

Set For Life



Norman Way



A "New Woman" Novel



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SET FOR LIFE

By Norman Way

Prologue Southern Germany, 1944

SS Colonel Hermann Kleinholtz stood with the two engineers behind the barricade at the end of the short railroad siding southeast of the German town of Straussburg. It was a warm, sunny afternoon, with clear skies and a slight breeze blowing out of the southwest.

Colonel Kleinholtz was glad to be assigned to this top-secret operation in small, out-of-the-way Straussburg. After the Germans had failed to stop the Allied landings in Normandy, things had gotten a bit rough around German High Command Headquarters, where he had formerly been assigned. The increased Allied bombings had not yet been a problem down here, largely because this particular section of German railroad was not used very much.

The three men began walking east through the high grass to the tree line. They continued walking to the end of the tree line until they came to the rocky ridge near the border of the city. Two hundred yards east of where they were standing was an open field.

“The Jew laborers will be housed there in tents while they work here,” said one of the engineers as he pointed in the direction of the open field.

Kleinholtz asked no questions as the engineers looked around some more and then walked back to the short siding. He followed them to their staff car parked nearby.

“It’s perfect,” commented one of the engineers. “The laborers and equipment will be here within a week. When they arrive, please notify the Fuehrer that work has begun.”

Both men snapped a Nazi salute. “Heil Hitler!”

Kleinholtz returned their salute. The engineers got in their staff car and drove away.

As he walked back to his hotel, Kleinholtz wondered about this top-secret project, the security of which had been entrusted to him. The war had not gone well since the Allies had landed at Normandy, and the future did not look very bright for the Fatherland.

Fortunately he had managed to get his wife and his young son Carl across the Swiss border to safety. He had made plans for his own escape too. As soon as this project was completed he was going to join them, and then they would begin their new lives together as Swiss citizens. They might even emigrate from there to another country, somewhere in Brazil or Argentina perhaps. America was also a place to consider. There

were many fine countries a man or a man and his family could begin a new and comfortable life in.

One thing was certain: they would have no future in postwar Germany, particularly because he had been in the SS. That would make him a marked man. If Germany lost the war he would be prosecuted for war crimes, which could lead to his execution or life imprisonment. After that happened, his family would be left to fend for themselves. They were going to have a very difficult time of it. He and his family really had no choice. They had to relocate for their own safety and well-being, even if it was before the war ended.

Yes, they would have to leave Germany—but they would never abandon their devotion to the great ideals of National Socialism, and to the advancement of the Master Race. Kleinholtz's wife, Walburga, was as devoted as he, and young Carl was showing great promise. It was a shame that he and Walburga had been unable to breed any more future leaders of the Master Race like Carl, but that could not be helped, any more than it now appeared the defeat of Germany could be avoided. Still, even if Germany were defeated, the Master Race must never be defeated!

The next week a train carrying the Jew laborers arrived and started to work. A path was bulldozed through the cleared area to the base of the ridge where the mining equipment would drill the cave for the secure storage of the priceless treasures to be hidden there. When the path was finished, a 20-foot wide by 20-foot high cave was drilled into the rocky ridge, with the rock and dirt being hauled away by trucks.

The two German engineers and Colonel Kleinholtz inspected the work periodically. Everything was progressing on schedule just as planned. German soldiers from the local garrison just south of the ware-

house complex kept prying eyes away from the construction site.

Tight security had to be maintained for this project, with no margin for error, under direct orders from the German High Command. Few people outside of the Fuehrer even knew about it, since the Fuehrer had planned it himself and had trusted its completion to only a very few people outside of the German High Command. No one except the engineers could get close enough to see what was going on.

Inside the newly constructed cave, nine three-foot by four-foot holes were dug along the walls on both sides of the cave. Six more holes were dug down the middle, where the railroad tracks were going to be laid. A small space at the end of a short corridor at the rear of the cave was carved out to serve as an office. It would only be used until the cave was sealed. Once sealed, it would look as if nothing had been done in that area. Except for those who worked on the project, no one else would know of its existence. Drawings and specifications for the project would be destroyed on its completion.

