

Part III -- The Loves of Marina

Chapter I -- Part III -- The Loves of Marina

At work, there were people who were not without love for Marina. Yanka Sabala had been in the pharmacy at Third Clinical Hospital on Lenin Street for ten years or more when Marina first came from Leningrad. Knowing now her as a very attractive girl with a rich internal world, well brought up, knowledge-filled, yet gentle soul. Yanka had entered Third Clinical Hospital pharmacy when she was very young and so the difference in age between them was just a few years, Yanka was 24 and Marina 18 or 19, but all the same, Marina was very professional, and if she felt she was right, she would insist on her opinion. So Yanka saw her as an intellectual despite her age. As for herself, Yanka felt she lacked a lot of social things: like how to introduce yourself to people; there were gaps in her development. She'd been brought up in a small provincial place in a remote region of Byelorussia and before being from Leningrad had different customs. Even when she'd been from Leningrad seemed to know more than people

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Chapter 1 -- Yanina and Sona

At work, there were people who were not without love for Marina. Yanina Sabela had been in the pharmacy at Third Clinical Hospital on Lenin Street for ten years or more when Marina first came from Leningrad. Yanina saw her as a very attractive girl with a rich internal world, well brought up. Strong-willed, yet quite open. Yanina had entered Third Clinical Hospital pharmacy when she was very young and so the difference in age between them was just a few years, Yanina was 24 and Marina 18 or 19, but all the same, Marina was very professional, and if she felt she was right, she would insist on her opinion. So Yanina saw her as sophisticated despite her age. As for herself, Yanina felt she lacked a lot of social things: like how to introduce yourself to people; there were gaps in her development. She'd been brought up in a small provincial place in Mogolov region of Byelorussia and Marina being from Leningrad had different development. Even schoolchildren from Leningrad seemed to know more than people

from anywhere else. There were so many museums in that city. All the same, Yanina was close friends with Marina and they shared a lot. After all, when you're young, it's quicker to become close. And Marina was very open; when you asked her a direct question, she would answer.

Later after Marina had been working in their pharmacy for about six months, she and Yanina spent a weekend together out of Minsk with friends, perfectly all right--girls slept together in same bed, so nothing wrong--and they got close, they talked a lot. Yanina remembers hearing about how hard life was for Marina in Leningrad and how her stepfather used to scream at her. If he called her a prostitute, she was not, she was a normal nice person. Yanina could understand such situations because her father had also been very strict and sometimes screamed dirty words at his children, but Yanina just ignored tirades. You know, among Russian men in small provincial places, you hear nasty rude words; men use dirty words in front of women with no real reason, so such accusations didn't impress Yanina. She knew Marina better.

She does remember that Marina did want to get married desperately and have a family of her own and told Yanina once that her grandmother had once forecast, "Somebody like you should marry a foreigner."

Yanina always thought that Marina was going to be a good

housewife because once, when she and Marina were visiting a home together, there was a kitchen book about how to prepare healthy food and Marina spent quite a while looking through that book.

Sona was born in a village 150 kilometers from Minsk, a town called Zabolat, and her father was accountant at local school and later on in charge of a farm; her mother was a milk-girl at this farm. Of eight children, Sona was born first; five younger sisters and two younger brothers were all still alive, and she finished school in her village and had a secondary technical education, then got an assignment at hospital pharmacy in Minsk. Her family, being Byelorussian, had her baptized in her village, but then people were always being baptized there in an Orthodox church and sometimes with some ceremony. What it really meant was that guests were invited to your house and you laid out a special table of food and then neighbors and relatives were invited to celebrate. A Party member wouldn't show up unless he or she was also your relative. Actually, they didn't pay too much attention then to whether there was baptism or not. Main idea was: if a baby is born, let everybody come and celebrate.

When Marina came to Minsk and started working at Third Clinical Hospital pharmacy, she dressed a little better than others. She was receiving salary no larger than anyone else, but Marina's aunt provided her with food, and Marina certainly spent her money on clothes. She did try to look fashionable. All the same she was very direct. She would tell you what she thought, tell it directly into your eyes. And she was kind, not greedy. She had a ruble, OK, someone wants to borrow money, she would give it--she was not greedy. If you asked her, she wouldn't think, "Oh, maybe I'll need to keep it today for myself." She would just offer it. She was straight: She would tell you the truth to your face even if it was not good, rather than whispering it behind your back. She was even not afraid to talk directly to people above her. Tell it to her boss if necessary. She wasn't fierce, she was fair: She would just say "I need this for my job." That was all.

Pharmacy work was from nine until four and there were about fifteen on duty, different girls assigned to different specialities. Sona, for example, would do everything that needed high sterilization; Marina dealt mostly with eye prescriptions, but each could do another's job if there was a lot of focus in a given day. And, of course, there was one rule: When dealing with patients, do not be ashamed to ask questions of your colleagues. No matter how small your doubt,

ask. You are dealing with patients. Marina was a good worker, very good on such matters.

Marina doesn't think Valya ever got mad at her. She would fuss at her, of course, and complain that she couldn't drag her out of bed because Marina had stayed out so late the night before, and now they had to rush because she was late for work. Valya would fix a breakfast which Marina didn't even eat, she was running so fast, and Valya would complain, "I'm just a maid in this house, that's all I am, I'm cleaning after you and you're sleeping--it's not fair." Around this time, Marina even thought she'd better cut down on her dates. She started getting up early. But then Valya would say, "Get out of here, get out of kitchen. I can do it alone."

When Ilya was home and not away on a special job, Marina would try to come in early from her date. Because Uncle Ilya had only to say a few words. That was it. He wouldn't punish her, he would say: "I don't approve of this; we have a curfew." But Valya would intervene. Of course, she was Marina's favorite aunt. She never had to ask herself if she was related by blood or not. Valya was her favorite when it came to aunts.

Chapter 2 -- Valya's Neighbors

When it came to singing arias at parties, Mikhail Kosovitch had a good voice, and he was full of energy as a young man. He received splendid marks in medical school. When not yet twenty years old, he was already a military doctor and was sent to the Western Front in Great Patriotic War.

7 | Post-war, he was both a professor and an academician--a little of everything, he said. Since he was speaking loudly to his interviewers, Misha's wife, a full-faced good-looking blonde lady named Ludmilla, also a doctor, began to tease him gently. "He is being so lively," she said, "because Misha thinks that when he raises his voice, you will be able to understand Russian."

Ludmilla (who is the older sister of Larissa who was Marina's dear friend when Marina and Larissa were adolescents) had a father who had been repressed in 1937. He was arrested on Ludmilla's birthday, the 2nd of February. Once, years

later, she received a postcard on that date from Yalta, sent by her brother to congratulate her. He added, however: "I remember everything connected with this date." So did Ludmilla. It had left her open to many people's feelings.

Sometimes, when she visits her brother, she asks to read her old letters. He has kept a large album of such correspondence with snapshots, and when she goes through photos and letters that concern 1937, she begins to cry. At that time she had three older brothers. She was a fourth child, an only girl, born after three brothers who would all love her dearly, and while Ludmilla's parents usually celebrated everyone's birthday, hers was considered special. On 2nd of February, guests came: children, then grownup people, and they were all waiting for her father to come back from work on this day, February 2, 1937, but he did not arrive. At night, there was a knock on their door, her mother opened it, and here was her father under arrest, accompanied by men from militia. Her father apologized in front of everybody for having to make such an entrance.

At that time he was in charge of a huge meat factory in the Far East, a very high position. Nonetheless, these militia men began a search while everyone was still there-- moved furniture at will, opened drawers. Their guests disappeared.

While in prison, her father was not tortured, but it was not easy. He may have been mistreated less than others since he was a known person, yet they would still put him on his knees in a corner and he would have to remain there through a night. They would throw tobacco dust in his eyes. Nonetheless, it was not equal to that severe attitude with which they dealt with other people in this same prison. Mostly petty humiliation for her father.

It developed that some people still respected him. So a message was delivered to her mother at 2 o'clock one night to tell her to visit his prison. He had a message to give her. His note said: "In a few days they are going to take me to my meat factory where they want to prove I've committed this and that, and I need certain documents to defend myself. . ." He mentioned which ones were required. He had been accused of sending out a boxcar load of spoiled meat.

Fifteen months after his arrest, they not only allowed him to go home, but put him back on his job. While he had been in prison, his family had been considered "enemies of Soviet people" so friends and acquaintances were naturally afraid to communicate with them, afraid, after all, for themselves.

After he got his job back, he worked hard for many years

and then Larissa was born in 1941, fourteen years after Ludmilla.

Despite his high position, her father was not a Party member, although he knew what was going on. Ludmilla remembers that whenever he heard a piece of propaganda on their radio that he found impossible to listen to, he would say to her, "Hi, darling--get me our potato smasher." It was his way of saying, "Let's mash such nonsense to bits."

In Ludmilla's family, her father was so much in love with his three boys, that when war commenced, he began to cry, and said to her, "I'm going to lose my sons." He had become established again as an influential man, and so was able to keep his youngest boy who had just graduated from high school out of induction, but that son went voluntarily, and in four months was killed in combat. When his notice arrived, Ludmilla's mother was so upset that she didn't tell her husband. Whenever she could contain her grief no longer, she would go over to her neighbors in order to weep so that at home she could behave as if nothing had happened. But Ludmilla's father grew worried: Why for four months had there been not one letter? Yuzik was this son's name and Ludmilla's father went to his Party secretary at work and started to complain: "Why are there no letters?" And that Party secretary replied, "What do you mean, no letters? Don't you

know about Yuzik?"

Her father came home and had a heart attack, and in four months he died. Then another brother was sent to the front and was killed too. Ludmilla's mother had now lost two sons and a husband. Two sons and a husband lost within a year and a half. Those were difficult years.

7 | Some forty years ago in Minsk, when Misha, now age 29, had already become an expert in radiology, he was asked to come at two A.M. to the Deputy Minister of Health's office. Stalin did not sleep at night, and so there was a rule that government offices also stayed open and only ceased working in accordance with when he went to bed. So 2:00 A.M. was not an unusual hour to be asked to appear. Misha had no idea why he had been summoned, but once he arrived he soon encountered a special expression. It went: "There is some opinion that exists that you should . . ." and whichever official you were seeing would then state which opinion existed. Of course, you never knew who was behind such an opinion. It might even be your Minister of the Republic, but that particular high official you are talking to, only says "There is an opinion that exists . . ." It is as if your entire country has

adopted this opinion. All you can understand is that it has come from persons higher than yourself. Considerably higher. In this case: "There is an opinion that we have a special job for you to be Head of our Medical Department in Ministry of Internal Affairs, Byelorussia." Which meant, of course, that Misha would be moved to MVD, also known as Ministry of Internal Affairs.

He was, as far as he was concerned, too young for this job. It needed someone with more experience in organizing things. So Misha tried to tell his Deputy Minister that he didn't want such an assignment; he was a doctor and wanted to remain one. He didn't wish to be a boss. Deputy Minister said to him, "We'll give you an apartment." Misha said, "I'm not asking for an apartment. My wife and myself, we have a room, 15 square meters downtown." Deputy Minister of Health said, "You're a young family. You're going to have children."

When Misha still didn't agree to take this job, Deputy Minister said, "Mikhail Kosovitch, why don't you want to be promoted? We're promoting you." Misha repeated: He just wanted to follow his profession, be a doctor. Deputy Minister said, "Since you are a very independent person, you can organize your life so you can be both." He spent forty minutes trying to talk Misha into it.

Now, with this Deputy Minister was present a man in

charge of all personnel, and at last, this person was told:
 "Try to see who is available for this job in Byelorussian Republic. If there's anybody better than Misha, I'll offer it to him. If none better, don't even bother to ask. Misha will be appointed."

A little later, Misha took this personnel man aside and said, "Try to find somebody," but he replied, "I've looked through these lists already; I'm not going through all that again. It's easier for me to draw up papers. You're going to be appointed tomorrow." Thereby was Misha drafted into MVD.

By 1953, he was working with Ilya Prusakov.

Prusakov, being an engineer, worked as department head in production of wardrobes by prisoners. After 1953, however, political prisoners were diminishing to some degree. Stalin's death had produced First Amnesty in spring of that year. Ilya's responsibility, however, remained one of coordinating efforts of various work-gangs in local gulags with proper arrival of materials. His work was to keep production continuing evenly.

