

BOOK SEVEN CHAPTER 9     EMILIE   DENMARK

Looking forward to spending his last day in Russia at the beach with his father and Argos, (before flying to Lebanon to visit Samuel's parents), Lapis had phoned Emilie in Denmark, telling her how much he loved her, how having a child had changed his life, how anxious he was to return home.

A few hours after the call, Emilie was in the kitchen when a thundering blast, a terrifying sound louder than any she'd ever heard, caused her to drop the blue fluted teacup Lapis had given her. Thunder? After checking on Samuel, who was fast asleep, she returned to pick up the pieces before going to bed.

Emilie's mother and stepfather arrived home only hours after Lapis left for Russia. Professor Swelling had been responsible for their kidnaping. Trusting the professor, hoping he could help with the Interspecies Internet, Emilie had given him relevant names and contact details. He'd attempted to use the information for his personal financial gain. Thankfully, he had failed. Emilie immediately told her parents. "What happened to you was because of me. I'm not going to be involved with the interspecies corridor any more."

After long hugs, hearing about the trip to Bhutan, her new sea green skin color, her mother and stepfather both smiled. "We love you. Take your time. We weren't harmed; we're all right." "How you want to proceed is your choice. We'll support whatever decision you make." The next day, remembering the astounding details of everything that had happened in Australia, Prague, Dresden and Bhutan, how her life had forever changed, Emilie wanted to believe the worst was over that, in the future, all would be well. Though not totally confident, she'd made a commitment which she intended to keep. Shilli, Asha, Julian and Lapis had talked about it many times, the intensity of their responsibility, in a courtroom in the Hague, to defend the human race.

Years before, studying the part Denmark played during and after the Holocaust, she'd framed a quotation from the Talmud to keep in her room.

*"You are not expected to finish the work. Neither may you desist from it."*

When the Vestas Wind System plane landed in Randers, Denmark, Argos and Chloe didn't waste a moment before leaving for Emilie's parent's house.

As Argos and Chloe turned the corner, Adrasteia, taking Samuel to the park, came toward them. When they walked passed her as if she was invisible, Adrasteia knew something was horribly wrong.

Sitting on the front porch, Emilie was excited to see Argos in the distance, curious as to who was with him. Emilie smiled - "Where's Lapis?" The golden retriever sat down, looking directly in her eyes. "He's gone." "What do you mean?" "He and his father were killed." Argos had accompanied Lapis to Russia, not only as his friend, but to protect him. That he'd failed to do this was something he hadn't yet begun to address and deal with. Chloe walked away.

As Argos explained the details, including Lapis' grandmother's death the same afternoon, Emilie's shocked and distant expression was frozen. After several minutes, when she got up and went inside the house, Argos left to find Chloe.

Emilie knew she needed to release her anger. It had happened before, when her best friend Elsbeth had been killed by a drunk driver. She went into the kitchen, took a large knife from the drawer, and walked into the bedroom.

In the far corner was a small upholstered chair, her favorite from childhood. Turning it upside down, she realized something stronger was needed to cut off the four rounded wooden legs. A second trip to the kitchen, this time returning with a small hand saw. Once the legs were gone, she repeatedly slammed the chair (which had been recovered more than once) against the floor, to crush the arms. As she struggled to rip off the upholstery, each layer evoked a memory.

Fabrics with childhood animals, forget me nots, hand woven stripes of red, purple and yellow from her trip to Guatemala and Honduras, a reminder of her fascination with the Mayan civilization. When she was finished, a coin dropped from the chair's webbing, dated the year Samuel was born. Emilie walked into the closet, sitting on the carpeted floor. She could smell Lapis, felt close to him. Chopper came in, lowered his head slightly, placing his forehead against Emilie's.

In Bhutan, Asha and Emilie had talked about rainbows. When Asha explained how she'd hung a faceted crystal from the ceiling at her home in India, rainbows dancing around the room when the sun shone, Emilie had put a crystal in Samuel's window. Standing in the doorway of his room, she stared at her son, fast asleep, a rainbow circling overhead.

Having put baby Samuel down for a nap, Adrasteia was sitting on the front porch when Argos and Chloe returned. The choices animals make in cross species relationships are no different than those they make in same species relationships. Some cats don't like other cats, no differently than dogs. Unlike many humans, animals are very selective about those they allow to become part of their lives. Chopper the English Bulldog, Gentil the French yellow Labrador perennial puppy, Matthiessen the Turkish Angora Cat and Love the Tabby were communicating. Were Chopper's eyes just watering, or were those tears? Wiggling his eyebrows, "Emilie is our spirit human! She needs our help."

Emilie's work with the Interspecies Corridor was the cause of her parents' kidnaping. Now, Lapis was gone. After Emilie's stepfather phoned Jane Green, the murders in St. Petersburg, (reported as an "automobile accident" by government sources), received international press coverage. When Jane Green explained to U.S. embassy officials that there was a witness, that witness now safely out of Russia, she was his attorney, things escalated quickly. Jane Green spoke the truth. She didn't mention the witness was Argos the golden retriever. Receiving a request that Lapis' body be returned to Denmark, the government responded that would not be possible. They hadn't been able to locate the body.

