

Excerpts From:
**The Pretty
Gladiator**



Third Draft

This is the first four chapters of a 274- page completed manuscript.

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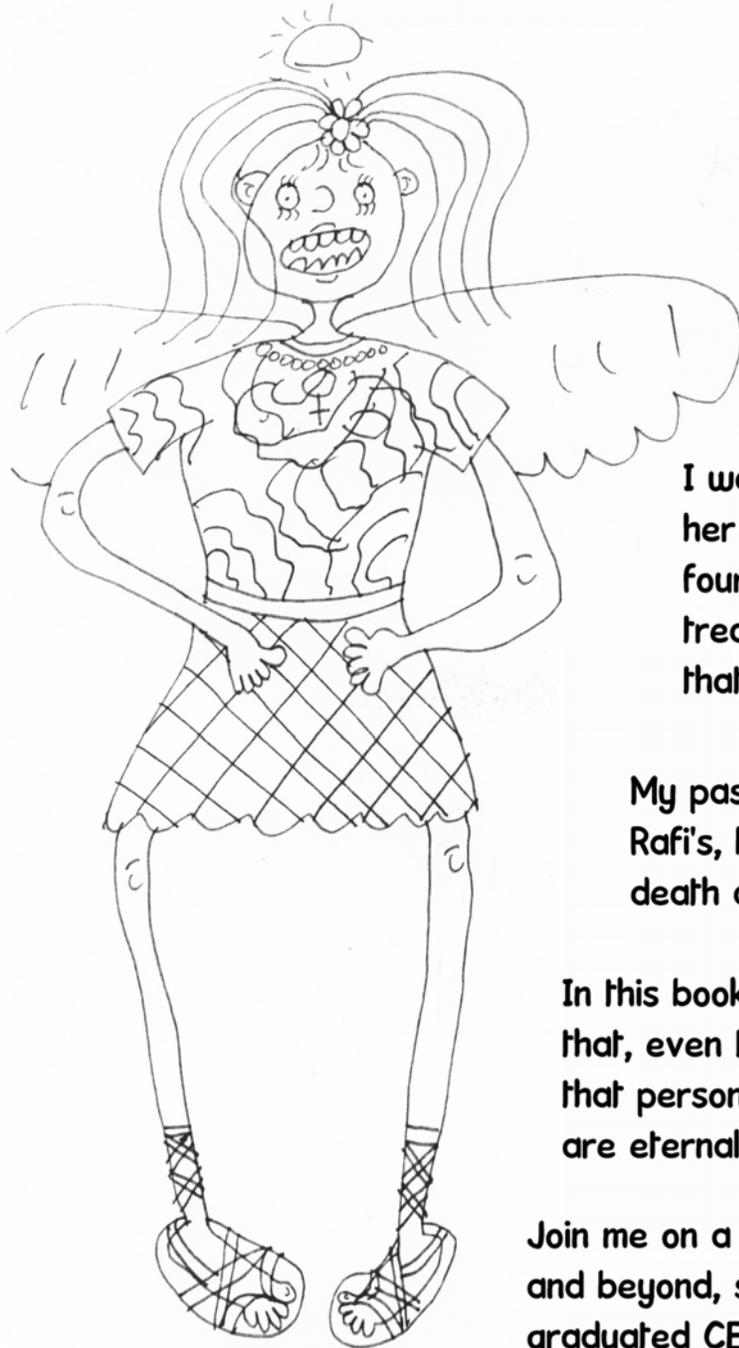
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Introduction



Bonjour.

My name is Sister Adèle, an angel who's part of the "Universal Order of Sisterhood".

I am also Rafi's aunt -- she never knew me when I was alive, but, since becoming her guardian angel (the first of four), she treats me like she treats her sisters (never mind that I'm a "sister").

My past life is just as interesting as Rafi's, but with two elements -- death and afterlife.

In this book, I hope to express the fact that, even though one's life may end, that person's creativity and spirit are eternal.

Join me on a journey towards life, death, and beyond, starting from when I graduated CEGEP -- in 1965.

Chapter 1:

“It était une fois...”



Leaving The Nest
(Trois-Rivières, June 1965)

It all began in a Quebec city of Trois-Rivières, a major city in the heart of the Mauricie region. We moved here from Ste-Anne-de-la-Pérade in 1963, so we could be closer to jobs.

We were a mixed-faith family – a rarity in the Catholic-dominated Quebec of the 1960s.

My Catholic father, Adrien, worked at a paper mill in town. A native of Ste-Anne, he was originally a fisherman before we moved to T-R, seeking better jobs.

My Jewish mother, Chloe, was a schoolteacher at the CEGEP. A native of the French territory of St. Pierre et Miquelon (SPM), Chloe embraces Judaism and humanity so much, that she wears sandals all the time, and had all of us girls wear them as well. She said that sandals are the only true way to embrace religion and keep a connection with “Mother Earth”, as it is what the original Jews wore. She also interpreted Judaism in a different manner, saying that it should be more about tradition and less about God. She first met my father during World War II, while he was in SPM on a fishing trip.

My younger sisters, Zoe and Rachel, still go to school.

My little sister, Nathalie, was only eight years old, but already has an unknown future. She was worried that she’ll be useless.

She does have a friend, a half-Japanese girl her age named Hélène. Hélène was born in Osaka, Japan (in the Kansai region), to a Quebecois father, who was a salesman for the paper company, and a Japanese mother, who was a “miko” – a traditional shrinekeeper – at the Imamiya Ebisu Shrine, an important Shintoist shrine in Osaka.

And me, the oldest of the four sisters – I graduated from CEGEP in 1965. And I figured out my career – art.

“So, what will you be doing now?” asked Adrien, my father.

“I’ll be attending Laval University to study art,” I replied.

“Art? How many women dabbled in art? All the art you see have been done by men.”

“Right, but women can do artwork just as well as men.”

“Doesn’t pay well, though.”

“Right, though you could be famous for your work. Van Gogh and Picasso were starving artists, but they became famous through the course of history.”

Ma maman, Chloe, chimed in: “She’s right, Adrien – I do a little painting and sketching, but I never became famous or rich. Maybe Addy might have a shot.”

“You sure?” asked Adrien.

“Positive,” answered Chloe. “With a mind as bright as Addy’s, she’ll go places.”

“Well. . . It’s her life; I’m sure she’ll make the best of it.”

“Merci, papa! Merci, maman!” I yelled, as I hugged them both.

With me going to university, that meant leaving home. And that meant that Nathalie, who idolises me like a goddess, would become depressed, as her sister would no longer be there. Yes, there’s still Zoe and Rachel, and her friend H  l  ne, but I practically meant the world to her.

“You’re leaving?” asked a surprised Nathalie.

“Oui, Nathalie,” I replied.

“But I don’t want you to leave!”

“I have to; the school I’m going to is in Quebec City, 80 miles from here. I can’t just come home every day like CEGEP; I probably won’t be home every weekend. But I promise – I will be home at Thanksgiving and Christmas, and will try to be home occasionally on weekends.

“Until then, you have Zoe and Rachel to keep you company, and don’t forget about your friend, H  l  ne.”

H  l  ne, then, walked in to see us, giving her thoughts on the subject:

“Oui, Nati-chan – I’ll always be here.”

H  l  ne gives Nathalie a hug.

She continues: “I will never leave you; we’ll still have fun together.”

Nathalie replied, “Oh. . . okay. But I’ll miss you, Addy.”

“I’ll miss you too, Natty,” I answered.

Then I hugged Nathalie, as we cried.

On a weekend in August 1965, I packed up my things and drove away.

My art career has just begun, and my influence on Nathalie’s life has just begun.

It is a start of a new experience.

A new adventure.

For both of us.

The Roomie
(Quebec City, August 1965)



After I arrived in Quebec City, I managed to find an apartment with a roommate. My roomy was a geeky, straight-haired woman, wearing glasses, sandals and a T-shirt. She was also a freshman, like me.

“Bonjour,” I greeted.

“Bonjour,” greeted Lanie. “My name’s Laurette Langelier, but you can call me ‘Lanie’.”

“Okay, Lanie.”

“Come in.”

Lanie’s apartment was really nice – two separate large bedrooms, a kitchen, and a living room with a color TV (though color

programming won’t begin in Canada for another year).

We sat down on the couch, and chatted.

“So, Adèle, what brings you here?” Lanie asked.

I answered, “I’m studying art at Laval.”