Misha and Ilya actually had what amounted to equal rank in MVD, and as a result had apartments approximately equal in floor space situated across the hall from each other. And Misha liked Ilya, considered him a special person: How to put it?--he was not like others. One could respect him. Ilya

same?
Ilya

never talked too much, knew his value, was tall, thin, dignified, educated. Not snobbish, but very intelligent. He had a long fine nose. He knew his value. Misha would say that Ilya was proud of his job, and never late for it, a professional officer. In his Army career, he had won many medals, and not just for such good behavior as working ten years at one activity, then twenty years in another, no, Ilya had real combat medals, an Order of Lenin, Red Star Order, which is very high; he was even nominated to be a Hero of the Soviet Union for participating in a major assault on the Scree River. Indeed, at Ilya's funeral in 1982, his Combat Red Banner had been carried in on a pillow. It was a Soviet custom. At last rites of a military man who had been awarded a fine medal, his decoration was ushered in on a small pillow.

Ilya, in person, however, was a much more modest fellow. He never put his medals on his jacket. And he was ready to contest decisions of his bosses if he felt they did not obey necessary or highest principles. He never manipulated situations behind anyone's back, but went straight to a given source and discussed matters with him.

Of course, there was no question who was boss of his household. Misha could give one good example: On a hot summer day, after they'd finished work, they were on their way home and he said to Ilya, "Let's go and buy a watermelon."

And Ilya replied, "Oh, Valya will buy it." Since Valya didn't work at a job, he wasn't about to tote a watermelon home.

Living across the hall, Ludmilla saw Valya frequently, and she could see that Valya did not have an easy life. She took care not only of Ilya but of his sister, Lyuba, who also lived with them and Ilya's mother, and people acted just a little superior to Valya. Ilya was at a much higher level intellectually than she was. He had high university degrees, and Valya had not even completed high school. And then, Ilya's mother was always very strict. Valya was not a person to go around to neighbors and complain, but Ludmilla did hear about it--her apartment was that rare place where Valya could be open.

What offended her most was that she was treated like a domarobotnitsa, a woman you hire to keep your house in order. Most often Ilya was not tender with her nor warm and it was clear that Valya suffered. Years later, it changed. When his mother died and Marina left, Ilya realized then how much older he was than Valya; in his last ten years, he became very ill, and then they were a good deal closer. He came to realize how important this woman was to him, and how she took such fine

care of him, went to such lengths to buy food that was especially good for him.

All the same, all through those earlier years, Valya took pains to keep herself in good form, psychologically speaking; she had the personality of someone who never complained. She even looked secure and self-confident; she was, in fact, confident that her family was not going to fall apart. While her situation within this family was not perfect, she was never afraid Ilya would leave her for anyone else.

Valya was also a very good housewife, and learned much from Ilya's mother, Tatiana. Of that lady, Ludmilla says: "We called her Vasha Zheleznova, which means: 'Iron Lady'." She was handsome, smart, intelligent, very good at communication, but like Ilya she had high moral standards, and was not available to just anyone who wished to make friends. At that time in early Fifties, there was no TV so generally, their two families would gather by a round table at evening, and Misha would read books aloud. Tatiana was often present. She usually wore dark clothes, and was always decently dressed, a very religious person who went regularly to church and kept an icon in her room. Ilya might be a Party member, but he never objected to that because this icon was just for her room, her private domain.

Tatiana's funeral took place at her church, a special

service. Valya organized everything, and, of course, Ilya was there and Tatiana's daughters, Lyuba and Musya. Tatiana had been friendly with a young priest with whom she had a deep spiritual relation; when she was dying, she invited him to her home for a talk. Nothing happened to anyone because of this. In fact, Ludmilla and Misha also went to this church on this day, and were not afraid to enter. But Ludmilla cannot remember anyone else being buried in such a fashion.

All of Ilya's friends from Ministry of Internal Affairs came, and Misha, of course--everybody, in fact, but their highest bosses. There must have been thirty people at this funeral. No one cried or showed emotion. Maybe they couldn't believe they were there in church. Nobody else did it that way.

After Tatiana's death, slowly but definitely, Valya came to be in charge of everything. When Ilya gave a party, and they were good parties with exceptionally good food cooked by Valya, she was certainly his hostess, but Valya did confess once to Ludmilla that while there were very nice people around at her gatherings, she could never get quite those same nice people who came to Ludmilla's parties, as, for example, the Minister of Culture of Byelorussia. More or less, she had her same people for each party, and Valya would even end up

wearing one dress every time--maybe try to put a new flower on it.

Ilya liked to paint landscapes and marine-scapes, but was highly critical about new tendencies such as surrealism and avant-garde. He would say, "If I paint a tree, I want to see that it is a tree." Once a painter started to explain it to him and Ilya said, "Why should I burn my brain to understand? What do these squares mean?" The painter said, "That is how I see our world." Ilya said: "Maybe you'd better consult a psychiatrist if this is your way of seeing."

His own painting became his hours away from a hard and difficult job at his office. "At that time," Misha said, "we had many problems because of our planned economy." Because part of Misha's job was to determine that workplaces were kept sanitary, he would visit factories that Ilya oversaw, and indeed, Ilya's factories made very good furniture. People from Minsk bought it with great pleasure. Ilya was coordinator of all such activities, a real task considering that timber came from one part of Russia, paper from another, and he had to bring in every necessity on schedule for workers to be able to fulfill their plan. Every day when workers came

on, there was work for them--paint, timber, glue, all there--an achievement. Ilya also had to coordinate cadres and management, still another kind of job.

Of course, there were sides to his friend that Misha never came to know too well. Ilya was an aristocrat, and kept most of his feelings to himself. At this period of time in Ministry of Internal Affairs, most bosses were simple people; coming back with decorations after USSR's Great Patriotic War, they were given high positions. But Ilya was well-educated; he even had a copper plate on which was engraved Engineer Prusakov. Before the Revolution, many people used a professional title and put it up on their door, but when Ilya did that, people didn't like it. They mocked him behind his back until he got a sense of that general feeling and took away his nameplate.

He was a delicate eater and a fastidious man, but Ilya was tough. Not a fellow to run away from a problem if something was not being done right; he usually had his knowledge in place. While he could be formal with people--even when he took a few drinks he never lost his dignity--he enjoyed inviting friends to his home, and never missed a holiday to celebrate. Of course, when Marina arrived that last time in 1959, new problems came with her.

Chapter 3 -- Larissa

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Ludmilla's sister, Larissa, 14 years younger than Ludmilla, is now a lovely, even voluptuous woman who does not look her age. Her manners are formal, but she smiles a good deal and sweetly. It offers a hint of that state of beatitude in which she claims to have lived when young.

After the war, Ludmilla entered Minsk Medical Institute in 1948. Larissa followed with her mother, although there was still an extreme housing shortage due to rebuilding in Minsk. So her mother's sister and husband and Larissa's mother and herself all lived in one room nine square meters in size, something like 9 feet by 10 feet.

After a time Larissa began to stay with her sister Ludmilla and her husband, Misha, a wonderful man.

In those years before adolescence and in early adolescence, Larissa's dreams were ambitious. She laughs at this recollection. She had wanted to become a doctor. She saw Ludmilla as her dearest friend, a physician whose patients all adored her, and Larissa wanted to emulate her. She did

well in school, read a lot, but then in ninth grade discovered that she could not look at blood. She did not lose her desire to be a doctor, yet she could never go into a dissecting room or a morgue. After that discovery, she even gave Minsk Medical Institute a wide berth. There were corpses in that building.

Larissa was modest then, very very modest. When she recollects it now, it even seems to her that she shouldn't have been, for she had many interests. Misha knew many concert singers and introduced her to opera and ballet. Minsk Opera House was near her home; she went there often.

Her school friends from Minsk days are still her friends, beautiful friendships. Growing up, most of them even shared the same large courtyard back of their apartment houses.

In adolescence she dated a lot of boys and had some favorites--sometimes she would even feel she wanted to marry one fellow but then a little later, would realize there was somebody else--she laughed.

7 | Misha Smolsky happened to be the soul of their company, one in a million, a center of their group. He was interested in Western culture. Everything he wore was very elegant yet never flashy. It was a beautiful group; they knew how to spend their time tastefully. A lot of dancing went on, and in fact they formed a dancing group called Minchanka, which means

"a female inhabitant of Minsk." She even travelled to other republics with her group. Larissa was slim then, very slim.

Now Larissa knew Marina for a long time. She first knew her as a thirteen-year-old schoolgirl who came from Leningrad to Minsk to visit her grandmother, and that was even at a time when Marina's mother was still alive. Marina was a year older than her, so it would have been 1954, when Larissa was living with Ludmilla on Kommunisticheskaya Street 42 and Valya dwelt across the hall. Marina's grandmother was still alive at this time and loved Marina very much. But in order to have some idea of what her grandmother was like you would have to know that she was like that very strong woman who had been in Panfilov's film, Vasya Zheleznova, that old film where the woman was so strong. Counting all people who lived in their building, Grandmother Prusakova only had some real liking for Misha and Ludmilla, which acquaintanceship began when Aunt Valya bought her over.

Marina was interested in literally everything. Larissa admired her. Marina was so beautiful, and so curious. And very bright. You looked at her and you were attracted. So they were friends. At that time embroidery was popular and they did a lot of that, and took walks together or went to movies. And when Marina went back to Leningrad to live again with her mother and stepfather, Larissa found it hard to part.

Being with her had been so interesting.

Then Marina came again for a summer visit in 1958 and she had become more practical. She had matured. Larissa was still starry-eyed but Marina knew a thing or two about real life. Larissa was even surprised at herself--what was in her upbringing that made her think all people were wonderful and good?

But Marina's mother was already dead. In her eyes you could see that life had left another imprint. While at that time they never talked about Marina's life in Leningrad, Larissa knew that Marina's stepfather was something of a despot.

Then, in 1959, Marina came to live permanently with Valya and Ilya. There she was again, same building, same floor, just across the hall. Valya and Ilya had a large collection of books and Marina loved to read. Larissa was in her dancing group so Marina would attend dances with her and they both had become big fans of opera, never missed a premiere in Minsk. Nothing was more exciting for them. They were very friendly now, and enjoyed many things together including most enjoyable meals.

"Our standard of living was different in those days," said Larissa. "What we had, wasn't the worst: We could buy smoked salmon and all sorts of fish, and clothes of some

variety were available in stores. Everything was relative to our standard of living, but in that period we had attractive imported shoes, pretty clothes, and good craftsmen were about.

"As for sex education--none in those days, none at all. Parents never spoke to one, you were never taught anything in school--God forbid, no!" Although Ludmila was a doctor, she explained no more to Larissa than physical changes in a woman. No talk about sexual life. Sex education came with marriage. By tradition, girls were brought up to believe that marriage was not sex but security, and so were raised in a very romantic way: Fall in love with a man, kiss him, but never know what's really going on--then a child comes. That was about how it was," said Larissa.

In medical encyclopedias, for example, a woman might read about a period, why it starts, how to deal with it, how to keep safe yourself if you didn't want to get pregnant, and there were books written about dangers present in abortion--afterwards, you might not have children any more.

Marina knew more, but after all, she was from Leningrad. Even so, they never discussed sex. If they talked about a boyfriend, it was whether he was good at kissing. They might also decide other questions of behavior--did he bring flowers? Did he stand up when you entered a room? If he didn't, Larissa would not pay attention no matter how good-looking her

date might be. And then they always liked a man who walked well. She thinks one reason Marina liked Misha Smolsky's group was that they all had such good manners. Having come from Leningrad, Marina was more culturally sophisticated than all these pharmacy girls she was working with, and so life was probably more interesting for her among Larissa's friends. Yet, their desire to meet men with good intellect was always accompanied by how such an intelligent person dressed. He had to be neat, wear nice white shirts, and have his shoes shining brightly.

21 On New Year's Eve--goodbye to 1959--Larissa went with Marina to welcome 1960 at Misha Smolsky's dacha out on Kryzhovka Street and when they walked in, Marina said, "Guys, no dirty jokes, please! She's a very modest girl." Marina treated her as if she were a source of clear cold water, at least it seems that way to Larissa now. She was naive and maybe Marina saw that when Larissa loved someone, her love was sincere. All she can say is that this New Year's celebration greeting 1960 was full of life and filled with literate erudite young people. Larissa will remember it always.

Misha had come to his family dacha early and fixed their place nicely, put up a little Christmas tree, and had a table of food laid out. Everything was wonderful. Jokes were witty, and their records were both Russian and Western. Since

they were all good dancers, they did foxtrots, tangos and waltzes, even a Charleston. Larissa remembers how beautiful and dramatic it was.

She hadn't gone with her own boyfriend, she hadn't wanted to--she laughed. Then Marina had come over to invite her. "Don't sit around your house alone on New Year's Eve," Marina had said. "Get up, we're going." And Larissa cannot remember whether Marina had a boyfriend this New Year's Eve or not. Maybe it was Misha Smolsky, maybe not. Larissa cannot recall.

