

AN EASTER STORY



GREEK AIR FORCE



by Spyros Peter Goudas & Bernadette Scott

Mr. Goodbar's



*The life of Spyros Peter Goudas
has been full of events.*



*The following reflects one event
that happened in the year, 1964.
For any of you who have read his
biography, titled “The Immigrant”,
you would know that Spyros and his
then girlfriend of 6 years, separated.*

*He never admitted whose fault
it was or why it ended.*

*It did however send him into an
emotional spiral and a deep depression.*

*His friends tried their best to pull
him out of it in many different ways
but were unable to.*

*Spyros, who was enlisted in the
Air Force, was stationed at the
Elefsina Air Base.*

*He never felt like leaving
the Air Base, although on
several occasions he had
an Exit Permit.*



*He preferred fixing,
maintaining and learning more about
aircrafts instead.*

*The reason he did not want to go out
was that he felt there was nothing out
there for him any more.*

*Usually, when a relationship ends,
the normal assumption is that the
female suffers more.*

*Many people do not realize that at
times, the man is actually in deep
emotional distress, resulting in loss
of appetite, lack of trust in everyone,
no display of happiness, and overall
seclusion from everything.*

*It is not something you can go
to the doctor for.*

*It is not a case of simply having
a prescription pill assigned
to remove the symptoms.*

Only time heals wounds such as these.

*It must be noted that around this time,
Spyros Goudas was one of the most
handsome and athletic-looking
young men in Greece.*



Many girls would have fallen at his feet.

After several unsuccessful attempts by his friends, and other army members to get him off the Base, he finally agreed.

It happened to be the Easter Weekend, a time of great festivity in Greece, where food and tradition mark the season.

There are customs related to the religious holiday of Easter which make it the biggest celebration of the year for The Orthodox Church.

The history of Greece dates back past the beginning of the Christian faith.

However, Greeks embraced the Christian faith and made it part of the Greek heritage.

For all Christian Orthodox countries like Cyprus, Finland, Romania and some parts of Albania, Russia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, etc. etc., Easter is the most festive.

It is a time for family and friends, food, feasting and celebration.

Needless to say, these religious festivities also apply to the traditional Catholic faith.

Throughout the country an abundance of customs and traditions are held during the week prior to Easter, referred to as Holy Week.

The preparations for the celebration of the Resurrection start on Holy



Thursday. Good Friday is the most sacred day of the Holy Week, the day of the culmination of the passion of Christ with the deposition from the cross and His burial.

Since it is considered a day of mourning, housewives do not do any household chores, not even cooking. Everyone goes to Church to decorate the Epitaph (Bier of Christ) with flowers.

On the evening of Good Friday, the Epitaph procession takes place.

On Easter Saturday morning, preparations start for the festive dinner of the night of the Resurrection, and housewives cook "magiritsa" (a tripe and herbs soup).

Shortly before midnight, people gather in the church holding white candles which they light with the "Holy Light" distributed by the Priest.

When the latter chants "Christ is



Risen" (Christós Anesti), people exchange wishes and the "Kiss of Love". With the "Holy Light" of the candles they make a cross sign on the front door post of their houses for good luck. They then all gather around the festively laid table, crack red eggs and feast on traditional foods.

On the morning of Easter Sunday, in many parts of the country a whole lamb is prepared on the spit.



There is a festive atmosphere everywhere and people eat, dance and celebrate usually until late into the night.

All over Greece Holy Week and Easter are celebrated with both great splendour and deep devoutness.

It was on the occasion of Easter Sunday that Spyros Peter was invited to celebrate with his friends in an area approximately 130 kilometres northwest of Athens, in the village of Leivadia, one of the many areas of celebration in Greece.

It was the tradition that in the front yard of every house, the roasting of a lamb began as early as 4:00 a.m. Obviously, all of Greece was aware of this celebration, so everyone went to the village and sampled the lamb from

each household accompanied with other delicacies such as taramosalata, tzatziki, various appetizers, and an assortment of vegetables.