“I’m going to Laval, too, but for psychology. I love to look inside people’s heads. Is this your first time in Quebec City?”

“Yes, it is. I come from Trois-Rivières; I don’t know anyone or anyplace here.”

“Don’t worry – I come from Jonquiere, in the Saguenay region, but I have some family here in Quebec City, so I come here regularly. I’ll help you try to make it here.”

“Thanks.”

Then she held both of my hands in my lap. At that moment, I started getting aroused. I thought to myself, “I’m not supposed to be aroused to women! Only men!” Though ever since puberty, I never got aroused to men – since I never got aroused to anyone until now, I thought there was something wrong with me. And with homosexuality still taboo, I thought there was something wrong with me.

Being in an awkward position, I asked Lanie:

“You are a woman, are you?”

“Yeah, why?” replied Lanie.

“A funny thing just happened – as you were holding my hands, I got aroused.”

“That is a serious problem. You should have it checked.”

“Sure.”

“I’ll get dinner ready while you get your things into your room.”

“Okay.”

As I went to my car, I noticed that Lanie closed her eyes, giggled, and clasped her hands together.

I wondered what was going on with her.

Little do I know...

For All Its Worth
(Laval University, September 1965)

The following month, school began at Laval University. Earlier, I have signed up for classes, took a tour around campus, and got financial aid.

But now, today I officially became a college student, on a road that would lead to a brighter future.

That afternoon, I went to my first art class, "Drawing I", which teaches the basics of drawing. An anglophone, Scott Mitchell, was my professor.

Shh. . . Class is starting. . .

"Hello, students; my name is Scott Mitchell, your professor, but you can call me 'Scott'. This is 'Drawing I', which explains and demonstrates the basics of drawing, using various types of media. 'Drawing I' is a prerequisite for all art courses here, since all types of art often start with a sketch. "

As I listened to Scott, I wondered how much I would amount to as an artist.

"On the dittos you just got are the books and materials you will need for this class. I know some of these items are expensive, but you'll find that they're worth it. "

That night, I went to the book store to pick up the texts, then the art supply store to pick up the required pencils, pens and papers.

My road to being an artist has begun.

But. . . it was a long, bumpy road indeed. To draw like a professional meant drawing the shapes just right, using the proper pencils and shading, positioning the curves and items in just the right spots.

Sometimes I wonder if it was even worth it. I probably would've been better off as an accountant, or somebody.

But, as they say, patience has its rewards.

The Night Visitor
(Christmas 1965)

Then came Christmas 1965.

I was back in T-R, visiting my folks for the Chanukah and Christmas holidays.

Very early Christmas morning, at 3:15AM, I got up to use the bathroom. As I peed, I thought of my family, Lanie, and my future. An art career is hard indeed, but it has its rewards.

After a few moments, I got up, put my panties back on, flushed the toilet, and went back to bed.

When I opened the door, I saw an angel in front of me. It startled me so bad, I thought I was having a heart attack.

“What in the world. . . ?” I yelled.

“Sorry I startled you,” the angel said.

“You better be! You almost killed me. And who are you?”

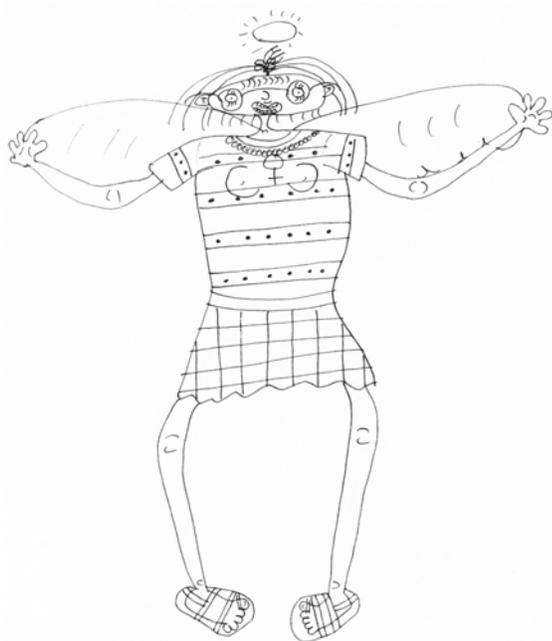
“I’m your guardian angel, Sister Rosie.”

“Why would I need a guardian angel? In fact, why me?”

“I am here to help you appreciate more in creativity. Art is indeed very important, but it’s the creativity that makes it enjoyable – for both the artist and the patron.”

“I do realise that creativity is important, but why me?”

“I am a member of a heavenly sect called the ‘Universal Order of Sisterhood’, where feminine angels like us help women back on earth. And what we do would eventually affect other women in the future.”



“Where do I fit in?”

“Twenty- two years from now, you will have a niece, who’s not getting the most out of life. She will be depressed, as she’ll have little reason to do anything creative.

“As a matter of fact, I’ll come into this person’s life as an older sister of her friend, only to die unexpectedly in 1998. ”

“1998? You mean you came from the future?”

“That’s right – Sisters can time- travel and help any woman in almost any time period.

“Most importantly – you better get used to me being near you a lot. ”

“Why’s that?”

“Sisterhood rules dictate that an assigned sister must be with their mortal ward until she dies. Meaning that until you die, I’m yours. ”

I sighed in resignation.

“What have I gotten into?” I asked.

“Nothing really, ” answered Rosie. “It’s only fate. Karma. ”

“Okay. If you promise not to do anything funny, you can be part of my life. ”

“Promise. ”

And at that point, an angel came into my life. But how little did I realise that her presence would not only affect my aspirations as an artist, but eventually my personal life – and my after- life.

Chapter 2

“Two Women
and a Flower”

(Spring-Summer 1966)



Spring of 1966 came. At the close of my first year at Laval, I've been doing really well in my classes – especially art. But to be honest, I felt that I should be doing art as a form of expression – where the only rule is that there are no rules.

Art by a prescribed technique, taught by a well-seasoned professor, is great; but I felt that art should be used to represent one's personality, not as a second coming of an artist like Van Gogh or Rembrandt.

I want to spread my wings in the art field, by taking what's already there and molding them into my own style.

That's a sign of a great artist.

But the question is: "What should I do?"

As I went home to T-R for the summer, it's a question that languished in my head.

Lanie came along, since she insisted that she meet my parents.

And of course, there's Rosie. I have a feeling that my love of art would help her give me ideas. Hope she does the trick.

Later that afternoon, we arrived at my folks' house.

Chloe asks, "So, who's your friend?"

I answered, "She's Lanie – she's my roommate at our apartment."

"Nice to meet you, Lanie," said Adrien.

"Bonjour, monsieur," greeted Lanie.

"So," Adrien asks, "what are you going to do during your summer break?"

I answered, "Same as at school – art."

"You have to show some of your work to us," said Chloe.

"I will," I answered.

We spent most of that evening relaxing. For dinner, maman made ham, green beans, potatoes and cupcakes.

At 10PM, Lanie and I went to bed – in separate rooms.

As I was starting to become unconscious, Rosie materialised in front of me.

Rosie asked, “So – thought of what you’re going to do for your art project?”

I responded, “Haven’t a clue.”

“What about flowers? They’re pretty this time of year.”

“But how should I draw flowers? I’m not too keen on them.”

“Simple – think of a special flower that grows within you. A flower that looks pretty on the outside and even more beautiful on the inside. A flower that only two can share.”

“What is that?”

“That’s something you have to find for yourself.”

“A flower, eh?”

“That’s right. I have to get going – we angels need sleep, too. Adieu, Adèle!”

“Bye.”

Then, Rosie disappeared into the night. All night, before falling asleep, I was thinking of Rosie’s riddle – “a flower that’s beautiful inside and outside, and only two can share”. There are many flowers in this world, but none that can strictly be shared by two people.

The next morning, I got up early, so Lanie and I can go to a park for a drawing trip. After I got dressed, Lanie came in.

“Good morning, Adèle!” greeted Lanie.

“Hey, Lanie,” I said.

“Before we go, I want to show you something. Please lay down on the bed and relax. And put this pillow underneath your lower back.”

“Okay.”

“Now, lean your head back, and close your eyes. ”

“What are you up to? This better be good!”

“It is, Adèle! Now hush!”

As I lay down, I expected a pleasant surprise. But it gave me creeps at the start.

Lanie manually spread my legs and went under my skirt, then slowly removed my panties, taking them off my legs.