There were six girls and maybe a few more boys and everyone was dancing with everyone else. It wasn't as if people had favorites that night; Larissa felt it more as a collective. They all slept over--chastely, of course--girls with girls, boys with boys.

Next evening, on first of January, she and Marina came back by train from Misha's family dacha.

Larissa remembers Ilya as a very good man, definitely not a negative person but Valya felt herself responsible for Marina and certainly didn't want her getting mixed up with wrong people. Whenever Marina was planning to go somewhere, Aunt Valya would always ask, "Is Lyalya going along?" Because if Larissa was with her, it meant everything would be all right. She thinks maybe Marina needed human purity. Larissa is not sure how to say it exactly, but she hadn't had any

experience with men and wasn't looking for it. To her, morality was important and anything other was terrible. One was supposed to be honest when you got married, a virgin. That was how things were supposed to be without exception.

In talking about himself, Nisha Spolsky, who is not to be confused with Ludella's husband, Nisha Kovatch, wants to state that he belongs to a minority in Byelorussia who are called Lithuanian Tartars. In ancient times Byelorussia was called Great Country of Lithuania, which should not in any way be identified with modern Lithuania. The old kingdom of Lithuania which became Byelorussia failed to survive because of its neighbors, Russia and Poland. But Lithuanian Tartars, who number 2,000 people, and have nothing to do with Tartar themselves like Nisha, can refer back to that time of an old time, they still have their own religion and are trying to restore their ancient culture. Spolsky, these days, is serious in studying his roots. They go back to a very old family of Nisha Spolsky's, very old roots. His grandparents were white-people had their own heraldry. Everyone in his family is connected with architecture or engineering and, in one way or another, with construction. He works in construction now, a very important profession he would let one know.

In his day he was respected like other Soviet people.

Chapter 4 -- Misha

*needed
earlier*

In telling about himself, Misha Smolsky, who is not to be confused with Ludmila's husband, Misha Kovotich, wants to state that he belongs to a minority in Byelorussia who are called Lithuanian Tartars. In ancient times Byelorussia was called Great Country of Lithuania, which should not in any way be identified with modern Lithuania. The old kingdom of Lithuania which became Byelorussia failed to survive because of its neighbors, Russia and Poland. But Lithuanian Tartars, who number 3,000 people, and have nothing to do with Tartar invasions from Asia, can refer back to that time of an old kingdom and still have their own religion and are trying to restore their ancient culture. Smolsky, these days, is devoted to studying his roots. They go back to a very old family of 15th Century roots, very old roots. His grandparents were quite noble people--had their own heraldry. Everyone in his family is connected with architecture or engineering and, in one way or another, with construction. He works in construction now, a very important profession he would let one know.

In his day he was educated like other Soviet people,

which means being obedient, not asking a lot of questions. Actually, he and his friends spent their time thinking about girls; it was very dangerous to talk about politics during those late 50s and 60s. When they were 20 years old, all they thought about was where to drink, who to date.

While he came from a large family, his father had a good financial situation so they always had money for good clothing. When he was young, his hair was very blond, his Slavonic blood was strong, and he could say that late 50s and early 60s was a period when he loved everybody and everybody loved him.

He was introduced to Marina through his friend Vladimir Kroglov with whom he went to high school. Kroglov was a neighbor of Marina's and she was a little bit in love with him. So, through Kroglov, he met Marina. Once they even went to Leningrad together, Marina, Kroglov and himself. She was returning to her stepfather's home after summer vacation in 1958 in Minsk, and Misha was overcome by Leningrad: "Can you conceive of it? You keep walking and there are buildings, buildings, buildings, buildings--you are caught in stone forest. Then you go through one arch and suddenly you see this space, unimaginable space, you can't even think after seeing so many narrow streets. The people who built this are very great."

At this time, he wouldn't characterize Marina as being popular. She was certainly attractive enough and some young men were drawn to her, but that didn't mean she had a long line of people paying court. What was most striking about her was that she came from Leningrad. In those days, Minsk was a joke, a large village. Leningrad was like New York City.

It was interesting to talk to her. She was smart and really quite educated. In 1958, only sixteen, but it was even attractive how she wore her clothes. Misha used to go to movies with her, but they didn't do much drinking together. Went out on river-boat trips where they danced, and listened to Bach, Prokovief and Elvis Presley. In those days, Misha wore narrow trousers, and shoes with high platforms--as a protest, perhaps. And he was a fan of serious jazz--of Armstrong, Sidney Besser, Goodman, Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra.

He wouldn't say his group had highest morals. But he and Marina were great friends, had a great relationship, by which he means it was a good relationship. They didn't gossip about each other; they were higher than gossiping about each other. Real friends, very funny, nice company.

Because of that difficult relationship with her stepfather in Leningrad, he thought she was a very unhappy person. And from what she said, it was very bad there. When he asked if it was better in Minsk, she said, "Yes, better

here." He thought there was some kind of a seal on her, a stamp that showed her unhappiness.

Chapter 3 -- Leonid

Leonid Gelfand was only 18 when he finished high school. And as early on, he did architectural jobs in Minsk. In fact he has been 32 years in his profession, but always working as part of large creative collectives. His work is everywhere-- industrial enterprises, public buildings, apartments--but always as part of this Minsk group.

At 18, he was not open at all, closed, very shy, but he was also goal-oriented and knew his profession. Never interested in sports or tourism or even in music, although he was brought up in a conservative family of doctors, he did like classics in literature and some opera. His family was not religious and followed no Jewish traditions except for particular holidays represented by certain kinds of food. His father had graduated from Hebrew school and could speak a bit of Yiddish and Hebrew, but at this period of time, educated people were not brought up to acquire religion. His family did congratulate him for his thirteenth birthday, but no big mitzvah took place.

He was friends with Nisha Smorasky, who was always sparkling with energy. And during a New Year's party in 1959,

Chapter 5 -- Leonid

Leonid Gelfant was only 16 when he finished high school, and so early on, he did architectural jobs in Minsk. In fact he has been 33 years in his profession, but always working as part of large creative collectives. His work is everywhere-- industrial enterprises, public buildings, apartments--but always as part of this Minsk group.

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He was friends with Misha Smolsky, who was always sparkling with energy. And during a New Year's party in 1960,

he met Marina Prusakova at Misha Smolsky's family's dacha. He was 23 years old and not thinking of marriage, didn't even date a lot of girls; he was still shy. Of this party, he only remembers a few details.

He sees a room with a stove. It's cold outdoors, but inside is cosy because there's a fire in that stove. Next, he remembers seeing this same stove, but now a girl has arrived. It is Marina, a slender girl with large, luminous eyes standing near that stove. It is all he remembers. Perhaps there were fifteen people at this party.

Marina had a way of looking at you. It was simple yet it attracted. Something in her was unprotected. It gave her a special charm. She had trembling lips, and for that matter her nose was a little blue because she was always cold--she was one person who always felt cold--and a specific odor came off her which she found embarrassing. When a person does pharmacy work, one's clothes and hair keep some whiff of medicine clinging to them, and she hated that. But Gelfant, personally, did not mind. It somehow was very good about her. It attracted him. Perhaps he was also drawn to her because she didn't have her own home, and no father or mother. He did pity her although he did not think she was a lost soul.

Gelfant, in comparison, had a close family. His father had been completely devoted, an attractive man, very charming,

full of tact. In turn, Gelfant considers himself also a devoted man who would like to live, perhaps, like his father. So, Marina and he were in different environmental and emotional situations, had different goals--everything was different. When they met, therefore, it was an agreeable surprise, but not something he saw as his future. Call it a New Year's adventure. On New Year's Eve, you always expect a miracle. Put it that he saw somebody, and suddenly he liked that person. However, this was a time when he was thinking about his profession and it was very important to him to become a good architect. He really didn't have any other large interests.

All the same, she produced on him an impression of a person who needs protection. So she inspired his desire to help her, to be tender with her.

Their relationship--which he never calls an affair--went on about six months, but it was not continuous. There were breaks. He was sick for a month with an operation on his nose, and there were other times when they wouldn't see each other for a couple of months at a time. Perhaps on five occasions they had an intimacy--not more than that. And indeed he would not have wanted anything to develop with greater speed. She was never self-confident and happy, so it's possible she cried in his arms--he would guess she did.

Chapter 6 -- Inessa

At the beginning of 1959, Inessa was working already. She finished Construction Technical Secondary School and lived with her parents, a sister twelve years younger than herself and a brother two years older. Her father was an engineer at Ministry of Construction, Byelorussia, and her mother stayed mostly at home, was a housewife.

With her job, she had quite a lot of free time and also had a boyfriend, a serious love for her. He was a student at Polytechnic Faculty, an extraordinary man, very talented, but like all talented people, very difficult. A year older than herself. His first name was Valentin. She'll say no more about him other than that he later designed and built several famous monuments around Minsk.

All her life, she lived in this city, saw it rebuilt by the Germans. She was a child then and felt sorry for German soldiers, even talked to one or two of them and brought one home. She lived in one half of a house of which they were rebuilding the other half and once when they were playing close by, this German came up to her to show her a wooden monkey, a toy. He spoke very bad Russian but then he

showed her pictures of his family, talked about his wife Elsa and his two kids, and if she remembers correctly, he said something about how sorry he was and how guilty he felt for what had happened to people in Minsk. She remembers he was dressed very poorly and she brought him home so her mother could feed him. Inessa's parents were kind and she thinks her mother probably understood that not all Germans had to be fascists. She can't say he became a family friend but they did feel sorry for him. He was a charming man and had his problems. He wasn't there often but did come back more than once, and stood out in contrast to other German soldiers who were mean, very mean in spirit. She remembers that his name was Hans. Others to whom she talked were not friendly at all. They hissed like geese when they spoke.

She doesn't recall how she first met Marina, but it may have been in a cafeteria, probably in 1960. She remembers, however, her first impression: very bright lips with no makeup, just naturally bright lips. Marina was thin and wouldn't necessarily be considered highly beautiful but Inessa found her attractive. A person can't become a friend in so short a period as two years, since it usually takes much longer to become real friends and share together all your difficulties, but, nonetheless, Inessa felt close. Marina was like a sister to her. And they visited at each other's homes;

went shopping together. Marina would tell about her boyfriends although Inessa never saw any of them. Marina certainly didn't bring them to dinner with Inessa and her parents, but then that had become one of their traditions in those days--gatherings of a certain number of good friends. And this circle of friends in which Inessa's family lived was at a high intellectual level, but Marina did try to fit in. Art was always being discussed, politics as well, and private subjects only later. But this very fact that Marina felt out of place only made Inessa feel closer to her.

As to whether Marina was happy at this time, Inessa took a pause and said, "Well, she had dark secrets in her life. I think to some degree these put their weight on her." Marina did tell Inessa certain things that Inessa wasn't going to talk about. However, she could say that she served as an older sister, and listened to Marina talk about her life in Leningrad, all that bad part of it, her street life, all those experiences that she couldn't boast of. It was, said Inessa, "more like a cry of the soul. In conversation with me, I think she considered that period to be a negative experience. A very bad negative experience." And so, in Inessa's opinion, Marina had wanted to leave Leningrad and change her situation.

At this period of time Inessa liked many people but

Marina remained special to her. Whenever she would see her, she would give a big hug with pleasure. Inessa valued openness in people and while Marina had not had opportunities to develop her best qualities, already it was obvious she could never betray anybody, not even in small things. Maybe she was a little bit too wild and emotional, she could, for instance, blow up instantaneously, but soon enough she would be normal again and Marina never used language that was explosive. Never dirty words. Absolutely not.

Chapter 7 -- Kostya

A neat, spare man with a broken nose, he is in excellent shape and looks as much like a coach of a hockey team as a doctor, but there he is in his office at a clinic, cautiously ready, Dr. Konstantin Bondarin, and our interviewers are there because a New Year's Eve party welcoming 1961 (on the same evening that Lee Oswald was at Ella's home) took place at Bondarin's apartment where he lived at the age of seventeen with his grandmother. Sasha was also present at this party and with him came Marina. Kostya's grandmother, it just so happened, was in a hospital and so an opportunity had presented itself to celebrate New Year's with an intimate group. There were eight of them present--Sasha, Marina, Anatoly Shpanko, a girl for Shpanko, a girl for Konstantin himself, and one other couple whose names he no longer remembers, but they were friends of Anatoly Shpanko who, in fact, was living in this same apartment with Kostya, a fellow medical student. For music, they played tapes, mostly Elvis Presley, and earlier in the evening, a lot of dancing and drinking went on until about two A.M., when Kostya and Marina disappeared into a bedroom. Before they could get very far

along with their project, however, Sasha started knocking on the door. Konstantin even had to step out and calm Sasha down. He was tough enough for that--he liked to box--but then there was no question of getting into a fight. Sasha was not such a type. Still, given that interruption, Marina was no longer in any kind of perfect mood. They made a date, therefore, to have another meeting tomorrow, New Year's Day, by a bridge near Minsk railroad station.

