

Chapter One

Name ~~said the chief prosecutor~~

Elania Karpenko comrade prosecutor she said.

Age

thirty seven

Occupation

in a look. I work at the officers club on the docks.

Do you have any children Mrs Karpenko asked a lady sitting on the prosecutors right

one son, Alexander aged fifteen

And where is he at school she asked her eyes never leaving the witness.

The Academy Elania replied

A man seated on the prosecutors left, opened a file, extracted a single sheet of paper and handed it over to the chairman of the tribunal. ~~He~~ studied for a few moments before offering

Clever boy, ^{young Karpenko} all A grades, he passed already re-examined for the foreign language school in Moscow. He frowned, handed the piece of paper back to his colleague and said ~~Pity, and with that single word the boy was shattered.~~ Pity, ~~he added without explanation.~~ without adding any

Elania knew ~~that~~ the casual comment, meant that her son would be withdrawn from the elite school ~~which~~ ^{expensive} decided over fate, attended only by the children of loyal party members, so they would also lose their their little hut in the government compound, just outside the city, and she even wondered if she would ~~also~~ lose her job.

Do you have any questions asked the chief prosecutor as he closed his file.

No comrade prosecutor was the correct answer, for anyone who ~~didn't~~ hoped to be quickly forgotten, and return to their normal life.

Can I see my husband she asked

Sadly said the chief prosecutor, Comrade Karpenko, was shot while trying to escape, he added as if he was handing out a parking ticket.

~~Alexandra~~ bowed her head, not wishing them to see her tears.

The ~~three~~ three members of the tribunal stood up and left without another word, assuming there wouldn't be a second question. There never had been in the past.

~~Elina~~ sat alone for a few moments, trying to compose herself, before she rose, and slowly made her way out of the people's court. When she stepped out into the corridor, she ~~pushed~~ ^{pushed} her son seated on a bench. The moment Alexander saw his mother, he leapt up and ran towards her.

Saying nothing she said firmly as she continued walking towards the front door, ~~he~~ followed her obediently out onto the street.

Wherever Papa he asked once he had caught up with her

He won't be coming home ~~she~~ ^{his mother} said, as she continued walking purposefully away from ~~the~~ building every citizen most dreaded entering.

Alexander took his mother's hand something he hadn't done since the age of twelve. Elina tried to

~~have they killed papa he asked~~

(PRO)

~~note~~ In the early morning, just before the sun ~~had~~ ^{was no sun yet}, a black van ~~had~~ ^{was no number plate} entered the compound, and came to a halt outside apartment block C. Lights had gone on in several of the little windows, ~~wondering, dreading~~ ^{would be} which door they were ~~going to~~ ^{knock on}. No 127 the Karpenkos. Several of the neighbours would have witnessed what had happened next, but if they'd ever been asked, they

would have said I was asleep at the time and saw nothing. The lights had gone as quickly as they had gone on, to let the authorities know there would be no witnesses to what had taken place on the road outside, although few would not have heard the single shot.

Did they kill papa Alexander asked gripping her hand tightly.

Yes she said, showing no emotion

But why Alexander demanded, sound my just like his father when he was angry.

He challenged the authorities she said and has suffered the consequences.

Then I will challenge the authorities said the boy and avenge my father's death.

Elanna stopped in the middle of the road, grabbed her son by the shoulder, and began to shake him, until he burst into tears.

You will never say those words again she said almost shouting. In future you will obey orders and conform, unless you want to suffer the same fate as your father. Do you understand me.

Yes mama he said, having never seen his mother so angry, even when he'd broken that window. She stopped shaking him, and ^{they} continued to the long journey back to the compound.

Elanna was glad that the boy ~~so~~ didn't continue to question her, as she needed time to think. She had already accepted that it wouldn't be long before they were thrown out of the compound. Dugo possibly even now. She already knew Alexander had lost his place at the academy, but would she also lose her job, and with it the meagre income, that she would need even more now they could no longer

rely on her husband's salary.

Elena began to weep, no longer able to control her feelings. She had lost the only man she had ever loved, and was determined Alexander would not suffer the same fate.

Demetri had been a kind, clever and brave man, whose ^{country} purpose was to better the lives of his fellow men, and look where that had got him. The moment he told her about his plan to form a union for the dock workers, ~~she knew his days were numbered~~, and however much she protested, it fell on deaf ears. Howards die a thousand deaths, brave men only once.

It was the day he began to distribute leaflets among his fellow workers, that ~~she should have realised his days were numbered~~ But even she had not expected them to come to their home in the middle of the night, drag ~~him~~ ^{Demetri} out of bed and onto the street, and then kill him with a single shot, as he stood there protesting.

