

DRAFT DEVELOPMENT

## **"LION'S WAR"**

A draft from The Philatelist of Lwow  
**"...man dominated man to his injury." (Eccl. 8:9)**

(Short title : "LEOPOLIS")

Drama based on a true story

Screenplay Treatment by

George Anthony Perantoni

### Log Line

The story of the 20<sup>th</sup> century portrayed through the lives of an Italian wine exporter and his son's love for philately, depicting key historical events which happened from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to September 11, 2001, as described in Bible Prophecy.

# "LEOPOLIS" CONTENTS

## **ACT ONE : A Rumble on Milwaukee's "Polak Hill".**

- James Groppi and the NAACP Youth Council open housing march in Milwaukee..... 3
- Victor narrates about his father, the wine business, and the early years of fascism.....4

## **ACT 2 part A : Il Duce visits the Winiarnia Italia. War in Europe ten years later.**

- Mussolini and Hitler and twelve other fascists visit the Winiarnia Italia in 1929.....4
- The Perantonis evacuate Lwow Poland before the Nazi invasion in 1939.....5
- WW2 starts with a massacre at the main Post Office in Gdansk in 1939.....6
- Padre Michele saves 203 Jew, Pole, and Ukie orphan children.....6
- Nazis bomb Lwow and then "give" the city to the Russians.....7
- Andre' and Franki arrested and sent to Russia.....7
- Victor returns to Lwow and he is horrified by what has happened there.....8
- The Italian Army arrives in Lwow and bring much relief to its citizens.....8
- Victor operates the Italian Military Post Office at the Winiarnia Italia.....9
- Victor helps his Jewish girlfriend escape from the Lwow ghetto.....10
- The entire "Lwow Division" of the Italian Army is massacred by the Nazis.....11

## **ACT 2 part B : The Italian Campaign of the Allied Armies. Andre' and Franki help attack the "soft underbelly of Europe"**

- Andre and Franki reunite in Egypt at the consolidation of the Polish 2nd Corps.....11
- Andre and Franki bring the war to Italy, Mussolini is overthrown, Nazis retreat.....12
- German soldiers, once polite guests of Italy, become brutal paranoid drunkards.....13
- Victor and Carlo sabotage the German army with spiked wine causing diarrhea.....13
- Volargne train station workers help Jews escape from the deportation trains.....14
- Volargne is pulverized instantly by a train containing 15 railcars loaded of TNT.....15
- Victor proclaims abhorrence for his former hero, Benito Mussolini and fascism.....16
- Victor turns to God's Word, the Bible, and examines prophecies for the first time.....17
- President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill "give" Lwow to Joseph Stalin.....17
- Andre and Franki help liberate north Italy, and reunite with Victor, Carlo and Luigi.....18
- Carlo, Victor and Luigi help Andre and Franki escape German search parties.....19
- Victor, Andre and Franki go to Milan and see Mussolini, dead, hung upside down.....20
- Hitler commits suicide, Germany surrenders, Japan is threatened from Potsdam.....21
- US drops 2 atomic bombs, Japan surrenders, Hirohito tells Japan he's not a God.....21
- First day after the war Stalin wastes no time to appropriate Lwow to the Soviets .....22

## **ACT THREE : Back in Milwaukee 1967, and then to Florida 9/11/2001. (final act) Victor ties the rest of the 20th century to Bible prophecy.**

(Draft in development)

## Character Profiles

Carlo Vincenzo Perantoni. Born 1882 Volargne Italy. Valpolicella wine exporter. Merchant and Inn keeper. WW1 Army officer. Religious man and Bible reader. Member of the National Fascist Party, but loyal to King Victor Emmanuel of Italy. Honorary Vice Consul Italian Affairs Eastern Poland.

Vittorio (Victor) Perantoni. Born 1912 Lwow Poland. Son of Carlo. Inn keeper. Dual citizenship Italy-Poland. Merchant, wine importer. Devoted philatelist. Enthusiastic member of Mussolini's Fascist Youth. Passionate photographer.

Luigi (Gigi) Perantoni. Born 1909 Lwow Poland. Son of Carlo. Inn keeper. Victor's elder brother. Dual citizenship Italy-Poland. Merchant, wine importer. Cook and Bartender. Member of the Fascist Youth, but not ardent like Victor.

Andrzej (Andre) Frodel. Born 1890 Lwow Poland. Artist, ink and paper expert. Printer Lithographer. WW1 Army Officer. Carlo's winery client. Stamp forger. Speaks fluent Polish, Italian, English, Russian, German, Hungarian, Romanian. Member of the Lwow Stamp Club. Devoted philatelist friend of Victor and Carlo.

Franciszek (Franki) Morawiecki. Born 1911 in the free state of Gdansk Poland. Postal worker Gdansk and Lwow. Student at Lwow University. Stamp collector. Passionate philatelist friend of Victor and Andre. Loyal customer Winiarnia Italia.

Michele (Padre) Kolbuch. Born 1903 Lwow Poland. Philatelist Catholic priest. Vatican missionary. Loyal Winiarnia client of Carlo's "pastasciutta & red wine".

Stasia (Stasi) Alexiniska. Born circa 1918 Lwow Poland. Beautiful Polish girl. Talented ballerina student. Allowed to date Victor, but never inside the winery.

Larisa (Lari) Doroshenka. Born circa 1916 Rural Lwow. Beautiful Ukrainian girl. Victor's girlfriend. Daughter of farmer Ivan Doroshenko (Carlo's hunting friend).

Daniela (Dani) Rabinowitz. Born circa 1917 Lwow Poland. Beautiful Jewish girl. Victor's girlfriend. Shopkeeper where Victor got his Zeiss Ikonta photo camera.

Luigina (Gina) Zaninelli. Born 1919 Caprino di Verona Italy. Beautiful Italian girl. Daughter of anti-fascist Italian cheese maker. Victor's fiancée the girl he married.

# Screenplay Treatment (draft)

## **ACT ONE**

## **A Rumble on Milwaukee's "Polak Hill". (Color film)**

**Milwaukee, 28 August 1967:** Victor's Italian-American friend and neighbor, the renown catholic priest Father James Groppi, leads the NAACP Youth Council on a daring historic march for open housing into the city's all white south side. They are greeted with bricks, bottles and violence by angry white residents standing in opposition. This incident becomes known as "The Selma of the North", and the location is later called "Milwaukee's Unity Bridge". That day members of the Chicago chapter of the American Nazi Party came to support Milwaukee's white south-side residents against open housing. They arrive on the scene in full color uniforms, boots, swastikas and "white power" banners, but they do not take into consideration that the activist residents they intend to help are predominantly American Jews and Poles who are consuming lots of beer, and they do not appreciate the Nazi presence. The turmoil soon changes from whites against blacks, to Jews and Poles against neo Nazis. A bloody rampage of fist-fights ensues while the residents chase the Nazis back to their cars, and shout "we don't want no niggers and we don't want no Hitlers and no Mussolinis either".

A few hours later, a caravan of cars transporting members of the Black Panther Party arrives from Chicago, and that night Milwaukee becomes the site of a racial riot. The City Mayor and Police Chief quickly enforce a total daylight and night time curfew which continues for three days, during which Victor takes the opportunity to talk with his sons and to show them his stamp collection. Victor equates the Milwaukee open housing issue to similar conditions which distressed Ukrainian minorities in his birth town Lwow (Poland), conditions which sometimes triggered armed attacks on Polish military barracks and police stations by Ukrainians in protest of their oppression. Emotionally, Victor admits the pleasure he felt at seeing the Poles and Jews beat up the neo Nazis earlier that day, and describes in detail the opposite situation when the Nazis rolled into Poland 28 years earlier, on 1 September 1939.

