About

The Goddess Of The Devil: Hitler’s Medium

A novel by Mart Sander

The Goddess Of The Devil is a historical speculative novel with elements of science fiction, military thriller, occult mystery and horror, completed in 2015. With around 215,000 words it’s a hefty manuscript; yet it covers a time span of nearly forty years – the most explosive years in world history, which set the scene for two consecutive world wars, ending with the birth of a new era of superweapons and superpowers. The book aims to draw the readers in with slow deliberation rather than grabbing them by the scruff of the neck and forcing them to follow. The reader is expected to reach his/her own conclusions – which are often quite disturbing, when achieved autonomously. It’s a close re-enactment of a doomed journey that was once taken by tens of millions: the book investigates the anatomy of National Socialism; the ideology which in spite of its obvious malevolence still fascinates countless people around the world.
Now, as the world celebrates the 70th anniversary of the destruction of National Socialism and Fascism, it is time to take another, alternative look at how this ideology was brought to life and how close it came to conquering – or destroying – the civilization.

*The Goddess Of The Devil* follows the tumultuous life of Maria Orsic, a celebrated beauty who, as the ‘official’ medium of the Third Reich was behind many decisions that shaped history. The novel opens with her as a young girl trying to make a career out of mediumistic readings, and her meetings with the notorious Thule Society which included aspiring politicians such as Hess, Himmler and Hitler. There follow the séances that produced controversial evidence, which was attributed to an alien consciousness and which instigated the research into alternative sciences, actively promoted by the Nazis. Part Two follows her to the legendary German expedition in Tibet, where Himmler was certain to locate the mystic Aryan kingdom of Shambhala (Shangri-La). Part Three shows her rise to the status of the favourite puppet of the new regime and her consequent disillusionment with it, as the gap between the ‘Ideology of Purity’ and reality widens. Part Four describes the years of the WW II, which Maria, the reluctant but rather obedient spiritual figure head of the Nazi nuclear and space research programs has unwillingly helped to release. In their desperate task to alienate themselves from the last crimes of the dying regime, her small surviving team attempts a frantic escape into alternative reality – or an alien planet – or, perhaps, just into their own doom.
The book avoids making overt statements about the verifiability of her telepathically received messages as well as the existence of Nazi super technology; nevertheless the reader needs to understand that the Nazis were ardent believers in mysticism and paranormal and without the occult basis of the Thule Society, modern history might have been written in entirely different ink. *The Goddess Of The Devil* also underlines a chilling parallel that can be drawn between the actions of Hitler’s Germany and Putin’s Russia: how history can be represented and rewritten to achieve a specific goal and how the concepts of love, patriotism and honour can be distorted into weapons of mass destruction.

The author, **Mart Sander**, is a writer, musician, painter and stage director, who has often introduced new perspectives on matters we deem common or even too displeasing to be investigated. After a couple of short story collections, short novels and stage plays, this book is his first major novel.
Maria Orsic – fact or fiction?

Author’s introduction

There are hundreds, if not thousands, of internet sites where the name of Maria Orsic can be encountered. In fact, her name produces 41,500 results on Google (plus about 10,000 more when the alternative spellings of her name – Orsich, Orsitsch, Orsitch or even Ortisch – are entered).

The information about her is reasonably rich in detail. We learn of her meetings with the most notorious people of the 20th century. We are shown reproductions of strange repeating patterns and words in unknown letters she has reportedly drawn. Her great beauty is described at length, even though there only seems to be a single photo portrait of her in circulation. And yet, the most important questions remain unanswered: who was she, where did she come from and where did she go?

Maria Orsic (most probably Oršić) (born 31. October 1895, Zagreb or Vienna – missing since 1945) was a psychic and medium who allegedly stood very close to the leaders of the Third Reich and was, in part, responsible for the technical superiority of Nazi Germany.
Maria Orsic reportedly became the leader of the mysterious Vril Society in post-WW I Germany – it was a group of beautiful ladies who deeply influenced the occult philosophy of the Third Reich. She was instrumental in providing the Nazi scientists with the information she obtained telepathically from ‘other dimensions’ (in her own words), ultimately leading to Germany's unrivalled superiority in both space and nuclear research. The discovery of fission and controlled nuclear chain reaction; first manned rockets and ballistic missiles; the first supersonic jet flight – all this is acknowledged by mainstream science history. And yet, there could have been much more. In history books, the giant leaps the German scientists took in antigravity technology, exotic propulsion systems and disc-shaped aircraft development are only hinted at; as are their unique experiments in nuclear fusion. A controversial but as yet not disproven theory (purportedly by German historian Rainer Karlsch in 2005) is that Germany was in fact conducting successful nuclear tests during the final months of the conflict and that the Manhattan Project did not really progress until the Nazi scientists were taken to the United States in the summer of 1945 - together with more than one hundred V2 rockets of Wernher von Braun – and perhaps three atomic bombs...

The visions of Orsic and her team ultimately led to the construction of what we know to have been referred to as Die Glocke (The Bell) - the wonder weapon that was deemed to be so powerful that the atomic bomb project was placed second in favour of this particular device. Orsic and her colleagues, many of them brilliant
fringe-scientists, probably believed – or gave to believe to their superiors who by early 1945 had their guns at the temples of the science team – that the device was meant to be an interdimensional portal. In the frantic search for a ’Wunderwaffe’, at the eleventh hour of total devastation, no straw was too improbable not to be grasped at. Orsic and the leading members of the group gathered on the secret testing grounds during the final days of the WW II and disappeared with the prototype – either into a different galaxy or to a different era. Or, perhaps simply by blowing themselves up when attempting to do so.

