questura, police headquarters. Because there were very few foreigners in Venice during the war, the secretary of the chief himself took care of me. He was a very amiable young man and we had a pleasant chat together. Then I went sightseeing. I had known Venice since 1919 and loved it. The next day I continued visiting places of interest, and after lunch feeling a bit tired, I went to my room for a pleasant siesta.

A maid suddenly awakened me saying I had a phone call. My first thought was it must be a mistake, no one knew I was staying at this hotel. Imagine my great surprise and joy when I heard the voice of your mother! True to our agreement to try to meet in Venice, she had stopped over on her way to Trieste where she had been assigned by the German Academy. She had gone directly to the questura to find out if I were in Venice and in talking to the young secretary, she mentioned she was looking for her fiancé.

"Tall and fair, I believe," said the young man.

"How do you know?"

"I talked to him yesterday," was his answer. Here's

another example of how "fate" or "predestination" works!

Now knowing your mother would be near Venice, I could actually begin making plans for the next few months. I say "months" because at that time when political and military situations changed from day to day, it was impossible to plan for a longer period. Planning for mere months was in itself an ambitious proposal.

In the restaurant to which my coupons had assigned me, I met several people I had known in Rome. Luckily for me, they were in charge of disbursing the scholarships of the Ministry of Foreign affairs. Hence, I proceeded to Padua, less than forty-five kilometers from Venice, and registered for the third year of law school. Having earned a degree in political science, two years of additional study would suffice to obtain a law degree in Italy. Then I applied for a scholarship which was readily granted. Thus, I had a modest financial base and could afford to make further plans at my leisure.

Because I had several friends and contacts at the Ministry of Culture and Information and the minister himself resided in Salo, I decided to go there to attempt to be reinstated in my former job making radio transmissions. Bypassing the cabinet chief, the same man who had fired me in July, I managed to secure an audience with the minister himself, thanks to the help of my friends. I pleaded my case and was reinstated on the spot. However, as no radio transmissions were being made from Venice, I requested a post in the theater and movie department. The director here was a very affable fellow and we hit it off well; soon afterward I became secretary to the Italian film censorship committee. I must

admit that I laughed to myself when, as a foreigner, I landed this promotion.

The Allied troops were bogged down near Monte Cassino and the Italian film industry concentrated in Rome, Italy's Hollywood, continued to produce new films feverishly. As war was raging, all the films needed to be approved by the Censorship Office before release. Normally this was just a formality, as the film producers were wise enough not to touch any subject that could get them into trouble. Nevertheless, each film had to be presented to the committee and it was my duty to determine when the commission met, to advise members, to prepare the minutes of the meeting and to give the "green light" to the producer involved. When the producers arrived they called at the office of the director, he then called me and asked me to make the necessary arrangements.

One of the first producers to come was a certain "Commendatore" Franchini. Now I must make something clear here. Most Europeans (especially Italians, Austrians and Germans) who were perhaps nonentities, but did not wish to be treated as such, had to conjure up some kind of grade or title: Doctor, Professor, Lawyer, etc. In Italy, where so many decorations flourish, these men liked to be addressed according to the grade of their decoration, starting with cavaliere (lowest degree), commendatore (higher), grand ufficiale (still higher), etc. Even before the official introductions were over, I recognized this particular "commendatore." When I was still looking for work as an extra in the movies, I had been to see him. He had been so rude to me, that I was forced to

tell him to "go to Hell!" He thereupon jumped up apparently wanting to fight, but realizing I was taller and broader, he meekly sat down again.

While pumping his hand I asked him in the friendliest manner, "Didn't we meet in Rome, Commendatore?" He turned a liverish color and muttered that he could not recall having had the pleasure. I assured him that even if I had not known him previously I would nevertheless do my best to satisfy him and offered to arrange the meeting in two weeks. His face became livid and he began elaborating how urgent the matter was for himself and his firm and humbly begged me to move up the date. I parried that the members of the Commission were extremely busy and that he was not the only one to request such a meeting, but in the end magnanimously agreed to call a meeting for the end of the week. Of course, he was obliged to thank me profusely. On his return to Rome he reportedly told everyone there was a "so-and-so" at the Censorship Office and his advice was "Beware!"

A couple of weeks later another producer came from Rome, was introduced to me, and started timidly explaining all the compelling reasons why he needed our speedy approval and beseeched me not to let him wait longer than three or four days. I knew this man too: he was a kind soul who had once been helpful to me. So I looked at him sternly and said, "Would three o'clock this afternoon be all right?" His reaction is easy to picture.

I found my job at the Ministry most agreeable. I had some decent colleagues, my boss was very pleasant, and my knowledge of foreign languages was very much

appreciated. Nonetheless, I felt that in Salo's "higher circles" I was not exactly a *persona grata*. It had been a bitter pill for the chief of Cabinet of the Ministry who had fired me once from the Ministry to see me reinstated, and every time I met his assistant I could not fail to notice the way he looked at me. I was certain that he and his chief would take the first opportunity to get rid of me so decided to prepare my own way out.

My Georgian friend, who was also an announcer in Rome, turned up in Venice too. He was doing some black-marketing. Communication with Rome was getting more and more difficult. Allied bombings had interrupted the railway connections and cars and trucks could travel only during the night since during the daytime bombings and machine gunning were continuous. Consequently, there was a lack of daily necessities in Rome. Anyone able to furnish them could realize a handsome profit; this was only natural. One encountered great difficulties hitchhiking because only military trucks were on the road and to travel, one literally risked his life. The trip of about six hundred kilometers from Venice or Milan to Rome took two to three days. This had a taste of adventure and I was tempted to try it out for myself, but a small incident gave me a push in the right direction.

The chief of the Cabinet had to go to Rome and we heard that on the way back to Venice he had been intercepted and captured somewhere in the mountains by Italian partisans. Being a rather important person, it had looked bad for him; he could easily have been killed or at the very least kept prisoner. But miraculously he

emerged from his adventure alive and unharmed. Of course, it all seemed rather suspicious. I seldom hesitated to speak my mind, even when it caused me inconvenience, so I mentioned in conversation with some colleagues that if he had been released unharmed, it could only mean that he either had treacherous connections with the partisans right from the start or he must have promised to collaborate in the future. People being what they are, this conversation was immediately reported to the assistant of my "friend" who called me in the next morning and started an "interrogation."

"Did you have a conversation with several persons at such and such time? Did you make insulting remarks about the chief of the Cabinet?"

"No, I did not make any insulting remarks, but just said what I thought!"

"How could you, an employee of the Ministry, say such a thing about the chief of the Cabinet?"

"I said it and I will repeat it. Please do not consider me a member of the staff any more. As of this moment, I am no longer with the Ministry."

So out I went and began to make arrangements for my trip to Rome.

From my Georgian friend I had heard that playing cards were badly needed in Rome. Curfew did not allow the population on the streets after dark, so card games became one of the very few amusements available. Playing cards were available in Venice from a large card factory in Trieste so I spent what I could afford of my "capital" and armed with twelve dozen decks of merchandise, off I went to Rome.

However, before I left, I procured a document from my friendly director indicating that I was going to Rome on movie business for the Ministry. The liaison of the German Military Command authenticated it. This enabled me to hitchhike on German military trucks and in a record fifty hours I was in Rome. I had scarcely arrived when I met my old friend, Etienne, in the Via Veneto. Surprised to see me in Rome, he asked what I was doing.

"I'm here on business," I said proudly.

"Business?"

"Playing cards."

"I will buy them all," said my friend.

At this moment another friend came up and wanted to have some cards, too, but Etienne insisted on buying the whole lot. I was rather sorry to have made such a slim profit, only one hundred per cent, through this quick sale, but agreed is agreed. In the future I would be a better businessman. But then a strange thing happened. A truck loaded with playing cards had arrived in Rome just two days before and all the shops were well supplied with cards. When Etienne tried to sell his the next day there was no demand. By the way, visiting Rome again after the war, I saw he still had most of the packs on his shelves. How I could possibly have continued my business activities had I not sold them then, I really do not know.

The next day, having concluded my business, I started back north. When I returned from this first trip to Rome, I made an inventory of the good and bad incidents I had experienced. If I wished to continue this risky trade I would have to organize it better: to find an item

not too bulky, one that would appeal to a very large clientele, so that the appearance of another such big consignment would not entirely upset the market. Merchandise which could be sold wholesale was especially important. Information gathered in Rome enabled me to pinpoint such an article: razor blades. But I could not find any sources in Venice. I went to Milan, the industrial and commercial capital of Italy, and was successful in finding good sources for the best pre-war American and German blades that some sly dealers had hoarded.

Consequently, my next three trips to Rome started from Milan. Only a small part of the distance could be covered by train; the remainder had to be done by hitchhiking. Here again, my knowledge of German, along with my "official papers" helped greatly. One had to stand for endless hours at the roadside before being picked up by a good-hearted truck driver. Moreover, travel was possible only by night: lowflying pilots loved to exercise their skills by machine gunning cars and trucks along the road. Fortunately, it happened only once that the truck I was in was machine-gunned; the gunner however, was apparently not much of an expert and missed us by at least ten or fifteen meters.

But my Georgian friend, Simonico Sekhniashvili, who had initiated me into the arcanae of black-marketing was less lucky. We had studied together at the School of Political Sciences in Rome. After his studies he went to Verona, met a nice girl, the daughter of a judge, fell in love with her, proposed and was accepted. But before marrying he wanted to achieve financial independence.

When I last saw him he told me he had wanted to put aside at least half a million lire, at that time quite some wealth. He had already collected 450,000 and was preparing to leave on his last trip. I was to follow him soon thereafter and we agreed that, upon arriving in Rome, we would each leave his Rome address at the General Delivery. But in Rome there was no letter from him. I learned much later from a mutual friend that the truck in which Simonico was traveling had engine trouble on the open road about fifteen kilometers out of the city. It could not be repaired quickly enough. Daybreak came and the ominous low-flying planes appeared, machine-gunning the truck. Poor Simonico received six bullets in his body and died instantly.

On that particular trip, still about two hundred kilometers from Rome, I was picked up by a small truck manned by soldiers returning to Monte Cassino where the Germans were holding the line against the Allies. Commanding the returnees was a staff sergeant, a tall and good looking man in his mid-twenties. He was returning from a brief holiday, his wife had just presented him a daughter. I expected him to be rather sad at having just left his young family, but no! He was full of joy to be returning to his men. "We have Poles against us there; do not believe my countrymen when they criticize them. They are wonderful soldiers, it's a joy to fight them!" In the Middle Ages this man would have made the perfect "condottiere" of professional soldiers. He did not know what fear was, as I witnessed some hours later. Besides, he was a utterly charming, courteous man with perfect manners.

