

Because Thimphu had no airport, the Vestas Wind Systems plane landed in nearby Paro. In the early morning, Neosha, Jane Green's law clerk, was waiting. During the thirty five mile trip to the capital, it was immediately clear why Bhutan, a country in the Eastern Himalayas, was called The Kingdom in the Clouds. Driving on a single lane, curvy road, with prayer flags waving from houses built into the steep hillsides, Neosha was both an excellent driver and expert guide. Though tired from the long flight, everyone was exhilarated to be together, especially in such a magical place.

The four attorneys Paul Osprey, Raoul Lapin, Rene Hibou and Jane Green had arrived the day before, as had Snug the Tabby cat, Youri the Kelpie, Chopper the Bulldog and Silas the Labrador.

The three story Guesthouse was located near the city center. The decorative woodwork of cornices, beams, windows and balconies was elaborately painted with animals, birds and flowers, the beauty of the extraordinary appliques, textiles and artwork unmistakable. A large family room and kitchen was on the first floor, the upstairs bedrooms overlooking a large courtyard.

Anxious, Chopper knew Emilie was coming. Running to greet her, standing on his back legs, his front paws reaching for her shoulders. he was nearly as tall as she was. On his right cheek, the English Bulldog had a deep mahogany colored fold, slanting from underneath his eye to the corner of his mouth. Tilting his head to one side, he said "Scratch me here." Silas (c-lass) was in Julian's arms before he knew it. When Snug and Youri walked toward them, Shilli, Asha and Lapis were thrilled to be reunited with their dear friends.

Waiting for their hosts to arrive, everyone gathered in the family room. Asha - "How is your sweet Samuel?" Emilie - "At two months, he sleeps and smiles. I thought about bringing him, but my mother couldn't wait to begin being a bedstemor. Shilli - "I guess no one has to mention the obvious. Today's September 28th, the second year anniversary of the lawsuit." Restless, Lapis stood up and walked outside.

Emilie - “He’s not himself. I can’t imagine what he’s feeling, losing his parents. I was so afraid for him, he was so vulnerable and exposed. When Nicholas’ mother and father were killed, Lapis got him through it. When Samuel died, he totally shut down. Now, it’s Nicholas who’s watching over Lapis. That they have each other is a blessing, like their Synesthesia.” When Lapis returned, a swallowtail butterfly was sitting on his shoulder.

Lapis - “I want to tell you all something. I might be in big trouble. The day after my parents’ funeral in St. Petersburg, I was so angry, I did something really stupid. Do any of you remember Xenia?” Shilli - “The cat who stayed with Nicholas to protect him.” Lapis - “Xenia went to the funeral, came home with me. All I kept hearing in my head was “Do what you need to do.” Fooling around with some frequencies, I interrupted the state run TV and radio broadcasting company.” “If you want to communicate something to an animal, a bird, a fish, a plant or flower, do it. Then. . . listen!”

The look of total shock on Shilli’s face startled everyone. Shilli - “I did the same thing. During a TV news report talking about how Namibia’s a model for wildlife conservation, I cut in with the sounds of cheetahs yelping and purring.” Julian - “Are you kidding? Me too.” Shilli - “What did you say?” Julian - “We interrupt this broadcast with an important message. Until you have loved an animal, a part of your soul remains unawakened.” When the Admiral appears, grinning, the reunion is nearly complete. “Let’s not forget four lawyers will be here any minute. It’s probably a good idea to keep this to yourselves.”

Julian, Lapis and Shilli are deep into conversation. Julian - “Every time I see the verify you are human message on the screen, asking you type the nearly illegible letters and numbers.... Lapis - “It won’t be long before different species verify who they are, their way, not ours.”

Asha - “Any of you had an unusual dream lately?” Shilli - “I was in a forest, watching a rabbit, crow, and an animal I’ve never seen before, some sort of goat and antelope.” Julian - “Same for me - a forest. There were these odd looking seats that looked like giant mushrooms, with some kind of attached mirror ” Lapis - “Emilie and I had the same dream. We were in a forest too, a heron and a crane flying over us.” Asha - “I was floating in a sea of blue poppies.”

Hearing familiar voices, Chopper and Youri ran out of the room, returning with the four lawyers. Rene Hibou - "How wonderful to see you all. Instead of Dresden, we decided this year to meet in Bhutan." Raoul Lapin - "I think I speak for all of us. After our experience with Ayres and Victoria, many things took on a new meaning." Jane Green - "Bhutan is known for its reverence for the natural world. We invited you here to enjoy the glories of the country, but, equally important, we wanted to talk with you. A lot has happened since the trial."

Paul Osprey - "The Tsechu Festival starts in a few days, amazing mask dances. Clock Tower Square, the Textile Museum, National Library, the National Memorial Chorten, the Changlimithang Stadium - so much to see."