_A woman behind the name_

Maria Orsic was first mentioned by the French authors Jacques Bergier and Louis Pauwels in their bestseller - _The Morning of the Magicians_. She does not come into the original French (1960) and English (1963) editions, but only appears in the German version (1969) _Aufbruch ins dritte Jahrtausend: von der Zukunft der phantastischen Vernunft_, reportedly after additional data was made available to the authors. Her status as a medium and as a remarkable beauty was established. The iconic photo of Orsic, however, is of unknown origin; other known photos of her alleged ‘Vril ladies’ that can be seen on the internet are quite obviously random images from the 1960s and 1970s fashion magazines, amassed by eager fans and web designers.
Since then, her legend has gathered strength. It is often suggested that she was responsible for channelling the information from an inhabitant of the Aldebaran star system which led to the technical superiority of the Third Reich; that she was supervising the reverse engineering process of the UFO that was wrecked in Schwarzwald in 1936, which took place in Himmler’s Wewelsburg castle – the occult centre of the Third Reich; that she had several secret meetings with Hitler and other Nazi leaders (notably Himmler and Hess, who were both very much into the occult) throughout her career, and that she was in some sense responsible for the outbreak of WW II (having prematurely reported at a meeting in August 1939 that the most legendary product of the so called ‘Nazi UFO project’, the Haunebu flying disc, was all but ready for action).

Unfortunately most of the available information about her comes from different UFO and Occult websites, which makes actual verification difficult. A thorough nonpartisan search into her birth and other such records is, apparently, yet to be conducted. She is often featured in UFO-related TV programmes (most notably in the History Channel series *The Ancient Aliens*) and books on that subject.

*The Goddess of the Devil*, completed in 2015, is the first major literary effort to set out her adventurous life and complex relationships with Hitler and the Nazi elite. The novel follows the available (yet often incredible) verifiable facts very closely, at the same time proposing some radical and unexpected theories about the philosophy and goals of the Nazi regime.
It is difficult to tell whether Maria Orsic is an actual person or a figment of fantasy – the Nazis were indeed masters of deception and when they decided to keep something or someone hidden, they managed to do so. But even without her as the protagonist, the wide assortment of people who were involved in the occult activities of the Third Reich – be they politicians, scientists, artists, thinkers or even showmen – offer enough material to fill many books. *The Goddess Of The Devil* is a story of an exceptional woman who, blessed – or cursed – with impressive spiritual power, found herself unexpectedly at the centre of the power-play of the Nazi Party, the SS, cutting-edge science and international spy rings. With such a rich mine of character and incident the materials for an entertaining and exciting narrative were simply waiting to be picked up and arranged – and when doing so, to my own surprise, I found the random pieces interlocking perfectly within their sections of the giant puzzle.
The short video teaser about the book I uploaded on YouTube (see the link at the end of this booklet), quickly received thousands of views. Hundreds of people have contacted me, either to ask whether the book is available for purchase or to share information with me. One elderly gentleman from the USA, reportedly a one-time official at the Joint Intelligence Objectives Agency (JIOA) told me that Maria Orsic was brought over to America under Operation Paperclip among 1,500 prominent Nazi scientist (several of whom – most notably the future leader of NASA, Wernher von Braun – appear as characters in the novel), engineers and technicians. He assured me that Maria Orsic was issued a new identity and spent her later years as a married woman in New York. However, no proof was offered to back that story.
**Writing about Hitler and the Third Reich**

It is a risky business to write about Hitler without immediately categorizing him as a monster from page one. This is like writing a book about a ‘good paedophile’ and his ‘love for children’.

And yet, as a painter who admires Wagner, I am both fascinated and terrified when I ask myself what turned another painter who admired Wagner into the most hated man in history? Under similar circumstances, could I also be turned into a monster?

The Nazi Party, which has become synonymous with all things evil, had its roots deep in occult societies. One of them – the Thule Society - was solely responsible for discovering and promoting Adolf Hitler, moulding him from a shy, disillusioned artist into a ruthless leader.

The Thule Society’s subdivision for ladies - the Vril Society - was first brought to public knowledge in the late 1940s by the German-American rocket scientist and writer Willy Ley, who had fled Germany in 1933. This group of young women, with their trademark lush hair down to their ankles are credited with having been instrumental in instigating research into the alternative science actively pursued by the Nazis.

In order to make the reader understand the occult background of Nazism, I needed to manipulate him/her into at least partially accepting the supernatural aspects
of the story. *We* may not be believers; *they* certainly were, and one must assume that they were given adequate grounds.

However, the book also attempts to be a study of the foundations of National Socialism. Too often Hitler and his ideology are simplistically dismissed as ‘pure evil’ – it is a safe procedure but offers no rational explanations as to why this evil took such root and still fascinates countless people.

It would be easy to start such a novel in the bullseye of a comfort zone – with a presumption that Hitler was evil as the basis for everything, almost as we automatically know that God is good and Satan is evil *per se*. I have, however, chosen a more dangerous path: I want to take the reader on a journey into the psyche of an ordinary German, who adored and idolized Hitler. I want my reader to be that German, to make his own choices as the book progresses and then ask himself: what could I have done differently?

It is easy to think of someone being ‘pure evil’. It’s much more difficult and painful to realize that there is no such thing. The truth seems to be that there are human beings who can believe and make others believe that they are motivated by love, and yet evolve into monsters.

It is my aim to prove that *everything* can be understood – even things that can’t and mustn’t be accepted, justified or forgotten. Once we refuse to try to understand we begin censoring our minds, and that leads us exactly where we don’t want to go. Many may argue that this is a slippery road to travel. But I disagree: when
we start clipping the wings of our inquisitive minds and fantasies for fear of unexpected discoveries, we might as well put on a muzzle lest we bite passers-by.

I have written *The Goddess Of The Devil* not as a statement or manifesto, but as a good, entertaining, and thought-provoking read which both warns us and gives us hope in the world where dark political forces are once again drawing sadly familiar patterns, applauded by millions.
Wernher von Braun

Das Marsprojekt

Studie einer interplanetarischen Expedition

Ein Sonderheft der Zeitschrift „WELTRAUMFAHRT“
The author, Martin Laurent Sander (born August 10, 1967 in Tallinn, Estonia) is an Estonian singer, actor, author, and television host of English-German parentage.

Sander began his musical education at the age of 7, released his first recording at the age of 17 and became a member of the Estonian National Opera the next year. During the early 1990s, after Estonia regained its independence, Sander began embarking on musical tours throughout Europe and began appearing in Estonian television productions. Sander has performed in a number of European venues in English-language comic operas and musical theatre. He has acted in six films and has directed three others. In 1993 he appeared on American television for the first time in the made-for-cable movie Candles in the Dark, opposite the Oscar winning actor Maximilian Schell and the American television actress Alyssa Milano.