***(Switch to black & white film)*** With fervent sentiment he recalls the elation he shared with compatriot Polish soldiers during the liberation of Italy in April 1945, after the Poles defeated the Nazis at Monte Cassino and the Wehrmacht began to retreat causing German soldiers to transform themselves from honorable friendly guests of Italy, into brutal domineering frightened paranoid drunkards. Victor continues relating how Benito Mussolini, his formerly admired leader and hero, was reduced to a pawn for Hitler's puppet government, the North Italy RSI, which was the last line of Nazi defense in Italy centered in the Valpolicella region, where the retreating Wehrmacht occupied Carlo's wine bottling shop and transformed it into a German field hospital, while Victor covertly housed and protected his Polish soldier friends from Nazi search parties.

***(Switch to sepia film with narration portions in color)***

During Milwaukee's three-day curfew Victor narrates the life and early years of his father Carlo; the Italian wine export business and the winery tavern in Poland; the rise and fall of fascism in Europe; and with painful anguish Victor blames and reviles Mussolini and Hitler who caused him to lose the two beloved cities of his youth, Lwow in eastern Poland and Volargne in north Italy.

**ACT 2 (part A) IL DUCE visits the Winiarnia Italia. (B&W film)**

**Springtime in Lwow 1929:** Victor returns to Lwow after completing High School in Volargne Italy. Carlo's friend Andre Frodel introduces Victor to distinguished associates of the Lwow Stamp Club where Victor strikes friendships with prominent members of Central Europe's philatelic community, and in turn Victor helps Andre become acquainted with his philatelic connections in Italy, Germany and Switzerland. Despite their age difference, Andre and Victor embark on a solid friendship fueled by their mutual love for stamp collecting of the best and most rare stamps! Their stamp collecting passion is shared by a Polish university student and postal worker Franciszek (Franki) Morawiecki, and a Vatican missionary catholic priest Michele (Padre) Kolbuch. The four ardent philatelists enjoy many fun filled evenings of stamp trading and card gambling for stamps at Carlo's "Winiarnia Italia" Inn and wine tavern, Carlo and Luigi join them and they all enjoy the house specialty: delicious "pastasciutta with red wine", and loud boisterous songs inspired by the fascist era, and the red wine.

Victor convinces Carlo that it would be good for business to hold monthly stamp collector swap-meets at the winery tavern, and Andre prepares some of his best counterfeit stamp art novelties to be awarded as door prizes. The two philatelists create fancy invitation postcards bearing a mock simulated stamp displaying the face of the era's hero Benito Mussolini in the center, with legal postage on the upper right corner. The postcards are a smashing success. Amazed postal clerks add their touch by placing precise philatelic quality cancels on the excellent mock stamp of Mussolini, causing a buzz of confusion among stamp collectors throughout Europe, who never saw a Mussolini stamp. Carlo, whose loyalty is foremost to King Victor Emmanuel, is outraged that his son's invitation postcards display the symbol of Fascist Youth adjacent to the winery's address.

The stamp meetings become very popular, and early one morning Warsaw's Italian Consul phones Carlo to advise him that, while in flight from Vienna to Warsaw, IL DUCE has decided to make an unscheduled landing in Lwow, thus requiring ground transportation to the Winiarnia Italia and lunch reservations for an entourage of fourteen men. Having less than four hours notice Luigi and Victor scramble to clean the hall and prepare the menus while Carlo scuttles to arrange a convoy of five deluxe cars. The lunch is a success, followed by impromptu stamp presentations and stamp trading. IL DUCE swaps with Victor ten PNF party badges for a ten-stamp sheet of Andre's fake Mussolini stamps, and then he initials two sheets, one for Victor and one Andre, and he jokingly commissions Victor to oversee all future stamps of fascism.

Adolf Hitler is with the entourage and he enjoys heated discussions about how the Great War was lost, but his presence is overshadowed by the star, Mussolini, and his closest champions of fascism. Hitler hints that Victor should ask Andre to provide an imitation stamp of him too, but Mussolini ignores him, and Victor does not take him seriously. A group photo is taken, and then around 3PM the group departs to continue on their flight.

That evening Luigi and Victor are convened to their father's den where Carlo reveals his concern about the direction fascism is leading the world, and fears his sons are following blindly. He quotes the Bible to them emphasizing that man can only dominate man to his own injury, while only a government ruled by God himself can solve all of mankind's problems and provide true peace and lasting security. Luigi is impressed but Victor doesn't understand what his father is telling him. Then Carlo gives each son their own protestant Bible.

**(Switch to sepia film)**

During his father-to-sons discussion Carlo narrates how the world has changed dramatically since the era prior to the Great War. He relates Bible prophecies which explain how and why the world has changed, the precise timing of the change, and the prophetic significance of the year 1914. Carlo describes in detail how life in general was completely different prior to the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in 1914, and provides to his sons firsthand testimony of his observations and even personal experiences, which explain the world's transformations accounted for in the Bible.

**The Perantonis evacuate Poland before Nazi Invasion. (Color film)**

**Ten Years later, 28-31 August 1939:** The Italian Consulate orders all Italian nationals to get out of Poland. Andre, and Franki throw a "goodbye wine bash" dance party in the honor of Victor and Luigi, inside The Winiarnia Italia, and Victor's girlfriends find themselves sharing Victor's affections before his departure. Even Stasia, the classy ballet dancer, breaks her strict father's rule and enters the Winiarnia for the first time.

The next day the Perantonis scramble to put their affairs in order for their unexpected departure, assuming they will return soon. Travelers are warned that all money and other valuables exceeding 100 Zlotys will be confiscated at the border. The Perantonis put their collective savings totaling about 40 thousand gold Zlotys (more than U\$100,000) in a Polish joint bank account, backed by gold.

Keys to the winery and apartment are given to Andre Frodel and also to Carlo's priest Padre Michele Kolbuch. Andre has agreed to occupy the apartment and keep an eye on the winery until the Perantonis return. Victor decides he's going to smuggle his stamps out of Poland, but in doing so he almost causes two international border incidents which very nearly cost him his life. Still, he gets away with the stamps and flees to Switzerland in order to avoid being drafted into Italian military service. Luigi is ineligible for the draft, and travels with Carlo to Volargne, awaiting to reunite with Victor in Lwow before year's end.

**WW2 Starts with a Massacre at the Gdansk Post Office.**  
*(Color film, with footage from newsreels and documentary clips).*

**1-3 September 1939:** Franki's summer classes at the University of Lwow are over and he reports back to the Gdansk Post Office scheduled to work but he is not allowed to enter. Heavily armed Polish postal workers are holding the building for a show of resistance to the anticipated Nazi invasion. The building's curator, his wife and ten-year old daughter are also inside refusing to leave. The resulting firefight with the German army is a scene of carnage, a massacre which marks the very first armed resistance to Nazism in Europe. Franki is filled with panic and anguish, and he hurriedly returns to Lwow and takes up residence with Andre in the Winiarnia's apartment.

**Padre Michele saves 203 Jew, Pole, and Ukie orphans.**  
*(Color film. Bombing footage from newsreels and documentary clips).*

**12 September 1939:** Lwow is bombed by German Stukas and Padre Michele's church and quarters are destroyed, and the adjoining orphanage is seriously damaged. Padre Michele takes 203 orphans, many of which are of Jewish descent, and he moves them into the Winiarnia's wine hall and the two adjacent apartments owned by Carlo. Andre and Franki help the Padre feed and care for the children with assistance from Victor's girlfriends Lari, Dani, and Stasi.