And then, something very dirty happened – something that cannot leave this room.

Lanie slowly licked the outer edges of my vagina. It felt a little ticklish, but ended up feeling very sensuous – a kind of sensation that really feels good. A feeling that actually puts a smile on your face, asking for more.

As Lanie “ate” me, she slowly stroked her fingertips on my legs, all the way down to my sandaled feet. There, she gently stroked my feet, especially along the bottom, where I was the most sensitive.

As Lanie caressed me with her ecstatic touch, I began to breathe heavily. My body and my head began to writhe to the sexual feelings.

The very top of my vagina, the clitoris, started getting very hard and painfully tight.

She then began to lick my clitoris, very slowly. The pain has started to become more intense.

And then, a burst of energy began to grow. As this increased, I breathed even heavier. I started to groan more. I’m starting to get moist.

When this energy reached its peak, I began to tense up. I banged my fists on the bed as I let out a stifled cry.

I have felt my first orgasm.

And then, Lanie stopped. My sexual sensations went away instantly.

It felt good.

It is when Lanie told me what she really is:

“So – did you like my little surprise?” asked Lanie.

“I loved it,” I replied.

“That was my way of telling you who I am – I’m a lesbian. I love only women. Romantically.”

“I see.”

“Anyway – ready to go?”

“Sure – give me a moment.”

As Lanie left, I sat up and took a long look at my vagina. It is this that I found out the answer to Rosie’s riddle – “The ‘flower’ that only two can share” is the vagina. The edges of the vagina – the labia – are the “petals”. The clitoris is the “stigma”. The nerves are the “stamen”. And like the vagina, a flower has an ovary.

My first time with Lanie, and Rosie’s riddle, has led me to realise some things:

- Flowers and vaginas are great art subjects, if treated with respect.
- Lanie cares about me so much, she shares her love with sex.
- And, most importantly, I realised that I am a lesbian, too.

What Lanie did to me led me to realise what I have felt over the years – I love women, not men. And Lanie made me feel more alive.

One thing, though – this was a secret that has to stay in my bedroom. Telling the world that Lanie and I are lesbians would make us pariahs in 1966 society.

As for my art – that’s a completely different matter. Such a matter that would earn me the fabled “15 minutes”.

But there’s one problem with my lesbianity, which can be summed up with one word.

Nathalie.

Nathalie

While I'm back in T-R, I also wanted to spend time with my little sister, Nathalie. Since becoming 9 years old, she's at a point where she can be influenced by anything.

What she does as a child could set the stage for what she does as an adult.

What I wanted to do is to show her how great a sister I am; why I am an important part of her life.

But of course, I since realised that I was a lesbian, after Lanie coming out to me that morning. How would my homosexuality affect Nathalie?

I placed that on the back burner for now; for now, I just wanted to spend time with Nathalie.

"Hey, Nathalie," I greeted. "What's up with my favorite sister these days?"

"Nothing much," she responded. "I'm going to be in the fourth grade this fall; looking forward to being back in school. I'm also looking forward to Girl Guides when that starts up again – had lots of fun with them last year."

"Looks like you had a lot of fun while I was gone."

"Sure did. But you know something, Addy? It's not as fun with you gone. I missed you."

"I missed you too, Natty. My life also seemed empty."

I sighed.

"Addy?", asked Nathalie.

"Yeah?", I replied.

"I'm thinking of getting a boyfriend when I go back to school. What's your advice on boyfriends?"

To a lesbian with a little sister, talking about boyfriends and your own sexuality is just as difficult as "the birds and the bees". I love women and have no interest in men. How would I break this to Nathalie that I'm a lesbian? Would you think I'm a bad influence?

Took a lot of courage, but this was what I told Nathalie:

"Nathalie?", I asked.

"Yes?", she replied.

“I want you to listen to me very carefully. What I am about to say to you is very important. ”

“Okay. ”

“I know nothing about guys. You know why?”

“Why?”

“I have a mental condition called ‘homosexuality’. It’s where a person loves another person of the same sex. For women, they are known as ‘lesbians’: one woman loves another woman. It is a condition which, personally, can never be treated. Many like being homosexuals so much, they never want to be treated. ”

“Wow. ”

“But the most important thing is – you can’t tell anyone that you’re a lesbian – you could be arrested. You could be killed. You could be a social outcast. Nevertheless, a lesbian is who I am, and I love it. And I love Lanie. ”

“Do you think I should be a lesbian?”

“I can’t say much to a girl your age, but I can say this: ‘Follow your heart. ’”

“Follow my heart. ”

“Only your heart can tell you if you love a boy or a girl. Don’t let anyone else say otherwise. ”

“Okay. One thing. . . ”

“Yes?”

“I think girls loving girls are weird, but I hold nothing against them. But, regardless, you’ll always be my sister, and you’ll always be in my heart. ”

“Merci, Nathalie. ”

“One more thing – have you told maman and papa yet?”

“Not yet, and for now, I’d rather keep it that way. Okay?”

“Okay. Je t’aime, Addy. ”

“Je t’aime aussi, Natty. ”

And then, we hugged each other.

It gave me a warm feeling in my heart that I was able to reach out to Nathalie, despite my lesbianity.

The following week, Lanie and I returned to Quebec City.

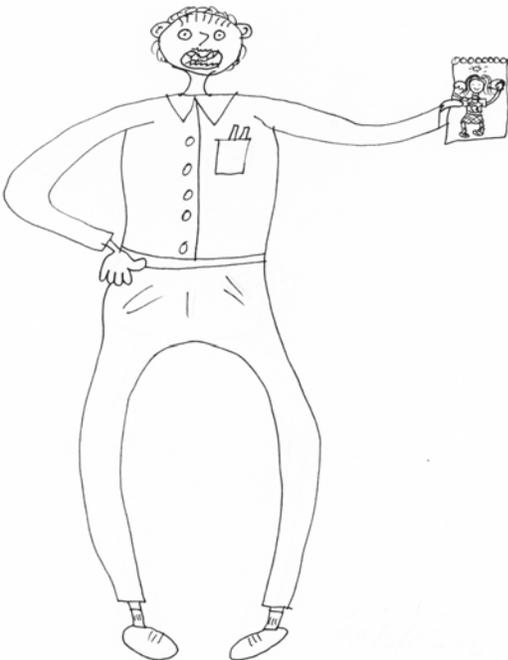
As we left, the family waved bye. Especially Nathalie, who was in tears, but smiling.

I have a feeling she'll do good.

Drawing Up Controversy
(Quebec City, Fall 1966)

By the fall of 1966, I was back at Laval, and back to learning art techniques.

One thing I really want to do for an art project is something that melds my personality with nature and the world – something that would, in a vague manner, explain who I am.



Later, I talked to Professor Scott about what I wanted to do.

“Professor?”, I asked.

“Yes, Adèle?”, Scott responded.

“I have an idea for my art project, but I wanted to know what you think first.”

“Okay.”

“It’s a painting of me, holding a flower. While this may seem tame, the top part of the flower is shaped like a vagina. Which is analogous to a flower.”

“Hmm. . . While more and more people are taking liberties with art these days, what would the public think? I have a feeling that genitalia in art would bring about

unwelcome controversy.”

“True. But, as they say, you have to start somewhere. And this is as good a place as any.”

“Well. . . as long as you claim sole responsibility, I’m game.”

“Great. I assure you this will be as tasteful as possible.”

And with Scott’s blessing, I went on to work on my painting. I already had an idea on what it would look like – me, holding my “flower” to the left side of me.

And, so it would be as accurate as possible, I also did some “research” as I worked on my painting. Believe me, the “research” portion was the best part of my project.

November, 1966: I’ve finished my painting.



Looks pretty, huh?

I showed it to Scott for his critique.

“Wow, that looks nice,” Scott commented.

“Sure does,” I said.

“The colors are subtle and well-defined, and I like the way you rendered the ‘flower’.”

“Really?”

“Of course. Personally, the use of genitalia in art is okay, if there is as little emphasis on ‘action’ as possible. This is definitely going in the student gallery.

“Adèle Fusey – you may very well be on the road to a worthwhile art career.”

“Thanks, Scott!”

And I hugged him.

And so, my picture wound up in the student gallery.

It has caught the attention of several onlookers, mainly on how the flower was rendered.

Surprisingly, by the general reaction, everyone was pleased.

It doesn’t matter what you draw, as long as you don’t show it in an obscene fashion.