Mart Sander is one of the most sought after television personalities in Estonia, hosting such hits as Dancing With The Stars, Sing Your Face Off or Pop Idol Estonia. He's currently active as a stage director / producer with the Estonian National Opera. In 2004
Sander released his first album of light classical music in Great Britain / USA, followed by several others (with his orchestra *The Swing Swindlers*). He was commended by HRM Queen Elizabeth II on her state visit to Estonia for championing British music, notably Gilbert and Sullivan, in Estonia.

Sander is a keen painter, exhibiting regularly. He has portrayed such celebrities as Madonna (entertainer) upon her concert in Tallinn, Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber (whose international gala concerts he has hosted), Arvo Pärt, and many others. In December 2013, his art book *The Stories Of Great Composers*, which he wrote and illustrated, became a Christmas best seller. His newest exhibition, *Mésalliance*, is a collection combining delicate female portraits with the poster images of 20th century dictators. These large oil paintings are at once visual illusions, perception puzzles, and at the same time painful reminders of historical injustices, perpetrated by these tyrants.

Sander has written novels in Estonian and English: *Mercator*, published in 1994; and *Lux Gravis*, 2008, as well as a collection of short stories, *Z, The Terminal Letter*, 2005. In 2013, a controversial play about the mysterious death of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, titled *The Swan Prince* was published by Pilgrim Books. His 2015 play *Behind the Random Denominator* had its world premiere on August 3, 2015 and was presented to New York audience on Broadway in September. Also, on August 1, 2015, his newest novel *The Whores*, the first book in trilogy, was published by Ajakirjade Kirjastus, one of the largest publishing companies in Estonia, to
critical acclaim. It became an immediate national best-seller, peaking at number one at the two largest book wholesalers Apollo and and Rahva Raamat, holding this position for four weeks, and is still firmly in the Top Ten list as of October 2015. In 2016, the novel will be made into a TV series.

In September 2014, the leading (and oldest) Estonian newspaper Postimees (The Postman) chose Sander as the number one multitalented person in Estonia.

Sander is Roman Catholic and a Knight of the Order of St. Stanislaus.
Height: 6’4’’ (195 cm). Single.

Paintings by Mart Sander:

Self Portrait As a Disappointed Artist, 2010.
Mesalliance I, 2015
Mesalliance II, 2015
Urban Hunter II, 2014
The opening chapters of the novel:

Part One: Getting there

11.50 PM

From his voice – from the slight hesitation that followed her request – it was obvious that she had frightened him. His silent fear was quite touching in its childlike innocence, in its lack of capacity for understanding what was actually going on around him: while dreading the consequences of disturbing his superior he was unable to allow his imagination to grasp the real scope of a terror that, until that moment, had not involved him. He had never opened his mind or his eyes to take notice of such things and, perhaps for that same reason, such things had never taken notice of him.

This was no longer the case with Maria. She had prodded the sleeping dragon and, as it had half-opened its eyes and noticed her, dealt a blow to cut off its head. But dragons had the habit of growing two new heads in place of the one cut off, hadn’t they...?

“Call him immediately,” she now ordered rather than requested the adjutant on the other end. Aside from his name being Brandt, Maria knew nothing about him,
yet she pictured the officer as very young, perhaps barely twenty.

The tentative silence persisted. Maria knew that the Reichsführer wasn’t to be awoken for any reason; in fact those who had the right to disturb him at such hour could be counted on one hand. But it would be known that one of those people was herself.

“Very well,” the officer broke the silence, sighing. “I shall notify the Reichsführer. Please hold.”

Lying on her bed, her eyes shut, Maria imagined the young man behind the door of one of the most powerful men in Europe. His hand was probably shaking. There would be a short series of timid knocks, perhaps repeated once or twice before Heinrich would awaken, confused and irritated; another sleeping dragon not to be disturbed.

But his irritation would give way to alertness as soon as her name was mentioned.

She heard the receiver being picked up.

“Reichsführer?”

“Yes, Maria! What is it?”

“Heinrich, we have cast the bait and it has been taken!”

A cold shiver ran down her spine at the sound of her own words, even though spoken in a whisper as if in danger of being overheard. Only now did the full meaning of what they had plotted and carried out hit her. It had been just a game, nothing more – for almost twenty years. But these few words she had just repeated, uttered gently into her ear not five minute ago, meant
that she had acknowledged and was now passing on a declaration of war.

“Where?” Himmler asked.

“Somewhere in the Schwarzwald region.”

The Reichsführer was silent for a while. Maria could only sense his exultancy before he said in a matter-of-fact voice:

“Come and meet me tomorrow. I’ll have Brandt book you on the first flight to Berlin. Will there be two passengers?”

“Yes, Reichsführer.”

After another brief pause, Himmler added:

“Best the Führer is not informed. Not until we know more.”

He rang off.

What had they done?!

Had they cut off the monster’s head – or had they barely scratched the dormant enemy, igniting a raging flame that would scorch them?

There was an even worse alternative she strove in vain to keep from crawling into her mind: that she had been unable to tell friend from foe. That she had ensnared and trapped something good to gain the approval of something evil.

She had reached out for the stars and seized at them, but when pulling her hand back she now saw the sky tearing from its seams and the distant suns dripping down like drops of poisonous mercury.

“Are we to go to Berlin?” the gentle voice of the one beside her whispered in her ear, but she pretended not to hear it, keeping her eyes tightly shut. She was out
of breath, as if her mind were frantically trying to escape and struggling with her body for its freedom.

What have we done?! a question was pounding in her temples. What have we done?!

Chapter I: Munich, 1919.

The bleeding sun poured red violently over the snow as if to consecrate the blood that was and would be spilled on these streets. The sun disappeared; the blood on the snow remained.

“There’s a commotion on the street,” a voice said behind her, as if she wasn’t watching the whole scene herself. “What do they want now?”

