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CYCLIC DEVIATION

Chronicles of the Chaos taming Protocol

Novel

Part 1

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INTRODUCTION

Brother Azarius carefully laid the scroll of Ancient Chronicles aside. He raised his head and removed the magnifying glass from his eyes. Then froze in an attempt to make sense of the prophecy that had long robbed him of his peace: ‘...and those days’ - it read. – ‘the Adversary overcame the Brotherhood of Confusion, and was allowed to behave outrageously for a short time. But then the faithful ones and those called by the Logos hardened again their will and strength, and established the Order, aided by the Council of the three.’ In his long-term management of the Brotherhood of Confusion, Azarius himself repeatedly tried to understand the meaning of these words. Only now did he have a premonition that their fulfillment was near. But despite the sleepless days and nights, their message eluded him. What more could he have done? In an expression of weakness, he had discussed the prediction in the Council of the Three, although he was not obliged to do so. And nothing! But now he knew, the day was near!

‘Probably the prediction must come true! It is possible only then that the brothers will find strength and finish the works of the Holy Order!’

Azarius thought to himself as he walked energetically through the dark, granite corridors. An emerald sphere hovered a little above him spreading light, so that he might in due time take the lead again in the protracted debate. With a mixture of sadness and enlightenment, he took his rightful place in the Holy Council. He signaled for the discussions to continue.

Not long after, the arguments brought the advocates of the different ideas to an impasse. Most fervent of all

brother Ezekiel, raised his voice, as if he had forgotten how unnecessary this was. A silent exchange of thoughts was the usual mode of communication between the members of the Holy Council. They were born with this skill. It was a sign of their destiny. Allured by the passion of Ezekiel, Augeus was replying properly with his booming bass. The unthinkable was finally a fact - although they had already lasted all night, the discussions were far from the 'divine Accordance'. That unconditional and complete surrender of will, powers, abilities to the wise and holy Preceptor of the Brotherhood. There was no unanimity as to the measures against the 'apostates', the book of De Bron, and brother Aspar, the outstanding member of their community.

Azarius sadly replayed in his mind the known events that had led to this dead end. For what happened on this fateful night - the failure of the Holly Council to reach 'divine Accordance'- insensibly suggested the cause of the appearance of the 'apostates' and the subsequent events. The cause was in the Brotherhood itself. Its refusal to act decisively and its inability to commit itself to self-denial created the current uncertainty.

Azarius sighed in despair. He felt pressured by the circumstances, *'Wouldn't it be possible for this not to happen? Why did everything appear now, during his administration?'* A wave of shame swept over him because of his weakness. A moment later, he regained his self-confidence as the unspoken leader of the human world.

'Probably most Directors of the Brotherhood have faced such a critical moment of impasse and moved beyond it, carrying the legacy of ancient days unswervingly intact. This fate was his share, and perhaps that was why this Directorate was entrusted to him - because he had within him the decision which would mark the way out.'

Full of hope brother Azarius stood up. The bickering died down in an instant.

'Brothers', he declared in his usual wordless manner, 'we are facing a test of our dedication! I remind you, your Call is

for everything and forever! I call upon you to restore the environment for the 'divine Accordance'! Brothers, unite your thoughts and souls so that they can be a building block for the Holy Order! Change and dissent may seem tempting, but they are not the path for us. They are the choices that humanity invariably makes in troubled days. But we must keep the Covenant entrusted to us by our ancestors. Therefore, brother Ezekiel and brother Augeas, you should purify your intentions, your ways, and come to the 'divine Accordance'. If you do not believe that this is possible, then your place is not in the Holy Council, nor in the Brotherhood! What do you say in response?'

Ezekiel rose and embraced the Council members with a look that suggested confidence and ambition. He was imbued with the full consciousness of the irresistible influence of his own person.

However, this confidence did not feed any arrogance. The dark eyes flashed with the pure flame of an active nature, of an enthusiastic will ready to embrace all problems. Ezekiel's look and gaze easily captured the unintended interest. The exquisitely outlined profile, the slightly hunched nose and the beautifully formed lips, together with the imposing attitude, radiated both measured and unobtrusive dignity. They easily caught everyone's attention. A charismatic whirlwind swept through those present when Ezekiel stood up. Even Brother Azarius was ironically aware of this.

'Brethren', Ezekiel began silently, in the usual way, ' I call upon your forbearance! Indeed, I have put too much emotion into today's debate. I have violated the good manners of our meeting, and have drawn brother Augeas into this impropriety. Forgive me, please! And you, brother Augeas, most humbly, I beg your pardon!' There were nods of approval and exclamations in the room. 'I have not for a moment lost sight of the sanctity of the 'Accordance'.

To be a part of it in times like today is vital. And I, like you, bear the traces of God, brethren'. With these words, Ezekiel

raised his hands up, and the wide sleeves of his mantle fell down, revealing gold-painted, calligraphic signs that reached high above his elbows. 'The lot of today is indeed heavy', Ezekiel continued, 'and it is not an easy choice to make. Our participation in this meeting is not accidental, but with signs of God declared. Therefore, brethren, according to the need of this hour, let us respond appropriately! For those who rushed to stir up the world as we know it, and who are not far from accomplishing such an intention, did they not come from among us, were they not members of the Brotherhood, and some even of the Holy Council?