Lapis and Argos had planned to spend the day in Lebanon with Samuel's mother and father before returning to Denmark. Hearing Lapis had been killed, Samuel's parents immediately contacted Emilie, sending their love, asking what, if anything, they could do. Shilli, Julian, and Asha did the same. Once Emilie let them know the date, everyone would be at Lapis' memorial service in Denmark.

The country's international teenage singing sensation and his biological father, an outspoken critic of corruption, had both been killed. When the demonstration scheduled by Lapis' biological father took place, the government found itself in the middle of a continuing storm, growing exponentially.

Thanks to Nicola, instead of several hundred people, the number rose to several thousand. With security guards surrounding the area in front of the Winter Palace, everyone stood together holding hands and singing Lapis' song. Again and again, over and over. "Holy is the man Free, Holy let the man be, Holy is the home ground, Holy is the peace found, Changes free the hearts of you and me." The sounds and images posted to worldwide social media were a beginning.

With no advance notice, a man from the Russian embassy in Copenhagen came to the house in Randers to speak with Emilie and her parents. Though he was polite and professional, Emilie's instincts were screaming. Not trusting him, she said nothing, her step father did the talking. When the man handed Victor Mortensen a large file folder, there were drops of blood on the cover, obviously caused by a paper cut on one of his fingers. Emilie's mother handed him a tissue. The Russian government had offered a settlement to be given to Lapis' family, on the condition the arrangement remain confidential. Argos walked over to Emilie. "Ever heard the expression *blood on your hands*?" Emilie immediately phoned Jane Green.

It wasn't until five days later when, dropping a crystal salt shaker, the silver top flying across the kitchen, pieces of crystal scattered, Emilie started to sob. Something was broken and no matter how optimistic she tried to be, she was frightened. Devastated by his best friend's death, then losing his parents, Lapis had been inconsolable, overwhelmed by his emotions. Until this moment, Emilie had never understood the depth of his conflicting feelings of disbelief, anger and sorrow. "I feel like I'm walking through glue." She now understood, getting through each day feeling as if she'd been drugged.

Returning to Denmark from Prague, after her cat Hygge had died, Emilie had found Mattheissen at a local shelter, Or had Mattheissen found Emilie? He was an affectionate long haired Turkish angora cat, deaf in one ear with wide eyes, one blue, the other amber. To avoid matting, his long silky white coat and long tail often needed grooming. Because of his friendly nature, Emilie often called him AMI. His first medical checkup showed he had a bb embedded in his gum, someone had shot him in the head. It was removed. The following morning, doing his wake up stretch, before staring his head butts and kneading, he looked at Emilie - "Feels better. Thank you."

Since they both fit the profile, Mattheissen and Chopper decided to share the alpha male designation. They became friends, licking each other's face.

The day Lapis left for Russia, a buff tabby cat appeared on the doorstep of Emilie's parent's house. "I am LOVE. I'm old but can love as well as I always have. Please help me." The veterinarian removed a cancerous tumor attached to his small intestine. Because part of his stomach had also been removed, Love wasn't able to eat morning and evening but, instead, several small meals throughout the day, identical to Emilie's cat Hygge, who'd died, peacefully in his sleep, two years earlier. Jumping to sit in Emilie's lap, Love put his head in the palm of her right hand, as she stroked him with her left hand, kissing his nose. When she stood up, he reached out, putting his paw over her wrist - "Please don't go."

At their initial meeting, Mattheissen and Love were standoffish, both vying for alpha male, protecting their own territory. When Love came home following his surgery, Mattheissen stayed at his side, grooming his head and neck, gently licking the soft and vulnerable area of his shaved stomach. Jumping into a cozy chair, Love would lie on his side and go to sleep, both paws cupped under his chin. Joining Argos, Chopper, Gentil and Mattheissen, Love was now part of the family. He was home.

Different memories came daily to Emilie. Lapis had always made fun of her paying attention to what she called "signs." The day before leaving for Russia, he'd taken his mother in law's car to be repaired. The name of the part that had to be replaced was a "harmonic balancer." Lapis smiled to himself. For everything that was now starting to change, harmonic balance it was!

Once Emilie made the decision to stay in Randers, her step father drove to Copenhagen to close her apartment, bringing back all the belongings and memories that went with them. Getting into a manageable routine wasn't going to be easy. Impatience being her major challenge, she knew it would take time. Asking herself if she should continue her environmental activist work with the Vestas Wind Systems, get her pilot's license, she had no answer. Denmark was a pioneer in developing commercial wind power. Nearly fifty percent of the wind turbines around the world were produced by Denmark.

In 2008, wind power provided nineteen percent of electricity production in Denmark. The Danish government hoped to increase that to fifty percent by the year 2020.

Although Emilie was still interested in getting her pilot's license, for the time being, she would spend the days with Samuel, her friend Adrasteia, and the beloved animals who had each, in their own way, taught her what she had first learned from her parents, that love and kindness, given freely with nothing asked in return, is all there is. The love and emotional attachment Emilie felt for animals was no different than that she felt for humans.