What they always want, Maria thought. Power. Money. Sex. Or, desperately, something to believe in? From the fourth-floor window, the crowds below reminded her of ants, driven by some compulsive collective consciousness to do something compulsively necessary. It was impossible to tell whether they were fleeing from or hunting after something. And if this, Maria thought, was an impression from the fourth floor, what would these people look like from high above, from the clouds? What would the birds, or the man on the moon, or God think? They wouldn’t recognize the fierce fighting for ideals, or the individuals who were willing to sacrifice their lives for the Cause. It would be a barely noticeable hustle at best, especially since the birds, the man on the moon and God had witnessed the
Great War, where millions had died in agony, without taking any notice. Because no-one had taken any notice. Aside from the birds, perhaps, but they ignored everything.

The aggressive handful of people with their red flags and hostile voices, and the taunting youths they had assaulted, were no longer visible. The scene was once again quiet and somewhat dreary.

But Maria didn’t explain these thoughts to her landlady, who would have been unnecessarily confused. Instead she said:

“The communists. They want peace and solidarity.”

Frau Mohr wasn’t satisfied.

“Then why do they scream and rampage? Why can’t they live in peace and solidarity, to show a good example? Then people might follow them!”

Maria knew no comment was expected from her, so she kept quiet, which was always acknowledged as her modest acceptance of the words from a wiser, older woman.

A couple, dressed in black, crossed the street towards the house. The doorbell sounded.

“They’re here,” Frau Mohr said, as was her way to react to the obvious. “I shall let them in.”

Maria closed the heavy curtains, which were designed to block every trace of daylight. She lit some candles and a small oil lamp. Electric lights were never to be used with customers, as they would destroy the mood, she always thought. Just like in a brothel. Men went to a brothel to find instant oblivion and satisfaction
from a woman’s body. Here they came to find the same from a woman’s mind: she was nothing but a mental prostitute, who would open her mind and her spirit as another woman would open her legs. And she would leave her customers satisfied, on most occasions. They would pay her and recommend her to other people who hungered for the same.

Maria glanced at herself in a large mirror, while the sounds of doors being opened and closed drew nearer. She could easily have worked as a prostitute, and she would have been paid well. Her beauty wasn’t a concept that thrilled her or made the mirror her closest friend and ally. It was merely a fact that she had learnt and accepted since her childhood. And since she was in another line of business, none of her clients ever told her she was beautiful. That would have been inappropriate. But this appraisal was often reflected in the eyes of the men who were accompanying the ladies in black with their tear-stained and swollen eyes veiled by thick black lace. How long would her career have lasted as a prostitute – five more years? Perhaps ten? Yet now she was looking at a business spanning fifty, why not sixty years, with each passing year adding credibility to her persona.

She was pestered with a slight headache, caused by a restless night. These troubled nights with disturbing dreams had become more of a rule than an exception. Maria found it difficult to come to terms with the visions that took shape in her sleep, rising like menacing shadows that were waiting for their time in some cosmic bank vault that stored all the misery yet to be unleashed.
on the world – as if more than enough had not, already, been drawn from it.

Maria knew that these were more than dreams; that somehow her visions which she was able to control when awake had made their way to her mind when she was at her most vulnerable. She was frightened by the realisation that these visions were involving her: she never allowed herself to be reflected in her work, always suppressing the urge to peek into her own future.

Now this future seemed to have come to haunt her. It was polluting her waking hours with memories that shouldn’t have existed for years to come; furthermore – that should never have existed at all.

She had no precise recollection of these dreams of late but, when she awakened, she was burdened with their residue; with the feeling that she had welcomed into her life something inexplicably bad, which had taken over and used her. Her heart was clenched in a fist of overpowering desolation, as if she was to abandon everything she ever owned and everyone she ever knew.

There was also a bitter sense of joy, the humiliating and unpleasant joy, of being alive, in spite of being mistreated and abused, marred with the shame of preferring such a life to nonexistence.

And there was guilt; the sense of involvement in something sordid, which had awakened a plague that had made her its tool. Death was to work through her and consider her its ally – even regarding her with respect. She saw blood on her hands, glowing like an unwanted badge of morbid honour, marking her as its angel.
The door opened with deliberate slowness, its speed set by Frau Mohr, the Vestal Virgin of this concocted shrine.

“The gentlemen to see you,” she said and withdrew modestly, her voice and body language hinting at the solemnity of the occasion which should greatly be respected.

Maria had been half-afraid, half-hopeful that the visitors would appear as some demonic figures who would put her out of her anguishing misery, but the men who stood at the door seemed utterly unremarkable, no more menacing than tax inspectors.

They observed Maria intently.

“Pleased to meet you, Fraulein Orsic,” one of them said while taking off a tightly-fitting glove. They were both quite young, perhaps around thirty, and moderately handsome, though different in appearance. “How very kind of you to receive us”. He extended his hand. Maria took it.

It was a heavy handshake, weighing down on Maria with the force of time distilled in solitude. Instantly, the moment settled as an anchorage point that was fixed in eternity, keeping one simultaneously safely afloat and a prisoner of its gravity; to be revisited over and over again. This handshake claimed Maria as its own; wrapped her in a blanket of soft whispers assuring her that she would often return to that moment in her mind.

“I’m sorry… What did you say?” she asked after a brief silence, as her racing heart began to settle.

The men looked at each other.
“What did you think I said?” the man asked in return, without removing his hand.

This was strange. Maria had the feeling that regardless of the counted seconds that had passed, she had shared a peculiar confession, resonant with things that can only be said between two people with a particularly close bond. She also realized that none of these words had actually been spoken yet, but they would be born in many years to come; not in a conversation between two people but in a tortured mind smothered by isolation.

Perhaps, this man was to play some part in her life after all.

“I’m sorry,” Maria said and released the man’s hand hastily. “Won’t you gentlemen please be seated?”

“Did you see something?” the man insisted. “Was it a... premonition? Is that what it should be called?”

“It’s really nothing. Just energies and signals crossing one another,” Maria gave a reply which in its vagueness would have satisfied most of her customers.

“No glimpses into my future?”

“It would take more than that. But now... Would you please be seated?” She sat down herself to reinforce this second invitation, and the men followed her example.

The one who had extended his hand in greeting had dark and deep eyes that made him appear somewhat exotic. Maria felt her prolonged appraisal was about to make the moment awkward, so she turned her eyes away abruptly. She noticed that the other gentleman, less
dashing in his appearance, was carrying a leather briefcase.