An associate priest from Rome, Padre Lantini, arrives from Warsaw and he informs Michele that the orphans, especially the Jewish children, are in great danger from the new Nazi General Government. Andre Frodel, the talented artist, modifies some of the orphans documents and falsifies new documents in order to remove any trace of Jewish descent from the orphanage records. Andre also creates a high quality forged "Vatican Travel Order" requiring the passage of the two Padres with 203 children past any European border en route to the Vatican. Franki uses his authority at the Lwow Post Office to send a coded telegram to Carlo in Volargne Italy requesting "some assistance for the children's travel from the Brenner pass to Rome". Carlo replies in similar philatelic code that "buses will be provided when Padre Michele calls him by phone from the Brenner Pass", alluding to Franki that more gold Zlotys can be found under a floorboard in Luigi's bedroom, and these are to be given to Padre for the trip.

By this time Polish partisans are poised for a westerly invasion by Germans, but the invaders turn out to be Russians coming from the East. Without delay the two catholic priests purchase a team of horses and two covered double trailer hay-wagons and depart with the children on an westward foot march the same day Russian soldiers invade Lwow from the east. The two padres distribute the remaining 5600 gold Zlotys among the children as they march by foot for two weeks past many Nazi check-points, until they reach Bucarest where they are able to board a train to Innsbruck, and then another train all the way to Rome.

**After bombing Lwow, Germany "gives" the city to Russia per the Molotov-Ribbentrop non-aggression pact.**

*(Color film, with footage from newsreels and documentary clips).*

**17 September 1939:** Polish partisans have a new enemy, the Soviet Army. Russians troops occupy Lwow and many Polish families are relocated, including Victor's ballerina girlfriend Stasi and her parents who now must live and work for the Soviet Army on a farm outside the City. Stasi is very miserable because she cannot handle this radical change of lifestyle, however she receives lots of encouraging help from Victor's Ukrainian girlfriend Larisa, who is the nearby farmer's daughter. Soon the two girls bond closer than ever before. Lari teaches Stasi how to be happy living as a country girl, and Stasi teaches Lari ballet.

Meanwhile 1939 becomes 1940, and in Switzerland Victor is becoming very impatient. He makes several attempts to communicate with his friends in Lwow, to no avail. Also, he makes several requests for travel visas to Lwow, and also for travel "through" Lwow, still to no avail, because Russians will not approve Victor's entry. 1940 becomes 1941 and Victor is still in Switzerland. Severe atrocities are committed in Lwow during the Russian occupation.

**Andre & Franki taken to Russia. Victor bluffs his way back to Lwow.**

*(Color film, with footage from newsreels and documentary clips).*

**22 June 1941:** Nazis break the Molotov-Ribbentrop non-aggression pact and march towards Lwow. Polish partisans aim guns west again. The Soviets arrest Polish men for induction to Soviet military service, including Andre and Franki who are moved eastward into Russia for this purpose. **1 July 1941:** Germans occupy Lwow and the Polish partisans return underground. Victor seizes this opportunity to bluff his way back to Lwow getting past various Nazi checkpoints using every scrap of Italian fascist documents in his possession, and when fascist documents are not enough he loudly asserts that he is a personal friend of Benito Mussolini on a mission to create postal stamp opportunities commemorating the advancements of the 1000-year Reich! That usually gets him through, but sometimes he must rely on his final trick, presenting a corner block of Andre's bogus Mussolini stamps marked with IL DUCE's distinctive "M" initial, in a glassine envelope, and that always gets him through!

**Franki inducted into the new Polish Army. Andre sent to Syberia.**

*(Color film, with footage from newsreels and documentary clips).*

**25 July 1941:** In the meanwhile Andre and Franki arrive at the Village of Totskoye in Russia where the Soviets are forming a Polish army using conscripted Poles, mostly from Lwow. When Andre, Franki and the other prisoners are told about this plan they all delight in jubilation for this opportunity to be armed and fight the Nazis who originally attacked and bombed their country the previous year. Unfortunately the Russian camp administrators find Andre to be past the acceptable age for this mission, and he is ordered to a "gulag" work camp in Syberia instead. This news distresses Franki, but before separating, Andre promises Franki that he will soon join him ready and fit as a Polish soldier wherever he will be, "because" ... Andre reassures his young friend ... "I have my pens and my inks and my papers, so nothing can stop me" !!



**Victor arrives in Lwow and is horrified by what has happened to the city.**  
*(Color film, with footage from newsreels and documentary clips).*

**10 August 1941:** More brutal atrocities are committed in Lwow during the German occupation. Victor arrives in his beloved Lwow and he finds the city destroyed and squalid. There are rotting dead animals laying on the streets, and even some dead humans hung by their necks from trees and light posts. The Winiarnia and the apartments had been looted, and now are empty and desolate. Victor observes that the secret floorboard in Luigi's bedroom was untouched, and upon removing it he finds a package from Andre with a letter. The package contains Andre's stamp collection and the letter tells Victor the terrible things that transpired since his departure for Switzerland. In his letter Andre assumes that they will soon be arrested and taken to Russia, and he asks Victor to safeguard his stamp collection until they meet again. In Andre's letter there's no mention of the girls whereabouts.

**12 August 1941: Italian soldiers replace German soldiers in Lwow.** During the Nazi's "Operation Barbarossa" Lwow becomes a staging ground for Germany's invasion of Russia, and most German troops are needed on the eastern front. An Italian division arrives in Lwow, and now Italian soldiers become the new occupation forces for the German Reich. The Italian soldiers prove to be much more humane than the previous two occupation armies, in fact they show much benevolence and compassion toward the ill-treated and abused population. Victor searches for Stasi and Dani but finds only gloomy looted empty apartments. He sets out to hitch a ride to the Doroshenko farm in search of Lari, but he is picked up by an Italian Army patrol. Victor identifies himself truthfully as an Italian wine importer living in Lwow, but he does not mention anything about his stay in Switzerland to avoid the draft. Victor is arrested and taken to the Italian military police headquarters where he is interviewed. There he asserts that he has dual citizenship with Poland, and as such he has the right to be in Lwow. This puzzles the field commander who asks the advice of the division commander. The division commander takes a special interest in Victor and asks for him to be sent to division headquarters for more interview.

**Italian division commander takes special interest in Victor.** Victor asserts that his dual Italy-Poland citizenship was sufficient for him to remain in Lwow, however he also offers to put on the Italian uniform if he is allowed to serve in Lwow. The commander tells him that he cannot join the Army without proper induction and military training in Italy. Furthermore, the commander states that he is under obligation to send Victor to Italy for military training regardless of his dual citizenship status because, accordingly, Poland no longer exists !

This news comes like a stab in Victor's heart !! His dear Poland doesn't exist ?!! His family's wine business doesn't exist !! ... His girlfriends are missing, and Andre and Franki were taken to Russia ?!! Victor wants to break down and cry.

The division commander clearly sees the pain and anguish in Victor's face. Crushed, he lowers his head and falls into his chair. ...“But”, ... adds the division commander as he reaches into his desk drawer, ... “If you give me one sheet of these fake Mussolini stamps which you made twelve years ago I will assign you to our military post office for six months before sending you to training camp”. The division commander is pointing at Andre's mock Mussolini stamp centered in one of Victor's Winiarnia Italia swap meet invitation cards of 1930 ! The commander goes on ...“and who knows, the war might be over before six months”. Now Victor feels like a dead man resurrected ! He is able to smile with the commander. He laughs in Joy ! He says YES ! ...“I'll give you better than a sheet. Here, take this corner block personally initialed by IL DUCE.”

