

SYNOPSIS:

THE LEGACY OF THE THREE EAGLES

This trilogy, a creative non-fiction is a family saga of persecution, horror and triumph of the human spirit. It is aimed for film productions or TV mini-series following book publication.

Part one, “The Nazi Eagle’s Dark Empire” is my father’s story. It is the saga of my parents in World War II set against the backdrop of death and destruction while Europe is burning. Unjustly accused, yet guided by deep values and his faith in humanity, my father risks his own life to save eighteen Jewish and Serb prisoners from being slaughtered in the 3 day “Razzia” massacre. The book reveals a well-kept historical secret that left a shameful stain on this disputed territory near the Yugoslavian-Hungarian border. Instigated by the Nazis, implemented by willing and unwilling Hungarian soldiers, three thousand innocent people walk their last mile naked in the snow, before being shot and pushed under the ice-covered Danube.

Despite the catastrophic loss of his right arm in an apocalyptic combat against the Germans, Father refuses to be handicapped. In the midst of horror and atrocity, having lost his home, and his country, Father remains unshaken, with courage and integrity that no amount of human suffering or injustice could destroy. Marching with his family amid endless rows of refugees fleeing the carnage in his burning hometown, his dreams, his hopes, his values and his undying spirit will be his sole legacy to me.

Part two is my mother’s story. “In The Crimson Claws of the Communist Eagle” takes me as a child, presumed “kidnapped”, into the magic world and secret rituals of a Gypsy camp outside a Hungarian village. This part depicts everyday life in the shadow of the Communist terror, seen through the eyes of a child. Most of all, this section is about the metamorphosis of a self-absorbed, spoiled socialite, my mother, who through hard labor and humiliation slowly turns into a humble and compassionate human being.

Part three, “The French Falcon’s Seduction” is my personal story, more than a rag-to-riches tale. It follows me from before my rise to stardom, as a poverty-stricken teenaged political refugee in Paris, a charity case wearing Red Cross hand-me-downs. Later, dressed by Christian Dior, I rub elbows with jet setters such as Brigitte Bardot. On a Mediterranean cruise, I am swept away by a young dashing prince of Morocco. While the Royal Court believes him kidnapped, our romance flourishes from the Pyramids of Egypt to the snow-capped Swiss Alps. An encounter with Albert Camus, singing with mega stars, my travel around the world and TV shows follow. I am General De Gaulle’s guest at the Paris Opera, and my first French kiss (yuck!) is from an obnoxious painter, with a funny moustache, a probing tongue and a misplaced passion: Salvador Dali! My dazzling career is shattered on a lonely hospital bed in the South of France while co-starring with the tenor Tino Rossi in the French musical of the decade. Poisoned by my understudy, I am suspended between life and death as I re-evaluate my life and my values to find a new path that brings me closer to my father’s integrity

My road from discrimination to fame is also a recipe to make dreams come true. The ingredients are: courage, perseverance, a positive attitude and most of all, human kindness. That’s my father’s legacy!

*Anticipating the success of this book, I am already working on the sequel about my life as a “shock-cultured” American housewife, a fish out of the water:
“The Triumph of the American Eagle”*

A part of this book runs parallel with the one woman show in pre-production titled:

“From Gypsy Camp to Salvador Dali”

By Ildy Lee

Sample Chapter

My father Tibor stumbled along, shoved by his captors. The street was deserted except for a bundled up woman pushing a baby carriage. It was early morning; the icy sidewalks were still in the dark. A German jeep pulled up behind the hurrying woman. A tall officer in Nazi uniform jumped out and shouted:

“Halt!”

The young woman stopped and turned around. The halo of an old-fashioned street lamp illuminated giant snowflakes swirling in the wind, casting its glow on a yellow star sewed to the woman’s coat.

With a distorted face, the German officer screamed in broken Hungarian at the frightened woman. “What are you doing in the street, Jewish bitch? You’re breaking the curfew, Yes? You arrogant people, you think you can do anything you please, Yah?” At this moment he spotted Tibor surrounded by Hungarian soldiers and uniformed policemen.