And how is it that they, also bear the marks of God could turn their backs on a fateful predestination? To pervert their God-given zeal into reprehensible carelessness? Moreover - in recent times, they have acted not only as opponents of the Brotherhood, but also as clear apostates from the Babylonian initiation. And this last, brethren, it is our duty to condemn and cut down from the root. Any encroachment on the 'Separation at Babylon' we, the Brothers of confusion, must necessarily thwart and observe that course of events in which all such intentions remain in vain. To do less is to abandon our faith.

Therefore, brothers, let us think clearly, let us step steady and touch firmly. Those who have caused the schism, let us punish! What they have brought to light, let us erase! And let the people who have come into contact with them return to careless ignorance!

Ezekiel's last words drew a roar of approval. Here Augeus signalled that he wanted to join the discussion, to which Azarius nodded affirmatively.

'Brethren, I would also like to present my view on the matter. First of all, I apologize to all of you and brother Ezekiel as well, for my inappropriate behaviour' - a wave of relief swept over the Holy Council. Augeus looked round at those present with a clear look and continued: 'Difficult days have come for us. Today, people, once again, have turned their backs on

faith. They seek and follow the necessary 'here and now' things. Technical inventions continue to be at the centre of human interest. Modern thinkers foresee how the development of technological trends and coexistence with their consequences will affect society. This is an unhappy trend for us. We have made a huge contribution to its formation. The situation would not be so bleak if truth and goodness, honesty and dignity, were not replaced by efficiency and intelligence, by functionality and interchangeability. No one is interested in the goodness of a man if he is not an efficient worker. It is an unnecessary anachronism. If someone is an efficient employee and still a good person, that is a 'curious feature'.

The evil these days is technological stupidity and irrational behavior. The world is decidedly mechanized and dehumanized. Humanity is synonymous with imperfection. Brothers, is this the society we wanted to carve out? Is this the meaning of our Initiation? Even if we do as brother Ezekiel insists, the world will continue to be emptied of goodness. We must change something radically!

Man's desire to be 'Godlike' manifested itself in his propensity to create all kinds of auxiliary tools, mechanisms, machines, devices, robots.

Yes, an ascending series, but as he labored over it, man became like his own creation, not like his Creator.

This is what we have to do, brothers, to remind the man who he is and what he is! Our intervention a century ago, in the course of creating

artificial intelligence, did not turn out to be particularly fruitful. People are still headed for the bottom of their fall. It's time to stop this! Let's return the world to its earlier days!

Visible commotion followed Augeus' words. Brother Azarius stood up and said bitterly:

'Brethren, it is evident that our jealousy does not arise from benevolent devotion, but is fueled by a preoccupation with

everyday judgments and reflections. This way, we can't make the 'divine Accordance' come true! Our subsequent arguments will be equally fruitless. Therefore, we will now close the meeting and schedule a new one. I urge you, brothers, do not forsake your covenant! Stay true! Prepare your hearts! The times are tough and require immediate action. Therefore, the 'Council of the Three' will discuss and adopt 'provisional measures'. They will be notified to whoever needs it. But soon, very soon, we will all gather again to dwell in the Accordance!

The brothers started to leave. Their initial confusion was gradually replaced by an intensifying grunt produced by surprise and an attempt to explain what had happened. Only Ezekiel, Azarius and Endorin remained in the hall - representatives of the three generations in the Holy Council. 'Come', said Azarius and led the group through the dark corridors to his study.

There they sat around a small round table. There were three chairs designed to prepare and facilitate the 'Council of the three'. It did not last long before the 'provisional measures' were specified, it was necessary to seize the book of the 'apostate' and examine it for hidden messages.

All associates connected with the conspiracy and its objectives, and outsiders as well, were to be returned to 'careless ignorance'. Finally, it was necessary that the members of the Holy Council be prepared irreversibly to achieve the 'divine Accordance'. Slowly the brothers left the state of 'unity'.

They felt elevated and significant. Humanity would be protected.

CHAPTER 1

Kors Bruno closed the door, put down his jacket and backpack. He looked into the living room. There was darkness in it - the blinds were down. He headed to his study. The satisfaction of getting home early was mixed with a creeping guilt. He didn't have to delay his conversation with Yasna too long. She had been waiting for him for a long time. He still took the time to smooth his hair and fasten his vest before introducing himself to her. He turned on the holographic portal and sat down behind the massive oak desk. The projector began to work like a sleeper who has been suddenly awoken. Initially, a spherical field of sparkling, bluish-white light was formed. And then in the interior was carved Yasna. A moment later she stepped out of the sphere as only a thin, flickering thread connected her to the holographic portal.

She stood in front of the desk and the pale glow emanating from her silhouette illuminated the mess above it. Kors, as always, watched the proceedings as if spellbound. Against the background of the dim light in the study, Yasna was enclosed in a semblance of angelic illumination. Her face was as clear as a diamond, without being angular, despite the high cheekbones and the right nose. Then it got the natural color for people. The light brown hair contrasted pleasantly with her dark eyes, and the overall impression was complemented by a beautiful dress of green brocade, worn shyly by a graceful figure.

'Hi, Kors, you're home early today', she said. 'How was your day?' Kors jumped up in surprise, as if he did not believe the magic before his eyes to be real, much less to speak.

He pretended to arrange the papers on the desk:

‘Hello! Will you sit down?’ He asked inappropriately, since he had no place to offer, and Yasna, as usual, refused. ‘Day as a day’, he said again, ‘you know, nothing special happens! Except Aspar...’

