

## Vicki Gaia's Research Page:

### German Ratlines

I'm finished with the last book of my World War II trilogy which will be published in July, 2008. The book is titled **Light In A Hollow Place**. The story takes place in Paris after the Liberation. While it's a romance, there is a subplot dealing with the German Ratlines. These were Nazi and Nazi collaborator's escape routes in which to ferry out men and women from war-torn Europe to places around the globe.

There are historical references to suggest the ratlines were supported not only by neutral countries, U.S and Allied countries during the war, but also by the Vatican. Information on the Internet was scarce compared to other historical facts about the war. Here are website that address this issue:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ratlines>

[http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Fascism/Ratlines\\_B\\_CS.html](http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Fascism/Ratlines_B_CS.html)

<http://www.spiritone.com/~gdy52150/ratlines.htm>

*Unedited excerpt for Light in a Hollow Place, copyright 2007, Vicki Gaia:*

"There's a situation I'd like to discuss with you, but later."

"Claire won't like to hear this." The mattresses groaned when Leslie stood. Settling back into his pillow, Richard rested his head. "Although she enjoyed playing spy last time." Back in New York, she almost got herself killed by her stubborn insistence she be involved. "I won't let her do that again, Leslie."

Leslie touched Richard's arm. "Don't strain yourself over this. Your health comes first. I felt I should tell you that your father's in town."

Another heart stopper, and Richard pressed his fist into his chest. "Fuck. He dares to show his face." No love lost between father and son, Eduard Roth had left Richard's mother before Richard had been born. Roth had given her enough money to get an abortion, and take a liner back to the states. He never knew she had their child, not until two years ago, when Eduard met Richard's mother in New York.

Richard snarled. "This should be good. Go on, what's up?"

"The French love their art. He's consulting with Rose Vallard, the curator of the Louvre."

"Wasn't she the director of the Jeu de Paume?" The Nazis had taken over the Parisian Jeu de Paume during their occupation, using it as a depository for confiscated works of art.

"Yes, and it's unbelievable, but she kept a secret diary of all the artworks coming into the de Paume. It's become the bible for the resistance and for those working to retrieve the artwork from the Germans."

"And they hired Roth? Are they nuts?" Not such an upstanding citizen, the man bought confiscated artworks from the Nazis and resold them on the black market. Now Richard was supposed to believe Roth was helping the French.

"Hmm, slippery chap. Remember, we kept his smuggling quiet on the other side of the pond. He went back to Switzerland, no

one the wiser. A man with nine lives like his son."

"Shut up. I'm nothing like him," Richard fumed, his skin itching from a rash of heat. Roth's heart was encased in a block of ice. Roth wanted nothing to do with Richard, and the feeling was mutual.

Richard massaged the back of his neck, easing the ache crawling up his spine. "What do you have on him?"

"Nothing. That's the problem. What worries me is he's Swiss and connected, and in Paris. Also, money and false papers are being funneled into Nazi hands so they can escape out of Europe. Ratlines. It's already happening."

How ironic. Richard had used an escape route over four years ago to get back to England. Now the Nazis were on the run. The U.S. policy made it clear there would be an international tribunal for crimes against humanity.

Richard sat up. "French francs are worthless but not Swiss francs. You think he's back to selling confiscated art or stealing from the Louvre to fund one of these ratlines? Would he be that bold?"

Richard's headache stepped up a notch. What did he do to deserve this? It'd be hard enough to deal with Claire once she came, but to deal with his father... "What do you want me to do?"

"Once you get out of here, contact him."

"And if I'm blind..." Richard slammed his fist into the covers. "What am I supposed to do then?"

"Don't be an idiot. Nothing's changed about you. You'll still be the man for the job."

Was this true? Did it matter if he couldn't see? He could still think, damn it! His movements would be encumbered, but he could help by using his intelligence.

"Is the BCRA involved?" The French had their own military intelligence who reported to the interim French leader, Charles de Gaulle. Surely, they were aware of this problem. "Let them deal with it."

"We're in contact with them. They're very concerned, as you can imagine, and asked for our assistance. They don't want France involved with a ratline."

Richard stretched his arms over his head to ease the ache in his shoulders and back. It'd been a while since he had to deal with intelligence on this level. He preferred the direct approach of blowing up buildings, railways and bridges. And, there was another slight problem...

Until then, happy reading!