? Since Sasha stayed over and awakened with a hangover, he and Konstantin talked next morning about Marina. She was a beautiful woman, Sasha said, and he was devoted to her, but Kostya could see that Sasha had an uneasy feeling about last night, and was hurt that Kostya had been alone with her. Sasha even tried to ask what had happened, but Kostya said, "Nothing. You drank too much, and imagined a lot of things."

That evening, carrying a bottle of champagne, he met Marina at the bridge, and took her to a friend's apartment. He could not use his own place because Anatoly Shpanko was still there with his guests, so, Konstantin used his friend's abode. All this friend had to know was that he needed three hours.

In general, it was clear that Marina had prepared for their meeting. It even started off with light kisses and tenderness when he met her at seven that night by the station.

At his friend's apartment, they played music, and drank champagne. He had known while dancing with her last night that there was nothing in his way. And he was ready, although, of course, there was no question of going directly from door to bed. No, no, no. In Russia, women didn't do that. Needed psychological preparation. So there was that sort of conversation where you talk about a lot of things at once---easy talk. Now, it's difficult for him to remember anything concrete, but it was flirty on his part. He would praise her, compare her with agreeable examples. As far as he remembers, he didn't try to talk about her private life. They did touch on Sasha, and she said that she didn't feel much for Sasha, but all the same, really wouldn't want him to know about these relations, nor, for that matter, anyone else. She was still interested in Sasha to a certain extent. As a candidate for marriage, anyway. That manifested itself afterwards, when she started going out with Anatoly Shpanko, then with Yuri Merezhinsky. At that point, it seems to Kostya, that she was striving to get married. Maybe, she still had a few thoughts in that direction with respect to Sasha.

It never occurred to Kostya that there was for himself, a possibility of falling in love with Marina. Not by tomorrow, certainly. Falling in love could only occur as result of a

long-term relationship. And then, there was another fact: She was Sasha's girlfriend. So he didn't really know how long he was going to see her.

He did, however, spend a long time seducing her on this evening. Maybe so long as an hour and twenty minutes, or even more. They knew how it was supposed to turn out, so they didn't hurry, he paid no attention to time. He was certain it would end positively. Yet, afterwards, when it was over, Marina looked up and said that she had to be home.

Kostya was only seventeen. All through it, he had been somewhat scared. He could sense that she was a woman with experience, so he didn't know whether she would like him, and therefore, to a certain extent, he was a little afraid. Now, thirty years later, he could laugh. "When you have a very young man who is overexcited and a bit uneasy, he's like a rabbit. That could certainly cause a woman to react negatively." She did try to calm him down, to make it clear that everything would be okay so that he wouldn't be so nervous, and maybe that is why their prelude lasted so long. He had wanted to sleep with her right away but his own lack of self confidence held him back. Champagne helped, however, to dull his fear, and, in general, he was still certain everything would turn out fine. Finally, they dimmed all lights. She waited for him to take her clothes off, and that

happened rather fast. Right away, they were scattered all over. And his clothes came off quickly, too.

Why did a man have sex with a lot of different women if it wasn't to bring new experience into his life? So, in this sense, since Konstantin had very little experience, Marina gave him a lot to recall. It was from the extravagance of her behavior and her expression in bed. They had sex a second time, and he needed no help for that. She didn't do oral sex, but she really liked to be kissed, and when you kiss a young woman whose skin is soft, really very soft, you get excited. And by kissing her body, by just kissing her everywhere, you could bring her to a state of ecstasy. That's how sexually exuberant she was--or, so he thought. He had been to bed with a few women before, but this was his first exciting time, his first real one, first time with a young woman. Usually, it had been with women much older than himself. He was amazed because of her apparent excitement when he kissed her all over with his lips.

Still, she seemed to understand that, when it came to these matters, he was still a youth. She wasn't entirely happy with him. Despite all her sexual exuberance while they were doing it, it seemed to him (and it certainly turned out that way) that he didn't satisfy her all that much. She was further away from him when they parted than when they began.

At that time, he didn't have even one idea that women could have orgasms. She wasn't shy, and she dressed herself in front of him, and now he would certainly have been happy to continue their relationship, but when he went up to her and tried to caress her, she said, "No, no, no--don't take it too fast." And he understood that something didn't sit well with her, that it would not go any further. This haste with which she got ready to go home put him on his guard, and she only allowed him to see her as far as that bridge where they had met on this early New Year's night.

Chapter 8 -- Yuri Merezhinsky

"My story will be very boring," Yuri says, "not interesting."

He is a handsome man of about fifty and may once have been as good-looking as a movie star. But now he is ravaged by an undescribed illness, and his shoulders are hunched. He has come to meet his interviewers from a hospital several hundred kilometers away and has been drinking all day; at night, he is still drinking with the harsh pride of a Russian who measures his prowess by the slugs of vodka he can continue to mix with various powerful emotions.

Speaking English occasionally, he proceeds to his narration, proud, aggressive, contemptuous of any specific reality he has to relate.

"My story will be very boring, not interesting. My parents and I lived in a building called House of Scientists near Minsk railway station and I can tell you this should be called 'A Story of Children Who Come from Cream of Society.' My father was a great scientist; he became part of our Soviet scientific history. My mother, same--Honorable Scientist of Byelorussian Republic. Immediately after Gagarin was

launched into space on Sputnik, my mother was interviewed, my father was interviewed, I was interviewed.

"I will tell you a long story about myself. When I was small boy, I played football in an apartment. It was apartment of First Secretary of Communist Party of Byelorussia and football was possible because their rooms were so big. My mother was part of Governmental Delegation to United Nations together with Khrushchev.

"As for me, I liked Elvis Presley. Not important," said Yuri, "whether rock or jazz. Important was that something came from West." Personally, he also liked Ella Fitzgerald, Elvis Presley, Louis Armstrong--he liked Elvis Presley more than Ella. Most of what they heard was tape-recorded, but his friends and himself listened to radio too, BBC, Voice of America. He was very much interested in clothes then, was always well dressed.

"During that time I was a student at our Medical Institute and there was a custom for prominent people to read lectures after a visit to another country. So my mother gave one at Palace of Trade Unions where she was on stage and everything was demonstrated with slides. It was a large hall, maybe 500 people, and someone came up to me then, Lee Oswald, just introduced himself: Alik Oswald. Said he had come from America to Soviet Union and he started to speak English. At

that time my English was good."

After Yuri's mother's lecture, they went upstairs to a ballroom where a dance had started, and Alik got interested in Marina. "She was a very attractive, impressive person, effective. She--how you say?--attracted people. She looked right; she was not gray. She looked--the word we use is effectnigentsia--a powerful effect upon people. This evening she looked very best, like she never looked before. I knew her before. I knew her after. But she never looked so attractive as she looked this evening. It was like from God, it was high, very high."

INT: Was she wearing lipstick?

YM: She painted lips all of the time.

INT: All the time?

YM: Yes.

INT: That's interesting because the word we get is that is she never used lipstick.

YM: She was very attractive. Effective.

INT: How long had you known her then?

YM: It doesn't matter--one day, two days, a year--I knew her long enough to know who was who. She was a woman, not a girl. Not a young woman. She was older. We were tired of her in sex.

INT: Tired of her in sex? We? Let's be precise here.

YM: I don't know about other people. I can talk only about myself. I never went with her to bed. But I could sleep with her even on a staircase.

INT: You say you could have her any way you wanted?

YM: Yes, sure.

INT: Your friends had her?

YM: Sure.

INT: For certain?

YM: Sure.

INT: I ask because in her biography she told the writer, Priscilla Johnson, that she was a virgin when she was married.

YM: I already told you Marina was not very precise in her biography.

INT: I wanted to be sure.

YM: She was sent out from Leningrad in 24 hours for prostitution with a foreigner, and she came to Minsk.

INT: For prostitution? Literally?

YM: With a foreigner. Then she came to Minsk. Because she had an uncle here. She was lucky.

INT: She was in such a jam?

YM: We call it 101 Kilometers--which means being sent very far away. From Leningrad.

INT: This is a matter I would like to clear up.

YM: System now is different.

INT: Who told you she was a prostitute in Leningrad?

YM: You ask a question which I consider very intimate.

INT: Let me ask it in a different way.

YM: No, it was right question to ask. She came here with four other people who were sent out of Leningrad together. She was in group. Two young men, two women. And her uncle worked for Ministry of Internal Affairs, MVD, that's why she was privileged to come to Minsk and not 101 kilometers. What it means, 101 Kilometers, you go to cut forest.

INT: A labor camp?

YM: Job for prostitutes and people who don't work. You were sent out of big cities to work, hard labor. At that time anybody could be accused of any type of prostitution. She was seen regularly in Hotel Leningrad and they told her to leave immediately because of foreigners. She was seen with foreigners and was asked to leave.

One of her friends was in Minsk too. A man taller than me, bigger than me. He had a nickname, Gon-don-chick, from the condom, wide condom. He bought condoms cheap. Four kopecks for one, and he bought brushes with which you clean your clothes. Then he made four holes in each condom and he took hair from brushes and put this hair into holes in each condom, and then he put another condom over this one with hair. And he sold it to prostitutes and many people bought it. For big money. That's why they called him 'Condom chick' because he made women happy, yes. At that time you even had condoms with mustaches. So that was his nickname. Condom-chick, Gon-don-chick. A large profit, of course. He was very popular with women.

Now, said Yuri, there was a problem--he and his group, he would say, were fed up with Marina. They didn't know how to get rid of her. She was good at sex but when a woman is always with her legs spread, sometimes you resent it. She

never worried about reputation.

It was asked how she could conceal her reputation. After she met Lee at this dance, how did she manage that?

Yuri: "You know, we are now three men here in this room, OK? Then a woman comes. Then a fourth fellow comes who is getting interested in woman with us. You don't tell this new guy, 'Man, you know, I fucked her in different positions so many times. . . ' You don't pass this information. Sasha was only one who was not her lover. Sasha was ready to marry her. He was in love with her. As they say--up to his ears. Everybody fucked her except Sasha."

On the night at Trade Union Palace, this same night in which Yuri's mother had already given her lecture on America, Yuri and Lee and Marina and Sasha left that dance together with a few others, and they all went to his Yuri's parents' apartment on Lenin Avenue, No. 20.

Once there, they did not talk politics. Politics was nonsense to them, said Yuri. They were not interested. They were 18, 21, 23 years old. Nobody was interested in politics. They sat and drank.

Then they went with Lee Oswald to his apartment, and then back to their homes. And Sasha Piskalev, Marina and Lee stayed at Lee's apartment while rest of their group left.

The interviewers said every other account of this evening

made no mention of Yuri going to anyone's apartment and that their understanding was that Marina had gone back to her Uncle's apartment. Yuri shrugged, and then was off on another bent.

Marina, he told them, worked for Pharmacy in Hospital Number Three and she had access to grain alcohol. Yuri didn't want to boast, but he could say that as a man he satisfied all women and Marina brought him bottles, big bottles of alcohol from pharmacy.

Asked about Lee, Yuri said he wanted to explain. "We are one team and we are ten people, and we have one, two, three, ten women and they are all very beautiful. They are always just between us, touching us. And everybody in team is fucking these women. At one o'clock she's fucking one, then another one--we all know it. It is not a secret. And we are tired of these women. We are bored by them. Except Sasha Piskalev. No one was serious about her from the start except Sasha."

So why did Lee become serious about her?

Yuri replied: "Every woman has her own raisin."

Later, Konstantin told Shpanko about his experience with

Marina. He doesn't know when she and Anatoly had a rendezvous but it was probably about two weeks later. Afterward, Kostya would introduce her to Yuri Merezhinsky, but that was totally by accident. Kostya was trying to resume contact with Marina, so he invited her for a walk, and since there was nowhere to go that he could think of, he took her to his Medical Institute. There she met Yuri.

He knows Merezhinsky would say that he slept with her but Kostya is not sure it happened. Yuri might have said that just to boast. The fact is that Anatoly Shpanko did have intimate contact with her. That much Kostya knows for sure. Tolya was a serious man out of Soviet army and, unlike Yuri, would never talk to others about an affair. Yuri, after all, was exact same age as Kostya, 17, and so he would be more likely to say, "Well, I got fucked, I really got fucked. . ." even more so because Kostya had not told him that he had slept with her. So Yuri said, "Yes, we did it, of course," but in this situation Kostya didn't believe him. Tolya and Marina really had it for each other and he doesn't believe she would have allowed Yurka to get into the middle of that.