He mentioned something undesired and now wasn't quite sure how to approach. He reminded himself not to get tangled up. But Yasna's movement around the office interfered with his concentration. She browsed the bookshelves, stopping for a moment in front of one, then moving on to the next. At the same time, Kors was captivated by the charm of a light feary, which for him was her floating among books.

‘Well, lately... there is a new colleague’, he continued with Effort, ‘and strange things sometimes happen around him’. ‘New colleague?’, She had found herself half-sitting on the desk in a moment. ‘You didn't tell me anything about a new colleague!’ In her voice there was bitterness, but not surprise, and the reproach in her eyes reached beyond the scale of reconciliation. All these features remained beyond the attention of Kors.

‘On the contrary, I did it a week ago!’, He answered spontaneously, although kind of uncertainty made its way into his memories.

‘I would have remembered, I always remember such things!’, Yasna's bitterness had grown into hostility. ‘I have no memory of a new colleague, you know I'm not lying!’ She got up from the desk and headed to the far end of the cabinet. If she had intended to show the depth of her offence, the effect was somewhat weakened by her excessive behaviour.

Kors once again condemned his negligence: he had to find time and introduce the long-prepared corrections in Yasna's ‘emotional’ module. Her behaviour was embarrassingly plausible. On the other hand, he viewed this issue as an unethical and over-trodden model of human attitudes

towards artificial intelligence. In fact, Yasna's 'overdosed' emotionalism both irritated and pleased him. There would probably never be time for corrections. He got up from his desk and headed towards Yasna with the intention of reconciliation, but failed to subdue his natural inclinations. He stood before her and with an equal amount of exhortation and intransigence said:

'I am sorry, I may be wrong! I should have told you more about him. But I didn't! He's somehow...special!'

Yasna, meanwhile, had taken a holographic copy of Kenneth Isaac's book 'Limits of trust'. She was flipping through the pages and rapidly devouring the contents.

'In what sense special?', She asked, without interrupting her occupation. 'Does he not fit into the glamorous appearance of your publishing company? After all, that's what you want to do with hiring all kinds of 'strange birds' - to look ordinary and affordable!'

Yasna was right - the publishing house he worked for was an establishment with traditions, but the modern age was not favourable to dignity and prestige. That's why the decadent image was worn down by the hiring of eccentric collaborators. It was assumed that they contribute to the formation of casualness. Kors, who, not without irony, counted himself among the eccentric employees of the publishing house, accepted this policy as another visionary quirk of the management department. At the same time he was not failing to recognize the clear success of this strategy. In fact, the advertising idea of his publishing company was a real masterpiece. With unobtrusive and precise interventions an occupation, which for centuries was a sublime manifestation of the human, was modeled as essence of life. Reading and, more precisely, absorbing all kinds of stories - ordinary, read stories, heard, watched, or experienced - was presented as a vital necessity.

'Yes', Kors thought sadly, 'having overcome the anxieties of sustenance and survival, man is now about to materialize his hopes and dreams. And this would forever change his attitude towards them. Their charm of sublime milestones, beguiling to the infinity and happiness, perhaps will be taken away from them. What, is there more waiting for us?' It was a trend. For decades man acquired more and more free time - an ambiguous resource. What people didn't have was a concept of free time. Kors forced himself out of his thoughts:

'This is true, but the essential is different. His weirdness is kind of real.' Yasna asked in amazement:

'Isn't every weirdness real? At least for those who notice it!'

'Yes, but to those who manifest it', answered Kors, 'it is a triviality. I agree we should exclude the cases when it is a means of self-affirmation, or when it is accompanied by the consciousness of one's own weirdness.'

'As far as I know, triviality can be no less true than weirdness!' Yasna said ironically. 'So, the new colleague, what's so 'really' weird about?'

'His name is Aspar, Aspar Larsson', Kors began thoughtfully, 'I think he knows how to... rearrange his surroundings. I'm trying to say, although I don't believe it myself, that Aspar influences... things. He can change them.'

'What are you talking about? Just listen yourself!', Yasna exclaimed with surprise, 'Are you sure?'

Kors replied confused:

'No I am not. How could I? Today we were all under tremendous tension due to the signing of the contract with De Bron, the destroyer of the bestseller idea. You know that every one of his books is a bestseller!'

Yasna nodded affirmatively, then her interlocutor continued:

‘Well, shortly before the meeting, Aspar hinted that De Bron's work was a threat to the mankind and his world, and that the negotiations would not end in success.’

‘Strange statement!’, Yasna said, ‘Did he put forward any kind of arguments?’

‘I inquired about his reasons’, answered Kors, ‘but he left his statement unclear. And it really didn't come to signing a contract. De Bron imposed new, unforeseen conditions that necessitated a postponement.’

‘Do you think that Aspar has a share in the circumstances that have arisen?’ Yasna asked.

‘I don't know what to think’, Kors sounded hesitant, ‘There are some other details, but I'll tell you about them later. I have to do some topical stuff.’

‘See you later then! And don't forget to tell me how Aspar changes things!’ Yasna reminded him.

‘Yes, of course! See you later!’, Kors promised and indulged himself, determined to take a stimulating needle shower.

Long afterwards, enjoying the old-fashioned drying with a discreetly scented linen-cotton towel, he thought he could similarly wash away the tension of his exciting thoughts through the encephalitic resonator, but he dismissed the idea with something more akin to disgust.