“Now, is there something I can assist you with?” Maria asked the obvious question. Sometimes words with little actual meaning needed to be exchanged in order to mark the beginning of the official part. Since the clients were often longing for additional reassurance, she added: “I have a feeling you want to contact someone.”

“All in good time,” the dark man said. This was rather unexpected. “First of all we would like you to tell us something.”

The other man lifted the briefcase resting on his knees and placed it on the table between them.

“Could you please tell us what’s inside this?”

Oh. The sceptical types. Before the séance, they want to be astonished and convinced of the medium’s authentic powers. Maria disliked these sorts of parlour tricks, but they were a necessary procedure on more occasions than she cared to recall. She gave the men a cool look, indicating that their proposition was rather distasteful.

“I take it that you yourselves are familiar with the contents of the briefcase?” she asked.

The gentlemen nodded, but didn’t disclose any more information.

There were many ways to deal with this situation. She could try to access the contents, probing the object with her senses, or try to infiltrate the consciousness of the gentlemen and fish the information from there. Or she could have protested that this was beneath her, that
she was a medium who only channels the voices of the departed ones through automatic writing, and not a carnival performer who reads tea leaves or predicts lottery numbers. But she wasn’t rushing into things. With deliberate movements she arranged the pen and papers before her, letting the gentlemen know that these were her real instruments of business. Then she took a deep breath and emptied her mind. The object in the briefcase was most probably something that had belonged to the person these gentlemen wished to contact. Perhaps a lonely, frightened item that is only too eager to make contact with a human mind again. Or, then, a hostile entity that guards its privacy fiercely. Maria was good at dealing with objects that had been cut loose from their owners. It was a question of approach, like the procedure of applying for an appointment.

Maria closed her eyes, reached her mind out to the object and spoke to it silently. *If you have a voice, let it be heard. If you have a face, let it be seen. If you have a secret, share it with me.*

She felt it awakening: it was aware of someone probing it. This was a smart object, probably very old; something that had seen many generations of people and considered individuals a short-lived nuisance. It was to be approached with caution: like a dormant electrical charge the energy in some articles was capable of paralyzing a careless investigator.

Maria had just admonished herself towards caution, when the object tapped itself into her subconscious mind like an aggressive leech. It hit her like a shock wave from a shell, deafening and blinding,
ripping through her senses with a sharpness of a thousand knives. And around the sharpness there was a mantle of unbearable cold and insufferable heat; something that Maria had rarely experienced before.

The contact only lasted for a fraction of a second before Maria slammed her senses shut. As a medium, she needed to know the difference between suppressing the fear that prompted the urge to close a contact with a tortured soul and the necessity to protect herself from violent and hostile memories which were able to injure a vulnerable human mind.

She had obviously given a muted cry, as she jolted instinctively away from the briefcase. The men stared at her with great interest. One of them had begun to light a cigarette; now his hand was frozen in mid-air, holding a burning match. The other man leaned onto the table, closer to Maria.

“What did you see?” he asked. “It is quite clear, that you did see something.”

Maria let them wait for a moment before she answered.

“I see two gentlemen who are here to test me. I don’t even think you want me to make a contact.”

The men glanced at each other again, but this time there was a certain recognition in their eyes, and respect in his voice as the handsome one said:

“You are absolutely right. We shall explain everything to you.”

“Once I have correctly described the object you inquire about?”

“That, we would be very grateful for.”

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Maria was uncertain about where this situation would lead, but she decided to avoid confrontation.

“I had a most strange feeling,” she commenced, reliving the brief moment of contact. “There is something in there that’s very old, and yet ageless. It’s inanimate, and yet it has touched countless lives. It’s revered and feared. In fact, it has seen so much fear that I don’t care to make another excursion towards it.”

“Where does it come from?” the other man, who had hardly said a word, asked. He had a well-hidden Austrian accent.

“That’s what strikes me as strange,” Maria replied. “It’s man made, and yet I have a feeling it’s not of this world. And there’s death; this thing is the cause of suffering and death of many.”

The men were respectfully silent. Maria could see that she had succeeded in impressing them deeply.

“Was this what you expected to hear?”

The men nodded.

“It is very close to what we were hoping to learn. But, if you would have to label the object – what single word would you use?”

“Perhaps...” Maria took another moment to think. “Religious...?”

She instantly perceived that she had hit the nail on the head. The man who was in charge of the briefcase rose from his seat and carefully unlocked the leather portfolio. From inside he produced a small object, wrapped in dark cloth. He placed it on the green velvet of the table and unwrapped it solemnly. Maria stared at the thing that was slowly revealed, mesmerized. She had
the urge to block the powerful vibrations it emitted, and yet felt strangely drawn to it.

“Beautiful, isn’t it?” the man said. “It’s Aztec. It was used in ceremonial sacrifice about five hundred years ago. Terrible to think, but it has been used to cut the hearts out of living humans.”

“Terrible and formidable,” the other man said as if to himself.

“But there’s more, isn’t there?” Maria said, her eyes still on the well-crafted handle, which was made in the form of some terrifying deity.

“Yes. You were right, when you said that it’s not of this world.” The man slid his fingers gently over the blade, which she could sense had once been frighteningly sharp. “It’s forged from a meteorite.”

“Yes,” Maria whispered, fighting the urge also to touch the blade.

“Meteorite iron is notoriously difficult to work with, but the ancient masters did a brilliant job, don’t you think?”

“Yes,” Maria repeated.

“It is of course no longer used to instil fear. But it has proven a very useful tool in cases such as this,” the man explained. “And now it has led us to you, as we hoped it would.”

“But why me?” Maria asked. “In Munich, mediums are a ten a penny.”

The dark and handsome man smiled.

“But we didn’t come here by chance. We knew about you and we were praying to the gods that you wouldn’t disappoint us.”
“I deal in truth, not pleasing,” Maria said. “I reserve the right to disappoint.”

“The truth can never disappoint,” the plainer looking man said with a sudden ardour, which made him look almost beautiful. His eyes, which had appeared timid and nervous, were now ablaze with sparks that flew from some inner furnace. Maria was uncertain whether this furnace was fuelled by a creative or destructive energy.

“True,” the dark one said, “providing that one has found the truth one has set out to find!” He then clicked his heels together in a military fashion and bowed his head.