We had been coasting down a hill when suddenly we heard explosions behind a sharp bend. We stopped. "Let's see what's happening," said the young sergeant jumping onto the road and beckoning me to follow. A corporal joined us. Around the bend a German military truck loaded with shells was on fire; shells were exploding at intervals. We distanced ourselves about ten meters away to observe. (The sergeant had chosen the spot, not I)!

Every time a shell exploded, I had the impression my neck was growing shorter and my head was sinking between my shoulders. I looked around. The corporal had disappeared. Although any one of the shells could have killed or maimed us, the young sergeant, completely unconcerned, discussed the best way to bypass this flaming wreck. Only by convincing him that in passing close to the burning truck he would be responsible for the possible, or rather probable, damage to or destruction of his truck, could I persuade him to find a detour. Some hours later, when darkness fell, the road brought us to a dense forest. "Oh, yes," he said, "I was told this is the place where there are lots of partisans. We had better take precautions!" He handed me a gun (I was ashamed to admit I didn't know how to handle it) and he himself grabbed a submachine gun. Fortunately nothing happened, otherwise I'm afraid I would not have been at all useful.

My next expedition to Rome was uneventful, and I preferred it so. But the following one was to be my last. On the way down, everything went beautifully. But in Rome I noted a certain nervousness and learned the

Allies were getting quite near. I decided to take hurried leave. This was on July 3. On July 4, 1944, the Allied Army entered Rome. My return journey was ghastly. The traffic on the road was as dense as it is at the five o'clock rush hour in New York City, moving extremely slowly without lights or with dimmed, dark blue lamps. Any car or truck that broke down was mercilessly pushed off the road. I spent eighteen hours of daylight lying in a ditch under a tree, watching Allied planes crisscrossing the skies, dropping bombs or machine gunning in all directions. It took me more than three days to reach Venice. My business affairs in Rome were definitely over. But the excellent profit margins I had made gave me enough capital to continue doing business in northern Italy. Although traveling would be much easier, the profit margins would be much lower.

At the beginning of July your mother's office was transferred from Trieste to Venice. We were very happy to be together, especially as the situation in Trieste was no longer safe. The whole region was overrun with partisans. In August your mother went on holiday home to Beuthen, returning to Venice in September when the order came for a new transfer to Meran.

In the meantime the Allied armies were constantly advancing northward. It was apparent, at least to those who used their brains, that the war was nearing an end. At that time my sister and brother-in-law were in Padua where the situation was not at all pleasant. When the German army retreated, there would be danger of bombing and shelling, and one could never tell what would happen should the city become a no-

man's-land. There was no doubt in our minds that at any moment they would have to leave Padua, but how in the emergency could they take their worldly possessions with them, modest though they were? I then suggested that I could bring some of the heavier suitcases north, near Meran to the family home of our Roman landlady with whom we were on the best of terms, and where the luggage would be perfectly safe. So one day I arrived in Padua; we managed some packing and I left with four oversize suitcases plus one of my own. To make things much easier, at that particular moment the rail connection was reestablished between Padua and Verona where I had to change trains for Meran. Who knew for how long? A day per week! I arrived in Verona late at night, after the most comfortable trip I had known in months and was told that the connection to Meran had been reestablished the day before so the train should be leaving within a few hours. I could scarcely believe my ears! The trip was to be incredibly easy — just like changing trains in peace time! I'd been prepared to carry all five suitcases from the station to the northern suburb of Verona and try to hitchhike — not an easy task with five ungainly suitcases. The train was standing a couple of hundred yards outside the station so a kindly railroad man helped me carry the luggage.

While we were walking along the rails, a German sailor on leave joined me. We chose a suitable car where the windows had not been broken, hauled my five suitcases into the compartment, placed them neatly on the rack, took off our shoes, and prepared to go to sleep without further ado. I was just falling off to sleep when

the wail of a siren pierced the idyllic silence of the night. "Alarm!" the sailor cried, starting to run while still putting on his second shoe. It was easy enough for him, he had just a little bag. While sleepily putting on my own shoes, I was trying to figure out what to do with myself and my five bags. Then I saw flares coming down, the prelude to a bomb attack. I realized that nobody would have the courage to steal my suitcases during the bombing, so I grabbed the bag with the most precious of my sister's belongings and ran. There were some stout and safe shelters under the old fortifications of Verona, but they were about five hundred meters away. When the first bomb dropped I stopped thinking about my dilemma and just ran into an insubstantial small shelter near the station. It was crowded with German soldiers, several Italian soldiers, some civilians, and me. Nearby, bombs were falling and exploding. The shelter turned into a hell. Men shouted and cursed, women prayed aloud and wept. It was most unpleasant and certainly demoralizing. At first the German soldiers seemed amused by this pandemonium, but then a sergeant lost his patience. "Ruhe!" (Quiet)! he shouted in such a harsh commanding voice that even the most hysterical women fell silent instantly, more frightened by him than the bombs. A wonderful calm reigned in the refuge for the next fifteen minutes until the bombing ceased. Fortunately no bombs fell on us, otherwise our primitive shelter and its occupants would have been blown to pieces.

I was hoping in the depths of my heart that no bomb had fallen on the railroad car holding my suitcases. Praise be, none had. Rushing back I found my luggage

intact. An hour later the train left and with no further adventures, brought my special cargo and me safely to our destination. Later my sister and brother-in-law left Padua in great haste with just one suitcase, so naturally they were happy to find the other four in Meran. Everything they had left behind with "good reliable people" in Padua was stolen I found out later. They were also joyful to find your mother in Meran, who, relatively speaking, was an "old-timer" and mothered them.

Once your mother had moved to Meran, there was no reason for me to remain in Venice. Meran is a bit nearer to Milan than to Venice, and Milan offered incomparably better business opportunities. Consequently, in September 1944, I settled in Milan, not a simple feat to accomplish. First of all I had to be careful not to spend too much money in order not to diminish my small business capital. Second, being a foreigner and stateless in a country at war, it was essential for me to avoid arousing any suspicion. Finally, it was not so easy to find shelter in Milan, a city almost destroyed by British bombers. I recall several nights in a hotel room with a gaping hole in the ceiling. Later I was lucky to secure a room in a small modern, but inexpensive hotel right in the center of town. In the beginning I did not realize I had rather peculiar neighbors. Only when I noticed that all my new Milanese acquaintances chuckled upon hearing my address, did I realize something was not "kosher." In point of fact, only two buildings away from my hotel was the most famous bordello in Milan.

I needed little time to overcome initial difficulties and feel at home in Milan, although I retained nostalgic

memories of Venice. I traveled all over northeastern Italy with my razor blades and was quite successful in that arena. Only one thing bothered me: Meran was still too far away, over three hundred kilometers from Milan, and the north-south railroad lines were still being bombarded. Hitchhiking was about the only way to get from point to point. A one way trip to Meran easily took two days. Once I had to wait a full twenty-four hours on a street corner in Bolzano for the opportunity to continue my journey. When winter set in, traveling became even more obnoxious. I still wonder how I did not catch pneumonia during my exposure in open trucks on cold winter nights.

The main reason for these unwelcome delays was my lack of proper identity papers. The "ministerial" document which I'd had the nerve to use, although my "career" had ended months ago, was all right for the Italians, but did not sink all that deep with the drivers of German military trucks in which I had constantly to ride going to Meran.

One day during a stopover in Verona I encountered in the street a young man whom I had met in Rome at the Swiss boarding house where your mother had been staying. He was mobilized, as all Germans were, and was wearing the uniform of the Organization Todt, an enormous paramilitary organization created for building and repairing roads, railways, bridges, etc. We started to talk. I mentioned my trips to Meran and immediately he asked, "What kind of documents do you possess?" I explained my position and he reacted promptly, "Come with me, we'll settle this matter at once." When I

left his office I had in my pocket a certificate stating that I was going to Meran for consultation with "O.T." management. The expiration date was marked 24.I.45. On January 24, I modified the expiration date to read 24.II.45; on February 24, I added one more bar, somewhat slanted: 24.III.45; and on March 24th, I simply joined the ends of the last two bars, making 24.IV.45. Thus, this document enabled me to travel undisturbed to Meran almost until the arrival of the Allies.

Once in Meran, where your mother was working, I felt I was in paradise. To tell the truth, I nearly forgot the war. In addition to being with your mother, no alarms awakened me during the night and during the days we enjoyed rambling excursions in the mountains surrounding Meran. The hotel rooms were heated and the restaurants, although offering very humble food, were very cosy.

So, traveling partly for business, partly for pleasure, I stayed in Milan as little as possible. Central heating had been turned off and using my electric mini-heater exhausted my monthly ration of electric energy in about four days. Upon temporarily settling in Milan, I transferred from Padua University to the University of Milan and whenever possible, in reality rather seldom, attended courses in the Law School. While traveling by train or bus I always tried to study and despite all the setbacks, I succeeded in passing the various examinations.

During my stay in Milan I met an interesting man, a certain Dr. Giarusso. Although Sicilian, he had for many years lived in the north. He was extremely bright,

very pleasant, hospitable, and had plenty of money. I soon learned the source of his money was black-marketing. We became friendly and one day he made me a business proposal. In Milan, as everywhere in Italy and most of Europe during the war, the most important food-stuffs, such as flour, sugar, fat, etc., were rationed. My new friend had contracted with the city officials of Milan to bring the town supplies from a sugar factory just north of the Po River. His fee was very high, but the operation was risky, the sugar factory being near the front line. He spoke no German and was afraid he might not be able to deal appropriately with the German military officials should his truck be held up for inspection or otherwise be stopped unexpectedly. This was war time and all sorts of surprises were possible. So he asked me if I'd be willing to join him and offered 50,000 lire, a fortune at that time. I gratefully accepted, as I needed the hard cash and the element of risk was most enticing.

