Chapter 8

A SAINT'S REPORT

Monologue

"After my first trial, I was often abused. There were moments when the beatings confused the pain. At times they poured boiling water on me and other times ice cold. They often filled my cell with smoke. But I did not care. My only concern was; To close my pen in my palm, not to let them take it, A pen from a swan's feather. As long as I felt it hidden in my palm, I knew where I came from, who I was and where I was going. So long as I did not lose it, So long as they did not find it and take it from me.

This little thing gave me the strength and the tenacity to endure. This insignificant object, this "nothing" kept me alive. A couple of times, I lost it. Then I saved some charcoal and kept writing on the walls. But I always found it again. This swan's feather that sometimes I dipped in the ink-if I had it-sometimes in soot and sometimes ....in my own blood.

I like to find myself thinking; A pen made from a swan's feather in the hands of God.

Six years have passed.

After the second trial, the conditions somewhat improved. But again, I was jailed, disreputable and estranged from my beloved Russian people. Of course, visits and letters grew steadily. I was given the opportunity to write about many things, Perhaps if I was not a prisoner, I would not have been left behind.

Your will unknown, Lord.

For twenty-five years I have lived as non-existent.
And now I am ready to make my account:
I was the last of the sinners.
They knew me as a prince since my birth.
Yet, I was a slave.
Slave to the love of God, the form of a servant slave.
But also a slave to images of God,
People of indescribable glory, even if they carry the stigma of fault,
A son of a glorious order, a Greek order, a Greek order.
A childless ascetic, yet father.
Father of a fiery nation, a nation of zeal.
Father of a Russian nation with love,
who, like this father, did not show, neither to a son nor a daughter.
And above all, lover.
Lover of faithlessness
A manic lover of faith, which only God was more manic,

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Lover of the Orthodox church.
Lover of offering mind, powers, soul, talents, flesh in the Orthodox Church,
In one, pure, perfect Orthodox Church, the greatest of God's gifts to the people's genre.
Maximus. Not a saint, but Orthodox to the bone,
The first Rome I visited at one time. The second one was born.
The third ... – oh the third! ... claimed me.
But the other, the great, the heavenly Rome won me.
For her I was born and for her I was born again.
Glory in its celestial government,
Glory to You, Lord of the forces of heaven
Glory to You, Lord of my heart.

The time has come. January 1556 will be my last month on this earth.
Christmas is here. Once again a stranger during Christmas. The Lavra of St. Sergius is beautiful, but nothing compares to Vatopedi.
"We look faithful."
The Last Christmas of my Life! In six days in 1556 he visits the world, but I will not even be able to see him in his first month. What a beautiful night of Christmas in my monastery!
Sweet Vatopedi, I am coming back to you, Not as I left, but as I was formed. Child of God, who by mercy I hope to find a place in His embrace. I return freely, like the souls, who, moreover, did not love the Great Friend, the Great Protector, the Great God, the sweet Jesus. And I will not leave over the centuries. The mind is returning, How did I start? Where did I go? Where I was! Who I am, who am I? I take the swan's feather and I write in a few words of my trip, Who will read it? Who will remember a buried monk after a few years? I put the words on the paper, and if it is meant to be, let it go.

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Έφτασε η ώρα. Ο Ιανουάριος του 1556 θα είναι ο τελευταίος μου μήνας σ΄ αυτή τη γη. Γλυκό μου Βατοπαίδι επιστρέφω. Όχι όπως έφυγα, αλλά όπως πλάστηκα. Παιδί Θεού, που με το έλεος Του προσδοκώ να βρω μια θέση στην αγκαλιά Του. Επιστρέφω ελεύθερος, όπως οι ψυχές, που άλλο πιο πολύ δεν αγάπησαν από τον Μέγα φίλο, μέγα Προστάτη, μέγα Θεό, τον γλυκύτατο Ιησού. Και δεν θα ξαναφύγω εις τους αιώνες των αιώνων. Γυρίζει πίσω ο νους. Πώς ξεκίνησα, πού βάδισα, πού βρέθηκα! Ποιος ήμουνα, ποιος είμαι! Παίρνω του κύκνου το φτερό και γράφω με λίγες λέξεις το ταξίδι μου. Ποιος θα διαβάσει; Ποιος θα θυμάται μετά από λίγα χρόνια έναν έγκλειστο μοναχό; Βάζω τις λέξεις στο χαρτί κι αν είναι γραφτό, ας τις πάρει ο αγέρας.¶
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