Or, so I thought.

A few days later, I visited the gallery with Lanie to show my painting, only to find that it was replaced by a sign bearing this message:

“This artwork has been removed and impounded by the Board of Directors, as it does not meet University standards”

My jaw dropped. My heart seized. I started to cry.

“Removed and impounded?”, I yelled. “Why would they do this?”

Lanie replied, "Maybe it was your portrayal of your 'flower' that caused this."

"Come on, Lanie! We're talking to Scott about this!"

Lanie and I ran to Scott's office.

When I got there, Scott gave me the bad news.

He said, "Sorry, Adèle. I thought it was okay, but apparently, the superiors are prudes."

I asked, "Is there anything we can do about this?"

"I don't know – let's go talk to the Dean."

We then proceeded to Dean Auglaize's office – he oversaw the operations at Laval, and has powers to accept or deny exhibits or activities there.

"Dean Auglaize?" asked Scott.

Dean replied, "Yes, Mr. Mitchell?"

"This is Adèle Fusey. She had a painting on display at the student gallery, but was taken down on account of indecency. Care to explain this situation?"

"Of course – I feel that the picture is obscene. The flower contains female genitalia, and any display of 'privates' is strictly forbidden."

"Even if it's strictly art?"

"That's right."

"Even if it's just there, and not in 'action'."

"Correct. Everyone knows that genitalia should never be exposed to the public."

"'Everyone'? I'm not 'everyone'. Adèle's not 'everyone'. And a lot of students in Laval's art program's not 'everyone'. Don't put words in our mouths!"

"Sorry, but my decision remains."

"Could you at least give the picture back to Adèle?"

"Sorry – regulations state that confiscated property remains confiscated permanently. Not just drugs, weapons or alcohol, but items of controversy as well. Including the painting."

“Listen, pal – return that painting to Adèle or I quit!”

I then chimed in: “So will I! I bet there’s another college that’s more liberal than Laval!”

The Dean then relented: “Okay – I’ll give Adèle back her painting, as long as it’s not displayed here, and as long as you two stay out of my sight!”

“Thanks, Dean,” said Scott.

I then hugged Scott in a fit of happiness.

And so, I got my painting back. But now that I can’t display it at Laval anymore, where can I show it now?

Scott had the answer: “There are a few nice galleries in Quebec City that can show your painting. One place is the “Black Cherry”; not to be biased, but my wife owns that gallery, and I’m sure she’ll find a home for your painting.”

I responded, “That’ll be great. The thing is that art cannot be censored, because it comes from the heart.”

“Exactly. While some may take offence of it, the patrons should be the judge, not some stuffy dean.”

We then went to the “Black Cherry” gallery downtown. Scott’s wife, Lorraine, the owner of the gallery, was there to greet us.

Scott introduced me to Lorraine: “This is my student, Adèle Fusey. For a first year student, she has shown tremendous talent. Today, she brought this painting she did, in hopes that you’ll exhibit it.”

I then commented: “As you can see, the flower is the focus of controversy – Laval University has banned this painting from exhibition, as my dean felt it was obscene.”

“Doesn’t look it to me,” said Lorraine. “Practically, all that your painting is expressing is your interpretation of womanhood. Some may find it shocking, but I don’t.”

“Really?”

“Sure; this is the right time when artists experiment a lot in art and creativity. This is the time that you should spread your wings artistically.”

“Wow.”

“And it’s why I want to put your painting on display at my gallery. And if it goes well, I

invite you to display your future works here. ”

Scott then asked, “So Adèle, what do you think? Controversy may not be bad after all. ”

I responded, “I’ll be honored. Merci, Scott! Merci, Lorraine! ”

And then, I hugged them both.

And so, my painting went on display at the “Black Cherry”. The number of people looking at my painting were small at first, but, as word of mouth spreads, more and more came to see my painting.

Chatter was generally positive, though there were some negatives – some complained about the subject matter; some about the quality. Nevertheless, I glowed with pride because my painting is being seen by more and more people.

Soon enough, even the fourth and fifth estates – newspapers and television – came calling:

Be Careful Picking This Flower

Local artist’s rendering of “flower” creates stir in Quebec
gallery

Wild Flower

Quebec woman’s interpretation of female
anatomy puts art up for frank discussion

Look But Don't Touch

Provocative painting at Quebec art house has many going “flower gazing”

I was also featured on a local newscast:

Anchor: A recent painting put up for display at a local art gallery is creating quite a stir among the art community in Quebec City. Due to broadcasting standards, we cannot show you the painting, but we'll show you its artist, in this report:

(film)

Reporter: Driving down St-Jean Street downtown, it's very hard not to miss the throng of crowds queuing up to see Quebec City's latest sensation – a flower with a sensitive part of the female anatomy, now on display at the “Black Cherry” gallery. I spoken to its artist, Adèle Fusey, about it:

(edit)

Reporter: I noticed this painting of yours – what motivated you to create it?

Adèle: I consider this part of the female anatomy the human equivalent of the flower – both have similar parts and functions.

Reporter: Right – but when you created the painting, were you realising the controversy it would create?

Adèle: A great artist likes to take chances. A great artist strives to be different – to leave a mark on this world in his or her own way. A great artist takes pride in their work – no matter how provocative.

Reporter: So, do you like your flower?

Adèle: I think it's lovely. Too bad some don't feel the same way.

(edit)

Reporter: Adèle Fusey. A newcomer in the art field already making

a splash. You can bet this won't be the last you hear about Adèle Fusey. And if you want proof, come by the Black Cherry and see for yourself.

Ever since the “flower” went up for exhibition, it became a sensation of the city – a sensation of the art world. I was basking in the glow of success.

And then, controversy meets controversy.

In January 1967, a group called the “Christian Decency League” came to the gallery. Their mission – to “censor” everything that is contrary to their religious beliefs, even if it meant violence and destruction.

The league was lead by Frederic Philippe, a man whose mission is to uphold Christian values, whatever the cost. With him is his American colleague, Robert Westboro.

“Hey sinner!” Robert shouted.

“What do you want?” said Lorraine.

“We’re coming in!”

Fred and Robert came in and walked directly to the painting. Fred had a container full of black paint.

Fred said, “We judge this rubbish as obscene. We are here to censor it!”

I barged in and said, “You will not do such a thing!”

Robert shouted, “Out of my way, sinner!”

“No!” I steadfastly exclaimed.

“Are you its artist?” asked Fred.

“What if I am?” I said.

“I would tell you that you should be home, doing house work. A woman’s place is at home, not doing crap like this!”



“You take that back!”

“Never, heathen!”

Robert proceeded to throw the paint at the picture when I kicked him in the balls.

While Robert cowered in pain, I looked at him victoriously.

But suddenly, Fred punched me in the eye.

As I knelt down in pain, Fred did his dirty work – he threw the black paint.

Right on the painting.



As I winced in pain, Fred got Robert up and left. As they left, Fred gave an ominous warning:

“Watch your back! We’ll see to it that you’ll never make art again!”

As they left, Lorraine called the police.

Still oblivious to what they done, I looked up to see my painting.

As I looked at the damage, I started to cry.

I looked. I cried.

I'm in a virtual center of darkness. Loneliness. Defeat.

All created by a residue of black paint thrown onto the painting.

And then, I reached my boiling point, screaming:

“Nooooooooo! Nooooooooo-o-o-o! Pourquoi moi? Pourquoi moi? What have I done to deserve this? What - have - I - done - to - fucking deserve this?”

Lorraine and Lanie came to comfort me.

Zealots have taken away my “flower”.

But they have not taken away my pride.

I wanted to shine in the art world.

And come the Summer of 1967, I will have that chance.

Chapter 3:

“La Tote Gradieuse”

(Summer 1967)



Before

After

The Summer of 1967. The fabled “Summer of Love”.

The time of Canada’s Centennial as its own Dominion.

The time Montreal opened its doors to the world with “Expo 67” .

And a time of peace and creativity among the young generation, resulting in “The Generation Gap” between the old and the young – which, luckily, did not happen in MY family.

This was a time when many young people were promoting peace, expanding their minds, and finding what fuels them all – creativity.

Personally, I already stumbled into the creative movement with my “flower” painting, which was destroyed by a couple of zealots.

But I wasn’t going to let that stop me.

I was back at my folks in T-R, spending the summer off from university.