A few days later we embarked. A professional truck driver was in charge of an old truck and four of us were in the accompanying car: Dr. Giarusso, his brother-in-law, another chap named Vic, and I. As if matters were not already complicated enough, the truck broke down before we had gone ninety-six kilometers and we spent more than twenty-four hours near Brescia having it repaired. When the repairs were completed, we resumed our journey. In a small place near Desenzano we stopped for food and parked the car and the truck in front of the restaurant. We had just finished our meal and were enjoying coffee at the counter near the window. Suddenly awestruck, we saw a monstrous German military vehicle

carrying a huge crane lurching toward us at full speed. To avoid colliding with our truck, it was obliged to mount the sidewalk on the opposite side of the road. We heard a frightful bang and witnessed the second-floor balcony of the house opposite us vanish, literally shaven off by the crane. Dr. Giarusso did not hesitate a second. "They'll hold us responsible! Let's get out of here!" He threw some money on the counter and ran out of the restaurant followed by the rest of us. In less than thirty seconds we had disappeared, before even the frightened house owners could rush from their damaged house.

We were on our way, hugging the side roads so as not to attract the Allied reconnaissance planes. At last darkness fell. On one hand we were glad, it was much safer now. On the other hand, we were forced to drive more slowly. The roads were rough and not marked so we lost our way more than once. After eternity morning came, but the thick fog, so frequent near the Po River, did not lift. We couldn't estimate our exact position, but we heard only too clearly the Allied military planes flying over us. (To save gasoline, German planes did not appear often at that hour). We didn't know which was preferable: to be enveloped in the fog and not to be able to trace our way or, if the fog lifted, to be exposed to machine gunning from the air. Our only real choice was to advance slowly, hoping for the best. All of a sudden the fog lifted and to our joy we sighted a village just a mile or so in front of us. We sped forward and luckily arrived at a farm house with a large adjoining barn where we could hide the truck. A few minutes later yet another plane passed over us, but we had reached safety. We were

hungry, thirsty, and weary and the good peasants prepared us a gargantuan meal: an enormous omelette with big chunks of greasy salami, tasty country bread, and an excellent zabaglione. Grateful, we went to sleep in the hay, though not all of us; Giarusso's assistant, Vic, had devoured at least ten eggs, in spite of a weak liver, and was frightfully sick, of no use to us during the rest of the trip.

When night fell, we drove the truck to the sugar refinery and stashed it in a shed. The next day it was loaded to the top with bags of sugar and under darkness we retraced our way back to Milan. There was no fog and this time we knew the roads, so to save gasoline we attached our car by a long strong rope to the truck which then pulled us along. We suffered only one moment of suspense when two German soldiers driving by in a car stopped us. We had the feeling they were not attending to legitimate business so the first thing I did was to ask them in a very firm voice to show me their credentials. When they heard fluent German and saw that I was by no means intimidated, they fled into the night. I was very proud to have earned that fee.

Weeks passed and on April 9, the Allies launched their big attack. Two weeks later they crossed the Po and on April 29, entered Milan. On May 2, the German Commander-in-Chief of the Italian front signed the surrender. While the Allied forces had been advancing, partisans emerged from their hideouts, fighting Germans and the few remaining Fascist formations and also killing their political, and sometimes their personal enemies, too.

My landlady in Milan urged me not to leave the

house, because, being fair-haired I might be mistaken for a German in hiding and my life would not be worth much. For two or three days I followed her good advice, but was miserable staying in my room as if imprisoned. So I burned a cork, colored my eyebrows dark, and ventured out. Having no close friends in Milan, I decided to visit Giarusso, the cheerful black-marketeer. It was rather a long way to walk, as buses and streetcars were not running, but going carefully and avoiding as far as possible people with red arm bands and sub-machine guns, I did reach the square where he and his family lived. Just before entering the house I saw two or three armed individuals coming out the door. Hoping they hadn't come to snag him for his black transactions, I stealthily reached the entrance and quickly noted the names of several people living there, so I would be able to mention one should any of these partisans halt me for questioning. I had just reached the fourth floor where my partner lived when the door flew open and three individuals with red arm bands and guns rushed out. To my utter surprise, one of them was Mr. Giarusso's brother-in-law! He greeted me boisterously and invited me in. My black-marketeer hurried forward to meet me and said, winking at me, "May I introduce you to the commander of the Monforte sector of the National Liberation Council of Northern Italy?" I was dumb-founded and had to discipline myself not to burst out laughing. This sly fox had prepared himself in time for the changing situation.

We chatted and toasted a drink, then Mr. Giarusso exclaimed, "Are you crazy! Being fair-haired and wan-

dering around like that? I cannot let you go home alone. Who knows what might happen to you. I'll accompany you back personally." We went out and an open car had meanwhile arrived. The commander sat next to the driver, Mr. Giarusso and I sat in the back, and two individuals with red bands and submachine guns crouched on the running boards on both sides of the car. Within ten minutes we had reached our destination. People were milling around in the street, exchanging comments and news; all were excited by the recent events. My baker, the milk and egg shop owners, the butcher, the concierge and his wife — all were there. Our arrival produced a genuine sensation. All of them gaped when they saw one of the partisans opening the door of the car and I stepped down in a superior and dignified manner. I'll never know if any of them had any suspicions, but even if they had, all suspicion must have been allayed or wiped out by what they saw. A unanimous cry arose, "Our doctor is with us! Long live our doctor!" I had to struggle to avoid being shouldered in triumph by the crowd and was smiling and waving right and left. In any case, after that incident I no longer hesitated to go out; I knew many good people who would vouch for me. A morsel of irony remained in my heart, however. Only twice in my life was I acclaimed and applauded by the crowds and both times on false pretenses, this time as a partisan and the other time in Paris in the Empire Theater when the crowd mistook me for a magician.

Two days later a truck arrived from Meran, carrying apples for the populace of Milan and even more important, a letter from your mother. The truck driver

offered to take me along on his return trip to Meran. I accepted the kind invitation with joy and no misgivings. My old "ministerial" travel papers would have been compromising, but now I had identification given to me by Mr. Giarusso and signed by his brother-in-law. In big print there stood: "Comitato Liberazione Alta Italia," Liberation Committee of Northern Italy. Below that was illegibly rubber-stamped "Monforte Sector" and then "Identity Card No. 11." Whoever inspected this paper could only conclude it had been issued by the central office of the highest authority in northern Italy, and that having Card No. 11, I must be a very important person. At least ten times on this trip our papers were checked and rechecked and every time I was respectfully saluted.



Brigitte



Gertrude Marie Magdalena
Née Lenke
and Carl Christian Max Adolph

Now that the war was over, the time had come to build a normal life which had been out of the question during the fighting. Amid the immediate post-war instability, there was one firm and stable factor: your mother and I would share the future together. Planning and arranging this was easier said than done.

Your maternal grandfather was by profession a mining engineer and until 1914, the manager of a coal mine in Upper Silesia, near Katowice. He then became a partner in a very successful mine excavation and construction business. Later he and a good friend were asked by mutual friends to refinance their business, the I.G.A., in central and western Germany. Until your grandfather's participation, the business had been in financial difficulties. This venture too was extremely successful, but the war disrupted everything and by its end, the situation was disastrous. With only two hurriedly packed suitcases, your grandparents fled from their home Beuthen only three days before the Soviet troops marched in. It was sheer luck that one of their good friends worked in the Beuthen city hall at the time. He prevailed upon them to leave, even threatening to help them forcibly should they refuse. "Why should we, old as we are, leave our home and flee into the unknown?" they protested. However, they finally fled,

leaving almost everything. Your mother's only sister, your Aunt Inge, and her children had also left a bit earlier, retreating to Coburg where Inge's brother-in-law and his family lived. Good friends of your grandparents, a couple who had remained behind, were forced into a concentration camp in Poland where they died a few months later.

Almost everything your grandfather had built up during his lifetime was gone. His houses in Beuthen, Breslau, and Liegnitz had been confiscated by the Russians and Poles; his other holdings in West Germany had been half destroyed by Allied bombings. The money transferred from Beuthen to the West never arrived. There they were, Opa and Omi, Aunt Inge with her three little ones, suddenly totally destitute. Poor Opa was heart-broken. All his life he had worked diligently for his family, had built up an important business and now everything had vanished, destroyed. And to make matters worse, Inge's husband, Hans, was not with them. They did not hear from him for weeks, as he was in Poland with the Corps of Engineers. When everything collapsed, he did manage to leave with his co-workers and after an adventurous and lengthy journey through Slovakia and Austria, finally rejoined the family. Their situation was so miserable that, poor as we were, we were still much better off. Your dear mother was sending them essentials, including oil poured in empty cans and welded shut by the local blacksmith. Later Hans went to Cologne, site of the sieged I.G.A., and helped put it into operation again.

At the same time there were also some changes in your would-be parents' lives too. Your mother had worked at the Ger-man Academy in Meran, but when the war ended, the financing of the Academy ended too. She was clever and fortunate enough to stay on as the companion of an Austrian lady who lived at Malcesine on Lake Garda and I was engaged in minor business with the small capital I had managed to accumulate. For several months things went smoothly, but then life started normalizing. Old firms opened up again giving credit to their old custom-ers and goods could be sent by mail or by rail without danger. Subsequently, neither my clients nor my suppli-ers needed me any longer. I had to switch and switch fast.

Instead of being independent, I became a sales representative. A number of potential clients already knew me which helped immensely, especially at first when I secured a job with a small firm selling razors, blades, and related leather ware, such as boxes for razors, soap and brush kits, manicure sets. The samples were quite nice and I was doing well — perhaps too well for the owner who turned out to be not only a hard man (this I knew), but also a dishonest one. After an unpleasant "discussion," I left him, but had to go to court to obtain the commission due me.

This upset the most important of all my plans. Events seemed to interfere constantly, forcing your mother and me to postpone our marriage. I had written to your grandfather asking him for the hand of his daughter and he had written me a charming letter

accepting my request but expressing his sorrow at the fact she had no dowry. I was acutely aware of circumstances and the lack of dowry did not disappoint me in the least. Being virtually a pauper myself, my ego would have been damaged had my future wife been wealthy. But in order to get married, I did need some foundation and with my commissions blocked we had to postpone the wedding once again. In the meantime all the tragedy your grandfather had endured finally broke his health and his will to live; he died on November 23, 1946, before our marriage celebration.