Anyway, this meeting with Yuri was by chance and all Kostya had for his pains was a walk with Marina. That was the end of it.

Later he heard that Marina was forcibly expelled from

Leningrad by the authorities for allegedly having relations with some Georgian, an unpleasant incident in a hotel with a Georgian. Now, he can't remember if he heard it from Sasha or Yuri--sometimes he thinks it was in a conversation with Sasha and sometimes with Yuri, but he did hear this story at that time, that much he remembers well. It was very simple in those days--once the authorities came down on you, you had 24 hours to collect your things, then you were out. Of course Kostya also heard that her uncle worked for the Organs in Minsk and had helped her to a certain extent to hush it up. But in any case, when such an event occurs, it is stipulated that you leave your city. Someone from KGB or MVD accompanies you to your railway station where you're put under someone else's supervision. At least, that's what people were saying. It could all be grossly exaggerated. Easily, it could be exaggerated.

Chapter 9 -- Anatoly

Anatoly Shpanko is a big lumbering man with large features who seems dazed--or, is it preoccupied?--with the responsibility of his work. He is a doctor in southern Belarus near the Ukrainian border and he deals with victims of Chernobyl--intense clouds of radiation passed over the bordering area of Belarus after that explosion. For this, or for other cause, he is drinking at ten in the morning and sings Russian songs to his interviewers in a heavy, slightly toneless voice, a bemused smile on his face.

His childhood may have been happier. He had been very proud of his father who drove trains in Siberia and later in Byelorussia. When Anatoly was still a kid, his father would take him along in his locomotive cab and let him pull the whistle and keep his hand on engine throttle. His father was a man willing to take a reasonable chance.

Before war came in 1941, his father was so certain that hostilities would start, he built a small underground shelter called a zemlianka and when Germans overran Minsk and reached Gomel, they took over his father's house and made it their headquarters. But that was only Shpanko family's main house.

A secret place was off in nearby woods, hidden underground, a zemlianka.

Years later, after high school, Anatoly and two of his friends wanted to become medical students and live in Minsk. So they took exams there. In advance was decided that if even one of them failed to pass, all three would return to Gomel. And that is exactly what happened: one did get a bad mark; all three went back. Anatoly had a good test, but they had an agreement, so he observed it. Since he was no longer a student in Gomel high school, he was taken into Soviet army and served for three years, '57, '58 and '59. In his last months, he was stationed not far from Minsk and was allowed to take his exams again for entrance to Minsk Medical Institute, and received fives in all three exams, excellent marks, best marks. He got in.

In medical school, his closest friend was a man named Volgaya Yanoshok, a dear friend, now dead. In fact Yanoshok was with him in that party at Konstantin Bondarin's on New Year's Eve when 1960 became 1961.

His first memory of Marina is of a very, very pleasant woman and he still remembers her this way. He would like to say that she never insulted him and he never insulted her. He usually treats women with great respect but when a representative of female sex is rude--and some can be very

rude--he will just look at them and leave with no notice. He can say that he likes kindhearted woman and modest girls.

He was serious in his studies---super-serious---and hardly ever wore a tie. He was not what you could call "top student" but very seldom did he get unsatisfactory marks. Usually they were good, very good. Only his first year proved difficult. He lived then in a small room and he can tell you that in all of a week he allowed himself only two hours for walking. All other free time was spent in study. It was easy in those days to rent a room--not an apartment--but many families in those days had a single room to offer, so he lived with a couple who had no children. In his second year, however, he lived in a private house near his Medical Institute, Konstantin's house, and his time became more relaxed. He could socialize much more.

So, he didn't date one girl but a number. At that time women were not conservative--if you went out with a girl, she didn't tell you, "Don't go to a movie with any other." But then his relation with girls was always individual. Not like a system where he had to be exact same man with everybody. He might go to a movie with one, and it was understood--no kissing--then another movie with another girl, lots of kissing. You could be anywhere between petting and absolute; he didn't have a system.

At Medical Institute there were more girls than men so boy students usually had a large choice, but it was tradition that students usually found marriages inside their Institute. However, it was virtually excluded that you could have sex and live together as students. Especially for him. He was Komsomol. You could be accused at Komsomol meetings if you lived in such a way. They didn't have Cult of Stalin any more but they certainly had Cult of Komsomol, and Anatoly was komsorg. That means he was in charge of half of his Komsomol organization. He was potok, secretary. If you had 1000 students, potok made up a group of 500 of which you were their leader. That meant you could receive some special appointment later. Upon graduation, students were usually assigned to miserable places far out in USSR but people who were high in Komsomol could choose first. You might even be asked "Where do you want to go?" When they came to him, however, he said, "Where is there need for a doctor?"

As far as women go, he would say that if you lived openly with a woman, you could be discussed endlessly. It would become blah, blah, blah at a meeting. So, you did things underground. Who would want to be topic of discussion at some Komsomol meeting for improper sexual behavior? One's biological need to have sex was satisfied, but such was done underground. Nobody knew with whom you were doing it.

Now Marina was one of the first girls he knew. What with his opening year of medical school being very tough for him, he had hardly dated in 1959. Following year, he met Marina and she was one of the first, yes.

Speaking of Marina, he can't say anything bad: she was just a simple girl, very simple, ordinary, positive. He just treated her like a woman. All he can remember is that there was nothing negative from his side to her and nothing negative from her side to his.

She consented to be Sasha's date for New Years, but she promised herself that she would dance with anyone who came along. . . That evening, she found herself in the arms of Anatoly Shpanko, a lanky fellow with unruly dark blond hair and a wide, appealing smile. Tolya, as she soon called him, was a 26-year-old medical student who had already served his term in the army. He was whimsical, yet deferential to Marina, and from the moment of their first kiss--they were standing in a dimly lit courtyard with snow twirling all around them and a lantern creaking in the doorway--she was deliriously in love with him. 'He was a rare person,' Marina recalls, 'He was honest in everything he did.'

There was only one drawback. Attracted as she was to Anatoly, Marina did not think he was handsome, nor did she like the way he dressed. He simply did not fit the image she had created for herself of a girl who goes out only with handsome men. Not wanting to be made fun of, fearful that her friends might think less of her, she steered Anatoly along back streets when they were together, as surreptitiously as if they were engaged in a clandestine affair. But she forgot her

calculations when he kissed her. His kisses made Marina's head spin. Finally he proposed--but there were obstacles. Anatoly had two or three more years of medical school, no money, and--even more important--no apartment. Marina consulted Valya and Ilya. 'No, my dear,' Ilya said. 'Let him finish the Institute first. You can talk about getting married then.'

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Anatoly does remember kissing in a dimly-lit courtyard but there was no snow coming down. Snow was already there. He remembers nothing special--it was routine kiss, nothing special. You remember details about something not ordinary to you. If something is not special, you do not remember.

When reminded that Marina did remember his kisses, he said, "She appreciated it, I think, ha, ha, ha." Then he added, "I am trying to be honest. I don't want to invent. I am sorry if I can't be helpful."

When asked why Marina singled him out as being "a rare person. . .honest in everything he did," he replied, "I think maybe she got this information from some of my friends. She didn't get it out of my behavior, but something she heard from other people." He would add, "That's why everybody wanted me to be secretary of Komsomol because many of them were younger and had not been in Soviet army." So, when he would say "this is fair," people would often accept it. When asked if he was

considered by most people to be honest, he replied, "Even today." When asked about how he dressed in those days, he said, "I never worried about clothes. When someone was too pushy and said 'I don't like this way you're dressed,' I'd say, 'OK, buy what you want me to wear and I'll wear it.'" He would not get dressed up just in order to please a woman. His opinion: A woman should like a man's soul, his character, not some clothes he is wearing. "We have a saying here that you greet a person by how they are dressed, but by time you say goodbye you respect a person for how they are."

As he recalls, Marina was pleasant and good-looking and not provocative and nobody told him a word about her. Nobody ever spoke to him about Marina having some history in Leningrad. "Maybe there were rumors around but people knowing me like I am, never passed me rumors. You can't come close to me this way." He would tell them, "'You want to talk about this person? Bring person here and then talk--don't talk to me alone without this person.' It was my rule."

Besides, they didn't have sex. He would say they didn't achieve such desire. He has no recollection of proposing to her and if he didn't have his own apartment, and she gave that as her reason for rejecting him, he would say that was not exact truth. Because he had an aunt in Minsk who had a house with land and on this plot was another small house that was

empty. So, if he had really wanted to marry, he could have lived with his wife in that small house--although while dating he would not bring a girl there because he would never do such a thing to his aunt. It would be an insult to one woman in front of another.

When asked if he was more moral than others, he said, "In those days--Khrushchev era--there were young men like me but not many, not many." As for a wife, he wanted a woman who was simple, average, very human. Marina would have fit his idea of who he'd want to marry. If he did propose to her once, and was turned down, he thinks he would have joked about it later. Because if you proposed seriously, answer should be given seriously.

He finds it hard to believe that on a night in March of 1961, at a long-forgotten dance, some Trade Union dance, Marina told him to meet her at 10 o'clock outside Trade Union Palace. He cannot see a possibility of that. He would not wait more than five minutes for a girl. Maybe he'd give it another five minutes, but never more. When time is over, he leaves, that's it. Maybe he could have gone earlier, and had some fun himself, then popped out to look for her at 10, but to him it doesn't make sense. At that time he thought many girls were in love with him. Not being egotistical either. Minsk Medical University was a very high, privileged

educational college so women were attracted to such students.

When told that he and Marina had a fight that night, at least according to Marina, and that he went after her and said "I have to talk to you," and she said, "I can't talk now, can't you see? Go away," he would only say he has no recollection of her speaking to him disrespectfully, but maybe it is true she walked out of his life and into another life-- this man she would marry. So his response now would be, "Ahh, she was lucky; she married her man and she is happy now. She was not waiting for me. She found another man, so that's good for her."

Of course, he is amazed that such a small love can create such a large interest. Even now he is surprised, he is even shocked that interviewers from America have come to ask about a girl who didn't marry him. In response to a hint of explanation, he asks, "Her husband killed somebody?" Then he adds, "Don't forget to tell me, because I'm nervous. I'm nervous about who was killed."

His interviewers assured him it would not affect one's present life and nobody would blame him for not marrying her. No trap door would close. They would tell him later. But with his agreement, they would like to go on with their interview.

They reminded him that he phoned Marina and asked to see

her, but again she refused. She not only told him that she was now having a serious relationship but added that she felt he had given up pursuing her too easily. They had only spoken once more and that was when they met on the street and she told him that she might be going to America. He had joked, "Come on, take me with you." The interviewers had asked, "Does this sound like your personality? Do you think you made such a remark?" He replied, "I can joke like that. With my character, I can say 'Good, you have a good life. Take me with you.'"

Shown the same passage from Marina and Lee, Sasha's first comment was: "Sometimes people invent stories for books." Then he added, "You know, even now, I admire her. If you notice, I respect women in general, and my principal is always that you should pet a woman along the fur, and not against it. And you should love a woman."

But how do you feel about what she says? "Half of it, fifty percent," he replied, "is invented. Certain things are true. Maybe she is not a very serious girl, you know. As we say here, 'there is a wind in the mind.' Now, when I read it, I can see she looked at me as just a young boy. I think

if she had waited for me, and had been patient enough, her life would be much happier than it was after she left for America. Because everything I wanted to devote to her, I have since devoted to my family. I think maybe now, deep in her heart, she is a very unhappy person. But if you see her, give her best regards from Sasha, and tell her that I'm not offended or insulted by what she wrote, although I had some unpleasant moments reading it.

"I understood some of what she felt when I was dating her, but now it's proved that she never shared my feelings, and this is the most difficult part to read. Now I understand that she is a very calculating woman. But at that time I was young. I never knew she had all these boyfriends. I suppose the best way for her was to marry a foreigner, and go to another country."

After they broke up, he had been very depressed. He didn't study well. It was a hard time. But step by step--and it took a year and a half--he came out of it. Then he was introduced to his wife, and has been happy all his life with her. He would thank the interviewers for having been to see him. They had brought a little bit of entertainment into his provincial life, he said.

Chapter 10 -- Alik

-1-

March 17 I and Erich went to a trade union dance, boring, but the last hour I was introduced to a girl with a French hairdo and red dress with white slippers. I dance with her, and ask to show her home. I do, along with five other admirers. We like each other right away. She gives me her phone number and departs home with a not-so-new friend in a taxi. I walk home.

Mr. Rankin. Where did you meet him?

Mrs. Oswald. In Minsk.

Mr. Rankin. Yes--but can you tell us the place?

Mrs. Oswald. In the Palace of Trade Unions.

Mr. Rankin. What kind of place is that? Is that where there are public meetings?

