Loty Petrovits-Andrutsopulou

Chocolate time

(Original title: *O kerós tis sokolátas*)

Summary and translation of the prologue, two stories and the epilogue

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Athens: Patakis, 2007 – 2nd edition 2008
ISBN 978-960-16-2574-4.

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(as in the original Greek book)

***** Translation enclosed

A sort of prologue

(extract)

When I was young, I loved chocolate. Only, I would rarely ever find any – it was such a difficult time back then. Perhaps that is why even now I still crave a piece of chocolate; it relaxes me and eases my distress just as it did then. In this book I will talk about those years. I shall tell you stories, real stories that may seem unbelievable just as they do in fairytales....

When you finish reading this book and if you have traveled enough to Athens, through its pages, in the time of the 2nd World War, you will probably wish to relax a bit. Then perhaps you will feel - as I feel in similar moments – that chocolate time has come.

The Candies

I must have been around four or five years old then, in the time of the German occupation of Athens – the only girl in our whole gang who despite the little food we ate, we would still climb up the Strefi hill to play. The boys imitated the war in their games, and there was no room for me, the "little one", as my brother Manos's friends called me. They were all older than me by two or three years...

"Girls can't play," they'd push me aside. "Girls don't play war," they heartlessly declared.

"She could play the nurse," Manos would attempt to compromise, but how were my small, untrained hands and thin body not to get in the way of the major attacks when treating the "wounded"?

The older boys would fume, "get the little muskrat out of the way, we'll step on her!"

"We can't have a proper fight if she's always at our feet!" they would cry out to my brother.

Until one day, Alekos said to my brother,

"We can have her play the Nazis if she wants. That way we can win faster."

"No, no," I exclaimed.

Leonidas was discouraged by the idea:

"We can't fight a woman!"

"That's right!" Manos cried with relief.

"No, not a woman," Milon somberly agreed.

So did Jordanis who, nevertheless, didn't like attacking very much.

"Fight a woman? No way!"

And it was the first time I heard something from the boys that I really liked. Oh, I was so pleased with that colossal word: "Woman"!

Up until then, I was the "little one" and the "muskrat". And I always watched from the sidelines while the boys played angrily, until I'd get bored and go sit in my "nest", a little seat in the root of a split tree bark. A lime-tree Milon had called it. It was that time of day that I craved for a story. And I would listen to one from none other than myself.

I had told and listened to so many stories all by myself that I would sometimes confuse the stories with what was actually taking place in the neighborhood. That is how I saw the dragon of a story clad in army attire, helmet and heavy boots, going to the house across the street, banging on the door, raging in and grabbing little Lefteri's father.

And another time I confusingly saw a bunch of giants in a huge car painted with green, yellow and black paint. They all sang satisfied and happy, something like "Taste, taste Lily Marlene." And that's how I understood that they must have eaten Lily, Mrs. Marlena's baby – they lived in the basement next door. That's why we didn't see the baby anymore and Mrs. Marlena was dressed in black from head to toe.

Those who escaped most from my stories were the dwarves. That is why I would often see them in the streets, even if they did change into strange, boney creatures that looked more like children. They didn't have any beards, just fuzz on their blackened faces. Nor did they wear shoes and caps. And almost all of them had swollen bellies.

The boys of Strefi hill did not care much for the stories I made up. They ploughed up and down the hill in their holey shoes and their scraped pants which looked wider and wider around their bodies. I kept counting new holes on them. Not only were their clothes thinning, but the boys would rip them with their war games as well; with their stalk-rifles, hand grenade-rocks in their back pockets, and twigs for guns. They'd scrape their knees, hands and legs, and even hit their faces like Manos who got a nose bleed one day and Jordanis almost lost an eye from a "rifle".

"You're going to get yourselves killed," my mother would cry in desperation. "What kind of games are these? I don't understand it at all!"

"Tomorrow I'm coming up the hill with you to show you a few proper games," said Uncle Nikos decisively. He was mother's younger brother and he barely left the house. He always worked in the basement and listened to father cry, "Careful!" And mother would always cross herself and look out at the street behind the curtain while he was "working".

"Tomorrow I will teach you how to play like true Greek children," said Uncle Nikos again. "So you won't cripple yourselves with sticks and stones."

Uncle Nikos's words were like the law not only for me and my brother to follow but for the entire gang to adhere to.

The following afternoon all the boys circled around our uncle on the hill. We were all mesmerized by the way he explained the games that the ancient Greeks played in Olympia. I enthroned myself in front of him and didn't miss a word, even though I didn't understand everything he said to us.

