THE SEX
LIFE OF THE
AMOEBA
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For Carson
The characters and events in this book, of course, are not intended to resemble any incidents or persons living or dead. I myself am a fictional character and, as the reader knows, a fictional character can only write about other fictional characters. That is to say, the characters of a work of fiction by a fictional character are only figments of a vivid (and possibly disturbed) imagination. Whereas, this is not true of settings. By depicting actual locales, I’d hoped to add realism to my story so that these fictional characters could, for a few hundred pages, come to life and seem a little less fictitious.

I hope this is clear.

— SARAH FIELDING, JUNE 2014
I ONCE TOLD Vlad I thought I was asexual.
“A sexual what?” he asked.
“Not ‘a sexual,’ ‘asexual.’”
“What is asexual?”
“Without sex, at least, not involving sex.”
“An asexual is someone who is not having sex?”
“Yes.”
“Like us?”
“I can’t speak for you, but yes, on my side.”
Vlad looked at me with pity, the Russian kind that flows from deep within the soul. “Sarah, I don’t want to pry but you are young woman having life with no sex?”
“Sort of, I mean, it’s not like I planned it or anything, it just happened, and it’s habit now, sort of.”
“Like marriage,” Vlad said wistfully.
“I wouldn’t know.”
“So asexuals, are they in favour of some-sex marriage?”
Vlad’s quips defuse your concerns only fleetingly.
I had felt asexual since puberty. It wasn’t that I wasn’t passionate — I thought I might be, but I didn’t know. Mostly, I felt like an amoeba — sexless.
During my university years, I’d had a somewhat relationship with Brad who, at 30, was still writing his doctoral thesis on the mating habits of sea slugs (they were more passionate than we were) and wasn’t paying attention when it ended. I was articling, putting in long days at Butbung, Drucker & Warthogh, where none of the males were even remotely romantic.
— none had passion potential — none. Romance is a knockdown from the right brain and lawyers (especially corporate ones) always lead with their left.

So after BD&W, I had doubts about a future in law. I wanted time to think and to travel but I had no money. So I went job hunting, which is how I met László.

"My movies," he explained during the interview, "are sexy, but for sophisticate audience." Like all Hungarians I’ve known (two), László is compact and stocky, has a vault full of charm, wears impeccably-tailored suits (without a tie), and smells like the cologne mart of a department store. Glancing at his watch, he nodded. "Come," he said and, driving off in his ancient Mercedes, I wondered if this was a test.

"So tell me why you want to be secretary."

"I don’t ... necessarily. I need to make money."

"What you want money for?"

"To go to London."

"London?"

"I want to see English theatre."

"Ah, theatre," he muttered. "When I go to theatre, I fall asleep. Actors talk too much. Not like movies which are vibrations of life. In movies, everything is possible." Even though László immigrated here 17 years ago, his English remains in the experimental stage.

After a few blocks, he pulled into the parking lot attached to Wilmington Heights High School, stopping near a group of movie trucks. Zombies, vampires, witches and princesses stood near a catering table, eating buns, drinking coffee, smoking, gossiping, and peering at their cells. László strode past them into the gym, through the ‘Halloween dance’ set, and down a hall to one of the classrooms, inside which movie lights, a camera and crew were focused on the teacher’s desk. Behind the desk sat a young, brown-skinned actor, French-kissing an older woman on his lap.

A rodent-like man yelled "Cut" when he saw László and everyone stopped.

"Good morning, everybody," said László pleasantly, taking the rodent-like man aside. "I am looking at footage," he said quietly, "and not seeing passion, so I show you what I want.” He took a paper from his pocket and, glancing at it, walked to where the actors were waiting.

"Good morning, Gloria, Jesus."

"Heysus," the actor said.

László peered at him.

"It’s pronounced Heysus."

László glanced at the paper again and smiled at the woman.

"This morning, we are shooting most important scene in movie. ‘Miss Jensen’ is teacher who is bored because students are deadheads except ‘Raoul’ who is excited by you — older sophisticated woman. In class he is looking sideways always to you and making trouble so you will look to him. He is sending vibrations to you, and you are thinking maybe you would like to feel young man’s passion. It is forbidden by school, but you think maybe he needs older woman. You are watching him. And you, ‘Raoul,’ are always looking at ‘Miss Jensen.’ She is most beautiful teacher in school, and you are most handsome student, so you are wanting each other, badly. Now we do take."