Mrs. Oswald. Sometimes they do have meetings there. Sometimes it is also rented by some institutes who do not

have their own halls for parties.

Mr. Rankin. They have dances?

Mrs. Oswald. Yes. Every Saturday and Sunday.

Mr. Rankin. Did someone introduce you?

Mrs. Oswald. Yes.

Mr. Rankin. Who introduced you?

Mrs. Oswald. I had gone there with my friends from the Medical Institute and one of them introduced me to Lee.

Mr. Rankin. What was his name?

Mrs. Oswald. Yuri Merezhinsky. . .

Mr. Rankin. Did you know that Lee Oswald was an American when you first met him?

Mrs. Oswald. I found that out. . .towards the end of that party. When I was first introduced to him I didn't know.

. . .

Mr. Rankin. Did that make any difference?

Mrs. Oswald. It was more interesting, of course. You don't meet Americans very often.

Mr. Rankin. After that first meeting, did you meet him a

number of times. . . ?

Mrs. Oswald. He asked me where he could meet me again. I said that perhaps someday I will come back here again, to the Palace. About a week later I came there again with my girl friend, and he was there. . .

Mr. Rankin. Can you tell us what attracted you to him?

Mrs. Oswald. I don't know. First the fact that he was-- he didn't look like others. You could see he was an American. He was very neat, very polite, not the way he was here, not as you know him here. And it seemed that he would be a good family man. And he was good.

Mr. Rankin. Did you talk about many things when you were together, when he was courting you?

Mrs. Oswald. We talked about everything, about the moon and the weather. . .

(n.1)

[From translation of Marina's description of her life written for the Warren Commission. . .]

Anatoly was quite ugly (and in this I think he has something in common with Mel Ferrar). But I was embarrassed to appear with him in public--silly girl. I was afraid that my friends would say, "What an ugly boy

friend Marina has." For that reason we would talk on the telephone for two or three hours at a time and it was very, very interesting to talk with him. . .He loved his mother very much and talked about her very tenderly. I liked that. I no longer had a mother, and it was very agreeable to see how this big, fully grown man acted like an innocent little child toward his mother. Not everyone can do this so straightforwardly. . .

Anatoly wanted to marry me but I refused, since he was still a student, and it is very difficult to study and maintain a family at the same time. To wait five years until he finished seemed too long for a young girl, and it seemed to me that in five years there could be a lot of changes.

One day Sasha invited me to a social evening at the Medical Institute, and I knew that Anatoly would be there, too. You see what a frivolous girl I was. Sasha forced me to promise that I would be there and gave me an invitation. Anatoly told me that if I came with Sasha he would not want to see me again, and that we wouldn't be friends any longer. But I thought I could arrange things somehow so as not offend either of them. The evening started at 7 o'clock and I came at 10 o'clock without any expectation of finding anyone there, since the doors had already been closed.

Something detained me at work, and I got home quite late; then I took two hours to get dressed and sat a long time in front of the mirror, then I lost my courage completely and was tired of dressing, so I put on an ordinary house dress. But my uncle started laughing at me: "Was it worth while standing in front of a mirror so long?" And finally something dragged me to that evening,

even against my will. I can say this quite sincerely--I felt something quite unusual that evening but did not pay attention to it. To my amazement Sasha was waiting for me. He was standing out in the cold without an overcoat. He ran out every 10 minutes to look and see if perhaps I had showed up. . .At the dance I tried to catch sight of Anatoly but I was told that he saw me with Sasha and left --which upset me very much.

Sasha was with his friends from the Institute. One of his friends introduced me to Lee, calling him Alik. . .and when Lee invited me to dance, and we started to talk, I decided he was from one of the Baltic countries, since he talked with an accent. But later that same evening I found out that Lee was an American. . .

I liked Lee immediately. He was very polite and attentive, and I felt that he liked me too, since he tried not to miss any dances with me. He got nervous if anyone managed to invite me first. Later, when we were married, Lee told me that he noticed me as soon as I came into the dance hall. Don't think that I have an especially high opinion of myself or am anything unusual, but I can say that. . .I had just come in from the cold [and] by then [other] girls were already tired, whereas I had just taken off my overcoat--so that I had a fresh look. . .I remember having on my favorite dress made of red Chinese brocade (Lee liked this dress afterwards), and my hair was done a la Brigitte Bardot. That evening I even liked myself. You see how I am boasting, but I am writing how I felt. . .

Later. . .we all went in a group to the apartment of this Yuri whose mother had been in the United States. . .I remember that she quarreled a little with Alik, since Alik defended America. . . when Yuri's mother said goodnight to

us, we stayed and listened to records which she had brought from America; we listened to music, looked at picture postcards of the United States and souvenirs. Lee spoke very favorably about his country and very interestingly. I was very pleased that he was trying to show the best side of his country. Later, when I asked him if he liked America, he said that he liked it, but not everything in it; for instance, unemployment, discrimination, the fact that it is very difficult and expensive to get educated, the high cost of doctors when one is ill. But he said very proudly that in America the apartments are prettier and not so crowded, and that the stores have things for every taste provided one has money. He also said that in America there is more democracy and that every person can say what he wants in the press, on the radio, or on TV. . .

That evening Sasha and Alik took me home. We were alone in the street for a few moments, when Lee asked when and where he could see me. I told him that perhaps I would come again to the dances at the place where we met but did not make any precise promise. But then, a week later, I went again with a friend to a dance--Lee was there. That evening he came home with me, and I introduced him to my Aunt. My Aunt liked his modesty and politeness, also the fact that he was very neat. She told me with a laugh that only an American was lacking in my collection.

(n.2)

In those months before she met Alik and was having several romances at once, she was kind of scared. Still, she could feel power over men. Of course, it was easy to fall in love, and she was looking for love. In love with love. When you're eighteen, hormones do your thinking. You are a proud young deer and you meet and fall in love with different people because you are looking. One attracts you because he knows how to open the door, a gallant. Another because he loves you dearly. She wanted a man to be romantic and a good provider, to be excellent, nice, and love her. But then there was always Anatoly. He did make her head spin. It took just one kiss. What you learn is that nobody is there to give you everything you need.

She didn't want to talk about her experiences. Catherine the Great had lots of lovers and was considered OK; that did not mean Marina had lots--she was not saying that. She just didn't want to talk about sex. Everybody was looking for bad; then they trash you. It wasn't that she'd done something she was ashamed of, nothing horribly wrong, but she knew when she first came to Minsk that maybe she needed advice. Because she was not that experienced. Maybe men thought she was something that she was not.

She talked to her friend Misha Smolsky who never laid a finger on her. They were friendly, just friends. He said,

"Come on, I won't touch you. You're not Anita Ekberg." That said it all. He told her: "Marina, there's a guy spreading gossip around that you're sleeping with him. Is it true or not?" She told him, "Misha, I'm asking you because I have nothing to hide. I cannot defend myself door to door if a guy is lying."

So Misha said, "I cannot punch him in the nose because it is not my business"--meaning she was not his girl--"but I'm going to tell him it is baloney."

She did not know why Merezhinsky, if that was the guy, Yuri Mereshinsky, talked about her that way. Maybe it was because he was always drunk and liked to make a fuss. Maybe it was rejection. Was this who Misha was talking about? It was most embarrassing thing. She felt humiliated in front of all the world. She had wanted petunias but she didn't know if she was willing to pay such a price for petunias.

She could feel her reputation. It felt like ugly clothing, smelly, that she was condemned to wear. Lee Harvey Oswald, for example. This Alik had tried to be intimate with her when she met him second time at Trade Union Palace eight days later, Saturday night, when she went to dance again on March 25, 1961. That night she took him back alone to meet Valya since Ilya was away.

He had wanted her to make a bed so he could sleep over.

Pretended it was too late for buses, so maybe he could sleep somewhere there? He must have assumed she was a floozy, so she sent him home. He could walk home, she told him. But she was not really angry. After all, on first night when she was wearing her red dress, she insisted on everybody going over to a bar to have champagne. Of course, this Alik didn't know that was because friends had told her that Anatoly had gone over to a bar, and she could hardly follow him by herself. It was why she said, "Boys, let's have something to drink-- champagne!" and led them there. Maybe Lee assumed she was a type who has to drink, but her only concern was to see Anatoly and prove to him that he was going to talk to her whether she came with Sasha or not. Anatoly, however, was angry; he ignored her just as he had told her he would: Come with Sasha and I will pretend I never knew you. So she spent that Friday night dancing with Lee in her red dress. He was a teaser, kind of. "In America," he would say, "they dance this way," and would bring her closer to him. He did not whisper in her ear. He would say, "Let me teach you how to do this," and he would dip. She could see it was his way simply to get closer to her. But not strong, not just grabbing, no, little by little.

But all this while she was thinking, "How am I going to prove to Anatoly that he can't just brush me away like I am

nothing?" Moreover, she was feeling pity for Sasha. He was victim of her strategy. So, when Anatoly acted like he'd never seen her in his life, it kind of freed her of obsession with him this night, anyway.

She began to flirt with everybody, including Lee. He must have thought she was some floozy! Which may be why he expected so much more than he got eight days later on that Saturday night when she took him home to meet Valya. He even said, "You have so many fellows and things, I thought you were some kind of. . .you know. . ." And then, she'd been wearing her red dress. Maybe she stood out.

Now, looking all that long way back, she would think that Lee intrigued her. He looked deeper into life. If he had been just a dumb Vanya, she would never have gone on a date with him. It was not being snobbish--she would say she respects factory workers very much--"but you are not going to date Vanya. Because what are you going to talk about with such men? They pinch girls openly--nothing but vulgarity. So, you stay away. No factory workers, thank you. You try to associate with a class ahead of yourself. Even if you come from middle of nowhere." It wasn't her desire to go backwards, and Lee did work in Horizon radio factory, but he also looked deeper into life. It certainly wasn't just his interest in politics. Her grandmother had told her about

politics--do not touch. Then you won't stink. Politics in her mind was poop. At same time, once you grow up, even if you don't want to belong to groups like Communist Party, still you are interested in how things happen. Young people could read in between lines and want to know; so Lee was part of a group of her friends who were interested in how this world was working.

After her second meeting with Lee, they made a date for one week later. But after a few days, Aunt Valya said, "Guess what? Your American called." He could not make it. He was sick, and stuck in some hospital way out at one end of Minsk.

Marina could say that no one thought this would yet be her husband. Even when he rang to tell Valya that he was ill, she was out with Anatoly. She liked Lee but she certainly didn't consider him as serious date. He was something maybe for a free evening.

Now his ear was infected bad enough for him to be in a hospital. Infected ears from childhood, he told her later. He had had mastoid operation when a boy.

Valya said, "Why don't you visit him? He has nobody here from home and this is Russian Easter." Valya said, "I

know for a fact that over in America they celebrate Easter. It'll be nice and touching." Valya put some nice cakes together on a plate and said to Marina, "Show him that Russians have some heart."

But when she finally got to this hospital--such a long trip on her streetcar--he was glad to see her. So glad. He hadn't expected a visit. What a low opinion he must have had of her! But he was so happy she had brought him canned apricots. She hadn't realized until he told her. It was his favorite dessert. Intuition must have let her know.

It was sad, however. He did look ill and his smile was pale. Physically, she couldn't say she liked him now. A little later that visit, he kissed her (after asking permission) and she didn't take to this first kiss either. There was negative feeling. Like a warning to stop. Stop right there. She asked herself: Do I want this to continue? She had never thought of it that way but first kiss could tell you a lot. Did she really want to know him more? Physically?--maybe no. But her mind remained curious. And he was so gentle. She remembers that his kiss wasn't just a peck, thank you for coming--no, it showed expectations. But he didn't smell like a Russian. He didn't even smell like he was in this hospital. His skin had some funny odor. There could be a lot of scents on top but underneath was basic scent.

Kissing him gave her definite negative response. He did not smell like fresh air and sunshine.

Later in relationship, she overcame it. She accepted this scent of his body. Still there, but she accepted it. If you love a man, you accept.

It was funny. After work, every day she would go to visit him. She could get in when no one else could. Visiting days were Sunday only, but she had her white uniform from pharmacy at Third Clinical, so, no problem.

She did not love him yet, but she certainly felt sorry for him. He was so alone. She could understand that. Loneliness is everyday companion to a lot of people, but not necessarily your good companion. Chilly. Empty. And Valya was so sorry for him.

While he was still in his hospital, he told Marina that he wanted to be engaged to her, and she should not see anyone else. "I promised, but I did not take this seriously." She did not love Lee, not yet, just felt sorry for him. Still, he was an American. You weren't going to say no if an American said you should be engaged, not say no right away.

On the day he got out of Fourth Clinical hospital, Valya had him over for dinner with Ilya.