“And you, a bunch of worthless do-nothings! You have strict orders to shoot all lawbreakers, and you don’t do anything? You should be court-martialed! He pointed his handgun at the young blond soldier who earlier had held Anna hostage.

“You, come here. I will teach you the lesson of your life. I’ll give you an order and you follow it. Fershtahen? Let’s see if you have what it takes! Shoot the Jewish bitch. Now!” he shouted.

Shaking like a leaf, the frightened boy aimed his rifle at the woman. He looked back at his superiors for help, but the Nazi officer pointed the barrel of his gun at him.

“Either you shoot the bitch, mama’s boy, or I’ll shoot you. It’s your choice!” The woman fell to her knees and begged for her life. In the carriage the baby started to cry. The soldier aimed his rifle, closed his eyes and pulled the trigger. The woman fell to the ground with a thud.

“Now shoot the baby!” The officer ordered. The rifle shook violently in the young soldier’s hand. He lowered it and burst into tears: “I can’t! Not the baby, I can’t shoot the baby!”

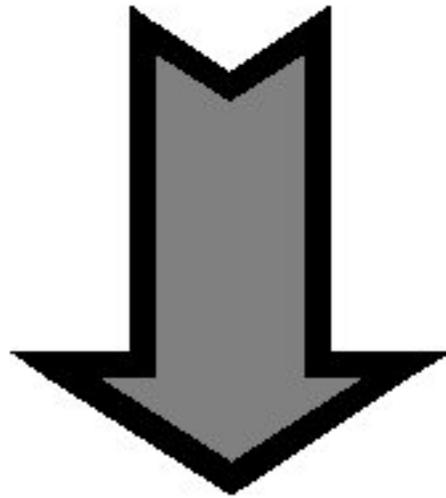
“Do I have to do everything myself? You are a disgrace to your country!”

The officer aimed his gun at the carriage and shot the baby. A little foot kicked once in the air and the crying stopped. The officer slowly turned his gun toward the weeping boy and without a word shot him in the head. As the boy hit the frozen ground, his blood-soaked military cap landed at Tibor’s feet.

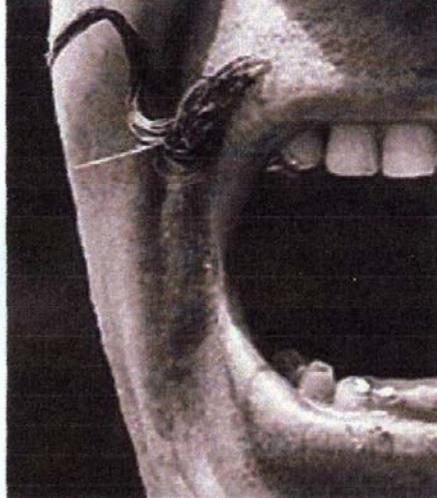
“You must all learn from this. Orders are orders! They’re to be obeyed. Fershtahen? How do you stupid Hungarians expect to win the fucking war with a bunch of weaklings like this? Now go and cleanse this city from the enemy! March!” The Nazi officer put his gun back into his holster, adjusted his jacket and rubbed his palms together with the contentment of a job well done. Before he jumped back onto his jeep, he looked around to see if anyone was watching.

“ He didn’t realize I am being held captive,” Tibor thought with relief. But as the Nazi officer’s eyes slowly lifted toward the window of their bedroom, Tibor held

his breath. He knew if his wife Anna were standing in the window watching the scene, the officer would shoot her on the spot. But Anna was already rushing toward the nursery, desperately pressing her baby against her chest while she still could. In these hours of insanity there was no hope left. She laid the baby in her crib and covered her own ears with the palms of her hands. She didn't want to hear the next shot. She feared it would be for Tibor.