“I am sorry we haven’t introduced ourselves,” he said, “but it seemed quite possible that we would leave dissatisfied and never see you again. I am happy to say this will not be the case. My name is Hess, Rudolf Hess.”

He offered his hand again, but this time it was to greet a lady, not the mere provider of a service.

“And may I please introduce my friend and colleague, Adolf Hitler.”

The troubled aloofness in the smaller man’s eyes was back. He quite obviously felt uneasy around women and only blossomed in the warmth of his own visions, where women were either symbols or statistics.

“Herr Hess. Herr Hitler.” Maria remained cool and restrained, preferring to let the gentlemen feel in charge of the situation.

“I heard my mentor speak highly of you and it was my intention – for which you must pardon me – to prove
him right or wrong,” the handsome one, Hess, said. “Because he is a man who in his search for the truth has been known to... well... be too eager to accept words from lips that are more than usually beautiful.”

Maria lowered her eyes, as the unwritten scenario that is called social intercourse between a man and a lady requires.

“He sent me to you with an invitation, and you must excuse my eagerness to conduct my own investigation before I could wholeheartedly impart it to you. May we please be seated again?”

They all resumed their seats. Maria should have been excited, but she had polished her image of composed graciousness to the extent where it became a haven that concealed her beating heart even from herself. With utmost calm, she asked:

“Who, if I may enquire, is your mentor?”
“IT’s General Haushofer,” Hess said.
Maria’s heart skipped a beat.
“Finally,” she thought to herself.
Chapter II: Vienna, 1917

Maria had met General Karl Haushofer little more than a year ago. She had barely been of age. How long ago it seemed, their gathering at the Café Schopenhauer in Vienna. It had been the Vienna of the Emperor, before everything crumbled to give way to chaos. Only two years had passed, Café Schopenhauer most likely used the same napkins, the hat styles of the ladies patronizing the place had barely altered, yet an era had irreversibly ended. Things looked the same, but something was absent. The scent; that’s what Maria missed the most. The omnipresent, omnipotent scent of aristocracy, decadence and security. Everything at the Schopenhauer had given off this scent: the Turkish coffee - watered down since the war had begun - the seductive waltzes and tangos from the string quintet - cut down to a trio since the war had begun - the Cuban cigars or Russian cigarettes of the gentlemen and the Parisian perfume of the ladies. Everything in the Viennese way of life belonged to the enemies, and since the war was lost, the enemies had banned the scent from those who were defeated. What remained was pretence.

But back then the people thought that 1917 was going to be just another year in the glorious annals of history of the Empire, with its unavoidable ups and
downs. And yet, it was the last. Actually, it was quite appropriate, for a new era was about to begin, the era of Aquarius, and the old world with its structure and ways was doomed to obsolescence. The five of them - they were the representatives of the new era, the builders of a new nation, and Maria was thrilled to be invited and accepted.

“I have heard of you,” the general had said to her. He looked less of a German imperial general and more of a Viennese gentleman who knows his every word to be a key to a woman’s heart. Maria was twenty-one and she blushed.

“Waisz here has told me about you and I must say I am very impressed with what I see.”

Maria knew he was talking about some papers that Waisz, a decorated war hero, had shown him, but the man had a way of making everything said to a lady sound like a compliment.

“Thank you,” she said. “But I am no-one. I am no more important in producing these texts than is the pencil I was holding.”

“But you are, my dear,” the general said. Somehow it went without saying that when he spoke, the other members of the company remained silent. “You are channelling some great force that we, mere mortals, are never able to touch. The fact that this force has chosen you is the proof that you are more valuable than any of us.”

“What I receive,” Maria said, “are words. Words that I don’t even know how to read. Without men like you, these scribblings would never change the world.”
“We are all but tools in the hands of --- well, nowadays it’s beginning to be difficult to choose the right word!” the eldest of the men, Prelate Gernot, said. “Twenty years ago I wouldn’t have hesitated to use the word ‘God’. But now? When you say ‘God’, you no longer generate a universal image of the one creative power. People have become donnish dogmatists, with too much knowledge in their hands and too little wisdom in their hearts. We are too eager to throw the words like ‘God’ out with the bath water, expecting to find some abstract and universally self-explanatory concept at the bottom of the tub.”

“And that’s why we all need one another,” the general took over. “To really turn these empty words into something that makes a difference at every level of existence. There can be no doubt that we are being helped by those wiser than us. But not everyone has the power to learn from them.”

“That’s where you come in.” This was said by Baron Rudolf von Sebottendorf, whom Maria had briefly met some time earlier and who had encouraged her to meditate on the Oriental writings. “It’s always a woman who brings us closer to the truth. Be it the Sibyl at Delphi or Madame Blavatsky, or Joan of Arc – we gentlemen are for some reason excluded from the ranks of those who are chosen.”

“Perhaps that’s why we always seek the company of the ladies – to be nearer to the Supreme,” the general said, and everyone gave a short, appreciative laugh. Maria thought that the general must have made life very easy for his soldiers - or their death.
“We are indeed,” Prelate Gernot said, “and we rarely fail to be exalted by them.”

Maria felt herself blush. The elderly man radiated an aura of a chosen purity, which made it somewhat uncomfortable for her to hear his sophisticated remarks involving women.

“For we subconsciously want the bringers of good news to astonish us with their beauty and grace, because deep down we know that beauty comes from harmony and universal order. From God!” the prelate concluded.

The way the venerable man spoke to and about Maria was almost verging on flirtation. Maria understood that this was done to help her relax and feel herself as an equal partner to these men, who by status and experience were towering above her. Because a balancing equals sign can be drawn between a man of distinction and a woman of beauty, when the two choose to play their prearranged hands of cards as peers.

“Yet it always is a man who makes the visions of a woman a reality,” she countered.

Sebottendorf gave a grin indicating that he regarded the remark he was about to make as witty.

“The coming era will be the age of a woman. Perhaps the next time we meet, Maria will have summoned us to her feet!”

More relaxing laughter ensued. Maria was grateful for the effort the men were making to make her feel at ease. And yet she became anxious lest she be a disappointment to those who obviously regarded her as one of them, one of the chosen ones.
Waisz spoke. Not because he had anything important to say, but because he felt the attention on his lady friend might have been too embarrassing for her.