After another inspection by the engineers, the laborers began laying railroad tracks from the barricade to the very end of the cave. A military wrecker truck was parked at the rear of the cave near the office. When it came time to re-open the cave, the truck would be used to remove the bombs once the demolition squad had defused them.

When the tracks were finished, an engine pushed a flatcar with 24 250-kilogram aircraft-type bombs into the cave. A soldier operated the wrecker truck that lifted the bombs off of the flatcar and placed them carefully in the nine holes on each side of the cave.

Next, as the train backed out of the cave, a bomb was placed in each of the six holes that had been dug between the tracks. These six holes were directly underneath each of the six boxcars that would be parked in the cave.

The following morning a demolition team arrived. They wired all 24 bombs together. As soon as they finished, Colonel Kleinholtz went to the army garrison headquarters building. There he phoned the German High Command in Berlin from the front office switchboard. "Please tell the Fuehrer his accommodations have been completed and we are awaiting the shipment of his furnishings," he said, and then hung up.

A week later, after midnight, an engine pushed six boxcars into the cave. This train had traveled only at night, due to the chance of Allied aircraft blowing it up before it could reach its destination. The increased presence of Allied aircraft had made transportation of anything more difficult, and this train load was one that Germany could not afford to have destroyed, so it had been given top priority over all other nighttime traffic.

It turned out that the tracks through the cave were on a very slight incline. For this reason, the wheels of each boxcar were chocked with a concrete block to insure that they would not begin to roll downhill towards the entrance.

In the morning the laborers fabricated a wooden façade across the front of the cave, leaving only a small opening on the left side. Special materials were mixed and then sprayed over the wooden façade. When it dried, the front of the cave looked exactly like the surrounding rock.

The demolition crew came back; the bombs were wired up to several trip wires on both sides and across the front of the cave. After they finished the job, they exited the cave through the small hole on the side. The small hole was then covered with a wooden façade and sprayed with the same material that was covering the rest of the cave's opening.

Colonel Kleinholtz and the two engineers surveyed the completed work. The material had hardened and it looked just like the black-grey rocky ridge that surrounded it. If you didn't know where the cave opening was before, you couldn't tell where it was now.

Last, the Jew laborers laid rolls of sod from the top of the ridge to the bottom, covering up part of the finished façade. Everything that had been done blended in perfectly with the rest of the ridge and the surrounding area from any direction. Even aerial surveillance would be useless to detect it.

The two engineers were quite pleased with the way things looked, and with the fact that all of the work had been completed ahead of schedule. After another Nazi salute, they both departed the area and returned to Berlin with their mission accomplished.

That night Colonel Kleinholtz phoned the German High Command again from the army garrison's headquarters: "Please tell the Fuehrer his furnishings have arrived and are all in place."

In the morning the Jew laborers began ripping up the railroad tracks. When they finished, the ground was smoothed out and rolls of sod were put in place. The barricade was reinstalled at the end of the short siding, just as it was before the cave was constructed.

The sanitary pit at the rear of the tents had been enlarged. The Jew laborers were then lined up and

executed. Their bodies were dumped into the pit and covered up. Kleinholtz felt a slight twinge of unease at the sight. Members of inferior races, of course, could be executed at will by those of the Master Race—but Kleinholtz had never quite understood why Jews, who might be quite as white as, say, the Fuehrer himself, were not considered members of the Master Race. Of course it was an opinion that he had always kept strictly to himself since the rise of National Socialism. Still, if ever he were the Fuehrer, he would surely enlarge the definition of the Master Race to include, not exclude, the Jews.

Soldiers packed up the bedding and then they dismantled the tents. Army trucks hauled everything away, leaving the field and the general area almost exactly as it had been prior to construction. It was almost as if nothing had happened there at all.