I was lying in bed when Rosie came in:

“What are you thinking about?” Rosie asked.

I responded, “Nothing, really. Though I would like to do something that would follow up my ‘flower’”.

“Now’s a good time to foster your creativity. Everyone’s doing it! You can, too! It’s the Summer of Love!”

“What’s ‘love’ got to do with it?”

“A second hand emotion? Sorry – ahead of your time. Anyway, with the war in Vietnam going on and the atrocities coming forth, people are sending messages of love. And they do it artistically. They’re even using their own bodies as ‘art’, with make-up, clothing and hair. Art and creativity is powering peace and love. Isn’t it wonderful?”

“It is. But where do I start?”

“First of all, you have to change your image. Take a look at yourself.”

I looked in the mirror.

Rosie continued, “Your hair is okay, but something is missing. Your skirt is okay, but your shirt and sandals make you look like a homebody. What I’m going to do right now is give you a makeover. I’m going to give you a new personality, something that best reflects your creativity. I have what you need in this suitcase.”

Inside that suitcase is a tie-dyed shirt, a pair of sandals with lots of straps, and a flower for my hair. I put these things on, and showed Rosie.

“Don’t you look wonderful?”, praised Rosie. Your hair looks better with a flower. The tie-dye shirt looks extra hip. And look – I love those gladiator-style sandals. Oh boy – you’re getting me aroused just looking at you! And I’m sure Lanie will, too. Now, we need to give you a nickname – all the good artists in this era have one.

“Let me think. . .

“How about, ‘La Jolie Gladiateuse?’ ‘The Pretty Gladiator’?”

“The Pretty Gladiator. . .”, I said to myself.

I took one more look at myself in the mirror – starting at my head, down to my sandaled feet. I took an especially long look at my skirt and my feet.

“I love it!” I said.

“Perfect!” said Rosie. “But now, there’s one more thing I want you to take – this sugar cube.”

“Why?”

“It contains a drug called ‘LSD’ – opens your mind wide up. But I want you to promise me never to take this unless I’m around.”

“Why?”

“While LSD opens minds, it destroys them, too. Many hurt or kill themselves under LSD. Some even sustained brain damage, leading them to be institutionalised – or dead. LSD will eventually become illegal, so experience it while you still can.”

“Okay.”

“Now first – sit on the floor, legs crossed. Okay, now take the LSD. Now put your index finger and thumb together on each hand.

“Close your eyes, and enjoy your trip!”

I have taken the sugar cube, sat down in the pose, closed my eyes, and blanked my mind.

Moments later, the LSD started taking effect – and taking over my mind.

I've seen various shapes and colors – at such an enormous rate, it would make one go blind.

Then I opened my eyes, to see that my room has become distorted. I began to get up and walked around, though I kept my fingers in the same pose.

On the bed, I saw a baby – she looked like me, though my head was the same as an adult.

The baby talked – she said, “Escape from this world! Now! While you still can!”

I looked around, and then I saw Rosie – only that she looked like the devil, with horns and a tail.

She laughed really hard, saying, “Look in your pants!”

I did – inside my pants I had an erect penis, instead of a vagina. I screamed in horror.

Then, in a chair, I found Lanie – shot in the head. Rosie came back as herself, saying, “Nathalie wants to see you in the bathroom.”

I did, and I found Nathalie – hanging by her neck. Her skin is a pale-ish gray. Attached to her shirt was a suicide note, which simply said, “Pourquoi?” (“Why?”)

I screamed as I ran into my room. Then I laid down on the floor, coiling in the fetal position.

When I opened my eyes, I saw a pair of sandaled feet, similar to mine. I looked up, and I saw a double of myself.

My double said, “Good thoughts, bad thoughts, turn them into art and reap its pleasures.”

She repeated that several times as I started going down from my high.

I found myself on my bed. When I opened my eyes, I saw Rosie.

I said to her, “Rosie? You don’t have horns or a tail, don’t you?”

Rosie replied, “Of course not, Adèle! What makes you think I do?”

“I was high – and you were the devil. I found myself as a baby. Lanie and Nathalie were dead. And then, I saw myself next to myself – who have an ominous hint – “Good thoughts, bad thoughts, turn them into art and reap its pleasures.”

“I think that little ‘trip’ is telling you something.”

“What?”

“First, LSD has its good side and its bad side. Second, your experience from this ‘trip’ should inspire you to make art that’s just as ‘trippy’ as being on LSD. Presenting the LSD experience – without the LSD. That practically sums up the 60s creativity right there. I think you came up with something.”

“Am I ever wrong?”

“Of course not!”

“Take your LSD experience, and make it into art. It’s as simple as that. Oh. . . one other thing. . .”

“Yeah?”

“Here.”

“Two sugar cubes?”

“Laced with LSD. I’m giving you permission to use them. You take one, and your girlfriend Lanie takes one. Then you two sit on the floor, facing each other. Hold each other’s hands, touch each other’s feet, close your eyes, and dream. When you share your LSD experience, you find it’s more pleasant.”

“Good idea.”

“Be very careful, though – misusing them will give you a bad trip – or worse.

“Gotta go, now. See you later!”

“Bonne journée, Rosie!”

That night, Lanie and I took off all our clothes, each took a hit of LSD, then sat on the floor, holding hands and our feet touching each other.

Then we closed our eyes.

We imagined ourselves flying, over a field of pretty, anamorphic flowers. The tree and the sun also came to life.

All the beauty practically exploded in life and color.

It's the best "trip" we ever had.

If LSD was used controllably, we would've travelled the far reaches of our minds.

Too bad the addicts, who burn out their brains by overusing LSD, spoiled it for the rest of us.



Later that week, I talked to Zoe, who also wanted to be a "baba" (hippie), like me.

"How do I look?" questioned Zoe.

"Trés jolie!" I exclaimed.

"You're the inspiration to my life – you have such good taste in clothes! So I like to be just like you!"

"Wonderful! You've even outdone me!"

"Oui!"

Zoe and I get along really well – generally, if she likes how I dress or what I do, she does just the same.

But the most impressible person in our family is, of course, ma belle Nathalie.

It seems she likes to be a baba, too.

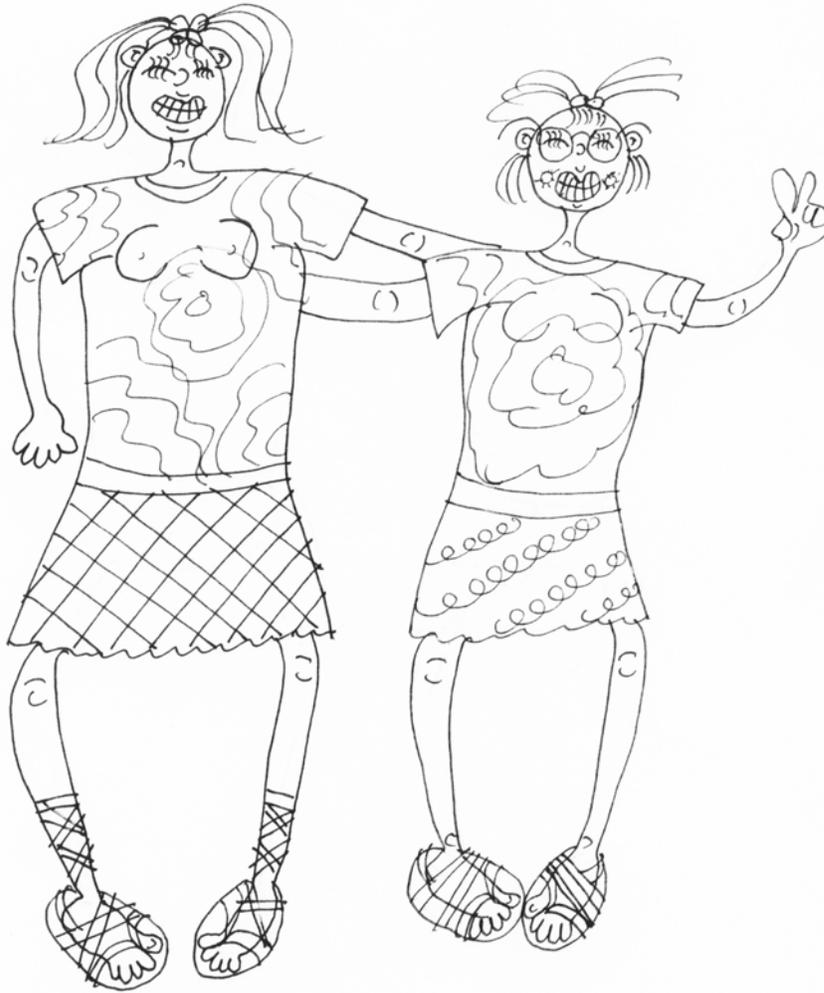
But not because she likes to be me, but because she wants me. She needs me.