‘Could he tell her about Aspar?’ Kors thought, *‘How did he change his own life, how did he ‘change’ her life?’* He wandered in his thoughts.

To be crucified by his conscience, because of ‘the Yasna project’, was a daily routine for him from the very beginning. Recently, in response to an irresistible agony, due to a long, fruitless search, he decided to recreate his idea of a ‘soul-mate’, a friend and opponent in a virtual holographic personality.

Now he had a 'real' partner. Kors sighed in an expression of helplessness and protest against the direction of his own thoughts. Humanity coexisted with the artificial intelligence without any particular collisions, but continued to think about them in categories such as 'virtual' and 'real'. And although they denoted beings commensurate with the humans in terms of independence, they also were shrouded in meanings contrary to those indicated by them.

Kors would very much like these connotations to be 'atavism of the language', rather than actual attitudes. Alas, man had the bitter experience of being the 'crown of the existing'. A misunderstood paradigm that justified control, greed and destruction. People perceived the idea of their non-exclusivity slowly. Along with freedom from the tutelage of a 'creator', they began to feel the burden of responsibility for 'others inhabiting the planet'. But the emergence of non-biological intelligence was a mystery to humans. Ambiguity and fears surrounded it. Their existence aroused curiosity but also anxiety. Kors believed that the man had become wiser. He hoped he wouldn't repeat his past sins against virtual Individuals of today.

As for Yasna's personality, it was a fine compilation of his favourite ideas and suggestions about the humankind, as well as the embodiment of his timid platonic aspirations about the Woman. He had not met many women, he knew more about books than about women.

Bistra was a bright mark in his imagination. Her appearance in the office was a bewitching whirlwind for all his senses. She was introduced to him as the 'manager of the program to attract De Bron' among the clients of their publishing house. Bistra was impressive, but she was not so much beautiful as

glamorous and radiant at every moment. Kors often wondered if he was the only one who viewed her with enthusiasm, or there were others who shared his attitude.

But he dared not ask anyone directly. He wondered whether Bistra's brilliance sometimes 'dims'. *'If she 'takes a break' from her irresistibility from time to time, that's fine! But if not, then it's embarrassing'*, he thought. Sometimes he intended to ask Zorina, Bistra's assistant, if her supervisor had 'moments of energy breakdowns'. But these 'probes' were not very clear to him, he had only heard of them. Besides, Zorina seemed quite astute to him, and perhaps...

Aspar appeared, almost miraculously, not more than four or five months ago. Since then, he has occupied a significant part of Kors' plans and time. It was often difficult and awkward for him to recall a memory in which Aspar was absent. He met him on one of his usual solitary walks through the Tyrolean Alps. He was impressed by the deep concentration of the young man in the silence of the centuries-old forest. This section was not among the preferred routes of the ordinary tourist. Meeting someone here was not difficult, it was impossible. But now this young man, with his eyes closed, seemed to be listening to the 'voice of the forest'. He didn't even flinch when he got close to him. He just opened his eyes, looked at him and smiled. 'You seem surprised that another person can find this part of the forest charming!' It was not a question, but a greeting. 'It's a surprise to me every time someone gets here without being lost', Kors said. The young man's face showed neither confusion nor anxiety. His expression was serene and with a hint of mystery, as if he knew much more than it was proper to say. From that day on, Kors and Aspar spent a lot of time together. They went on mountain hikes, met in places they both liked, shared opinions, discussed ideas, books.

They got to know each other. Gradually, the sadness of the unmet 'soul mate' faded and disappeared. Soon, at the insistence of Kors, Aspar applied for and received an

appointment in the natural science department of the same publishing house where he himself worked. It so happened that one day Kors, shared his former idea of a friend and interlocutor with Aspar. And the latter welcomed it and offered cooperation. After long hesitations and many regrets, Kors decided to assign the 'Yasna project' to Aspar.

A short time later, Kors returned to the study. Yasna stood by the high window and watched the sunset. She gave herself over to the sight that was unfolding. And it was irresistible! He joined her silent contemplation. Only when he managed to slip out of the charm did he say:

'Let me tell you now about Aspar!'

Kors began the conversation from where he had left off, rarely wondering if it was inappropriate.

'I was in complete perplexity after his statement that De Bron and his work were a danger to the people. I assumed it was metaphorical statement or allegory about the effect on the values of the human. But I saw no reason for it. Then Aspar made me understand that the meaning was literal.'

'Literal? Are you kidding?' Yasna asked in disbelief.

'No, I'm not kidding', Kors assured her, 'but I wish Aspar was kidding!'

'Does he have any prior connection or contribution to this program?' Yasna wanted to know.

'No, as far as I know, and I am still the head of the humanitarian department in this publishing house. If it were possible, I would know!' Kors's answer bore clear traces of his excitement. 'In addition, Aspar's sphere are Botanical almanacs... and computer programming. Some time ago, at a work meeting, Bistra and Zorina, the publishing house employees engaged in finalizing the 'De Bron project', pointed out that his book was written in an archaic language, such that even they themselves encountered difficulties'.

‘What is the point of creating a product that is incomprehensible to its target audience? Could it be written for a special group of readers?’

Yasna's words did not sound like a question, but rather like a reasoning. However, Kors answered appropriately:

‘I have no idea. According to Aspar, the book is a demonstration, and the language it was written in is most likely the Lost Language. In other words, it has no addressee and carries no message’.