In the olden days, he said, every four years all wars would cease. Men would lay down their weapons and go the games in Olympia. Whoever did not participate would sit in a stadium and watch the athletes: who would run faster, who would jump higher, who would throw the javelin farther, who would win the wrestling match... No harm was done to anyone. Even if they wrestled, even if they competed, they did it as a game to see who the best athlete was, and who could win.

On the winner's head they would place a wreath of a wild olive branch. Everyone was pleased – both winners and losers -- because the most important thing was to play and to

participate in the games. Everyone seemed like your friend there. There were no enemies in Olympia.

"How can you play a game without any enemies?" Alekos asked troubled. He didn't quite understand, perhaps because he wasn't listening or because he was younger than the others and had no memory of what life was like before the Nazis came to Athens.

"Of course you can," Milon gravely assured him. He always spoke very seriously.

"You can play such a game," cried Jordanis enthused about ending all the attacks.

And I was pleased. Oh, I was so pleased that they would never tell me to play the Nazis again!

It wasn't the first time Milon had heard of these games. He said his father had gone to the Olympics which took place in Berlin before the war.

"But why didn't he go to Olympia to see the ancient Greeks instead?" I foolishly asked and the gang immediately broke into laughter. I almost started to cry.

Uncle Nikos saved me by explaining furthermore. He said that many centuries had passed since the games were held in Olympia. And then in 1896, the people of the world decided to recreate the ancient games.

They all gathered here in Athens, they went to the large stadium with the white marble seats (the one close to Alekos's grandfather's house) and made the athletes compete in the ancient games – wrestling, jumping, running, etc. There was a parade and a celebration and a big jubilee. The winners did not receive wreaths of olive branches but medals: gold, silver and bronze. And between each country a promise was made: Every four years they will stop all wars and gather in a different country each time in order to play these games. They were named once again, the "Olympics".

"Which means that if four years pass since the last games, then the war will stop," cried Jordanis.

And I was pleased. Oh, I was so pleased! I did not know what the world was like without the war. Father had said that once the war ends we will stop going down to the shelter whenever the sirens hailed. And we wouldn't all be squeezed in there smelling the mildew for hours on end.

Uncle's face darkened as if the sunset began from his eyes.

"It's been over four years but the war hasn't stopped," he said slowly. "It's almost seven years now since the last games in Berlin in 1936. In 1940 they were supposed to take place in Tokyo but they were cancelled... And the way things look now, I doubt that they will take place in London in 1940 as planned."

The gang was silent. A cold wind blew and shuffled the leaves in the trees. I shivered. And I was sad. Oh, how sad I was that grownups couldn't keep their promises...

"We can have our own games," suggested Milon seriously – and when was he ever not serious?

"And no more war and battles," added Manos willingly.

"We can race each other every day! We can find a rope and stretch it out and practice our high jump! We can make javelins out of sticks and stalks to throw as far as we can! We can find a good spot with soft dirt for the long jump," Jordanis raved enthusiastically.

"We can run around the hill to see if we can make it. That'll be our marathon race," said Leonidas ready to start.

"What should we use for medals?" asked Alekos.

"You'll think of something," said Uncle Nikos as he rose.

It was getting dark and only the children hadn't noticed now that a flame burnt within them.

The boys' Olympics began on the Strefi hill the following day. But I was pushed aside again.

"Your uncle said that only men took part," Alekos intervened.

And uncle's words were followed like the law according to the gang.

"Hey now, get out of the way so we can start," said Jordanis anxious to run.

"There's nothing we can do. Go, so we don't run over you" - my brother also stopped me.

But who could stop my tears from running?

"That's why women get on my nerves," cried Leonidas. "They cry for the slightest reason."

And how is it that on the one hand I was sad that I could not play with them, but on the other hand I was pleased, oh so pleased, to be referred to as a woman again…

"If I win I will give you my medal," promised Milon.

I believed him. He always spoke to me so seriously. His words calmed me.

The medal that had been assigned for the race was more valuable than gold back then. It was a bag full of seven candies wrapped in shiny red paper. How they got in the hands of the boys, I don't even know. The only thing I knew was that I wanted those candies more than anything in the world. I had only eaten candy two or three times in my entire five years of life. But I remembered the taste – just as wonderful as the taste of chocolate that I would barely ever appreciate. Your mouth would fill with a sweetness that slipped down low, down into your stomach, down where I would sometimes feel a grumble in the middle of the night.

