

Brother Does Not Feed Brother

But Pity Who Does Not Have One

The doctor was contemplating the words of the young man in front of him. The patient that they were discussing had not exhibit any dangerous traits, yet it did not mean that he did not have them. He remembered the vivid picture painted by his younger colleague who had been in charge of the yard when the patient had been brought. The man had insisted he had seen a dragon who would carry his brother here and there. Coupled with the obvious signs of alcohol abuse and the fact that the patient's own bodyguards had brought him wrapped like Egyptian mummy, sweating and spitting threats, the behavior had led to the reasonable conclusion that the case was a classic delirium tremens. But it had been the dynamics of the case after that had puzzled the elder doctor. The young man had got his pill despite protesting it and even the minimum dose had knocked him off completely for more than twenty hours. He had not been unconscious, he was just asleep and because during the hot summer days there were too many aggressive patients to be taken care of, the sleeping one was let sleep. The bodyguards had sworn that their boss did not take any medication and was otherwise healthy as a rock. That did not bode well with the elder doctor - healthy men even with some alcoholic practice were not knocked down by mere fifty milligrams for that long. By some reason nobody had given him a following dose until he had woken up completely confused as to where he was and how he got there. When informed, he had insisted that his hospitalization had been a mistake but it was such a common occurrence within the walls of the yard that the young woman who had been in charge had dismissed his words completely and insisted on a week-long observation period. He had gone mad at that and tried to intimidate her, but two people of the support staff had quickly restrained him again and given the patient his next dose. That had calmed him in few minutes - which was the other unusual part and the patient had agreed to be quiet, eat and drink. He had fallen asleep halfway through his meal.

Then his brother had called with an inquiry about his condition and the news about their father's accidental death. Under the circumstances the initial doctor had considered not recommended the patient's release or even the transfer of the grave news. The brother had agreed reluctantly claiming that it had been probably an isolated incident triggered by the heat. There was always a first one, that did not mean it would be the last or the danger had passed for that boot, the doctor had advised. The gossips traveled fast and he knew who his patient was by that time and had no illusions about the alcohol overindulging and aggressive behavior. He confirmed the initial decision of a week-long hospitalization as a precaution before contemplating further treatment. The brother had offered funds and requested individual room as well as some extra food. When informed that food could not be provided by the hospital he had arranged for an employee of his company to deliver it three times a day. The man had shown three hours after the conversation with a sizeable dinner and a note saying "Stay calm! I will get you out of there as soon as I can!" At that time the elder doctor had started his shift and had decided to try and influence the patient into compliance. It had worked better than expected - the man had been polite and coherent, but claimed he could not remember a thing in the last two days. His last memory was that he was going to visit his brother vacationing in a small village nearby and had arrived there and met his brother and his friends. He had frowned unbelievably at the mention of him seeing dragons and threatening his bodyguards, he had not remembered the meeting with the female doctor in the morning either. The young man had confirmed that he had never used any drugs or even common medicines except for an occasional aspirin. He insisted that he was ravenous and asked if he would be permitted to take a shower. Both signs were encouraging and the doctor allowed him to enjoy his shower and dinner before he gave him the note. The man had brightened considerably and asked what the doctor would require him to do further.

The elder doctor knew that if something was too good to be true it probably was, so as a precaution he insisted on continuing on the pills but lowered the dose to the minimum. The patient had gritted his teeth but had accepted it. The doctor had assured him that his relatives had been very helpful and his diet would be different from the standard hospital one; that he would be allowed to socialize with the other patients if he wanted and asked for his understanding.

It had been five days ago and the young man had been a model patient since. He had passed the wake up hours in the company of an old man who was usually spending a week or so every now and then and had