Although American Bulldogs were banned in Denmark, English bulldogs were not. Chopper loved Emilie, who'd cared for him since he was two months old. What he felt when he first saw Chloe the sloth was different. Why? He didn't know. Surely, different species fell in love. He was transfixed by her eyes. The feeling was mutual. Chopper's under bite charmed Chloe, as did the pure joy he expressed rolling on his back, his feet in the air. Watching him cuddle next to the Turkish angora cat was a sight Chloe would never forget, Ami licking Chopper's coat, as he fell asleep and began to snore.

In the week that followed, Chopper and Chloe were never apart. Chopper's separation anxiety a thing of the past. Getting to know one another, they laughed at how humans classified their two breeds' shared traits: lethargic, lazy, napping rather than walking. Chloe wanted to learn how to be like other sloths, now Chopper asked her to teach him how to be different than other bulldogs. It started with them meditating together each morning. Chloe was always ready for the comment "It must be terrible being slothful." Chloe - "Quite the opposite. It's very convenient going to the bathroom only once a week." Chopper had never been intoxicated. When Chloe described to him how her mood changed when she chewed coca leaves and fermented flowers, he was hesitant but decided to give it a try. For this English Bulldog, once was enough.

Though comfortable in her own skin, Chloe wanted to experience what other sloths did, understanding how hanging upside down gives one fresh insight about everything, topsy turvy a view not many experienced. Chloe had learned not only how to be true to her original self, but also to new and different behaviors. Resting only three hours each night, she needed to learn how to relax completely. Sleeping longer offered not only a wonderful regenerative quality, but new insights, dreams and life changing possibilities. Chloe rode on Chopper's back. They were both sure enough of themselves (not impressed with themselves) to admit easily when they made a mistake, not afraid to try anything. Having each other made all the difference.

A fast moving sloth (who had learned how to move slowly) taught a slow moving bulldog how to walk energetically. They were in love. The perfect couple went against what everyone expected of them. With the bulldog listed as one of the laziest breeds, Chopper no longer fit the description. He had always liked doing things his way, enjoying peace and quiet and sleep. “Let me remind you I am not only the national dog of England, they call me the Churchill dog because of my courage, I’m also the mascot of the United States Navy. If you need me to do something, just let me know. I am often temperature sensitive, too hot or too cold isn’t healthy for me and it’s hard for me to breathe. By the way, I have very discerning tastes, I love raspberries.” Among many talents, Chopper was able to repeat, word for word, (with the accuracy of a tape recorder) what had been said, any time, any place he was present. Chopper and Chloe were anomalies. Neither shared features by which humans defined them. Far from the lowest degree of obedience and intelligence expected from other English bulldogs, Chopper exceeded the intelligence quotient of many humans. His emotional intelligence was off the charts.

With Lapis gone, Chopper slept next to Emilie, his paws outstretched, his head next to her leg, watching over someone he loved. When Emilie awoke, the sun coming through the window reflected a single strand of a spider web from the small table to the desk chair. She stared at it, watching it, according to the light, appear and disappear. Love jumped up on the bed, lay down on Emilie’s stomach and starting to knead. They needed each other.

As a puppy, he was easily startled and hadn’t liked wearing a harness. It became a game. Emilie would leave a treat on the floor. Chopper would look at her, shaking his head “No” left to right, she’d move the treat nearer. He’d look at her as she said “You know what I’m going to do....” tilting his head to the right, listening. As she walked closer, putting the harness over his head, Chopper would stand still, as if in a trance. When she rubbed the mahogany fold on his right cheek, he smiled as the two left for the adventures of their daily walk. One of the neighbors had lifelike statues of a stag, doe and fawn in his front yard. Whenever Chopper walked by, he would stop, lick the doe and the fawn, shake his head up and down and walk slowly away, sometimes turning to look back. Low to the ground and muscular, his waddle was his signature gait. Returning home, he’d give Emilie an upward head nod, roll over, kicking his legs in the air, then wait patiently for his belly rub, licking Emilie’s ankles as she gave him a full body massage.

The previous year, when Chopper had raced ahead, his leash wrapping around her ankle, Emilie had fallen, Her doctor explained she had to watch out for a potential trick knee. When she put pressure on her left leg, it might not hold up.

She'd slipped twice since, Chopper at her side as she regained her balance, nodding his head - "I'll always be here." If Emilie or baby Samuel was ever threatened in any way, Chopper would do anything and everything to protect them.

Lapis and Emilie had several projects planned when he returned from Russia. Intrigued by the sounds Chopper made when he sat at the window communicating with both the parrot (who lived next door) and three black crows (who sat every morning in a semi circle), they wondered if it would be possible to teach animals and birds a specific melody? For Lapis, sounds were colors, he looked forward to recording the caws of the crows combined with Chopper's singing. Bees could be dangerous for bulldogs, causing a serious allergic reaction, their eyes swelling shut. Not for Chopper. A bee regularly came to sit on his ear to join him chatting with the parrot and crows.

Lapis' memorial service was planned for the following week, allowing Samuel's parents, Shilli, Emilie, Julian and Asha time to make travel plans. Having only recently found out she had a half brother, (who was to visit Randers during the Christmas season to meet Lapis) Emilie tried repeatedly to contact Soren, leaving multiple messages. Soren's business partner was Lapis' biological father.

On November 22<sup>nd</sup>, Lapis' birthday, the outage struck.