You did not have to pay anything.

In addition, no one accepted any payment either. It simply was a pleasure for the householder to have someone stop in front of his house and sample his creation, with hopes he would be the one with the best tasting roasted lamb!

The group Spyros Peter was with included the organizer of the party, Spyros Delilambros, who had invited some of his friends, their girlfriends and other family members.

Everything was progressing well and happy with the occasion... stopping, tasting, joking, etc. It was almost as if Spyros Peter had found himself all over again. It was only at sun down, when

everything was winding down as far as the food tasting celebration was concerned and the whole group, along with other groups, were heading into the Arena for the evening festivities. However, on the way there a sudden veil of sadness engulfed him.

He admitted to his friend, Spyros Delilambros, that he did not want to continue further and would prefer to return to the Airbase.

There were obviously other cars and buses returning to Athens and the surroundings with which he could obtain a ride.

When he told this to Spyros Delilambros, he tried to persuade him to continue on with the group.

Spyros Peter declined due to the fact he was not in the mood. Delilambros insisted he remain and emphasized that if he did not go on, neither would the group.

Therefore, Spyros Delilambros persuaded the whole group, and they all proceeded back to Athens.



Spyros Delilambros 1964

The group ended up in a big taverna in the Plaka area under The Acropolis. The place was filled with people, food and wine. Spyros Peter was even persuaded to play some music on his harmonica.

By this time, he had consumed quite a few glasses of wine and by the end of the night, everyone knew why he was in such a deep depression.

Quite a few girls openly told him

that they were available to him. However, with all that wine, he knew that he had to return to the Air Base.

Spyros Delilambros, who had done everything possible to uplift his spirits, assigned one of the girls to make sure that he arrived back at his destination safely and she was to return to the taverna right away by taxi.

(She was assigned the responsibility since most of the group had consumed their fair share of vino!)

Being filled with wine, Spyros Peter was vaguely aware of the girl's presence.

The next day he awoke to find 50 drachmas and a note in his wallet.

(He was deeply appreciative of this gesture).

He felt very guilty about the whole situation and the fact that he had caused Spyros Delilambros to take the whole group away from their scheduled Arena festivities.

However, this was a turning point in his life. He found himself back on track.

He will forever be grateful to Spyros Delilambros and the whole group for their kindness and understanding of his situation that day.

Many people may not have realized the fine line that Spyros was walking at that moment on the way to the Arena.

He could only describe it as "a situation between life and death!"

He remained friends with Spyros Delilambros all these years. And although they had not had the



opportunity to see one another for over 40 years, they were reunited at the funeral of Spyros' brother, Nikos Goudas, in Athens in 2005. It was a bitter sweet reunion (see picture).

Of course the above story took place almost half-a-century ago and many people may question the significance of this narration.

As part of the team involved in producing the biography of Spyros Peter Goudas, titled, "The Immigrant",

I always "grilled" him further, asking more and more questions which resulted in responses prompting me to see an absolutely different aspect of "the man behind the label": the human and emotional side.

Spyros Peter Goudas is a very complex man who has overcome many adversities to achieve what he has accomplished to this point.

Some may admire him, love him,



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hate him, envy him or say he is just plain lucky.

The fact remains, he was not born with that perpetual "gold spoon in his mouth"; he has worked extremely hard to acquire and to maintain his accomplishments.

Maybe you may see a part of yourself in this little booklet and realize that when you feel that there is nowhere to go, or no one to turn to, that there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

There is always another Easter!! What really prompted me to write this booklet is to show the value of true friendship and the miracles it may produce.

To Spyros Peter Goudas, Spyros Delilambros' friendship, kindness and understanding of his emotional situation at that time, will never, ever be forgotten.

This was one of the most significant turning points in his life.



Sincerely, Bernadette Scott





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