‘The Lost Language!’ Yasna exclaimed.

‘Yes, but don't ask me!’, Kors confirmed, ‘I know as much as you, but I plan to investigate’.

‘Well, I'll explore too! But wait, tell me how Aspar changes things!’ Yasna insisted.

‘Well... now that I think about it, it's not that easy to put into words, I'm not even quite sure that what I'm about to tell you has any real basis...’ Kors began to ramble.

‘Kors, don't get carried away’, Yasna said with unexpected firmness. ‘Talk to the point, please!’

Her interlocutor sighed resignedly and continued:

‘Well, good, but you should know that these are only my observations and speculations. It seems to me that sometimes when Aspar Larsson is around, the air sphere around us starts to behave strangely. It becomes tense in a certain way. The

feeling is close to electrifying, but not quite the same. There is a certain softness and predisposition that covers the person, an undefined exaltation and readiness to be led... somewhere’. Kors overcame his embarrassment and continued:

‘I have not shared these thoughts with anyone, even to myself I am formulating them for the first time.

‘You say’, Yasna intervened, ‘that these sensations appear when Aspar is around, but not always, right? Can you

compare what you experienced with that of someone else, even by indirect signals?’

‘Such a comparison never occurred to me. Until now, I assumed that all this was due to some abnormality of mine, but in the future I will watch for similar reactions. And what do you think about all this?’

‘What you describe, although the data is insufficient, does not sound meaningless. It is rather implausible’. Yasna sighed and continued: ‘Because it means that Aspar manages to activate the elements of background cosmic radiation to the extent of unconditional predisposition. How this is possible, I do not know, I only know that it requires colossal energy. The kind that this city consumes for a whole decade. Strange... everything is strange!’

Yasna, deep in thought, nodded goodbye to Kors and returned to the Info-sphere.

CHAPTER 2

De Bron sat in front of a blank sheet, waiting to be inspired. It took a while. True to his Muse, he remained for some time in readiness. Nothing happened. He moved uneasily and slicked his silver locks back tightly. He took off his glasses and cleaned them for a long time with the old-fashioned molecular dis-integrator spray. His pointed nose, together with his pursed lips and well-shaped, forward-pointing chin, all seemed to be trying to facilitate the task of his empty gaze aiming to accomplish contact. De Bron believed in the power of the words. He also believed in his Muse. He put his heart and soul into his creations, drew inspiration 'from above' and that is why success has followed him so far.

It took a long time to accept that his expectation was in vain. He got up, wrapped himself in the coarse woollen cloak, which now seemed to him a naive stroke in an unnecessary masquerade. He tried not to reproduce the disappointment in his walk, but wasn't sure he succeeded in doing so.

Return to his usual activities was the next, obvious decision. He had to consider all the possibilities of divulging the existence of the Ancient Language. Because the Brotherhood of the Confusion used this language to strengthen its own power in the human world. The ignorance that spread among people about this phenomenon made it easy to conceal the true nature of the Ancient Language. It was both more and less than a language. Less, because it was not a means of communication, although it was reproduced with the speech apparatus of the human body. And more, because with it a much greater effect was achieved than with ordinary speech. *'That is why we are waging a struggle against the Brotherhood and its Holy Council'*, thought De Bron, *'Their tyranny must be denounced. Their pressure is clearly felt. With the help of the Ancient Language they*

controlled the people. But the real evil was the Accordance! The apotheosis of control! The sublimation of the impersonal wills of the brothers of the Holy Council! Yes! And it's Compulsion! There was no human ability that could escape it. But resistance could be acquired, representing a kind of counteraction. Proof of this was himself, Bistra, Kurt, Sevar and the other realized companions. Freed from the dependence of the Accordance and the guardianship of the Brotherhood, the humans would harness the Ancient Language to their service. At first this could be done with mediators who mastered the Ancient language to perfection. And at a later stage, it would probably be assimilated also by ordinary people. Well, at least to some extent!

To oppose the Accordance was torture. Overwhelming and incomparable! It turned out to be too long, but there was no turning back! He and the rest of his associates knew this well. They had to complete their goal: freedom from the burdensome patronage of the Brotherhood and the Accordance. With the help of the Ancient Language, he believed it was possible. *'And not only freedom, but much more!'*, he thought, *'Ancient Language - cradle of gods and titans! Calmer of the Chaos and Maker of Worlds! How we need your help!'*

There was a knock at the front door. De Bron looked around his office. The bookshelves languished in semi-darkness, only the lamp above his desk was trying to push the darkness into the corners. He slowly left his 'inspiration realm' as he liked to think about it. He got up and went to open the door. On the threshold stood Bistra, wearing her conspiratorial expression. Personally, he preferred to see her radiant and focused. She greeted him hastily and rushed into the hall.

She removed the hood of her silk-silicone coat, untied the knot, and handed it to the host. The latter was in tense anticipation, as he did not know what Bistra had in store for him this time. She was visibly enjoying his condition, for a sly gleam crossed her face before she said: 'We have to discuss... many things!'

'Yes, welcome, come in!' De Bron replied ironically. 'I suppose we will discuss 'the many things' and do as you insist. Are we waiting for someone else?'

She looked at him, but showed no other reaction to what she heard, except the primal surprise.