Plans were changed. A celebration of life service would be held at the Regnskov Rainforest the following day. As Emilie and her parents, Argos, Chopper and Chloe, Gentil, Ami and Love entered the grounds, a large white crow sat cawing on a high branch of a towering, twisted tree, its warped branches seeming to reach out. Under the tree stood Ayres the Orangutan. As his gentle eyes looked at Emilie, he opened his long arms, a span of seven feet, to take her in his embrace. Emilie had learned beginner's sign language to communicate with both Ayres and Victoria the chimpanzee. Crying, she held her fingers and thumb together, first touching her mouth, then moving her hand back toward her ear to touch her cheek. Home. Ayres understood.

Chloe the sloth had made arrangements with the Indonesian government of the Island of Borneo to transport Ayres to Denmark. Thanks to Vestas Wind Systems, he'd arrived the day before the outage began. His home had been compromised. The winner of the Nobel Peace Prize was about to be caged and shackled. It was time to leave Borneo.



As far as an eye could see, the forest was crowded with animals, tree branches filled with multi colored birds. monkeys, butterflies and snakes. Before the service could begin, barking dogs, meowing cats. cawing crows changed from a cacophony of disconnected sounds to a distinct melody no one recognized, the song Lapis had written on the flight from Denmark to Russia. *All of Us*. Argos began howling,

Several months before, while driving down a busy street in Copenhagen, Emilie had seen a squirrel in the road, dashing back and forth as oncoming cars approached. The essence of fear. She never knew if he'd avoiding the traffic to get safely to the other side, but she never forgot the image.

The day before he was killed, Marcus had a message. Emilie had practiced becoming more spontaneous, asking herself was she too controlling, a romantic, an idealist, naive, all of them? What were her strengths, her weaknesses? She was impatient, waiting for things to unfold was difficult, but, becoming more sentimental, that was changing, slowly. The week following Lapis' funeral, she knew what she was here to do.

Using the money Ayres the orangutan and Victoria the chimpanzee had given her from their Nobel Prize, she would buy a piece of land near Randers to begin a sanctuary for animals with special needs. What was the link between the trauma of humans and non human animals? Veterinarians and human doctors combining their research could find answers. Ayres was the first she told. Using sign language, he replied. "Could it be my home?" Though the climate of Denmark was far different than Borneo, Ayres knew where he wanted to be. Animals help people bond. The sanctuary would help not only the animal kingdom, but the human kingdom as well.

When Lapis and his father were shot, Argos the golden retriever picked up the notebook Rodion always carried with him. Safely aboard a plane for Denmark, he gave it to Chloe, who, arriving in Denmark, passed it to Emilie. The pages of notes and numbers meant nothing to Emilie. She phoned Jane Green, Helen March and Sang, carefully reciting each page for them to write down.

The day before Emilie planned to begin looking for property for the sanctuary, a letter with no return address was hand delivered to the house. A hundred and forty three acres on the outskirts of Randers had been transferred into her name. Who had done this?

Sitting under the large tree outside of Emilie’s house, Argos was silent. He blamed himself for Lapis’ death and needed someone to talk with about his grief, stress and guilt. He was a golden retriever, known to be one of the smartest breeds in the world. Chloe knew what he was feeling. She believed that anyone who was depressed could be helped by becoming involved in something they believed in, Argos needed to take an active part in a project he cared about. That afternoon, Emilie asked Argos to go and see the property that could become a sanctuary and let her know his ideas and thoughts. If and how they proceeded would be his decision.

Word spread across the country there was to be a meeting the following week. Emilie and Argos chose not to go. Her mother and stepfather made the journey to the capitol, taking Chopper, Gentil, Matthiessen (Ami) and Love with them.

The Lord Mayor of Copenhagen stood before thousands of people. “We are Danes and know about caring for one another. At the end of the meeting, if you need assistance of any kind, shelter, transportation, please come forward. There will be no concern with either food or water. Crops, once harvested, will reappear in three days. Community kitchens will begin tomorrow. Please do no harm to any animal. They are here to help. I’ve been told of several instances when humans have begun communicating with animals, cats, rabbits, cows and birds. Would anyone who has experienced this please let us know. We’d like to begin documenting what has happened. Several animals and members of the natural have asked permission to speak.”

Two double crested cormorants landed at the Lord Mayor’s side. “I am MODIFIABLE. More and more people around the world are beginning to understand what I am about to say to you. Planet Earth, with its tendency toward complexity, is far from the center of the cosmos. The connection between the way things work on earth and on other planets will be one thing among many to be questioned. As the Universe accelerates, particles, atoms, molecules, then stars will explode into more atoms.

Hundreds of new planets will appear, colliding galaxies, supernova, streaming asteroids will be commonplace. Stars will move, reassembling to form images all can understand. Will reverse motion continue to be considered an illusion? Rain will fall without clouds; volcanos will erupt simultaneously. Rather than spewed smoke, dust and ash, the substance the wind will carry to all regions of your planet is something your species has not yet defined, sent by the natural world to help you along your way.”

