



## Ingrid cannot find a Logical Explanation

Getting off the plane at Roswell was like walking into a wall of hot, dry heat. New Mexico was mostly a desert state and the summer sun beat down incessantly. The land was baked hard, rivers had dried up and plants looked as if they were barely alive.

Professor Schwarzkopf was accompanied to his new quarters and then immediately taken to see Major Jerry Marshall. To keep his office cool, the blinds were drawn and the only light came through slits between them.

“You’ll need a team, if you’re going build us this flying craft,” he said, getting straight down to business. “How many people will you need?”

“I will need three others,” Professor Schwarzkopf replied without needing to think about it.

“Any names in mind?”

Professor Schwarzkopf listed five possible names and was then dismissed.

The next day Major Marshall requested to see him again.

“We did background checks on the names you gave us. Stanford vouched for Ted Burns. Yale are reluctant to let Archie Andrews go but we’ll get him for you. Oxford have not convinced us about Rupert Windsor. Yuri Barmin - no way, and that leaves us with this one.”

He dropped a file on the desk between them. In large, black letters across the top was written ‘Professor Ingrid Larsen.’

“If I can’t have Rupert Windsor or Yuri Barmin, then I will need her,” Professor Schwarzkopf explained. “I have followed her work in scientific journals and she is vital. Her mathematical and technical work is unrivalled.”

“From what my man in Sweden says, she is also quite a knock out.”

Professor Schwarzkopf looked shocked, “I have no idea of her physical appearance. All I know of her is what I have read.”

“Let me tell you what I know. She speaks Swedish, English, German and Russian. She studied at the University of Lund and after graduating she was recruited by the university. The other professors there cannot speak highly enough of her academic abilities, especially as she’s a broad. Nothing wrong so far but, “he paused, “her parents’ political activities are not compatible with our own.”

“What does that mean?” asked Professor Schwarzkopf, shifting uncomfortably in his seat.

“It means they are members of the Left Party, and the Left Party supported the Soviets during the war. Her parents were interned in camps by your friends, the Nazis. After the war, they were released and, last year, stood in Government elections. And you know what they say, ‘the apple never falls too far away from the tree.’

Professor Schwarzkopf was confused. If political affiliation were a problem then what was he doing here? On top of this, he had no idea what talk about apple trees had to do with this situation.

“I don’t understand why her parents’ political views should be a problem. It is Professor Larsen I require. Not her parents.”

Major Marshall picked up the file, “Are you sure that you need her?”

Professor Schwarzkopf nodded.



“Then you’ll be responsible for her. If she does anything that you regard as suspicious you report it straight to me. Do you understand?”

“Yes.”

“From the moment she arrives here, until the time that I am satisfied with her behaviour, she will be under watch. Is that a problem?”

“No.”

“Good. Dismissed.”

Professor Ingrid Larsen arrived at the base six days later. Her decision to accept the invitation was a calculated one. Emotionally, she did not want to leave Sweden and her parents. Logically, it was the only decision to make. America had money for funding, Professor Schwarzkopf was someone whom she knew was respected in his field and Europe was in the process of rebuilding while America had been comparatively untouched by the war. It was an opportunity that she would have been foolish to turn down.

She was shown to her quarters and unpacked her bag. Five identical white blouses were removed, refolded and then placed on a shelf. Five grey skirts were evenly hung from wooden hangers and her different under garments were placed in different drawers. Apart from clothes her suitcase also contained a hairbrush, book of poetry by Oscar Wilde and a well-kept copy of *Über die Hypothesen, welche der Geometrie zu Grunde Liegen* by Bernhard Riemann. Lastly, she removed a notepad, her geometry set and a well sharpened pencil, and put them neatly on the desk.

A soldier knocked on the door and requested that she follow him, but she asked for a few minutes to tidy up her appearance first. There was a mirror in the corner of the room and she looked at herself in it. Her eyes were sky blue but there were dark bags under them from tiredness. She applied some foundation to hide the results of the constant travelling and looked at the hair. Long blond locks fell down untidily past her shoulders and she looked unkempt. She took a hair brush and began to brush each side one hundred times.

The soldier knocked again and politely insisted that she follow him. Reluctantly, she did as she was asked and followed the man to a well-equipped laboratory. Standing at a chalk board, working through a theorem on propulsion was a man with jet black hair greased to one side. He was so consumed by what he was doing that he did not notice her enter. His hand moved frantically over the board, changing numbers and mathematical formulae. After two minutes, he stopped, stepped back and ran his fingers over his hair.

“What? What? What?” he puzzled in German, obviously confused by something.

Ingrid approached the blackboard and rubbed out half of a formula. Without looking at the man, she took the chalk from his hand and corrected the equation.

“Your problem was here,” she said as she handed back the chalk.

As he took it, she stared into his face and lost herself. For what seemed like an eternity, she stood without speaking.

“Professor Larsen, I presume,” said Professor Schwarzkopf awkwardly. “A pleasure to meet you. My name is Johan Schwarzkopf.”

“Professor Schwarzkopf,” she smiled, “I am aware of your work.”

“And I am aware of your work from afar,” he looked at the black board, “and now up close.”



The soldier who had brought her to the lab interrupted them, “We are on a tight schedule, Ma’am. We have to go and see Major Jesse Marshall now.”

She followed the soldier slowly out of the laboratory and called back happily, “It was a pleasure to meet you too, Johan.”

Their interaction had barely been one minute long. As she walked away, she could not understand why she had felt compelled to say those words nor to say them in such a jovial manner. There was no logical explanation.

Even though her head was confused, deep in her heart she knew.

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