once upon a time been a sailor then a bell master. He had long ago retired and lived alone in his hut amidst overgrown vineyard at the end of a small village not far from Bourgas. The doctor suspected that the old man's neighbors were calling the cops to get rid of him for a while and not because anyone genuinely considered him dangerous. Somehow the magic phrase "They let him out of the madhouse few months ago!" worked miracles on the policemen who preferred to drop him at the yard rather than verify the real situation. The old man knew the doctors, the nurses and most of the permanent patients by name, called the hospital "my free barber shop with bed and breakfast" and was completely harmless. He had an odd sense of humor. When one of the rare hospital inspections had coincided with his stay, he had put a perfect show of all the madhouse anecdotes - dragged a clog behind him on a makeshift leash, brandished a spoon insisting he was going to empty the sea, threw imaginary green crocodiles from his pajamas, you name it, he did it. Only the whispered threat that he may lose the right to stay longer in winter had toned him down. The unusual pair had shared the gargantuan meals that were supplied hot to the hour, shared some private jokes that made them roar with laughter and had spent hours drawing after charming a nurse into giving them a pad and a pencil. The doctor had picked up some of the discarded pages and was bemused to see that all the drawings were of bells, small, big, covered with letters or with flowery ornaments or with geometric patterns, carillons, bells with tongues and bells with hammers, gongs, long tubular bells, short square ones, pearl-size balls with beads in them, or clusters of metal beads with hoops tied together, chimes of all types. The head nurse reported that the unlikely pair had stuck together like magnets and parted only when the rooms were closed for the night.

There was also the incident with the locksmith. The doctor who had been in charge that afternoon had evaluated the man but somehow had not established him as high risk. It was easy to slip and think that the quiet schizophrenic was not much of a danger and he probably had not been at the time he had arrived claiming some insomnia only. His black attire could be considered work appropriate; he was clean-shaven, soft spoken middle aged man, somewhat skinny, bald as an elbow. He worked for himself and mentioned that his existing family did not care much about him as he was poor. There had been no signs to alert what was going to happen that night, the doctor's colleagues unanimously stood behind his decision to give the man a mild sleeping pill and to keep him overnight for observation.

The evening had been quiet. The new patient had spoken softly with the personnel in charge and some of the yard's inhabitants and retired. He had blustered that his room would be locked despite being told that it was for his safety. That might have rung a bell but was not unheard of so nobody took him seriously when he had told them that he would be "out of here as well as many of these oppressed people in no time flat". As he had been scheduled to be discharged the very next day, the phrase had been taken for its face value.

Soon after midnight a new patient had been brought in and to the horror of the doctor in charge, the yard's door had been discovered unlocked. He had immediately sent the head nurse to verify if there were any other doors that may have been forgotten. After she found the third consecutive door unlocked, the nurse had run back to report. The doctor had been a veteran and that had saved the day, or more precisely, the night. He had ordered the floor shut and had called the security to come as soon and as quiet as possible. He had gone from door to door himself with the keys that he had taken from the locked cabinet in the nurses' room. The gray man had started with the heaviest cases, getting grayer with each door as they had all been unlocked. Most of the patients were medicated and had continued to sleep while he had tried to conduct his frantic round as quiet as possible. The head nurse had been locking the rooms of the less dangerous patients. There had been few rooms left between the two silent figures clinking keys when the doctor had seen the woman stop.

That door was half closed and a quiet discussion was going on in the semi darkness. Tanas was sitting on his bed tight as a violin string and nonchalant conversing with his night visitor. The skinny locksmith had perched on the empty bed across from him and was detailing an intricate way of opening a medieval safety mechanism which sounded more like an assembly of pins. His hands were flying in the air and he was so winded that he did not seem to notice anything around. Tanas made a brief eye contact with the doctor and continued to ask questions, inch by inch getting away from the door. The doctor motioned to the nurse to fetch help and she silently slipped to get the orderlies. Tanas kept the conversation flowing, mentioning chastity belts and making the locksmith laugh, a hollow strange laughter, as if he had forgotten how to do it. Then the man got agitated and jumped, said that he had to go and awaken the rest, as it was time to leave,

they were free to go. The elder doctor had braced himself - the orderlies were nowhere to be seen, he had a loose psycho trying to liberate the world starting with his nuthouse and Tanas was a black horse, described as recovering from delirium spoiled rich brat with extraordinary physical strength.

The Aesculapius's servant had not have time to suck his breath completely when Tanas had stood up to his full height, proclaimed his eternal gratitude to the little man, embraced him - and had him in a dead lock with his other hand firmly clapping the man's mouth in the next second. He had looked at the doctor and said, 'I can hold him for a while, but I would prefer you to take over as soon as you get your senses back! I think he had unlocked every door he had found on the floor, but had planned to wake up all your patients at the same time. I will be much obliged if I am not going to witness a madhouse revolt, thank you!'