The second cormorant stepped forward. “I am IMPARTIALITY. What the human species has done is near to being irreversible. The antidote is simple. Nature and human behavior. Humanity, not technology. During the outage, touch sensitive and auto response will refer to how humans interact, respond to and touch one another, animals, plants, those in the natural world. Machine learning will not be relevant. Human greed and ignorance will hopefully, gradually, be overtaken by common sense and generosity, rigid thinking replaced by flexibility. Those of your species who behave to obscure their self interest will be shown the consequences of their behavior before they act. Those humans who have difficulty with empathy will now experience others’ feelings. Working together in groups of unlike minded people will be the only choice for survival.” As the two majestic birds took flight a hen, followed by a moon jellyfish and shrimp made their way to the platform.

“I am YAMAMURA. Some of us are happy, many are not. When we’re allowed to roam freely, eat and drink as much as we want, lay as many eggs as we like, all is well. With what lies ahead for your species, I’d like to remind you it’s never a good idea, when discussing what someone else did, to perpetuate their errors by repeating them. By the way, females excel at reconciliation, particularly in your political world.” YAMAMURA reached down to pick up the jellyfish and a shrimp, placing them both gently on the podium.

“I’m a moon jellyfish. My name is SYMMETRY. When I lose one or more of my limbs I can rearrange those that are left. If anyone is interested, I’d be happy to explain how this is done. Oceans are a source of energy and fuel. There are many sad surprises and magical accidents ahead. Answers to questions you have never asked. Fun versus winning.”

The shrimp wiggled across the podium. “I am AUDACIOUS. My heart is in my head. The unfamiliar isn’t the same as the improbable. Each human carries a universe inside them, their brain. A fall doesn’t come before pride. Have you considered having your visual pathways altered?” AUDACIOUS moved onto SYMMETRY’S back.

A young boy walked onto the platform, his dark blue T-shirt with the word JASLEMS in white letters, a great Pyrenees at his side. “My name is Paul. This is SIMON. He’d like to say something. If anyone wants some stone fruit, there are baskets for anyone to take after the meeting.” “What’s stone fruit?” SIMON - “Plums, apricots, peaches, nectarines and cherries.”

The elegant white double coated dog began. SIMON - “The only human body part able to regenerate is a liver. Other regeneration must begin. Wild animals know which plants can help and heal. The treatment of many humans can often be found in nature, medicinal flowers and trees. You will be dealing not only with your own species but with other species and beings of the natural world. Connections will begin with small moments, feelings, memories. Pills will soon be obsolete. There are better and faster ways to target cells in your bodies; plant based medicine working against bacteria. Look at nerve pathways, remember frequencies. Time to reevaluate. Sewage to drinkable water is already underway.”

A purple butterfly landed on SIMON’s head. “I am CYCLICITY. Aggression is the one thing that well might destroy humanity. Even illness does not spread as hatred does. Has your species not learned from its own history, when reasons for what you call *war* have been fabricated by humans whose ignorance, bad judgment and personal motives were more important than the good of all? Did humans invent gods to explain the unknown? Superficialities are at an end. The answer to fears about biological warfare is in front of you.”

A baby orangutan jumped onto the platform, a leaf in his mouth. “I am KINSHIP. It’s time for ignorance, the energy wasted to carry hatred, the trafficking of drugs, guns and humans, the brutality and violence of civil wars, bombings, genocide, ethnic cleansing, nationalism and religion, the unnecessary barriers created by judging others, greed and consumption of resources, to be tempered with evocative questions, open minds, and change. Violence in war affects not only soldiers harmed by stress, many other creatures undergo the same trauma.

KINSHIP continued. “The human species has materialistic tendencies. Money is a form of exchange, nothing more. Those that believe, because they have more pieces of paper, they are better than others of their own species had better think again. Embarrassment of riches. Reversal of fortune.

*He who has the gold makes the rules* no longer applies. Coinage won't address the natural world's concerns, human involvement will. Your monetary system has failed because success, individually and territorially, is both measured and judged by economic performance, not by quality of life. Evolution applies to economics. World economies can learn by looking at important lessons from eco systems. Money is not the only form of exchange. There is epidemic fraud everywhere currency is used without transparency. Time and energy to acquire wealth versus collective cooperation.

Please listen. The ozone layer that protects your planet from ultraviolet radiation is being impacted by atoms. Many of your species do not believe that carbon emissions come from burning fossil fuels. There will be no meaningful changes regarding the climate until those with wealth become involved. Until individuals and companies understand the profit potential from solutions to stop global warming, little will happen. As the predictions continue about the importance of stopping the use of fossil fuels, oil, gas and coal, hopefully the outrage will help you accelerate the needed changes. In Iceland, geothermal energy fuels homes and power plants all over the country, a pollution free energy source. Time is running out. We'll be seeing each other again. Next time, you may not recognize me."

Receiving the Nobel peace prize in chemistry in 1995, Frank Rowland was clear in his acceptance speech. "What's the use of having developed a science well enough to make predictions, if in the end, all we're willing to do is stand around and wait for them to come true?"

A strong smell overtook the area, unusual because each person was experiencing a different odor, one that brought to mind something that had happened in their past. No one spoke or questioned how they had understood the communication of animals, birds and fish.

As the meeting continued, Chopper, paying attention to his instincts, went to find Simon the Great Pyrenees. "May I talk with you?" Simon - "Certainly." The two dogs went to sit nearby. Chopper - "How long have you known Paul?" Simon - "Since he was born." "What is the word JASLEMS on his shirt?" Simon - "He was interested in the youngsters who went to court to defend the human race, reading everything he could about the trial."