Jane Green - "You must be tired from the trip. Get settled in, do a little sight seeing, we'll talk tomorrow. Our surprise for the day is that you've been invited to meet Bhutan's King Wangchuck."

At breakfast the next morning the four lawyers shared their news. Paul Osprey - "The man responsible for having Marcus killed has been arrested, tried, and sentenced to life in prison."

Lapis - "How did you find him?" Raoul Lapin - "An animal led us to him. The man was clever, hiding behind a fraudulent international charity raising money for animals. Not only did he keep donations for his personal use, he used credit card information to steal from animal lovers worldwide." "Why would he want to harm Marcus?" He knew the time was near for communication between species. That he had no idea about the process was his frustration. Worshipping money, he wanted to get the patent before any one else."

Paul Osprey - "He believed if Marcus was dead, you'd all be intimidated, back off and withdraw. Little did he know that what he did would have the opposite effect." Rene Hibou - "Obviously, he had no idea who he was dealing with!"

Emilie - "You said an animal helped you to find him?" Raoul - "My wife and I live in Geneva. One afternoon we were at a outdoor garden party with our new dog. When a stranger approached us to introduce himself, the puppy jumped into my wife's arms, buried his head and started whimpering. When he wouldn't stop crying after several minutes, we decided to leave."

On the drive home, both my wife and I heard something. *He is not a truth teller. He did the harm.* Looking into the man's financial background, it all came bubbling up. The animal charity fraud was just the tip of the iceberg, why he received life imprisonment." Asha - "What's your puppy's name?" "His name is KIND. He's a Yellow Labrador."

Paul Osprey - "Despite Britain's fervor to preserve wildlife, we have no government agency for that protection. Even though it's a crime to take eggs from birds' nests, collectors won't stop." Lapis - "I wonder if humans will ever be considered 'collectibles?'" Jane Green - "After your visit to the Textile Museum and Library, how about meeting in the family room later this afternoon?"

Later that day, invigorated from their experiences touring the sights of Thimphu, everyone looked forward to a quiet afternoon at the Guesthouse. When the attorneys walked into the room, they carried an unmistakable sense of excitement. Paul Osprey began. "When you testified in court, you each championed changes for a specific cause. After the trial, all five of you sent us information about a different issue." Raoul Lapin - "What's remarkable is that you all seemed to have been inspired with the same idea." Julian - "After the trial, everyone expected us to go back to our lives as if nothing had happened. We're not the same people we were before."

Jane Green - "That you're tight knit, living so far apart, is enviable." Shilli - "What does 'tight knit' mean?" "That you're closely bound by shared values and friendship. At least, that seems to be the opinion of a group of world class scientists." Lapis - "What do you mean?"

Paul Osprey - "When you sent us your detailed research on constructing the first interspecies communication forum, you asked our advice. We forwarded your work to several people we trust, the brightest minds we know. Their own research paled in comparison. Disbelieving what they were reading, everyone had the same comment. "Are these five people quintuplets?" Emilie - "I don't understand."

Rene Hibou - "When a section of Lapis' research posed a question, Shilli's notes answered it. Asha wrote about butterflies at her wedding reception, Lapis noticed a significance the month before. Lapis couldn't figure out how to get from one point to another, Julian's research had the answer. You were thinking

and working independently, but have created a finished jigsaw puzzle.”

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Julian - “That happens all the time when we’re together. Exactly the reason we have to figure all this out. When we’re with each other, talking and listening, we can do anything.” Shilli - “It’s just not the same over the internet.”

Emilie - ‘Mr. Osprey, Mr. Hibou, Mr. Lapin, Mrs. Green, What do you all think of the idea?’ Rene Hibou, warmly - “The normal attorney client relationship no longer applies. Let’s start by using first names. Agreed?” Everyone smiles and nods.

Jane - “The trial lit a spark. You’ve given a voice to something many others believe in. Until the lawsuit, people were ambivalent. The world wide attention pushed them to take a clear stand. You declared an emergency to begin making changes now, not sometime in the future. Our offices have been contacted by people from all over the world offering you their support. This is an opportunity very few are offered.”

Paul - “Before the trial you each gave us your Power of Attorney.” Everyone nodded. Raoul Lapin - “We know you remember what Pro Bobo means. Putting together all the information, ideas and research you sent, it was clear you’d created something that needed protecting. We filed papers for a utility patent in your names. We used your initials, including Samuel and Marcus, for the name JASLEMS. You can change it anytime you like.”

Rene - “For your protection, we’ve started legal entities in Namibia, Denmark, the United States, and India. Because we heard you were moving to Denmark, Lapis, we haven’t done anything in Russia. We wanted you to make that decision.”

Jane - “In today’s world people often reinvent themselves, their careers and passions changing as they do. Being flexible, adapting to different situations all plays a part. Working on an interspecies corridor is a unique opportunity. If you turn it down, you might have regrets later. We’ll talk tomorrow.”

No one slept that night.

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