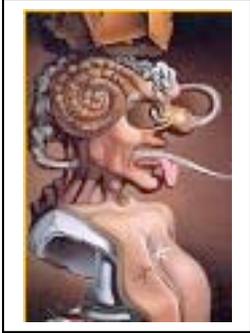
Scroll down to:
“KISSED BY DALI”



Ildy Lee:

The Kiss





My First French Kiss

BY: ILDY LEE

On a Thursday afternoon, early spring in Paris, the sun filtered through the thick crowns of the chestnut trees that line Boulevard St Michel on the Left Bank. The air was fresh and the wind loosened my rebellious braids into my face. My eyes squinted in the glow of the fading sun and I felt happy. I enjoyed walking along old cobblestones, the very same pavement that Victor Hugo, Chopin and Baudelaire walked on, and I loved sitting at the same sidewalk cafes where Rodin, Picasso and Hemingway sat. I often strolled here, between the historic buildings of the Sorbonne and the wrought iron gates of Luxembourg Gardens. I spent many cozy afternoons on its shady benches daydreaming over open note books, creating the illusion of studying hard, or just blatantly flirting with one of my handsome classmates from the nearby law school.

However, today was a special day for me. I was on top of the world, for I, Ildy Lee, the obscure little political refugee with her guitar and her songs had just captured the heart of French people on national television, singing about my war-torn country, and the scars of hatred and prejudice!

Now, as I walked home from the studios, I enjoyed watching the reaction of people I crossed, who had just seen me on TV. Then, in the early sixties, there

were only two TV channels, which meant that most of the people I met on the streets had seen me. It was fun to watch their expressions. Some were smiling, some looked surprised and others asked for an autograph! This was the moment I always dreamed of; not only I had an impact on people's lives, but also I made it! I made it big! I couldn't stop smiling. I wanted to hug everybody, to toss them in the air and catch them! I wanted to sing and dance!

Carrying my guitar case in one hand, I played a secret game by counting those passing people who seemed to recognize me. I was still counting heads when I noticed a strange looking man walking along my left side. He was walking slowly, observing me from the corner of his eyes with a teasing smile. He sported the funniest mustache I'd ever seen. It curled up in abrupt points, like the horns of a bison. Even though he was oldish, despite that ridiculous mustache, he was rather attractive. He had thin lips, a rosy complexion and a mischievous sparkle in his eyes that slightly slanted as he smiled. "Hmm, definitely charming!" I thought. He intrigued me, and now in turn I was observing him.

His long fur coat was open with elegant negligence over an expensive wool suit. A silk handkerchief peeped from his upper pocket. His shoes were glossy and his hands covered with extremely fine leather gloves. He held a little dog on a leash, and next to him, close to the curb, an old-fashioned Bentley driven by an attentive chauffeur in uniform followed his footsteps.

Who was this man, wrapped in his exotic perfume and eerie mystery?

He probably misinterpreted my staring at him for he now winked at me from the corner of his eyes. Since he was very skinny, he looked even taller than he really was. He kept staring at me and I started to find him annoying. He was obviously rich. Maybe even famous. But so was I. Well, not rich. But I was certainly on my way to be famous. So this annoying man with his inflated ego wasn't going to impress me at all. I couldn't allow him to do that! I decided to ignore him and turn my head away, just when he stepped closer and put his arm around me. I gasped. What a nerve, I thought!

“I just saw you on TV!” He announced victoriously. He had a high-pitched, theatrical voice. Nothing was natural about this man.

“*Big deal!*” I said to myself, “*So did the rest of the country!*” But instead I heard my voice answering with a nervous laugh: “Oh really?” I politely tried to escape from under his arm.

“I thought you were absolutely...hmmm...”

“*Terrific!*” - I tried to complete his sentence in my mind.

-“How shall I say?” he said, “You were.”

“*Great!*” I was thinking. “*Come-on, say it: great!*”

“I have found you absolutely...hmm, intriguing!”

That's all? Intriguing, I thought. Is that an insult?

“What do you mean by intriguing?” I asked.