The next morning the chief of the department had personally thanked Tanas for his timely intervention and assured him that it had been an isolated case which would never be repeated. He had tried to find out why the locksmith had singled him to be awoken first, but the tall man had lifted his shoulders in the timeless gesture of "I don't know!" The locksmith was sleeping peacefully in his high security "vault" which was carefully locked in a way unreachable from the inside under any circumstances. The boss had been too good a psychiatrist to believe in the young man's innocence but had no option to press. Tanas had told the doctor that he did not plan to press charges as according to him the incident was closed and the hospital directors were grateful for the small mercies.

It all would have been rather nice if not for a suspicious problem. Neither the elder bell master's blood sample nor his younger friend's one had shown any traces of the medications they were prescribed and the nurses took care that they should take. The doses were not big, but the complete absence of traces meant that the medication had not been in their respective systems from the first day of their introduction to one another. That also meant that their exemplary behavior was due completely to their own nervous systems unassisted by the tranquilizer. While it was not much of a surprise for the old guy, it was puzzling with the young man. If his delirium symptoms had been so severe for the first two days how he had gone to a complete control so fast was a mystery. Human beings were eternally full of riddles but the elder doctor

knew that in his profession an unsolved riddle could cost a life and carefully tried to warn the patient's brother about the danger.

Dimitar was sitting across the doctor and trying to convince himself that what he was doing was right. He could not leave Tanas in the madhouse no matter how tempting it was. It would not be fair. Even his grandfather had not done that despite having more trouble with him than anyone. With their father gone, Tanas was going to have control over the security business and may be the necessity to work would make him a better person. He would have to work real hard to pay the debts that the company was sinking into but Valkuda's opinion was that it was a salvageable one with some modifications. Dimitar chew on his lip - he kept forgetting that Tanas had no idea their father was dead. The doctor insisted that the news be broken before he left the hospital if only as a precaution to avoid a breakdown. So he was facing the entire circus! The sculptor asked if they could proceed as planned so he would decide after he saw Tanas' reaction.

A nurse knocked at the door and led in the tall young man in hospital pajamas. The staff had fished him one that was long enough for his frame but that meant that it was made for a proportionally rotund person. In it even the well built Tanas was looking bony. He took one look at his brother then at the doctor and said, 'I have expected other visitors!'

The phrase may have been polite enough but the doctor caught the millisecond of dark flame in his patient voice. If the gossip columns were to be trusted the two brothers could not stand each other. Or to phrase it better, his patient would happily rip the guts of his visitor for allegedly getting over their grandfather's empire behind his very back. Yet it was the brother who had come to the rescue when he could have let Tanas rot in the hospital. No one else had shown up for visiting which meant that they either had no idea where he was or did not care.

'Tanas, again it is not what you think it is. Dad died the day you were brought here and I have been running around with the funeral, the immediate management of your company and five millions other things.'

'Dad died? How?'

'He was standing at the beach alone when there was a landslide. He probably hit his head and was unconscious, but did not die of the impact, he drowned. I am sorry I had to break the news like that but there is not a nice way anyway.'

'What about your manager?'

'Valkuda? She is in Varna, she is taking care of your company in your absence, I hope you don't mind but as Dad and you have been the only executives and the people needed guidance, we did not know how long you would be here...'

There was a few seconds of silence when Dimitar could almost see the battle in his brother's mind. He had come to him in Brashlyan with the news that their father had Valkuda captive and to be executed and was at present facing the table turned - his father had gone dead instead. Tanas had not seen Valkuda though; he had relied on his father's words... The only logical solution to the puzzle was that somehow Valkuda had overpowered the old coot and drowned him in the sea. Tanas knew the rare grip that his father still possessed despite years of alcohol and lazy life. Very few men could stand to him, far less a woman. But then she was not an ordinary woman, she was the one riding dragons with his brother if she was still alive. Tanas was well aware that one word about it would send him back to his cell with a shot and packed securely like a FedEx parcel. The freedom was on the tip of his brother's pen as he had to sign for his release. Better be nice and ask questions later.