'Kurt and Sevar will come soon', she answered. Then the two met their eyes, full of questions and trepidation:

'No Accordance', they said almost simultaneously. 'Not yet, or we'd know!' They nodded with relief, and she added:

'Your book is missing.' Enjoying the impact of her words, she continued, 'I have no part in this. Someone else did it instead.'

De Bron said thoughtfully: 'Things happen according to our plans, without us moving them! Now nothing prevents us from revealing the truth! Shouldn't we be more careful?' He remained silent for a while, and then asked again: 'Whom do you suspect: Aspar or the brotherhood?'

Bistra's answer was ambiguous:

'I don't think Aspar is capable of that. But one way or another, he is at the publishing house to protect the interests of the Brotherhood. De Bron, listen to me, I suggest we do not shrink back, do not try to remain undiscovered, but step forward!' De Bron looked at her quizzically:

'What are you up to this time?', he asked with concern. 'Do not give in to adventure! We don't have to succeed at all costs. We must preserve the dignity of Overseers and respect

the Light Precepts. We cannot reduce ourselves and our goals to the useful!

‘De Bron’, answered Bistra, ‘you didn't give up, did you? You think like an apostate, but you live like a zealous member of the Brotherhood. Do not wave the banner of high integrity! Now is our hour! We should not lull ourselves to sleep with stories about the good and the proper. We must be decisive. It is useless to forge the iron when it is cold. De Bron, our iron is getting hot! It's time to do what's necessary!’

‘The necessary and the reckless don't coincide’, De Bron objected. ‘And it seems to me that this is precisely what you are going to involve us in - in a thoughtless and hiding incalculable risks enterprise’.

‘Our venture is risky to begin with. That's a trait we can't take away from it. But we are prepared for the danger! De Bron’, Bistra sounded imploring, ‘How much more to plot and plan? If not for us, let us do it for others, for the unsuspecting and the unenlightened! It's time!’

De Bron reluctantly nodded and said:

‘Let's hear Kurt and Sevar what they think. Until then, you can tell me your idea’.

‘We are already fully prepared’, began Bistra, ‘to take the first step of our plan. But we must hedge against surprise actions by the Brotherhood!’

‘Yes, it will be catastrophic if they mobilize too early’, noted De Bron.

‘Do you remember one of the last Accordance?’, Bistra asked. ‘Then the self-will of some of the brothers led to the Program Wars. In reality, Augeas, Ovid and Endorin aimed to speed up the process of unification of stock indices. They wanted to turn the world into a single market with common rules. The same was the purpose of the Accordance. And the ‘insignificant’ self-initiative of Endorin and Ovid was a perfect ‘subversion’. Unconsidered, but still perfect. It consisted in

creation of two, instead of one, almost identical computer programs. They were intended to inevitably accelerate the change of the banking and stock exchange system. But the task assigned by the Accordance was the creation of one, only one, program. Endorin had to invent it, and Ovid had to infiltrate it unnoticed in the financial sphere. Augeas - in the stock market. The commission was not very complicated, but the brothers were unable to fulfil it because they performed twice as much as necessary. They created two programs! The goal was good. The goal was the well-being of the people! Still for the brothers, the first priority should be to follow the instructions of the Accordance! The latter was not observed. Well, the Accordance then failed to anticipate and prevent the damage. There was a destruction that lasted for decades.'

'What makes you think the Accordance failed? It is possible that the destruction was part of the plan', objected De Bron.

Bistra moved uneasily on the couch where she was sitting. She shook her head and stared into the light of the burning fireplace. She was silent. De Bron was also lost in thoughts. The warmth of the flames brought comfort and intimacy to which Bistra did not want to indulge. She broke the silence again:

'Then for many people this destruction was their last experience. You know I don't believe in the evil beginning of the Accordance. I share that it exhibits extreme dominance, but it is devoid of self-righteous malice. I think in a ruthless and inhumane way the Accordance is fighting for the 'good' of everyone. That is why I believe that the Program wars were not planned by it. The Accordance is not a man, it only serves the people. As it can and knows.' In response to her words De Bron muttered:

‘You're right! The Accordance is a great... creation! I wonder who its creator is?’

‘You are strange, De Bron. You want us to keep our honour as Overseers and not transgress the Light Commandments. But I see that you have finally rejected the divinity of the Accordance. Where is the basis of your faith then, which prevents you from violating the Commandments? Do you think its existence was caused? That it is only a means to achieve certain goals?’

De Bron replied with sorrow and triumph:

‘All the years when the rebellion in me was brewing, I felt great resentment from the Coercion of the Accordance. On the one hand, our predestination to be Overseers grants us unfathomable, inhuman abilities. We are born to be divine. By them we judge and suppose that we are like our Creator, and we dare to assume that these faculties of ours are but a shadow and an omen of the Divine Attributes. On the other hand, the Accordance depersonalizes us. We cannot enjoy these skills and exercise them beyond the limits delineated by this peculiar, divine intent. To be only followers of the highest Will - I do not believe and I do not want this to be our Destiny! Later I got used to it. The coercion, not the insult. The insult was always in me, fresh and indelible. I didn't break, and that gave me a boost. If I could be unbreakable, then the Accordance was not All-Powerful. And it did not know about my rebellion. That is to say, it was not Omniscient. And when we began our secret meetings, the Accordance did not resist, nor thwarted them. Even if it knew about them, it could not be present in any form. No, it was not Omnipresent. Without these three, its divinity to me was incomplete and not the same. Therefore, a long time ago I judged for myself - The Accordance is created! But from whom?’