Sunday night, after the evening meal, Colonel Kleinholtz stood on a platform next to the garrison's commanding officer and before the assembled army garrison. He cleared his throat and then addressed the assembled soldiers in front of him: "The Fuehrer has asked me to commend you on the outstanding job you have done for the Fatherland. I am pleased to inform you that he has authorized an additional month's pay, and all of you will have thirty days paid leave before being reassigned. The paymaster will give you your money now, and in the morning a convoy of trucks will be here to take you to dispersal points so all of you may go home."

Kleinholtz stepped back and the garrison's commander stepped to the front. He dismissed the men and they quickly began eagerly lining up at the tables to receive their pay. This was almost the only good news they had since the Allies had landed at Normandy; they couldn't wait to go uptown and spend

their money. The way the war was going, it might be the last chance any of them would have to party.

Before leaving the base, Kleinholtz picked up the mail at the garrison's office. The mail was in two groups, one including business and military mail, the other the soldiers' personal mail. He took the business and military mail to the postal station. The soldiers' personal mail he took back to his hotel.

Standing in front of the hotel's fireplace he tossed the soldiers' personal mail, several letters at a time, into the flames and watched as the fire consumed them. The German High Command didn't want to take the risk of any soldier writing home about this construction project or the fact that they were being re-assigned.

Later that night Kleinholtz made the rounds of various nightclubs and drinking establishments. He shared drinks with some of the soldiers and wished them well. Everyone was in a jovial mood. In the morning they would all be going home to spend time with their friends and families. Only the colonel knew that, in the morning, the convoy bringing in the replacement soldiers would not be taking these men to dispersal points. They would be trucked to the Russian front. They would simply be told that the Fuehrer had changed their orders at the last minute and that they would be needed elsewhere.

He doubted if many of them would survive to talk about the construction project they had been guarding, since in all likelihood they would probably die fighting either the Russians or the Americans and British who had been advancing at an alarming rate. There had been rumors of a massive offensive through the Ardennes later in the year, but that hardly seemed possible at this late date. Following the debacle at Stalingrad and the Allies landing in

France, there seemed to be no stopping them. Hitler's Germany and its Third Reich, which was supposed to last a thousand years, appeared to be doomed.

For all intents and purposes the war was lost, and it was just a matter of time before Germany had to surrender. To continue to fight until the very end was pure madness. Kleinholtz doubted if he was the only one that had begun to question the mental capabilities of the Fuehrer.

In July, shortly after the Allies came ashore at Normandy, he had slipped across the Swiss border with a forged passport and an attaché case with fifty thousand Swiss francs, which he put in a safety deposit box in one of the local banks. The Swiss bankers were not any smarter than other bankers, but they did know how to keep a secret. When things got bad he would head for the border to join Walburga and Carl. They would begin a new life together with that money and other forged documents.

He was glad that his escape plan for his family had gone off without a hitch, and he was looking forward to rejoining his family as soon as he could arrange his own escape. For now he would just have to see how things went here. It would only be a short time before he would be able to put his own escape plan into action and leave all of this behind him.

Turning up the collar of his full-length leather coat, he began walking quickly back to his hotel. He was several blocks away when two figures in dark clothing walked out from an alley and confronted him. Startled, the colonel took a step back as one of the men raised his right arm.

There was no sound as the silenced pistol discharged. The 9mm bullet struck the colonel in the

forehead and he toppled backwards. He was dead before he hit the ground.

The shooter jammed the pistol in his coat pocket as both men rushed forward. They grabbed the dead colonel's body under the armpits and dragged him back into the alley where their car was parked with its trunk open. After depositing the colonel's body in the trunk, they slammed the lid shut and drove off into the night.

Chapter 1

My story, I think, begins like most all transgender people's stories. I knew there was something wrong with me even as a very young child. That thing between my legs didn't belong there. I wasn't who I appeared to be. I wanted to wear dresses, not pants. I loved the color pink and wished for pink finger and toe nails.

What was wrong with me? Why did I have these feelings of femininity? Did God do this to me? If so, why? Was this God's idea of a bad joke? I asked myself over and over again. And why me—or for that matter, why anybody?