While the young sculptor had caught most of his thoughts right, Tanas was thinking of more. He had come to the understanding that the last few days had been the only free days in his life. He did not need to pretend that he was one thing or another as nobody cared about what he thought he was. The Grand Mogul from room four had gone so far to offer him to take care of five thousand battle elephants in his stables if Tanas was out of work. After a profound and completely logical lecture on the beauty of the nineteenth century still life, the painter from room two had expressed interest in teaching his audience of one how to read entrails and Tanas had retreated fast as he had not been keen on finding out whose entrails would be used for the practice. The middle-aged bespectacled man who spent his days reading some thick history books was completely fine to talk to unless the subject touched ancient mysticism. At that point his eyes

were lit with flames that could melt a cauldron of frozen ice. He offered his company to join him in the order that was part of world conspiracy. It was supposed to procure an obscure manuscript allowing the readers to reach immortality by some rituals compared to which painful death was a child's game. But none of them had wanted Tanas to comply with a heap of expectations - they were accepting him with what he had to offer them then and there. That was a novelty.

Tanas was not used to be free. He had been the firstborn of a prominent family that had been in the spotlight for generations. Probably it had started with his grandfather insisting that he should be born on the right side of the blanket and had trapped his parents in their marriage. The name was also not his, it came with the family name. His mother had not think not to comply with the tradition of calling him Tanas after her husband's father despite the fact that it was considered old-fashioned moniker even then. Tanas Jr. had hated every single note of his violin lessons and had gone to the English immersion kindergarten with pleasure because he liked the young enthusiastic teacher who was saving him from his dreadful nanny for few hours. His parents had expected him to be like a potato sac - if left in the corner to be found there in the same condition. They had their life and he was something of a make-up pouch - not much trouble to carry around but not much missed if forgotten at home. Tanas had grasped early that the only person who could scare everyone else into doing what he wanted was his grandfather and had learned to manipulate the people with his name, or may be he had learned it by copycat. His father was much better in that game having infinitely more practice. The boy had learned first that power was law and then that the law was power, and that while law may fail often the power failed rarely.

School came with the load of expectations also. Being born in January made him the eldest in his class sometimes a year older than his classmates with distinct advantages. Even when he was little his height was above average and the constant sports section exercises had added to what the nature had spilled lavishly on him. While Tanas Sr. had insisted on the social sports like tennis and riding, he had not taken into account that swinging a racket and swinging a stick required the same practiced movement. From there it was easy - Tanas had been the leader of the street band of guys and in a port town smelling of sea, freedom and pirates the band had romanticized power beyond reasonable. The local police squad was well aware of who Tanas Sr. was and went to him as a last resort which earned his grandson few beatings from

his father but nothing more. As he was intelligent, Tanas Jr. had found that good grades at school were much easier to be obtained and kept as well as better rewarded than the poor ones. The good grades kept him out of trouble with the teachers and they preferred to look over the rumors about bullying with "Boys will be boys!" shrug. The girls were after him in packs as he had the dark pirate look and had copied his grandfather's sense of style. In the era of total jeans madness he was stubbornly wearing dress pants and pressed shirt, sleeves rolled to show tanned corded forearms. He passed the exams for the Economic Faculty right before he went to his two-years of military duty where he was the envy of his fellows due to the stacks of love letters he was getting. Smack in the middle of that period the restitution had made his grandfather what he had been at the beginning of the communist era - immensely rich. By the time Tanas Jr. left the barracks his father had living the high life of a heir presumptive, had divorced wife number three and was on number four to be divorced few months later. He had taken a quick inventory of Tanas Jr.'s good looks and quick charms and had started trying to soften his own father's heart into dolling more money for his lifestyle. He had been convinced that the old ogre would not bypass his clone copy but the money would have to pass through him first. Tanas Jr. had succumbed to his father's scheme and started emulating him. He continued his easy grades into the university while partying on his father's side. He did not get it at first but it was like a drug -once started it took immense courage to drop it. At some points of sobriety he had given himself account that he did not like most of what he was doing but before he decided to act another party invitation was on the table or another girlfriend was calling for a day on the beach with no strings attached. He had continued with playing tennis and riding only because it was affordable to few hence socially prestigious and kept him in some form. He was expected to attend some functions - so he did, he was expected to be seen in his father's company - so he was there, he was expected to drink and grope so he drank and groped. It was easier than to slide into the Spartan life led by his ever grumpier grandfather. Tanas Sr. hated the waste of a lifestyle his son led and by interpolation hated the son and the grandson who enjoyed it, often at his expense. Early in the game Tanas Jr.'s father had explained him sincerely that a wrong step aside would mean that he would not see a broken penny of the money that were about to come to him after the death of Tanas Sr. He was told to jump - so he did.