‘De Bron, your attitude towards the Accordance may be based on wrong conclusions. Nothing you've brought up is irrefutable. But you are right about one thing - Coercion is

intolerable. Therefore, let's announce our protest against it! Let us undermine the precision of the instructions given by the Accordance. If we change its plan in areas where polyvalent developments are likely, probably it will not react in a timely manner.'

'Bistra, you are a scientist, but I think you are taking our most important project lightly', said De Bron with amazement. 'Shouldn't there be at least a superficial analysis of the case with the Program Wars and ours? To compare certain parameters in which the two cases occurred, and only then to make analogies, to plan a sudden beginning of our resistance. However, in one case it is about the stock exchange system, and in the other the Ancient language. We know the Accordance is sensitive to it. It may not respond so sluggishly.'

Still under the influence of excitement, Bistra said:

'De Bron, the purpose of our conspiracy is not to publish your book, which is undeniably inspiring again. No, on the contrary! All the difficulties that accompany its appearance pave the way for the existence of the Ancient language to be declared. We needed to create an environment for broad support of our mission in the political, public and media sectors. That is why until now we have always added new and new requirements to its publication. In order for a contradiction to ripen and a problem to arise, which will prompt us to make a statement to the media. At the same time, we must be prepared for the Brotherhood's countermeasures. It has the resource to thwart our intentions. But if the actual leader of the Brotherhood, the Accordance, is misled as to the true intent of the members of our conspiracy, then the great goal is accomplished. Therefore, I propose a compromise solution - let's start publishing your book, but you will rework it and remove everything related to the Ancient language from its plot. And we will state at a special press conference that:

'Publishing became possible only when you forcibly removed a very essential element from your book.' By doing so, it changes its artistic values, on the one hand, and on the other, it leaves the world in ignorance and delusion. Therefore, we proceed to the most urgent moment of our mission - the revelation of the truth!

'No, no, wait, Bistra!', De Bron almost shouted, anxiously, 'It doesn't work like that! The entire book is designed to highlight the Ancient Language. And now, if I take away its main theme, there won't even be a book left!'

'Don't despair!', Bistra tried to calm him down. 'You are a great writer and you can afford yourself one of your books not to be a best seller! But our cause will be brought to an end!' De Bron stated dejectedly:

'This compromise may destroy my self-respect, or the editors may refuse to publish the book.'

'De Bron, let us put the common good before the personal and show a little more self-denial!'

'Bistra, there is no need for this irony!'

'Well, the Brotherhood will not detect the threat, which was expected in your book', summed up Bistra, 'and therefore the Accordance will give out less radical assignments. This will allow us to implement our plan, which until now we have called 'a backup'. We will publicize the Ancient Language through the media and with the support of the political formations!'

'This is not a bad idea', replied De Bron, 'But why not

we proceed straight to the announcement? The current version of the book, anyway, is in the hands of the Brotherhood. It is aware of our true intentions. The orders of the Accordance will hardly be affected by the corrections I would make to the book. We should unite our efforts to reduce the consequences of the tasks that the Agreement is about to distribute. Then to our advantage we can apply the strategy you called...'

‘Subversion’, added Bistra, ‘based on self-initiative and extreme punctuality!’

There was a knock on the door. Kurt and Sevar were probably here. Kurt never adopted any civilized means of announcing his arrival. De Bron went to meet the visitors. Bistra glanced evaluative at the blank sheet of paper on De Bron's desk. She wondered if it was a foreshadowing of a ‘crisis of inspiration’ in the most prominent writer of her time. De Bron returned, followed by Kurt and Sevar. The latter walked briskly, but that was the only resemblance of their coming together. Kurt was dark-eyed, matte-skinned, and had features so sharp that they created tension in those who interacted with him. Sevar, on the contrary, had blue eyes, fair, translucent skin, and his face was oval and predisposing. Both were respected members of the Holy Council. Bistra and De Bron had severed their ties with the Brotherhood and the Council, but did not encourage their colleagues to follow them. New and reliable information was needed for their cause.

Sevar greeted Bistra heartily, and Kurt just nodded sullenly.

‘Well, tell us’, he didn't hold back, ‘what are we gathered for?’ His haste made Bistra laugh. And now she answered meekly:

‘We need to find a new strategy. So far, attempts to publicize the existence of the Ancient Language have led to the point that we are regarded by the Holy Council as a ‘group of apostates’. They have no idea of our numbers or our ultimate goals. We believe that they will take actions aimed at intimidating us and limiting our freedom. We assume that they will summon a new Accordance. This hasn't happened in a long time. Peaceful existence did not require such a move, but now it is different.

Now there are us!’ De Bron coughed and intervened:

‘Gentlemen, Bistra's idea is based on the following: we predict that the Holy Council has reached a stage where it will have to take action to deter us. Even I personally think that it has already begun. The book is missing! The one which reveals the Ancient Language. It isn't any more in the publishing house. And since it is not with us, I suppose the Brotherhood has made an effort to get hold of it. This fits perfectly with our old and the new line of conduct. We propose to remain inactive in response to this provocation. The Council will probably initiate a new Accordance. And now we come to a decisive moment in our design. You will officially attend this special

meeting. The instructions you receive from the Accordance will be discussed and we will jointly decide on their replacement. Our goal is - through a series of our actions, to break the synchronicity maintained by the Accordance. When the disorder reaches its climax, then we will accomplish our primary goal: the disclosure of the Ancient Language.’