László glanced at the Assistant Director.

"Lock it up, please,” the A.D. called out.

The actress sat at the desk, the actor standing a few feet away.

"Picture up." As the camera rolled, László nodded at the rodent-like man who yelled: "Action."

‘Raoul’ ambled up to the desk. "Ms. Jensen?"

The actress looked up.

"Why do I have to stay after class?"

"I thought we should have a talk."

"About what?"

"Your lessons."

"What about them?"

"You haven’t learned them."

"Which ones?"
“Any of them. You’ve learned no geography this year. You don’t even know where the equator is.”
“I don’t need to know that.”
‘Ms. Jensen’ glanced at her report book. “You don’t like school, do you?”
“I like some school.”
“The young girls?”
“Nah. They don’t know nothing.”
“They don’t know anything.”
“Yeah, they’re not like you.”
“Like me?”
“Yeah, you know everything. This is like my favourite class.”
“It doesn’t show.”
“Yeah, well, that’s cause I only like some kinds of geography.”
“What kinds?”
“Well ... I like your geography.”
“My geography?” ‘Ms. Jensen’ stared at him.
“Yeah, I’d like to study that.”
Now she was gazing at him, curiously. “Would you?”
“Yeah. I could be like one of those explorers.”
“Explorers?”
“You know, like those guys looking for the equator. I could look for your equator.”
She removed her glasses. “Do you think you could find my equator?”
“You betcha.”
“And what do you think you’d see there?”
“A big fiery volcano.”
“Really?”
“Really.”
“Now,” said László urgently.
‘Raoul’ pulled the older actress from the chair and, as their limbs clutched and grabbed each other, they clamped their mouths together.
“Pull her to desk. Push everything off. Lay her on top.”
Flailing out one arm, ‘Raoul’ swept the teacher’s desk clean and pushed ‘Miss Jensen’ onto her back.
“Now you are wanting her beautiful breasts.”
The actor fumbled with the top button of her dress.
“No, no, no. Tear it. You are crazy with desire.”
The actor ripped the dress open.
“Now you caress her breasts. You want her so much. And you, Ms. Jensen, want him so much you are undoing trousers.”
Awkwardly, as the actress fumbled with the actor’s pants, ‘Raoul’ began kissing her breasts. Both actors began to moan, pant and gasp, and simulate intercourse.
I was dumbfounded. I didn’t know where to look. I mean, I was embarrassed. I’d been taught by nuns, and it was ten o’clock in the morning. I was gaping at László who was focused intently on the scene. I looked at the crew who were casually watching and waiting for the actors to finish — the groping and moaning seemed to take forever. What were they thinking?
At that moment, I knew I didn’t want the job.
Finally, László nodded at the director who yelled: “Cut and print.”
“Good,” pronounced László, nodding at the actors. Taking the director aside, he said quietly: “In close-ups I need to see passion and breasts. Make them go for it.”
Back in the Mercedes, he seemed ebullient. “So, Sarah, what you think?”
“It was interesting,” I said politely, still dazed. “Where do you sell these ... movies?”
“Everywhere.”
“People buy them?”
“Of course, I can afford to pay top salary to executive secretary with degree in law. You will come work for me.”
“I’m sorry. I can’t.”
“No?”
“I’m a feminist,” I said pointedly.
“I am feminist too,” László said. “I know many women who are friends.”

I was stunned. “Do they watch your movies?”

“Of course.”

“And they like them?”

“Everyone wants to see people wanting each other. It is only natural; but in this country when you make movie of this they think it is ‘porno-graffe’. They do not understand it is healthy to see sex in movie. You are intelligent woman, I can tell. This is crazy business, and I need smart woman to tell me what women think, and what they desire, and to make ideas for women’s movies. I think you would be good for this.”

“What do you mean ‘what women think’?”

“What they want. Career ... husband ... lover? How they can see who they want to be. How they can live. What kind of movie they are watching. I need smart feminist woman to tell me this.”

László’s flattery always sounds sincere, and probably is — no doubt he could persuade a leopard to change its spots (“you would look much sexier in stripes”) — so I was conflicted. His offer was tempting, but I still hesitated. I had checked out the Felicity Pictures website, which seemed obsessed with sex — in a wide variety of positions and locales. And yet, László was against pornography, so what kind of company would I be working for?