Nathalie's more "sister" than Zoe or Rachel, because she wants to know more about life.

And she's about to get another lesson.

Chapter 4:

“Waging Peace”



La jolie gladiateuse et
sa petite gladiateuse (July 1967)

Ma Petite Gladiateuse
(July 1967)

Nathalie Fusey. Âgé de dix ans.

A girl who needs to turn to others for guidance.

Especially me.

One day in July 1967, while back at home, Nathalie came to see me.

“Allo, Natty!” she greeted.

Nathalie was dressed like a baba – tie-dyed shirt, a skirt, sandals. And she went the extra mile by painting her face – a sun on her right cheek and a flower on her left cheek. She’s more baba than I was.

Two years earlier, she asked me a tough question about boys.

Now, she’s about to ask me another challenging question:

“What’s the meaning of life?” she asked.

I replied: “The meaning of life. . . hmm. . . that is probably the most difficult question to answer. All I can say about that is that. . . we exist, and our lives are defined by what we are and what we do.”

“Oh, yeah.”

“Why did you ask?”

“I don’t know – remember when I asked you about guys a couple of years ago?”

“Yes.”

“I don’t know if it’s just me, but, I don’t find guys very interesting. It seems that men are more bland and self-centered, while women are more beautiful and fun.

“Practically, I’ve taken more interest in girls than boys these days.”

Nathalie sighed in a depressed manner.

She continued: “Addy. . . I don’t like boys. . . I think I’m a lesbian.”

“Are you sure about this?”

“Oui. As a matter of fact, I’m having a crush on someone – and it’s not a guy. It’s a girl. In fact, it’s someone I knew for a long time.”

“Who’s the lucky girl?”

“Hélène.”

“Your friend, Hélène?”

“Oui. I love her hair, her clothes, her background – even her feet. She has a lot of things that I love that no man has. I don’t know what to do.”

Nathalie placed her head on my shoulder, and started to cry. She sounds like a girl who’s in serious trouble; a girl who’s only choices are loving her best friend, or death.

Being a lesbian is hard enough, but when you’re just a kid, it becomes much more serious.

Nathalie’s still growing up, but she already has the whole world on her shoulders.

Being a lesbian, I knew how it feels, so I had a little talk with her.

I said: “Don’t cry, Nathalie. I know how you feel. It’s tough being a lesbian. It’s even tougher for a kid like you.”

“Why is that?” she asked.

“First of all, homosexuality – where a person loves another person of the same gender – is still taboo. Second, you’ll be teased to no end, maybe even get expelled. And third – what if your friend is not a lesbian? Most crushes aren’t, and you may be the one being crushed. And considering that it’s impolite to ask if they are a lesbian, it’s best that they come to you.”

“Really? What should I do?”

“Let her come to you. That’s it. And if worse comes to worse, remember – only you are you – no one else. And you have a big sister who loves you very much. Sisterly, of course.”

“Merci, Adèle. Another thing. . .”

“Yes?”

“Do you think I’m beautiful?”

“Very beautiful. You have my taste in clothes. And I love how you painted your face – you’re more baba than I am. Your face is the most beautiful part of your body. Now, tell me what is the second most beautiful part. ”

“Your hair?”

“Not quite. ”

“Your eyes?”

“Sorry. ”

“I get it now – breasts!”

“No!”

“What is it, then?”

“Look down below. Besides the ground, what do you see?”

“My feet?”

“Exactly. Now, I’m going to shut up for a couple of minutes – during this time, take a good, long look at your feet. ”

“Okay. ”

For a couple of minutes, Nathalie stared at her feet.

Nathalie looked at her naked feet – all ten of her toes, with leather straps wrapped around her foot and her heel, and a thong between the toes, and a hard leather / rubber sole underneath each foot.

As she stared at her feet, Nathalie smiled. Then she said:

“They’re beautiful. ”

I responded, “Now close your eyes and lightly touch them. ”

And she did just that. She felt each toe, each strap, the smoothness of her skin, the texture of the leather, the thickness and stitching of the straps and her

soles, the tire rubber underneath.

And then, she cried,

“Oh, mon Dieu!”

“Yes, Nathalie?”

“They do feel beautiful. Also – oh, my God.”

At that point, she realised the importance of feet.

I said, “Say no more, Nathalie. Treat your feet like they’re people themselves. They’re precious, just like you.

“And promise me one thing. . .”

“Yes?”

“Never wear socks or closed-toed shoes. Okay to do so for safety and outside in winter, but once you’re at home or at school, put your sandals on. Your feet are too precious for shoes or socks.”

“Je t’aime, Adèle!”



Nathalie hugged me, as she joyfully cried. It seems that, once again, I’ve reached out to my little sister.

A sister like Nathalie is a treasure for mankind – people like her are keys to the future.

And I feel that she’s one of those “keys”.

But then, her friend, Héléne, came to see us.

Héléne is also dressed in a skirt, tie-dye, sandals and face painting. Just as much a baba as Nathalie.

But then, Héléne said:

“Did Nathalie tell you that I love her? I think I’m becoming a lesbian, too!”

So much for being secret and polite.

At least they love each other.

The War Against Peace (Fall 1967)

September, 1967. The Summer of Love is over, but its effects remain. The colorful demonstrations and gatherings have given way to the changing colors on the leaves.

I’m now starting my Junior year at Laval. I’m halfway towards my 1969 graduation, when I’ll get my Bachelor’s Degree in art.

But, as the last year has proven, my degree would merely be the icing on the cake, as my flower painting, destroyed by those flipping zealots, proved that art is a viable venture for me.

And now, I am working on a new painting. Something that’s worth talking about on the streets.

And this time, something that actually can be shown on TV.

Rosie, my ever-faithful guardian angel, came in with a suggestion.

She asked, “So, what whimsical piece of art do you have planned now?”

I responded, “I don’t know – I like to do something just as over-the-top, but something anyone – even kids, can see. Something that can make the papers and the evening news without being censored.”

“Well – first of all – what happened this past summer?”

“I took LSD and meditated to the heights of Nirvana?”

“Besides that.”

“Nathalie and H  l  ne were lesbians?”

“Besides that.”

“What, then?”

“You forgotten already? It’s the reason you meditated. It’s the reason you became ‘The Pretty Gladiator’. It’s the reason Nathalie and H  l  ne revealed themselves as ‘baba-gouines’. And it’s the reason your next artwork’s going to be a big splash!”

“Oh yeah – you were talking about. . . ”

“The Summer of Love! A summer bountiful of love, peace, unity and creativity! Your next artwork should be just about that!”

“Really? That’s a great idea!”

“It should feature a message of peace, while showing the psychedelic tone. Something that reflects your new persona. ”

“Looks like a good painting. I’ll get to work. ”

Shortly afterward, I thought of what I wanted in my new painting. Something that reflects the period – the mood – me.

My idea of a painting is a tie-dye background, with a globe in the center in a black outline. There would also be children holding hands around it.

The painting would symbolise world peace; it would symbolise the joy that was present in this Summer of Love.

It would be a painting that would help everyone to think that violence is not the answer.

It would be a painting that expresses hope for the next generation.

It would be a painting that explains what would happen in a world without war.

It would be a painting that even the God Squad would approve.

It would be a painting that all would enjoy.

And best of all...

It would be my best masterpiece yet.



When I was finished, I invited Scott and Lorraine over to my place, to show him and Lanie my work.

I asked, “So guys. . . what do you think?”

“Wonderful, simply wonderful!” praised Scott.

“Gorgeous!” said Lorraine.

“You outdid yourself again, Adèle,” said Lanie.

I responded, “At least it’s something everyone can enjoy without fear.”

Lorraine then said, “Yeah – especially the ‘God Squad’. I hope. What happened earlier this year has broken my heart. Hopefully with this painting, it would show that there is plenty of love and peace to go around.”