“I never saw anybody like you! That good old Mireille presented you on the TV screen as the Anne Frank of songwriters. That's quite a name to live up to! “

“Do you mean I didn't live up to it?” *But who could live up to Ann Frank?*

“No, on the contrary. I have to admit that you deeply touched me. Providing all this is real.”

“What you mean by that?”

“Well, did you really lose your country, and your friends? Hmm, Young lady? Or is this just a publicity stunt? Come on, You can tell me the truth! And how come you speak perfect French, with no accent? Any explanation for that, my dear?”

I really started to dislike this arrogant man. How did he dare to doubt me?

“And those cute little pig tails, are they real?” He put the loop of the dog leash around his wrist, slipped off his right glove and playfully pulled on my hair.

“Whether you are real or fake,” he said, “Doesn't really matter. What matters is that you were convincing up there. You looked so vulnerable, and your song was as touching in its sadness as the death of a swan. But you are also pretty. Let's see!”

He stepped in front of me, his moustache like curled walrus tusks silhouetted against the setting sun.

-“Yes, very pretty indeed” He whispered. “This soft light makes you translucent. Don't move! Hold this expression!” He ordered like he owned me. “I like you distant like this” He said, “And a little melancholic.” He was now tracing the contour of my face with his glove, holding it like a paintbrush. The soft touch of the leather caused my skin to tingle and sent a chill through my spine. Then he slightly turned my head to the side, as if he were reinventing or recreating me. He looked like a Dutch Master at work. There was a strange glow in his eyes.

“ I'd like to paint you, he said with a theatrical gesture that gave him a God-like posture. You'll be my Madonna. A sensuous Madonna. Without any clothes on, just a long shawl, wrapped around your body like a snake, nestling its cruel head between your warm little breasts.“

He was talking with a mellow dramatic, raspy voice, and bulging eyes, like a bad actor who overplayed himself. Then he suddenly changed character and like an eager child, he asked with a mischievous grin, “ Would you pose naked for me?”

This was more than I could bear. I was confused and overwhelmed. This man, who easily could have been my father, was rude, shocking and disrespectful. No one had ever talked to me like this. On the one hand, he did it with so much charm that he almost disarmed me. But on the other hand, he was treating me like a cheap showgirl or a cocktail waitress. “*Who does he think he is talking to? I thought. After all, I am the daughter of an eminent Law professor. Maybe poor,*

but respectable. And I am on my way to be a star. How about it? Last week I had 5000 posters pasted all over the Metro stations and the billboards of Paris, mind you! And today, after my TV show, Eddy Barclay, the record mogul phoned the station and offered me a recording contract. There! So who is this little vermin to treat me like this? And look! There is a growing crowd around us, all my fans. How could this man humiliate me in front of them?" Blood rushed to my head. I was furious!

“Oh, how charming!” He said. “You're blushing. Good, very good! So you're not a fake after all!”

“ I am sorry, but I have to go” I said scornfully. “Good bye!”

He grabbed me...”Don't go yet” he pleaded. “Listen, I am having a party at my hotel Saturday night. Come along and sing for us, you won't regret it, I promise! And by the way, bring along Ismael, that gypsy guitar player who preceded you on TV, will you? Do you know his telephone number, can you contact him? “

“ Oh sure”-I promised. Knowing darn well that I was certainly not going, and I had no bloody intention to contact Ismael either.

“You know who I am, don't you?” He asked eagerly.

Was I supposed to? He mentioned his name, but frankly it didn't ring a bell. Come to think of it, I vaguely remembered now, having seen him on some TV shows. He was a painter. That was it! He was a crazy, zany painter. Not very

talented, I thought. He painted strange things, like melting clocks and other nonsense, just to be different. His only talent lay in his eccentric interviews. This man would do anything to be noticed. Then I remembered; he once rented the entire second floor of a world famous hotel so he could ride his bicycle in the hallway. Another time he ordered the bellhop to herd one hundred sheep up to his luxury hotel suite to paint them. They soiled the oriental carpets with their droppings and smelled up the place. It was truly disgusting! I hoped that I would never ever have to lower myself to do just anything for publicity! The pushy little painter who tried so desperately to be famous, handed me a piece of paper he tore off from an envelope in his pocket and swiftly jolted down: "Hotel Meurice, Saturday night 8 o'clock. Bring Ismael!" He signed it with a fancy, curving gesture that he finished up in the air with elegant circles, like a ballet dancer, before ceremoniously handing it to me.