As we neared his office, the argument was being thrashed out in my head. The nuns had said ‘no’ emphatically, but László was insisting that he needed me. Naturally, I was flattered (I have low self esteem), but beyond that the job, as I understood it, was less boring than corporate law (no kidding); the money was good; and I was tired of job-hunting. I liked László and he seemed to like me. And I would only have to do it until I had saved enough for London. Shouldn’t I at least try it? Maybe, as a feminist, I could make a difference.

“Could I try it for a month?”

“Of course.”

“I’ll take it.”

THAT MONTH WHIZZED by. After the first week, it was easy to see what could be improved to make Felicity Pictures more efficient. I put László on a schedule (at which at first he balked); set up deadlines and task lists for the staff and created a data base program for monitoring the progress on all Felicity’s projects. I seemed to have a talent for this (without having an MBA), so László insisted I stay on. I did, and after completing HALLOWEEN HOODOO, he offered me the position of associate producer — in lieu of the raise I’d asked for — and gave me my own office, a former utility room (broom closet) next to the stairwell.

Now I had two jobs: associate producer and László’s girl Friday. I had to cancel my plans for London every few months because the work load never let up. Although I was managing fine, and I knew László was pleased, by the time we’d finished shooting FIELD OF SCREAMS, nine months later, the job had begun to affect my health.

I was having trouble sleeping. I had recurring nightmares of being caught naked in a crowd, frantically trying to cover myself with my hands. I woke four or five times a night in a cold sweat, relieved to find myself under my quilt. This is an actual psychological disorder — nudophobia (I looked it up) — but I knew it was the nuns chiding me. I was paying actresses $500 a day to strip and simulate copulation. To believe that this bettered the lives of women everywhere was delusional; but of course that only caused me to smother my feminist side all the more. I had no one to talk to; and I was too busy to have a
social life or a boyfriend (with Brad and László as role models, I was having difficulty seeing men as romantic objects).

László, of course, wasn’t deluded—he was demented. In his world, Felicity’s movies shared the screen with those acclaimed French films which also featured an abundance of nudity and lovemaking. He was unable to see that his movies lacked subtlety, irony, character and—until Vlad arrived—story. László knew how to get a picture made; he just didn’t know how to make one. He was a producer, not a filmmaker. And my slow realization of this only extended my depression and sleepless nights. I realized I had to get out.

I’d decided to tell László I was quitting the day before prep on Kiss My Ass, but then he introduced me to his new director, Vladimir Pudovkin. Meeting Vlad, an intelligent, witty, six foot three, meaty Euro-Russian, saved me. It was like finding a long-lost brother.

Shaking my hand firmly, and eyeing me (an earnest, naïve 25-year-old), he said, “László tells me you are finest associate producer he has worked with.”

“I know, he says that to everyone.”

“I don’t know if you are finest,” he said without the flicker of a smile, “but you must be wackiest to work with Hungarian lunatic.”

It was instant simpatico. We knew why we were there—money. As the associate producer, I made sure László’s pay cheques were never late, a rarity in the picture business, or so Vlad assured me. We also shared the same work ethic (on set, I often heard him mutter, “Maybe we can make this shit smell little sweeter.”).

So making those two pictures with Vlad was revelatory. From him, I learned about movies, art and life; and, for a time, the nuns’ voices were muted, even though I still hadn’t resolved my moral dilemma. Meanwhile, Vlad fought ceaselessly with László (art versus commerce) to give the actors dignity and to raise the tone of our pictures, trying to show him a more sophisticated and intelligent method of making movies. During many of those twelve-hour days, it seemed like a losing battle. Halfway through Kiss My Ass, I noticed Vlad looking morose. “What’s up?” I asked.

“I think László is winning. I was just working out how to make slow dolly shot close-up on breasts.”

Vlad understood the war between business and integrity, and he did the best he could with what he had. Our pictures were well directed—still exploitative—but less offensive, even artful in places. Even so, during those two years, Vlad and I continually urged László to aim higher; and as a result, four months previously, he surprised us by putting me in charge of a new department. I became Head of Quality Development (Hungarians have a sly lack of wit) with no increase in salary, authority or perks (my desk remained in the broom closet); and although I still had to function as László’s associate producer and girl Friday, Vlad and I felt we had established a beachhead.