She liked how Alik could handle himself with her uncle. Very dignified. He told Ilya he had come to live forever in

Russia. He intended to work hard. Ilya said well, if that was so, then he, Ilya, would be ready to help him organize his life. And Marina could see that Valya was thinking, yes, they could have a little guidance over him because Alik didn't have anyone in Minsk and they would treat him well.

He charmed Valya. He was so neat and he was very tender. He kissed Valya on her good cheek after dinner and said, "Thank you, this meal was great." Well, it was, but he also said it nicely.

After dinner, Ilya said: "Take care of this girl. She has plenty of breezes in her brain." Wasn't that awful, thought Marina? She was a serious person. She would have liked to have breezes in her brain, she certainly wanted to have fun, but she was always feeling responsible, or examining her conscience. She could never say, "Just wash it off!"--she never did. Maybe from Ilya's point of view, it was because she liked one guy one week, another guy on following week, but Marina would have told him, "I'm still looking. I meet somebody, and he's an idiot or he's dumb. He takes me out to dinner, and wants me to pay for it. Or he's always clearing his throat because he's an opera singer. All evening long, that's what my opera singer did." Yes, she had known one, went on a date with him. "He had a nice cashmere coat and scarf and he was preparing for his aria next day." When they

went to restaurant he chose, she thought, well, maybe at least he'll show some culture here, but he ate his dinner and said, "I forgot my wallet." Then he said, "Pay for it, I'll give you some tickets for my opera." When she went, he was soldier #23, back somewhere in the chorus--an impressario! Of course, she had to drop him.

No, she did not want to talk about her courtship with Alik. It was not that remarkable. All courtships are the same: Put best foot forward. The trouble with courtship is that you never know your person until you get married and live 24 hours with him.

Still, she would talk to others about this courtship. Larissa encouraged her. Larissa saw how this new American boyfriend would distinguish Marina from other girls. And he had an apartment. Alik had invited Marina to visit his apartment first night after dinner at Ilya and Valya's. So Marina came with Sasha, Yuri, and Larissa. Safety in numbers. But Lyalya talked about him so positively afterward. He was neat, he did not seem uncultured, and he had such good manners.

Chapter 11 -- A Little Bit of Conquering

Sasha recalls that night at Alik's place. His apartment was in a grand building where they had a TV tower, but Oswald's room did not look cozy. It was what they call kozongy, that is, bureaucratic. No home atmosphere.

Alik already spoke good Russian. An accent, and his pronunciation was off, but he could speak. He put on Tchaikovsky's first symphony, and as they listened, Alik told his life story. He'd been in U.S. armed forces, served in Asia, didn't like war, didn't wish to be a part of war. So he had decided to come to Soviet Union for residence, and Moscow had sent him to Minsk. Now he worked at Horizon radio factory, "as an engineer." They had a bottle of Russian champagne. Sasha liked him--thought he was cool, very balanced, no unneeded emotion. Oswald didn't smoke, but enjoyed others inhaling their cigarettes--or so it seemed to Sasha. However, his apartment looked poor. "Iron dirt," as they called it. And his table was neobtosonyj, not polished properly. There were very ordinary chairs, and a bookshelf put together out of a few boards.

He had many records, however, long-playing records, all

classics. Maybe they spent an hour and a half there. It was late, maybe ten o'clock when they left. And Sasha said to Marina, "Let me see you off because tomorrow morning early, I have to go to my job and you, too, you have to wake up early."

At this point, Sasha indicated that he wanted the tape turned off. He then told this story: When he arrived at his home, there was a car waiting outside, and it took him to KGB offices, where they played for him a recording of what he and others had been saying at Lee's party. They did not explain why they were doing this, nor did they go into other details. They told him merely that they wanted him to report in whenever they asked him. And they told him that he should sign a piece of paper which would summarize his conversation with this officer, but when he would not agree to do this, they made no big deal. Officer merely wrote down a few lines to state that his notes had been read to Sasha.

All this took place in a basement room of official KGB building, on Lenin Street, and he had been brought there in a car. He was allowed to walk home, a good few kilometers. When he arrived, his mother scolded him for hanging out with his kind of friends, too upper-class, too well established, members of Intelligensia--Yuri, particularly, and Kostya Bondarin. She told him, "Look, you come from simple peasant folk. You shouldn't be around people like that. You're going

to get into trouble."

To his interviewers, he now said that after he stopped seeing Marina because she was going with Lee, he also stopped seeing Yuri, and Bondarin, whom he assumes were also called in. It was as if none of them wished to see too much of each other in order not to have to report on one another. You could say that they shared a new language in which they never had a conversation.

Both Igor and Stepan separately informed the interviewers that they have no record of any of this in their files, and are at a loss to understand Sasha's version of events. It is possible, they point out, that he was not interrogated by KGB but by MVD, who in those days worked in the same building, and so was often mistaken for KGB by uninformed people. However, MVD, given their simpler function as policemen and as guard personnel at slave labor camps would hardly have had recording equipment set up next to Oswald's apartment.

On the other hand, they would admit to some early concern about Lee and Marina. When that romance developed quickly into marriage, it could be said, Igor admitted, that they did lose some sleep, and felt somewhat at fault that no steps had

been taken to keep this courtship of Oswald and Marina Prusakova from flourishing.

When asked what such steps might have been, Igor's response was delicate. There were girls, he suggested, some of them attractive, certainly, certainly, who at one stage or another could be called upon by the Organs. And perhaps one of them might have diverted Oswald. They also could have attracted Marina perhaps to some other person, some very attractive man qualified for such activity. They didn't do that, however. It was a large move after all. So that gave Lee and her a possibility to begin. Then came a wedding with almost no warning. More problems to deal with. Would there now be any leak of information to Oswald through Marina by way of Lieutenant-Colonel Prusakov of MVD? To insure themselves against such an outcome, they were finally obliged to make personal contact with this Lieutenant-Colonel, Ilya Prusakov.

In this period, therefore, was a considerable amount of stress, and it was fact, Stepan didn't always sleep too well. Nor Igor.

Close to three years later, when Marina was writing her account of her relation to Lee for the Warren Commission

[Commission Exhibit 994], she emphasized how much they would walk "in the streets of Minsk in spring--it is cold, but spring is coming on."

Only later did Lee tell her that he could not bear cold weather. Of course, if she had not had so much on her mind she might have noticed, for he would get so chilled that he would duck into recessed doorways to get out of the wind or he would take her into stores just to warm up.

"When Lee and I met," she wrote,

my friends used to come along too and we would dance and drink coffee and tea. The boys and girls would try to show off their knowledge of English and ask Lee how various English words were pronounced. Everyone had a gay time. Lee had a lot of classical records, and he loved to listen to them when we were alone. He did not like noisy company and rather preferred to be alone with me. I remember one of these evenings when we drank tea with pastry and kisses. Then (please excuse my vulgarity, due to youth) this tea was very tasty. I never again drank such tea or ate such pastry--ha ha! Lee told me that he wanted us to get married and stay here forever. He had a small darling apartment. . .with a separate entrance--quite enough for two, especially if they were young. I told him that I would become his wife (since I had already fallen in love with him) but that we should wait several months because it was a little embarrassing in front of our friends to get married so quickly. But Lee agreed to

wait only until the first of May [and] planted some flowers on the balcony in honor of my agreeing to marry him. (n.1)

March 18-31 We walk. I talk a little about myself. She talks a lot about herself. Her name is Marina N. Prusakova.

April 14 We are going steady and I decide I must have her. She puts me off and so on April 14 I propose. She accepts.

All right, once Lee had gotten out of that hospital, they had started dating. She didn't see him every night, she certainly kept seeing Anatoly until express date of April 20 when she finally accepted Lee's proposal. Then, no more Anatoly.

It was not just that Lee was neat and polite. When people were clean, that was very attractive to her. She also liked people who bathed, people who could think cleanly. She would admit it: she liked starch. Starch was in his shirts, and she felt free: She could walk out from seeing him any time

she wished. So she had thought before April 20. So, she kept seeing Anatoly. But not to point of intercourse.

"Ah, well," she said to her interviewers, "number one, in Russia, you don't have that many opportunities to be in somebody's. . .inside. And it was winter when I met Anatoly. And mostly just kissing. And he was good kisser. Put it that way." She never felt she was what you call a "sexual person." More like sensuous. Going to very end in sex--not her goal. She wasn't looking for climax. "It's part before that interested me." But with Anatoly, it was very first time she wanted to go further. Only it never happened.

On the other hand, Lee certainly wanted to sleep with her. Sometimes they would go to his apartment, and things would get to point of no return. Once, he threw her out, said: "OK! Stay, or get out!" She got out. But he wasn't rough. What she liked about Lee, and about Anatoly as well, was prelude, talking. It wasn't just physical, grab, kiss, here we go. You talk and gradually you warm up to it. "I think that was what I liked during relationship with Lee prior to marriage. A little bit of conquering."

So, he might be gentle, but he was also a little aggressive when it came to sex. "Why do you think we got married?" she would ask. She shook her head. "Well," she said to her interlocutors, "dear President Ford told everybody

that Lee was impotent and that's the thing which is not true . . . People like that become President. I am sorry. I have no respect for Mr. Ford."

[from FBI report on interview with Marina Oswald on December 1, 1963]

She stated on one of her visits to the hospital OSWALD had asked her if she would be his fiancee, and not go around with other boys. She said she would consider this.

Following his release from the hospital, OSWALD began visiting MARINA at her uncle's apartment. She introduced him to her uncle and aunt. She said at this time she still saw on occasion another boy, but this was without the knowledge of OSWALD. She said this other boy objected to her becoming serious about OSWALD. When asked for the name of this young man, she replied that his first name was ANATOLI. ANATOLI was finishing medical school, and he probably is a physician by now. She said she could not remember his last name.

MARINA advised her uncle and aunt did not disapprove of OSWALD and, in fact, were glad that she had reduced the number of her boy friends to almost one. They offered no objections to OSWALD and told her it was her decision to make. . . Following his release from the hospital and during the courtship, he continued to ask her to be his wife and she continued to occasionally see ANATOLI up

until April 20, 1962. On that date, she agreed to marry OSWALD and together they went to the registrar to file their intent to marry. . .Permission for the marriage was granted in seven days, and it was thereafter necessary to only wait three more days to fulfill the required ten-day waiting period. They were certified as married by the registrar on April 30, 1962, [and] her aunt and uncle had a reception for them in their apartment. Their mutual friends were invited.

She advised she was not interviewed by any official and that the only documentation necessary for this marriage was registration of intent and the certification of the marriage ten days later. . . (n.2)

[From narrative prepared by Marina Oswald for the Warren Commission]

. . .It was one of the happiest days of my life. Alik, too, I think, was very happy that we were allowed to get married. He only calmed down on the day of our marriage; before that he went every day to ZAGS to find out if we were to get permission. Only after our wedding did he finally believe that what we wanted had really happened. We did not believe that it was possible. I remember that Lee bought me some early narcissi, and we went to ZAGS with our friends. We came back on foot; the sun was shining; it was a warm Sunday, and everything was beautiful. (n.3)

Chapter 12 -- The Wedding Night

One day, about a year after Lee moved from Hotel Minsk to his apartment, Stellina heard that he had gotten married. A floor lady at Minsk hotel said: "Did you know? That American married a Russian girl? One of ours." But, she added: "A woman who is spoiled goods. A Leningrad sidewalk prostitute." That rumor had spread around Minsk. Stellina remembered: "Switch off the light and kiss me please." A respectable decent young lady wouldn't talk that way because respectable young ladies, if they knew any English, would know more than those two phrases. Russian girls were brought up, said Stellina, to take no sort of initiative with respect to men. Sex was friendship, and caring, part of big relationship, tenderness. Many women were not even told about female orgasm. What for?

"Turn off the light and kiss me," was absolutely unheard of. Enough! She didn't want to meet this young woman.

First her aunt and uncle thought she was going out with

too many men. Now that she had it down to two, and wanted to get married, Ilya had to say: "Don't be in a hurry. What are you getting yourself into? You should know this man better. Such a short period of time."

On their marriage day, however, Ilya was nice. He said to Marina, "Maybe you are ready. Love each other. Now that you are married, you should live a peaceful life. Don't put shame on yourself. Just live so that people see you have a beautiful life."

At their pharmacy, Sona first heard about Oswald when Marina started to say, "I was introduced to this American, Alka," then Sona heard a little later that they began to see each other, and Alka began to call Marina "my bride." So when she came to them and said Alka had proposed marriage, girls thought, well, Marina's uncle has such a high position and we're just small people here. If he, in his high position, allows them to marry, who are we to decide no? They did remark that he's a foreigner, but Marina said, "He's not going to America."