Simon liked Chopper's pleasant personality but was surprised by his intelligence and energy, certainly not what he'd heard about English Bulldogs. The two dogs shared their protective nature, the priority always the safety of their families. They trusted one another.

Chopper - "Has anything unusual happened lately?" "Odd you should ask. Paul entered a contest online, only people from certain countries were eligible. He won first prize, which he'd receive on one condition. They would send him a box which he'd then open a week after the next outage begins. Chopper - "Has the box arrived?" "Yes. He hasn't told his parents" "You live nearby?" "Very close." Chopper - "Please come with me."

Chopper and Simon ran from the meeting. Arriving at the house, Simon took Chopper to the closet in Paul's room. Chopper lifted the box carefully, the two then going outside to begin digging. The box was buried and covered with dirt. Chopper went back inside to get the bag of Scrabble letter/tiles he'd seen on the table. Simon the Great Pyrenees and Chopper the English Bulldog returned to the meeting, sitting directly in front of the Vestas Wind Systems' pilot who'd flown Argos and Chloe from Russia to Denmark. Reading the letter tiles Chopper had arranged on the ground, the pilot immediately went to speak with Security guards surrounding the Lord Mayor. It didn't take long for an emergency task force to arrive, following Chopper and Simon to the house. Neither dog knew viruses can exist underground. They had done their best to avert a biological disaster. That, by doing so, they were putting themselves in danger never entered their minds.

During the trial in the Hague, as Julian entered the courtroom to testify, a boy he'd met somewhere, he didn't remember where, approached him. He *did* remember he hadn't liked something about him. "My father's an attorney. When you testify, don't say you can communicate with animals. If you do, you'll lose your case. Everyone will laugh at you." As Julian walked to meet his attorney, Silas the Labrador, sitting in an aisle seat, nudged him. "Be true to yourself." When Julian took the stand, his attorney asked "What is your name?" "Julian Emerson." "Do you communicate with animals?" "Yes. We are working now on interspecies communication." The boy who'd told Julian to lie got up abruptly and left the courtroom.

When the Nobel Peace Prize had been awarded to Ayres the orangutan and Victoria the chimpanzee, the Dutch boy (whose name was Ron LeBrun) was furious that animals had received two million dollars in prize money. Ron's mother had died in childbirth. His father, an attorney, had raised him to believe that animals were playthings, to do with as he pleased. Growing up surrounded by the stuffed trophy heads of tigers and lions hanging on the walls, he'd killed any and all small animals he could find, feral kittens, abandoned puppies and birds. His uncle, his father's brother, was currently doing research on air born viruses.

Having followed the press reports of the trial, Ron knew the names and home countries of the defendants. He wanted to hurt them in any way he could. Knowing the inevitability of another outage, he put his plan in place when no one would be looking for anything unusual - an online contest, with only those under the age of eighteen living in Namibia, India, Denmark, Lebanon and the United States eligible to participate.

The premise of the competition was simple. Invent a new word and meaning. The winner from each country would be selected, the first (and only) prize - one thousand dollars. Ron never intended to send anyone money. Instead, he'd informed the five *winners* they would receive their prize on one condition. He would send them a box which they would open one week after the next outage began. During an outage, cyber warfare would no longer be relevant. Bio terrorism and the spread of epidemics were a different story. Knowing how young people love contests, how they loved secrets, Ron suggested applicants not tell their parents about their participation.

When her mother and stepfather arrived home from Copenhagen with Chopper, Gentil, Ami and Love, Emilie and Argos had just returned from their daily walk. Hearing what Chopper had done, Emilie took his face in her hands, holding him close. Knowing that people who are mean, unkind, selfish and violent are usually afraid, Chopper and Emilie still shared a disbelief that any young person would do this.

Emilie - "What letters did you put on the ground for the security agents?" Chopper was attentive. "Tango, Alpha, Romeo, Echo, Sierra, Uniform, Delta." Emilie - "What does Taresud mean?" Chopper - "I don't know. It came to mind at the time. The task force officers understood."

The youngsters who had entered the contest had learned a lesson, as had their parents. Ron LeBrun was arrested and taken into custody. After the details of his son's behavior became public, his (attorney) father's attempt to do damage control felt flat.

Timing had been crucial. Had anyone hesitated and not made the choice they had, a catastrophe would have been inevitable. Beginning with Lapis' father's notebook which Argos passed to Chloe during the flight from Russia to Denmark, who then gave it to Emilie, who phoned Jane Green, (who contacted counter terrorism task force officials in six countries) Shilli, Asha, Julian, Miss March and Sang. . . to Chopper, who paid attention to his instincts and found Simon the Great Pyrenees. Each had played a pivotal role.

The details of what Chopper had done quickly spread throughout the country. Village to village, town to town, everyone knew Chopper the English Bulldog. The Lord Mayor of Copenhagen announced he had commissioned two bronze statues, one to be placed in the harbor next to The Little Mermaid, the other in Randers' main square. A knighthood was being considered. A week didn't pass without strangers knocking on the door, wanted to meet the dog who'd risked his own life to save many others. A woman Adrasteia recognized from her daily walks to the park with Samuel, dropped off a gift, a likeness of Chopper she'd made from Legos. Adrasteia remembered their recent discussion about Buddhism. The enclosed card read "For Chopper who showed us love. LEGOS TO LGOS. Let go of Self."