Milon won the race! The candies were his.

"They're yours!" he said serious as always.

That night I slept with the bag of candies in my arms. No, I wouldn't eat them all at once. I wanted to cherish them first, to believe they were mine, all mine. I had something special, something that none of the boys had – only me.

I would take them with me to the top of the hill the next day. I would take them to my tree, I would tell them stories, hold them tight as I had seen some girls hold their dolls once. I wanted the candy to understand just how much I loved them. And then I would eat them. Out of love, not out of evil like the giants ate the baby. I would melt them slowly in my mouth

so their sweetness could reach deep down into my stomach. I only felt sorry for the bag that would be left empty and alone.

Now that I think of it, I was also a bit upset that I wouldn't give Milon a candy or two. I also pitied Manos and the others who wouldn't taste a bite. On the other hand, however, I was pleased that the boys would learn what it means for someone to have something and not share it with you – a little bit of a game, a little fun, a little attention, a tad bit of friendship... And I didn't understand how it was possible to be both happy and sad about something that was yours.

The next morning, around dawn, I changed my mind. I would eat my candies because I loved them – that was the right thing to do. Isn't that what mom said every Easter about Christ, when she would take us to Holy Communion?

"So now we're eating Christ's body?" I would doubtfully ask the whole way to the church.

"Yes, we eat it out of love," mom would reassure.

However, not everyone eats what they love. Sometimes they put it in the ground to live for eternity – isn't that what they say? Just as they put grandma a while before the war. And Alekos's grandfather a week ago. And Mrs. Marlena, the mother of the baby that was eaten by giants, a few days ago. She passed away "out of sadness" sighed mom, "out of hunger" mumbled dad. And I was sad but happy too (how is that possible?), because now Mrs. Marlena would live with her baby Lily for all of eternity, even if the giants sang, "Taste, taste Lily Marlene."

If you put the things that you love in the ground, they will live for eternity – that's what the grownups said.

"High jump" was the name of the game that the boys played the following evening. Only Alekos wasn't playing. He was bored, he said. He didn't really like that game.

"Come hold the rope!" my brother said. He had found a task for me to do.

I placed my precious bag against the root of my tree and proudly ran towards the "athletes" to help.

The game was exciting. The boys were anxious to see who would win the high jump, and the rope kept on rising. No one noticed Alekos who had glided over to the tree. No one saw him stuff three or four candies in his mouth while putting the rest in his pocket without the wrappers - he confessed to it all months later. He held the wrappers in his hand. When he finished eating all the candy, he took olive pits out of his right pocket. He placed the olive pits in the wrappers and stuffed them back in the bag. He carefully slipped away.

The game was about to end. No one was the winner for today. They would continue the next day with the rope three inches taller. It was time for the "athletes" to rest before descending down the hill. It was getting dark.

"Don't be late!" cried Manos who saw me run to my "nest" under the split tree. "We're leaving in five minutes!"

No, I didn't have time to unwrap them now. Besides, I didn't want my candies to be cold without their coats when I'd place them in their little ditch.

I had dug a little hole in the ground, as deep as I could, first with my hands, then with a sharp rock. I kissed the bag for the last time; I shoved it inside and covered it with dirt, just as mom covered me with a blanket at night.

"If you plant the seed, it will definitely grow in no time," Milon had seriously said one day to my brother about a plant.

And that kid always spoke seriously.

My "seeds" would therefore grow into a candy tree, ripe and tall, and would live forever! It might even reach the clouds. It might even reach the sky like the beanstalk in that fairytale.

And then I would eat handfuls and handfuls of candy that would never seem to end. My brother would also eat some. So would the "athletes" – first of all, Milon then Jordanis, Leonidas, Alekos and the others... My father would eat some, my mother as well. And I would put a handful in the basement for my uncle, whose work never seemed to end. The dwarf-children would eat some too and they would be full, and they wouldn't have to snoop around garbage cans and lick olive pits that had been thrown away. There would even be candy left over for the dragons and the giants with the black boots and black uniforms. They would eat some and taste the sweetness of candy in their stomachs and then be tamed. They then wouldn't grab fathers, or eat babies out of spite, or carry guns. They would abandon their weapons and climb up the Strefi hill to play the ancient games of Olympia with all of us.

From that day on, I would carry a bottle every afternoon and secretly water my candy tree.

"How many days does it take for seeds to grow into a tree?" I casually asked Milon several times.