A friend whom I had met in Venice at the Ministry introduced me to a very able craftsman who was making small leather articles and selling them to shops. I immediately realized this presented an ideal opportunity to make money and simultaneously to take sweet revenge on my former boss, the cheat. So I took the best samples in my old collection, let the craftsman copy them, established prices slightly lower than those of my old firm (reserving for myself a much higher commission than I had earned before), and went to sell the new merchandise to the clientele I had already on my books. The craftsman was extremely happy, because without a salesman his business had been suffering. In me he had someone who was able to give him not only the right samples, but also the right prices and steady clients.

Business was marching along smoothly and our wedding date was set for early February 1947, as I wanted to be married before I was forty-three. We could

not get married in Milan, because I had no birth certificate. The situation in Rome was different, no doubt because of the powerful influence of the Catholic Church whose spiritual head was right there. A certificate either of birth or of baptism was accepted by the authorities. A very kind priest at the Russian Orthodox Church in Rome, himself born in Ukraine, issued a certificate indicating that I had been baptized in Kiev on February 14th, 1904. This solved the problem. We liked the idea of being married in Rome as it was there we first met, and Oksana and Jan had in the meantime returned to the city. So to Rome we went just a few days before the special date.

Our first task was to check in with the questura to get a permit to stay in Rome. Imagine our surprise and disappointment when the policeman, after having issued my permit without any discussion, gave one to your mother for only five days. "We do not allow more than five days to Germans," was his cool remark. We certainly could not accept this answer as final and asked ourselves what to do. Suddenly I had an inspiration. Whenever I had come to Rome in past years, I had always reported to the same policeman, a very nice man named Esposito, and we had become quite chummy. When I was in Rome just after the war, I had with me some original Gillette razor blades, a real rarity then. In the stairway of the questura I had met Esposito who had given me a broad smile and asked me how I was and what I was doing. He was so friendly that on impulse I pulled a small package of Gillettes from my pocket and gave it to him. He was moved by my friendly gesture, thanked me effusively, and asked, "What can I do for you?"

"Nothing. Can't I make a small present to an old friend?" He thanked me again and we went our ways. So now my dear Corporal Esposito came to my mind.

I inquired at once where I could find him and was informed that Sergeant Esposito was secretary to the Chief of Police in Rome. We hurried to him and I literally fell into his arms. I showed him your mother's permit and he became serious. "Why didn't you come to me directly? I'd have settled this matter at once. But now!" He thought a minute and said, "Let me try. But you'll have to wait, I'm afraid." So we sat in the anteroom and waited patiently for over an hour; at intervals he came to ask us to be patient then disappeared again. At last he reappeared with a big smile, gave me the permit, and asked me not to open it there. We thanked him heartily and left. Scarcely outside, we opened the paper and saw that in the original, "permit for sojourn given for five days," the words, "for five days," had been crossed out very thoroughly and two stamps reading "Police Prefect" authenticated the cancellation.

I immediately understood what had occurred. The good man had waited until his superior had left the office for lunch and then effected the cancellation and applied the stamps. The very next day I returned to the questura to express my gratitude and to give him a carton of highly prized American cigarettes. He refused to accept this gift, saying, "Two years ago you gave me Gillette blades and said, "May I not give a little present to an old friend?" Today it is I who say, "May I not do a little service for an old friend?" He failed to see my little present was just a gesture, whereas his "little service" was

truly invaluable and could even have involved him in serious trouble.

The question of our legal status in Rome having thus been settled, on Saturday, February 1, we went merrily to a branch of City Hall at the Capitol, along with our witnesses, my brother-in-law and Prince Paul Paleologue Crivez, an old friend from the Paris period of my life. We stopped at one of the several museums clustered there and inquired where the civil marriages were performed. In Italy Catholicism was the state religion and weddings performed in a Catholic church were recognized by the state. Non-Catholics had to go to City Hall for a civil ceremony. However, no one seemed to know exactly where this could be accomplished. Finally a guard exclaimed, "Oh yes, it's the room where the Jews get married," and led us to a beautiful salon with luxurious antique furniture. On a platform behind a big desk, three City Hall personalities were seated. We produced our credentials, forms were filled out, signatures given, and the vice-mayor put on his imposing red-white-green sash, symbolic of his official powers, and made a short dignified speech. Afterward he declared us man and wife. This was the first of our three marriages.

The next day, Sunday, February 2, at ten-thirty in the morning we were at the Lutheran church for the Protestant ceremony. This was a more complicated formality and never having been to a Protestant marriage before, I'm afraid I made a couple of blunders. The gracious Pastor Dahlgruen initiated the ceremony and turning to me asked, "Do you wish to take this woman as your wife, do you promise to keep her, to be a good and

faithful husband...."

As soon as he stopped for a breath I, like the eager, excited groom I was, instantly replied, "Yes, I do!"

He waved his hand and said aside, "Not yet." Then he kept on extracting still more and more promises from me.

Again I interrupted with "Yes!"

He had once more to wave his hand at me before going on. By now I had learned my lesson and when he stopped for the third time I was mute. "Now! now!" he urged.

I repeated my third, and this time correct, "Yes, I do!" The pastor nodded in a friendly way and concluded our second marriage.

All the excitement had completely exhausted us and Michele Lombardo, my old colleague from the Ministry in Rome, noticed it. He packed us into his car and drove us to a café near the Porta Pia. We remained in the car while he got out and returned with a waiter carrying glasses of vermouth. We toasted, strengthened for our expedition to the Orthodox church.

This third marriage fortunately presented no problem to me and your mother's natural savoir faire led her through the ceremony with grace and flair. Although I was a first-time "star" in the production, I had already witnessed several orthodox marriages. During the lengthy ceremony, the poor witnesses, Etienne de Chadarevian and Tito Salerni both bachelors, according to Orthodox custom, had to suspend metal crowns over our heads, being sure they did not touch our heads.

To do this for three-quarters of an hour was quite

a feat. They devised a clever arrangement: when one couldn't hold on any longer, he gave a subtle hand sign to the other and simultaneously, and very decorously, they changed hands. Toward the end of the ceremony, preceded by the priest, we walked sedately three times around the altar which had been placed in the center of the church, our hapless witnesses following us all the time. Finally the impressive ceremony came to an end. We had been thrice married! I would never dare ask your mother for a divorce as it would surely be a very complicated procedure!

In the afternoon we arranged a reception for about twenty friends at the Dinesen Hotel near the Via Veneto. The festivities came to an end and the writing on the wall did not convey "Mene Tekel," but more prosaically, "No Money!"

With my suitcases bulging with samples and wares, I hustled down to Sicily leaving my new wife in Rome as the guest of Silvia and Giacomo Pozzi-Bellini. Money was so scarce that I bought only a one-way ticket, hoping to sell enough merchandise for the return ticket. Paul Paleologue-Crivez gave me a letter of introduction to his brother, Prince Alexander de Moree-Crivez, who was in Palermo. We called him Sandu (later he would become your godfather, Alex). I gave the letter to Sandu and his wife, Anka, as soon as I arrived and they invited me for dinner. I then made my rounds, selling my junk, as a matter of fact, quite profitably. At seven o'clock back at the hotel, to my great disappointment the porter gave me an apologetic note from Sandu and Anka saying Sandu had unexpectedly been called away from Paler-

mo. Would I come again at nine o'clock? My good dinner had gone but as business had been good I trotted off to a pleasant trattoria and enjoyed an excellent repast on my own. By nine o'clock I was back at the hotel. Sandu came hurrying up, "I'm so sorry for the delay! You must be as hungry as we are! Let's go immediately to a restaurant." What could I say? To tell him his note had not been explicit would have been rude. With gusto I enjoyed my second dinner in two hours. (How marvelous to be young and to have a good appetite, I was then a mere forty-three.) After dinner we went partying at the British Club where we danced, ate, and drank until three o'clock in the morning. I barely had time to go to the hotel, brush up, pack, and catch my train at five o'clock. This was the first time I had met Sandu and Anka, but we understood each other well right from the start and although we seldom meet we have always remained very good friends.

Upon my return from the Sicilian trip which was, as a matter of fact, quite successful, we decided we should try to stay in Rome, as we greatly preferred it to cold, humid Milan. Hélas! We could not find proper accommodation that at the same time suited our means. Reluctantly we decided to return north. Because in Milan my work had been only temporary, your mother went back to Lake Garda while I hunted for better quarters. My efforts were not too persevering, as I was on the go most of the time earning our daily bread. Several weeks passed. Nothing. One day your dauntless mother took the initiative into her own energetic hands and joined me in Milan. We found a temporary, though not very suitable room, but soon she found two rooms, a bedroom

and a sitting room, with the use of bath and kitchen in the apartment of a lonely old Swiss lady in a beautiful district, Piazza Castello, just opposite the park and Sforza Castle. At first the landlady was rather diffident and not too pleasant, having had a bad experience with our predecessors. But in course of time your mother's charm softened her and by the time you, Marina, joined us, she was not only gentle but entirely friendly.

About this time I began having trouble with Renzi, my leather craftsman. He was an excellent worker but a weak husband, dominated by his energetic, good looking, though somewhat bitchy, wife. For them I was a golden opportunity. From a very humble craftsman he had quickly become the owner of a firm that boasted first class clients in Milan, Rome, Florence, Genoa, Verona, Venice, and many other cities. At one point, he needed financial help and a neighbor lady who had some ready cash was only too glad to participate in this thriving business. Everything seemed to be running satisfactorily for all concerned, including myself. But, as you will realize, in life most people who can bear poverty, cannot bear success, even a modest one. My hitherto staunch supporter began to work sloppily. Clients who had previously been well satisfied noticed the difference and complained unpleasantly. What upset me the most was his having become dishonest. I had long known the wholesaler in razors, razor blades, and similar products to whom I'd been selling our merchandise at lower prices than those paid by shopkeepers. Renzi cut his profits here and I my commission. One day on coming to visit a client, I saw in his office some of our, or rather my sam-

ples, which I knew I had not sold him. He informed me that Renzi had told him that the price could be reduced by bypassing me, and that is exactly what they had done. As you can well imagine, I was enraged! I immediately went to see Renzi, gave him a piece of my mind, made him pay me the full commission on that sale, and told him that should it ever happen again, I would drop him like a hot potato. As a matter of fact, I decided not to wait, but to take the initiative as soon as the appropriate opportunity arose. I did not trust him any more.