Like most children, I suffered in silence. I was afraid to talk to anyone about this. Would my mother understand? I doubted it, but then who would? Nobody, of course. I was alone with this singular problem of being a female in a male body. Was I going to be trapped forever like this? Had I died in some previous life, and was this my hell?

Early on I learned there were two worlds: Masculine and Feminine. I was in the masculine one by virtue of my biology. But I knew I didn't belong there. I was in essence a prisoner in my own body.

Like any prisoner I wanted out, not only of this body but the male life that I was heading into without being asked if this was the life I wanted. I had been stuck here. Perhaps this was God's idea of a bad joke. If it was, I certainly didn't think that it was very funny.

I knew I was going to have to do something or go crazy. As a child, of course, there were no options open to me. As I grew older maybe, by some miracle or other, there might be an answer—but for now I couldn't even imagine what it might be. I could only keep hoping that there was going to be one and I would be able to find it.

The question was, what was I going to do until then? When would I be able to resolve this situation and get started on the life I wanted and deserved to have? Or would I be forever consigned to be miserable in a body that was not mine?

I knew that there might be a point where I would no longer be able to “suck it up” and just live as a man. What would I do then? Killing myself didn't seem to be the worst possible option, but I wasn't sure. Someone once said “Death solves all your problems”—but of course that person hadn't yet died and found out whether it was true or not. I decided not to take the chance.

Mom had divorced my dad before I was born. She never talked about him much, except to say he had been found dead in his pickup truck camper on a California beach some weeks after their divorce had been finalized.

She remained in Minnesota, where I was born, and worked in human resources at a computer software firm. She made good money, but had to put in longer hours than most of the other employees. That meant

I had a lot of time to myself. I used it wisely, studying hard and earning good grades.

I would not describe her as a “health nut,” but she and I made good use of the treadmill and stationary bike in the basement of our duplex. When the weather was nice we jogged, biked or walked in the parks in the surrounding area. We both enjoyed the silence and solitude of the great outdoors.

You could say that the silence and solitude were my saving grace. There was never a lot of conversation between us. I kept myself busy with household cleaning and laundry chores as well as my outside chores of mowing, raking, and shoveling the snow from the sidewalk and driveway.

“Everybody works, everybody benefits,” she had once said.

I continued to struggle with my feelings. The internet provided me with information about resources and treatment, though as a minor I was not able to utilize any of it. I thoroughly enjoyed the websites that sold bridal, bridesmaid and prom dresses as well as other formal apparel.

Fantasizing about wearing those beautiful dresses consumed a good deal of my free time. I also enjoyed those internet retail sites that sold what were called “sissy dresses” and accompanying accessories like ruffled panties, petticoats, high heel pumps, French Maid uniforms, etc.

I thought about how much fun it would be to be able to wear such feminine apparel while mincing around coquettishly in those high-heeled shoes. Listening to the click of my high heels on the hard floor and the rustle of my petticoats under my satin or taf-

feta puff sleeve French Maid mini dress as I walked was both a visual and audible fantasy.

In addition I dreamed of being able to enjoy luxuriating in a perfumed bubble bath, scrubbing myself with perfumed soap and, after toweling my self dry, generously dusting myself from head to foot with sweetly scented body powder.

These were all very “girly” and very feminine dreams. The thought of them one day coming true would have to remain just a fantasy for now. Nevertheless, they kept me going. Sometimes dreams and fantasies are all you have to hang on to.

Imagining myself wearing pretty lingerie and sitting at a pink well-lighted vanity applying creamy lipstick, powdered blusher, eyeliner, eye shadow and mascara was another of my favorite fantasies.

Just how I would look in make up was something yet to be determined, but I was confident that I was going to make a pretty girl if I ever got the chance. At this point God only knew when that chance might come.

A news program about the Kentucky Derby got me wishing I could wear one of those fabulous floor-length gowns and big floppy hats I saw the women wearing. Wishes and dreams were all that seemed to be a big part of my life to date.