Emilie was proud to be Danish. Denmark, the small country with the world's best solar and wind power technology. had introduced the toy building bricks (LEGOS) to delight children and adults alike, developed the finest hearing device technology, was one of the leading international suppliers of veterinary equipment and accessories.

The next morning, as Chopper, Gentil, Mattheissen (Ami) and Love lay side by side, their paws forward, meditating, Emilie wasn't successful quieting her mind. All she could think of was Lapis. During the night, Ami had put his paws around her, his face next to hers, licking her cheek. Emilie had been taught to always look for the good in other people, but sometimes when she wanted to believe the best, the situation had backfired. She now understood it was equally important to pay attention to warning signs.



Not wanting to be a distraction from Chopper's new found fame, Chloe kept her distance. She and Chopper had agreed not to tell anyone of their love for one another. Sitting on the front porch one morning, while talking about unethical current breeding practices to meet popular demand of certain bulldog features, they were surprised when a llama appeared out of nowhere. He and Chopper shared an under bite. After a few minutes of communication, the llama walked away. Chloe - "Anything interesting?" Chopper - "He asked me to remind everyone how important the earth's magnetic field is, for human beings, for everyone in the natural world. He said it might come in handy for me to learn to swim." Chloe - "You don't like water." Chopper - "On my first try, I sank." Chloe - "Lets sneak out tonight after everyone is asleep and try again." Chopper lifted his right paw, giving Chloe an upward head nod. "RWYA." Ready when you are.

The two left for the beach in Randers at two o'clock in the morning. As Chopper walked very slowly into the water, Chloe jumped onto his back. "You can do it. You can do it. Relax." A rare white harbor porpoise approached to echo the message. "I am ANOMALY. You can do it. Take your time." Chopper pushed his front paws forward, then drew them back, his back paws slack. In an instant he began swimming with the speed and grace of a dolphin. ANOMALY - "I'll teach you something new tomorrow, same place, same time. Because you are Chopper, no one will be astonished when they hear you've learned how to be two places at once. Please look into albinism." The extraordinary white porpoise, first spotted in Russia, years later in San Francisco Bay and now Denmark, had come to see Chopper. A bulldog who swam like a porpoise. Another behavior to add to the list. Neither Chloe's infectious enthusiasm nor Chopper's aquatic skill fit their breeds' description.

Argos blamed himself for Lapis' death. Stress. Anxiety. Guilt. Spending time at the property that could one day become an animal sanctuary, imagining a place where any animal who'd been purposefully abused, abandoned or accidentally injured could feel safe and at home, secure, Argos changed. He would oversee that every need would be met at the highest level, nutritionally, medically, behaviorally. All at the sanctuary would be loved, enjoy the freedom to be themselves. For many love was a feeling they would be experiencing for the first time. Every animal has an acoustic identity, an acoustic signature. Animal suicide would be addressed, a psychiatrist part of the medical team. As Argos continued to explore the acreage, a group of five foot tall giant sunflowers nodded as he passed.

That the onset of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was often delayed was normal. What was ingrained would take time to heal. Argos understood an animal's need to communicate with someone the details of their injuries, what was troubling them, exactly what he himself needed. Children who were lonely were more vulnerable to illness. Didn't this apply to young animals? Argos would discuss with Emilie how he hoped children could be involved with the sanctuary. Marcus the Labrador was able to detect signs of cancer and epileptic seizures in humans. "I've done what I came to do. It's now up to each of you to do what you came to do." When Ayres the orangutan arrived to explore his new home, Argos was the ideal guide.

Having arrived at the property agonizing over his feelings of guilt, Argos left feeling differently. He and Ayres were both anxious to talk with Emilie about their ideas. Would the surrounding countries of Norway, Sweden and Finland be interested in crossing borders to become involved with the sanctuary, bypassing any competitive cultural issues?

Emilie had stood in a courtroom in the Hague, promising to commit her life to environmental activism. When she'd asked Argos what he thought about her changing her mind, to devote her time instead to an animal sanctuary, Argos put his head in her lap. "To Thine Own Self Be True." As did Emilie, Argos now knew what he was here to do. Help in any way he could with a rehabilitation center for animals in distress and pain, physical and mental.

From shy to straightforward, sensitive to outspoken, with Lapis gone, Emilie spent more and more time alone with her thoughts. Knowing, during past outages, that no one had any illness issues, she wondered if a person's health was dependent on something not yet fully understood. Her repeated attempts to contact her recently discovered half brother, Soren, went unanswered. His neighbors hadn't seen him. He'd simply disappeared.

Born on December 24<sup>th</sup>, Emilie's favorite time of year was Christmas. Chopper's birthday was December 14<sup>th</sup>. With Lapis gone, she would be there for Samuel, passing on the traditions one day he'd carry on with his own family. When a basket of forget me nots appeared on the doorstep Christmas eve, no one questioned who'd sent them. For Lapis, musical tones came into his head as colors. Emilie wondered if their son, Samuel, would have the gift of synesthesia.