As HQD (as Vlad now referred to me), once a week I had to present László with ideas for ‘quality’ movies. I saw new plays, read stories, novels, and the unsolicited scripts that arrived daily in the mail; but whatever I presented, he rejected.

Vlad smiled when I complained. “How difficult can it be,” he said, “to find quality screenplay with excessive copulation?”

László’s constant rejection left me discouraged and angry. I told him it was a waste of my time, but he was adamant I continue—his way, I suppose, of pretending that we weren’t going to go on making schlock. So I kept searching, relentlessly, for a worthy story he would want to produce, but was still unable to stifle the nuns’ voices in my head. Vlad, meanwhile, was fed up with making (what he called) ‘flicky-flicky-bang-bang movies’. Those were tense days.

What follows is the story of finding Honor’s novel; and the subsequent making—or rather, unmaking—of the picture. I know this account won’t be entirely accurate but by using all available sources (emails, cell records, my journal, script notes, and interviews with those involved—in some cases having to assume what was said and
I HURRIED HOME, showered, and rushed to the set with my aching head and body feeling as though I had been infected with every bird flu in existence. I found the catering table, poured two coffees, added double cream and sugar, and huddled in one of the director's chairs, praying not to have to talk to anyone until I had regained consciousness. But of course 'anyone' in the form of László walked up. "I was telephoning to you last night."

I looked up, unable to speak.

"So?" He was clearly anxious about something.

"So?" I mumbled.

"Did you feel her?"

"What?!"

"Did you feel her?"

"Oh. Yes."

"And?"

"She thinks it would destroy, ah ... the dramatic tension between Maddie and the Consul, which is what drives Maddie to Miguel ... the reason for their affair."

"Sarah, I am not idiot. Why is everybody not want to see sex? Come with me."

I knew immediately what he intended to do.

"László, I don't think this is a good idea ..."

"Come."

László led the way onto the soundstage to the bedroom set just as Vlad was beginning a take, a two-shot favouring Carey sitting on the edge of the bed in my champagne haze I remember peering at her (the bubbles had long since disappeared), surprised that she was gazing intently at me, listening — really listening. And when I woke, I was in a bed, light was streaming through the curtain and I had no idea of where I was. When I tried to get up, smashed pottery started banging loudly inside my skull and I had to lie down again. I was naked in a strange bed in a strange room — a hotel room. Was I dreaming — had my nudophobia kicked in? Looking around, I saw the robe on a chair, and remembered the bath. How did I get to the bed? I tried to examine it — two people had slept in it. I fought hard to remember anything, but nothing came back. I found my clothes, put them on and, passing the kitchenette on my way out, saw a note on the table:

Sarah
Orange juice in the fridge.
Coffee on the machine, just turn it on.
Out for my run, back soon.
Carey.

At the bottom, I put:

C.
Early meeting, see you on set.
S.

I had no idea what I was feeling, except panic — I didn't know what had happened, if anything, or what I had done, or felt. Did it matter? I didn't want to offend Carey, but if I had seemed agreeable under the influence of champagne, well, what was I feeling now? Was I attracted to her? Yes. Physically and emotionally she was enticing. And she listened. Did that mean I was gay? Did it matter? No. And Nathan? What about Nathan? Who was he? Who was I? What was I?
“They're not ... communists, just simple people who want a better life for their children.”

“Then they must fight for freedom,” Martin said with finality, gazing out past the lights into the dark of the studio, his face set in stone (not unlike a Mt. Rushmore president). Watching him, Carey didn't move, her expression inscrutable.

“Cut. Print,” Vlad said, approaching Martin. “That was good, Marty. Where you get Monroe line?”

“It's the truth.”

“I liked it,” Vlad said.

At that point, László stepped forward. I followed reluctantly. Carey gave me a slight, quizzical smile which I returned, hoping I wasn't revealing my confusion.

“Vlad, Martin, Carey, I've been thinking that maybe we are not seeing enough of Guy and Maddie.”

Distracted, all three looked at him.

“What?” Martin said.

“So audience can understand why they are together.”

I could see that Vlad and Carey knew what was coming.

“They're married,” said Martin, dismissively.

“Yes, but we need to see how they love each other, and how they have passions together.”

“Passions?” said Martin, disdainfully, staring at László.