When the compound finally came in sight, she was prepared for the worst, and recoiled when she saw which guard was on duty that morning. He usually gave her a smile, but when he stepped out of the guard house ^{onto the road} he blocked her path.

I can't allow you to enter he said in words firm and hard, his eyes sympathetic. He didn't say another word as a second guard she had never seen before walked across to join them.

But can't I even collect my things she said as a third guard appeared carrying two battered suitcases.

But where am I to go she asked.

Make not our problem said the second guard standing his ground.

Alexander clenched his fist and took a pace forward, but his mother grabbed him firmly by the arm as one of the guards raised the butt of his rifle ~~and~~ ^{no} ~~dragged him away~~ with all the strength she could dragged him away.

The boy reluctantly picked up the two suitcases, and said where ~~is~~ ^{are} my mum? but heaven knows, well stay with your Uncle Boris, if he'll take him and if he won't ~~then I'll go with you~~

* * *

Boris wasn't surprised to see my sister standing ^{of his little flat.} there when he opened the door. The news of Demetri's death had spread around the dockyard ~~early~~ faster than ~~slavering~~ seagulls.

Come in he said, looking up and down the corridor, relieved to see no one in sight. He let them ^{some} through to the spare bedroom, and when ~~she~~ ^{she} saw that the two little beds had been made up, she whispered thank you.

Is the least I could do he said. No ~~one~~ ^{one} admired Demetri more than I did, but I warned him not to ~~disturb~~ ^{pro} ~~disturb~~ ~~the~~ ~~heart~~. ~~He~~ ^{He} began to cry, and he took her in his arms. I hate them every bit as much as he did, but ~~that~~ ^{that} wasn't the way to beat the bastards.

Do you think there's any point in my going into work tomorrow. I wouldn't have thought so, ~~but~~

~~I have no idea~~ he said, but there's only one way your going to find out

And what about your job,

I'm safe at the moment, but it might be wise, for us not to be seen going to the docks together. It's not that...

I understand she said. I only wish Demetri had shown

the same caution and common sense.

I'll go with you said Alexander

You'll report to your new school said Helena,
I never want to see you anywhere near the docks.

* * *

~~Helena~~ rose early the following morning and had left for the docks even before her brother had risen. She assumed that once she arrived at the gates, another guard would ~~step~~ step forward and bar her entry, but to her surprise she strolled through the ~~gate~~ ^{entrance to the docks} without being stopped and made her way across to the officers' compound.

When she entered the back door, and made her way to the kitchen no one gave her a second look, not a good sign. She didn't take off her coat as she assumed she wouldn't be staying that long.

She checked the menu, the first thing ~~she~~ ^{Helena} did every morning. Soup and chicken pie one by one her fellow ~~kitchen workers~~ ^{workplace workers} appeared, and although none of them spoke to her, she wasn't in any doubt they knew exactly what had happened.

~~Helena~~ finally took off her coat, and replaced it with a white smock before she began her normal routine when preparing for lunch.

When the kitchen supervisor arrived she expected his first words to be in ~~my~~ ^{my} Elena but ~~after~~ ^{however} a cursory inspection, ~~he moved on to~~ ^{he moved on to} the person who was preparing the soup.

It wasn't until the horn sounded for a two minute break that Elena joined her friend Olga and found out the truth. (OTO)

It was a close run thing said Olga, just be ~~thankful that their stomachs overruled their judgement,~~ ^{she goes} ~~typical of men,~~ But because of Protovsk, because

Because it would be his brain that overruled his judgement, and now that Denika is no longer around to protect you it will be long before... the buzzer sounded, and everyone quickly returned to work. Just be thankful said Olga that you such a good cook, because as long as you go on giving them a better meal here than they are getting at home you might just survive.

Elena ^{quickly} returned to her post and continued to prepare a chicken pie, with a lightly crusted ~~top~~ ^{crust} ~~partly~~ ^{partly} baked potatoes carrots and peas that ~~she~~ should leave them in no doubt what they would ~~think~~ ^{think}, if they ever let her go. But some thing else was on her mind.

* * *

When the head of security appeared just before lunch he looked at Helena as if she was on the menu. ~~After~~ ^{After} Proforov held the grand title of head of security but everyone knew, he was ugly and reported not to the folk commentators, but directly to Moscow, so everyone feared him.

It wasn't long before the fear, burred into a close inspection of her working, and while other officers sometimes sampled a titbit, his hands rested on her bum, and on one occasion she could feel him as he pressed up against her.

Once Alexander had gone to bed, she gave a brother a running account, of Proforov's behaviour,

There's nothing you can do about it said Boris, he'll assume your available she added, and it doesn't help that you are the best looking woman he ~~has~~ ^{sees} every day, comes around every day.