“Don’t tease Maria!”

He wasn’t a man who could be considered witty.

“Lothar,” Maria said, her eyes, voice and body giving a reminder that, after all, the physically strong but mentally average pilot had been instrumental in introducing her to the group that had gathered at the Café Schopenhauer. “The gentlemen are not teasing me. They are honouring me, simply by having me in their company!”

Lothar smiled, appeased.

“Is it too much to refer to this meeting as miraculous?” Sebottendorf continued. “For a prophet needs believers if he is to upset his era. There might have been countless prophets – indeed, countless Jesuses or Mohammeds – who went unnoticed, who died before they were able to spread the message. If a supreme intelligence wishes to communicate a message, should it bet on one single prophet? Methinks not! It would transmit its message globally. And the easiest way to change society? To change every single human being! Yet we all know that we humans are not receptive, even if our minds and souls are open. Therefore this information only reaches those who have a special level of receptivity. Was Jesus the son of God? I shall not ponder on this. Suffice for us to know that he was able to channel the divine knowledge to us, to the world that was yoked to blindly obeying the demon god of the Hebrews. Suddenly, a message of charity and love was
introduced. I sometimes believe that it was Mary Magdalene who channelled the message of a new era to the world for Jesus to deliver it to humanity and to accept his martyrdom. Two thousand years ago, the voice of a woman and her sacrifice would have gone unnoticed.”

“Have you decided?” a waiter asked, probably having stood for some time beside the table. Café Schopenhauer was proud of its unnoticeable waiters.

Several minutes were spent discussing the assortment of coffee, tea and cakes on the menu. Maria looked around: it was a place for the idle ladies and the aristocrats of the old era, probably discussing their hunting and fishing or planning the next house party. None of these people seemed to realize that thousands were being killed on the fronts of a war which had arrived just as suddenly as the Black Death had arrived some five hundred years ago. It was the time for people to die. It was their own task to find plausible justifications for dying.

“And that task has been fulfilled,” Maria thought to herself.

“Sorry?” general Haushofer said, with a spoon of sugar stopping mid-air.

Everyone had their eyes on Maria.

“I’m so sorry,” she said. “Sometimes I find myself answering questions I don’t even dare to ask.”

“To dare – and why shouldn’t we be guided by our foolhardiness?” prelate Gernot asked, mixing the sugar in his cup of coffee. “The truth wants out. It has, by its nature, always had an intimidating effect on people:
something in us demands that the truth should be hidden. It’s like preserving life itself. But against who, or what?”

“Against our enemies,” the pilot Waisz found it his duty to reply.

“This war...” Prelate Gernot said, and his eyes swelled up with tears. “This war is lost to us. It’s lost because countless people will not accept the spiritual revolution, brought on by the Age of Aquarius. They will fight on, driven by anger, still reassuring themselves that they are fighting for the truth. And only a few will survive.”

“Unless the new truth simply takes over,” Haushofer speculated. “Not the demonic truth of the old religions, of the vindictive gods, who make us wage war. We all know that one day there will be a truth that we don’t need to fight for. A truth that simply is and everyone in the world will reach out for it.”

“Yet, to receive that truth, we need to abolish the truth of before,” the prelate said. “The Age of Aquarius will be the era of enlightenment at all imaginable levels”.

“Ushered in by the messages from the likes of you,” von Sebottendorf added. “The countless prophets and sibyls who have given their best to convert the hostile world into a kind one!”

Lothar turned to Maria, a warning look in his eyes. “With most of these prophets perishing.”

The strong black coffee with a touch of brandy – Maria had observed the general pouring some into her cup – made her feel braver. She smiled at the gentlemen, and they smiled back. At the same time, she was careful
not to appear drunk or too fascinated by the suggestions of the men in the company.

“You are wrong if you think that you need me,” she said. “In fact, I am the one who is desperately in need of someone who could cure me – of all the things I don’t understand, or want.”

The prelate laid his hand upon hers.

“Lothar showed me some papers that you produced during a séance,” he said. “I trust him. He doesn’t lie. I’ve been his confessor since he was a child, and since he was a child, he has manifested an extraordinary integrity.”

“That he is a hero is undisputed,” General Haushofer said.

“And as a human being… am I doomed?”

Maria had never seen Lothar’s eyes turn misty before.

Everyone turned to Prelate Gernot, as if expecting him to produce an answer that would deliver an antidote for every anguish ever to be felt by any man.

The prelate lowered the cup he was holding and stared into the young man’s eyes.

“No. No. The most beautiful emotion a man can have is remorse. Without true remorse, there can’t be true redemption. Without redemption, there is no salvation. We humans are involved in a cosmic game of chess, with our very existence at stake. History is being written with the ink of hate – it’s like an unfinished canvas that is always being attacked by the brush of a giftless artist, who thinks that his brush-strokes will change reality.”
Lothar opened his mouth as if to say something in his defence, but General Haushofer beat him to it.

“If a man would go to battle hating himself, it would be a lost battle,” he said, giving an impression that he had practised these words before. “How many different truths does a pilot run before his eyes, when he sees the enemy aeroplanes on the horizon? None, if he is a member of the race that is to lead the world to salvation! As are you!” The general folded his arms around the young pilot and embraced him without further speech.

It was an emotional moment and Maria felt an obligation to infuse a touch of feminine softness into the somewhat sombre atmosphere. She wanted to say something that would alleviate the distress of these great men who were destined to carry on their shoulders the fate of a nation. But words seemed to have left her. Maria had the feeling of being a cocoon in which something is moving, preparing to break out. Alcohol, which she had never tried before, was circulating in her veins like molten gold, pulsating with a hypnotic beat in her temples. The heavier her body seemed to grow, the more its weight snapped the shackles by which it was attached to her spirit. Maria opened her heart, her mind, and spoke. She wasn’t quite sure what she was saying.

There followed an immediate silence. Even the trio that had played the old-fashioned Stephanie Galop finished at that very moment.

Von Sebottendorf smiled, then grinned, then smiled again ridiculously.
“She has done it,” he whispered. “She has been approached.”

