

THE CENTURY OF SICKOS

BY

REBECCA ALVAREZ

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Expectation -----is Contentment----

Gain ---- Satiety -----

*But Satiety----- is Conviction of
Necessity.*

*The soul's distinct connection with
immortality is best disclosed by
Danger or quick Calamity.*

*By Emily Dickenson most loved
verses that brings you face-to-
-face with the private world of
one of America's greatest
poets.*

>THE CENTURY OF SICKOS<

You Name it, you can have it all...

We'll name a few and start with:

- Pedophile*
- Necrophile*
- Rapists*
- Killers*
- Robbers*
- Embezzler*
- Tax Evaders*
- Blackmailers*

*Last but not least, the psychopaths
and the Big Bad Wolves in real life.*

>Part One<

Budapest, Hungary, 1980

MY DECISION TO BECOME A LAWYER was irrevocably sealed in my mind when I realized my father, hated the legal profession. Gedeon was a young teenager, clumsy, and he was embarrassed by his awkwardness, frustrated with life, horrified of puberty about to be shipped off to west Europe (Vienna, Austria) to a Medical University to study medicine. My father Milan Kovacs, as well as my mother Clara wanted that I'll study medicine to become a doctor specializing Surgery or rather chirurgic meaning to become a Surgeon.

I'm the eldest of three kids and my two younger sisters, Katja and Rosa has to deal with later to follow the wishes of my parents. I never dreamed to be a Physician, not to mention a Surgeon who sliced human bodies. During my high school days my classmates used to say hey! kid, what's up? Gedeon brought up the shaky remnant of a once great smile. He'd always been thin, even delicate, but now he is gaunt. In his twenties, he'd had an odd effect on young girls. They wanted to take care of him. My father was an industrial engineer in a Hungarian company, manufacturing pipes for underground water systems for huge buildings. He worked sixty hours a week to provide the family and to support my studies. And because he was the manager, he was the favorite choice to speak for the company in dispositions and trials. I can't say that I blame him for hating lawyers, but I grew to admire the company he works because they made his life miserable. He spends eight to nine hours a day, rain or shine haggling with them, but no time for his family.

Then hit any available alcohol as soon as he come home, walked in the door, no hellos, no hugs, no dinner, just his continuous bitching while he slugged down bottles of beer, then passed out in his battered recliner. Father loves alcohol, aside from being tyrant, he dominated all of us. I could sniff alcohol on his breath, when he comes home, it seemed he need a drink in the morning to start his heart or whatever excuse he used to get by. My mother Clara from Austrian origin has to keep up with father's mood, *love and patience towards a drunken husband are two different shoes*. Some men hurry home to loving wives, some to not-so-loving wives, and some with wary care, to other men's wives. At the time divorce is not quite common in Hungary that was partly a catholic country. I pitied my mother especially when the company my father works had problem like one trial lasted three weeks, and when it ended with a large verdict against the company. My mother called a doctor, and they hid my father in a hospital for a month. The company later went broke, and of course all blame was directed at the lawyers.

Not once did I hear any talk that maybe a trace of mismanagement could be in any way have contributed to the bankruptcy. Liquor became father's life, and he became depressed. He went a year without any steady job which really ticked me off because I was forced to wait tables and deliver pizza so I could claw my way through college. I think I only spoke to him twice during the four years of my undergraduate studies, not to tell him yet that I studied law and not medicine. The day after I learned I had been accepted to law school I had been cautious with my studies and always got an A grade, I will not graduate with honors, though I'm somewhere in the top half of my class.

The only smart thing I've done in three years of law school was to schedule the required and difficult courses early so I could goof off, in this, my last semester. And to learn more of the rules and law of Austria and the rest of West Europe.

I went home to Hungary to surprise my family and to announce the great news, that I am in my fourth and last year of law and would be finished in six months. Then I'll sit for the bar exam. I would become a registered lawyer, and still figuring out in what direction should I master. My classes this spring are a joke--- Sports Law, Art Law, Selected readings from the Napoleonic code and my favorite is the Legal Problems of the Elderly. Still thinking criminal law is also interesting.