**Winiarnia Italia becomes the provisional Italian Military Post Office.** Then Victor asks the commander “where is the Italian Military Post Office located” ? He replies that they don't have one yet. “The field postal van is parked outside, and the first mail delivery is scheduled to arrive tomorrow.” Then the commander asks Victor, “do you have any suggestion where we should station the post office ?” Victor replies : “YES ... You bet I do ! At the Winiarnia Italia” ! The commander is pleased, and soldiers are assigned to help Victor convert the winery hall into a functional post office facility.

The next few months Victor is very busy operating the military post office at the Winiarnia. As operation Barbarossa becomes more involved deep in Russia, the German presence in Lwow becomes minimal, whereas the Italian presence is everywhere and it brings to Lwow citizens a welcomed relief from the brutality they had experienced under the Russians and Germans. Gradually some shops reopen, and then some restaurants, and even some entertainment is found at night. Not much, but it's a start. The Italian soldiers give a needed positive atmosphere to the city which had experienced vicious murders and many other atrocities the previous two years.

By October Victor's post office is commissioned to sort and process German mail also to the various units in Russia, and he is to arrange delivery of mail to the limited German troops stationed in and around Lwow. During this period the German presence is reduced to the train station and the war operations staging and deployment center, and also the Janowska prison labor camp where Jews and other political prisoners are kept. The Germans are also busy preparing a restricted Ghetto in the city which will be used to confine, process, and deport many more incoming Jews.

**Winiarnia Italia becomes the Italian Soldier's Club.** In November the division commander visits Victor at the Winiarnia and observes that the hall is much bigger than needed for the postal operation. He suggests relocating the post office into the adjacent apartment's front room, and then to redecorate the winery like it was, to be used as a soldier's club for the coming holidays. Also, he suggests making some modifications to the ground apartment across the courtyard to be used as the officer's club. Then the commander looks at Victor

with a stern face, and says : “Do you suppose your father will give us a good deal on wine if the Army provides the wine transportation from Verona to Lwow ?” Victor is ecstatic ! Carlo and Luigi resume exporting wine from Valpolicella, and Victor and the Italian quartermaster are importing Italian wine to Lwow. The Winiarnia Italia is back in the wine business !

**Andre Frodel bluffs his way out of Syberia.** In the interim, Franki is transferred to Buzuluk with General Wladislaw Anders New Polish Army for additional training, and to prepare for deployment to Iran through the Persian corridor (later to form the Polish 2<sup>nd</sup> Corps in the Middle East and then join the British allies in Egypt). While Andre Frodel is on a train to Syberia he prepares new identification papers for himself, which he inks in whenever the train is delayed or halted. When he arrives at the Syberian Gulag work camp in Kolyma he learns that out of an estimated 12,000 Polish prisoners less than 600 are still alive. He also learns that the young and strongest are scheduled to depart in two days, on the train's return trip, for induction into the new Polish Armed Forces of the East. Now Andre completes his forged documents, and he makes himself 39 years old (instead of 51) with the fake work title as a master tent-maker (a much needed military profession). Without much effort he causes himself to be redirected back to the new Polish Army, like a new man !

**December 1941. Victor reunites with his girlfriends.** Two weeks before Christmas the Winiarnia soldier's club and the courtyard officer's club are stocked, furnished, decorated and ready for the holiday parties. Victor obtains a day furlough to resume his search for Larisa at the Doroshenko farm. Hopeful, he wraps four bottles of wine as presents, just in case. The division's motor vehicle section offers a car and driver to help him with the search, and to get him back quick. Tears of joy fill Victor's face when he finds both, Lari and Stasi together ! He learns that Dani's parents were murdered during July's Nazi pogrom massacres, and Dani has been in the Janowska labor camp since September, but a few weeks ago all Jewish prisoners from Janowska were transferred to the Lwow ghetto where deportations take place daily. Victor cannot hold back his tears. Victor returns to Lwow sad, but he becomes determined that he will find Dani, and that he will make her free.

Back at the post office Victor steams open the German mail of the ghetto guards looking for information which may help him obtain special favors from them. He obtains a good deal of useful information which will help him bribe or even blackmail some of the German ghetto guards. He copies their addresses and he mails them invitations to the Winiarnia's holiday parties, including personalized discounted entrance coupons with free drink tickets, which they can obtain simply by showing their identification card along with their personalized discount coupon at the entrance. The Winiarnia holiday parties are a big success, and Victor makes contacts among German guards who let themselves be coerced by Victor's ruthless Sicilian soldier friends, and then bribed by Victor with rare stamps, as a means to obtain Dani's release from the Ghetto. Victor and his three girlfriends enjoy a private 1941-42 new year's eve party in one of the back rooms of the Winiarnia Italia soldier's club, then Dani goes into hiding to the country farms region with Lari and Stasi.

**The entire Italian "Lwow Division" is massacred by the Germans.** 6 months have past, and in March 1942, Victor must relocate to a military training camp in Italy. In late 1942 the Lwow ghetto is overpopulated and very busy processing Jews and deporting them to Auschwitz and other death camps. The Italian division in Lwow is commissioned by the Nazi General Government to participate in this effort, but the Italian soldiers refuse to arrest Jews and do not cooperate with deportations. As Italy is facing imminent invasion by the Allies many Italians see it as a form of "liberation", and broad discontent with Germany infects all Italian military services throughout Europe. In the summer of 1943 the Russian campaign fares badly and the General Government fails to supply their wretched military. Many Italian soldiers in Lwow sell weapons and ammunition to Polish Partisans and Jews underground; they do this partly to obtain much needed living supplies, and partly to help end the damn war. On 25 July 1943 fascism is overthrown and Mussolini is arrested, but then rescued by the Nazis. After fascism falls in Rome, Italian soldiers in Lwow, and elsewhere, are gradually relieved of their duties by the Germans. On 8 Sept 1943 Italy surrenders to the Allies and Italian soldiers in Lwow prepare to go home. On 15 Sept 1943 Germans covertly massacre the entire Italian division in a forest west of Lwow.

**The Italian division formerly stationed at Lwow becomes known as "the division which disappeared in 1943". The Nazis execute over 2000 of their former allies, and they burn and bury the bodies, and then plant trees over the mass graves.**

**ACT 2 (part B) : The Italian Campaign of the Allied Armies.**  
**Andre and Franki help attack the "soft underbelly of Europe"**  
*(Color film, with footage from newsreels and documentary clips).*

**Early 1943:** Its been almost eighteen months since Andre & Franki separated in Russia. They are traveling in separate units of General W. Anders Army and keep missing each other. Andre knows the whereabouts of Franki, but Franki has no idea what might have happened to Andre since his departure to Syberia. In the meanwhile General W. Anders moves his troops through Persia and the Middle East to join the Allies in Egypt.

**In springtime 1943** other Poles join the "Anders Army" which now becomes known as the Polish Armed Forces of the West. Finally Andre & Franki reconnect when "Anders Army" consolidates in Egypt as the Polish 2nd Corps. Andre Frodel's language skills gets him assigned as an interrogator of prisoners of war for the Allied armies in north Africa (most of the prisoners are German and Italians). Andre is able to get Franki assigned as an Allied guard at the Italian POW compound, so now the two philatelist friends from Lwow are finally reunited, and they share the same living quarters.

In time, Andre's language skills expand his responsibilities beyond prisoner interrogations; he coordinates operations and logistics as an interpreter for the various multinational Allied forces which are coming together in North Africa. When he learns that the bulk of the Allied forces in North Africa are poised to invade Italy he can hardly wait to tell the good news to Franki.

With determination the two Polish philatelist friends conclude with optimism that they are going to find Victor, Luigi, Carlo and Padre Michele, and reunite with them again for a joyful and nostalgic evening of "stamps, song, pastasciutta and red wine". Their spirits remain high for months as they eagerly await the day that they will invade Italy, attacking the Nazis in "the soft underbelly of Europe".