“Yes, but we need to see how they love each other, and how they have passions together.”

“Passions?” said Martin, disdainfully, staring at László.

“We need to see their love. Guy realizes they are in danger and how much he loves Maddie. And he wants to show his love to her.”

From Martin and Carey’s expressions, I could see László was pushing his passions cart uphill. I heard Vlad sigh.

“So he kisses her. And she kisses him and suddenly they are wanting to have each other. Of course, she loves Miguel too but she is caring — and passionate — about her husband. She is vulnerable and wants to give her love to him.”

bed watching Martin who was standing by the window and peering out every few seconds.

“Action,” Vlad said, quietly.

Carey paused. “What are you looking for?”

“The rabble,” Martin’s improv caught her by surprise.

“Why would they come here?” Carey sighed. It sounded real.

“Because they hate us.”

“Why should they hate us?”

“Because we fight for freedom. That’s why they want to destroy us.”

“They don’t want to destroy us. They want to feed their children.”

I was amazed by Carey — she kept finding her way back to the script.

“Commies don’t care about children.”

The line stopped her. Then, with barely a pause, she responded.

“That’s not what JFK said.”

The line was so unexpected that Martin glanced at her sharply. He’d been leading the improv parade, but she had just darted ahead. He eyed her warily. “What?”

“President Kennedy. His inaugural address. Don’t you remember? ‘We all want to cherish our children.’ He used the word ‘all’.”

“The President didn’t support commies,” Martin said, dismissively. “He stood by the Monroe Doctrine.”

“Did he?” Carey asked. Martin had taken the lead again.

“Yeah. Monroe was a great president. Not one of the gutless ones.”

“That was a long time ago,” Carey stated, tentatively. I sensed she couldn’t remember what the Monroe Doctrine was, or when.

“It still applies,” Martin said.

“Does it?” Carey said cautiously.

“The fight for freedom is eternal. President Monroe knew that. That’s why he told the world to back off the Americas; but commies hate democracy and they’ll kill anyone to get their hands on Chile. Well, not on my watch. Tell that to your commie friends.”
we pulled up in front of the plain, yellow-bricked, two-storey Church of St. Clodoald of Nogent.

After Nathan's call, Father Muldoon, the Dublin-born priest, who had taught in Chile for some years, had assembled thirty-seven refugees and immigrants — Chileans as well as a few Peruvians, and a Columbian — in the church hall, poor people who seemed extremely vulnerable.

“This,” Father Muldoon said, introducing us to the group, “is Sarah, Zoe and Nathan,” and gestured to Nathan to make his pitch.

“Amigos,” Nathan said, with the Chileans watching him warily, “we are making a movie about poor Chileans who want to share in Chile’s prosperity.”

“Ellos están hacienda,” said Father Muldoon, “una película sobre los pobres de Chile, que quieren compartir en la prosperidad de Chile.” Baffled, the Chileans watched Nathan.

“The Chileans in our movie,” Nathan said, “are demanding their rightful place in society, but they will not be making any violence.”

“Los Chilenos,” Father Muldoon said, “en la película exigen su lugar que le corresponde en la sociedad. No vamos a hacer ningún tipo de violencia.”

“We need real Chileans to appear in the movie. For one day's work, we will pay...” Nathan looked at me.

“Seventy-five dollars,” I said, having done the calculations in my head on the drive out.

“We will pay you each seventy-five dollars a day.”

“Necesitamos chilenos verdaderos para actuar en nuestra película. Les pagan 75 dólares al día.”

Nathan smiled at the group, comprised mostly of men, and a few women (one with a baby), who appeared destitute and fearful but proud. No one moved. I knew that seventy-five dollars wasn’t a lot, but that didn’t seem to be the reason they weren’t coming forward.

“Tell them,” I said to Father Muldoon, “that we will also feed them.”

“Van a dar de comer a ustedes.”

There was a murmur from the group but they remained motionless.

“¿Por qué no lo quieren hacer?” Father Muldoon asked.

A man, fiftyish, with a sad, sweet face, stepped forward hesitantly. “Tenemos miedo que tales personas de Chile nos ven en la película y vendrá hacer daño a nuestras familias,” he said. “We are afraid,” he added, in halting English.