However, when I arrived home, I was shocked to hear that father is in a nursing home lying in a coma for the last few months after his fall changing a lightbulb in the utility room when a ladder collapsed, and he fell on his head, that damaged his brain. I immediately went to visit him, but he was no longer speak- able. He lasted another month in a coma before someone mercifully pulled the plug. Several days after the funeral I suggested to mother the possibility to file a lawsuit, but she was just not interested up to it. Also, I've suspected that father must be partially inebriated when he fell, and he was earning nothing, so under our tort of system his life had little economic value.

My mother had received a grand total of sixty-five thousand Hungarian Forint in life insurance. *But I was disgusted thinking that no local crook could have been under that illusion that kind of sum hoarding along with all the trash that father had to do for their company would be satisfactory.*

Mother seemed happy and relieved from the heavy strained life with my father. She's now relaxed with my two younger sisters without a husband. I strongly hope that mother won't remarry while my sisters are still in school. No one knows what she has in mind. I don't want to live on handouts, contribution to the cause, as he called them. Father was never a dedicated soul; he was a genuine ass. Mother wasn't really happy with my father during the last years of their married life. He became irritable and moved around the house like Hitler to his underdogs.

Most of the time I used to evade the moment and get out of father's way when he was around. There were several incidents that me and my siblings were scared that he put a hand on our mother and whack her, I might be forced to protect her from his cruelty. To imagine that everyone can withdraw, and somehow achieve peace or wisdom to go somewhere not to witness the meanness of our father towards our mother was a fantasy. It is in most cases appropriately selfish and even unethical to be interrupted by his drunken friends during our dinner. He didn't even control himself in front of his colleagues being harsh towards his family. We have to put up so much of his attitude, he didn't know the word love and kindness towards his wife and children.

When I left Hungary for Vienna four years ago, it was a harsh November winter day. Hungary has still the hint of communism, and I saw young men working on the street repairing canals and I thought, look at those idiots standing out, freezing their asses off with a beggar's loan, I would never do such job if I became a lawyer. I had the feeling like "let their future take care of itself" I don't really care what's behind me, I will reach my goal in the western world.

JUNE 1984, THE DAY BEGAN WITH THE FUNERAL of

Milan Kovacs.... It wasn't much of a funeral, just a dozen assorted men, his colleagues and women, from our neighborhood all looking uncomfortable, assembled at the third-rate funeral home selected by Mom. Few of my parent's relatives came to join the funeral. In my heart, I was glad that father is gone, and the everyday struggle of my mother ended. She has the right to be happy in her last years of life. I learned from my sisters that my father had been behaving impossible, irritated on every tiny cause and it makes my mother and sister's life deeply miserable.

In other years, other times, other places, we would have assembled to drink his memory, but after the brief service, his body being carried to his last resting destination, we gathered in a small Hungarian restaurant, sopping doughnuts and soft drinks. Coffee is the drug of choice for those who don't drink alcohol. After the funeral I travelled back to Vienna since I have some classes the following day. The criminal law professor was thirtyish, a term substitute who had taken over the class at the beginning of the semester when the regular professor got ill. Gedeon had stayed in a student dormitory with law students at the university and he was able to adjust his surroundings.

Gedeon Kovacs finished his law and decided to specialize, as a Criminal Lawyer. The Bar Examination wasn't that hard for him, he even got excellent rating, then job offers were on cue waiting for him. He just needed to apply, and his dream turns to reality, he wanted someday to have his own Law Office. Such dream is very much possible in Vienna since he had already mastered the German language and the European law system.

After seven years in Vienna, Gedeon applied for Austrian citizenship and was approved to acquire a dual nationality, i.e. Hungarian and Austrian. Potential job openings are there for him to choose. It didn't take him long to find a prestigious Law Office in the center of Vienna. As he presented his perfect resume' and credentials, he was accepted as a young member of a large well-known law office, located in the famous area of the city which is the first district. He had a great chance to have some experience in court as defense lawyer or as prosecutor together with an older colleague who had been in this profession for several years.