“You want me to go to your hotel?” I asked suspiciously.

“Don’t get me wrong,” he said with a Cheshire grin. “In fact, I’ll introduce you to my wife Gala.” In his attempt to appear harmless, he was almost convincing, however his eyes glued on my ruby red lips betrayed his true intentions. “Don't be late!”

He spun me around and his expression abruptly changed while he whispered to my ear: “Oh, baby, you look so innocent, yet you've got such sinful lips!” and he pulled me closer. “Can I kiss you good-by?” he asked but didn’t wait

for an answer. The next thing I remembered were his upper incisors gleaming white in the setting sun. His lower teeth, obviously his own, were worn down and blackened. They looked sharp and cutting as he bent over me, looking like a hawk before striking its prey. Then he swiftly glued his thin lips over mine while his dog leash got temporarily caught in my guitar case. His enormous silhouette was overshadowing me, dark like the spread-out wings of a victorious vulture. I was helpless as he pinned me down, shocked, surprised and angry. His mustache was hard as a claw and it did hurt as he was pressing himself forcefully against my body. Yet his fur coat was soft, animal like and I closed my eyes for the aroma of his exquisite perfume dizzied me.

However, what followed that day, I wasn't prepared for!

Like a giant vacuum, his lips sucked mine into his mouth, licking and wetting mine like an octopus and then...Oh my god! And then! - His sharp and pointed tongue forced open my mouth and invaded my inner cavity, turning and swirling and probing up to my tonsils. The tongue was huge, alive and crawling all over inside, like a giant dragon, wagging its tail. I wanted to cough it out, tear it out or spit it out, as I was gagging on it. That tongue was a frightening, horrible nightmare and I wanted to wake up.

Finally, the invader retreated with a triumphant smile, a gladiator who just had conquered the enemy. He gave me a last wink and he and his little dog disappeared through the crowd into his chauffeur driven Bentley. I wanted to die

while the crowd was cheering, applauding and whistling. Blushing, I ran to the washroom of the corner coffee shop and rinsed out my mouth over and over. Yuck! I never had a French kiss before, but God, this was disgusting! A blond girl followed me to the wash room.

Oh, that kiss! - She sighed, - How lucky you are! I would do anything to be kissed by Salvador Dali!

But I felt violated, dirty and ashamed.

* * *

The following Sunday morning as I spread out the newspapers over the cafe table, smiling faces of the zany painter with curvy mustache stared at me from every page. The headlines were flashing with thick captions: Big party Saturday night at the Hotel Meurice hosted by Salvador Dali and his gracious wife Gala.

Maybe it would have been safe to go, after all?

I didn't realize then that the man who gave me my first French kiss was one of the greatest masters of our century. Fortunately Ismael never found out how close he once came to fame and glory, for the master died on January 1989.

In quiet museums I often stare at his masterpieces wondering how would I feel looking at a canvas that would display my naked body, an infant on my lap, and a snake's head nestled between my breasts? Would I be proud or ashamed? Did he remember me at all? Was he disappointed that he never saw again the innocent Hungarian schoolgirl that he left so confused that spring afternoon on the Left

Bank? And when I think of him, I still don't know whether the muscle spasms in my stomach, the butterflies in my chest and the chills through my spine are due to admiration, desire, disgust or regret. I guess, I am still confused. All I know, that today I would give anything to feel once again the magnitude of that chaotic and consuming fire that only a genius of his caliber can create. Yes, I would give anything to have a second chance to taste the strange passion of that kiss that frightened me so much on Boulevard Saint Michel on that spring afternoon in Paris.

END.



Ildy Lee's poster as a recording artist at the time she met Salvador Dali.