I also thought about wearing foundation garments, sheer stockings, a lacy camisole with a matching half slip under a very frilly, feminine blouse tucked into a slim tailored skirt and high heel pumps, working as a female executive’s receptionist or personal secretary. Combining working en femme and living en femme would be an ideal lifestyle for me.

Sometimes it was hard to concentrate on my studies or whatever else I was doing when these thoughts of femininity seemed to overpower my thought process. On one occasion mom waved her hand in front of me and said “Earth to Michael, Earth to Michael, HELLO.”

I managed to snap out of it with the excuse that I had been preoccupied with something at school. Still she had looked at me and asked:

“Is everything OK?”

Naturally I replied “Of course, mom.”

At puberty my voice didn’t change much. I knew if I could ever be a girl someday I wouldn’t want to have a strong masculine voice, so I had always spoken softly. Voice is the one thing that couldn’t be altered very much, so I talked very little and, when I did, I kept my voice modulated.

I stuck with our healthy diet and exercise routine. Down the road, I knew, the better physical shape I was in, the better I would be able to withstand the rigors of the surgery I thought I was going to need, as well as the hormonal effects my body would be going through.

Looking in the full-length mirror on the back of my bedroom door after showering one night, I thought that my nearly hair-free body, with hormone treatment, could result in a fairly attractive female. With both hands I pushed up under my nipples, and thought it wouldn’t take too much to give me a decent set of breasts.

Due to my short stature, mom had enrolled me in martial arts at a young age. I guess she could see that by the time I was in high school I could be a target for



bullies, and she wanted me to be able to defend myself. I applied myself enthusiastically and soon became good at it.

Sports never really interested me. I would have much rather been taking ballet and dance lessons in addition to my martial arts classes. Of course there was no hope of that ever happening, as much as I would have liked it.

I saw myself in my little pink ballerina costume wearing pink nail polish, blusher and lipstick as I pranced around the stage to the delight of my parents. It was a very nice pipedream, but of course that was all it was. It seemed like pipedreams were all that I was ever going to have until I could find a way out of my predicament, or “conundrum” as one internet site put it.

Ballet and dance lessons were just some of the things that had passed me by, which I had no hope of getting back. I was left without hope of recouping those things, except of course in my dreams and fantasies, but that was little consolation as far as I was concerned.

In my spare time I continued to enjoy those internet sites I mentioned. It was a form of “release,” I guess you could say. Those websites and my dreams were the only things I had to keep me going.

The fact that the internet had provided me with a lot of information about this “condition,” for lack of a better word, as well as the knowledge that there were many others like me out, there didn’t help much to alleviate the stress that I was feeling.

As long as I lived with mom, I knew, I was never going to have an opportunity to cross dress or apply makeup, so there was no point in buying anything

just yet. That would have to be for some time in the future—but still I was getting impatient for the chance to see my “feminine side” as someone once put it.

I didn’t have long to wait to be living in an empty duplex. After finishing my sophomore year, I turned sixteen that May. Mom and I had planned a hiking vacation to Yellowstone Park. There would be plenty of beautiful outdoors for us to enjoy there.

When we got back I would start a summer job at a local golf course and country club. Mom knew somebody there and had gotten me an interview before school let out. I wanted very badly to start earning my own money.

The trip was never made because a former employee returned to work with a gun and began shooting.

Mom and I had thought she worked in a fairly secure building—but it turned out it was not secure enough. The man entered the lobby just as several employees were leaving for lunch and opened fire on them. Mom and two others were shot dead, and three more were wounded, before he was shot dead by security.

The company described him as a “disgruntled employee.” I wondered why more steps had not been taken to insure that he would not be able to do something like this—but it would serve no purpose. Three people were dead, three more were hurt, and nothing they could do was going to change that.

I delayed starting my summer job by a week. A friend of mom’s from work helped me with funeral arrangements and contacted a local attorney to help me with the legal details.