Apparently, he started to look out for a change of domesticity, it took him a month to find a comfortable, moderate apartment for rent. Then he left his student room, settled in a bachelor's two-room apartment, a tiny living room, a kitchen, with the desired necessities. Gedeon tried to build a bachelor's nest which is new for him. He bought some furniture and kitchen wares; his sisters came to Vienna helped him to get started. For the first moment, it was amazing to be young professional bachelor, independent, no father bullying him around. Gedeon thought hello! Vienna, I had come, and I stayed, he was comfortable in his small apartment that's only twenty minutes ride with the subway to reach the office. His mother and sisters came to visit, showed him how to use the kitchen wares they bought for him. His family was glad and very proud of him, a bright promising lawyer. Afterwards we had a family bonding, my three women enjoyed shopping. When my father still alive, my family were not able to come and visit me as they like. Father was indignant of family bonding. He wasn't that lively type; he just wanted to rule and commanded us around like his slaves. Now that he's gone, everybody seems to be happy and free.

Gedeon thought, but perhaps, he might have loved us a little in his own way, to be around who performed different task and would have measured his strengths and weaknesses in relationship to his own. Usually, family mourns when the head of the family dies but how painful and strange to think and see that his family seems to be relieved and felt happy without the head of the family. So be it.

Vienna is a lovely city along the Danube River. Its prominent feature is the old Stephen's Cathedral, and most of the historical building that were damage during the Second World War were being restored. The world historical distinguished museums had been refurbished to have their original radiance. The luminous portrait of the Emperor Franz Josef and his wife Elizabeth had obtained their brilliance.

My mother and sisters enjoyed their stay in Vienna, it was a lovely day when we visited the museum and after had dinner in an Italian restaurant. Gedeon Kovacs now a full pledge lawyer is and was not an expert on wines. He had neither the time nor the motivation to develop a truly discerning palate, but he had gained enough experience to know that the wines being offered at this table were very rare and expensive. The Italian meal was exquisite. After their meal they were asked if they wish some coffee, meaning, normal coffee with milk or cappuccino, his sisters ordered cappuccino with small cake, he and his mother a glass of red wine.

Gedeon said, there's a dispute going on with the people from town would like to open certain city areas to developers, to build new and high-rise apartments. His mother Clara advised him to be careful not to get involve in any political dispute.

Gedeon sipped his red wine said, why not sell some of it off just to keep everyone happy? There's an article in the newspaper that a wealthy Vienna businessman owned a wide part of land along the Danube. A strong team of developers wanted to turn the place into a modern area, a lovely pristine for luxurious apartments, shopping mall and all what belongs to it. The old local people here would insist to live like before the war, they are mistaken. *We are all but fragile creatures and our time on this earth is brief. Most of us are born, live out that allotted span and die, affecting the lives of our own immediate families and perhaps a few close friends. We should appreciate every moment of our life because one day everyone wishes they had more time.* Gedeon continued, *however, some of us, whether by design or by fate, are destined to touch the lives of many others during that earthly sojourn.*

His mother Clara and his two sisters listening to Gedeon cocked their heads lightly and smiled, his sisters in great surprise asked him, since when you became sentimentally poetic? He grinned said, I've read so much in my life during my studies here, I never go to bars or restaurants. I spent my leisure time in reading, it was my pleasure and love to read several kinds of literature books. His mother Clara said but you don't need to engage yourself in politics, that's a dangerous area of this world. At least the city mayor is a good politician. All-in-all Gedeon was delighted to give his three women family a city tour and he had never seen them happy in their life like this moment. He bought a nice scarf for his mother and for his two sisters a small handbag on their choice and a winter jacket. They were back to his apartment and prepare for their departure next day, he has to accompany them to the train station.

>Part-Two<

March 1986 Gedeon Kovacs, First Year at the Law Firm, Dr. Manfred Fusek, Robert König & Associates. It was an exciting day, and I wore my new suit with a new shirt and tie, which I bought a week earlier, intended for the first day of my new job to gain impression. Entering an old restored historical building which was converted into offices, it was like stepping into Oz. It's clean and sparkling lobby. People working in different companies in the building were friendly, they smile, greeted each other good morning or good afternoon as if you have known each other long. They move with sense of purpose. The problem outside is just that remained outside. I took the elevator up to the 4th floor, knocked the right door, the lady who received me wasn't astound that I registered as a new member of the staff. She let me in stared at me as if I'm hovering somewhere just above the poverty line, she rang the boss of the firm Dr. Manfred Fusek.