‘How can we be sure’, Sevar intervened, ‘that what we do will break the synchronism maintained by the Accordance?’

‘We can't be sure. We rely on previous precedent’, said De Bron patiently. ‘At the same time, we assess the probability of success as very high. When this happens, we will address a message to the three political confederations, calling for unity in the name of humanity. We will present the Ancient Language as a faithful pillar of human development. We will make some...demonstrations. We believe that with the Ancient Language on our side we shall succeed!’

Kurt listened attentively, and when De Braun had finished, he said:

‘In this plan, there are many assumptions, ‘what the opposing side will do’. And what are we going to do? Our actions are too dependent on unpredictable circumstances. I am not

convinced that we should go this way! And why do we have to wait for the next Accordance? Isn't it better to get ahead of it?' Bistra replied dryly:

'Then we'll give our advantage to the Accordance, and quite inglorious!'

Kurt nodded ashamed. Then Sevar intervened:

'Kurt, be patient! We can handle it! Resisting the Accordance is much more difficult than what we are preparing to oppose.' Kurt met Sevar's gaze briefly. In his eyes there was a flash of gratitude, but it quickly disappeared. However, his next words sounded more conciliatory:

'Well, let's assume that everything develops according to our predictions. We declare the Ancient Language, the confederations unite. And the Brotherhood? Do you think it will remain uninvolved?'

'Yes, you are right', answered Bistra. 'It will certainly intervene after it recovers from the surprise. But there will be us. For us, the Ancient language is not incomprehensible. With its help and power we will fight!'

'Moment, moment', De Bron shouted loudly. 'We don't want to go that far! Let's resume this clash all over again! Shall we fight? Shall we throw off the yoke of the Accordance? Yes! But in a conflict between the Brotherhood and the Ancient Tongue...'

'De Bron', Bistra had fallen into some kind of exaltation, her eyes, face and whole being shone. - 'let's remember that this conflict was never between the Brotherhood and the Ancient Language. Brotherhood is only an intermediary. The real clash is between the Ancient Language and the Accordance. We know that the executor of the will of the Accordance is the 'Order of Confusion', or as we call it shortly - the Brotherhood. Is it not time for the Ancient language to find in us the Intercessors of its will? Is it not appropriate for the 'Order of the crowd' to appear?'

The others shook their heads in denial almost simultaneously. In the next moment, they all turned reproachful eyes towards Bistra. Sevar summed up the disapproval:

‘Bistra, you know that we do not aim to enter into conflicts with the Brotherhood. It has vast experience in dealing with riots. And our activity can be described very precisely as such.’

Bistra watched Sevar with a sneer:

‘I don't understand how you imagine we'll succeed if we keep avoiding confrontation with the Brotherhood. Believe me, it won't approach peacefully like us! And what kind of strategic success is this? A simple application is not enough! We must construct the possible scenarios, then select the one we approve and make sure that it happens!’

Sevar replied uncertainly:

‘We are not avoiding the Brotherhood, and in a sense we are all still part of it...’

‘Hmm... I'm curious to know, Bistra’, interjected De Bron, ‘how would we form the ‘Order of the crowd’? Are we going to apply? Shall we sign a petition? How do you think it might work?’

Bistra's reply bore traces of hard-pressed indulgence:

‘Don't you realize that we, anyway, act, think and dream like the ‘Order of the crowd’. Indeed, we do not have a built-in hierarchy, structure and protocols, like the Brotherhood, but in essence our activity aims to uphold the cause of the Ancient Language.’

‘The way you described the Order of Confusion, it seems perfectly understandable. And even vulnerable! Perhaps, the more words we can name something, the closer and familiar it becomes.’

Kurt uttered the last words lost in a muse. The features of his face were relaxed. Lacking tension and edge, they hinted at another person lurking behind Kurt's usual unfriendliness.

All those present observed this state with astonishment, then groaned back as Kurt almost embarrassed regained his semi-fierce appearance.

De Bron then declared with authority:

‘I think we are too important to change our allegiance from one cause to another in just one lifetime. After all, it is of centuries-old duration! Some would think that we are dishonourable and unworthy, but in reality our affiliation and devotion to the Brotherhood were not self-willed. They were not our choice.’

‘We know what you're talking about’, Kurt put in impatiently. ‘Some of us are still drowning in the impasse you describe!’

‘This is precisely why I am trying to clarify to myself what is ahead of us’, De Bron continued. ‘Our zeal and involvement in the affairs of the Holy Council and the Brotherhood were, and I will say once again, were not our own choice. Therefore, when we turn to our consciences and are stricken with the bitterness of our dishonour, let us remind us that this honour which we reject contains no value recognized by ourselves. This honour is built around imported values, in the formation of which we had no part. There, I said it! Our mind, will, essence were guided, even controlled, by something outside of us! It was only by resisting the Accordance that we regained our ability to determine our own destiny. And should we give this opportunity to someone else so soon? Do we need such dependence again? Because I suspect that's exactly what's going to happen, if we walk the path to the Order of the crowd!’

Bistra took the floor again:

‘Well, good! What you claim is debatable. But I admit that I will not be able to convince you now of my rightness. I suggest to leave the question open and think the upcoming will again confront us with this dilemma. Hopefully by then we will be inclined to act more responsibly!’

The story has only just begun. [Read the full novel on Amazon.](#)