**Summer 1943:** During Victor's military service in Italy he is repeatedly denied transfer to Lwow due to the fact that his Polish birth papers would constitute him as an enemy of the Axis, likely to join the Polish partisans if he was to return to former Polish soil. In the summer of 1943 Victor completes his military service, but continues to be denied travel papers or visas due to the heightened state of the war. That summer he marries Luigina (Gina) Zaninelli, and together they expand Carlo's business to the city of Mantua (33 miles from Volargne) where they open a cafe'-bar and wine bottling shop. **In July 1943** the Italian campaign begins with an Allied Forces invasion of Sicily, and later that month the Fascist Grand Council overthrows their leader Benito Mussolini, and then King Victor Emmanuel orders his arrest and imprisonment. The recent military actions and political changes in Italy cause Victor and Carlo's waning wine business and connections with Lwow to stop completely.

**On 8 September 1943** while Mussolini is in prison Italy surrenders to the Allies. Subsequently the same month, Mussolini is rescued by the Nazis and he is re-established to be the Italian DUCE once again, but as Hitler's puppet, heading the Nazi-Fascist RSI puppet government in north Italy with headquarters in the Lake Garda town of Salo', adjacent to the west end of the Valpolicella region.

**13 October 1943:** Italy joins the Allies and declares war on their former allies, Nazi Germany and Japan. Consequently, north Italy is cut-off from the Italian mainland peninsula and the Valpolicella region is dominated by Nazi Germany.

**May 1944:** Andre and Franki are in central Italy with the Polish 2nd Corps attached to the British 8th Army. They fight with distinction and are victorious in the final Polish assault of the battle of Monte Cassino. From Vatican City Padre Michele is able to communicate with the Perantoni's only through clergy network. Victor and Gina offer Padre Michele an open invitation for "pastasciutta and red wine" at their new cafe' and bottle-shop in the city of Mantua. **5 June 1944:** The Allies enter Rome. Andre and Franki go to Vatican City and find their Philatelist Lwow friend Padre Michele Kolbuch. The three friends agree to make a surprise visit to the Perantonis at their new bottling shop in Mantua as soon as the allies can break through the Nazi's Po line of defense. Meanwhile, Carlo and Luigi and their families are in Volargne, clutched in the Nazi Wehrmacht's final Italian lines of defense, where the Po line and the Adige line and the Alpine line converge into a bottleneck in their town, their escape route to Germany.

**In July 1944** the Soviets begin the Poland offensive, and they gradually push the Germans out of Lwow. Polish partisans turn their attention east again. Later the same month Soviets overrun the city of Lwow and the entire region of east Galicia becomes Soviet once again, and remains Soviet.

**German soldiers, once polite guests of Italy, become brutal paranoid drunks.** Due to the Allied advances in south and central Italy the morale of German troops in the RSI of north Italy becomes awfully disheartened, miserable, and fearful. By late 1944 the Axis is losing the war on all fronts, and the Nazis are losing any hope in the possibility for a "final victory", nor any hope for their promised 1000-year Reich. Fear of the Allies and anger towards the Italians is apparent in their faces. Looting and drunkenness is the order of the day.

As the Allies advance northward the Nazis gradually retreat toward the road leading to the alpine Brenner pass, the notorious gateway to Germany, a passage used by barbarians for well over 3000 years. In time all retreating Nazi personnel and their logistics are forming a bottleneck in the district of Victor and Carlo's little town Volargne di Dolce in the west Valpolicella region adjacent to Lake Garda. On the opposite bank of Lake Garda, in the town of Salo, is the RSI's Nazi-Fascist headquarters of Italy's ousted DUCE, Benito Mussolini. Victor and Carlo are in the heart of the RSI, isolated from the Italian peninsula, and isolated from Lwow Poland, and stuck in the middle of a bottlenecked military retreat of brutal domineering paranoid drunken Nazis.

**Victor and Carlo sabotage the German Army with diarrhea.** The Nazi engineers "Todt Organization" establish a headquarters on the grounds of Carlo's friend, the Villa of Count Valentini in Volargne. They use slave labor from local citizens to construct large scale defensive positions and military obstacles to be implemented throughout the district in order to impede the rapid advance of Allied troops. Most Volargnesi townspeople are enslaved for this huge effort. Victor and Carlo are ordered to deliver wine to the German quartermaster. With reluctance Victor obtains cheap local wine, and the wine is often delivered in broken bottles, for which Victor blames "the road craters". With threat and coercion the quartermaster reprimands Victor for the inferior quality of his wine, and demands that he deliver good wine in unbroken bottles.

Carlo and Victor take into consideration that German soldiers are less brutal while drunk on Italian wine than when sober on Nazi ideology and training. So they change their strategy by adding freshly fermented "grappa" to the wine bottles, "grappa" distilled from the same seasonal grape-stalk leftovers, after winepress, from which the wine originated. Now Victor delivers an abundance of very fine wines containing tastefully planted increased levels of alcohol !

The German soldiers are quite fond of Victor's "grape schnapps". Taken in moderate amounts the wine-grappa mixture is a digestive drink which promotes healthy bowel movement, but taken in excess causes uncontrollable diarrhea! In those days the average German soldier drank in excess. Italian partisans increase their presence and take advantage of the Wehrmacht's drunken disorder, logistical mayhem, and confusion.

**Nazis step up arresting Jews, while Volargne rail staff help Jews escape.**

By November 1944 the last German defense lines (in Italy) draw back to the alpine foothills of the Adige river valley concentrating the majority of their remaining logistics in the vicinity of Volargne, La Chiusa di Ceraino, and Dolce' (close to their escape route for the Brenner Pass). Much of the time Carlo stays in his Mantua bottling shop spiking the local wine with Grappa, while Victor and Luigi deliver the spiked wine bottles to the Wehrmacht. Other acts of sabotage by local citizens against the Germans increase significantly. Even though the Wehrmacht is retreating in defeat, the Nazi compulsion to carry out their Fuehrer's murderous orders continues like clockwork. Deportations of Jews and other political prisoners are accelerated with priority in order not to miss any opportunities of capturing Hitler's precious victims before the Wehrmacht escapes from Italy. Therefore trains transporting Jewish prisoners are given high priority now, because deportations of Italian Jews were not conducted during Mussolini's regime, prior to his arrest and fall in 1943. But now that IL DUCE is reduced to a mere puppet of Hitler, the Nazis are accelerating deportations to make up for lost time. They intensify arrests and dispatch deportation trains from all regions of north Italy's RSI, filled with prisoners. All the trains are headed to Germany through the Brenner pass, adding to the huge bottleneck traffic jam of logistics converging at Volargne's railhead, thus causing valuable delays during which local train station workers help several prisoners to escape.

**The town of Volargne is pulverized in one instant.** As part of their defense strategy and also to protect the German motherland from the advancing allies, the Todt Nazi engineers plan to implode "la Chiusa foothills" as a final defense of their retreat, thus flooding the river valley and closing the ancient gateway to Germany road permanently. For that reason they obtain a munitions train comprised of fifteen train-cars loaded of TNT which they intend to detonate inside a railway tunnel located beneath La Chiusa foothills. In the meanwhile the fifteen menacing railcars are kept parked on stand-by only a few miles south of the river-closing's foothill tunnel, adjacent to Victor and Carlo's town Volargne, guarded by German soldiers. None of Volargne's townspeople are aware of the frightening payload that is parked adjacent to their town. But a young man from Switzerland employed as an interpreter for the Todt organization knows its contents, and he sells the information to the Allied Forces.

