*"Well, when people talk about the Silver Age, they're usually talking about when the capes really first started showing up. They say it like before people started wearing masks, life was Bronze, you know, like the Olympics. Like life was good, but only third-place good. After it came gold. That’s changing now, too, I guess. Don't ask me what's next. It's all so ridiculous. Heh, I blame the media. Anyway, like I was saying, in the beginning, it was silver. And for the people who really know, when you talk about the Silver Age, you're mostly talking about Galena, the Silver City…" from the* Pulitzer Interviews, Legends of Print *series, a conversation with Garrison Geist, 1999*

Smith stood when the prison guard signaled nonchalantly from his side of the steel mesh and glass. He set down his newspaper and picked up his fedora. When he put his hand on the inner door and nodded, a guard buzzed him in from a booth. Beyond the portal, another uniform was waiting to escort Smith to his destination. The other man didn't say anything as they silently walked along, which was expected. Smith ignored the sideways look. The guard had good instincts; he wanted to know who would visit that particular inmate. As they slowed, Smith smoothed his tie and removed his hat again. The uniform opened the door and nodded as Smith stepped past him into the cell.

“If you could give us some privacy," and the guard frowned.

He reached up to close the door.

"You can leave it open," Smith opted for a steady look instead of a smile. "He isn't going anywhere."

"Agent, how nice it is to be seeing you again," the prisoner sat on his cot, shoulders and face hidden by shadow.

Smith turned to face the man, but as he moved his head he also surveyed the cell. He was looking for things a normal prison guard wouldn’t notice, or be privy to, about the dangerous nature of who they were holding.

"Karl," Smith nodded. He peeked once out of the corner of his eye to make sure the uniform was out of earshot.

"Tzis name your government gives me, do you know what it means?" The prisoner leaned into the light, exposing plain features and a modest haircut. He stood from his cot, bringing him to his full and unimpressive height. He had thinning hair, a slight belly, pitiless, steady eyes and still, weathered hands.

"Can't say that I do. We have a problem. We need to talk about what you did, Karl," Smith didn’t react when the prisoner stood, but rooted himself in the open doorway.

"How about Smitz? Do you know what it is to be smitz? Smithed, ja? I am here only for three weeks and tzee people offer me to read all number of books. I haf been reading, you can tell?"

"I can." Four months ago he didn't speak a word of English, but he had insisted all of their correspondences and conversations be in his new, native tongue. "Look, Karl, for your cover to work, you can't go around talking to people about the benefits of communism. Especially sounding like you do, and with who you're supposed to be."

"Yes, tzis football leader." Karl stared at Smith; the only thing moving was his mouth.

"Soccer Coach, Karl. You're a soccer coach. A quiet one that doesn't get arrested, at that. Now, I have some instructions for you. I've tried to keep your real identity away from my superiors for as long as I could, but I think you're going to have to hide up in Canada for a while because of all of this. You’re in the local papers."

"I am sorry to be saying tzese things, but I will not be leaving."

"What? Look, if you’re found out, they’re going to put you in a hole, Karl. You’ll never see the sun again." He broke their agreement temporarily, and spoke German.

"No, I have been understanding many tzings, recently, comrade. Your Americans and their bomb have avakened something in the rest of the world, old and poverful. In tzis place, in your books and papers, I haf discovered the nature of the Fuhrer's revenge." Smith half expected the prisoner to fly into violence. Certainly, he thought twice about the guard leaving the door open. Who had given him newspapers?

"Karl. Listen to me. What do you expect to accomplish if they find you here behind these bars, and you're not contrite. You signed that pardon-"

"A small tzing to dirty a name tzat was not mine," and the prisoner stepped closer. The prisoner grabbed Smith’s shoulders with sincere strength. "You tzink tzis place could contain me? No, comrade. There was more education here than in the safe house. I stayed because I chose. And I will leave so, too."

Smith's stomach turned. "At least let me help. Tell me where you're going," he insisted. Like a friend.

"Ja. You will meet me tomorrow on the road east of here, at the setting sun,"

"And then what?"

"And tzen I will make you unconscious,"

Smith’s forehead creased.

The prisoner chuckled. He reached a hand up and knocked on Smith's forehead. "Plausible deniability. You remember tzis? Tzese were the first words you teach me," and then he smiled. Like a friend.

Smith's only play then was to trust, and nod. He gave the prisoner his hand to shake.