

CHAPTER SIX DEPRAVED INDIFFERENCE

The blackboard quotation.

In the universe there are things that are known, and things that are unknown, and in between, there are doors. William Blake.

As usual at the morning meeting, everyone is talking at once. Emilie - "Wayne and Neil need nicknames." Wayne - "Can I choose my own, how about *NoName*?" Laughter and smiles. Samuel - "NoName it is!" Lapis - "I want to change mine. I know I have a temper, say things without thinking." Julian interrupts. "Last night you were telling me about your Synesthesia. How about Senses?" "Perfect!" Julian - "Where's your friend, Nicholas?" "He's going through a rough time, likes to stay by himself."

Asha - "We have to pick a name for Neil. Since he asked me to call him the old man, how about *om*?" Neil - "I love that! He starts humming "ommmm." Shilli gets up and puts a small package in front of both Wayne and Neil. "These are for you." Shilli - "Has anyone noticed how most things in nature are spiral and circular, how few are square?" Julian - "Does anyone know who owns Antarctica? *The answer is. . . No one and everyone!*" Emilie - "Okay, if we're having a trivia contest, did you know plants have DNA?" Neil jumps in - "How about this? My doctor told me that a surgical incision on a fetus still in the womb heals without a scar."

Marcus arrives for the daily meeting with a small black dog and a white Siamese cat. They all jump onto the table. Marcus - "VACLAV and LIBUSE live in this territory."

Marcus continues. "Different age groups are reacting differently. Many young people have only known a life with technology. Everything for them will be counterintuitive, the opposite of what they are used to: slow not fast, listen not talk, focus not delete, share not profit. Many will have difficulty, a visceral reaction they're not prepared to deal with, impatience, isolation and stress. Knowing the difference between need and want, older people will be more frustrated than afraid. I'd like to spend time alone now with Vaclav and Libuse." One by one, everyone goes to Marcus. Some embrace him, others kiss him, others stroke his coat. The love they feel for him is palpable.

Following White Crow's instructions, every morning Emilie took a walk along the Vltava River, always sitting on the same bench. One morning, when a dolphin popped his head out of the water, she was not at all surprised. "I am CTIBOR. Ask Lapis to bring his family here tomorrow." In an instant, he disappeared.

The next morning, Emilie, Lapis, his aunt and uncle are at the river when CTIBOR appears. No one moves. Emilie kneels down. After listening for a few minutes, she looks up and begins. "You are attorneys. The animal world is considering bringing a legal action against the human species. Since this has never been done before, they'd like to know if they have grounds to do this." Emilie pauses for a few seconds. "An orangutan, chimpanzee and dolphin would like to hire you. They can communicate using both sign language and morse code."

Lapis' uncle shakes his head, gets up and motions to his wife. In not exactly a friendly tone - "Lapis, we'll see you at the hotel."

Later that night, Lapis comes to Emilie's room. "My aunt and uncle don't want to be involved. Their daughter, my cousin Irena, overheard her parents talking about what happened. She's a law student, really smart. She's amazed you and I can communicate with animals. She wanted me to ask you if she could go with you to the river. She wants you to tell something to the dolphin."

As a light rain falls, Emilie, Lapis and Irena leave the Halcyon for the river. It isn't long before Ctibor appears. All Irena knew to do was to focus her mind on what she wanted to communicate. *Depraved indifference*. After a few minutes of silence, Emilie touches Irina's hand. "He understands. He thanks you. He wants you to meet Marcus, something about a court."

The World Court, The International Court of Justice at the Peace Palace in the Hague, the Netherlands, immediately came to Irena's mind.