"Days?" he laughed. "You mean months. Even a year."

And his laugh was even serious – how is that, really?

"Trees don't need water if it rains," uncle Nikos attempted to reason with me when autumn set in and I would insist on climbing up the hill to water "some little tree".

Then the flu came. Then the chicken pox. And then the measles had its turn. I burned with fever. And uncle Nikos would be in the basement for "work," then at my bedside to keep me company.

That is when, while delirious, I told him about my tree. And that I was upset, oh, so upset, that I didn't know what had become of it in so many months...

Uncle laughed.

"Silly, that's not possible," he said. "Candy doesn't grow."

I insisted, though. I knew it to be true. I had heard it somewhere, I wasn't sure where, perhaps outside, in the neighborhood, or inside, in a fairytale.

I forcefully took him with me, the first day I could leave the house after all my illnesses. It was almost Spring and we both climbed the hill to my "nest" under the split tree bark.

“Wow, look! A wild olive tree!” uncle said surprised when I showed him the exact spot that I had planted my little bag.

And I was pleased, oh I was so pleased, that fairytales did not lie.

“The ancient Greeks would braid wreaths out of their branches for the winners of the Olympics. We talked about that, don’t you remember?” uncle asked.

Yes, I remembered…

Instead of a candy tree (imagine that!) my tree grew into a wild olive tree. And now we would have wreaths to braid for the heads of the winners, but no candy.

Uncle Nikos’s words were the law, and I believed him. And I was so, so sad that I couldn’t feed the boys candy (or the dwarves, or the giants)… And I was glad, oh, so glad that I imagined myself as the first to put a wreath on Milon’s head with the branches of my very own wild olive tree!

And I didn’t understand how it was possible that on the one hand I could be so sad and on the other I could be so happy about something that was happening to me. Perhaps it was too much to understand because I wasn’t a whole “woman” yet, as the boys had called me. I was barely five years old -- during the war, during the German occupation of Athens.

Uncle Thomas and the Peacocks

When we were little, I would look at my brother's bookshelf and see a book called, "Uncle Tom's Cabin". I had learned how to read pretty well, even for a first-grader. But I didn't dare touch that book. It was too big. Besides, I was already quite sure which story it hid inside its pages. I had no doubt that it was about our own "Uncle" Thomas, as we called the keeper of Strefi hill. And about his little house, with only one small room and its red-tiled roof, on the first turn of the dirt path that led us to our favorite playing grounds.

My brother burst into laughter when I told him my idea about what the book was about.

"Like Harriet Beecher Stowe would write about the keeper of Strefi all the way from America!" he exclaimed through his laughter.

Our father took the liberty to explain that the book's Uncle Tom was somebody else. He had lived in a different place at a different time, and had lived through different hardships. His skin was a different color, the color of chocolate, and his struggle for liberty was a different one. He didn't say any more. If I wanted to learn more about the American Uncle Tom, I should best read the book by myself, since I was already such a good reader, even if the book did look too big.

At that particular time, during the Nazi occupation - it must have been January 1944. Uncle Thomas of Strefi was the only person I cared to know about. He was always so pleasant and kind. The white-haired keeper would gently speak to all the children who climbed up the hill to play, he kept the hill clean, he cared for the bushes and trees, he fed the few animals that had remained and when the sun set and the hill was abandoned, he would go into his little house to rest.

"Now there's a man who truly loves nature," I had overheard a grownup say after he had witnessed Uncle Thomas care for the plants and the animals with such devotion.

"It's as if he talks to them and they respond!" admired a passerby. "I wonder where he finds the energy with so little food and for someone his age…"

Uncle Thomas must have been old indeed. He looked very old to me, but I felt like he was my friend. I regarded him as someone very close to me, especially ever since he came and consoled me when he saw me whimpering in a corner because the boys - my brother and his friends - wouldn't let me play with them. I was too small, no matter how much I grew.

"Don't worry my little one." He bent and patted my head. "Even if the boys don't play with you, you can still sit here all you want and have fun in your own way: you can think, you can dream, you can enjoy nature, you can sing aloud or in your head, you can say a prayer – anything you want! Just know that the hill is yours!"

I lifted my head and looked at him with relief. He wore what he usually wore, a worn-out dark green uniform that looked too large over his skeletal body. He wore the same cap with the town badge on it over his white head, the same old, worn shoes on his thin feet. And he held the well-known cane: a long stick with a pointy edge so he could pick up paper trash without bending over.