It was Stavros the bell master who had led him to the idea. When Tanas was sitting in the corner of the canteen after the disastrous conversation with the entrails-reader and trying to blend with the wall the old man had come to him and looked straight into his eyes:

'Who are you?'

'Tanas Tanassov, have you heard the name?'

'I have but at that time there was another guy who was wearing it. You look like him but you are not him... '

'I am his grandson.'

'That much I could guess myself. So who are you?'

'I am a boss of a security firm in Varna and it is a complete mistake that I am here.'

'It is not a mistake, but you don't know it yet. Boss is a profession of sort, but I wanted to know what makes you tick.'

'Work makes me tick. Girls make me tick. Booze sometimes.'

'Nay, they don't. You have no name for your work, no name for your girl and no name for your booze, you see?'

'What do you mean I have no name?'

'If you have told me that you like chasing someone by car and shagging Penka and drinking ouzo, I would have believed it. But you don't have names, so they don't make you tick. What do you like doing when you have free time?'

'I don't have free time! I have a company to run!'

'Hmm, and how do you run it if you have no time to think about it? To do something you need to think it over. What do you do with your hands when you think?'

'Hold a glass or a beautiful lady!'

'You see - no names again. You may think you hold them but it is them that hold you. Try again - what would you do if you had all the time in the world?'

'I don't know, probably I will sleep some of it.'

'If you fell asleep with all the time of the world you will never wake up. Sleeping is after you have done something. What would it be?'

'Go riding' Tanas was frantically groping for something that would get him out of the spell that the old man had on him. 'Yes, I will go riding! There is that red stallion, Smerch; that's it; I would go riding. You see, I even have a name for it!'

'So tell me what does Smerch prefer: apples, carrots or sugar cubes?'

'Well, how do I know what he prefers? I may ask his keeper next time I am at the club, if you like.'

'Then you have no name either, you have seen some label and you are trying to pass it as a name, you don't know your horse...Tell me, why did you go into security business?'

'It was my father's one, so I followed. There is nothing bad to work with the family!'

'I did not say there is... But if your father had been clearing shit you would have followed him?'

'I don't think so, or may be I would, depends on what was there for me! But I doubt they would have sent me to the Economic Faculty to train for it. You see, I happen to be good at mathematics!'

'Are you? You can sell eggs at the bazaar being good at mathematics, you know, calculating the change. What do you like most about the faculty?'

Tanas opened his mouth to say 'The beautiful students!' but stopped. The old man had hit the nail on the head - Tanas did not remember more than a dozen names and even that was blurry. He did not remember a subject that he had really enjoyed, may be some of the algebra and even that because he was better than most of the group and for a change they were copying his work rather than the other way out. There had not been an easy camaraderie as he was already hanging with his father's crowd and his fellow students had not got the funds to join or the status to do so. He concentrated on finding a happy memory about it but somehow it was eluding him. Even his graduation day - his grandfather had organized a pretentious dinner for him and had tried before the formal guests' arrival to talk to him about starting anew, giving him money to embark on his own business. Tanas Jr. had had such a severe hangover from the celebration with his father's cronies the night before that had waved him away and dropped face in the plate in the middle of the fourth course.

Stavros was still looking at him but something told Tanas that the old man was not waiting for answer. He had the patience of the sea hitting the rocks for thousand years until they were reduced to the fine sand that lined it. Slow but relentless, gentle but firm. Tanas wished he knew who he was but was afraid to ask. Stavros grinned with his set of expertly made dentures.

'If you are not afraid to find out and you want to talk about you may come and visit me and we will talk!'

'I don't know who you are - how can I come to visit you?'

'All you need to do is to go to Vassiliko, ask for the Mad Stavros and someone will show you the road. Keep in mind, there are no much people living around there in winter and I hate cleaning up the snow so it may look deserted. Don't pay attention, I will be there. But that is not who I am, that is where I live. I am a sailor and a bell maker - but I sail and make bells only a little now, I am getting older and it is harder to do it. I love my vineyard and make a great raspberry wine but it finishes fast, so if you don't come in September or October it will be probably gone. I love fishing, hate nosy tourists but you will not see a lot of them as my reputation is doing a mighty job. The first thing that the landlords tell their tenants is not to wander around my place. Otherwise I cannot enjoy my dried fish with ouzo with cold water on the front porch in the evening when the sea is most beautiful. Don't bring much luggage when you come, my shack is not very big but I have a spare bed to put you in.'