Of course, all this optimism was dampened quite a bit, when Scott showed us that day’s newspaper. He said:

“I wouldn’t dance with joy just yet – listen to this:”

Dear Editor:

I would like to express my displeasure for the peace demonstrations that have occurred this past summer. America has gone to war to drive the commies out of Vietnam. And you know how God hates commies.

This whole business about peace is [censored].

“I think he meant ‘bullshit’ . . . ”

I say America is doing a fine job keeping the commies at bay.

Personally, I would like to see Canada go and send troops to Vietnam, to help out the Americans.

At the least, it would give those good-for-nothing peaceniks something to do – when they’re drafted.

And you know how God loves the draft.

So all you damn hippies beware – God hates you! You will burn in hell! Repent by praying for salvation – and the draft!

– God bless you,

Frederic Philippe

Christian Decency League

Scott then ranted, “That asshole! Who does he think he is? God?”

Lorraine responded, “Whoever he is, he prefers war over peace; he imagines a world without communism, and he believes that only war can rid of the commies – nothing else.”

Being angered over the whole thing, I responded:

“That’s bullshit! Utter bullshit! He’s not the boss of us!

I don’t care what Freddie-boy thinks – I still work for peace! My painting will be revealed to the public. And the next time the Black Paint Gang comes around, we’ll be ready! A gladiator defends her rights and freedoms, and I’m not called ‘The Pretty Gladiator’ for nothing!”

“Well- put, Adèle!” said Lanie. “I’m very proud to say I love you.”

“I love you too, Lanie,” I said.

Then we kissed.

That weekend, my painting was put up at the Black Cherry gallery.

Throngs of crowds come to see my painting. There was a favorable consensus of approval. Visitors thought this was the best picture of peace ever.

The media concurred – in newspapers...

What Peace Looks Like

“Gladiator” Adèle Fusey presents her case against war

Defender of Peace

“The Pretty Gladiator” demonstrates that war itself is
the enemy

The War Against War

Adèle Fusey paints a picture of peace - her ultimate weapon against
war

And on television...

Anchor: *Adèle Fusey, who made a big splash last year with her explicit “flower” painting, is back. This time, she’s declaring war against war:*

(film)

Reporter: *The Black Cherry gallery on St-Jean has made headlines again – last year, it was the controversial “flower” picture. This year, something less explicit, but just as controversial – a picture of peace – part of her campaign against war, waged by Adèle Fusey, who has adopted a new persona – “The Pretty Gladiator”. I chatted with Adèle earlier:*

(edit)

Reporter: *So Adèle, what motivated you to do this painting?*

Adèle: *Well, sir, there is too much trouble in this world already – with a war that Americans have no business being part of, with the killing of innocent people and children in the crossfire.*

In fact, war or not, there are people world wide being pushed around, hurt, even killed – just for what they believe in.

And unfortunately, that includes peace itself.

Reporter: *That is a nice painting there, but will it be enough to stop a war? Stop crime? Stop violence?*

Adèle: *Gotta start somewhere.*

Reporter: *How true. How true.*

(edit)

Reporter: *The road to peace is sure to be a bumpy one indeed, and it looks like it’ll take a gladiator to show the way through. A “Pretty Gladiator”. Adèle Fusey. Here’s hoping she wins the battle.*

Later at the gallery, I was surprised by the amount of people who showed up.

“Oh la la!”, I exclaimed. “Look at everyone queuing up to see my peace painting. Seems everyone wants to give peace a chance!”

“Tell me about it,” commented Lorraine.

Then, Lanie bursts in, to tell me some bad news that's bound to get worse:

"Adèle! Lorraine!" shouted Lanie; The God Squad's coming! They're coming down the street!"

"Merde!" I said. "Scott, get to the door and block their way in! There's no way they'll censor me now!"

Scott ran to the door. Shortly after he got there, Fred and Robert were already there.

"By order of God, Let us in!" shouted Fred.

"Absolutely not!" said Scott, defiantly. "After what you did last time, you are no longer welcome here!"

"Out of my way, pissant!"

Fred shoves Scott out of the way, so hard that Scott fell. Then, Fred and Robert barge in.

"Everyone listen!" shouted Fred. "By order of God, this exhibit is closed!"

Lorraine yelled, "What the fuck are you doing here? Get out!"

"Back off!" yelled Fred.

Fred shoves Lorraine to the ground, then walks to me and my painting.

Fred then diatribed, "Lookie here! 'The Pretty Gladiator'! You should be at home serving your husband as 'The Pretty Housewife'!"

"Fuck you," I said.

"A potty mouth, eh? You know what? God does not love potty mouths. He does not love renegade housewives! And he certainly does not love peace!"

Fred has his customary jar of black paint, ready to be thrown. His henchman, Robert, takes a hold of my arms.

Fred said, "First, I'm going to censor your painting with this black paint. Then, I'm going to censor you, by breaking your jaw, your arms, and giving you two black eyes!"

"Do I make myself clear?"

"Do I?"

I was preparing myself for the worst. But this time, the outcome would be much different.

The cops came to the rescue.

As they entered, one of them drew his gun at Fred and yelled, "Freeze! Let the lady go and put your hands where I can see them!"

Knowing that they were no match for the police, Fred set the jar of paint down, let me go, and surrendered himself and Robert.

My painting was saved. I was saved. And I had a feeling my soul was saved too, when the cops intervened.

God loves peace. God hates war. And God hates violent cretins who go violent on his behalf.

Cretins like the so-called "Christian Decency League".

As the two fools were escorted out, Fred remained vengeful: "You may have won now, but I'll get you! And God will, too!"

"Okay buddy, keep walking," said the cop that arrested him.

Another cop, who stayed to write his report, looked at my painting. He was in awe.

"Wow, that is beautiful!" he said.

"Well, thanks," I said, giggling.

"We cops have to occasionally resort to violence to keep the peace, but I would prefer peace anyday – would make my job easier."

"Definitely."

"Nice meeting you, ma'am. Keep up the good work."

"Merci."

As the cop left, Lanie came in.

She said, "Glad you're alright, Adèle! Same to your painting!"

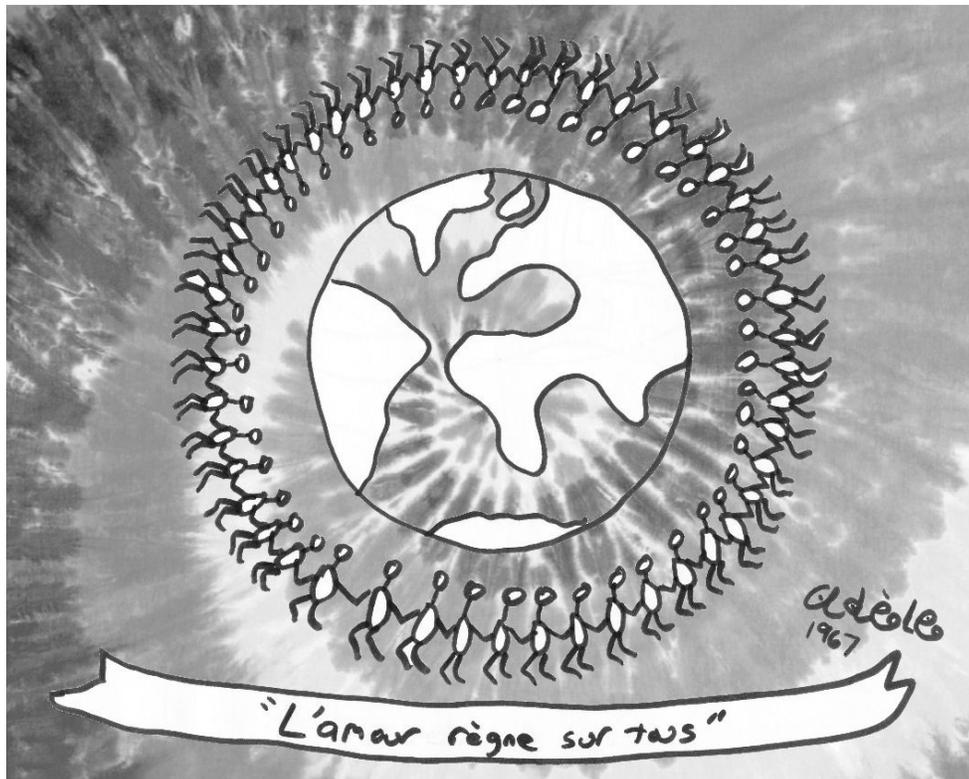
"Merci, Lanie," I said.