"Come on, get up!" he smiled and it looked as if his sunken eyes had filled with joy. 'Let's go feed the peacocks!"

The large cage with the beautiful peacocks was further up. Last year there were five or six. I always loved to look at them, especially when they opened their bright feathers and walked proudly about. This year there were only two and they never opened their tail.

I got up, I held Uncle Thomas's thin hand and we started towards the peacocks.

"Do you know the story about the hill?" he asked me as we walked.

I shook my head.

'Strefi hill, remember, is as ancient as the rock of the Acropolis, and as old as Lycabettus," he began. "Of course, it's not as tall, as you can see however, it holds its head up high right here in the middle of Athens, in Exarchia, as if it wants to protect our neighborhood. It stands proud, even though it's been through many hardships, the poor thing…"

"Hardships?" I wondered. "What kind of hardships?"

"The worst that a hill can go through," said Uncle Thomas. "The last century, the Athenians had turned it into a pit."

"What's a pit?" I interrupted.

"A quarry. They dug into it to take its rocks and build the capital's homes. That's how it got its dents that you see here and there. And if they continued, the entire hill would disappear."

I shuddered! Imagine our paradise not existing!

"Eventually they realized their crime," he continued. "They decided to stop hurting it and to make it a little more attractive. So before the war they planted trees and the bushes you see, they opened up paths where you children run on, they made little steps for people to climb where their were crevices. They made squares for people to meet and walk on, a small outdoor theater where you kids go and sit sometimes….They soon put the peacocks in the large cage, the monkey further down in the smaller one, the goldfish in the pond…And the town put me in charge of the hill, so I could care for it. And as long as I can, I will."

We reached the peacocks.

"But what happened to the others?" I asked. "Why are there only two remaining?"

"Starving people stole them, my child, so they could eat them instead of chicken," he answered softly so as not to cry. "I didn't get here in time…It was dark, and until I heard their frightened cries and realized what was happening, they had already grabbed them and gone. I don't know how they had the heart to do such a thing. Hunger makes a man a beast. Even the pond began emptying of goldfish little by little – I don't even know how and when they would steal them. You see, fish don't have voices like the peacocks and so how was I to know there

were thieves stealing them? Only the monkey is in its cage – they didn't want her. What would they do with her? She's skin and bone from the little she eats as well. I don't know how long she'll last.

"And now these two won't open their tails out of sorrow, because the thieves stole the others?" I asked.

Uncle Thomas smiled again.

"No, that's not the reason. Only the male peacocks have large tails that open proudly wide. These smaller peacocks are the females. Perhaps that's why they weren't stolen. The hungry thieves preferred the larger ones!"

I looked at the female peacocks with pity, even if they had gotten away. I didn't like that they were left alone.

"I'm going to the others now," I told Uncle Thomas and ran to find the boys.

Okay, so they wouldn't let me join their game. But at least they were there. I could see them. I could hear them. We were all together and at that moment, that was enough for me.

When the sun went down, my brother came to get me and go home. Uncle Thomas waved from a distance…

It was the last time we saw him. He never appeared on the hill again.

"Perhaps he became ill and is in a hospital somewhere," mom offered her explanation.

"Maybe he died of starvation," dad shook his head. "You see, he loved animals so much he would never lay a finger on them, not like those thieves. He would never eat the fish or the peacocks in order to stay alive."

"Maybe the Nazis got him," mumbled our cousin, Olga, who always knew what was going on in the neighborhood. "They say that he was helping the rebels."

Whatever the reason, Uncle Thomas vanished from Strefi hill and no one ever found out what happened to him. Shortly after, the two remaining peacocks vanished as well.

When the war was over, some people from the neighborhood said that the keeper of the hill had died in Germany, in a concentration camp that he had been transported to by the Nazis, because he would hide rebels in his little house at night. But no one could confirm that this information was true.

However his life had ended, our kind keeper remained in my memory indelibly. Even today, I go for walks on Strefi hill because it is still so beautiful. And as I walk up the hill I can still hear his voice:

"Just know that the hill is yours! Here you can still sit all you want and have fun in your own way: you can think, you can dream, you can enjoy nature, you can sing aloud or in your head, you can say a prayer…"

And then I think of a prayer that Uncle Thomas' soul rests in peace along with all the Uncle Thomases of the world, that because of their great love for nature they could chat with

plants and animals. They fought for freedom with their small strengths. They fought for goodness, justice and humaneness in their own way.