That night Emilie had a dream. She had Lapis were Christmas tree worms living underwater. Their inch long tube like bodies had brightly colored Christmas tree crowns. When Emilie walked outside the following morning, the seeds she'd been given in Bhutan to plant once she arrived home had sprouted. A bottle brush tree had begun to shed its red blossoms, shaping four letters, ABIN. Lapis' nickname.

Every night at his bedtime, Adrasteria read Samuel a Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale. When Argos and Ayres returned from the sanctuary property, Emilie was talking with her friend about the difficulties the renowned author had faced. The golden retriever and orangutan sat to listen. Emilie - "Hans Andersen told others how depressed he was at school, he suffered dyslexia and was discouraged from writing. While at his school master's house, he'd been abused, constantly, to *improve his character*. Adrasteria - "Do you think pain is linked to creativity?" Emilie - "There seems to be some connection between depression and artistic achievement. So many artists throughout history were dealing with challenges, sometimes overwhelming. Van Gogh, Hemingway, Lord Byron, Virginia Woolf, Schumann, Coleridge, Tennyson, William Blake, Melville, Henry James. Not only artists, writers, musicians, dancers, performers, but also scientists, teachers, business people."

Adrasteria - "Pain and art. Creativity and pain. Isn't depression, mental illness and the creative process equally balanced by those whose art is purely self expression? I've never thought pain is necessary for creativity. Maybe in some cases shaped by it, but integral to it?" "Argos - "The word *Art* can be tricky. If the human definition is *a creation of imagination*, how is the art of animals and the natural world different from that of humans? Is there a connection between art and emotional pain for both human beings and nature's beings? I don't know."

Ayres the orangutan slowly stood up, gently touching the sea green skin of Emilie's right hand. In sign language, he explained how many animals were now ill, psychologically not physically. Emilie had learned basic sign language two years ago. With Ayres now having chosen Denmark as his home, she'd resume her ASL studies.

Argos - "How do you think dogs whose job it is to detect explosive devices feel watching their colleagues being blown up and killed? Animal and human soldiers have the same sense of duty... and the same reaction. Both are now being giving the drug lithium."

As a puppy, Chopper had traveled with Emilie from Prague to Dresden, then to the Netherlands. Now, he was home in Denmark with his true love, Chloe the sloth, a statue representing him soon to sit on a rock by the waterside at the promenade in Copenhagen, next to The Little Mermaid. Chopper understood the frequencies used by whales. Without telling Emilie or Chloe he asked a whale he'd met at the harbor to deliver a message to the other side of the world. A relay of aquatic mammals began. Unlike Emilie, Chopper knew how to be patient. In less than two months, a dolphin would arrive in Denmark with a reply.

Chloe's journey had begun with a visit to Australia to meet the Admiral and Snug, the three legged orange tabby cat. After traveling to Prague to pay her respects at Marcus' grave, her next stop was Lebanon to meet Samuel's parents, on to India to congratulate Asha on her work, then to the United States to see Julian. Chloe arrived in Russia only hours after Lapis had been killed. Leaving for Denmark to meet Emilie, she never imagined she'd meet and be captivated by an English bulldog. Chloe had done what she had come to do. She was home.

With perseverance, intelligence, ingenuity, vulnerability, exuberance, curiosity and sweetness, Chopper and Chloe would continue on their destiny's path.

Chopper's ability to fall asleep, any time any where, was enviable, his snores a familiar sound. Seeing Emilie resting on the couch, he jumped up, turning over to find a comfortable position to snuggle. Emilie remembered their first meeting at Marcus' funeral.

At the center of a large clearing in the forest sat a giant, gnarled Prometheus stump. As far as an eye could see, the area was crowded with animals, birds and horses. One by one, Shilli, Neil, Asha, Samuel, Emilie, Julian, Wayne, Lapis and his cousin, Irena, walked to the tree trunk, each placing their small carved lucky piece in the center. Two puppies, an English Bulldog and a yellow Labrador had run into the clearing, jumping on the stump, knocking the pieces to the ground, forming a shape everyone recognized, Marcus' silhouette. A white crow swooped down, picked up one of the pieces and flew away. At Samuel's grave site memorial service, the same bird had flown overhead, dropping the lucky piece Samuel had left at Marcus' grave.

In Australia, street art, murals, chalk drawings, posters, hand made kites and flags had the same design, evoking a visceral emotional connection. A partial solar eclipse left an image in the skies over Prague that seemed familiar to everyone. The feeling shared by those in Lebanon witnessing what was appearing in the clouds was amplified purpose. . . and hope. Namibia's brightly colored ice halo (circum horizontal arc) had nothing to do with race, gender, ethnicity, religion, geography, or age; a shared sense of being human.

An aerial spectacle in India, a murmuration of speckled black starlings, had surprised and inspired. Flocks, not led by a single bird, moved together collectively, each starling making a choice to coordinate with his and her neighbors. Gracefully swirling and pulsating in fluid motion, thousands of birds became one recognizable image. On a moonless night, fireflies swarmed across San Francisco, the same design appearing in clouds, contrails, rainbows and meteor showers worldwide. As the Vestas Wind Systems plane left Russia, smoke flares and wingtip vortices formed the same visual.

Emilie stared at the cinnamon colored marking on Chopper's left side. It was the image seen around the globe.