In the sunny afternoon of **21 November 1944** Victor is making a routine delivery of spiked grappa-wine to the German quartermaster's mess tents and canteens. He parks his delivery van near La Chiusa river bend and continues on his delivery rounds by pedal cart because civilian motor vehicles are not allowed inside German compounds. After delivering wine in Volargne he reloads more wine from his van into his pedal cart and begins pedaling towards the mess tents near Dolce'. As he pedals past the marble foothills Ceraino he is unexpectedly stunned by the instantaneous blaring roar of four allied warplanes which appear suddenly from behind the massive foothill, flying at very low altitude directly over Victor's head, then disappear just as sudden, past the next foothill.

The warplanes fire their machine-guns on the deadly railcars which are parked about 100 meters adjacent to Victor's town Volargne. Startled, Victor stares in the direction of their flight and right away the sky turns red, then white, then black in one instant, followed by the thud and reverberation of a tremendously loud thunderous explosion which breaks every bottle of wine in the pedal cart, and causes sharp piercing pain in Victor's ears. Less than two seconds later Victor is thrown off the pedal cart to the ground by a mysterious force squeezing his entire body, and then immediately the pressure disappears, and there is no air to breath as his hair and clothes are being pulled in the direction of the explosion, and he sees the wine pouring from the cart become airborne, flying south towards Volargne. Then the air returns and Victor can breath again, his hearing returns as he perceives echoes of the loud explosion bouncing from foothill to foothill, like in a circle threatening to come back and finish him off !

The air strike on the fifteen railcars loaded of TNT set off a gigantic explosion of such a powerful magnitude that an atmospheric vacuum sucks one of the warplanes into the ground. A second warplane is pierced by a train-wheel, and carries it away, and still another is riddled with pieces of train fragments, like steel shrapnel. The initial impact pulverizes Volargne's buildings adjacent to the railway facing the tracks, and crumbles the remaining buildings in town which are either knocked down by the explosion's direct force, or implode inward due to rapid changes of air pressure. Some explode from inside out due to the sudden vacuum, and likewise, many of the fatalities, the wounded and the dead, are due to similar internal eruptions from vacuum, particularly their blood vessels. As all of this happens, the enormous explosion echoes throughout the Adige river valley as it bounces from hill to hill to be heard throughout the Valpolicella and Lake Garda region as an apocalyptic trumpet blast, a gazette that the Devil has taken Volargne as his own. An estimated ninety six percent of Volargne's buildings are totally destroyed. War damages equal to those sustained by the town of Cassino over four months of battles, bombs and shelling which occurred there, but in Volargne it happens in one instant, and the town is no more !

Victor regains his balance, he quickly gets on his pedal cart ignoring the bath of wine flowing out of the carrier and he pedals hurriedly back towards Volargne. A snowfall of white dust makes it hard for him to keep his eyes open. He pedals down along the river bend and gazes down the hill but does not see the town ... he sees only a cloud of dust where the town should be ! At first he imagines that he is still somewhat disorientated and that he must have pedaled in the wrong direction, but that hopeful guess is short lived as he discerns that the Adige River is on his right side, and it is flowing southward. He stares intently at the cloud of dust, and begins to discern that the cloud is quickly settling over heaps and piles of rubble, all covered in white dust. The road ends where the rubble begins, and Victor leaves his cart there and proceeds on foot walking on rubble. The dust cloud is becoming thin and Victor is able to see portions of buildings and some standing walls, which is all that is left of his beloved Volargne ! Less than one hour earlier Victor was loading and unloading wine in that beautiful town in a sunny afternoon. Now he stands in an apocalyptic end-of-the-world scene, and survivors covered in dust and blood begin to emerge from the rubble, like ghosts.



**Victor proclaims abhorrence for Mussolini and Fascism.** The scene that ensues is one of total despair, grief and anguish. Victor screams and cries out loudly, finally releasing anger which has accumulated in him since the day the Nazis invaded Poland. He screams out loud obscene curses against his former hero, the Duce, Benito Mussolini. At the top of his voice, with tears tracking across the white dust on his face, he curses Adolf Hitler for having taken away IL DUCE from the Italian people, and he curses Mussolini for betraying Italy.

A platoon of German soldiers arrive on the scene and they observe Victor's acts of madness, they are silent and also horrified of what happened to Volargne. Victor turns to them and starts throwing pieces of dusty rubble at them screaming out loud obscene curses against Germany and against the German people, against National Socialism, against Adolf Hitler and his idiot puppet Mussolini. The German troops choose to ignore him as they walk away in bewilderment. This scene closes with Victor screaming vulgar accusations of treason against Mussolini and Fascism, and while he is on his knees, crying in the rubble, he uses pieces of Volargne's broken bricks to beat and flatten the PNF party badge which IL DUCE gave him at the Winiarnia, fifteen years earlier.

The next scene is one of recovery and consolation as Carlo and Luigi join Victor, Italian soldiers and others in searching for victims in the rubble and helping the wounded reach an Italian Army hospital tent which is hastily being erected near the river bank outside the zone of rubble. They remain at Volargne's rescue and recovery all night and the entire following day.

The following evening Carlo and his sons return to Mantua for much needed meals and rest. Dinner is very somber and quiet. After dinner Carlo pours his sons large brass mugs of "Lacrima Cristi" wine, along with smaller glasses of aged red Vermouth. Luigi thanks his father and starts drinking stating that tonight is the right night for getting drunk. But in sore disagreement Victor says that its no use, all the wine in the cellar could never clean the taste of Volargne's "dust of death" from his palate. And then Victor proceeds to get drunk.

**Victor turns to God's Word, the Bible, for the first time.** The next morning the three men find themselves curing a hang-over at the breakfast table nibbling on home made Valpolicella raisins, and Carlo's special sun-dried peaches and figs. The espresso machine is constantly hissing and bubbling as the men sip away at highly sweetened very potent black Italian coffee in miniature cups, one after another. The bottle of "Lacrima Cristi" is still on the table, which prompts Victor to blurt out to his father: "Dad, why did you serve us from the bottle of "Tears of Christ" last night ? Carlo knows exactly what his son who never talks religion is hinting at, but he replies: "because its damn good wine". Dissatisfied with his father's answer, Victor says, quoting from what is written on the bottle's label: "Isn't the myth that Christ, crying over Lucifer's fall from heaven, and upon seeing the devil penetrate the Vesuvius, Christ cried his tears on the fertile lands adjacent to the lava flows, giving divine inspiration to the vines that grow there"? Carlo got the hint, he knows what his son wants to talk about.

Carlo replies to Victor: "Yes, that's the myth, but now, how about the Truth"? Victor interrupts: "well, isn't it the same thing you tried to explain to us at the Winiarnia after Mussolini's visit fifteen years ago" ? Carlo answers addressing both of his sons: " No, its not the same thing. A myth is a legend and not worth the paper its written on, if its even been written. First of all, Spirits in Heaven do not shed teardrops, and secondly why would Christ have cried if it was Him who threw Satan out of Heaven in the first place ? And for what purpose did Christ throw Satan out of Heaven ? Now, please go get the Bibles I gave you fifteen years ago, and lets read the truth about the Devil's fall from Heaven."