As for the things he had told me, I have a big question: How is it that the same words Uncle Thomas used have been written by a foreign children's book author as well? I read them recently in a foreign magazine[1]. Uncle Thomas was not an educated man and he probably hadn't read them translated. He was also quite a few years older than the writer. Elizabeth Orton Jones[2] writes:

Every child in the world has a hill, with a top to it… And singing is what the top of each hill is for. Singing – drawing –thinking – dreaming – sitting in silence… saying a prayer. I should like every child in the world to know that he has a hill, that that hill is his no matter what happens, his and his only, forever.

This coincidence is a mystery and is impossible for me to explain.

For you, who is reading this story, I want to write something similar here, because I am certain that Uncle Thomas would want me to, if he was living in our time and he had met you. I want to tell you that if you search outside in your neighborhood or within your soul, if you search in reality or in your dreams, in your expectations or in your memory, you will see that you have your own hill too, with peacocks or without. On its top or on its side you can really sit, sing, draw, think, dream or pray. And this dreamy hill, no matter what happens, will be yours forever.

[1] The Horn Book Magazine *September/October 2005*
[2] 1910-2005

A sort of Epilogue

Now that you've read the stories of this book, I wish you were near me, so I could give you a little bit of chocolate. To ease the pain if something upset you, as you may have lived a little of those difficult years within the stories; the years that brought misery, fear and death to mankind. However, since I can not offer you any chocolate, I will point out five incidents that had a much better outcome. They all occurred at the same time in Greece, and they are incidents that soothe the heart, delight the mind, and calm the spirit. Because they show that kindness and humaneness can not be lost even in days of brutal violence. This goes to show that good and justice are more powerful than evil and injustice. That is why victory is theirs' in the end.

Listen then:

The first months of war in 1940, when the victories of the Greeks were consistent, many Italian soldiers were caught prisoners. Many of them were transferred to Athens. One morning a crowd of people saw them cross Omonia square in a line, escorted by Greek soldiers. They were worn, withered and afraid. Many Greeks spontaneously bought whatever they could from the kiosk – candy, chocolate, cigarettes – and began handing them out to the prisoners. It didn't matter if they were enemy prisoners, if they had invaded Greece unjustly, if they had viciously fought with its soledіers. Humaneness had won.

Later, in April of 1941, armored Germany had attacked weakened Greece and succeeded in kneeling her down. The Nazi soldiers began entering the Greek villages close to the borders. Most of those villages were devastated. In one of them that had been abandoned by most of its inhabitants, only one Greek soldier had remained, and he was badly injured. The Nazis found him and his fate would have been unknown if a German doctor had not attended to him. He cared for his wounds and gave him medicine. The wounded man, many years later, told this story himself on a television show. He said he owed his life to a representative of the enemy. That particular doctor certainly was not touched by the ferociousness of war. Humaneness had won.

Something quite similar happened again, when the Italians also entered Greece along with the Nazis. An Italian doctor in charge of the health and care of his soldiers, without any obligation, would doctor and heal the inhabitants of an entire Greek village. He gave medication and medical advice to old and young. While caring for them he caught a contagious disease and passed away, there in the village. The villagers mourned and buried the doctor as if he were their own. And on his grave a candle is always lit to remind all that in the time of war and barbarity, humaneness sometimes won.

In September of 1943 Italy managed to rid itself of Mussolini, the creator of fascism, and formed a treaty with the Allies against Germany. Suddenly, Italy became enemies with

their once allies. The Nazis started hunting them down and executing them in whatever country they were to be found. This also happened in Greece. Italian soldiers tried to hide, or to find ways to escape, to survive. And that is when a great number of Greeks helped them. They hid them, protected them and helped them escape. And what if they had fought each other with such fierceness on the Albanian front in 1940? Humaneness had won.

In December of 1943, the Nazis killed all the men of Kalavryta town. Then they locked all the women and children of the city in a school and lit a fire to burn them alive. An Austrian soldier, however, knowing that he would probably pay for this act with his life, opened the door and let all the women and children out without a moment's hesitation. It was obvious that he had never accepted the notion of Nazism. Humaneness had won.

These five incidents that strengthen the faith in goodness and justice, and fill men with hope were not the only ones during the war. Many such incidents occurred in Greece and in other countries, because, as you have probably already understood by now, humaneness has no nationality.

When this is felt and believed by all inhabitants of the world, then we have a basis to hope that war will never break out again. Then, perhaps, our planet may become a vast, sweet nation for every human being. And then, the "chocolate time" will be everlasting.