He looked like he's in his early fifties, it sounds like he's from Hungary but anyway, he introduced me to all the staff of the Law Office that looked mostly eager, ambitious young men, all attired in well ironed suits with that lean and hungry look Shakespeare warned about. Ther Law Firm consists of eight males and four females. The chancellery covers almost all areas in legal matters. One of them that would be my trainer Craig Müller, in his fortyish, Austrian mother, German father, was the firm's leading appellate specialist, a man who probably knew the judges better than the law but was no slouch on the law either. I didn't have to be told he would be the one presenting the appeal to the court. This was his specialty.

Craig was as relaxed as an ambassador in a friendly country. We shook hands, while he said welcome to the gang young man! Perhaps or it's possible that I'm the youngest of the group in my twenty-ninth years. We exchanged the usual lawyerlike pleasantries which I have still to get used, like casual friends meeting outside a theater. The boss guided me where my chair and table located equipped with telephone. I was introduced to the first young female staff; her name is Joanna Smith, must be around between twenty and thirty, completed her university in economics and finance. I was thinking what the hell is she wasting her time in a Law Firm? She was drafted as the secretary in our group, gorgeous figure, face that could pass in cinema screen, long legged and a wonderful butt. She wears a tight dress that expressed her fantastic figure. I have to swallow deep when she wiggled her butt going out of the room.

We shook hands and she looked me up and down. It was the kind of a look a woman might give a fish that doesn't look too fresh. It was a choice between cruel and mercy. I chose mercy. Then the boss introduced me to his secretary Mildred Santos, in her late forties, she must have work for him since Adam and Eve. She was not the best-looking female to ever grace the planet, but fact is, she must be good in her job. The next male I meet, his name is Robert König, short name Bob, an Austrian native, the boss of the financial group who in real sense of the word, the second boss of the Law Firm. He is as big as a small mountain and looks like a tackle for the pros. In his mid-fifties, he wears his hair in tight military cut, and his face could be a model for any painter or sculptor who wanted to depict a ferocious Indian. He looked like Sitting Bull's kid, his appearance was forbidding, but a gentle man who cared about people.

Bob's secretary Delia Campus, in her fortyish, who is expressionless, looked like her eyes were about to pop. She's the type of woman out of place, at least not in a Law Firm where lots of people come and go. She looked like one from the former age that is incongruous in the present. I'm wondering why the bosses employs ugly impossible women, this one got a huge bag that would hold a year's groceries and still leave room for half a sheep. Perhaps ugly women are efficient and organized and as humorless as a dead mackerel. These two women the so-called secretary to the bosses, were plain and simple whose appearance completely unremarkable. Their features were meant as teachers in a school full of naughty kids. Perhaps, they were employed as protection that bosses would be safe from young women staff. These ugly women must be single and always on time and leaves in the afternoon at five who cling to routine because it offers small comfort in a chaotic world.

These are women who doesn't entertain small talks and detests young staff women flirting the boss. There are dozens of bitches out there in hot pants who would fuck than eat. Therefore, there's no need to scandalize the firm. I'm sure the bosses are Catholics, and true believer in rules of nature and not holier-than-thou type at all. I was working like two weeks and get acquainted what to do in this large office, except staring to the fascinating women staff. I have to read the current case handled by Craig Müller, tried to understand the technique in the courtroom. This will be his first time in Gedeon's life to practice and apply what he learned in the law school. Time slipped so fast, he planned to purchase another set of suits- off the rock, when he got the time, since this is now the daily attire to wear in the office. Gedeon felt comfortable in his skin, and he likes the feeling.

Atty Gedeon Kovacs First Legal Case.