Here I must open a parenthesis. From Rome we had sent wedding announcements and congratulations had been coming from various friends. A telegram from Vahe (Mik) Bogossian, a wealthy young Armenian whom I had met earlier in Milan, particularly impressed us with its sincerity. Some weeks after we had settled in Milan I went to see him for a friendly chat and discovered he was in the wholesale textile business. Immediately an idea struck: the war had ceased more than two years earlier, the situation was almost normal, money was more easily available, and Italians, both men and women, had always dressed extremely well. The textile business ought to be thriving. I asked Mik whether he had salesmen for all the regions. "No," he said. "The region from Lake Garda to the Yugoslav border, including Verona, Padua, Venice, and Trieste is still not being explored."

"I'll take it over," I said. (I had a nerve).

"But what do you know about textiles?" he asked

me in surprise.

"I acquired a little knowledge at the Hochschule fuer Welthandel in Vienna a few years ago. If you'll explain some basics, I'll learn the rest on the first trip. See, I'm not a textile salesman, but I am already a salesman! In any case, at the end of the first trip, if you feel I haven't produced results, we can call it quits."

He was agreeable to these terms and a few days later I departed. I was not in fact so sure of myself. I could distinguish silk from rayon and from cotton, these were the fabrics he sold, but that was about all. Fortunately, I had much experience in selling. Quite frankly, originally I did not like this job at all. To go around begging simple shopkeepers to buy my junk, what a humiliation, I thought. So at first I visited likely customers and did not beg at all, nor did I insist as most Italian salesmen did, talking faster and faster, trying to persuade the client. I displayed a disarming smile, offered to show my merchandise and if the shopkeeper did not wish to see it or did not want to buy it, I went, but always left behind a business card printed "Dottore B. Lotocki." The idea of a title was and still is a great draw in Italy. My performance apparently impressed many of my prospective customers, because if not on the first, then on the second visit, I usually made a sale. What was instinctive in the beginning became a technique. When this happened, I realized that I was not a beggar; my customers needed my merchandise to sell in turn to their customers. My merchandise was excellent, they ought to be grateful to me. This gave me added assurance in my sales talk and I began to consider the job as a sport. "If others (Ita-

lians) are doing so well, why shouldn't I (a foreigner) do even better?"

I still remember my first trip to Conegliano. A customer asked me for certain fabrics by name, (regional names, as I discovered later). Never having heard of them, I had to confess reluctantly that I didn't carry them. At that moment the man's glance caught part of my samples on the counter. Looking more closely, he exclaimed, "But you do! This is tibet!"

"Sorry," I answered, "the name I've always known is cashmere."

"That's what they call it in Milan, but we call it tibet here." Looking straight in my eyes, he asked, "Have you been traveling in textiles long?"

I could see I had nothing to lose by being truthful. "This is my first trip," I admitted a bit ashamedly.

"I thought so! But we all have to start! Let me see your samples and take your order book. Now write: one bolt of No. 7, one bolt of No. 10...."

After several visits, the customer-salesman relationship often became quite friendly. For instance I remember once when our collection was somewhat late, I arrived in Latisana to visit one of my best clients, just to hear him ask, "Why so late? All your competitors have already been here. They bothered me so much I finally bought everything I need!"

I was taken aback, but had an idea. "If my best clients talk to me like that, how can I afford the new fur coat I promised my wife?"

The expectable response would have been, "What do I care about your wife's fur coat?" But no. "You too?"

he sympathized. "The same as I. All right then, take your order book and start writing."

Alex, you remember meeting another of my clients; we've been exchanging Christmas cards for twenty-five years. Once when passing through Portogruaro on the way home from Yugoslavia we stopped at his shop. He was very surprised! Leaving his assistant to tend the shop, he took us to his home. What a home, by the way! Beautiful and furnished in good taste. He had already advised his wife, his daughter and his daughter-in-law of our coming and when we arrived there was quite a party, as if we had been old good friends, and really, we were.

Last but not least, I shall tell you of Silvio Bini. In Mik's office I met another of his sales representatives, a big man, the silent type, and gruff. We had always exchanged perfunctory greetings but that was all. One day about six months later he came up to me, gave me a hearty handshake and said, "For many months I've been watching you and have learned to respect you; you are a hard worker. Let's be friends. I'm at your complete disposal for any information or advise you may need and I'm an old hand in this trade." (He had his own shop before the war, but was bombed out and had lost practically everything). We became very close friends. He was very helpful in sharing his knowledge and experience and later, when he reestablished his own business, I went with him as his first sales representative. Later, when your mother and I decided to emigrate to the U.S., he told us, "If you really feel you must go, I cannot keep you. But think it over carefully and please take into con-

sideration that if you stay here, you can stay as my partner. Italy too can be America."

While traveling with my silk, cotton, and wools, I included a collection of men's woolen clothing, as Bini had suggested. These selling trips lasted two to three weeks. I normally carried two suitcases jammed full of samples and personal belongings, twenty kilograms in my right, fifteen in my left hand. The railroad stations in most of the small towns I visited were one, two, or even nearly three kilometers outside the town limits with no public transportation connecting them. You can well imagine what kind of exercise I got and what muscles I developed.

I was always on the lookout for more merchandise which could lead to further income and one day I added to my samples a collection of handkerchiefs from an elderly Jewish man named Herz. He was a nice man, but I found it strange that being a Jew, and remembering what had happened to Jews in recent years, he sometimes recalled with nostalgia the time he had spent in the German Imperial Army and how he had polished his military boots to the degree of utmost perfection so as not to get into trouble with his "sarge." Herz's handkerchiefs were of good quality but not unusual and his prices were rather high. At least they exhibited good taste and were his own design and they did gain me a new line of clients which greatly helped when later I met Mr. Libini who dealt in the finest Swiss handkerchiefs. At that time large printed batiste handkerchiefs, what Americans call babushkas, were extremely popular with Italian women. Libini was a bit of a lunatic, somewhat

unstable, but absolutely honest. He had known disappointing experiences with his salesman and gladly gave me his set of samples. I tried them on the trip and found it was great going. I had to drop Herz and went all out for Libini. His compact collection fit into a small bag, was easy to carry, and enabled me to go again all over Italy Rome, Florence, Genova — and to sell to the most elegant stores. My income soared!

Since business was progressing so well, Mik financed a small 500 cc. Fiat Topolino car which I bought to enable me to move faster and more efficiently. It was definitely a great help, no more thirty-five kilogram suitcases to lug, no more sitting for hours in the shabby waiting rooms of cramped stations and pleasant outings when I was home. Unfortunately, we did not long enjoy this precious little car which we had grown to love. Although it happened nearly forty years ago, I still feel miserable writing this sad episode! I had left on a usual business trip and we had agreed I'd come back on a certain date so your mother could take her Italian driving test in the little car in which she had practiced.

I had progressed as far as Trieste when I received the news that our good and close friend, Baroness Anja Manfredi de Blasiis, was in a particular mental institution in Verona.

I had met Anja in Rome at the beginning of the war. She was from Finland, but her father, a diplomat, was of Swedish descent and her mother was a Baltic German. Her first husband was a German. Her second, a certain Baron Manfredi de Blasiis, was an Italian from Apulia. This marriage did not work, her son from her

first marriage being the principal reason. The couple separated. Anja's health was very delicate and she had undergone several operations and had been for a long while under heavy sedation to alleviate her pain. Her husband, very wealthy and influential, accused her of being a drug addict and had succeeded in getting her interned in Verona's mental asylum. This was a ploy — he simply wanted to ditch her. Somehow she managed through a servant to smuggle out a letter addressed to me, which your mother forwarded to me in Trieste.

Naturally, I had to intervene and left Trieste early in the morning. I had to stop on my way in a couple of places and arrived in Verona in the afternoon, going straight away to see the director of the asylum. A doctor-psychiatrist, he seemed a fairly bright and pleasant man. I decided my most urbane manner would yield the best results. I told him I had learned that Baroness Manfredi whom I had known for a long time was interned in his institution. I said I thought he probably did not even know about this as she had probably been registered by one of his aides who had not bothered to examine the case thoroughly. A man in his position, I added, knows that certain cases may have many facets, some of which, if not well considered, might produce very unpleasant consequences for the persons involved, and seeing that he was so kind and sympathetic, I would like to avoid any trouble for him. I explained the true situation (which he doubtless knew, but added some details about which he was certain to be ignorant). Anja's aunt had been lady-in-waiting at the court of the last tsar, her father had been an ambassador, and, most important of all, her uncle was

the current ambassador of Finland in Rome. "I learned..." I started to say.

"How did you learn?" he interrupted.

"That is immaterial, but please tell me if my information is incorrect. I have learned that the baroness was interned supposedly because she is a drug addict. Her uncle does not yet know of this, but you may be assured he will be informed immediately. His visit to the Palazzo Chigi (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) would provoke an international incident, and imagine what would happen if the newspapers got wind of the story that a poor, sick, innocent woman, was interned in a madhouse by a husband who is trying to get rid of her."

The director listened very politely, but his smile had gone and he seemed slightly nervous. "You are right, I was not properly informed and must investigate," he said (and I am sure he lied). "Please come back tomorrow and we will continue our conversation."

I told him I had to leave the same evening and had to have his decision beforehand. He asked me to come back at nine that evening. I did so and we argued until eleven o'clock.

In the end he relented. "All right, I promise you that the Baroness will be freed within forty-eight hours, but you must promise me that you will not inform the ambassador."

We shook hands and I left. The man was by no means a fool and kept his promise.

Soon after our argument had been concluded, I left the director's office completely exhausted. I had been up since six o'clock that morning and on the road until

five that evening, all that time under terrific strain, first mapping out my strategy and then reasoning with the director, awaiting his decision, and talking to him again. There was only one thing I wanted to do now: sleep, but I had to be in Milan that night to deliver the car to your mother for her driving test. I drank a cup of strong coffee and took off, on the road once more. The monotonous droning of the car's engine was making me drowsy. I stopped at the next highway exit and attempted a ten minute nap, but as soon as the humming of the car stopped, my drowsiness vanished so I decided to continue, but sleep overcame me again. I stopped but sleep evaded me a second time.