“Gracias, Antonio,” Father Muldoon said, turning to us. “This is Antonio. He speaks a little English. I have asked them why they do not want to do this. He told me they are frightened. They think certain people in Chile will see them in the movie and harm will come to their families.”

We stared at them, not knowing how to respond. Then Nathan said, “Amigos, we will disguise you, and some can wear masks. No one will know it is you.”

Father Muldoon laughed. “Les van a disfrazar y algunos pueden llevar máscaras. Nadie sabrá que es usted,” he said.

“Nadie sabrá que es nosotros,” Antonio repeated, smiling.

Relieved, the Chileans murmured approval. Almost en masse, they all stepped forward to the table where Zoe took their names.

“¿Puedo traer a mi perro?” came a voice from the back of the room.

“This is Alvaro,” Antonio explained. “He wants to know if he can bring his dog.”

Alvaro, thin, young, the kind of young man who cries out to be mothered, looked at us woefully as did the large German Shepherd beside him. I glanced at Nathan.

“Of course,” Nathan said. “Demonstrators have dogs too.”

“Los manifestantes tienen los perros también,” Antonio said.

“Just make sure he doesn’t bite the producer,” I said. Alvaro looked at me then to Antonio.

“Sólo asegúrese de no mordes al productor,” Father Muldoon said.
I always think of that story whenever I come up against the obsession we all have with stars — that yearning for a link to fame; our attraction to a thin veneer of lustre that shrouds an elite few, and turns the rest of us into slavish peons. Why do we seek the flimsiest of connections to the gods and goddesses of the screen (any screen these days), or to anyone in the glare of pop culture?

Why do we need to know how the battle sequence was shot, or how the special effects worked, or what star is pregnant and who’s screwing whom? What is our endless fascination with an industry of illusion (and its workers) that perpetuates untruths? Do humans really thirst this much for unreality? Yes; and no one seems immune — except possibly the guy asleep on the sidewalk outside Nathan’s theatre.

Even I’m susceptible. I was introduced once to a famous movie actress at a Festival party. Still ravishing at 62, she had asked me a simple, make-conversation question, like ‘What do you do?’ and I had blurted out my entire history in about four and half minutes. I remember her look of bafflement as I went on and on, unable to stop myself. Being next to someone I’d admired on the big screen was overwhelming — because you can reach out and touch this luminous someone, you feel you know them; and you want to ensure that they know you. But these celestial bodies have no reason to know us, or to be our friend. Most likely, they couldn’t care less about who we are. Our tragedy is that we’re still smitten.

All this was running through my head during rushes, and I kept turning to glance back at Honor in her seat under the projection booth, the flickering beam illuminating her rapt expression as she gazed up at Maddie and Guy on screen arguing about ‘commie rabble.’

What was she seeing? Having watched Carey and Martin on screen for years, and now having met them in person, was she captivated by their personas, no longer concerned that we — Hardy — had altered her story; or that Carey, Nathan, and Martin were busy improvising a new one? I wondered if, like a mother forced to give up her babies — only to want to be part of their lives later — she had become fixated on these remade characters.

When rushes finished, I caught a glimpse of her dashing out. Was she still angry?

“They’re still screwing with my dialogue,” Hardy said, rising. The actors’ improvises were adding a real tension to the scenes, but he remained concerned that the actors were doing to his work what he’d done to Honor’s (except they were better at it).

“Actors give us good lines and make your lines look good,” Vlad said, with a withering stare. “You should be thinking about ending.”

“I’m working on it,” he said, grimly.

“I’d like to speak with you,” I said to Vlad.

“Maybe we need drinks,” he said, noting my expression.

“I could use a drink,” Hardy said.

“I’m afraid I need to speak with Vlad privately.”

“What is private?” László asked.

Oh, God — the endless complications of social niceties. “It’s personal,” I muttered.

“Oh, personal,” László said, with a slight mocking tone, as though he never bothered having a personal life. “I will take Hardy for drink.”

“Good,” Vlad said, “maybe you and Hardy can find ending.”

Lásló sighed as though an ending were the last thing we had to worry about.

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Whenever I needed to clear the brush from whatever path I was on, I would take Vlad — who functioned as my consigliere — to a bar, and pose my problem. He would usually respond with a story, ending with a piece of Russian or Vladian folk wisdom that was often no guidance at all — but just talking to him somehow made the problem seem far less onerous.