None of the girls from her pharmacy were invited to her wedding, but then, it wasn't a big party, just her uncle and

aunt--not a regular wedding in a restaurant where many people were invited. Just close relatives, close friends--after all, they were not rich.

During the period of Yuri's friendship with Lee, Konstantin noticed that whenever he was returning home from an evening at which Lee was present, a person was always following him. Same person. So they stopped having contact with Lee.

It was precisely for that reason that he didn't take part in her wedding. "Yuri and I talked about our feeling of being watched. I said to Yuri: 'We're being grazed.'" There was a special word, pasut, which was used when you were clearly under surveillance. You were sheep and you had a shepherd who watched you everywhere.

As for Marina, Kostya would say that she had a goal in mind, and Lee was Victim Number One.

A victim, after all, is someone who is used as a means. That Marina wanted to get married was obvious to every man who had ever had anything to do with her, but Tolya Shpanko would have been the most appropriate for her.

Inessa doesn't recall when she heard the name Alik for the first time but there was a period when Marina disappeared for a while and Inessa just didn't see her. When she reappeared after a couple of months, Inessa was surprised and in some way shocked to discover that she was getting married to an American. Inessa thinks she was very eager to have a family and the man she chose was something of a second choice. All she said was that she was getting married, nothing more. She wanted family atmosphere.

Marina never told Inessa anything in detail but she did share some of her feelings. Inessa did have a sense that Marina had dirt upon her, that it was creeping, maybe, toward her soul but hadn't managed yet to sully it.

"You can be soiled on the outside, that's my feeling, but in your soul remain honest and decent. No, those are the wrong words. How can I say it? Well, she's dear to me, and I saw something in her," said Inessa.

"She was confessing, she spoke with a great deal of pain, with a very great deal of pain, believe me. I am afraid of seeming self-assured, but it seems to me that she needed me. She approached the subject gradually, she would talk and talk

and then afterwards she did get more detailed. It was before she got married that she told me all that. She felt entirely alone, as if nobody needed her."

Inessa knew that right before her marriage, Marina was worried that Lee would find out about her past on their wedding night. But, as she spoke with Inessa, she told her that she did know what to do with herself so that he wouldn't find out. It was difficult to talk on this subject because it involved physical and medical matters, but afterward, Marina said everything was OK and Lee thought she was a virgin. Something she did medically--yes, she did it.

Inessa said, "Of course, it shocked me, but I didn't judge her." Inessa hadn't known how she had managed something like that, but Marina told her. It was to use tannic acid. Marina was in a pharmacy, after all, and there were certain chemicals--when you put them in, you could give yourself strain and tension down there. When your bridegroom consummated first night, you would have real pain. You didn't have to take acting lessons. Blood was not necessarily produced but it was painful enough to convince. "This is what I remember Marina telling me."

After her wedding, Marina told Inessa that all had gone well and she was happy. This was not because he was such a great hero in bed but because she had succeeded in convincing

him she was virgin.

After marriage, Marina became a good and decent wife, Inessa said. It changed her. She had always wanted to have her own home and now she had achieved that. Somehow, Marina settled down.

INT: In an interview, one person responded to a question by saying: You're right, she wasn't a virgin on her wedding night. She was worried that Lee would find out, and she went to the pharmacy and got some tannic acid. She was protecting her marriage.

M: Okay.

INT: That's exactly what was said.

M: Okay. It's true. So? So, you are sex pervert to spend five days to get to talk about subject like this... I mean, isn't it enough?

INT: I'm telling you what happened in the course of the interviews. Pavel told us about an incident that happened at the radio factory, when guys came up to Lee and kidded him, and said: "Well, was your wife a virgin or not? How much blood was on the sheet?" We could never find out what Lee's answer was.

M: I don't know.

INT: Nobody seems to remember how he answered that question. So we don't know whether that was something which

bothered him. It's of value to know whether every time he had a disagreement with you, every time he had an argument with you. . .

M: Your guess is as good as mine.

INT: We're not interested in the sex by itself, but in what knowledge he had of you. How did it affect him? Your girlfriend said you were concerned about your marriage. She said it with a lot of emotion and feeling. That you were doing it to protect your marriage.

M: At least, I was serious about that.

INT: Exactly right. That helped us understand that you were serious about the marriage.

M: I wanted to have family. I was damn serious about that.

INT: Let me get it out, so we don't have to feel anybody is hiding anything. Inessa told us in this same interview, in kindness, with great love and affection for you, that you, Marina, carried a great burden from Leningrad. And about how difficult your life was in Leningrad and with your stepfather, and that you had to live a life which you were not proud of.

M: It wasn't by choice.

INT: Inessa explained how you felt very bad and were very much worried that you had had this life in Leningrad, and that you had to resort to things to survive, to eat, to find a place to sleep. . .

M: I never once in my life was paid money.

INT: I'm sure you weren't.

M: I was looking for love in wrong places and sometimes I had to pay for that. I actually was raped by a foreigner.

INT: By a foreigner.

M: And also my girlfriend sold me.

INT: Jesus Christ.

M: I mean I was trapped in a room. He locked the door. And he raped me. And you know how they have those dezhurnayas that sit over there in the hallways of hotels holding keys for people who are out? And I couldn't scream. I thought what would this woman think of me? So I fought this man. He finally threw me against him. He said, "Well if I knew you were a virgin, I would not have touched you." And I do not know what happened. I never. . .I swear I never have had blood, ever. You know what I mean? Lee didn't ask me. But I pretended. I was terrified, I said when night comes, what am I going to do? I mean, what? It's a cleancut life from now on. I want to be serious and I was terrified. But Lee did not ask me.

INT: He never asked the question whether you were a virgin?

M: He did thank me for it. So I thought, Oh my God. I flew over that. . .Now I'm holy again.

INT: Right.

M: All my life that's all I wanted to be. . .And then Lee came from the factory and told me about how guys there talk, and he laughed and he said how barbaric and awful. And I said, "Don't you talk about us. I don't want to be

discussed." And once, now I recall, we had an argument and he kind of mumbled: "Yeah, little virgin." And I said, "Yes, I am." I said, "Prove it that I'm not." And he dropped the subject.

April 31st After a seven-day delay at the Marriage Bureau because of my unusual passport, they allow us to register as man and wife. Two of Marina's girlfriends act as bridesmaids. We are married at her aunt's home. We have a dinner reception for about twenty friends and neighbors who wish us happiness (in spite of my origin) which was in general rather disquieting to any Russian since foreigners are very rare in the Soviet Union, even tourists. After an evening of eating and drinking in which Uncle Wooser started a fight and a fuse blew on an overloaded circuit, we take our leave and walk fifteen minutes to our home. We lived near each other. At midnight we went home.

Chapter 13 -- Honeymooners

There had never been one minute, said Marina, when she didn't know that her mother loved her, and that her grandmother loved her, and that had been her only stability, only one she had ever found in her life. So she would say now that her main reason for getting married was to find someone to belong to, and to have a family. Marriage was holy. One entered it for life.

Of course, she wanted to come to her marriage in purest way. Of course. In Russia it was a tradition that a man married a virgin but with Americans she didn't know how to read their feelings. They were a novelty. Maybe they wouldn't care as much.

She could say this much again: Lee did like to laugh about how barbaric it was in peasant villages. Showing bloody sheets! He had learned such at work and asked if it was true that after your wedding night everybody in town had to see red evidence. Marina said: "I did not know that men at work even think that way." He laughed. No big issue.

She asked him, "What are you guys discussing?" and let him know she didn't want to be talked about at some factory

after they were wed.

She remembers that in Leningrad when she was 14 years old, she would dream of being 16 or 17 and getting married. Some white prince would come. No dirt, nothing. So, when she became--what would you call it?--a witness to life's reality, she wasn't prepared. Probably, she said, it's that way for every little girl.

After they were legally married at ZAGS license bureau and some stamp was put on her passport to that effect, she happened to notice Alik's date of birth, 1939. It was then she realized that he had been lying when he told her he was 24. He was only 21. She said, "If I knew you were born in 1939, I wouldn't have married you." It was only a joke but she added, "It's too late now." He said to her that he had worried whether she would take him seriously. After all, she had made fun of Sasha on that night they met and told Lee how Sasha was only 20 and she was not about to marry babies.

At her wedding, Valya had prepared a feast: crab salad, salami, black caviar, red caviar, pate, and then she had stuffed a fish with its own cooked meat, just skin on outside and fish meat within, no bones. Not one. You could even slice it. Imagine how hard it is to save fish skin but Valya removed it carefully, then stuffed its own meat back until it

looked like a real fish again. Beautiful. Such a special effort.

Marina had already begged her aunt not to go through any Russian tradition of saying "Gor'ko, gor'ko." But as they sat around their table eating, somebody pretended to be choking on too much pepper and so everybody started crying out: "Gor'ko" --which means bitter--and Marina turned red. In obedience to such custom they now made her kiss Lee over and over every time somebody said, "gor'ko." Later she danced with everyone and then Erich Titovets and Pavel and Alik sang "Chattanooga Choo-Choo." Next morning Valya walked in on their apartment and dropped a plate on their floor with enough noise to wake up ghosts, and said, "This is Russian custom."

At her wedding, Marina had been embarrassed by Aunt Musya's husband, Vanya, who got drunk. (Lee called him Wooser!) As usual; he couldn't handle liquor. What a vanya! He crowed like a rooster, screaming away for whole wedding party. Marina was embarrassed. "I thought, my new husband will ask himself: 'Alik, what kind of family did you just marry into?' It was very uncomfortable situation."

That night, when they went back to his apartment, they discovered that Valya and Lyalya had placed flowers all around their bed. Her nightgown was on a pillow.

They didn't have a honeymoon. They just spent two days

in bed getting accustomed to each other--what would you want her to tell? They were new. They couldn't analyze everything. Talk a little, observe a little--bit by bit you go on, you don't make any big issue. Little by little. When you read romantic books, it's not enough; you want more. But sex was not romance. More like soiled clothes.

One thing: Lee was not bashful. He could walk around their apartment naked. As if it was nothing. That was surprising to her--that a man could be undressed and do what he wanted to do until he got dressed. But she never said anything about it. For Minsk, however, he was exhibitionist. She had just never experienced American way. He would not even be embarrassed to get up and go to their bathroom while leaving door open. That was unusual. Marina was trying to find out what was expected of her. She did not know what her man wanted so she had to learn.

Guys at Lee's factory, she soon found out, would always talk about sex. Big topic over there. That was why Marina never wanted to date factory boys. Their mentality. When Alik would laugh at what they said, she would say, "Don't tell them about our lovemaking. Don't you dare."

Alik's first experience with sex had not only been with a Japanese girl, but he also said that he'd never had an American girl. Just Japanese and Russian girls. Marina

wondered whether he would wonder if he was missing something? Maybe he should have had a girl from his own country first? No, Marina didn't know what to expect these first few days of marriage. She could say: kind of lived in euphoria. Now finally married, you know! And she had married an American. She had that stupid apartment she'd always dreamed about. God was smiling on her. Finally! A year or two before, she had been with Larissa and they'd been walking past this same apartment house. It was such a beautiful place from outside, elegant in construction, across a quiet street from nicest river in Minsk, Svisloch River. High columns rose through fourth and fifth stories of this elegant building, with high balconies between these columns. Marina had pointed to one window and said, "I'd like to have that balcony." She said that before she ever met Lee, and thought how nice it would be to have this best view of Minsk when flowers were out. So she said to Larissa, "Do you know anybody who lives here?" Larissa said no.

**May 6, 1961 Found us thinking about our future.
Despite the fact I married Marina to hurt Ella, I found
myself loving Marina.**

Her Aunt Valya said, "Let me see your pampered, manicured hand," and all Marina had were Polish fingers; her nails were broken from cleaning stone walls on her balcony, washing their floor, so forth. For that moment, she just stood there and said to herself, "Is this what married life is about? Broken nails? Oh, my God!"

But for the first couple of days, since they only had a couple of days off from their jobs and couldn't have a honeymoon, it was like they would stay in bed and would get up by late afternoon. On your honeymoon, you don't watch a clock. Maybe later, they would take a walk. A honeymoon was sexual, you explored. Marina felt as if now she was free to do what she wanted to do. She didn't think about their problems in sex, and she didn't want to talk about that really. You expected fireworks, and it didn't happen and you thought maybe it's supposed to come later. It never did. That was all right. But she didn't know if what little was happening to her was all that was supposed to happen, and so in bed everything was a problem. She didn't know what to do or which way it was supposed to be. It was not that Lee was impotent, not so. Lee was always eager beaver. But later on, when Marina was tired or in a bad mood, she didn't avoid him, just told him, "No, I don't want to make love to you because I feel used one more time. What for? Something there for you,