I thought I had by now probably overcome the "dead point" and went on my way. It was ten or fifteen minutes later that I hit a milestone which jerked me awake. I tried to step on the brake, but it was too late; the car slid down a steep slope and was entangled in some bushes bordering a ditch. On the other side of the ditch was another road and if the car had left the road some fifteen feet further along the overpass, it would not have merely slipped, but would have careened onto the other road, and I would not now be writing these lines. I was a bit dazed, my temple having hit the windshield, shattering it to pieces. I heard voices and the sounds of someone running down the steep slope. Two helpful truck drivers had seen me plunge down the slope and had assumed the worst. They consoled me, helped me to wipe away the blood gushing from my wound, pulled the little car onto more even ground, changed the front tire which had burst, and advised me to drive across the

fields for a few miles until I reached a side road that did not have a ditch. Encouraged by their spontaneous assistance, I did as they had suggested and found my way to the road. From there I reached a main thoroughfare and was soon in the suburbs of Milan. Somehow I found my way to the emergency room of a hospital where my wound was cleaned and stitched.

Toward four in the morning I made it home. As you can well imagine, your mother was terribly upset seeing me all splattered with blood. I had to insist that she go that morning for her driving test, although our car was of no use. Once there, she was told that she could not have used our Topolino for the test in any case, because that type of car was too small. In spite of driving a strange car, she passed with flying colors! My wound looked pretty awful and I had to go back to the hospital to have it tended again; the surgeon, Dr. Radici, a good friend of Mucchi, reopened it and extracted several small pieces of bakelite that were still embedded in the flesh. Afterward he did a fine job of plastic surgery.

A similar operation was not possible on our dear little car, the front axle was broken and had held together only by a miracle; moreover, the entire car was battered on all sides. We had to get rid of it at a very low price and had no money for a new one. That was the tragic end of our poor Topolino, but it was a small price to pay when we heard that Anja had been discharged from that dreadful mental asylum, a great consolation to us. I tremble to think of the consequences had she been incarcerated for a lengthy time.

Well, life went on, even without the car. I resumed

my tours, although they were less hectic as I had trimmed down my samples to a more reasonable size. Your mother started working as a German correspondent in a firm importing foreign, especially Swiss, newspapers and magazines. She was among sensible people and liked the job, all the more so because she had been rather lonely during my long absences. She stayed with the firm almost until you, Marina, made your appearance into this world in 1950.

It was during this time that our finances got a fast boost. Meeting our friend Etienne de Chadarevian on one of my trips to Rome, he told me that he had just returned from visiting friends in Sweden. "How?" I asked, "Wasn't it very expensive?" He told me laughingly that he had played and won some money in the Casino Venice Lido.

Hearing the story, your mother was prompted to ask, "Why don't you try your luck next time you're in Venice?"

"I'm not a lucky gambler, but if you give me some money of your own, I'll try." Two weeks later that opportunity arrived. I entered the Casino Venice-Lido and sat down at the roulette table. I played red and black, odd and even, high and low. I lost and lost. Then I remembered that a clairvoyant in Milan once told me that two was my lucky number. I set my last chip on square two – and two spun up. Exceedingly delighted, I pocketed my winnings and pushed a tip over the table to the croupier. He mumbled something and I answered, "Yes, yes." I got up to exchange my chips for cash and glancing back over my shoulder, noticed that someone had placed his own chips on number two of the roulette table. "Ho-ho," I said

to myself, "somebody is daring to play my lucky number." Hurriedly I threw all my chips on number two.

"Rien va plus," called the croupier. The wheel stopped spinning, number two was the winner again! The croupier then pushed all the chips over to me. Highly surprised I asked, "but who else put his chips on number two?"

"You," answered the croupier, "when you pushed me the chips, I asked if you wanted to repeat number two and you agreed. These are your winnings." How happy I was; and he had earned a very good tip. When I returned to Milan I ran through my notebook to check the predictions of the clairvoyant and was flabbergasted: my "lucky number" was not two, but three.

As we were so centrally located, it was easy to get to La Scala and your mother sometimes took advantage of this. We had made some new friends and our financial situation had improved considerably so that life in Milan was not at all unpleasant. My "de luxe" handkerchiefs lightened and eased my daily trudges to the extent that now I was able to visit Oksana and Jan in Rome from time to time.

But there was one looming circumstance that worried us considerably: after the war, the Communist Party in Italy had grown in strength. A suburb of Milan, Sesto San Giovanni, was even called by its communist inhabitants, La Stalingrada Italiana. Tito's Yugoslavia next door to Italy completed the "lovely" picture! We felt that should political trouble arise, we, as stateless foreigners, would be the first victims. Also the situation would be even more complicated if we had children.

Fleeing with babies is quite another matter compared to adults escaping alone.

We had a good friend, an Estonian named Allas, who had been in trouble both with the Gestapo and the K.G.B. in his native country. He constantly maintained that the Gestapo were just plain idiots compared to the K.G.B. with their refined tortures. Although he said he was frightened staying in Italy and wanted to emigrate, he never left Italy and died in Milan in 1969. Regardless, I am grateful to him for having strengthened our decision to go to the U.S., not that we particularly welcomed the idea of leaving the Italy we loved and starting from scratch for the umpteenth time. But our decision was dictated not only by the political situation, but also by other arguments: we did not wish our future children to be stateless, but wanted them to hold a good citizenship. Having spent thirteen years in France, I could have become a French citizen, but the idea had never really appealed to me.

As a matter of fact, we had already applied for an American visa in 1947. Your mother could have obtained one, but my quota (USSR) was exhausted. So when the I.R.O., International Relief Organization, mission arrived in Milan, we went there to formally apply as quotas had been temporarily suspended for war refugees, and we definitely qualified.

The formalities lasted several months and in the meantime we were familiarizing ourselves with the idea that we would soon cross the ocean. During our wait I met an astrologer. He drew my horoscope and our trip to the U.S. was clearly marked therein. Some weeks later I was called to the I.R.O. office: "You told us you worked in the movie industry in Italy during the war! You cannot enter the U.S.A. As an actor, you were a member of the Actors' Union, a Fascist organization!" I was speechless.

I could only go home and break the bad news to your mother. When I entered the door she asked, "So, what's the good news?"

"Why good news?" I asked.

"Well, you're humming, and you only hum when you're very happy!"

Only then did I realize that I was actually in a happy mood at the idea of not having to leave Italy. The plan to emigrate had been the result of reasoning, but in

the depths of my heart, I did not at all desire to leave my beloved Italy.

It came about that I again met the young astrologer and couldn't resist cattily asking him how he could have made such a mistake in predicting our departure for the States, as the visa had been refused. He may have been a good mind reader, but he was a lousy astrologer in my opinion. He flushed and mumbled that everybody could make a mistake. Promising to redo his calculations, he asked me to drop by the next day. As arranged, I appeared with an ironical smile on my face expecting to hear his apologies. But to my surprise the good fellow said resentfully, "I redid my calculations. You will be leaving for the United States, arriving there before the end of July. You'll scurry around trying to get a job, but don't worry, you'll get one before five weeks are out and your knowledge of languages will be your greatest mainstay." I was, of course, shaken. The man seemed so sure of himself. Let's wait and see, I thought; what else could I do?

Three weeks later a letter arrived from the I.R.O. asking me to come and see them. I did so and was informed the McCarran Act had been amended; only members of the Communist, Nazi, and Fascist parties could be denied a visa. Restrictions no longer applied to members of other organizations. A few weeks later all three of us, Marina included, went to Naples to be screened at the central I.R.O. office. We were supposed to stay in a camp, but refused. Instead, we went to a hotel and had our screening sessions in the mornings. This dull screening was quite lengthy, so the afternoons I

devoted to brisk business in Naples and on weekends we went to Capri and Ischia. Finally I was given an appointment to see the commissioner, this was the last step. Inwardly I was rejoicing and happy at the thought that this procedure would finally be over. Smiling broadly I strode into the "lion's den" while dozens of awed people waited in the anteroom. The commissioner was a tall, splendid looking man and his first question was, "So you want to go to the U.S.?"

I really do not know where the inane impulse came from, but I blurted out quite seriously, "I'm really not so sure."

"Why so?" he queried, astonished.

"I have an utterly charming wife, but I was told that in the U.S. men are under the complete domination of women. I'm afraid that instead of being head of the family I'll be reduced to a dishwasher, floorsweeper, and baby-sitter!" I'm the first to admit this was not the right way, or the proper place, to so assert myself and had I spoken in such a way to a European official, I would no doubt have compromised my chances. But in general Americans, even officials, have a sense of humor, as I had learned from early on-the-spot experience!

The commissioner started to laugh and said, "There's a lot of truth in this, but you have a good European wife so you shouldn't worry too much. Let's hope our American customs do not spoil her."

We then chatted and joked for at least half an hour. At the end he even handed me a small parcel to mail to his wife in Tucson upon my arrival in the United States, as he didn't trust the Italian mail. When I finally

emerged from his office, those awaiting their turn asked anxiously, "Is he terrifying? He kept you very long!"

This interview concluded the long, tedious screening process. We were told to be ready to go by special train with the other camp refugees to Bremerhaven to wait again in a camp until our departure to New York City by boat. The idea of camps was abhorrent to us. Poor as we were, we declared, "No camp, we will leave from Naples by ourselves at our own expense."

One more formality was required. All I.R.O. immigrants had to have an American sponsor. However, the only people I knew in the U.S. were the Timoshenkos and they were not yet American citizens. (I was under the false impression that U.S. citizenship was necessary in order to sponsor a refugee. Later, I was quite thankful I hadn't asked them to do me this favor). I had originally intended to get a sponsor through the Ukrainian American Relief Committee, but I met Mr. Wassyl (Basil) Fedoronchuk, a fellow Ukrainian in Rome. He had taken over the Ukrainian language broadcaster job I'd held ten years before. It was he who very kindly arranged our sponsorship by a young Ukrainian, Andrew Hubal, who had gone to the United States several years before. Strangely enough, Mr. Fedoronchuk didn't even know the man, but did know a young lady who had fought together with Mr. Hubal in a Ukrainian partisan group against the Reds. Her word was sufficient for him to vouch for us!

We returned to Milan and I began liquidating my business and financial matters in preparation for our early departure. I went to my law school, where I had

only three or four exams to pass and obtained a document stating that if I returned within seven years I could finish my law studies and obtain my diploma. The only drawback was it took me, not seven, but twenty years to return to Europe!

Nobody forced us to go to the United States; it was a decision taken of our own free will. But still, we had to admit, it was a major gamble, not only to go to another country (to this I was accustomed), but to another continent. As the family bread winner, I was, after all, at the ripe old (especially for the U.S.!) age of forty-seven, had a year-old baby and exactly \$1,000 sole capital. Leaving old Europe, where we had been born and had lived all our lives and where we felt at home, where all our relatives lived, was not easy.