Well he's not available for any Russian especially a slob like that

You may not be given a lot of choice if you want

to keep your job. Don't forget her and every other woman in the kitchen, ask Olga. And her not your only problem said Boris, have you read Alexander's latest school report.

Yes said Helena, and I've warned him about the consequences of not setting down.

Her like his father, easily bored, especially when having to deal with idiot, his problem is simple her brighter than any of the teachers and they know it.

Helena lay in bed, thinking about her husband still unwilling to accept he wasn't ~~the~~ alive ~~she~~ ⁽¹⁴⁰⁾ Alexander worshiped him, always wanting to impress ⁽¹⁴⁰⁾ ~~his father~~, whenever they were at home, ~~they~~ ^{she} ~~could~~ only speak Russian. When you join the school of foreign languages in Moscow, they must think you a Russian. Denis's mastery of ^{the} Russian ^{language} also helped him at work. The occupying force as he used to describe them to his fellow workers, and been happy to put him in charge of the loaders, not just because his fellow countrymen were ~~willing~~ ^{able} to take orders from him, but the occupiers were ^{not} ~~too~~ lazy to learn his native tongue. But Pretrovski had spied even among these ~~domestic~~ ^{consolidated} ~~men~~ ^{men}, and when he began secretly pushing back, the ~~USSR~~ ^{USSR} didn't need any more ^{ready} to have him eliminated. ~~He may not have pulled the trigger, but he unquestionably gave the order.~~ ⁽¹⁴⁰⁾

Brave men rarely consider the consequences of defeat, he told Alexander, that is the role of the coward. ~~Her~~ Helena only wished her husband had been ~~a coward~~, more of a coward.

Boris had been his second in command, but Pretrovski clearly didn't look upon as a threat, because he was promoted to chief water. What

Protopski couldn't know was that Boris hated the Russian even more than his brother in law, and although he appeared to conform, he was already planning his own form of revenge which wouldn't require circulating leaflets.

Despite Helena remonstrating with her son, his school reports didn't improve, and a threat of expulsion and the possibility of a period of time to be spent in a reform institution finally made him buckle down, but for how long Helena wondered.

If her problems at home weren't enough, they weren't improving at work. Protopski's advances were becoming more and more crude, and on more than one occasion she had considered pouring boiling water over his wandering hand, but ~~reined~~ ^{reined} herself that the consequences were not worth thinking about, one evening when she was cleaning up the kitchen before going home, he came in clearly drunk, and began to fumble his trousers off, when a junior officer came in and she managed to escape while Protopski was distracted, but she knew she couldn't put off his advances for much longer.

That night ~~after~~ after Alexander had gone to bed, Helena asked her brother to go over his plan in greater detail.

I thought you weren't interested he said.
Oh no, but I'm desperate.

Several foreign vessels he began enter the dock every week to unload their cargo, and we are expected to turn them round as quickly as possible, so any waiting ships can take their place. That's my ~~main~~ responsibility, but my other job is to ~~make~~ ^{make} sure that ~~nothing~~ ^{during} the unloading ~~stage~~ ^{one or two} of the goods go missing.

So missing Helena repeated

Not all the meat that ends up in the officers kitchen was bought in shops said Bond And it wasn't a coincidence that those two carcasses of beef appeared on the same day as an Argentinian refrigerated ship docked on Quay seven. Helene didn't interrupt.

American cigarettes, swishy whiskey and Cuban cigars don't always ^{all} reach their intended destination. My biggest triumph was the Jaguar that was lifted as ~~fast~~ into the dock while being unloaded which you must have seen parked outside the commandant's office, but now I keep my job.

But how does that help me asked Helen,
once a ship has unloaded its goods, ~~there are~~ ^{some} ~~are~~
~~to be a chance~~ to load the loading process begins,
and because not everyone wants ^{cases of} salt or vodka,
several ships leave empty handed. Helen remained
silent while her brother continued. There are two
ships due to dock on Friday who after there
discharged with leave on Saturday afternoon, with
several holds empty, one will be returning to New
York the other to London. You could be on one of them

But if we were caught trying to escape,
it wouldn't be New York or London we were
heading for but on a train with a one way ticket
to Siberia.

That's why Saturday is so important said Boris,
because the odds will be stacked in our favour.

Q10) Why is Saturday so important demand of labor.

Kiev are playing ~~Stavro~~ ~~Stavro~~ ^{Dinamo} ~~Stavro~~ ^{Stavro} tomorrow in the semi-final of the Republic Challenge cup, and almost all of the officers will be sitting with ~~the~~ ^{comrade} ~~sitting~~ ^{with} in a box while ~~the~~ ^{comrade} ~~the~~ ^{with} will be taking the stand. So there will be about 1000

window

(You would take advantage of. All you'll have to
decide ^{if} if you want to go to New York or London
or Siberia said Helena,

END OF CHAPTER.