On a bright Monday morning when I reached the office on time, Joanna Smith, the secretary greeted me smiling like sunshine that lit her pretty features, good morning, Attorney, you got a client. I was surprised since I had no appointment. He smiled just call me Gedeon. When I entered the conference room, an elderly couple were waiting for me. They introduced themselves as Mr. Andras & Mrs. Tonia Julich from Hungary, a distant neighbor who used to know my parents who told her to come to my office. I greeted them asked if they wish some coffee, they nodded, he requested the secretary to bring two cups of coffee.

Before I let them continue to tell me their story, I called Atty. Craig Müller to be present and hear what they have to say. When we were sited, the couple told the story about their daughter that was just murdered two days ago in her apartment. Gedeon said, I have read something like that in the newspaper and aware that she was a Hungarian origin. But she had another name. Mrs. Julich interrupted him; yes, indeed she had changed her whole name when she came here a year ago. Her real name was Lorinne Julich, she changed it into Kamilla Jan. She escaped from her fiancé two days before their wedding. Mrs. Julich murmured, we really wanted to know the reason why she escaped from her wedding, and she didn't run away with any other man. As if she was scared of something.

Andras Julich who sit beside his wife said, now that she is dead, we will never know why she ran away, At the back of his mind, thanks God, she is dead. Otherwise, he will also enjoy the life in jail wherever this will be.

Since then, we were continuously looking for her, but we got no positive result. Adam Lazlo, a well-to-do businessman her future husband is now totally down and devastated. He had been searching for her too, in fact he even hired a detective to do the job. Mr. Julich said in serious voice, who knows perhaps he has something to do with Lorine's murder. According to the Police, they found her dead on her bed, totally smashed and was stabbed in her breasts direct to her heart. Her blood scattered around the room in her nice, noble, high-rise apartment at a Vienna prestigious district along the Danube. Craig said, it seemed the young woman must have a bad night. Mrs. Julich tears rolling and silently sobbed, her husband was sitting stiff touched the hands of his wife.

The criminal investigator and the Vienna Police search her personal documents found our names as her parents. Andras Julich said in shaking voice, we were summoned to come to identify if the dead girl was really our daughter, indeed she was our daughter. The Police were astonished how beautiful creature who was brutally killed, died so young and senseless. The matter is now under investigation. Gedeon, the fresh lawyer asked the Julich couple and where is the so-called fiancé right now? In unison, they replied we don't know. That's why we are here to hire you as our lawyer to place a suit against the murderer of our daughter, whoever he is. The Vienna Police must have some hint who murdered our daughter. Craig Müller asked, do you have any idea who was deeply mad at her and so wicked to kill her brutally? Andras Julich opened his mouth said like a whisper, that can only be her fiancé, he was so crossed and angry he meant ill to make revenge to my daughter of putting him in a very precarious position and embarrassing situation.

The vicious Andras Julich couldn't explain that he was the primary reason why his daughter escaped the wedding not being able to tell her fiancé on his face that she had been abused and molested by her own father when she was still seventeen every time, he came home a bit drunk. Lorine was totally afraid that her father will mishandle her if she gives a hint to her mother who had no idea that her husband is an asshole, a lousy pig who screwed his own daughter under his own roof. Andras Julich thought it's possible to molest his own daughter since she was forced to submit what he wanted out of fright which is in reality a rape.

Gedeon Kovacs glanced to Craig said, and what was your daughter's work here in Vienna? Mrs. Julich explained she works in a Travel Service. That's what she told you? Yes, she wrote us a letter. But it was mentioned in the newspaper that she works in an escort service organization. Mrs. Julich replied something like that. Gedeon and Craig looked at each other speaking with their eyes in Lawyer's language., understood that these people have no idea what their daughter's occupation. Andras Julich said according to the newspaper the high-rise residents were mostly people working in the United Nations and they are people of quality, distinguished and refined and she has a small dog. Craig quoted what was written in the newspaper, the neighbor Mrs. Dorothy Tinsdale, wife of an American diplomat was really worried about the constant dog barking. It seemed the small dog had been barking, making noise almost the whole night as if she wanted to inform someone that something happened to her master, so she asked another neighbor in the morning, and they decided to alert the Police who came immediately and open Kamila Jolan's door by force.