I myself had only one relative left, my brother-in-law in London. My dear sister died there on New Year's, 1950. Poor Oksana contracted tuberculosis in Tarnow, where Jan had been in charge of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Ukrainian government-in-exile in 1922. The reason for her tragic death was very simple, she and Jan did not have enough to eat in those harsh times. In France she had been much better off; then my parents sent her to Switzerland for two months and she seemed cured. In the early forties in Italy, her illness started all over again. In a hospital in the hills near Modena a pneumothorax operation nearly cured her. Afterward she and Jan went to Padua, Meran, and returned to Rome. Sad to say, Jan was not making enough to live on, so when an opportunity arose for him in London they moved. Although they were better off

financially, the climate unfortunately proved to be very unhealthy for Oksana and was probably the deciding factor in her premature death at the age of fifty-two.

Before leaving for the United States, of course, we went to Cologne to take leave of your mother's family. The idea of our adventurous departure was naturally a serious blow to your grandmother, but she took it courageously, and your mother had to promise she would come for a visit to Cologne as soon as circumstances permitted. During our short visit I had an amusing experience. A gypsy clairvoyant, Mrs. Buchalla, lived in a village near Bonn and I decided to go and see her. As soon as she saw me she said, "You are leaving for the United States now, but not forever; you will come back, though not to Germany." Somewhat later Mrs. Buchalla became quite famous and German politicians were flocking to see her.

On the way back from Cologne we stopped at Luetzelflueh, Switzerland, to visit your mother's cousin, Ilse, and her husband who were most friendly and kind. Just about a year old, you were a real pet, Marina, during the whole journey.

After these emotional leave-takings, we returned to Milan, completed our preparations, and on July 9, 1951, boarded the train to Rome where we bade old friends, including Etienne de Chadarevian, goodbye, not knowing when we would see them again. After settling a few details with the I.R.O and the Italian liner, we allowed ourselves a nostalgic farewell visit to Capri before embarking aboard the *Conte Biancamano*, on July 15, for a new world and a new life.

On board we had a small but quite comfortable two-berth cabin in tourist class. The passage was uneventful but pleasant. We spent most of the time on deck, recuperating from the fatigue that had preceded our departure and getting ready for the assault we were preparing to make on Fortress America! The captain graciously invited us for cocktails with four other travelers, an unusual courtesy to tourist-class passengers, and gave us special permission to use all cabin-class facilities. This was a highly appreciated gesture since the tourist quarters and deck were somewhat cramped.

One of the people invited with us was Saturno Diotallevi. Satys Travel was born from that encounter. Saturno was going to the U.S. for a three month visit with an uncle in Connecticut. We had many happy hours together, but when we disembarked in New York we never expected to see him again. Imagine my surprise when about two years later a teller in the Perera Company told me a gentleman wanted to speak to me. It was Saturno! He had come to cash a check and had recognized me sitting at my desk. In the meantime his three month visit had become a permanent stay: in Connecticut he had met a girl from his native Fano (where he had never noticed her), fell in love, and married her.

We did not sail directly to New York City, but stopped some hours in Halifax. Here I went ashore and caught my first sight of typical American clapboard houses. Frankly, I was not impressed. They looked so paltry to my European eyes. Wooden houses are practically nonexistent in central or western Europe; one has either brick or stone or none at all. Frame houses are seen

only in Russia, Poland, or Finland.

Finally! In the morning of July 25 we arrived in New York. It was several hours before baggage was unloaded and our documents checked so we could disembark. As soon as we descended the gangplank, a young lady came running toward us. It was Halia Timoshenko whom we had informed of our impending arrival. We continued to walk on, followed by a porter with our luggage, and there behind the gate, I saw a fair-haired young man looking unmistakably like a Ukrainian. That must be our sponsor, I immediately thought. I walked toward him and asked in Ukrainian, "Are you Ukrainian?"

"Yes," he responded, not at all surprised.

"Then you must be Mr. Hubal!"

"And you Mr. Lotocki. I have already reserved a room for you in the Ukrainian quarter."

"But what will we do with all our suitcases?"

"No problem," he said. "We can deposit them next door at the office of a Ukrainian organization." Before leaving he tried to hand me \$200 to defray our initial expenses. "I thought you might need it," he said. We were overwhelmed by the kindness and spontaneous help of this young man whom we had never seen before and who had taken the day off from his job solely to welcome us and offer his assistance.

The hotel to which he took us was quite inexpensive and very modest, on the corner of Eight Street and Third Avenue. The elevated trains thundered past our windows day and night. Our kind sponsor wanted to find us one of those walk-up, cold-water flats which

seemed to be the Lower East Side specialty, but we preferred to follow the advice of the Timoshenkos and took a lease in their apartment block at 13441 Cherry Avenue in Flushing. I am most grateful for that advice, as this was a pretty and verdant place and there we later met our good friends, the Szancers, Newmans and Goodmans.

As soon as we had settled down, I started to look for a job.

It would not have been so difficult had I been younger. The Royal Bank of Canada was a typical example. I had worked in its Paris office and had been all but hired in the New York branch; however, when the personnel manager realized my age, the whole business was off. So I walked the streets, filled in applications, and received polite refusals. One day I went to see a banker whose name had been given to me by Gregory Thomas whom I had met in Paris many years ago. This banker could not employ me but suggested I try at another smaller bank. The man there in turn suggested the Perera Company where I could use my knowledge of foreign languages. By coincidence, I had intended to try there, having seen that name on the window of No. 10 Broadway. The banker's encouragement gave me an additional push and so to the Perera Company I went.

Guido Perera, a very amiable man, received me in a friendly way and we started to talk. I mentioned my knowledge of French and he immediately spoke to me in excellent French; then we switched to German (his German was not first class). Thinking he was of Spanish descent, I reluctantly admitted I did not speak Spanish.

"Do you by chance speak Italian?" he asked. I told him I'd spent thirteen years in Italy and had an Italian doctorate. From that moment on we spoke only Italian together. He was of Italian descent but had been born in Egypt, where everyone at that time spoke French. I noticed my Italian impressed him more than anything else, including my banking and accounting experience.

To my disappointment, at the end of our conversation he informed me that for the time being he had nothing that would suit me. I gave him my address and Timoshenko's telephone number, for possible future references, and left to scout again. When I came home, Timoshenko told me that a gentleman had called two or three times in the afternoon and had left his number. It was Perera who wanted me to start working with him immediately. I did next the day. The prediction of the Milanese astrologer came to mind. I started at a meager \$55 per week. Perera explained he did not want my colleagues to be jealous. However, in September I received my first increase and two months later a second raise came. I was no longer his secretary, but his assistant.

Our first stage in the States was difficult. Your mother was in a perfectly strange country, surrounded by an unfamiliar language, we had very little money, and she was alone with a little baby and no relatives or friends nearby. I say "alone" because alone she was for five days a week. In the mornings I left before eight o'clock and never got back home before seven in the evening; I was really very little help to her. But her undoubted courage, organizational talent, and her unfailing optimism helped her to regularize our lives and win the

friendship of good neighbors that has lasted for more than thirty-five years.

My own foremost obstacle was the realization that American English is not the Anglo-English I had been accustomed to hearing and speaking. I could scarcely understand voices on the phone, the whole social setup was new to me, and my new colleagues, though friendly, were totally different from the people with whom I had dealt in England in 1937 and 1938.

Mr. Perera was, however, right from the start, very kind to us. He invited the three of us to his delightful country home near Fishkill, an old farmhouse transformed into a modern villa with grand Italian antique furniture. He also often asked me to accompany him to important receptions and dinners and even instructed me to purchase a dinner jacket and send him the bill. It was on one of these occasions at the Economics Club, of which he was a member, that I met Richard Nixon, then junior senator of California. Last but not least, because I occupied an "executive position," my vacation was not the standard two, but three weeks.

Mr. Perera left the handling of foreign exchange business to the managers of the 10 Broadway and 636 Fifth Avenue offices and concentrated mainly on his particular hobby, the Italcable Company, of which he was the official representative in the U.S. My office hours were long because Mr. Perera frequently stayed late, but I was not kept too busy during the day and, as I have always disdained idleness, I began assisting our accountant, Fred Tordella, who was overrun with duties. He had been born in the U.S., but his parents had gone back to

Italy and he returned again to the States only after the war. I was happy to have the opportunity to speak Italian and found him very bright. We harmonized admirably. But Mr. Perera did not like him. "He is low class and no gentleman," he used to say. (Only later did I realize that he was right.) "You are here as my assistant, do not help Tordella, he can do his job by himself." I tried to speak up in Tordella's favor, but did not get very far. Tordella, however, welcomed my friendliness and seemed to be grateful. Little by little I grew into my job and new surroundings and felt very happy in the office.

Then Mr. Perera had a heart attack. He soon recovered but became irritable and suspicious toward most everyone (I was a lucky exception). He spoke of dying and very kindly wanted to groom me to succeed him as Italcable's representative. As a matter of fact, his premonition was correct: he did not survive long and died at the beginning of 1953, shortly before your birth, Alex, and the firm went up for sale. The two managers, thinking they did not need the name of Perera to keep the firm's clientele for themselves, did not bother to bid. Therefore, an outsider, Nicholas L. Deak, a Transylvanian, bought the firm for next to nothing. He was, however, not an outsider in foreign exchange matters: there he was an expert. Furthermore, he had initiative and ideas. Soon after the takeover he called in four of us (the foreign money trader, the accountant, the administrative assistant, and me) and asked us each individually whom we would suggest to take the position of manager. Unanimously we suggested Tordella. As accountant he had the best idea of how things ran in the firm and,

although a bit young, he had spent seven years with the company. Mr. Deak followed our suggestion, put Tordella temporarily in charge, and a few months later confirmed the nomination.

Perera's desire for me to get the Italcable job did not materialize; the Italcable people wanted a well-known American personality which I, as recent immigrant, certainly was not. Fortunately, in helping Tordella I had learned a lot about the Perera business and stayed on with the firm. I did not think, however, that I would do well after Mr. Perera's death.