General Haushofer was writing something in his notebook. Prelate Gernot had his eyes on Maria, whereas Lothar seemed to be searching for change. Yet he was the first to speak:

“What was that?” he said, with a bemused expression.

“What?” Maria repeated mechanically. She had the feeling she was drunk for the first time in her life.

“I don’t know if I should thank you, or the one who has chosen to speak through you,” the prelate said very softly. “One should be impossible without the other. Oh, how we have searched for you!”

The general produced some papers from his pocket, while the prelate was still gazing into Maria’s eyes tenderly. Von Sebottendorf had pearls of sweat beading on his forehead.

“Go on, Fraulein Orsic! Don’t lose the connection!”

“I don’t know what it meant, or even what language it was in,” the prelate said, “but I’m sure those words were said not by you but through you. And I’m sure they carry an enormous meaning.”

General Haushofer looked at the papers he had produced. “Maybe they were the very words you wrote down during a séance last year. Lothar told me about you; about a girl who is able to fall into a genuine trance and transmit information – even though unknown to herself. Your hand, driven by some unknown consciousness, marked down the doodlings that you
yourself were unable to appreciate. Had Lothar not shown these scribbles to us, we would still be in the dark.”

“I’ve heard that passage of speech before,” von Sebottendorf exclaimed, pushing himself to his feet slowly and looking dazed.

General Haushofer glanced at von Sebottendorf. Then he faced Maria. “The markings you produced during that séance were only the beginning. We believe there will be much more, once you learn to master your powers even further. Perhaps you already have. I’m almost afraid to ask von Sebottendorf where he has heard these words before. Because I know it will change everything.”

Everyone’s eyes turned to von Sebottendorf. Everyone asked themselves whether the astonishment shown on his face was real. This was a man who believed that some moments deserved to be spotlighted by adding a touch of drama.

The rather plump von Sebottendorf sank to his seat again. Maria had noticed that he had always been very careful to hide his double chin with youthful gestures and poses of his head. Now he had completely forgotten about his appearance. His mouth was hanging open, his chin almost touching his chest.

“Oh… my… God…!” he uttered. “I thought I was the only one of our race who has ever heard that invocation, which is chanted by the Guardians of the Supreme Truth in Tibet during their most sacred ceremony. These words signal that the initiate priest has established a contact with the higher knowledge!”
“Maria, what did you see?” the pilot Waisz asked her, grabbing her hands. Maria stared at her fingers in his grip, but seemed to be utterly oblivious to what had happened.

“Whatever I have said, I apologize,” she said as if in a stupor.

“You have seen and spoken the truth!” von Sebottendorf whispered.

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“Until we were told of your meeting with the general, the reports of your séances seemed rather feeble,” Hess said. “For don’t we all know that the truth is preceded by lies that are designed to smoothen the path for an ultimate lie?”

“Haushofer is a great man, a great general,” the quiet man, Hitler, said. Maria was eager to concur, but wanted to see whether the man only wished to feel the satisfaction of being admired for his noble opinions. She was surprised when Hitler unexpectedly continued by bursting out:

“He is too great a man to be a leader.”

“What do you mean?” she asked.

The pale man seemed somewhat intimidated by the fact that a beautiful woman had spoken to him.

“General Haushofer is kind, without realizing the hazard of being too kind. His objective is not to have his men killed. What he fails to remember is history: forgiveness amounts to lowering your shield. And this is
followed by the spear of your enemy piercing your heart. Is forgiveness a weakness?”

“Such weakness is strength in the hands of the mighty,” Hess said.

“Spoken like the enemy!” Hitler turned to him, as if he wanted to punch him.

“An enemy of what?” Hess snorted. “The frontier between friends and enemies is repositioned on a weekly basis.”

“What is your religion, Herr Hitler?” Maria asked the smaller man, whose sudden and violent outbursts when it came to protecting his views had been like bright red explosions in the dimly lit room.

“My race is my religion,” the man said.

“Well… what does this religion demand from you and offer to you?”

“Sacrifice,” Hitler said after a short moment of silence. “It both demands it and offers it as a prize.”

“That’s a harsh religion,” Maria observed.

“Religions are transactions: you must give what’s dear to you in order to gain what you wish. I don’t make deals with gods. I pray that I could sacrifice myself thoroughly and that my sacrifice would be my ultimate reward; that my blood would water the seeds of a new era.”

“So you are craving for martyrdom?” Hess asked with undisguised sarcasm. “Are you willing to sacrifice your life?”

“Life!” Hitler grunted. “Dogs can sacrifice their lives in a scuffle over a bone. Life means nothing. We all die.”
“Then what would your ultimate sacrifice be?” Maria asked.

Hitler straightened his back dramatically.

“Everything. My integrity. My better judgement. If needed, I would take wrong decisions and act against all my principles. I would be a monster and be remembered as one. I would gladly be hated or, even worse, be forgotten. I would even sacrifice the redeeming knowledge that my deeds had changed the world for the better.”

“Well I’m sure you’ll have ample time to prove yourself right – or wrong,” Hess said. “But we mustn’t bore Fraulein Orsic with all this.” He sat and leaned closer to Maria, leaving Hitler intentionally distanced from the two of them.

“You asked me a while ago, if we wanted you to make a contact,” he said. “In fact it was us who wanted to make a contact with you. We came here as messengers; we took the liberty to test you. It was needed to reassure us that the trust placed in you is justified.”

He took an envelope from his coat pocket and placed it on the table.

“General Haushofer sent us here to give you this invitation. He’s afraid the Post Office might fall to the Reds and he feels you are too important to be in any way compromised.”

“He believes the communists might want to use you,” Hitler remarked, sounding like a fractious child who has been excluded from a game he desperately yearns to play.
“Therefore I undertook the task of inviting you personally,” Hess proceeded like the naughty boy who flaunts the joys of the game in the face of one who has been left out. “You and other ladies in your circle are expected to meet some very prominent members of the Thule Society and of The Lords of the Black Stone in Berchtesgaden, in a week.”

“I shall be there,” Maria said.

“Great secrets are to be revealed. Great things are expected of you,” Hess concluded, then rose to his feet and bowed to Maria.

Hitler did the same, but he still looked vexed.

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Thank you for your interest!