The three men spend that entire day together, resting, and discussing the terrible experiences which they have witnessed since the Nazi invasion of Poland, and Carlo supplements their limited experience with many more additional facts which came to pass since that infamous day when the young 19 year old Gavrilo Princip assassinated the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife on 28 June 1914. Carlo is able to show Victor and Luigi how the Great War which resulted from that assassination never really ended in 1918, but is continuing right now, in Volargne and elsewhere around the world. The men closely analyze all the major social and political events from 1914 to the present day, 23 November 1944, and they clearly see the direct connections which tie the Archduke's assassination all the way to the destruction of Volargne. They read scriptures from the Bible and they examine its prophecies, and Victor finally understands what his father was telling him 15 years ago from Psalm 146 verse 3 : "Do not put your trust in nobles, nor in human beings, to whom no salvation belongs." Victor opens his stamp collection, and there it was, clear to see, all the "nobles" of every country, in their succession, and not a single one of them could be credited with having given anything useful to their people other than what God had already given to them Himself. On the contrary, with further analysis and Carlo's vast experience and knowledge, Victor was able to see that each one of those "nobles" in his stamp collection could be blamed for his part of having "...dominated man to his injury" (Eccl 8:9).

**4 February 1945:** Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt meet with Joseph Stalin for a conference in Yalta where they decide how to divide and reorganize Europe after the anticipated unconditional surrender of Nazi Germany. The same day Luigina gives birth to Victor's son, Robert, amid days and nights of bombings and shelling during the escalated war in north Italy. The following week, while at Yalta, Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt offer to "give" Lwow and east Galicia to Stalin's USSR, in exchange for Soviet participation in the Pacific Theatre. Stalin accepts their offer, and with this deal Victor loses his beloved Lwow forever. Victor and most of the Polish soldiers in Italy do not find out about this deal until after the war. They are not aware of the impact nor the consequences that this transaction will have on their lives due to the subsequent Cold War. Lwow will never be the same, and the Perantonis will never return to their wine import business, and they will lose the Winiarnia Italia, their eight-unit apartment building, and all their other assets in Poland.

**6 April 1945 : Andre and Franki help liberate north Italy.** Andre and Franki fight with the Polish 2nd Corps during "Operation Grapeshot" which initiates the Allied penetration across the Po river into the Lombardy plain. In a town near Bologna, about 65 miles from Mantua, an Italian philatelist postal worker befriends Andre and Franki, and he helps them communicate with Padre Michele at the Vatican. The three Lwowians plan to meet and go to their long awaited visit at the Perantonis in Mantua for "stamps, song, pastasciutta and red wine". Without delay Padre Michele packs suitcases with extra priestly garments and an assortment of blank Vatican papers, and he travels to Lombardy by car bearing Vatican license plates.

Padre arrives on 8 April. Its a joyous occasion of reunion for the three old friends from the happy days in Lwow. Padre offers the postal clerk a giant Roman salami and an autographed photo of the Pope, in gratitude for hosting his dear friends, at the risk of his own life. Andre gets busy right away at falsifying the Vatican documents to read as special travel orders for three clergymen due to the recent bombing of Rome's wine purification plant, with an attached purchasing order for obtaining special purified wine from Carlo Perantoni, with transportation back to the Vatican to be consecrated by the Pope. The following day Andre and Franki put on the extra priestly garments and with Padre in the driver seat they head for Mantua. Michele and Andre speak fluent Italian and German, but Franki must pretend to be a deaf-mute monk and wine purification inspector from the bombed Roman plant.

Finally, the long awaited day, Andre, Franki and Padre surprise Victor, Carlo, and Luigi who they have not seen for almost six years, since the day prior to the start of the war, which is still going on. A cheerful and festive evening of "stamps, song, pastasciutta, and red wine" ensues, and it continues the following day and evening. The morning of 12 April 1945 the friendly gathering is broken up when Nazis invade Carlo and Victor's wine bottling shop and transform it into a field hospital. At first Andre and Franki hide in the wine cellar while Padre acts out "his concern for the wounded Germans", and gives last rites to the dead, but later that day Andre and Franki are discovered in the wine cellar, so they begin acting out their "wine purification testing" procedures, however the suspicion of a German Army Chaplain causes apprehension to the three Poles.

In order to alleviate the matter quickly, Michele approves two wine barrels for Vatican procurement, and he pins an "official looking purchase order" on both barrels, then requires Carlo to accompany them to a "designated Church for the transfer of funds". As soon as they depart in Padre's car, Luigi and Victor load the two wine barrels into their delivery van, while the German Chaplain is expressing his suspicions to the commander of the field hospital. Victor quickly drives the van to Luigi's house where Padre's car has been garaged and Vatican license plates removed. The three Poles get into Victor's van and he drives them to his own house where he and Gina hide their friends in the attic. They stay in the attic with Victor the next three days, eating pastasciutta and other delicacies cooked by Gina, drinking Carlo's wine, and gambling for rare stamps, quietly, refraining from singing while German patrols are searching for them door to door.

In the meanwhile, Luigi and Carlo empty the wine from the two barrels, and they modify the lids so that Andre and Franki can hide inside the two empty barrels with lids that lock from inside the barrels. On 15 April the three Polish friends are ready to chance their escape. Carlo switches Padre's Vatican license plates onto Victor's delivery van, and then he says goodbye to his friends. The three Lwowians get into the van with Victor and Luigi, and they head for the region of Bologna. Victor drives and Luigi is in the front cab with him, and both brothers are wearing the priestly robes while Andre and Franki are in uniform and armed, hidden in the empty wine barrels. Padre Michele seals the wine barrels with noticeable red wax seals with Papal embossings, and he sits next to the barrels supervising the transport of the "Pope's purified wine" holding an attache' case filled with counterfeit Vatican travel orders and documents.

About 30 miles south of Mantua they are stopped at a German checkpoint. The guards had been previously informed to be on the lookout for three likely suspicious "Vatican emissaries", two priests and a deaf-mute monk. Dressed as priests, Victor and Luigi complain vocally and forcefully that the deaf-mute monk is part of the previous team whose wine cargo had been stolen by the "barbarian Allies" in the vicinity of Florence. The guards order Padre to lift the barrel lids, but Michele complains loudly and asserts that they are the 4th team making this wine procurement trip for the Vatican, and that the Pope is very upset because he had to postpone the Holy Easter Sacraments due to the lack of purified wine by military interferences such as this one. He tells them that if they break the seals on those barrels they might as well steal the wine because its purity will have been compromised by bellicose men, and he adds this stern warning : "Be advised that a Luftwaffe airplane with neutral Swiss Guard markings is standing by in Rome waiting to deliver holy bread and wine sacraments to the Fuehrer himself in Berlin, and its already two weeks late" !! With that said, the German guards bow down and kiss the revered wine barrels, and then they ask the three clergymen for a special blessing as they are fearfully awaiting combat with the advancing Allies at any moment. All members of the German checkpoint remove their helmets, put down their weapons, and get on their knees while Padre, Victor, and Luigi act out "ritualistic blessings" for the frightened German soldiers.

One hour's drive later Victor's van is arrested by a British infantry patrol, who kindly direct their Polish friends towards the Polish 2nd Corps in order to reunite with their units, while Victor and Padre return to Mantua. **On 21 April 1945** Andre and Franki take part in the Allied victory over the Germans in the battle of Bologna which liberates most of the Lombardy plain. The German Army evacuates Mantua and they retreat toward the location of Volargne's rubble, enroute to the Brenner pass. Some days later the Lwowian friends reunite again in Mantua in order to take advantage of the great philatelic opportunities during this critical period. Each of them obtain complete sets in full size sheets of the RSI's "defeated stamps" at special discounted prices, and place orders with the liberated Mantuan post office to obtain some never issued RSI stamps planned to be soon overprinted PSI-MANTOVA, meaning "Piena Sovrenita' Italiana", to commemorate the expected reunification of Italy into one sovereign state.