'How do you know if I will come at all?' Tanas was amused.

'May be I will tell you when you come, may be I will not, we will see. But you have just started on a journey to yourself here and I am pretty sure you will not stop until you find something. Think about it - here we are all free to be whatever we want, to put on other lives like clothes and discard them easily, to play our favorite roles from plays we ourselves invent, to be irresponsible for a change, to forget that the rules of the world outside exist. Just be careful though - you will not want to get stuck for long here, it is like sleeping through the eternity with all the time to spare. You should be careful also with some of the free people around as they are not free but unhinged and it is different. Like you should never argue with the little guy from room seven over the Darwin idea of how the species originated. You see, he has his own system and is very protective of it. Last year he managed to convince my roommate that he was a cock and I had to get up at four in the morning to shut up the rooster. If I were you I would stay away from the musician over there, they are close pals with your entrails advisor, but he does not want to read, he wants to play them. Speaking of entrails, mine are telling me it is lunch time soon. I will go ask the head nurse what we are going to munch on.'

'May I invite you to something else?'

Stavros waved a finger, 'The boss here will not let us out for today, so may be later.'

'No, not out, but my father had arranged for some food to be brought to me, and he usually sends enough for two people.'

'Your father?'

'Who else?'

'Indeed... I will be delighted. It is not so often I have a restaurant food - or he sends you home-cooked meals?'

At that suggestion Tanas howled. Picturing his father with an apron cooking restlessly for his son in the madhouse a gourmet meal, packing it and calling his bodyguard to deliver it as a Little Red Riding Hood - that blew his fuse. He was laughing and laughing, tears streaming down his face and the old man was sitting across from him and waiting patiently for him to get it out of his system. Tanas wiped his cheeks and looked at him.

'Thank you, that was good! Dad wielding a slotted spoon. I just have to be careful never to tell him that!'

At least the danger to tell his father anything that may get against his hide was gone. Tanas looked at Dimitar with new interest. His brother looked much older than the man who had stood across from him at the table of Tsarev's office. The strain on his face could be attributed to the overload of the last few days but Tanas doubted that his brother had done it alone and had overtaxed himself. He had looked strained even when facing him in that teeny tiny village of his, Brashlyan. No matter how hard he racked his memory, Tanas could not remember one thing more about their meeting there. Had they drugged him somehow with something? But the tests of the madhouse would have found the abnormality, right? Was it the combined effect of the extreme heat, the long journey and the lack of alcohol as the doctors around claimed? He was suspicious of it also. One thing was sure - Tanas wanted out of there and fast. The rest may wait.

'In that case I better go back and start picking up pieces, she has always more on her plate that it is reasonable to chew! That is, if the doctors here will give me a clearance.'

'Oh, I believe you and Stavros are living today. The nurse will bring your clothes and I will finish the formalities with your brother.'

Tanas left and the doctor turned to Dimitar;

'I know he looks his normal self but I hope you will be very, very careful around him. At first signs of depression or overreaction you should seek specialized help. I will give you the number of a good colleague of mine in Varna to keep a tab on him for you to have it handy. A very discreet man, I assure you!'

The man in shirt and suit looked very much like the previous Tanas, he thought with a faint sense of dread. As if together with the clothes his previous obligations and mistakes were coming to take over him again. He had the absurd urge to rip the jacket off. That would unleash the medical hounds though. He could live with it for a while. There was a knock on his door and Stavros came also dressed in his civil clothes - a beaten set of cargo pants and some ridiculous T-shirt with Mickey Mouse on it which looked twice his size.

'I came to say goodbye before you plunge back in your previous life. Do you remember the address? Repeat it!'

'Go to Vassiliko, get anyone on the street, ask for Mad Stavros.'

'Good, you will not be lost. The door does not lock as there is nothing to be taken but I have a guarding rooster, you better yell from afar. See you there!'

'Wait, how are you going to get to Vassiliko now?'

'The usual way - I will hitchhike!'

Tanas looked at him with some doubt - very few people were so desperate for a company to pick Stavros up. It was already late morning and the heat was rising steadily.

'I may ask my brother to arrange it somehow. Come!'

'Your brother?'

'Yeah, my younger brother. Dad apparently died the day I was brought here.'

'My condolences. Not very old.'

'No, he was not. It was an incident, he drowned. Let's go.'