“As soon as they were barging in, I called the cops. They were up to no good. I didn’t want to see those Christian cretins hurt you – or your creativity.”

“Don’t know who He or She is, of if it’s merely “It”, or if there’s more than one, but God is watching us.”

“Oui... Peace is beautiful.”

Then, we kissed as we looked at the painting.



The Lord – or Lords – work in mysterious ways. And like the police, He – or She, or They – work to keep the peace.

Lanie is right – peace is indeed beautiful.

Appendix

While this is a semi-graphic novel, there are some things that may need clarification or explanation. As a service to readers, I have provided an appendix, which would explain things for the uninitiated.

Introduction

1. **Fusey:** The name “Fusey” actually came from a street in Cap-de-la-Madeleine, Quebec -- “ Rue Fusey” (Fusey Street), which is what the first few blocks of Route 138 is known as after crossing the St. Maurice.

Chapter 1: “Il était une fois...”

2. “Il était une fois...”: French for “Once upon a time...” There's supposed to be an acute accent over the “e” in “était” on the title page, but, unfortunately, that particular font (B Surfers) did not include fonts for accented letters.
3. **Nathalie:** I named Adèle’s little sister after a bédé (French comic) character created by Sergio Salma; his Nathalie, a little girl in the early stages of elementary school, has big dreams of traveling around the world; she helps sate her dreams by learning about, and assimilating, various cultures from around the world. My Nathalie is just as creative as his, only that she’s not too gung ho about traveling the world.
4. **Trois-Rivières (T-R):** A major city in Quebec, located about halfway between Montreal and Quebec City, on the “Rive Nord” (North Bank) of the St. Laurence River. The mouth of the St. Maurice River, the backbone of the **Mauricie** region, is located here, separating T-R from its suburb, Cap-de-la-Madeleine. T-R and Cap-de-la-Madeleine, along with four other municipalities, amalgamated to form the present-day T-R in 2002.
5. **Ste-Anne-de-la-Pérade:** A small Quebecois town, about 30 miles northeast of T-R. The village is known for its Tommy Cod, which is found in abundance in the Ste-Anne River. Every winter, the town holds a festival, where the town literally expands onto the ice of the Ste-Anne River, with numerous ice fishing shacks and temporary restaurants, bars and fishing supply stores. And best of all – the ice is generally thick enough for pick-up trucks to drive on. I’ve been there in February 2005, and it looks idyllic and incredible – to a point where it’s where I wanted Nathalie and Adèle to be born – as well as be the prior home base of the Fusey family.
6. **Paper Mill:** One of T-R’s major employers is the production of paper. Kruger, Inc., a paper manufacturer, is T-R’s leading employer, with its factory on the banks of the St. Laurence.
7. **CEGEP:** An acronym for “*Collège d’enseignement général et professionnel*” (“College of General and Professional Education”), its sort of a “halfway house” for those pursuing a post-secondary education in Quebec, especially those planning to attend a university. The CEGEP program is unique to Quebec, where it replaces Grade 12 – as a result, general public education in Quebec goes only to Grade 11, while other Provinces, and the US, go to Grade 12.
8. **St. Pierre et Miquelon:** a French Overseas Department (what they call a “state” or “territory”), about 16 miles off the coast of Newfoundland's Burin Peninsula (on the south side of Newfoundland); it consists of two major islands, Saint-Pierre and Miquelon / Langlade, plus several smaller islands.
9. **Kansai Region:** An area in the south central part of Japan’s Honshu island, known as the historical and cultural heart of Japan. Osaka is one of the best-known prefectures in Kansai – others include Nara, Wakayama, Mie, Kyoto, Hyōgo, and Shiga.
10. **Laval University:** A major university in Quebec, located on the west side of Quebec City, near Ste-Foy. Founded in 1663, Laval is North America’s first francophone higher-education institution. Laval is noted for its forestry and actuary (risk assessment) programs, as well as its football team, the “Rouge-et-Or” (Red and Gold), which carried the CIS (Canadian Interuniversity Sport, Canada’s NCAA) championship four times – most recently, 2006. It

should be known that Laval, Quebec, the suburb of Montreal, is not related to Laval University.

11. **Saguenay**: A region in central Quebec along the Saguenay River. The largest city in the region is also called “Saguenay”, which was formed in February 2002 with the amalgamation of Chicoutimi, Jonquière (Lanie’s hometown) and La Baie. The region’s major industries are paper and aluminum manufacturing.
12. **Color TV in Canada**: Even though border viewers got colorcasts from across the border, and even though some Canadian stations were equipped with color equipment (mainly for production of shows aimed at Americans), color television did not officially arrive on Canadian airwaves until 1966 – about 13 years after the current color system was first used in the US.
13. **Dittos**: What many of us called “mimeographs”. A primitive form of mass copying of documents, mimeographs used special liquid chemicals and purple ink. The smell of the chemicals on the paper, the wrinkling, and the wetness of fresh copies are the well-known negative points of mimeographs, as well as the ink liable to run when exposed to water. When photocopiers became more prevalent and affordable in the 1990s, “dittos” became relics of a days gone by.
14. “The Night Visitor”: Title named after a Christmas opera, *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, which debuted on December 24, 1951 as a television special on NBC. The opera was about Amahl, a disabled boy who habitually stretches the truth, becoming a friend to the Three Kings (the “Night Visitors”), when they paid him a visit. His mother, a thief already used to Amahl’s stories, refused to believe him, until she saw them for herself. The opera was an annual tradition on NBC television, which televised it in some form from 1951 to 1966.

Chapter 2: “Two Women and a Flower”

15. “15 Minutes”: In 1968, artist Andy Warhol made a statement, declaring that, "In the future, everyone will be world-famous for 15 minutes." In 1979, he announced that he was right. The term is related to the fact that a person would be popular today, but would be boring, old news tomorrow. Though of course, the late Warhol is now an art legend, who was famous for much more than 15 minutes.
16. “Girl Guides”: What Girl Scouts are called outside the US.
17. “Follow Your Heart”: To be actual, starting a long, lasting relationship is much more involved than this, but at least it’s a first step.
18. “St-Jean Street”: Known in French as “Rue St-Jean”, it’s a major thoroughfare in Quebec City’s south side, beginning in the Old City, running towards the west to Ste-Foy.
19. “Christian Decency League”: I patterned the CDL, and its founders, Frederic Philippe and Robert Westboro, after the “Westboro Baptist Church”, a “church” based in Topeka, Kansas whose sole mission is to demonise homosexuals, and anyone who disagrees with their views. I also added an Al Qaeda-style touch here, by having them commit violence to get their way. When we think of terrorists these days, we think of Muslims, but as we learned in the past (Eric Rudolph, Terry McVeigh, Ku Klux Klan, the Unabomber, abortion protesters), terrorism and radicalism is by all means not exclusive to the Islamic faith.

Chapter 3: “La Jolie Gladiouse”

20. **Summer 1967, “The Summer of Love”**: This was a period where young people united to celebrate a feeling of love and unity. Creativity also played a role, as evidenced by the music and artwork produced during this era. This was also a time the hippie counterculture garnered worldwide awareness. San Francisco’s Haight-Ashbury district and The Beatles’ “Sergeant Pepper” album were the key factors in the Summer of Love.
21. **Canada’s Centennial**: Canada celebrated its centennial on July 1, 1967, 100 years after the British North America

Act of 1867 created Canada as a Dominion. As with the US's Bicentennial in 1976, Canada celebrated with massive celebrations and special projects – including Expo 67. While Canada became a dominion in 1867, however, it wasn't until the Canada Act of 1982 was passed when Canada was given total independence from Britain.

22. **Expo 67:** Montreal's own World's Fair, which was open from April to October, 1967. Still fondly remembered in the hearts of Canadians and Quebecois, the event brought Canada – and the world – together. The fair centered around a central theme – “Man and His World”, or, in French, “Terre des Hommes” (“Earth of Humanity”). Many of the exhibits of the fair centered around the human contribution to civilisation. After the fair closed, the land (artificially made in the middle of the St. Lawrence River) and its buildings were transferred to general use. Part of the Expo 67 legacy includes Casino de Montréal (made up of the French and Quebec pavilions), the “Biosphère” museum (using the Buckminster Fuller dome made for the fair), and Montreal's “Métro” subway system (which opened in October 1966, in anticipation for Expo 67).
23. “Âgé de dix ans.”: “Ten years old.”