When your mother left for Europe with both of you children for a summer vacation in 1953, I decided to go to San Francisco, which had always attracted me, to find out if I could get a better position there. Bice Fitzsimmons, your mother's friend since our first months in New York, was there as were Oles Timoshenko's mother, whom I knew well from Volyn, and his uncle, a professor at Stanford University. I did not expect any of them to provide me with a job, but rather to help me to get an overview of existing possibilities. The trip was an interesting change, but practical results were not too encouraging. I soon recognized that my chances to improve my position by going west amounted to nothing; I had to persevere in New York City.

Under its new owner the Perera Company was developing other activities. Another branch was to be opened in Newark. This was essential in order to comply with certain financial laws of New York. I was placed in charge. Mykola Bohatiuk, a Ukrainian whom you know, was my first assistant. Later a new company, Perera Ex-

press, was created and started to issue traveler's checks, although it by no means competed with American Express. I headed it for some time and then returned to New York. My friendship with Tordella had ended the day he was promoted to manager; he needed me no longer! I cannot call him exactly petty, but he was extremely stingy where money was concerned. I was promoted to manager, assistant treasurer, then treasurer of the Perera Company, becoming the third man, so to speak, after Deak and Tordella. I had to fight for every raise. As a matter of fact, when he left the Perera Company — or rather, was "eased out" (sacked in my opinion), he said to me, "What did you want? Perera was a small company and there was money for only one person." (He naturally meant himself)!

One day an opportunity arose to increase my income; I seized a sales job for Exercycles, a sort of stand-easy motorcycle machine with pedals, seat, and handle-bars that functioned electrically. It was supposed to replace fitness exercises for those who were too lazy to otherwise exert themselves. The price of the contraption was \$395 and my commission was \$170, good money in the late 1950s. I had to advertise, make appointments and give demonstrations, only in the evenings or on Saturdays or Sundays, of course. Carrying this 155-pound machine around in the trunk of my car posed problems in the beginning, but I solved them by selling sixty machines in thirteen months, which brought a hefty cash surplus. At the end of a trial period, I "chickened out," however, when the firm offered me the exclusive sales rights for all metropolitan New York.

That would have entailed leaving Perera and hiring at least three sales representatives, not to mention setting up a myriad of administrative details. But while it lasted it did bring additional income.

I intentionally mentioned this extra-curricular job in the office and one day Mr. Deak called me and asked how I could take on such a demanding extra job which certainly must have handicapped my family life. I answered that I had no other choice if I wished to meet family needs. Soon thereafter I got a \$1,900 salary increase and a bonus on Christmas Eve. But when the next December 24 came, there was no increase and only a picayune bonus.

Two days later, Valeria and Saturno Diotallevi and your mother and I attended a performance of *Hamlet*. During the intermission Saturno mused about his plan to start a travel agency. He mentioned our being a part of the venture. Hamlet's searching question had become suddenly personal: "to be or not to be?" I looked at your mother, she looked at me, we spontaneously agreed! At that very moment "Satys" Travel was conceived, blending Saturno's first name with mine.

I arranged a private talk with Mr. Deak and told him I was leaving to open my own business. He tried to dissuade me and even offered to improve my contract. I could only respond, "Look at that beautiful Chinese vase on the mantle. If it fell and broke into pieces, we could perhaps mend it, but would it still be as perfect as before? The same applies to our collaboration!" Mr. Deak, a very intelligent man, knew at once precisely what I intended to convey.

"Oh, I understand you very well, Mr. Lotocki, I did the same thing in my younger years." We talked for a few minutes longer. "I'm sorry you're leaving, but wish you good luck and let me thank you for having helped me teach Mr. Tordella good manners." I must say inwardly I enjoyed this last remark!

I stayed on at Perera for another four months to complete my contract and on May 1, 1959, Satys Travel was officially launched at 501 Madison Avenue. But immediately an obstacle presented itself. We needed a sponsor from the steamship lines. Saturno found one from an Italian line and I from the Holland-America Line. Likewise, in order to be able to get an official appointment by the International Air Travel Association and thus receive a commission from the airlines, every new travel agency needed a sponsoring airline. We had just opened and nobody knew us, so how could we find a sponsor? I racked my brains until a plan formed in my mind. While still manager of the Perera Company in Newark, I had met Bill Cotter, manager of the TWA Newark office, who was, so to say, my next-door neighbor in Commerce Street. We had become good friends and had often lunched together. Later we both left Newark and had drifted apart. Pondering a possible sponsor, Bill Cotter flashed to my mind and I was highly pleased to learn that he had made quite a career for himself, having become manager of the TWA Interline and Travel Agencies Office of all metropolitan New York. We could not wish for a more appropriate sponsor. I went to see him and we chatted happily about old times and recent events and I then announced that a friend and

I had opened a travel office. "Good," said Bill, "but you'll need an airline to sponsor you. Which will this be?"

"None other than yours!" was my answer. He was taken by surprise, but let himself be persuaded to do us a good turn and at the next meeting of I.A.T.A., just three and a half months after the start of our venture, we received the I.A.T.A. appointment under TWA sponsorship. Bill did not lose face in having given us his backing. Satys Travel channeled a great deal of business to TWA, and nowadays whenever I travel, I always favor our "dear old" TWA.

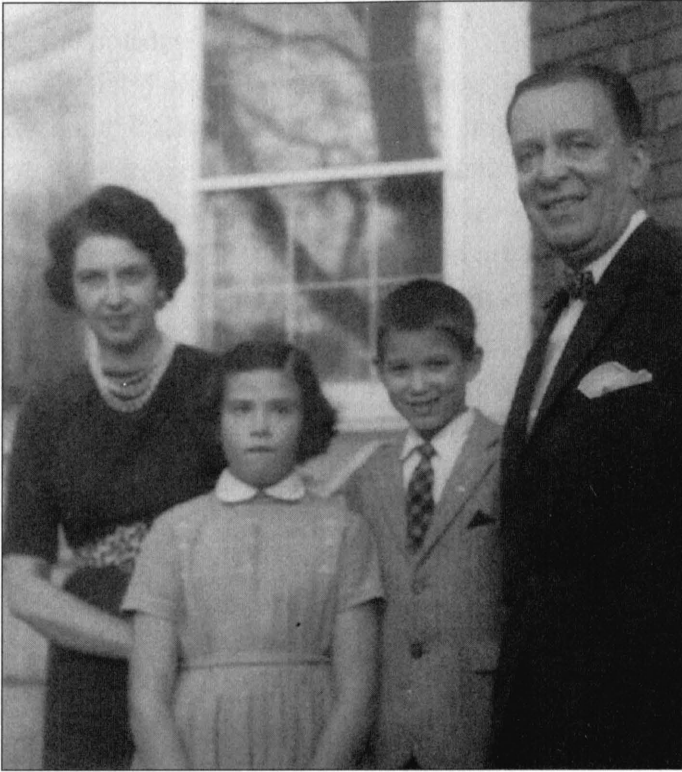
Satys Travel flourished through the years and we saw quite a bit of the world traveling through all five continents. We also enjoyed life in New York and all the cultural activities it offered such as theatres, operas, concerts, museums, and exhibits.

I was also happy to be active in Ukrainian church and political organizations and to participate for six years as vice-president and another six years as president of the board of trustees of St. Volodymyr Cathedral of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in New York City.

After an armed hold up in the office of Satys Travel in 1971, I realized I had become disillusioned with New York and tired of its constant rat race. Having reached the age of sixty-seven, I wanted to retire. My partner and his wife assumed Satys Travel. You, our children, were in college, Alex planning to study later in Paris. So we sold our house and settled in Europe, taking an apartment in Rome. Our many old friends and Brigitte's relatives in Europe made the transition very easy for us. You came visiting often, being our offsprings

you too loved to travel and to see the world. We also made a point to come to the U.S. every year, especially to share the holidays together.

In 1988 after an absence of over seventy years we made a eight day trip to the USSR, including Moscow, Kiev, and Leningrad. Moscow struck me as most "Stalinesque" in spite of being a modern city. The Moscow I remember from 1914 was a provincial town with its jumble of stone edifices and shabby wooden houses. Kiev, of course, was as ever, a lovely baroque city. And Leningrad under any name never loses its imperial charm and grandeur. It was a bitter-sweet return "home," but I am thankful I could again see the places of my childhood.



Brigitte, Marina, Alex and Borys in New York

A POSTSCRIPT TO MY CHILDREN

Yes, my dear children, I have had a very rich and most interesting life, colorful like a kaleidoscope. How many people can say they have known and lived in three so different "worlds," or historical periods, as I did? I remember most vividly three of five pre-World War I great empires: the tsarist Russian Empire which covered more or less the area of the Soviet state, then the Ottoman, or Turkish, Empire which extended over the Near East from Arabia to the Black Sea, and the British Empire which covered vast regions on five continents. As a child I had a map of the world in my room and literally went to sleep and woke up under this world picture, never dreaming I would some day actually trod over much of its surface. Today I shudder as I would have to learn the hundreds of new state names and capitals which came into existence after World War II.

Of course, traveling the globe with a U.S. passport is so easy. In the Russia I knew, people needed a passport simply to travel from one part to another within the empire. I remember the old joke: A human being consists of two parts: body and soul, but in Russia of three parts: body, soul, and passport.

Traveling has enriched my life, I met many friendly people all over the world; simple, hospitable men of all races and social strata, especially in the Mediterranean countries of Italy and Spain. The same also held true for such faraway places as India, Bali, New Caledonia before the mass tourism of the last twenty years commercialized and spoiled the once so colorful, romantic Orient.

I was uprooted at an early age, had to learn to adapt to living in twelve different countries, exercised thirteen professions and had to learn a number of foreign languages, but this made me strong and determined. I would feel happy, my dear children, if these pages conveyed to you the belief that helped me in the most difficult or even seemingly desperate situations: never lose faith in God or yourself. What another person can do, you too can do, if you try hard enough!



Brigitte with Alex and Marina

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Although his birthplace was Sanct Peterburg, Borys Lotocki is Ukrainian, the son of a well known scholar and diplomat. Born under the reign of Tsar Nicholas II, the turbulent events of the Russian Revolution hurled the young Borys from his childhood into twelve foreign countries where he lived and practiced thirteen different professions. He has been a banker, accountant, film censor, movie actor, sales representative, and travel business owner. In addition, he has served on the Olympics Committee and chaired the board of an industrial company.

Master of seven languages, he has studied at the Institute for International Commerce in Vienna, the School of Political Sciences in Paris, the Pedagogical Institute in Prague, and the University of Milan Law School. He holds a doctorate of political sciences from the University of Rome.



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