**On 28 April 1945** the four Lwowians are guests of Victor's dear philatelist friend Gogliardo Grassi in Milan, where they collect and trade more unique stamp and postmark opportunities associated with the imminent fall of Hitler's Nazi-Fascist puppet state, the RSI, and they also place orders with Gogliardo for the anticipated new issues of Italy's new Republican stamps in mint sheets, and they also order future sets mailed on letters to be postmarked the day of issue, and/or the day of Italian reunification. Rumor is out that Mussolini was captured near Lake Como by Italian partisans while he was attempting to escape to Germany disguised in the uniform of a German soldier.

The next day, **29 April 1945**, while traveling to Milan's main post office the five friends observe the commotion of a large group of people in Piazzale Loreto, so they make their way through the crowd to see what the commotion is all about, and they cannot believe their eyes ! The bloody dead bodies of Benito Mussolini and his mistress Claretta Petacci were being raised to hang upside down from the overhead framework of a gas station. There were also the bloody bodies of another dozen high ranking fascist leaders strewn on the ground roped by their feet and being raised to hang upside down. This same day, in Berlin, Hitler marries his mistress Eva Braun in the Reich's Fuhrerbunker. Soon they will hear what is happening to Benito and Claretta. Their marriage will last only one day.

The crowd loses control and people start spitting on IL DEAD DUCE, and then throwing stones and objects at him, and finally they beat on his head with sticks and clubs until his face caves in. It is a gruesome uncivilized scene of carnage. Victor gets sick to his stomach and throws up. Padre Michele is threatened by a communist partisan toting a handgun that the Padre should not even think of giving IL DUCE his last rites or even a blessing. The five philatelists leave the crowd quietly, with somber faces, while the other bodies are still being raised upside down, and the crowd's uproar progresses to pandemonium.

The news of this revolting and macabre scene reaches Hitler's bunker in Berlin. The next day, **30 April 1945** Adolf Hitler and his newlywed wife Eva Braun, now Eva Hitler for one day, commit suicide and have their bodies secretly cremated so that they do not become the focus of a similar butchery.

**2 May 1945:** The remaining German forces in Italy surrender to the Allies, and north Italy's RSI Fascist-Nazi puppet government falls. The war is finally over in Italy, and the country begins a period of recovery and healing. The Italian government starts proceedings to become reunited as a democratic republic, but by now Victor wants to be no part of Italy. He has become utterly disenchanted with Italian affairs of state and the unreliability of Italy's various forms of government which he has experienced in his short lifetime of 33 years. Also, he has come to firmly believe the factual evidence of Biblical Truth versus worldly reality contained in Bible prophecy, which Carlo has been asserting to him since the day Mussolini visited the Winiarnia Italia in 1929. So now he begins to prepare for a new life journey in anticipation of finally making the long awaited return trip to his beloved Lwow, to reclaim the Perantoni family belongings, and to resume the winery tavern and import business, with his new young family.

**8 May 1945:** Germany signs an unconditional surrender. War in Europe is over. Victor and Gina start packing for a new life in Lwow, with their baby son, Robert, but passports and visas are on hold until after the impending conference of the three major Allied powers (UK, USA, and USSR) scheduled to begin on July 17 near Berlin, in Potsdam of Brandenburg.

Padre Michele returns to the Vatican. Andre and Franki find their way to Monte San Giusto of Macerata, in central Italy, where the Polish forces are assembling.

**On 17 July 1945 the conference in Potsdam convenes** and it will continue for the next two weeks. During this conference the western powers accept recognition of a Soviet controlled Government in Poland, as had been previously planned at Yalta, thereby causing the Polish Forces and their Exiled Government in London to become shut out "cold", a chilling premonition of the next war !

**On 26 July 1945** the Allied Powers, along with the Republic of China, issue a declaration from Potsdam to the last remaining Axis power, the Empire of Japan, in order to proclaim defining terms for Japanese surrender. This becomes known as the Potsdam Declaration, an ultimatum stating that if Japan does not surrender it will face "prompt and utter destruction"! Japan rejects the ultimatum.

During the two week conference, US President Harry S. Truman mentions the "powerful new weapons" which he intends to use on Japan, but Stalin is not impressed because he had heard similar boasting of "miracle new weapons" from the Nazi propagandist, Joseph Goebbels, which were nothing more than false claims intended to put fear in the hearts of Russian troops as they were advancing toward Germany. This conference, coupled with President Truman's subsequent use of atomic bombs, marks the beginning of tension between the United States and the USSR, which eventually leads to the looming "Cold War".

**The Potsdam Conference ends on 2 August 1945.** To this date Victor and Gina continue to have their luggage packed as they are anxiously awaiting passports and visas, with permission to relocate to Lwow.

Four days later, **6 August 1945**, the United States drops the first atomic bomb on the military industrial city of Hiroshima. It is a 20 kiloton bomb nicknamed "little boy", which instantly kills more than 80,000 people, most of which are civilians.

**On 8 August 1945** Joseph Stalin declares war on Japan, honoring his part of the Yalta conference agreement, thus sealing the fate of the Polish citizens of eastern Poland, Galicia, and Lwow. Consequently, unbeknown to Victor and Gina, their hope of a new life in Lwow also terminates that day.

**On 9 August 1945** the United States drops its second atomic bomb, a 22 kiloton named "fat man", and kills more than 70,000 people, and completely destroys the industrial seaport city of Nagasaki. The count of post-attack casualties caused by the radiation effects of these two bombings will be more than double the original number of fatalities. **On 14 August 1945** Emperor Hirohito accepts the allies terms of unconditional surrender "with only one condition", that is, that the declaration of surrender "does not compromise any demand which prejudices the prerogatives of His Majesty as a Sovereign ruler."

Hirohito's condition is accepted, and the following day his "surrender speech" is broadcast by radio to all the Japanese people. Subsequently, General Douglas MacArthur tactfully convinces the Emperor to make another speech to the Japanese people, to explicitly reject the Shinto claim that he is a divinity, a god.

**Hirohito's surrender speech broadcasted on 15 August 1945** marks the end of the war in the Pacific. Although this surrender was obtained by the US without help from the USSR, **the following day 16 August 1945** Joseph Stalin, without delay, initiates the "border agreement between Poland and the USSR" which closes the deal he made at the Yalta conference, thus solidly finalizing the Soviet acquirement of eastern Poland and Galicia to the so called "Curzon line", which is a demarcation dating back to post "great-war" 1919. This action by Stalin will steal from Victor the second town of his youth, Lwow, for the next 46 years.

The news that Poland ceded Lwow and Galicia to the Soviet Union reaches Victor a few days later, but he does not yet understand its implications. He is still hopeful of returning to Lwow, as he figures that the society, culture and traditions of Lwow are far too established for a reign by the Soviet Union to make too much difference. He is in a state of denial, he is letting his wishfulness do his thinking. If Victor ought to perceive all at once the full reality of what is taking place, it would be much like his loss of Volargne, without all the victims, but nonetheless the total loss of any remaining trace of his youth. He and Gina keep on hoping.

The next 12 months are difficult times for Victor. The Italian economy is at an all time low, and the new Republic's governmental bureaucracy make it even more difficult for merchants and other businesses to stay afloat. Now that fascism is gone forever, the new republic struggles with the influence of communists in Italy's new multi-party democratic government. The leading party is called "Christian Democracy", but by now Victor is ever more contrary to human governments. He firmly believes what he has learned from the Bible. Now, like his father Carlo, he is convinced that only a government ruled by God himself can solve all of mankind's problems and provide true peace and lasting security. He finds his consolation in the hopeful prophecies of the Bible, the "Good News" for all nations, tribes, and tongues, as taught by Jesus Christ.

**ACT 3** *Back in Milwaukee 1967 ... and then to Florida, 9/11/2001.*  
*Victor ties the rest of the 20th century to Bible prophecy.*

(In development)